

The Gods 531

Chapter 531 - Could it be a Conspiracy?

Back when Yun Che listened to Yun Qinghong talk about the stories of the past, he remembered that he clearly mentioned that the Little Demon Emperor disappeared the night he married the Little Demon Empress... He thought that it was strange back then even if the Little Demon Emperor was desperate to save his father and his heart was bitter, would it kill him to leave two or three days later? He just had to run away to Profound Sky Continent at this crucial time for a suicide mission.

Now he suddenly understood; not having the desire to get married when he didn't know if his father was dead or alive was just an excuse, his real intention was to run away!

If I were married to this woman who was that scary even just hearing about her, I would run away too!

Mn? That's not right! The Little Demon Emperor was the Demon Emperor's heir, the master of the Illusory Demon Realm. With his identity, all of Illusory Demon Realm's women should be free pickings, what kind of woman couldn't he find? Why did he choose some scary woman who sounded like a reanimated ghoul as his Demon Empress... could it be that the Little Demon Empress was from a prominent family? But that still doesn't make sense. In Illusory Demon Realm, what family background could be greater than the Illusory Demon Royal Family... and the Little Demon Emperor was the Illusory Demon Royal Family's first chair! No matter what, he shouldn't have to tolerate this.

"Xiao Yun, what is the family background of the Little Demon Empress? Why did the Little Demon Emperor marry her back then?" Yun Che asked out of curiosity from his heart.

"Uh, it's because the Little Demon Emperor can only marry her."

Xiao Yun's answer stunned Yun Che: "Can only marry her? What does that mean?"

"Big Brother, I can't believe you didn't know that... oh!" Xiao Yun suddenly realized, "Right, right! I subconsciously forgot it again. Big Brother, you are from the Profound Sky Continent. Hehe, here in Illusory Demon Realm, no one would ever ask a question like that."

Xiao Yun started explaining, "The Demon Emperor can have multiple wives, but the Demon Empress was set ahead of time for him. Because the Demon Emperor's bloodline must be preserved as complete and perfect, the Demon Empress who marries the Demon Emperor must also have the purest Demon Emperor's bloodline, so their offspring would continue to have the most complete Demon Emperor's bloodline and inherit the Demon Emperor position. This is a basic principle that the Demon Emperor's bloodline had which could never be broken."

"As for the children that were borne by other wives, they would be bestowed the title of duke, and can intermarry with other families, but can never inherit the position of the Emperor. But, I heard Father said, that the Demon Emperor's bloodline would consciously not let the bloodline outflow. So in the recent thousands of years, the previous Demon Emperors rarely married other wives besides the Demon Empress, and even if they married, they would purposely not have any children with them. So now, the Illusory Demon Royal Family does not have a Grand Prince anymore. The Duke Hui Ye that we saw today, and his father Duke Huai, are dukes who have the closest relationship with the Demon Emperor's

bloodline. However, even though that is so, the Demon Emperor's bloodline in their veins are just too light."

Xiao Yun's explained very clearly, but Yun Che, who was listening, was stunned. He asked while trying to sound out, "If what I know is correct, the Demon Emperor's bloodline seems to only have one bloodline. If this bloodline were to be kept pure, then the Demon Empress must also have the purest Demon Emperor's Bloodline, so does that mean... the Little Demon Emperor and the Little Demon Empress are... are..."

"Oh, the Little Demon Empress is the Little Demon Emperor's older sister," Xiao Yun said casually.

Yun Che, "#\$%..."

"Um? Big Brother, what's wrong? Your face... suddenly became so strange?" Xiao Yun seemed to not really understand why Yun Che's face was twitching like that.

"...The Demon Emperor's bloodline... has been like this for generations?" When Yun Che spoke, even wind was coming out from the gaps in his teeth.

"Yeah." Xiao Yun nodded, like it was something normal. His facial expression was as normal as ever, "Each generation of Demon Emperor and Demon Empress would give birth to a son and a daughter, and those son and daughter would become the next generation's Demon Emperor and Demon Empress. There are a lot of other families like this, especially those that can pass down their bloodline power. To prevent the bloodline power from passing on to outsiders, it is forbidden to intermarry with another family. The inheritance of the Patriarch must not mix, that is the clan's greatest taboo... We, the Yun family, are not as strict, because the men can pass down the Profound Handle to the next generation, but not the women. So women in the Yun family can intermarry another family, but men cannot leave the Yun family and marry into another family."

Yun Che stared straight at Xiao Yun for a long while, and said slowly, "In the Profound Sky Continent, blood relatives cannot marry each other."

"Why?" Xiao Yun's eyes widened, "Marrying the person closest to you can make sure that the offspring also has the purest bloodline. The Profound Sky Continent... is so strange!"

From the view of the people of Profound Sky Continent, you are the strange ones... Yun Che gnashed his teeth and thought. This is called cultural differences, that's right, a real life example of cultural differences!

No wonder the Little Demon Emperor would marry the terrifying Little Demon Empress, it's because he didn't have a choice!

Seems like it's also not easy being the Illusory Demon Emperor.

"Now that the Little Demon Emperor is dead, the one who has the purest bloodline in the whole Illusory Demon Realm would be the Little Demon Empress. It is impossible for the Little Demon Empress to give birth to the next generation alone... that means, starting from the next generation after the Little Demon Empress, the pure Demon Emperor's bloodline would not exist anymore," Yun Che mumbled and said, "On top of that, with the Little Demon Empress being a woman, no wonder those dukes would spawn disloyalty, with even some of the guardian families' loyalty are starting to collapse."

“Yes, that’s right,” Xiao Yun nodded, “Father said this is the biggest crisis the Demon Emperor’s clan has faced since a million years ago.”

“The Little Demon Emperor was too rash. His eagerness to save his father and take back the Demon Emperor’s Seal was understandable, but he should know that the safety of his life determines the whole Demon Emperor’s clan’s heir and future! If he died, the Illusory Demon Realm would no longer have a pure Demon Emperor’s bloodline. The Demon Emperor died in Profound Sky Continent. My grandfather and Yun family’s top ten fighters also died there. He should’ve known that he would surely die if he went to Profound Sky Continent alone... If he really wanted to suicide, at least wait until the Little Demon Empress bore a son and a daughter... Rather than being rash, it was more like being stupid!”

Yun Che’s eyebrow suddenly raised.

Wait!

When he first arrived at the Illusory Demon Realm, it didn’t take effort for him to think about the serious and irreparable consequence, so how could the Little Demon Emperor not think of it? Being the heir to the Demon Emperor’s bloodline, the Little Demon Emperor should naturally value passing down the bloodline more than anyone else... that was something more important than himself, and a thousand million times more important than his Father’s life...

Then why did he go and suicide so stupidly?

A possibility flashed across Yun Che’s mind... is it possible that the Little Demon Emperor went to Profound Sky Continent for some other hidden reason?

Or... he didn’t actually die in Profound Sky Continent!? Is the knowledge that everyone has in Illusory Demon Realm all fake because someone made it up to cover something up?

After all, the Little Demon Emperor “disappeared” on their newly wedded night, and left a note informing people that he departed for the Profound Sky Continent, but no one actually saw him leave the Profound Sky Continent. No one even saw with their own eyes if he actually left... if the Little Demon Emperor was not a complete moron, then, there was a huge possibility that there was something hidden... or some conspiracy.

Yun Chen eyebrows tightened, and thought back to when he was first at Heavenly Sword Villa. Back then, when Ling Kun used his words to provoke Grandfather Yun Canghai, he seemed to have mentioned the Little Demon Emperor...

Yun Che closed his eyes, and concentrated on remembering what Ling Kun said back then...

“...It’s no harm for me to tell you again that your Demon Emperor had already died a long time ago. Died under hands of our Mighty Heavenly Sword Region’s Sword Master and Sun Moon Divine Hall’s Heavenly Monarch... Your pitiful Demon Emperor who had just ascended to the throne, overestimated his own abilities and wanted to take revenge for his father. Tsk, tsk... his cries were so pitiful when dying. Right now, the entire Illusory Demon Realm is supported by a little demon empress...”

Yun Che, “...”

Yun Che had an extremely strong memory. When he focused and thought back, he could make sure he didn't miss a single word... Ling Kun talked about the Little Demon Emperor's pitiful death... but he didn't mention where he died, or how... At least, he never said he died in the Profound Sky Continent.

Xiao Yun didn't notice Yun Che's sudden facial changes. He nodded and said, "The Little Demon Emperor was really too rash. I heard that the day he was married, he drank a lot of alcohol, and he didn't use his profound strength to resolve his drunkenness, so he lost his mind after he drank, and acted rashly... That could be, hehe, because he didn't know how to face the Little Demon Empress on their wedding night. I heard my Father said, that the Little Demon Emperor was actually very afraid of the Little Demon Empress."

"Afraid?"

"To be accurate, it should be respectful and afraid," Xiao Yun said, "I heard Father say that the Little Demon Emperor had an air of arrogance, but was also really compassionate. As soon as he was born, he had a fearless personality. Even the previous Demon Emperor couldn't control him, but the only person he was scared of was his sister... oh, who was also the Little Demon Empress. Little Demon Empress' profound energy cultivation was always stronger than his, and from youth, she was domineering person. Every time the Little Demon Emperor didn't behave himself, she would beat him up until he obeyed. Even when the Little Demon Emperor saw the previous Demon Emperor, he would be bossy and tyrannical, but when he saw his sister, he would be docile and obedient, and wouldn't even dare to breathe. Even our Father would also be well-behaved in front of the Little Demon Empress... I heard from Mother once that back then, Father and the Little Demon Emperor went to the Northern Passes on the spur of the moment, and disappeared for a month without a word. When they came back, the Little Demon Emperor was beaten up by the Little Demon Empress... and Father was beaten up along as well, with more than thirty bones broken, and had to lie in bed for half a month..."

"...So...cruel!" Yun Che listened with his heart jumping and his skin crawling.

"But, even though the Little Demon Empress was always dominant, her personality wasn't extreme, and it was hard not to respect and approve of her. When she was about twenty years old, she took over the Illusory Demon Royal Family's affairs, and almost everything was taken care of perfectly; even the twelve guardian family's Patriarchs were respectful to her... until the news of the death of the previous Demon Emperor broke out. And after Little Demon Emperor passed away, her personality changed completely. Her aura, the expressions in her eyes, her actions, all became terrifying. Whenever she appeared, everyone became silent, and it seemed like during these past few hundred years, she had never smiled again."

Having just lost her father, and her brother... Mn, or husband, it would be strange if she didn't resent or get mad! Yun Che thought, and said, "Her family is dead. Left alone with the purest Demon Emperor's bloodline, she not only bore the pain of losing her family, but also bore all the responsibility. At the same time, she is a woman. To inherit the position of Emperor, and be pressured by a number of rejections, by political pressure, by gossip... that could not be easy. In that situation, if she wasn't strong and malicious, let alone a hundred years, she wouldn't even have lasted for ten years."

"Mn, mn!" Xiao Yun nodded, "Father said the same thing! Father rarely compliments anyone, but these years, Father complimented the Little Demon Empress many times. At the same time, he also worried

many times for the Demon Emperor Clan's future. After all, after the Little Demon Empress, there would never be another one with the Demon Emperor's pure bloodline..."

"Whatever, that's the Little Demon Empress' problem. Not mentioning the future, it's uncertain that she would still be the Little Demon Empress even a month from now. That Duke Huai was not afraid to run rampant, and he also doesn't seem to be afraid of the Little Demon Empress knowing about it. Seems like he is not only ambitious, but also very confident." Yun Che said, curling his lips.

One month later at the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony, I should be able to see the legendary Little Demon Empress... Yun Che lowered his eyebrows and muttered... your attitude, will determine whether or not I return that item to you... or else, even though this is Grandfather's dying wish, I will disobey! I hope... you will not disappoint me!

The "big secret" that Grandfather wanted me to tell you, I will have to see if you have the ability to make me want to tell you myself!

As for the Mirror of Samsara... sorry, I'm not going to return it to your Demon Emperor Clan, because that already belongs to me!

Chapter 532 - Outside Demon Imperial City

The Yun Family that had been noisy the entire day, finally quietened down, but every Yun family member's state of mind was still at a hard-to-calm excited state. Night quietly fell. The quiet within Demon Imperial City's night was still the same as ever, seeming to not have been affected by the "great matter" which happened in Yun Family.

Yet news of Yun Qinghong and his wife having fully recovered their profound strength had already spread throughout the entire Demon Imperial City in the evening, causing great waves to occur in all the great clans and powers.

From the second day onward, Yun Family's gate became exceedingly lively as an endless stream of people came to express their wishes to pay Yun Qinghong a visit. And every single person who came was possessed of a startling pedigree, yet every single one of them were politely declined. They were informed that the Patriarch would not be entertaining any guests for three days.

And the Clan Assembly which was supposed to be convened on the second day was pushed to after the third day on orders from Yun Qinghong.

Because this was the period of three days where Yun Qinghong knelt by Yun Canghai's body, watching over it. And for the entirety of three days, he did not eat nor drink; did not move nor sleep. And Mu Yurou was by his side, accompanying him in kneeling and watching over Yun Canghai's body; she did not leave his side at any moment.

If it was not for the important matter at hand, Yun Qinghong would have knelt for a month... Or maybe even longer than that.

However, the fact that Yun Canghai's remains had been returned was not made public. Besides the four of them, no one else knew. And three days later, the Coffin of Eternity which held Yun Canghai's remains was retrieved by Yun Che and put into the Sky Poison Pearl. Yun Qinghong did not object, because even though he did not know what Yun Che wanted to do, he believed in Yun Che; he believed in his own son.

As for the Mirror of Samsara, upon Yun Che stating that he was not willing to return it to the Demon Emperor Clan, Yun Qinghong only had a brief moment of hesitation. After that, he simply handed the the Mirror of Samsara back to Yun Che. His son had recently returned and his joy, comfort and contentment, coupled with the guilt and the debt he felt he owed Yun Che for the past twenty-plus years... All of this manifested itself as him and Mu Yurou not being willing to reject anything Yun Che wanted, no matter how overboard he went; even if it was to the point of violating some of their own principles.

And as for the fact that Yun Che was actually a scion of the Yun Family, this was only known by the four of them as well. Because once this matter had spread out, it would invariably lead to people connecting matters to the 'Profound Sky Continent' and this would lead to unpredictable trouble or even danger for the Yun Che who had just arrived at this time.

They would rather the people who had marked Yun Che and went to check on his background come up with nothing, so their hearts would be filled with misgivings and apprehension, and they would act with caution and prudence so as to not cause unwarranted damage.

And as the person who had rendered extraordinary service to the Yun Family by eradicating the root of their impending calamity, coupled with his status as the Patriarch's godson, Yun Che's approval rating within the Yun Family had risen exponentially. Even if the elders of the Yun Family saw him, they would greet him with faint smiles and display expressions filled with praise; there were even some who lavished him with generous praise when they saw him.

The night deepened and all was silent.

In the past few days, Yun Che did not go out much; he spent the majority of his time in the training room, concentrating on cultivating the Extreme Mirage Lightning movement skill while getting used to the weight of the Heaven Smiting Devil Slayer Sword.

"It's about time to see the fruits of my training." Yun Che mumbled to himself.

Bang!

The Frozen End Illusory Mirror was shattered by him. Yun Che exhaled lightly and the aura of profound energy that was emanating from his body began to swiftly recede. In the blink of an eye, it seemed as if all the energy that had been emanating outwards had disappeared. Forget about profound energy field, even the sound of his breathing and the beating of his heart seemed to have completely disappeared. If a person had his back faced towards Yun Che, he would not even be able to detect his presence at all.

Upon the activation of the skill 'Hidden Flowing Lightning', a considerable amount of profound energy was used to rigidly lock up his aura within his body. When he let the skill persist, it required a set amount of profound energy to continue functioning, but this amount of profound energy was so small that it could not even catch up to Yun Che's profound energy recovery rate that was boosted by the Great Way of the Buddha. He maintained the concealed state bestowed by Hidden Flowing Lightning and changed into a set of black clothes. He exited the practice room, jumped onto the rooftop, and started moving after he had randomly chosen a direction.

Moreover, his current status in the Yun Family had received a huge boost, so even if he was discovered by other people, it would not be a huge deal. But what filled him with joy was that even though he had flown through a good half of the Yun Family grounds, not a single person had noticed his presence!

And this place was not some random ramshackle slum. It was filled with a countless number of strong individuals who stood at the peak of power. Even if you randomly picked one of them, that person was a member of the Yun Clan who could send shockwaves through the entire Illusory Demon Realm. In normal circumstances, the aura of a Sky Profound Realm practitioner could not even be hidden from a Emperor Profound Realm practitioner, so it was needless to say that an Overlord could do so as well. Everywhere else, Overlords were as rare as phoenix feathers and qilin horns, but in Demon Imperial City, they practically littered the streets. And especially in the Yun Family, they were a dime a dozen. Yet Yun Che had circled the entire Yun Family holdings and not a single person had discovered his presence.

Yun Che had been on the run countless of times and his ability to conceal his presence was already extremely strong. Now with the aid of Hidden Flowing Lightning, the results had exceeded even his own expectations. Because even if Yun Qinghong wanted to tour around the Yun Family holdings without being detected and without arousing any attention, it was practically impossible.

"If I had learned this Hidden Flowing Lightning when I was in the Azure Cloud Continent, I would not have had to endure the misery of having to constantly be on the run!" Yun Che vented within his mind. After that, he directly exited the Yun Family holdings and entered Demon Imperial City, which was shrouded in night.

Even though Yun Che had been in the Demon Imperial City for two months, he spent practically all of this time helping Yun Qinghong and Mu Yurou make a full recovery, so he had never actually properly visited Demon Imperial City.

Even within the pitch-black of night, it was naturally hard to affect the vision of a strong profound practitioner. As Yun Che travelled north, he did not move at too fast of a pace, so he could maintain the greatest degree of concealment. On the journey, he felt the presences of many strong individuals, but not one of these strong individuals had discovered him. And after he had run his eyes over the Demon Imperial City which was submerged in the curtain of night, Yun Che finally could not resist testing out the power of Extreme Mirage Lightning. He fiercely exhaled, not caring that this would very likely cause others to perceive him. His body instantly seemed to have morphed into a bolt of lightning and he flew forward at great speed. In the blink of an eye, he had completely disappeared into the night.

If you were to consider instantaneous movement speed, Extreme Mirage Lightning naturally could not compete with Star God's Broken Shadow, but not many profound movement skills could compare with it anyways. However, in terms of continuous movement speed, Star God's Broken Shadow was also definitively outclassed by Extreme Mirage Lightning. As he flew, it was really as if he had become the image of lightning itself. Before he could even react, he had already moved past more than three hundred fifty meters of distance.

And in comparison to the speed that Hua Minghai had displayed to him while running away, his current speed had actually surpassed the standard that had been set back then.

After all, Yun Che's current profound energy was far richer than Hua Minghai's profound energy at that time.

Yun Che could not help but think... Hua Minghai had relied on the two skills Extreme Mirage Lightning and Hidden Flowing Lightning to become known as the number one thief in the Profound Sky, so now the current him... had he not surpassed Hua Minghai to become the new number one thief... Hmm?! No that's not right, I am definitely not some thief!

Even though Yun Che had been cultivating Extreme Mirage Lightning for more than a month, because he did not want to attract any attention while he was in the Yun Family before this, he did not dare act indiscriminately, so even if he had performed the skill, it was only within the confines of the practice room. Now that he wantonly displayed its full capability, he unexpectedly needed a good long while to get used to the extreme speed that was produced. But under this extreme speed, it was as though he had become a gale of wind. The feeling that he had left the entire world eating his dust was incomparably refreshing, so Yun Che unwittingly stirred his profound energy and kept increasing the speed at which he was moving.

Whoosh!!!

Under the blanket of darkness, an old man who was walking along the streets of Demon Imperial City suddenly heard the sound of a violently rushing wind echo in the skies above. He raised his head, but that sound had already trailed off into the distance; he did not even see hide nor hair of the person who had just passed by.

"What, what a fast speed... Could it be that it is a Monarch from one of the big families?" The old man breathed excitedly.

Not only was the speed displayed by Extreme Mirage Lightning shocking beyond compare, the expenditure of profound energy was also far less than what he had expected. Yun Che had unknowingly already travelled more than one hundred fifty kilometers, and this entire process was done under the fastest speed he could travel. However, he did not feel the least bit tired, nor was he even short of breath.

Yun Che had finally come to a stop, but just as he was about to return, he suddenly realized that what laid in front of him was actually the tall city gates of Demon Imperial City.

According to the direction he had flown... This place was actually the northern gates of Demon Imperial City?

After roughly estimating the current time, Yun Che had become somewhat flabbergasted. Just this little time and effort, and he was actually already at the outskirts of Demon Imperial City... The speed of Extreme Mirage Lightning was simply akin to that of galloping lightning; it was fast to the point of being incomprehensible. And his own profound energy level was only at the peak of the Sky Profound Realm. But to be able to rush from the Yun Family household all the way to the northern gates of the Demon Imperial City within such a short span of time, this feat was only achievable by someone who, at the very least, had to be at the peak of the Tyrant Profound Realm!

When he had come to Demon Imperial City, he entered from the southern gates. And this place was at the other end of Demon Imperial City. Yun Che lapsed into thought, and then decided to abandon the notion of returning home. He decided to continue flying forward, and very soon, he flew out of the city limits, leaving Demon Imperial City.

“Where are you going?” The moment Yun Che had activated Extreme Mirage Lightning to move as swiftly as lightning, Jasmine had been startled awake from her sleep.

“Whoaa... Where is this place? It’s so black!” Hong’er had also been jostled awake. But Hong’er’s ability to sleep was far greater than Jasmine’s. Jasmine, in order to suppress the devilish poison within her body, had to sleep for around ten hours each day. But Hong’er had to sleep for at least twenty hours a day, and if she wasn’t woken up by her hunger, she could even sleep the entire day away.

“Xiao Yun had mentioned before that Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley was directly north of Demon Imperial City, so if I keep travelling north from here, I might even be able to catch a glimpse of that place.” Yun Che replied.

“You want to go to Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley? That place is known as the most important location in the entire Illusory Demon Realm, and even the Twelve Guardian Families are not normally allowed to enter. There will definitely be extremely strong guardians or restrictions lying in wait, so even if you can find it, what can you do?”

“I am only curious as to what sort of place it is exactly. After Xiao Yun had described it as being so mystical, it being the reason that there is such a big gap between the young generation of the Yun Family and the rest of the Guardian Families, all because the Yun Family was barred from entering it for one hundred years... Ah, I am only speaking casually. I don’t really want to find out the location of that place, and even if I do find it, I will not try to enter...”

“Because even if I want to enter, I want to enter that place with my head held up high! And go in together with Father, Mother and Xiao Yun!”

As he was speaking, Yun Che had unexpectedly already traversed over fifty kilometers. The clouds in the night sky had already vanished without him noticing and a bright, shining half-moon hung in the night sky, with the radiance of the moonlight dispelling a good part of the darkness. Underneath Yun Che was a plain of rolling green grass and he could hardly sense the presence of any people, demons or beasts. When he looked ahead, he only saw a vast, spacious emptiness.

“Strange, this place isn’t too far from Demon Imperial City, it isn’t remote nor wild, yet there isn’t a single person or demon to be found? Yun Che said in a mystified voice. After that he came to a realization, “Could it be that because Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley was in this direction, no one is allowed to be in the vicinity?”

After chewing on this for a while, it ended up seeming to be the most suitable explanation.

“Master! Quick, look, that place is shiny! Is there something nice to eat there?!”

Hong’er’s excited and coquettish voice rang out. Yun Che looked down, and below him was indeed something that sparkled brilliantly. He said with a helpless expression on his face, “That is a small lake, it’s not something shiny! And it’s definitely not something delicious for you to eat!”

The surface of the lake reflected the moonlight, and under the curtain of night, it shone with an exceptional brilliance... For Hong’er, there were only two types of food, one was swords and the other was precious stones which shone with all kinds of light. And after Hong’er understood just what kind of food she liked to eat, by her definition, anything that was shiny, was definitely something nice to eat!

“Small lake? Oh...” Hong’er’s voice fell and her previous excitement completely died down.

“Yun Che, go down there and take a look.” Jasmine said suddenly.

Chapter 533 - The Strange Bewitching Maiden

Yun Che’s body stopped, “What did you discover?”

“That little lake, there seems to be a very special aura emanating from it.” Jasmine said slowly, “And it is similar to an aura that I am familiar with... In fact, it seems to slightly resemble... the aura of the Golden Crow!”

Golden Crow?

“You have come in contact with the aura of the Golden Crow before?” Yun Che asked reflexively.

“That isn’t important right now. Even though it is very faint, it is extremely unusual for a lake to be able to exude an aura which is similar to that of the Golden Crow. Go down and confirm it.”

The power of the Golden Crow belonged to the element of fire, but a lake would naturally be filled with water, so it did sound extremely unusual. After Yun Che confirmed that there was no one else in the surrounding area, he complied with Jasmine’s words. He drifted down and landed on the side of the lake.

This was a very small lake. In fact, it was not much bigger than a pond, and with just a glance, you could see its limit. However, the water in the lake was exceptionally clear; even under the hazy moonlight, one could still see directly to the bottom of the lake.

The area that was seventy meters beyond the lake was covered in a thick swathe of uneven and wild foliage, but the plants that grew there were not a healthy green, instead, they seemed to be dry and withered. Within that circle of seventy meters surrounding the lake, an area which should have been most suitable for plants to grow, there was not even a single blade of grass which grew there; it was just flat ground.

The night wind drifted up from the lake’s surface, and this night wind, which should have carried along with it the cool and refreshing feeling of lake water, instead caused Yun Che to experience a distinct feeling of dry heat, which was extremely bizarre. His heart skipped a beat and he crouched down, dipping his hand into the lake... The water was not cool, it was instead, practically at body temperature.

Demon Imperial City was already located to the north of the Illusory Demon Realm so it should’ve been a cold region. Right now, it was night time, so the lake water should be cool to the point of being icy cold. It definitely should not even be anywhere near this warm.

“Within the waters of the lake lies an aura which is definitely similar to the aura given off by the Golden Crow’s flames. However, I cannot confirm that it is actually the Golden Crow’s flame energy.” Jasmine said evenly.

Yun Che muttered under his breath, stood up, and said in an uncertain tone, “Could it be because this place is in such a state because it is close to Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley?”

“No!” Jasmine retorted, “Take a look at your surroundings. Only the small area which is near the lake is devoid of any sort of plant life. It’s as if everything around the lake had been burned up completely. Yet once it gets further away from the lake, you can see that a thick undergrowth has sprung up all around this area. If it was really due to Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley, then it should’ve happened to this entire region. If I am not wrong, there is someone who is releasing the Golden Crow’s flame energy into the lake, and from the looks of it, it wasn’t too long ago that this happened; only two or three days ago at most.”

“Releasing flame energy into the lake water? Why?” Yun Che asked in a mystified tone.

“Perhaps it wasn’t done on purpose, but it was the Golden Crow’s flame energy within the person’s body that was left behind after the person had been submerged in the lake for some time. But it is far more likely that someone cannot completely control the Golden Crow’s flame energy within his body, so that person relied on the lake’s water to help calm it down. This alternative is the far more likely one, because the flames of the Golden Crow are incomparably fierce and explosive; if you do not cultivate the 《Golden Crow’s Record of the Burning World》 and you just rely on profound energy alone to try to control the Golden Crow’s flame energy like a normal profound flame, that would basically be impossible! Also, the purer your Golden Crow bloodline is, the more true that statement becomes!”

“Hm, so that’s it...” Yun Che slowly nodded his head. The Illusory Demon Royal Family all possessed of some measure of the Golden Crow bloodline and the bloodline of the Demon Emperors possessed the purest strain of this Golden Crow bloodline. Could it be that someone from the Illusory Demon Royal Family had bathed in this lake?

But there didn’t seem to be any value in investigating any further. If he wanted to witness the Golden Crow’s flame energy, he could simply do so by entering Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley. That place was somewhere he definitely could not miss out on!

However, this place was a blanketed in a sea of stillness and there was no one around to disturb him, so Yun Che felt that it was a good place to practice his sword skills.

“The night is still young. Since I have travelled so far, I might as well put myself through the paces and practice my sword skills!” Yun Che extended his arm, “Hong’er, you’re not allowed to sleep, prepare to...”

“Wait!!” Jasmine suddenly shouted, “Hide your presence and conceal yourself immediately, someone’s coming... and this person is an extremely powerful individual!”

To be able to be described as ‘extremely powerful’ by Jasmine, this was definitely no laughing matter. The person who was coming was at the very least someone he definitely had no way to deal with. And if it happened to be an enemy or a villain, he could not even call for help in this remote place which was so far from the Demon Imperial City. Yun Che swiftly used Hidden Flowing Lightning to conceal his presence, and after that, he soundlessly submerged himself into the wild undergrowth behind him.

The foliage was not very tall, but it was extremely dense, so it could cover up Yun Che’s entire body. Not long after he hid, a vague figure appeared in the sky directly within his field of vision. After that, in just a fraction of a second, the figure seemed to slip through the night sky like flowing light, closing approaching until it was only one hundred meters away from Yun Che...

So fast! Yun Che exclaimed in his heart. At the same time, he quickly ducked his head to prevent the other party from noticing his gaze... Once your spiritual perception had achieved a certain degree of acuteness, even if you did not use your eyes, you would definitely notice it if you were being watched... and Yun Che had this kind of ability. The other person's astounding speed was a manifestation of an incomparably strong strength... This person's strength might not even lose to his father, Yun Qinghong.

Right after Yun Che had even made his gaze inconspicuous, he suddenly realized that the other person's speed had noticeably slowed. After that, the other party came to a stop not far from where he was, still hovering in midair.

Yun Che suddenly froze... Could it be that I have been discovered? Shit! How could this Hidden Flowing Lightning suddenly become useless at the most critical juncture?! Or maybe... the other person's profound energy is simply too strong, so even after I used Hidden Flowing Lightning, I am still unable to escape his spiritual perception?

But after a short while, Yun Che breathed a silent sigh of relief. Because even though the other person had come to a stop, he did not notice any gaze being directed towards himself. A profound energy aura was released from this person's body and it swept across the surrounding area. It also swept across Yun Che's position but it continued without any interruptions, so this was proof that Yun Che still had not been detected yet... But once that profound energy aura had swept through his body, it caused his entire body to violently stiffen while the organs in his body tightened up suddenly. A bone-piercing chill filled him entirely, even seeping into his blood.

This person... What a terrifying aura!

Yun Che was completely convinced that the strength of this profound energy aura was not inferior to Yun Qinghong's in any way!

The strength of this profound energy aura was actually secondary to the fact that it also clearly carried with it an exceedingly heavy feeling of suppression! The strength of this suppression made Yun Che feel like all the blood in his body was going to congeal.

And if Yun Che was affected to this extent, then if it was someone else, it was possible that under this oppressive feeling, that person would directly kneel on the ground while trembling all over.

What kind of individual is this... He did not discover my presence, but he stopped here anyways. This meant that this person was going to come here all along.

A Sovereign Profound Realm expert; what was someone like that doing here in the middle of the night?

That person floated in midair for a good long while, and after confirming that there was no one in the vicinity, that person withdrew his spiritual perception. At the same time, Yun Che raised his head with the utmost caution to look in that person's direction. Because in the relatively clear moonlight, he could clearly see this person's features. And after he did, his expression instantly became stunned...

Someone who was possessed of such a strong profound energy and emitted such a shocking feeling of oppressiveness; Yun Che had expected to see an old person who had a grand and mighty visage, or perhaps a middle-aged person with a severe and reserved countenance... Or at least, even if it was someone who seemed to look very young, he would not have been so flabbergasted.

But directly in his field of vision, there was clearly a....

Little girl?!

Yun Che tightly shut his eyes, then opened them again, and what he saw.... was still a little girl!!

The girl looked to be very young, at most fourteen to fifteen years of age. She even looked younger than the initial appearance of Feng Xue'er all those years ago. She was wearing an ill-fitting ugly grey long dress... No, it could not be called a dress, it was instead an unornamented, dark grey robe. The girl's figure was extremely small and delicate, and even these robes which were not too big could not show her figure. Instead, as it was billowing in the night wind, the hem of the robe had nearly engulfed the girl's ankles.

This girl... was dressed really strangely.

But this strangely dressed little girl had an exceedingly beautiful and delicate face; her complexion was also exquisite. At least for the Yun Che who had seen far too many outstanding beauties in his life, after he saw her face, even he felt like he could not breathe for a while. It was practically on par with the impact he had felt when he had first seen Feng Xue'er...

Xia Qingyue had a kind of pure and cold beauty, Feng Xue'er possessed an illusory and ethereal beauty and Jasmine had a bewitching enchanting beauty... While this girl also had a beauty that was incomparably strange and bewitching, but the bewitching feeling she gave off was different from Jasmine's. It was a kind of sinister and dangerous feeling of enchantment. It caused Yun Che to unwittingly feel like he was staring at a cold-blooded emotionless death god when he looked at her. And it made him feel like if he came near her or made contact with her, he would die a terrible death.

Even though she looked like she was only a young girl, her features were already at the pinnacle of beauty. However, the sinister and bone-chilling cold she emanated was even more extreme than that. Yun Che definitely believed that when people faced her, the first thing they would notice was not her breathtaking beauty, but would first feel pure terror because of her aura... and gaze!

While floating in the middle of the night sky, her eyes were also an unusual gloomy black, and they gleamed with a dull black light under the moonlight. After noticing those pair of eyes, Yun Che felt like he had been drawn into a boundlessly deep night sky; one which had no limits. And once he fell into that gaze, it was as though he had been consigned into an eternal abyss of pure darkness, never to escape... He practically averted his gaze instantly while a chill ran down his spine.

This little girl... who exactly was she?!

Moreover, a young girl who looked like she was only fourteen or fifteen, yet actually possessed the profound strength of a Monarch... and she should even be a mid stage Monarch!

Monarch; this was a term that represented the pinnacle of the profound world. Within the Profound Sky Seven Nations, it was an existence that was akin to myths, but in this place... Father was a Monarch, Mother was a Monarch, Uncle was a Monarch... and even a fourteen or fifteen year old girl had the strength of a Monarch!!

This grand term, Monarch, just when did it seem like this title had become worth so little!

“This person! What a heavy vicious aura she is emitting! Looks like she has killed her fair share of people.” Jasmine said in a bland voice. With her capabilities, she would naturally not be frightened by this little girl, “She should belong the Illusory Demon Royal Family.”

“How did you know?”

“Because she has the presence of the Golden Crow bloodline within her body.” Jasmine warned Yun Che, “You better hide as best as you can and pray that you don’t get discovered. Based on the vicious aura she is emitting, if she discovers your existence, she will slaughter you with no hesitation whatsoever!”

Yun Che, “...She came all the way here by herself in the middle of the night. What is she intending to do? Could it be that she is waiting for someone?”

After Yun Che had finished speaking to Jasmine, the girl who had been still for a long while suddenly moved, and her body slowly descended to the ground.

Her hair was very long and it grew all the way to below her hips. It was as pitch black as a starless night sky. The night wind brushed her hair across a face which was like white jade. Once the soles of her feet touched the heart of the lake, she stopped there and lightly closed her eyes.

In the instant she closed her eyes, the heavy, sinister and icy-cold aura that was emanating from her vanished without a trace, as the oppressive feeling that weighed on Yun Che’s body and mind vanished as well... The young girl quietly stood in the heart of the lake, her expression serene, while her black hair lightly danced in the wind. It painted a picture of ethereal beauty that no one would want to disturb... Yun Che just stared at her in a daze, to the point where he even suspected that his previous perception of her was all a misperception.

Slowly the girl spread out both her arms, and a pair of small white hands that were as tender and translucent as jade porcelain peeked out from under her broad sleeves. Following that, her body continued to descend, until her calves submerged in the lake... At this time, a cluster of scorching flames sprang forth from her body.

The flames were dull, but they spread rapidly, and soon, they engulfed her entire body. In the midst of the flames, her black hair began to dance wildly... But, it was not the wildly dancing hair which grabbed Yun Che’s attention. Because as the fire began to burn on her body, her grey robe quickly turned into grey ashes... Once the fire died out, a snow-white, delicate, fine jade body which would move the heart of anyone revealed itself proudly as the night wind blew... and it also appeared directly before Yun Che’s eyes.

Chapter 534 - Narrowly Escaping Death

Yun Che’s eyes widened while his mouth completely gaped open... If his self-control was not good enough, a sound would have definitely escaped from his throat.

He had only acted on a fancy today to use Extreme Mirage Lightning to go for a spin, and then conveniently practice his sword skills. Little did he know that in this isolated and desolate place, a terrifying Sovereign Profound Realm individual would show up in the dead of night... If it was only this, he could still cope, but it was clear this individual had an extremely bad temper, so he had no choice but

to hide... And this bad-tempered individual was actually a young girl... And to top it off, this young girl, before his very eyes... burned all her clothes to a crisp and was now as naked as the day she was born!

What the heck was going on?!

If it was only an ordinary girl, it would not be the least bit exaggerated to say that given her perfect looks, she held the title of the number one beauty in the Illusory Demon Realm, so Yun Che would definitely feast his eyes on this delicate morsel. But the problem here was that this little lady's profound strength and the aura she projected was simply too terrifying... If he was discovered before this, since there was no prior hatred or animosity, she might just let him off the hook.

But right now, if she discovers him... even he would have felt that it was abnormal if she did not rip him to shreds.

Yun Che shut his eyes with lightning speed and his heart violently jumped in his chest. But immediately, a self-righteous voice resounded in his head: What are you nervous and guilty about?! It's not like you deliberately wanted to peep on her. You were here first! The little lady came after. She was the one who burned up her clothes. To be honest, this means that she took the initiative to let you take a look, it has nothing to do with you at all... Moreover this little lady is so beautiful, if you don't look, it will literally be a waste to have eyes, a waste of your own life!

This self-righteous voice immediately restored the balance in Yun Che's heart and he opened his eyes once more. His eyes verily sparkled as he stared unblinkingly at the girl in the heart of the lake... That's right! It was she who suddenly burned up all her clothes, it's not like I was peeking at her on purpose!

It has got nothing to do with me at all!

It'd be an absolute waste if I don't look!

After being previously startled by this young girl's shocking aura, Yun Che did not dare to take a good look at her. But now that he had realigned his mental state, coupled with the fact that the girl had also withdrawn her aura, he gazed directly at her. And his gaze drank in the magnificence of her natural state. The two people were separated by tens of meters, but this kind of a distance was nothing at all. Given Yun Che's current visual acuity, it would have been no different if she was standing right in front of him.

As he stared at the girl, Yun Che gradually went into a daze, and he was unwilling to blink even once... He even forgot the scary and sinister feeling that this young girl had given to him before.

The girl's body was very delicate and it could even be described as rather petite. Narrow snowy shoulders, a slender waist, small buttocks and even her breasts swelled slightly on her chest. Her skin was as snow-white and delicate as a newborn baby's; it was like jade, pure and smooth without blemish. It was to the extent that it even began to resemble the sparkling, translucent and limpid qualities of white jade. One could even see the faint outlines of blue veins being traced along her skin, and this was especially apparent on her slim and slender snowy thighs, where it was snow-white and tender to the point of being transparent.

If one hugged such an exquisite and delicate body, it would feel as light as air. That fine and narrow waist looked like it could be grasped within the palm of one hand, and on the front of her chest, her two gently swelling snowy mounds were adorned with two flawless light red jade pearls... and this was the most enchanting ornament which crowned itself on her snow-white body, to the point where it took one's breath away.

At least for Yun Che, he had already found it hard to breathe long ago. A sense of regret and vigilance was birthed in his heart, because he believed that if he looked any longer, there was a possibility that he would let down his guard... But even though he was alerted to this, he was still unwilling to avert his gaze.

Was this little girl... a demoness?!

Profound Sky Continent's number one beauty was Feng Xue'er.

And the girl in front of him, she could definitely bear the glory of being crowned Illusory Demon Realm's number one beauty!

As Yun Che was still caught in his stupor, threads of steam began to rise from under the girl's feet and these threads of steam quickly intertwined, becoming thick columns. In the blink of an eye, the entire surface of the lake became enwreathed in steam. At this moment, following a gurgling sound which rang out, a spray of water churned to the surface of the lake. This spray of water seemed to have sparked a wildfire as the entire surface of the lake lurched and churn as it began to seethe and boil...

No! It was the entire contents of the lake.... It was really boiling!!

Steam ascended to the heavens while the water in the lake violently thrashed about. A sense of heat assaulted Yun Che, and it was only now that he noticed that all the water in the lake had shockingly become a pool of boiling water! The girl still remained fixated in place, not moving an inch as the churning lake water drenched her body. And this jade body that had been covered with dewdrops seemed to sparkle, making it even more tender and lovely than before, causing an intense urge to uncontrollably well up within Yun Che!

However, every single water droplet did not remain on her body for long as they quickly evaporated into vapor. Both of her eyes remained shut, but her delicate and lovely face would sometimes appear to tremble... as if she was in some kind of pain.

"It was as I thought!" Jasmine said, "My guess was right! She has the Golden Crow bloodline but she does not have the 《Golden Crow's Record of the Burning World》, so as the Golden Crow's flame energy within her body gradually matures, she will inevitably find it harder and harder to control, which is why she has to use this kind of method to pacify it. Threads and strands of cold energy exist a thousand meters below this lake, which means that this lake was previously a natural cold spring which possessed extremely dense cold energy. This cold spring was used by her to suppress the Golden Crow's flame energy which was running riot in her body. And it is obvious that she has come here many times, because this cold spring has already become a hot spring because of her!"

Yun Che, "..."

The water in the lake continued to boil as thick steam covered the sky. At this rate, all the water in the lake would evaporate before long. The girl still continued to stand there, not making a sound. Amidst the fleeting mist under the dazzling moonlight with her jade-white delicate body being sprayed with dewdrops, she seemed to be a little fairy wreathed in celestial fog. A fairy who was cleansing her celestial robes in the waters of the Jade Lake, as if she needed to cleanse away all the dust of the vulgar world from her person.

Yun Che's gaze remained fixated on her and even he did not know how much time had passed, until his throat uncontrollably... made a small movement, and an extremely soft swallowing sound was heard.

This swallowing sound was so soft that even if an ordinary person was extremely close, they would not be able to hear. This was especially so, as the boiling lake water completely engulfed the sound that he had just made. But Yun Che broke out into cold sweat once he made that sound. He instantly recovered his mental faculties and then inwardly said: Oh shit!

It was in this exact instant that he saw the girl in the middle of the lake open her eyes. A cold sinister gaze that seemed to come from a death god shot directly in his direction as a cold killing intent which seemed to be composed of countless icy blades instantly filled the night sky.

Yun Che's eyes widened into saucers and he did not waste any time thinking. He swiftly opened Purgatory and began to frantically circulate all the profound energy in his body. He activated Extreme Mirage Lightning and using the most extreme speed he could achieve, he desperately fled towards the west.

Boom!!!!!!

The sound of an explosion came and all the water in the lake rushed towards the heavens as they engulfed the girl's jade body. Once the lake water had fallen back to the earth, the young girl's figure was already nowhere to be found, only a fast-disappearing afterimage remained... The afterimage of the girl was no longer that of her naked, but an afterimage of her dressed in the exact same grey robes that she had worn before.

When Yun Che borrowed the power of Extreme Mirage Lightning, the speed in which he could achieve was comparable to a late stage Overlord, or even an early stage Monarch. However, it was definitely not able to compare to that of a mid stage Monarch. Even after he had made a mad dash, fleeing away from the place with all his might, in only the span of a few breaths, the air suddenly shimmered with light, and a grey and delicate figure seemed to have teleported right in front of him.

Yun Che eyes flared. He fiercely grit his teeth, and then used all his might to bring his body to a halt. After he managed to come to a stop with much difficulty, he was only less than thirty meters away from the girl... And if he did not use all his effort to stop his movement, he would have definitely barrelled headfirst into the body of the girl.

Those eyes which were as black as night silently glared at him, carving his features into their memory. And under her gaze, Yun Che's heart suddenly stopped as all the nerves in his body were pulled taut... This may be a girl who was as beautiful as a fairy, but she was also a death god who could take his life at whim! When Yun Che's urge to kill was provoked by rage, the heaviness of his killing intent was enough to make even enemies who were ten times stronger than him shudder with fear. But this was the first

time in his life that he had felt a terrifying killing intent coming from another person that could nearly compare with his own... To possess such a killing intent, this girl must have killed countless people and she must regard life as though it were grass. If she were to kill him, she would do so without batting a single eyelid.

This young master was really only out for a breath of fresh air!

Even though I did take huge advantages of you with my eyes... it's not enough for me to pay with my life, is it?!

Yun Che forcefully stabilized himself and assumed a completely innocent and harmless posture. He said in a most earnest voice, "Ah, little sister, let me just say this in advance. Before you had arrived, I was already at this place, so I definitely did not peek on you on purpose... Even though I did look, but that was because you stripped yourself for me to see. It has nothing to do with me. Ah, but of course, I am a good man with first-rate morals. So if you definitely want me to take responsibility, I will sincerely consider...."

At this moment and at this time, the only thing Yun Che could think of to save himself from this predicament... was to rely on his good looks.

"You idiot!" Jasmine roared furiously, "What are you doing still standing there for?! Hurry up and run, are you waiting for death?!"

"#%..." As Jasmine's voice fell, Yun Che's body already shimmered and he violently fled away like a light wisp of smoke... but where exactly could he run to?! Even if he had cultivated Extreme Mirage Lightning to its highest level, this girl could catch up to him in the span of a few breaths! She was, after all, a mid stage Monarch who was not the least bit inferior to Yun Qinghong!

But this time, the girl did not pursue him. She simply floated there and stared straight at Yun Che's fleeing figure. She slowly extended a delicate palm which was like snow jade and said,

"Un... for... giv... able!"

This word pierced the heart and an extremely chilling cold sensation spread over Yun Che's entire body. He swiftly looked back, and discovered that sky around him had turned into a sea of red...

Boom!!!!!!

It was like a volcano had suddenly erupted into life, the entire earth seemed to overturn instantly. The ground fractured and a blood red flame shot out in a straight line, covering a distance of more than three kilometers, coloring the entire night sky red.

Under the roiling thick smoke and the sand which seemed to cover the sky, a huge crater that was tens of meters deep had appeared in the location where Yun Che was at. In a three kilometer radius around that crater, everything had been ground into dust; not even a blade of grass or a small pebble remained.

Countless fires raged around this enormous crater, refusing to die down. Even the skies above were stained with the light of the raging flames, as though the whole sky had begun to burn.

The girl remained at her original spot. It seemed as though she was the only thing that remained in this world. Everything else around her seemed to have disappeared and even Yun Che's figure had seemingly vanished into thin air.

This terrifying attack was a manifestation of the young girl's violent urge to kill and absolute fury. Such a horrifying power was enough to instantly burn an Overlord into ashes, much less someone who only emitted the aura of the Sky Profound Realm. But this girl was clearly someone who was meticulous and prudent to the extreme. Even though she could see the devastation she wrought, she did not immediately leave the place. Instead she surveyed her surroundings, probing to see if there was any presence she could detect.

At this moment, a few faint presences could be felt coming from the direction of Demon Imperial City and they seemed to be approaching swiftly. Clearly, the heaven-shaking commotion from before had alerted several strong individuals in Demon Imperial City. The girl was not able to continue searching for any traces or signs of life. Her eyes sank and she spun around. The red light around her body flashed and she seemed to turn into a wisp of smoke, disappearing into the night.

After many breaths had passed in silence, a mound of dirt broke in the middle of the huge crater and Yun Che jumped out, landing on his butt as he pathetically spat out dirt. After that, he began taking huge breaths, desperately inhaling air.

Looking at the deep crater that surrounded him which nearly stretched to where the eye could not see, Yun Che could not help but shudder.

This little lady, she really went too far! This kind of power is enough to extinguish an Overlord like he was a plaything. I am only at the Sky Profound Realm, for heaven's sake!

Chapter 535 - Yun Family's Will

That strange little girl's profound strength was way too scary. She could definitely instant kill an Overlord effortlessly. But with her power from before, even if it wasn't fire, she couldn't instantly kill Yun Che. The hell-like eighteen months that he spent on the Primordial Profound Ark refining himself in the spatial storms wasn't for nothing. Even Jasmine said that with Yun Che's body now, in terms of strength, he wasn't weaker than a low-level Monarch, and even his recovery rate far surpassed that of a Monarch.

But "couldn't instantly kill", didn't mean could not kill. With the large difference between their powers, if she wanted to kill Yun Che, it would be as easy as pie.

The energy was fire profound strength, so naturally, it was impossible for it to threaten Yun Che's life. When the sea of flame fell onto him, he hid himself within the fire, concealed his scent with Hidden Flowing Lightning before the fire went down, went underground... and made it out by a thread.

If it weren't for Hidden Flowing Lightning, even if he had a hundred lives, he would still be dead.

"There's someone coming from the south, more than ten people. If you don't want any trouble, leave here immediately," Jasmine warned.

Yun Che stood up, dusted himself off, and felt a little afraid... three more days and it would be the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony. Originally, he wanted to warm up his body, and get used to Extreme

Mirage Lightning, but he almost lost his life because of it. He still had something important that he wanted to do at the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony. If he died just like that, he would die without justice.

Yun Che concealed himself, avoided the people who came to check the situation, and went back to Demon Imperial City. On his way back, he was cautious, so his speed was slow. When he finally returned to the Yun Family, the sky was already starting to brighten. At this time, a few people among the Yun Family were already busy working... it was almost the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony. The Yun Family treated the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony very seriously, because it most likely would determine the future of the Yun Family, so they had to prepare thoroughly.

Yun Che went back to the Yun Family, and immediately passed out. He didn't mention any of his 'exciting adventure' to anyone. After all, he went out in the middle of the night and saw a little girl completely naked... it was not something he wanted to describe to someone else.

Three days passed by in the blink of an eye.

There was nothing different about today's Demon Imperial City, it was just more crowded. But, even normal people who didn't have profound strength could feel a different scent in the atmosphere.

Today, the Little Demon Empress had been on the throne for a full hundred years. In the past, every Demon Emperor was on the throne for a thousand years with no exceptions. On the throne for a hundred years meant that it was merely a tenth of the time. However, what was different about this time was, even though she was the Illusory Demon Emperor, her title was not Demon Emperor, but "Little Demon Empress." Decades ago, before the Little Demon Empress' hundred-year reign, there had already been an unusual atmosphere in the Illusory Demon Royal Family.

Everyone guessed that today might perhaps be the day the secret movements within the dark would explode... The Hundred Year Grand Ceremony was the perfect timing.

Today in Demon Imperial City, there was a great possibility that something serious would happen.

Yun Che woke up very early, pushed open the door, and saw Yun Qinghong already standing in the courtyard, silently facing those withered grape arbors. Hearing the door being pushed open, he didn't turn around, and said in a calm voice, "Che'er, you're awake."

Yun Qinghong was covered in heavy morning dew, obviously having stood there for a long time. From the shadow of his back, Yun Che saw his burden and seriousness... These days, he had been preparing for the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony day and night. The shadow of his back told Yun Che that he was not confident with what was going to happen today... He was even a little pessimistic about it.

Yun Che's footsteps paused, and after a short hesitation, he said, "Father, I have a question that I always wanted to ask."

Yun Qinghong turned around and looked at him, "Did you want to ask, why I, your father, would be willing to be this loyal to the Demon Emperor's Clan?"

“Yes, and no,” Yun Che replied. “The Yun Family is one of the Twelve Guardian Families, loyal to the Demon Emperor’s Clan. It is a mission that has been passed down from our ancestors. Grandfather and the previous Demon Emperor were like brothers. The Little Demon Emperor and Father also called each other brothers. From this, we could see that the Demon Emperor’s Clan had always valued us, the Yun Family. But... after the Little Demon Empress inherited the throne, she placed guilt on our Yun Family several times. On top of losing Grandfather and losing the ten great cornerstones of the Yun Family, it made it even worse. The younger generation also fell behind the other guardian families because of it. Even more so, today’s Yun Family is mocked as unqualified to stay in the Twelve Guardian Families.”

“The Little Demon Empress has been on the throne for a hundred years, and we, the Yun Family, had been guilty for a hundred years, and could not lift our heads and rise. This is the main reason why the Yun Family has been falling so speedily. And in the days that Father controlled the Yun Family, most of the preparations were for the Little Demon Empress, and the preparations for the family were secondary! The Little Demon Empress treated the Yun Family like this, but Father not only held his tongue without any thoughts of betrayal, and you still put in all of your efforts. I... don’t really understand.”

“Blaming the Yun Family wasn’t what the Little Demon Empress wanted,” Yun Qinghong sighed and said. “She blamed the Yun Family out of helplessness. And in this situation, a large part of this was caused by our own Yun Family.”

“Because Grandfather lost the Illusory Demon Royal Family’s Demon Emperor’s Seal?” Yun Che asked.

“That was only the cause,” Yun Qinghong answered. “The Illusory Demon Royal Family ruled all the souls in Illusory Demon Realm, and have the twelve families’ loyal protection. As of today, it has been ten thousand years. In this past ten thousand years, because the Yun Family was backed by the Profound Handle, our overall power had always been above the other guardian families, and had never been surpassed. And because of this, our Yun Family had been valued the most by the Illusory Demon Emperor. During your Grandfather’s generation, he had been given the title of the Demon King, and the Demon Emperor even announced that your Grandfather would have equal footing to him. In reality, that position is even higher than that of dukes! He was below one person, but above all the others.”

“Che’er, if you were from the other guardian families, yet there was someone always above you, how would you feel? There would be envy... Originally, the positions were on the same level, but a member of the Yun Family received the title of ‘Demon King’, glory and honor that the other guardian families all longed for. It also made the position of our whole family immediately surpass that of the other families... How would you feel then? It would be easy to feel envious and imbalanced, and there would be a lot of hatred.”

“...Could it be that, a hundred years ago, the other guardian families joined together and pressured the Little Demon Empress?”

“That’s right,” Yun Qinghong replied, closing his eyes. “Your Grandfather was the Yun Family’s core, and the ten Grand Elders were the Yun Family’s cornerstone. Losing any one of them was a huge blow to the Yun Family. But over the course of one night, we lost your Grandfather and all ten Grand Elders. The highest and most important level of the Yun Family’s skill immediately fell behind. In addition, the Demon Emperor’s Seal was also lost in the Profound Sky Continent. Those guardian families who were

envious of the Yun Family all those years finally got their chance, and made people in the Demon Imperial City broadcast the Yun Family's 'unforgivable crime' to the whole Illusory Demon Realm. The whole Illusory Demon Realm was filled with denunciation against the Yun Family, until it was so bad that there had to be some heavy punishment to calm everyone down.

"And that was led by the Helian Family, with over half of the guardian families involved. The families that I am sure that didn't participate, were your mother's Mu Family, and the Under Heaven Clan that doesn't like to make trouble. Led by Duke Huai, various royal clans also criticized our Yun Family, saying that the Yun Family was unforgivable, and if it weren't for the hard work and protection of ten thousand years, killing the whole clan wouldn't be too much... It must have been at that time that Duke Huai's bloodline became disloyal. After all, the Demon Emperor's bloodline was bound to go extinct, and he hoped to replace it."

"Back then, the Little Demon Empress had just taken over the throne, so it wasn't stable, and she was a woman. After her, there would not be any more pure Demon Emperor's bloodline, and on top of that, due to the loss of the Demon Emperor's Seal she cannot cultivate in the 《Golden Crow's Record of the Burning World》 and receive the power only Demon Emperors possess... Under the heavy pressure as though she was walking on thin ice, she couldn't help but blame the Yun Family. However, she never killed anyone from the Yun Family. She only cut the resources of the Yun Family for a hundred years, and forbade us from entering Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley, making this generation of the Yun Family poor in resources, and seriously weak... However, this kind of weakness was a shield for our Yun Family. When we were so weak that we couldn't even be a threat, our enemies left us in peace."

"I... see..." Yun Che nodded his head slowly.

"Che'er, you have to remember," Yun Qinghong said seriously. "The First Demon Emperor was a savior to our Yun Family's ancestor. If it weren't for the First Demon Emperor's actions, our clan would have gone extinct ten thousand years ago. We swore that as long as the Demon Emperor's Clan existed, the Yun Family would protect them. These past ten thousand years, the Yun Family never had the thought of betrayal! And from this day forward, we will continue to keep our word!"

"But, what we're protecting is the Demon Emperor's Clan! The inheritor of the Demon Emperor's bloodline! And not those impure dukes who only have some of the Demon Emperor's bloodline! Even though the Little Demon Empress is a woman, she has a complete Demon Emperor's bloodline. Since she is on the throne, she is the real Demon Emperor! As long as she is still on the throne, our Yun Family will do everything we can to protect her loyally."

"But..." Yun Qinghong's voice deepened, and his eyes turned cold, "If she was really forced off the throne, and some other impure duke became the Demon Emperor, then the Yun Family's mission to protect ends there. At that time, leaving the Twelve Guardian Families would actually be something we want! We don't need a title given by the Royal Families!"

Yun Qinghong was serious. From his eyes, Yun Che saw determination. Yun Che nodded deeply, "Father, I understand. Even though I didn't grow up in the family, the blood of the Yun Clan flows in my veins, and even more so, it is the Patriarch bloodline's blood. I will not disobey Yun Family's will!"

"Mn." Yun Qinghong nodded and smiled, even his locked eyebrows relaxed.

Yun Che looked at his expression, hesitated a little, but asked anyways, "That Duke Huai, is he really that powerful? From Father's expression, it looks like you're worrying a lot."

Yun Qinghong sighed softly, "A month ago, you should have already noticed their presumptuous and insidious behavior. That day, Helian Peng said personally that half of the guardian families have already fallen on Duke Huai's side. Among the Royal Clans, more than sixty percent united with Duke Huai as the leader. They gathered a large amount of experts from the royal families, and recruited strong practitioners from remote areas in the Illusory Demon Realm. Controlling these powers, Duke Huai was naturally able to do whatever he wanted. But the Little Demon Empress is not an indecisive person. She never took any actions towards Duke Huai's well-known ambitions. It was not that she didn't want to or didn't dare to, but because she couldn't do it. If she really did take action, it would have had difficulty succeeding. In turn, it would give Duke Huai a suitable excuse to pressure her and attack her. On the other hand, even though Duke Huai has enough power, he hasn't taken action yet, and the main reason is also because he didn't have an excuse to do so."

Yun Che, "..."

"Patriarch, all of us are prepared. We are just awaiting Patriarch's order."

Outside of the large door, a respectful, serious voice sounded. This voice, belonged to Great Elder Yun Waitian.

Yun Qinghong slanted his eyes, and said, "Okay! Everyone gather in the main hall, we will leave for the Demon Imperial Hall in fifteen minutes!"

"Yes! Patriarch!"

"Che'er, go wake Xiao'er. We should set off." Yun Qinghong looked up into the sky, as if he wanted to predict heaven's will for today.

Chapter 536 - Duke Huai

This time, a hundred people from the Yun Family came to the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony. Amongst them, about half were young disciples. Out of the thirty-six core elders, twenty-nine of them came along, and the three grand elders were also amongst them.

"None of the three Grand Elders stayed behind. All of them came along. Looks like Father is really going all out this time," Xiao Yun approached Yun Che and said quietly.

Yun Che nodded, "The other guardian families would probably bring their best along with them as well. Speaking of which, is each family only allowed to bring a hundred people?"

"Mn! At this Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony, the top forces and leaders from each the major regions in Illusory Demon Realm were invited. But usually they could only bring a maximum of three people. Even those with top skills cannot have more than ten people. Only us, the Twelve Guardian Families, and each major Duke Palace can bring that many people," Xiao Yun explained. The Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony had been at the center of worldwide attention for a while, so naturally he had some level of understanding about it.

After all, the Twelve Guardian Families were the most powerful forces within Illusory Demon Realm. Their position was equal to that of the Profound Sky Continent's Four Great Sacred Grounds, and their existence was meant to protect the Demon Emperor's clan, so the special treatment came naturally.

"How many people would be at the Grand Ceremony?" Yun Che asked again.

"Uh, I don't know," Xiao Yun said as he scratched his forehead. "This is also the first time I attended the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony."

"There would be about one hundred thousand people," Yun Qinghong, who was walking ahead of the, answered. "Out of these hundred thousand people, none of them are ordinary. This included mayors from major cities, aristocrats, sect masters, profound palace chiefs, and the kings of different races... as well as the young generations that they brought with them, they'll most likely be a young master or their number one genius. Demon Imperial City is the head of the Illusory Demon Realm, but even though their skills may not be on the same level as the twelve families, they cannot be underestimated."

"One hundred thousand people..." The scale was close to what Yun Che had expected. This was the first large event that happened after the reign of the Little Demon Empress, and it gathered almost all of the top beings in the whole Illusory Demon Realm. Yun Che thought for a while, and asked, "How many Duke Palaces are in the Illusory Demon Royal Family? How are their strengths?"

"There are a hundred and three Duke Palaces, and the most powerful one is Duke Huai Palace." Yun Qinghong squinted his eyes and said, "All of these royal families more or less have some of the Demon Emperor's bloodline. With such natural talent, their cultivating speeds are a lot faster than those of normal beings. In addition, having the most abundant resources and the opportunity to enter Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley improved them greatly. Because of this, no one in the royal family is mediocre. They are all strong practitioners. Especially the 'Illusory Demon Seven Scions' of each generation, their names are well-known all over the world."

"Each Duke Palace has a shocking amount of strong practitioners, but the scale is still far behind the Twelve Guardian Families. However, over the years, Duke Huai tried to win over all of the other dukes secretly. All of the powers from each major Duke Palace have gathered towards Duke Huai Palace, and on top of that, they used high prices to buy strong practitioners from each clan. Currently, the strength of Duke Huai Palace is unfathomable. Even the guardian families are leaning towards Duke Huai Palace, especially the Helian Clan, they're clearly on Duke Huai Palace's side... If Duke Huai really rose in revolt today, the situation would be unfavorable for the Little Demon Empress' side. But, even though the Little Demon Empress is a woman, she will not go down that easily. What will happen at today's Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony... is unpredictable!"

Demon Imperial Palace laid precisely at Demon Imperial City's center. Before even entering the range of the Demon Imperial Palace, an enormous hall so tall that it was covered by the clouds emerged before their eyes. This hall was so huge that it was almost the size of the entire Yun Family. This Demon Imperial Hall was exactly where the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony was to be held. Above the hall, a large crow with its head up high, standing on three legs with golden feathers covering the sky was there, receiving the whole Demon Imperial City's veneration and worship.

Seeing Yun Che staring straight at the golden crow overhead, Xiao Yun explained, "That is the Golden Crow Divine Beast's golden sculpture. The Illusory Demon Royal Family's Demon Emperor's bloodline is

in reference to the Golden Crow's bloodline. The Golden Crow symbolizes the highest beliefs in Illusory Demon Realm."

It was still early. The Yun Family's party wasn't moving fast, when they were about to enter the main entrance of the Demon Imperial Palace, a group of merely ten or so people was coming over from the other direction. When they reached their destination, all of the guards in front of the palace welcomed and knelt before them.

The leader of that party was dressed luxuriously. His expression revealed an imposingness which came from someone who was naturally born above others. From his eyes, there was arrogance, as if nothing on this world was good enough for him to look at. Seeing the Yun Family's group, his eyes squinted, and his mouth slightly grinned, as he said with a joyous expression, "Oh? Big Brother Yun! Is it really you?"

Yun Qinghong's footsteps stuttered. He turned around to look at him, and said softly, "Duke Huai, it's been a long time."

Duke Huai?

These two words quickly made Yun Che look to the direction of the person speaking.

Everyone in Demon Imperial City knew about Duke Huai Palace's ambitions. His schemes were endless, so much so that he was reckless and fearless, and seemed to not be afraid of the Little Demon Empress knowing. Yun Che thought that the Duke Huai would be someone without any manners, but the person who Yun Qinghong called Duke Huai was someone with a smile on his face, who looked harmless and gentle. It was hard to imagine him as someone with ambition that wanted to take over the Demon Emperor's throne... except for his eyes, which were deep like the dark night, and proud like a lone eagle.

"Hahahaha!" Duke Huai laughed loudly as he walked over, "Big Brother Yun, it really has been a long time. Two months ago I suddenly heard that you and sister-in-law's body magically healed, this duke was overjoyed. Unfortunately I had to prepare for today's Grand Ceremony, so didn't had spare time to come and visit. I feel ashamed to appear before Big Brother Yun, I hope Big Brother Yun wouldn't be offended."

Two months ago, not only had Yun Qinghong insulted his son, Duke Hui Ye, he also personally beat up the Venerable Stone Dragon into serious injury... The Venerable Stone Dragon probably didn't come along today because he hadn't healed yet, and with that injury, it would most likely take more than half a year to recover completely. At the same time, Duke Huai Palace sending the Helian Family to assassinate Xiao Yun and Number Seven Under Heaven had been exposed. But when this Duke Huai saw Yun Qinghong, he didn't bring it up at all, as if it had never happened. He even called Yun Qinghong "Big Brother," so intimately, as if they were brothers through life and death who hadn't seen each other for many years.

What a smiley poisonous snake... Yun Che laughed coldly to himself.

"Since Duke Huai had that thought, how could this Yun offended," Yun Qinghong said without emotion.

"Ai!" Duke Huai swung his hand, said with dissatisfaction, "Big Brother Yun, don't call me 'Duke Huai' like a stranger, call me Brother Huai like the old days. I miss the old days when we brothers drank

together. How about... after the Demon Empress' Grand Ceremony, Big Brother Yun come to my shabby duke palace as a guest, and we, as brothers, could drink together, how about that?"

"Duke Huai, I accept your good intentions, but I'll pass on the drinking." Yun Qinghong laughed lightly. "The people are the same from back then, but the purpose is not the same as back then. As for the taste of the alcohol, it's naturally different as well. It has become hard to swallow, so it's better to not drink it."

But Duke Huai wasn't mad at all towards Yun Qinghong's mockery, "Is Big Brother Yun mad at this duke? Sigh, no wonder. This little brat from this duke's family doesn't let people stop worrying... Ye'er, come over here!

Duke Hui Ye came out from the rear, and stood beside Duke Huai. A cold gaze brushed upon Yun Che's face. Duke Huai said, "I heard that this duke's good-for-nothing son disrespected Big Brother that day. Sigh, you've really humiliated our Duke Huai Palace. Ye'er, hurry up and apologize to your Uncle Yun!"

Duke Huiye gritted his teeth, lowered his head, and said, "Uncle Yun, Hui Ye's was immature that day, please forgive me."

Yun Qinghong calmly accepted it, and said softly, "Since you know your own fault, I will not hold a grudge against a junior. Duke Huai, I scolded your son, and embarrassed him in front of everyone that day. I hope Duke Huai wouldn't mind?"

"Don't mention it Big Brother Yun!" Duke Huai waved his arm in a forthright manner, "My good-for-nothing son was out there with his reckless behavior, disrespected elders, and caused so much trouble. Big Brother Yun, as his senior, teaching him a lesson is a matter of course. This duke can't thank you enough, why would I mind? Next time, if this brat disrespects you again, don't waste your tongue, just beat him up and throw him out."

Yun Che smiled enigmatically.

"Big Brother, look at the person behind Duke Hui Ye," Xiao Yun came over, said while lowering his voice.

Yun Che gave a sidelong glance behind Duke Hui Ye; standing there was a tall, muscular, young man. Hui Ye could be considered fair-skinned, handsome, and elegant, while this young man was fierce-looking with sharp aquiline eyes and large muscles on his body. Just looking at him, would make one feel the frightening power hidden within the muscles.

The young man appeared to have felt Yun Che and Xiao Yun's gaze, as he suddenly stared straight at them. However, his eyes left Yun Che and Xiao Yun after one glance, then he scoffed loudly. His gaze was filled with extreme disdain... as though Yun Che and Xiao Yun didn't even qualify for him to take another look.

"This man, is Duke Huai's oldest son, Hui Ran! Head of this generation's Illusory Demon Seven Scions! Whether it was the Twelve Guardian Families, or the Illusory Demon Royal Families, none under the age of thirty-five was his match! And he had a brutal nature. Those who fought him either were either seriously injured, or died a horrible death," Xiao Yun said in a low voice. From his voice, Yun Che could hear his deep fear.

Yun Che nodded slightly, and stopped looking at him. Yet at this moment, he realized that Duke Huai's gaze had suddenly landed on his person.

"Could this be the godson Big Brother Yun had adopted? If this duke remembered correctly, his name should be... Yun Che?" Duke Huai said while smiling. His gaze scanned Yun Che from head to toe, then, he slowly nodded his head, "As expected, his bearing is extraordinary. It is no wonder such a character like Big Brother Yun would adopt him as godson. How could he be someone common? At least from the looks of him, he's probably even stronger than the biological son."

Xiao Yun stepped forward, kept a straight face and said, "Big Brother is indeed stronger than me. With a big brother like this as an example, I am confident that I will improve myself even faster. At the very least, I would not embarrass my parents."

Yun Qinghong nodded his head slightly, his expression was full of approval.

"Good, hahahaha!" Duke Huai laughed loudly, and cupped his hands towards Yun Qinghong, "I forgot to congratulate Big Brother Yun for receiving a godson. However, Big Brother Yun's adopted son is quite mysterious. This duke had wanted to get to know him a little more these past days, but even with this duke's eyes and ears, this duke still couldn't get any information. It really triggers this duke's curiosity."

Duke Huai exposed the fact that he looked into Yun Che with a straight face, and didn't even try to hide it. After saying that, he put his arms down and said, "The Grand Ceremony is about to start, this duke will leave first. When there comes a time that this duke sends an invitation, I hope that Big Brother Yun will not reject me."

"Let's go."

Duke Huai revealed a meaningful smile towards Yun Qinghong, then, he strode to the entrance of the Demon Imperial Palace. When he had one foot in the palace gate, he suddenly stopped, looked toward his front, and sighed with his back towards Yun Qinghong, "Aside from you, Yun Qinghong, within the Twelve Guardian Families, there are no others that this duke has yet been willing to call 'Big Brother'. If there's one person who this duke doesn't want to be an enemy against the most, it would also be you, Yun Qinghong. Today, this duke still calls you Big Brother Yun, and from this day forward, is Big Brother Yun willing to be on an equal footing with this duke and call each other brothers, or... Heh heh, the results will naturally be decided by Big Brother."

Duke Huai's remarks stunned the Yun Family and the members of Duke Huai Palace. The legs of the guards who were guarding in front of the palace were trembling, as they kept their heads down, pretending to have heard nothing.

Duke Huai laughed softly and stepped into the palace, with Hui Ran and Hui Ye following closely behind.

"Royal father, why did you show so much courtesy towards that Yun Qinghong? And even making the promise of having equal footing afterwards? How is he qualified?" Duke Hui Ye asked in confusion.

"Heh heh," Duke Huai smiled lightly, and said with deep emotion, "The Yun Qinghong that you know about had always been a useless cripple. But the Yun Qinghong from before you were born, was the real Yun Qinghong. If you were born a few decades earlier, you wouldn't have asked this question. The

previous Demon Emperor gave Yun Canghai the title of 'Demon King' back then, and even allowed him to have equal footing as him. The Little Demon Emperor even saw Yun Qinghong as an example since he was young, and called him Big Brother. Even I, your father, was required back then by your grandfather to set Yun Qinghong as a goal!"

"Ah..." Duke Hui Ye was stunned, and couldn't say a word.

"Hmph!" Hui Ran scoffed in disdain, "Royal father, you are being too serious. Even if he's that strong, with his age, he could be a mid-stage Monarch at most. So the Yun Family has another mid-stage Monarch, how much of a threat can he be? There was no need for royal father to bribe him with 'equal footing'!"

Duke Huai paused in a brief silence, and said, "Probably because the image of him is too deep in this duke's heart. Everything is prepared, and this duke's heart is extremely assured, but the thought of him having already recovered, there's an uneasy feeling... This feeling, makes this duke feel extremely unpleasant!"

Chapter 537 - Uncle Your Sister!

After entering Demon Imperial Palace, Yun Che followed Yun Qinghong and sprinted straight for Demon Imperial Hall.

Decorated with glass tiles and golden domes, the atmosphere was extremely grand and majestic... This was the first time Yun Che entered the Demon Imperial Hall, and he was deeply astonished. He did not feel like he entered a massive palace, but instead felt like he had stepped into another world. Even Phoenix City of Divine Phoenix Empire paled in comparison to this.

"The Yun Clan has arrived!"

The seats in Demon Imperial Hall, were nearly filled and those prideful rulers of their respective territories all acted cautiously within Demon Imperial City, not daring to even talk too loudly. They had arrived many days ago, and they had even come here many hours before the start of the ceremony when the sun had not even risen. Only the top powers within Demon Imperial City would come just before the ceremony started.

Following the shout from the guard in front of the hall, the noise within the Demon Imperial Hall quickly quieted as numerous gazes shot towards the main entrance of the hall.

The Yun Family has always been the leading family among the Twelve Guardian Families, and even though they had fallen to last place, they were still an existence admired by the masses.

The arrival of the Yun Clan caused all focus to shift onto them, as all kinds of expressions and gazes appeared on people's faces. Numerous people revealed an expectant expression, as though they hoped a good show would happen... Because the seats and positions arranged for the Yun Family was vastly different from the past.

A grand ceremony of this magnitude only happened once every hundred years. The Twelve Guardian Families who possessed esteemed status were naturally given golden seats. In the past, Yun Family, being the head of the Twelve Guardian Families while also possessing the greatest strength the same time, were the most highly regarded family by the different every Demon Emperor. Therefore, they

were always given the leading seat closest to the Demon Emperor. It had always been his case, no matter if it was the Little Demon Emperor's Succession Ceremony a hundred years ago, or the Little Demon Empress Succession Ceremony which soon followed.

That seat had belonged to the Yun Family for the past ten thousand of years, and had always been the pride of the Yun Family!

Today however, that seat was not labelled "Yun", but instead the word "Helian"!

Although the seats of the Yun Family were still at the center of the hall, its seats were now the last of the twelve families and were placed at the very end! Even the word "Yun" was smaller than that of the other families.

For ten thousand years, the seating area of the Yun Family had never been changed before. Now, it was not only changed, it was shifted from first to the last place.

As though declaring and mocking Yun Family's great downfall to everyone present, as well as the entire Illusory Demon Realm.

Even an idiot could tell with one look that this was intentionally done by someone to mock the Yun Family. It was also obvious who it was that did this... Because the arrangement of the entire ceremony was planned by those the royal families.

When the Yun Family saw their seats, the looks on all their faces changed.

"Simply outrageous!" Great Elder Yun Waitian clenched his fists, as he thought about his son who had been administered with venom by people from Duke Huai Palace and then eventually died under the hands of Duke Hui Ye. The anger within him caused his body to tremble and glare with hatred.

"This is too much! Are they really treating our Yun Family as a nobody!" Second Elder Yun Duanshui said with a face full of anger.

"Let's enter our seats." Yun Qinghong replied plainly, then, he kept quiet. His face was as calm as always. He did not show any signs of anger or displeasure, not even a slight frown. With uniform gait, he looked straight at the sign of "Yun" and walked towards the seats.

In an instant, everyone who were hoping to watch a good show were sorely disappointed. Some could not even help but come to admire Yun Qinghong, or even respect him. As calm as the clouds, indifferent, even when humiliated or favored. The "underhanded blow" that the members of the royal family whom possessed ulterior motives had set were not only unable to insult the Yun Family one bit, it instead showed the world the superb demeanor of the Yun Family Patriarch in such a short amount of time.

With such a Patriarch, even if the Yun Family had fallen temporarily, no one would dare to belittle them.

"Three Grand Elders, please." Arriving at the seats, Yun Qinghong did not sit down immediately, and instead, paid respects as a junior to invite the three Grand Elders, Yun Jiang, Yun He, Yun Xi into their seats first. The three Grand Elders acknowledged him with a slight smile, and entered their seats at the same time. Only after that did Yun Qinghong enter his seat.

The seats for the various major Duke Palaces were similarly golden and the various Duke Palaces surrounded the Duke Huai Palace like stars crowding around the moon. From the moment Yun Qinghong walked in, Duke Huai's gaze never shifted away from him. Only until Yun Qinghong had sat down did he look down slightly. Even his chest seemed to rise and fall obviously as he said quietly: "Yun Qinghong... is undoubtedly still Yun Qinghong."

"Are you worried that this Yun Qinghong will thwart our plans?" Beside him, a luxuriously dressed middle-aged man with a clean white face asked with a grin. However, from how he dressed, he was obviously not a part of Duke Huai Palace.

"After hearing news of Yun Qinghong's sudden recovery, this duke's heart became unsettled, and it was inevitable that this duke would be worried." Duke Huai said: "Doesn't Duke Zhong agree?"

"Hehe, Duke Huai is being over sensitive." The person called "Duke Zhong" smiled as though he did not care: "He only returned to being Yun Qinghong from a crippled person and it's at most only another person that is an obstacle. Yun Qinghong is only a hundred and seventy years old, and even if he were a thousand seven hundred years old and reached late stage Monarch, what can he do? He would at most be an obstacle that is a little troublesome. He wouldn't even be capable to cause any changes to our plans... With strength that we have gathered for so long, in this world, is there really anyone that exist who can thwart our plans?"

"I hope it really is this duke just being too oversensitive." Duke Huai said faintly after closing his eyes.

The tolerance Yun Qinghong displayed caused everyone to be impressed. The members of the Yun Family could also clearly feel the changes in everyone's looks around them, and only then, did the sense of shame they felt get greatly reduced.

Although everyone from the Yun Family entered their seats, their faces were extremely unpleasant, especially the younger disciples whom all revealed faces of anguish, as they lowered their heads, unwilling to interact with any other members of the Guardian Families, especially the members of the Helian Family who were now sitting at the leading center seat, looking at them with gazes of contempt and ridicule. Dropping from the center seat to the seat at the end, such a feeling was hard to bear.

Yun Qinghong swept his gaze toward his back. When he stopped, he said plainly: "What? Is sitting here such an embarrassing thing?"

The disciples of the Yun Family looked up in shock, uncertain how to answer.

"If just a seat could make you guys feel so discouraged and embarrassed, or if your pride needs to be satisfied by the position of the seat, then continue lowering your heads and let everyone present see your good-for-nothing look of grievance and humiliation!"

"A truly strong person, a real man, would not kneel even if his feet were being crippled, nor would he lower his head even if his neck was being snapped apart! If it were our Family Ancestors that shook the world, forget about seats being placed towards the end, even if they were being pressured into the mud, they would stick their chest out proudly and act with pride! Because this is strength and pride that was etched in one's bones! No matter what kind of seats we're sitting on, it is not embarrassing... How you are all acting right now, is the true embarrassment!"

Yun Qinghong's words were like a timely wakeup call that violently rang within the heart and soul of every Yun Family disciples. In an instant, they felt as though a fire had started to burn within their chest, and all the blood in their body, along with the pride and strength hidden deep within it, had been ignited. Every one of them raised their heads and looked up, the weak gaze they had previously was replaced by a determination as they looked at everyone else proudly.

"Patriarch, we are not good-for-nothings! As disciples of the Yun Family, we will not lose to anyone!" A young Yun Family disciple said out loud and the other disciples quickly echoed, as a sense of excitement and pride that was suddenly ignited filled the entire Yun Family seats, completely swallowing the previous lifelessness in an instant.

"Good!" Yun Qinghong nodded slowly: "Now these are my Yun Family men! If you yourselves feel that you aren't equal to others, then our Yun Family will never prosper again! If you think that you are strong, our Yun Family... will be strong!"

"Yes, Patriarch!!!" The entire Yun Family echoed in unison. Each of the short two words was deafening, nearly shattering the roof of the hall, as it directly broke into the skies.

Seeing Yun Qinghong's back, Great Elder Yun Waitian was stunned a while, before he muttered to himself: "All the experience I've obtained all these years, I thought that if I had become the Patriarch, I would not pale in comparison to the current Patriarch... It is only now that I know my thinking was simply a joke."

Second Elder Yun Duanshui smiled slightly, speaking with deep lament: "Every generation of our Patriarch inherits not only their bloodline, but also the spirit that allows us to prosper generation after generation!"

"The Mu Clan has arrived!"

Following a shout that came from outside the hall, the Mu Family of the Twelve Guardian Families also entered the hall. Leading them was a authoritative looking elder. Even though he was old, his face did not have one bit of wrinkle, and his hair and beard were all black. Only from his slightly bent eyebrows, long beard, and plain clothes did he actually look like he was an "elder".

On his right, was the young master of the Mu Family, Mu Yubai!

The identity of this elder was obvious.

"It's Grandpa!" Xiao Yun exclaimed in excitement. He was very familiar with this elder, but this was the first time Yun Che had ever seen this person... His biological grandfather! Mu Family's current Patriarch — Mu Feiyan.

The Mu Family seat was just on the right of the Yun Family, just adjacent to one another. Mu Feiyan gaze swept in front of him as he walked with big strides, and when he arrived at the Yun Family seats, he brows quivered ferociously. Unconcerned with the presence of everyone that gathered, he scolded in rage: "Bastard things! They actually put your Yun Family at the end!"

Yun Qinghong stood up and replied with a smile: "Calm down Father-in-law, even though our family has been married for generations, we had never been next to each other before during a ceremony. Today, this will no longer be a regret, and can be considered something to rejoice about."

Hearing this, Old Master Mu who was exhaling heavily and staring widely instantly slapped Yun Qinghong's shoulder and laughed loudly: "Good Son-in-law, I knew that such a small matter is so insignificant that you will not put it to heart. Oh? Is this kid that godson of yours?"

Mu Yurou pulled Yun Che and Xiao Yun out together, then said with a smile: "Che'er, this is my father. You can call him Grandfather, just like Xiao'er."

"Grandfather." Yun Che respectfully called out without hesitation, because the elder standing in front of him now was his grandfather, and he had a quarter of his blood.

"Mn, good kid. I can tell that you're different with just a glance. Especially your eyes, they look like Qinghong's when he was young." Mu Feiyan examined Yun Che for a while and praised: "Yubai usually does not praise anyone, but he speaks about you nearly everyday during these past few days. I've heard so much that calluses are about to grow out of my ears."

In his admiring glance were signs of deep gratitude. He knew that Yun Qinghong and Mu Yurou's full recovery was all thanks to Yun Che. With his vast experience, he obviously knew that such matters could not be revealed in public, or else troubles would be invited.

"I thank Grandfather for the praise." Yun Che replied with a full smile.

"These three are all my elder brothers. In the future, you can call them uncle like Xiao'er." Mu Yurou pointed at the three brothers who looked alike, and were standing behind Mu Feiyan: "That's your Third Uncle Mu Yuqing and that's your Second Uncle Mu Yukong."

"Yun Che greets Second and Third Uncle." Yun Che greeted with respect.

Only Yun Qinghong, Mu Yurou, Xiao Yun and Yun Che knew of Yun Che's true identity because he said that he did not want to reveal it yet, and Yun Qinghong and Mu Yurou agreed to his request. However, Mu Yurou obviously could not control her urge to let her precious son reunite with his uncles.

Mu Yuqing looked exceptionally young. He received Yun Che's greeting with a smile, not forgetting to praise him: "No wonder even Brother-in-law is willing to accept you as his godson. Let's not talk about anything else, but just his looks alone are already not below me in my prime."

Mu Yukong slapped his forehead and replied helplessly: "Old Three suddenly gaining a nephew has indeed caused him to get carried away. Mn, Yun Che, your address of "Second Uncle" won't be for nothing. Next time when you visit our Mu Family, I'll definitely supplement you with a gift."

"This is your Great Uncle, Che'er you've seen him before already." Mu Yurou pointed to Mu Yubai and said.

Yun Che went forward and greeted in all seriousness: "Great Uncle..."

"Uncle your sister!" Mu Yubai waved his hand and yelled in dissatisfaction: "Didn't we agree to be sworn brothers earlier. Are you going back on your word? Or do you think I, Mu Yubai, am not fit to be your sworn brother?!"

Chapter 538 - The Twelve Families

There was no doubt that Mu Yubai was a prideful person. This was the first time in his life that he had wanted to become sworn brothers with someone else, and he was even willing to lower his own seniority to do so with someone who was in his early twenties. If he were to still be rejected, it would mean that he would have lost all the face that he had earned in his life thus far.

Therefore, since he had already said it, he had to get this brother! It had to happen no matter what!

Yun Qinghong, Mu Yurou and Xiao Yun's faces changed drastically. One month ago, Mu Yubai said he wanted to become sworn brothers with Yun Che, and although they thought that their ages weren't really suitable, there were no major problems. Now, however, knowing that Mu Yubai was Yun Che's blood related uncle, if it really were to happen... it would become a huge joke.

Yun Che laughed awkwardly, and said: "Of... Of course it's not that I'm not unwilling. How about this, if senior still wants to become sworn brothers with me after today's Grand Ceremony, I would definitely not refuse."

"Good!!" Just as Yun Che finished speaking, Mu Yubai quickly shouted in reply, as though he was afraid Yun Che would go back on his word. He valiantly continued: "A real man never goes back on his word! I, Mu Yubai, will never go back on anything I say, even in death! We will go through the ceremony tomorrow, whoever goes back on his word would be the son of a turtle! All of you are going to be witnesses!"

"This..." Xiao Yun scratched his head, as he looked away, not daring to look at Mu Yubai.

"Hohoho..." Yun Qinghong laughed in a weird and shady manner.

Mu Yurou grinned until her eyes became two lines: "Big Brother, this is what you said yourself, none of us forced you to."

The three weird expressions caused Mu Yubai to have a sense of unease. He stared widely and asked in caution: "What's going on? Are you guys hiding something from me?"

"Enter your seats quickly, the ceremony is going to start in an hour. Today is not the day for you to fool around. Already nearly two hundred years old and you still haven't given me a grandson, what kind of man are you? Hmph." Mu Feiyan said with disdain as he walked with big strides towards the Mu Family seats.

The word "grandson" immediately silenced his three sons. They moved behind the old man, not daring to even utter another word. Mu Feiyan had three sons and one daughter, but even though his daughter had married Yun Qinghong, his three sons were still single until now, not providing him any signs of the arrival of a grandson. Whenever Patriarch Mu becomes angry at home, it was because of this matter nine times out of ten. This was also why he had not yet given the Patriarch position to Mu Yubai.

He could only blame his three sons whose fear of marriage was etched deep within their bones. Normally, they were casual and unrestrained, but when they thought about being controlled by a woman when they got married, they would shrink away. The fact that Mu Yubai was persistent about making Yun Che his sworn brother was a sign of just how "carefree" a person he was. As for the responsibility of giving Old Man Mu a grandson, the three brothers always pushed around the

responsibilities. Many times, Old Man Mu would get so enraged that he would beat up the three brothers... Even so, not one of them had gotten married.

“The Under Heaven Clan has arrived!”

The Under Heaven Family was led by Patriarch Greatest Ambition Under Heaven and Yun Che could see Unparalleled Under Heaven in the group. Slightly behind him, he could see Number One Under Heaven. There was also Number Three Under Heaven and Number Six Under Heaven whom he had met three months ago, and the others elves who were in line with them were probably Number Two Under Heaven, Number Four Under Heaven and Number Five Under Heaven. At their center was the elf girl who caused Xiao Yun’s bottom to leave the seat with a scraping sound as he said agitatedly: “Seventh Sister... It’s Seventh Sister!”

As a clan of the elven race, not only did the Under Heaven Family possess eye-catching long ears and diaphanous wings, a distinct aura of nature energy could be felt emanating from their bodies. When they arrived, it seemed as though a cool breeze had just blown through the entire hall, causing everyone to feel refreshed.

Seeing where the Yun Family were seated, Greatest Ambition Under Heaven was stunned for a moment. When he went past the Yun Family seats, he nodded towards Yun Qinghong, but did not say anything. Number One Under Heaven also nodded towards Yun Che.

Number Seven Under Heaven secretly stole a glance at Xiao Yun before lowering her head and biting her lips. She had not seen him for three months and in three months, the thing she understood the most was that her chance of meeting Xiao Yun was become slimmer and slimmer...

The Under Heaven Family seats were adjacent to the Mu Family seats.

Xiao Yun’s eyes followed Number Seven Under Heaven, and only when she sat down did he look away. His eyes were not focused, he was lifeless, and his face covered with dejection. Yun Che looked at his expression, and sighed silently. He knew Xiao Yun’s eyes were downcast... He was not Yun Qinghong’s real son, and the fact that he was from the Profound Sky Continent was already a given. This caused the original obstacles between him and Number Seven Under Heaven to increase tremendously.

The backgrounds of the two of them... were of two completely different worlds.

“Given up already?” Yun Che asked with a faint smile.

Xiao Yun shook his head: “I would never be willing to give up on Seventh Sis, but now I... Now I... really don’t know what to do.”

“Then don’t think about this for now. A favorable turn of events often happens when one least expects it to.” Yun Che said with a smile before his tone turned more serious: “Xiao Yun, the Twelve Families are almost all here, give me a brief introduction of them, especially the leaders and the elites of the young generation.”

“Ohhh, alright!” Xiao Yun nodded. The Twelve Families were the strongest existence in Illusory Demon Realm, so their leaders and the rising stars below the age of thirty-five were naturally names that shook the world. Xiao Yun, having been Yun Family’s Young Patriarch for the past twenty years was naturally familiar with these people.

He pointed directly opposite at a seat that was labeled with the word “Xiao” and said: “That is the Xiao Family of the Twelve Families. Their original form is the Howling Heaven Pegasus and their Family profound skill allows them to control tempests. Their Patriarch is Xiao Xifeng and rumor has it that he is in the second level of the Sovereign Profound Realm. For the young generation, the strongest is also their Young Patriarch, the person in blue, standing beside Xiao Xifeng... His name is Xiao Donglai, and even though he is twenty-five this year, which is two years younger than Yun Xinyue, he is at the same profound level as Yun Xinyue, fourth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm.”

Yun Che nodded, remembering every word he said.

Xiao Yun pointed to the seats on the right of the Xiao Family which were labelled “Jiufang”: “That is the Jiufang Family. They are of the demon race and their original form is the Nine-Headed Flood Dragon. Their family profound art is a frighteningly deadly poison technique and they have a very deep relationship with the Helian Family. There would be marriages between the families nearly every generation. The current Patriarch is Jiufang Kui and the person beside him is Young Patriarch Jiufang Yu. He is thirty this year and his profound strength also seem to be in the fourth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm... However, it is rumored that he possesses a rare innate Flood Dragon Poison, the ‘Nine Emperor Venom Body’, that only appears within the Jiufang Family once every four thousand years. If one is poisoned by it, it is said that even a low level Monarch would find it hard to dispel.”

“The Lin Clan is a clan of human-demon hybrids. Their Patriarch is Lin Guiyan and the strongest of the young generation is the person sitting directly being Lin Guiyan... Lin Hanchuan, twenty-nine years old, fifth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm.”

“Nangong Family, human race. They are called the strongest sword users of the Illusory Demon Realm and use dual blades as their main weapon. Their Patriarch is Nangong Zhi and strongest of the young generation is the youngest son of the Eighth Elder — Nangong Yan.”

“The Chiyang Clan has arrived!”

A loud shout interrupted Xiao Yun’s narration. Yun Che turned to look at the main door where a scarlet family was entering while bringing along a heatwave.

Members of this family were fully dressed in red, and even their hair and eyebrows were scarlet. As they entered, the temperature rose drastically. Some of the weaker profound practitioners who hailed from more distant regions, who were on the weak side were caught off guard as their skins burned with a burst of acute pain. Only when they hurriedly channeled their profound energy did they barely withstand it.

“That is the Chiyang Family, their original form is the Scorching Sunfire Dragon! They are a race of true dragons and are very strong. Their combined strength only loses out to the Helian Family and the Su Family. They possess the Scorching Sun Dragon Body and the speed at which they practice profound cultivation and learn profound skills is much faster than normal humans and demons. Their current Patriarch is Chiyang Bailie and the strongest of the young generation... Err, it’s that girl.”

In the direction Xiao Yun pointed, Yun Che could see a young woman standing beside Chiyang Bailie. She looked pretty, was tall, had scarlet hair, and a tinge of scarlet came from her wheat colored skin.

The most eye-catching thing about her were the scarlet colored tight leather clothes that she wore. The scarlet leather shirt was short and wrapped around her voluptuous breasts, yet it revealed her flat stomach and navel. Her shorts were an even shorter pair of red tight leather waist pants that only barely held her butt and completely revealed her slender long legs. Hanging on the pants was a coiled scarlet whip, and unorganized lines of fire flickered about continuously upon it... It only took one look to evidently see that this was not a normal artifact.

This wild and hot look immediately drew the gaze of countless young men; each one of them eyes shone brightly, salivating. However, it was obvious that she was already used to this kind of attention as she walked with her head held high; the elegance and pride clearly shone on her face.

"This appearance is too bold. If my wife dares to dress like this, I would definitely divorce her." Yun Che said with a crooked mouth, then immediately added: "If it's only to show me alone, then it would be different."

"Cough. She's called Chiyang Yanwu, it is said that her affinity with fire is almost equal to her ancestors from the ancient era. Her talent is frightening and although she is only twenty-four, she is already at the peak of the fifth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm, about to advance to the sixth level. However..." Xiao Yun lowered his voice and continued: "This Chiyang Yanwu has a reputation in Illusory Demon Realm for being very prideful and it's said that no man has made her look at him straight in the eye before."

"Among the Twelve Guardian Families, there is actually a family whose strongest practitioner in the young generation is a woman, this is interesting." Yun Che rubbed his chin and said.

"Actually, it is not only the Chiyang Family that has a female as their strongest in the young generation." Xiao Yun pointed to the family who was labelled "Bai" and said: "That is the Bai Family who are also of the demon race. Their original form is the Cloud-winged White Tiger. Their Patriarch is Bai Yi and the strongest of their young generation is the girl on his left — Bai Jie, thirty years old, fifth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm."

"Oh." Yun Che nodded gradually, before his brows twitched: "Er, Bai Jie?"

"Eh? Does Big Brother know her?" Xiao Yun asked in shock.

"No, no. I definitely don't." Yun Che shook his head: "It's probably the first time I've heard that name, but why do I find it so familiar... Never mind, tell me about Helian Family."

Author's Note: Twelve Family Seating Arrangement:

East (North to South): Helian, Chiyang, Bai, Nangong, Lin, Jiufang, Xiao.

West (North to South): Su, Under Heaven, Yan, Mu, Yun.

SummerRain Note: The Xiao (嘯) Family of Illusory Demon's Twelve Families is a different character from Xiao Yun's Xiao (萧).

OverTheRainbow Note: Regarding the 'Bai Jie' thing at the end, there is a mature adult novel named "少妇白洁", or "淫荡少妇之白洁", aka "Lustful young milf Bai Jie". Mars Gravity basically made a reference as a joke, don't worry about it being significant to the plot or anything haha.

Chapter 539 - Drawing a Clear Line

"The Helian Family are of the Nine-headed Demon Snake race. Their current Patriarch is Helian Kuang and that Helian Peng Big Brother saw two months ago is his younger brother. The strongest of the Helian Family's young generation is that person sitting next to Helian Peng... Helian Ba! He and the Su Family's Su Zhizhan are the strongest among the all the juniors from the Twelve Guardian Families. However, Helian Ba is thirty-one years old this year, while Su Zhizhan is only twenty-seven, so in terms of innate talent, Su Zhizhan is slightly superior to Helian Ba."

"Su Family?" Yun Che swept his eyes over the seating arrangements of the Twelve Families. The Twelve Families were split into two, one side east and the other west. The Helian, Chiyang, Bai, Nangong, Lin, Jiufang and Xiao Families were seated on the east side, while their own Yun Family, Mu Family, and Under Heaven Clan were seated on the west side. And the northern-most seats on the west side were labelled with the word 'Su', but the seats were still empty as the Su Family had not arrived yet.

"The Su Clan has arrived!"

Just at the moment Yun Che was looking in the direction of the Su Family seats, a loud, clear voice rang out from the front of the main hall. The one hundred members of the Su Family entered as one body and they directly marched over to where their seats were.

The middle-aged man who led the group came to a stop once he passed by the Yun Family. He cupped his hands towards Yun Qinghong, "Brother Yun, I hope you've been well?"

Yun Qinghong stood up and faintly smiled, "Everything has been splendid. Big Brother Su's profound strength seems to have once again risen significantly, congratulations on this great news."

"Haha, I am still far off compared to the freakish talent that is Brother Yun." The middle-aged man laughed in a free and easy manner, "Zhizhan, hurry up and greet Uncle Yun."

"Zhizhan greets Uncle Yun." The youth who stood beside the middle-aged man made junior's courtesy. His expression was filled with respect and he was neither servile nor overbearing. He was of uncommon bearing but after Yun Che saw his eyes, he had a feeling that this fellow was also someone who was filled with conceit... but that was to be expected. Because all these absolute geniuses from the best families had grown up amidst the constant admiration and astonishment of others; it would be even more abnormal if they did not possess any arrogance whatsoever.

After they had said their greetings to the Yun Family, Mu Family and the Under Heaven Family, the Su Family took their seats. Xiao Yun resumed his introductions without missing a beat, "The person who greeted Father just now is the current Patriarch of the Su Family, Su Xiangnan. And the young man was the aforementioned Su Zhizhan. The current strength of the Su Family is only inferior to that of the Helian Clan, but Su Zhizhan will definitely not lose to Helian Ba; both of them are at the sixth level of Tyrant Profound Realm, but if they were the same age, Su Zhizhan would definitely be the superior one."

“The Su Family is the same as our Yun Family, in that both families are all humans, so the relationship between both our families have been in good standing for generations. Patriarch Su is also Father’s longtime friend. In the years that father was crippled, he personally came to visit many times.” Xiao Yun explained in detail.

Yun Che slowly nodded his head. Moreover, from the looks that Yun Qinghong and Su Xiangnan had exchanged just now, he could surmise that the Su Family was definitely not an enemy.

“That ‘Yan’ Family to the right of the Su Family, are they also humans?” Yun Che pointed at the position the Yan Clan was seated.

“Yes.” Xiao Yun nodded his head, “The Yan Family are called the Divine Spear Clan and all the members of that family use the spear as their weapon. They also had a pretty good relationship with our Yun Family all this while. One hundred years ago, the Yan Family was basically considered the weakest of the Twelve Guardian Families, but now it is a title our Yun Family ignominiously bears... The Yan Family’s Patriarch is called Yan Zijing and their Young Patriarch is Yan Chengkong, twenty-six years old, third level of the Tyrant Profound Realm.

“The Under Heaven Clan are of the elven race and their weapon of choice are profound bows and arrows. The Patriarch is Seventh Sister’s father, Greatest Ambition Under Heaven, and the Young Patriarch is Seventh Sister’s eldest brother, Number One Under Heaven. The one who is representing their young generation is Seventh Sister’s sixth brother, he should be twenty-eight this year, fourth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm.”

After Xiao Yun’s introduction, Yun Che now had a good grasp of the basic information regarding the Twelve Families.

“Xiao Yun, what kind of level are Duke Huai Palace’s Hui Ran and Hui Ye at?”

At the mention of these two names, Xiao Yun’s expression clearly became a lot more nervous, “Hui Ye is at the sixth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm and he is the third amongst the Illusory Demon Seven Scions. And that Hui Ran, I heard that he is already at the eighth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm?”

Yun Che’s brows twitched, “A late stage Overlord? The Twelve Families are already considered the pinnacle of power in the Illusory Demon Realm, so why is their young generation so lacking in comparison?”

“The various great Duke Palaces of the Illusory Demon Royal Family have always been small in number, so their combined power will not be as strong as the Twelve Families. But in the end, they are still royalty so they have access to the best resources. Thus, the elites they produce, especially those elites from the young generation, had extra advantages which far outstripped what was available to the Twelve Families. Every generation’s Illusory Demon Seven Scions will be, on a whole, stronger than the twelve prodigies from the Guardian Families, but they won’t be that much stronger... This Hui Ran is a rare monster, his innate talent is so high that it’s bizarre. Moreover, Duke Huai Palace has definitely spared no expense in using an extreme amount of resources on his body to allow him to have an abnormal strength that far surpasses his age!”

“I heard from Mother, that when Father was thirty years old, he was also at the eighth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm, so this Duke Hui Ran is as strong as Father was when he was young.” Xiao Yun

said in a rather dissatisfied tone. This was because, at least where the Yun Family was concerned, Duke Huai Palace was an evil adversary.

“Oh, these two cases are very different to me.” Yun Che faintly shook his head, “Father had an innate potential which distinguished itself from the rest, whereas this Hui Ran had access to extra resources that far exceeded what our father ever had in his youth. He may be comparable to Father when they were both this age, but once you look to the future, he definitely will not have the qualifications to be compared with Father at all.”

“Mn, well said, Big Brother!” Xiao Yun said in a voice filled with agreement.

Yun Qinghong glanced at this set of brothers and he gave a dry laugh. After that, he looked forward and kept silent, not uttering a single word.

It was only fifteen minutes away from the official start of the grand ceremony, so at this moment, the Demon Imperial Hall was already filled to the brim. The various dignitaries, hegemony, main powers within the Demon Imperial City, Twelve Families and the great Duke Palaces had all assembled. Yun Che turned his head, and he was just about to ask Yun Qinghong some questions regarding the Little Demon Empress when he suddenly noticed that Yun Qinghong’s expression was far more grave now as compared to when they had first entered. Yun Che furrowed his brows. His eyes swept across the crowd, but they began to slowly relax a bit.

The center of the Demon Imperial Hall was directly north and it was where the Demon Emperor would be seated. The two core seating arrangements which were closest to the Demon Emperor were divided into an east and west wing, and these core seats were where the various great Duke Palaces and Twelve Families were seated. The Su Family, Yan Family, Under Heaven Family, Mu Family and Yun Family were arrayed from north to south on the west wing. Whereas the Helian Family, Chiyang Family, Bai Family, Nangong Family, Lin Family, Jiufang Family and Xiao Family were arrayed from north to south on the east wing.

The west wing, where the Yun Family was seated, had a total of five Guardian Families.

Whereas the east wing had a total of seven Guardian Families!

The specific seating arrangement was:

East Wing (north to south): Helian, Chiyang, Bai, Nangong, Lin, Jiufang, Xiao.

Middle (north): Little Demon Empress.

West Wing (north to south): Su, Yan, Under Heaven, Mu, Yun.

The two wings had been exactly the same but the Twelve Guardian Families had not split themselves up equally, so this ended up with one wing having five while the other had seven and this presented an uncomfortable asymmetry... And this asymmetry, during a grand ceremony where all the heroes of the land had gathered, definitely had to have some meaning.

And the same imbalance occurred with regards to where the Duke Palaces had seated themselves. There were also more royalty seated in the east wing than in the west wing. This even created a gap in the golden seats that were originally reserved for the royal family. Some aristocrats and nobility who

were not from the Demon Imperial City were arranged to be seated there instead, causing their expressions to be terrified as this excessive, unexpected good favor left them restless.

“Father, the seating arrangements seem extremely problematic this time?” Yun Che asked in a low voice.

Yun Qinghong slowly nodded his head, “The situation is much worse than I thought it would be... far, far worse! This seating arrangement could be said to be drawing a clear line.”

That’s right, this was indeed drawing a clear line!

For those who were not from Demon Imperial City, they naturally could not tell what was happening. But as for those who lived in the Demon Imperial City, especially the members of the Twelve Guardian Families and the royal family, they could tell with a single glance... that the Guardian Families and royalty sitting in the east wing were either aligned towards Duke Huai, or had even completely defected to his side.

On the west wing, there was no one who was aligned with Duke Huai; they were all still loyal to the bloodline of the Demon Emperor and as such, they were also loyal to the Little Demon Empress!

At first, Yun Che was still rather unclear as to which of the Twelve Guardian Families had thrown in with Duke Huai, but now, it was clear as day! And this was clearly deliberate on Duke Huai’s part; he was showing to all those assembled that the power that he held was already this great... and it was a power that already completely suppressed those who were still loyal to the Little Demon Empress!

Such a seating arrangement, such brazen and unscrupulous behavior... Duke Huai’s intentions and desires were made abundantly clear during this grand ceremony!

The various Patriarchs and Elders of the Su Family, Yan Family, Under Heaven Family, Mu Family and Yun Family exchanged glances and their expressions became incomparably grave. None of them had predicted that the situation would be quite so severe, that the power Duke Huai had been gathering covertly all these years would actually be so terrifying.

“Is it really so unbearable to have a woman as a ruler?” Yun Che said with lamentation in his voice. The image of Cang Yue immediately appeared in his mind and it warmed his heart. He said to himself: Thank goodness I healed that disease of my royal Father-in-law so he can spawn a whole new nest of little princes. Because if there is a situation where he has no choice but to pass his position to Xueruo, then my princess wife will be in for a bad time... she’ll be tired to death.

“To these powerhouses who stand at the peak of the Illusory Demon Realm, women have always only been viewed as an accessory or even a toy for men. Thus, having to swear loyalty to a woman will indeed cause conflict to arise in their heart... But it should definitely not be a reason for them to betray the bloodline of the Demon Emperor! The greatest reason is actually their own greed! Duke Huai Palace had definitely peppered them with a copious amount of treats and enticements... but I just never expected that the two great families of Chiyou and Nangong would actually be aligned with Duke Huai! This is absolutely preposterous!”

Yun Che could hear a deep pain emanating from Yun Qinghong’s voice.

“What moves do you think Duke Huai will actually make during this grand ceremony?” Yun Che asked, “And why would he choose this particular occasion?”

“Because this is where all the heroes of the realm are gathered.” Yun Qinghong said as his brows sank, “All the various district rulers, lords of the big cities in the Illusory Demon Realm, hegemons and the leaders of all the main races... and even the leading figures hailing from the every field of mercantilism, medicine, and craftsmanship were invited as well! Almost every single person among the one hundred thousand who are within this great hall is an individual who has a great deal of influence over a place, profession, or even over the entire Illusory Demon Realm. It could be said that the seventy billion citizens of the Illusory Demon Realm are completely represented by the one hundred thousand people present! When today’s grand ceremony ends, these people will go back to their respective territories and they will disseminate all that has happened here today to every nook and cranny of the Illusory Demon Realm.”

Once Yun Qinghong had finished speaking, Yun Che immediately understood what was going on. “So that is to say that this time, Duke Huai wants the people to know that the Little Demon Empress no longer holds the highest power and prestige in the realm, that the strength he possesses now is more than enough to suppress her? After which, he will force the Little Demon Empress to abdicate in front of everyone here?”

“No, you have only gotten one part of it correct.” Yun Qinghong shook his head as he replied, “He definitely wants to borrow this occasion to fulfill his meticulous and methodical plans, but he definitely won’t use that method. Because that method will produce a result that is contrary to what he desires.”

“It would produce the opposite of his desired result?” Yun Che asked in shock.

Yun Qinghong’s eyes grew distant and he slowly began to recount, “Ten thousand years ago, the Illusory Demon Realm was a sea of chaos. The human and demon races were locked in battle and the fire of war had spread to the four corners of the realm; this left the people in dire straits. But after that, the Demon Emperor Clan inherited the legacy of the Golden Crow and received a great power. Henceforth, they led the Twelve Families and began a campaign that lasted several hundred years before they finally conquered the Illusory Demon Realm. Under the brilliant leadership of the Demon Emperor, both the human and demon races stopped fighting. After that, he gradually began to eliminate the conflict between the races and brought peace to the realm; this has persisted to this day. And the primordial divine beast, the Golden Crow, became something that the people of the Illusory Demon Realm have put their utmost faith in for the last ten thousand years. As such the Demon Emperor became a figure that has been loved and revered by the citizens of the Illusory Demon Realm through the generations.”

“If Duke Huai forces the Little Demon Empress to abdicate so he can take her place, then there would be rejoicing throughout the land only if the Demon Emperor bloodline had always led the people to calamity and caused them to undergo unspeakable hardships. But it just so happens that it is the opposite of that scenario, so if Duke Huai truly did that, all he would invite would be the wrath, rebellion, and rebuke of the people of the Illusory Demon Realm! Even if the power that Duke Huai holds is one thousand times what he has right now, how could he afford to provoke the burning wrath of the seventy billion citizens of the Illusory Demon Realm? This is the main reason Duke Huai is has never dared to make any hasty moves.”

“Ah, so this’s how it is.” Yun Che said as he lapsed into a momentary daze, “So what action will Duke Huai actually take?”

“He will definitely create a reason that is sufficiently adequate, a reason that will cause all the people to be convinced during this grand ceremony.” Yun Qinghong said with a grave expression, “The Little Demon Empress has always been very clear about Duke Huai’s disloyalty but she has never taken any actions against him because she does not want to give him something that he can use, like saying ‘her nature is brutal and vicious and that she harmed other members of the royalty for no rhyme or reason’. So during today’s events, the reason that he will concoct will be fairly simple... for example, he will implicate the Little Demon Empress in a few rumors that would cause all the people to rise up in fury, scandals that he himself has created, of course! And they will be the most vicious and evil of rumors possible... Such as promiscuity, harming her loyal citizens and even feasting on the innards of children.”

Yun Che’s eyebrows slanted fiercely and he said in a low voice, “And if these kinds of rumors were to be shouted out by a single person, no one would pay any attention... but if half of the Guardian Families and half of the royalty support these rumors and join their voices to rebuke the Little Demon Empress, then all these people who have arrived from all over the Illusory Demon Realm won’t have a reason to doubt such lies! Furthermore, the public opinion will be manipulated in such a way that it will create universal fury throughout the lands. Thus, the Little Demon Empress’ reputation would be completely swept away and she would even become a villain in the eyes of the public... Once that happens, it would only be logical that Duke Huai succeeds the position, and it will even be done with the full support of the people!”

“That’s right!” Yun Qinghong said as he nodded his head with a heavy expression. Because once he noticed the strange seating arrangements, he immediately saw through all of Duke Huai’s thoughts.

“So does Father have a plan to help the Little Demon Empress avert this calamity?” Yun Che asked in a serious voice.

Yun Qinghong lapsed into a momentary silence, and then slowly said, “The plan is actually fairly simple, but now that seven Guardian Families and the majority the royalty have sided with Duke Huai, it will be even harder to realize it, nearly impossible in fact.”

“What is the plan?” Yun Che asked swiftly.

“The plan is that we incline the hearts of the heroes gathered towards the Little Demon Empress before Duke Huai can begin his scheme, so as to not allow his people to voice out the accusations they had already prepared...”

As Yun Qinghong finished speaking, he gave a long exhalation and he shut his eyes. It was clear that he was bitterly pondering how he should face and deal with the coming scenario.

Yun Che silently considered Yun Qinghong’s words and he was also drawn into deep thought. After a while, he suddenly opened his mouth and said, “Father, once the grand ceremony starts, no matter what I do, I hope that Father does not stop me.”

Yun Qinghong opened his eyes and gazed at him deeply. But he did not ask what he was going to do exactly, instead he simply nodded his head silently. And in the midst of those eyes which were as deep as the sea, laid the trust that a father had in his son, a trust that needed no reasons.

“The—— Little—— Demon—— Empress—— Has—— Arrived!!”

At that moment, a reverberating, earsplitting voice filled the Demon Imperial Hall and the originally noisy grand hall immediately fell into a hush. It was so quiet that one could hear the sound of pin dropping. Every single person raised their head to the skies and gazed at the sky above the grand hall.

Chapter 540 - She's the Little Demon Empress?!

The sky above the hall was suddenly wreathed in the light of flames as a gigantic three-legged Golden Crow appeared amidst the fiery sky. Its wings were spread wide and it let out a long cry which tore through the air. After this, the three-legged Golden Crow descended from the flames and as it descended, it left a long scarlet curtain of fire in its wake. The fire curtain descended from the top of the hall all the way to where the Emperor's throne was. Once the three-legged Golden Crow touched the ground, it disappeared. Behind the curtain of fire, a blurry figure could vaguely be seen seated on that throne.

Everyone within the great hall uniformly rose from their seats; Yun Che was also pulled up by Yun Qinghong. After which, everyone present knelt on the ground.

“We respectfully welcome the Little Demon Empress!!”

Every single person who had the privilege to be invited to the Demon Imperial Hall were undoubtedly the strongest of the strong. The sound of one hundred thousand overlaying voices rising in reverence produced such a vastly powerful sound that it caused the ears of the weaker profound practitioners to reverberate, while also causing their internal organs to churn. And if this was just some normal hall, the power of these voices could cause it to vibrate until it collapsed.

“Everyone, you may rise.” A severe voice rang out from behind the curtain of flames.

Everyone returned to their seats and when Yun Che returned to his seat, a look of suspicion crossed his face: This voice... why does it seem so familiar to me? I've clearly never seen the Little Demon Empress before.

Following the descent of the Little Demon Empress, the hall became so quiet that one could hear a pin drop; a heavy atmosphere seemed to envelope every corner of the hall. At this time, the figures of two tall women slowly surfaced from behind the curtain of flame. The two women had features that were both pretty and solemn; one of them was human while the other was a demon, and both exuded the powerful aura of the Tyrant Profound Realm. They extended their hands at the same time and took hold of the fire curtain. After which, they slowly pulled the burning curtain of flames to the left and the right, revealing the figure of the Little Demon Empress.

Yun Che had always held a deep curiosity regarding just what kind of person the Little Demon Empress was. So after the curtain of flames had been parted, he steadily stared at the figure which was seated on the throne. Her appearance was exactly as Xiao Yun had described, she was wearing grey clothing and she was not adorned in the imperial splendor expected of a ruler. Moreover, her figure seemed exceptionally tiny, and at first glance, she seemed to have the body of a little girl, but once he could see her features clearly...

Yun Che's eyes widened instantly and his body swiftly withdrew to the back as he placed his body behind Yun Qinghong.

"Eh, Big Brother, what's up with you?" Xiao Yun hurriedly asked as he noticed Yun Che's sudden strangeness.

"She... She... She... She's the Little Demon Empress?!" Yun Che stammered as his tongue tied itself into a knot, as his teeth started chattering.

"That's right." Xiao Yun automatically replied as he nodded his head, "Big Brother, you seem to be really strange right now... Could it be that you've already seen the Little Demon Empress before?"

"But... Didn't you tell me that the Little Demon Empress looked terrifying and that her face was fierce and forbidding?! This Little Demon Empress looks completely different from the way you described her!" If this place was not the venue of the grand ceremony, Yun Che would've roared at Xiao Yun until saliva sprayed his face.

The Little Demon Empress was swathed in grey clothes, but underneath all of that loose grey cloth lay an exquisite and delicate body. Both her eyes were as gloomy as the night sky and they emitted a coldness that seemed like icy knives. However, her features were exquisite and beautiful, and they seemed to be carved from snow and ice.

This was clearly the grey-robed little girl whom he had seen outside Demon Imperial City three nights ago. She was also the person who had nearly killed him!!

That little girl... was actually the Little Demon Empress!

That she was the Little Demon Empress was nothing much... What was more important was that on that night, in her ignorance, she showed her naked body to Yun Che... and Yun Che had observed every single part of her body; he had even continued to look for fifteen minutes...

And the most important thing was that after he got caught by her, even his face was recorded in her memory!

Is this some kind of cruel and unusual joke the heavens are playing on me?!

Yun Xiao had an innocent expression on his face, "I did say that the Little Demon Empress was very scary, oh... I also recall telling you that I didn't dare to look directly at her face. What I really meant was that the Little Demon Empress' aura, gaze and temperament was extremely terrifying. Every time I saw her, my heart would start beating wildly and a chill would run down my spine. But I never said that the Little Demon Empress' features were scary. After all, everyone recognizes her as the number one beauty in the Illusory Demon Realm."

"#..." Yun Che suddenly had the urge to throttle Xiao Yun to death, "That last sentence... Such an important piece of information, why didn't you tell me that day?!"

Xiao Yun's neck contracted and his expression grew even more innocent, "You... You didn't ask me what the Little Demon Empress looked like, Moreover... I felt that this information was not really that important at all."

Yun Che smacked his forehead as he choked on his words silently.

But now that he thought back to that day, when Xiao Yun called the Little Demon Empress ‘terrifying’ and ‘scary’, he was referring to the feeling she gave off, and he definitely did not say that her features were scary. But the way he described it made it very easy for one to think of a sinister, fierce and forbidding face that people would not dare to look at. Furthermore, since she was even older than his father Yun Qinghong, she should definitely be a middle-aged lady...

So with the description provided by Xiao Yun, he definitely would not be able to connect the Little Demon Empress to a little girl who did not look a day over fifteen!

And even though she was also dressed all in grey, it did not tell you anything, because it was far too normal for those who worshipped the Little Demon Empress to imitate her style of dressing... And even though she used the Golden Crow’s flames... all of the Illusory Demon Royal Family could also use the flames of the Golden Crow...

Right now, Yun Che was tangled into a complete mess... this scenario was simply too stimulating.

Before this, he was calmly thinking of how he and his father could solve the crisis that the Little Demon Empress would encounter during this grand ceremony, but now... the one who faced the greatest danger was actually himself!

Whether he could walk out of this place alive today was totally an unknown quantity right now.

He had actually seen the stately Little Demon Empress naked... this kind of charge perhaps could not be cleared even if he had his head chopped off ten thousands times. After all, this was the Little Demon Empress who had been officially wed to the Little Demon Emperor as it was witnessed by all; this was the ruler of the entire Illusory Demon Realm.

Yun Qinghong shot a glance at Yun Che. His face was filled with suspicion, but just as he was about to ask, the Little Demon Empress slowly rose from her throne.

“From the time this empress had succeeded her husband’s position, in the blink of an eye, it has already been one hundred years. In these hundred years, even though I have been unable to make any great contributions to our people, at the same time, I have also have not led our people into chaos and disaster. So it could be said that I have acquitted myself adequately in this task that my royal father and husband has entrusted to me.”

“The Hundred Year Reign Ceremony is normally an occasion of great celebration, but this time it is different. This empress has reigned for one hundred years, and it has been one hundred years since my royal father and husband have passed away. Even though one hundred years have passed, I have not yet been able to avenge my royal father, nor husband! Under this hatred and enmity, what is joy is there? What is worth celebrating?”

“Thus, during this grand ceremony, there will be no singing and dancing, no praise and acclamation, and no one will be allowed to present tribute. Today we will only speak of the events that have happened over my hundred year reign and of our plans for next hundred years.”

If one observed the features of the Little Demon Empress, one would discover that she was so beautiful, even the sun and the moon paled in comparison. But accompanying those beautiful features was a heavy oppressive aura which could overturn both heaven and earth... Even if she was a ruler, this kind of

oppressive aura was simply too heavy. It was so heavy that it was sufficient to cause a powerhouse of the profound world to have difficulty breathing when they faced her.

This kind of oppression, which was terrifying enough to cause one's heart to palpitate, was completely enough to cover up her breathtaking looks.

She stood in front of the throne, coldly surveying the one hundred thousand experts of the Illusory Demon Realm gathered here, and began to slowly speak. Every word that proceeded from her mouth was ear-splitting to the point where one might go deaf; each word contained the power to completely shake one's heart and soul. Every large force in the hall did not only have great strength, they also held key responsibilities within the Illusory Demon Realm, but every single one of them bent their heads and silently listened; no one dared to raise their head to look directly at her, and not a single disrespectful movement was made.

A girl who only looked like she was fifteen at most... and she was even recognized as the number one beauty in the Illusory Demon Realm... Yet she was the ruler of the billions of citizens within the Illusory Demon Realm!!

For the Yun Che who had 'seen' the Little Demon Empress for 'the first time', the impact it had on his spirit and eyes was undoubtedly extremely big.

The Little Demon Empress raised her right arm and her broad grey sleeve hung down to expose her snowy and tender palm, while also revealing a part of her white jade arm. The maid who was standing to her right slowly stepped forward, bending her head as she presented a small scarlet wine cup.

The Little Demon Empress slowly picked up the wine cup, and the audience hurriedly scrambled to pick up the wine cups that were prepared for them. Once they had done so, they held the wine cup in clasped hands and held them out towards the Little Demon Empress.

"Today's grand ceremony will begin with this cup of wine!" The Little Demon Empress raised her hand to the sky and she wore an expression of such majesty on her young and girlish face that no one could despise her.

"This cup, is to first salute our Illusory Demon Realm!"

"To secondly salute all the ancestors of the line of the Demon Emperor!"

"And to thirdly salute all of you who are gathered here today! All of you are the cornerstones, pillars and walls of my Illusory Demon Realm and for the past one hundred years, this empress has completely relied on your strength to assist me... This empress will make the first toast to show my respect!"

As the Little Demon Empress' voice fell, she had already raised her head high to drink the wine in her cup.

"Thank you, Little Demon Empress!"

All the people gathered were terrified without exception, and they hastily drank the wine in their cups in panic, not daring to leave even a single drop. There were some who were so excited that their hands began to shake, because in the Hundred Year Reign Ceremony, it has always been them who toasted the

Demon Emperor first. But this time, it was the Little Demon Empress who made the first toast, and this naturally filled them with extreme terror.

The Little Demon Empress set down her wine cup and surveyed the people once more. Those eyes which were already filled with a heavy aura of death suddenly released a bone-piercing coldness. She asked in a bland voice, "Who was it that planned today's seating arrangements?"

Everyone in the great hall immediately held their breaths; those who were not in the know looked at each other helplessly while the faces of those who dwelt in the Demon Imperial City suddenly changed... The seating arrangements of the Twelve Families had been constant for ten thousand years, and everyone did not doubt that the Little Demon Empress could tell the problem of this grand ceremony's seating arrangements with one glance. But no one had guessed that a mere second after she had toasted all the heroes and important ministers of the land, she would, in front of all who were present, suddenly inquire regarding this matter in the middle of this grand ceremony.

This turnaround was so quick that it left everyone helpless and at a loss.