

## Three-Time 471

Chapter 471: 471. Friend or Foe

The last day of February.

In the early morning, lightning flashed, and thunder roared as heavy rain poured down in the region near Xingluo Island. The island was shrouded in rain, and from a distance, it looked like a massive gap had opened in the sky with a waterfall gushing down.

Xie Jun had taken some people to patrol the coast, but the rain was so heavy that visibility was blurred. They could no longer see the situation on the sea. The small wooden houses built by the beach had been blown away, and after securing the boats at the dock amidst the storm, they couldn't seek shelter in the forest for fear of being struck by lightning. They had no choice but to return to the City Lord Mansion and ask Sheng Yue if they could disband and go back first.

Since Mo Yan left, Sheng Yue had moved into the forbidden area to live. When Xie Jun met him, he was folding paper airplanes.

After listening to Xie Jun's report, Sheng Yue casually said, "Call everyone back. We'll go out again when the storm stops."

"Yes, thank you, Young Master Sheng." Xie Jun left hurriedly and rushed back into the storm.

"Someone, come." Sheng Yue called, and soon an old man with white hair appeared before him. He listened to the command and quickly left.

The storm did not subside until night had fallen.

As Xie Jun took his people to check the situation on the beach once more, the sky had completely darkened. A light rain continued to fall, and when looking out at the sea, it was pitch-black; only the sound of rainfall and waves could be heard.

"Are we going to guard this place throughout the night with this damn weather?" one elder's grandson complained.

Though Xie Jun was the team leader, he didn't dare to interfere too much. He replied, "The rain should stop soon. Young Master Sheng said that the next few days are crucial, and enemies may invade. We cannot let our guard down."

"What enemies? Isn't the Island Master just visiting his granddaughter? What other enemies could there be?" someone couldn't help but ask.

Xie Jun shook his head, "I don't know. We shouldn't concern ourselves with such matters. It's best not to say much."

"I bet Feng Ming knows, but he's locked up in the dungeon. Has he died already?"

Xie Jun frowned, "Get back to work!" He divided the night watch into three teams, including himself, and assigned each team to their own areas. If anything abnormal occurred, they were to send out a signal immediately.

"What's the point of guarding this broken island? We can't even go out. Who would come and attack this place?" someone complained to Xie Jun, "I have never been outside in my entire life! How long are we supposed to live like this? Since the Island Master's granddaughter now has power, why not just follow her and enjoy a life of richness and honor!"

"Don't say any more! It's not our place to question the Master's decision! Be careful not to let Young Master Sheng hear you!"

"Damn that Sheng, he's been acting so smug lately. I regret not killing him as soon as he arrived on the island!"

"My dear sir, you may have a backer, but I fear losing my life. Please say less."

"Humph! I think the peaceful days on this island are numbered!"

Xie Jun held an umbrella in one hand and a lantern in the other as he walked to the place where he had secretly spoken with Feng Ming that night. He paused for a while. Xie Jun knew Feng Ming was still alive and why he was captured. He had even thought about trying to save Feng Ming and then escape together. But after weighing the pros and cons, Xie Jun decided it was too risky and gave up on the idea.

"Captain, are we continuing in this direction?" someone asked from behind him.

Xie Jun recovered his senses, glanced at the sea, then turned around and said, "Let's go."

Those who were on guard duty at the coast were either discontented or worried. Still, they dared not go back to sleep, so they had to walk round after round in the rainy night.

Unbeknownst to them, the enemies they were guarding against had already sneaked onto the island before their patrol resumed at dusk.

To avoid running into Mo Yan on the way, Qiao Cong, Old Mu, and Cheng Yun had taken a detour. They had initially planned to arrive by noon today, but they unexpectedly encountered the storm.

At that time, the sea was extremely rough, and their boat almost capsized several times. However, they could not afford to delay any longer, as the first day of the third month was the next day. Moreover, in the middle of the sea, the closest land they knew was the island where Qiao Cong had once lived. But even in a day's time, they could not make it there and it was even further from Xingluo Island, so there was no escaping the storm no matter where they went.

Thus, the three unanimously decided to brave the storm and keep moving forward. Fortunately, Qiao Cong had lived at sea for many years and experienced several storms. In the end, he managed to bring Elder Mu and Cheng Yun safely to Xingluo Island.

When they approached the shore, it happened to be right after the biggest wave of the storm had passed. The coast was unguarded, so they quickly went ashore and let the boat drift away with the

waves. This was to prevent the boat from being discovered. After all, when it was time to leave, they would probably have already stirred the snake's nest, so they could just seize a boat from the dock of Xingluo Island.

Elder Mu carried a large double-shoulder bag on his back, designed by Su Liang, with a waist strap for support and a waterproof layer inside. The explosives they brought with them were in this bag.

After landing, the three quickly hid in the dense forest. They knew there were landmines in the forest, so they followed Gu Ling's example when he infiltrated the island and walked on the trees instead of the ground.

The plan was to sneak in, with darkness providing the perfect cover.

The three of them spent about half an hour in the forest, also resting. During this time, they saw Xie Jun leading people through the forest toward the beach. Gu Ling had told them not to actively look for Feng Ming.

When the time was about right, Elder Mu, who had been to the island before, led the way, with the three of them keeping a distance and remaining vigilant as they secretly approached the center of Xingluo Island.

They had all seen the map of Xingluo Island that Gu Ling had brought to Jiaye City, complete with the detailed distribution of the buildings on the island drawn by Su Liang. It was not difficult to figure out where the forbidden area was.

Apart from the storm that had almost capsized their boat earlier, everything had gone smoothly so far. The three of them cautiously avoided any people and got closer to the forbidden area. After quietly observing the surroundings for a while, they silently infiltrated the forbidden area. It didn't take long for them to see that there was a light in Mo Yan's room, with someone moving inside.

Wouldn't it be Mo Yan still on the island... Just as this thought crossed the minds of the three, the door opened and a gray-robed old man came out of the room, holding something in his hand and heading deeper into the forbidden area.

According to the portraits Gu Ling had shown them, the man's height and appearance did not match Mo Yan's.

And the three of them were targeting the cave deep in the forbidden area, not Mo Yan's room.

No matter whether Mo Yan was still on the island or not, they had already arrived and would still follow the original plan.

Elder Mu made a gesture, and the three continued deeper into the forbidden area.

A faint light emanated from the cave, and Elder Mu coldly watched as the old man, who had come out of Mo Yan's room earlier, entered the cave and quickly left.

As expected, there was someone inside the cave.

Elder Mu guessed that this important place would be guarded by either Mo Yan, who might have never left the island, or Sheng Yue, who Gu Ling thought might have been left behind to guard the forbidden area. Whoever it was, they could directly bomb them.

However, according to Ying Ying, who had been inside the cave before, the entrance was almost a hundred meters away from the pool that Mo Yan cared most about. If they put the explosives outside the cave, it would be difficult to destroy the pool.

Therefore, they had to go in, and the closer the explosives were to the pool, the better.

This was also arranged. Elder Mu would go. Originally, Cheng Yun said that he would go inside, reasoning that as Gu Ling's substitute, he would have the chance to talk whether he encountered Mo Yan or Sheng Yue. But Elder Mu rejected this idea. The reason was simple: the person going in must be able to kill without hesitation, but for Cheng Yun, that was a bit difficult. He had returned to secular life and started eating meat again, but he hadn't broken his vow to never kill. It might happen soon, but they couldn't let him take a chance on it. He himself didn't have confidence in this, and under such circumstances, even a second's hesitation could lead to being killed by the enemy.

As such, among the three of them, the most calm and the best with guns was Elder Mu, making him the best choice.

There was no sound coming from the cave. After signaling to Qiao Cong and Cheng Yun, Elder Mu carefully approached the entrance of the cave. On his face, he wore a Ghost Mask, on his back, he carried a bag of explosives. He had a gun tucked away in his sleeve, and on his body were three types of hidden weapons and five types of poison.

Hold his breath and concentrating his mind, he walked close to the wall, making sure to avoid casting a shadow on the floor that might alert those inside. Before entering, he had already prepared himself mentally: if he encountered Mo Yan, he should not hesitate and shoot him immediately. Waiting one second longer might result in being captured by Mo Yan's magic treasure. If he encountered Sheng Yue, he should also kill him immediately; he was not one of their own. After killing the person guarding the forbidden area, he would quickly place the explosives and fuses, then leave and ignite them...

With each careful step, Elder Mu ventured deeper into the cave, and the light inside grew brighter.

As he was about to round the corner, Elder Mu held his breath and stopped, listening intently. Inside, it was still very quiet, with no sounds at all.

Elder Mu tightened his grip on the gun in his hand. According to the map drawn by Gu Ling, he would soon be able to see the pool at the deepest part of the cave. Whoever appeared in his line of sight, he would kill them immediately!

However, in the next moment, when Elder Mu's shadow appeared under the bright light, he raised his gun with a startled expression, immediately let go, and retreated back into the shadows.

But in that instant, Elder Mu had already been discovered.

"It's Elder Mu, right?" Sheng Yue's voice came from not far away.

Elder Mu's eyes were cold, gritting his teeth and trying to calm himself down. The reason he didn't take action when he saw the people by the water was that he didn't see Mo Yan or Sheng Yue, but a group of children!

Those kids, about seven or eight of them, lay quietly by the water, ages ranging from two to three to around seven or eight years old. They seemed to be either sedated or asleep.

Not to mention Elder Mu didn't expect this, even Gu Ling hadn't anticipated encountering such a situation!

"Elder Mu, there's no one else here. You can come out and talk. I won't do anything to you." Sheng Yue's voice came from behind a stone screen by the water.

Elder Mu took a deep breath without showing himself, still hiding but he spoke, "Young Master Sheng, what are you doing?"

Sheng Yue's voice was calm, "Elder Mu has already seen it, so there's no need for me to say much. Mo Yan asked me to stay behind and guard the forbidden area since I had anticipated that you would be arriving soon."

"Haven't you forgotten that you agreed to cooperate with my apprentice?" Elder Mu said coldly.

Sheng Yue replied, "I haven't, but our agreed cooperation doesn't include the destruction of the forbidden area. I'm not sure how much Elder Mu knows about the secrets of Gu Ling and Su Liang, but I clearly told them what I wanted. If they remembered our cooperation, they wouldn't have chosen to destroy this place since it's important to me too."

Elder Mu now knew everything and understood what Sheng Yue was talking about. The so-called cooperation is mutual exploitation. At that time, Su Liang and Gu Ling needed Sheng Yue to help convey information to Mo Yan and then return to the island to eliminate the He Family. Because Sheng Yue was not wholehearted with Mo Yan, Su Liang and Gu Ling chose to keep him.

What Sheng Yue said now wasn't wrong either. He told Su Liang and Gu Ling that he wanted to go to the world where his mother's previous life was.

However, at this moment, what was said didn't matter. Just like Elder Mu had planned to kill Sheng Yue when he saw him, Sheng Yue was also clear that Su Liang and Gu Ling would definitely choose to destroy the forbidden area, but this didn't make him waver in his plan. Even before tonight, Sheng Yue had the chance to genuinely stand with Su Liang and Gu Ling, but as he said to Feng Ming, he had no friends, no enemies, only what he wanted to do.

These children were all born on the island. Perhaps they wouldn't be good people when they grew up, but now they were just innocent children who hadn't done anything evil. They shouldn't have to accompany Sheng Yue to his grave just because they were born on Xingluo Island.

Elder Mu couldn't bring himself to take action, and even if Gu Ling came personally, she wouldn't be able to do such a thing.

In this round, Sheng Yue had already won.

Elder Mu didn't put down the gun in his hand, and while sticking to the stone wall of the cave, he asked, "Where's Mo Yan?"

"Why don't you ask where Feng Ming is?" Sheng Yue countered.

At this point, it was a direct indication that Feng Ming had been exposed.

Elder Mu frowned, "Just say what you want to say!"

Sheng Yue really said it, "Feng Ming is in the dungeon. Elder Mu should know very well where the dungeon is."

"What do you mean?" Elder Mu asked coldly, "Do you want me to save Feng Ming? What's your purpose?"

"Purpose? I'm friends with Su Liang and Gu Ling," Sheng Yue said.

Elder Mu snorted coldly, "Spare me the nonsense."

"Hehe, I have no ulterior motive, I just think Feng Ming is a talent, and it would be a pity if he died. Since you've all come, why not take him with you?" Sheng Yue said, "Consider it a gift for Gu Ling and Su Liang. I hope that when we meet again, they can show me some mercy."

"You know very well what you've done." Elder Mu said coldly.

"Is Elder Mu talking about these kids? Don't worry, they'll be fine, they're just sleeping. But if you don't leave, they can only continue to sleep in the cave, and if they catch a cold, it won't be good. I'm sure Elder Mu wouldn't want to see innocent children getting sick," Sheng Yue said, "As for using these children to guard the forbidden area, that wasn't my idea, it was Mo Yan's. If Gu Ling and Su Liang had killed me back then, you wouldn't be able to leave today, and these children would truly be harmed."

"Why didn't you catch us?" Old Mu frowned and asked.

"I've already said, I'm friends with Su Liang and Gu Ling, and I don't want to embarrass you. As for how to explain it to Mo Yan later, that's my business." Sheng Yue said, "Please leave as soon as possible, Old Mu and your friends outside. You can save Feng Ming, but don't upset anyone else, otherwise, I won't be able to help you."

Old Mu raised his gun once more and appeared, looking at the sleeping children beside the pool and the stone screen blocking Sheng Yue. Gritting his teeth, he said, "You'd better take care of yourself!" and swiftly ran out.

When Qiao Cong and Cheng Yun saw Old Mu coming out, they thought he had succeeded.

Qiao Cong brightened his torch, ready to leave, but when Old Mu reached him, he pressed down on his hand, "No luck, let's go!"

Qiao Cong didn't understand, but they had agreed to listen to Old Mu this time. He knew Old Mu's character and that he had spent a lot more time in there than expected. Something must have happened beyond their anticipation. The three quickly left the forbidden area.

Rescuing someone from the dungeon was much simpler.

It was late at night, and they could use poison without anyone noticing.

Feng Ming was asleep when he suddenly saw people coming to rescue him, he was surprised.

Without causing any disturbance, the three took Feng Ming out of the dungeon and quickly left the City Lord Mansion.

When they learned they needed a boat, Feng Ming led the way. He knew of a hidden dock because there were fewer patrols on the south shore.

After that, everything went smoothly. Feng Ming led them to successfully avoid the guards on the coast and found a suitable boat, leaving Xingluo Island.

After sailing a few hundred meters out to sea, Qiao Cong finally asked Old Mu, "What exactly happened? Why did it not work out? Did that old bastard Mo Yan catch and let you go? That's impossible!"

Old Mu shook his head, sighing deeply, staring at Xingluo Island growing farther away in his line of sight, "Mo Yan wasn't there, it was Sheng Yue. He captured a group of children and guarded the pool in the cave. What else could we do?" Now they couldn't use the explosives. If they alerted people on the island, they would definitely be surrounded and unable to escape.

Qiao Cong cursed, "That bastard! Su Liang and Gu Ling should have killed him back then!"

Old Mu shook his head, "Don't forget that he took the initiative to show up. He knew that Su Liang and Gu Ling wouldn't kill him at that time because Mo Yan was the biggest threat. And he's right, we couldn't have resolved what happened in the cave tonight if it wasn't for him."

Cheng Yun sighed, "What does he want in the end?"

Seeing the three people silent, Feng Ming hurriedly spoke up, "There's something! I met Sheng... Sheng Yue during the day!"

Old Mu frowned, "What happened?"

Feng Ming said solemnly, "Now it seems that Sheng Yue anticipates you will come and plans to save me. He told me something. At that time, I was a little confused, but now I understand that he deliberately told me to pass it on to you!"

"What is it?" Cheng Yun asked.

"Sheng Yue said that the Mo Yan who went to the appointment on the first day of March is a fake!" Feng Ming frowned, "The real Mo Yan has already left the island, and probably went to the capital city!"

Upon hearing this, the three became alarmed.

Old Mu quickly calmed down, "Why would Sheng Yue tell you these things? Why didn't he directly say it when I met him earlier?"

Feng Ming pondered, "In my opinion, he wanted to show us that he has everything under control and that our Master shouldn't underestimate him."

Cheng Yun's expression was puzzled, "Is Sheng Yue a friend or an enemy?"

"He's not on our side, but he's not with Mo Yan either. Otherwise, he wouldn't have let us go and reveal important information to us." Old Mu stared, "Anyway, he's not a

madman who likes to kill, which can be considered a good thing. We should hurry back. Mo Yan is fake, so nothing will happen to Gu Ling, but our home is not safe!"

Chapter 472: 472. Mo Yan kidnapped her

The rain stopped completely in the middle of the night.

At the break of dawn, Old Mu's group had already left Xingluo Island far behind, and was on their way back to Jiaye City.

Feng Ming had slept a lot while he was locked in the dungeon, so he didn't feel sleepy at night. He volunteered to help steer the boat and stayed awake all night.

When Old Mu woke up, he wanted to switch places with Feng Ming to let him rest, but Feng Ming insisted that he wasn't tired. He looked somewhat ashamed and said, "My master sent me back to Xingluo Island, but not only did I fail to accomplish anything, I also caused trouble for all of you."

Old Mu stood up and looked towards the direction of Xingluo Island. As far as he could see, the seas were vast, and there were no islands or land within sight.

"Don't say that," Old Mu turned his head and sighed, "At least your actions have let us know Sheng Yue's attitude. Maybe it seems like you returned empty-handed this time, but who knows about the future? Don't think too much about it."

Feng Ming nodded, "Thank you for consoling me, senior."

Cheng Yun was sitting cross-legged on the boat, pretending to take a nap. At this moment, he opened his eyes and looked towards the fishbelly-white glow appearing in the east where the sky met the sea. "Amitabha, I hope everything is well at home."

On the other side, Gu Ling and Qiao Jing had no idea about Old Mu's group's encounter. They had set off yesterday afternoon and were on their way to the designated meeting place, which they would reach before the sun rose.

Gu Ling and Qiao Jing were still on the same boat. Qiao Jing had disguised himself as Gu Ling, and Gu Ling had disguised himself as Qiao Jing. Their clothes were also switched, so when they stood together, there were no flaws in their appearances.

For this trip, they had a total of ten boats and a thousand soldiers, most of whom were archers from the army.

The sea breeze was crisp in the early morning, and Qiao Jing stood at the bow of the boat, looking eastwards. "If we can kill Mo Yan today, we can all go home. I am getting married to Min Rou this year. What gift will you give us?"

"What's the meaning of asking for a gift?" Gu Ling asked back.

Qiao Jing snorted, "If I don't ask, will you take the initiative to give one?"

"Is it that important for me to give or not give?" Gu Ling asked back again.



Qiao Jing's lips curved slightly, "It's important. You've said it yourself that your luck is good. Share some of your good luck with me."

"Wait and see," Gu Ling said indifferently.

The morning glow had reddened half of the sky, and the sun was about to rise. They had arrived at the agreed-upon location.

Qiao Jing ordered all the boats to stop moving forward and rest.

"What if Mo Yan doesn't come today?" Qiao Jing asked.

Gu Ling, of course, had considered this possibility. "Then we'll just go back."

"I still hope he comes. Let's settle this matter once and for all today." Now that Qiao Jing had someone on his mind, he couldn't wait to grow wings and fly back to the capital city.

When the sun came up, Gu Ling and Qiao Jing had already eaten a simple breakfast, and the small boats sent out to scout had not returned yet.

Qiao Jing asked Gu Ling if he wanted to go to another boat, but Gu Ling shook his head and said it was not necessary yet.

"My grandfather and the others should be almost at Xingluo Island. I wonder how things are on their end." Qiao Jing was worried about Old Mu and the others' mission.

Gu Ling shook his head, "If Sheng Yue is on the island, they probably won't be able to blow up the forbidden area."

Qiao Jing frowned, "Do you think so highly of Sheng Yue? If that's the case, why did you let my grandfather and the others risk going to Xingluo Island?"

Gu Ling's expression remained calm, "Whether Mo Yan comes today, and whether Sheng Yue is on the island or not, are all just guesses. They're possible, but not certain. It's worth a try. Even if Sheng Yue is there and they can't succeed, they won't be in mortal danger, and we can at least see Sheng Yue's attitude."

After hearing Gu Ling's words, Qiao Jing felt that the possibility of Qiao Cong and the others failing was quite high. However, as they said from the beginning, as long as the people were safe, they could find a solution to the other problems later.

Gu Ling went back to the cabin to rest and told the others to call him if there was any news.

By the time the scouts came back, it was already approaching noon.

During this time, Gu Ling had taken a nap and woke up to hear Qiao Jing saying that a scout had discovered the ship from Xingluo Island. There was only one ship, and they had not greeted them. They saw it from a distance and turned back, unsure if Mo Yan was on board.

"The ship has the flag of Xingluo Island." Qiao Jing said. Xingluo Island had a totem designed by Mo Yan, with a red background and a black six-pointed star pattern. Min

Rou and Sheng Yue had mentioned this, and the scout saw a large flag flying on the ship with this pattern.

Those without a flag might not necessarily be from Xingluo Island, but those who come openly displaying it must be from the island.

Qiao Jing asked Gu Ling again, seeing that he still had no intention of keeping his distance from him, and ordered the ten ships to line up in a fan-shaped formation on the sea. When Xingluo Island's ship approached, it would be easy to form an encirclement.

After waiting for about fifteen minutes, a black spot appeared in the field of vision, then slowly enlarged. Gu Ling saw the flag of Xingluo Island flying high on the ship.

"I think Mo Yan has come. Otherwise, he wouldn't have sent a small time underling to invite you to Xingluo Island, which he knows is impossible." Qiao Jing said to Gu Ling.

Gu Ling shook his head slightly and did not speak.

Soon, the ship from Xingluo Island approached. Gu Ling still did not hide on another ship but stood beside Qiao Jing, watching the approaching ship with cold eyes.

When there were about fifty meters left, the ship from Xingluo Island stopped. An old man in white clothes appeared on the bow of the ship, accompanied by a group of people. The figure and appearance of the man matched the description of Mo Yan given by Min Rou and Sheng Yue.

At this moment, Qiao Jing, who was pretending to be Gu Ling, didn't ask for Gu Ling's opinion and directly ordered, "Fire the arrows!"

The next moment, a piece of oilcloth on the ship was lifted, revealing the cannon designed by Lao Mu underneath, pointed at the bow of the ship from Xingluo Island.

Meanwhile, the other nine ships had already surrounded the ship from Xingluo Island from a distance, with archers on standby. They began indiscriminate attacks on the ship.

"Gu Ling!" Mo Yan, who was in the middle of the boat, was protected by people shielding him from arrows coming from all directions. The cannon fired at the ship, but the explosives were shot down into the sea midway.

Qiao Jing snorted coldly, "State your name!"

"I came here today to negotiate at the request of my granddaughter! What are you doing? Where is Su Liang?" Mo Yan shouted loudly.

Qiao Jing glanced at Gu Ling and saw that his face was expressionless. "Continue, fire attack."

Qiao Jing felt that something was not quite right, but he had no time to think about it at the moment. At his command, the catapults on each ship began to launch explosives at the ship from Xingluo Island, while arrows ignited with fire were also shot towards the ship.

This was a one-sided attack, as the ship from Xingluo Island had no means of retaliating.

Soon, the first explosion occurred on the ship, and it quickly caught fire. People who had already left the bow of the ship began to jump into the water.

Qiao Jing's expression became serious, and he couldn't see where Mo Yan was. "Could it be that he pretends to be weak until he gets underwater, swims to our ship, and then..." touches this ship, and collects it?

Gu Ling nodded, "It's possible." As he spoke, he raised his bow and arrow. With narrowed eyes, he aimed at one of the people jumping from the ship into the sea and shot him through the heart.

It was not clear how many people were on the ship from Xingluo Island, but even if they jumped into the sea, they had no way out. As soon as they surfaced, they were immediately attacked by dense arrows.

The battle ended quickly. The sea was left with only a burning wreckage of the ship, and more than a dozen floating corpses. Even the flag of Xingluo Island had been reduced to ashes in the fire.

Qiao Jing still didn't dare to take any risks, feeling that Mo Yan couldn't have died so easily. He was just about to persuade Gu Ling to go to another ship, just in case, when he suddenly saw a corpse drifting towards their ship. It turned out to be Mo Yan, who had been surrounded by people on the opposite bow just a short time ago!

"Is he really dead? Or is he just pretending? Hurry up and shoot a few more arrows!" Qiao Jing urged Gu Ling.

Gu Ling shook his head, "There's no need to waste arrows." He had killed Mo Yan with an arrow through the heart – he could not be alive. The arrow was still in his body, floating on the surface of the sea like a long spear.

Qiao Jing ordered the body to be salvaged.

Soon, the number of people was confirmed. There were thirteen, all middle-aged or older, with half of them being elderly. There were no young people.

Mo Yan's body was salvaged onto the ship where Qiao Jing and Gu Ling were, and it was confirmed that he was dead.

Qiao Jing bent down to examine the body, surprised to exclaim, "The face is real! It's not a disguise!" He had thought that the Mo Yan who came today might be a fake, which was why the situation had turned out this way, and Gu Ling had guessed it earlier.

"A real face does not mean the person is real." Gu Ling's expression was calm.

Qiao Jing lifted Mo Yan's right hand, on which was a ruby ring, "Is this the item?"

Gu Ling shook her head, "Fake."

Qiao Jing still took off the ring, looked it over carefully, and didn't find anything special. He handed it to Gu Ling, "What if this is Mo Yan? He really came to talk peace with you, but he didn't expect you to be so cruel."

Gu Ling looked at the ruby ring in her hand, her expression indifferent, "If Mo Yan is so careless, he would have been dead long ago and wouldn't have lived until now."

"Did you expect that the real Mo Yan would not show up today?" Qiao Jing frowned.

Gu Ling shook her head, "There's a possibility, but not necessarily. Let's go back."

Qiao Jing ordered to return. After a while, he looked back at the ship that had been burned to almost nothing, and couldn't help feeling frustrated, "If I had known this, I wouldn't have gone to all the trouble to come here. Do you think Mo Yan is still on the island?"

Gu Ling shook her head, "I can't predict the future, but Mo Yan is likely to have gone to the capital city."

Qiao Jing's face changed, "There's danger at home! Let's hurry back!"

As Gu Ling said, he was not sure whether Sheng Yue would be guarding the forbidden area on Xingluo Island or not; there was only a possibility. Likewise, he didn't know whether Mo Yan would come today or not, so there was only a possibility that he wouldn't. They made arrangements, but the enemy would not act entirely according to their plans, which was foreseeable, but how the enemy would act was unknowable.

Exactly because he guessed that Mo Yan's magic treasure might be able to capture living people, Gu Ling decided to come to the appointment today, because Mo Yan might appear.

But the fact proved that Mo Yan was really cautious in order to survive until now. In other words, he was afraid of dying; otherwise, he wouldn't have waited so long not daring to walk the road he once walked. Going back in time was his ultimate wish, but being alive was more important.

"If that person was Mo Yan's substitute, why should he bother? If he simply didn't send anyone today, wouldn't it be more convenient?" Qiao Jing puzzled.

"In case I was as naive as you and really thought he was dead, his purpose of arranging a substitute would have been achieved," Gu Ling's expression was indifferent, "Moreover, the people who came today, apart from his substitute, should also be those disloyal people he has long wanted to eliminate."

"Could it be..." Qiao Jing lowered his voice, "Mo Yan knew early on that you weren't the transmigrator, but Su Liang was?"

Gu Ling shook her head, "Not necessarily, but if he guessed it, it would be normal." Sheng Yue could guess it, it would be normal for Mo Yan as the transmigrator to discover that Su Liang should be the transmigrator. Not discovering would be his mistake. Mistakes are good for Gu Ling and Su Liang, but they can't rely on them.

"Then what's next? Would it be that when you return to the capital city, Su Liang has already fallen into Mo Yan's hands? In that case, he can control Su Liang, and we can't save him; wouldn't he be able to do whatever he wants?" Qiao Jing felt the situation was bad.

"Go back, get ready, and take over Xingluo Island," Gu Ling said.

"But you said that if Sheng Yue's on top of it..." Qiao Jing sighed, "My grandfather and the others can't deal with Sheng Yue. If you go personally, it would be different. If Mo Yan really went to the capital city to catch Su Liang, it's probably too late for you to rush back now."

Capital City.

In the blink of an eye, it was the first day of March. Su Liang wrote “meeting at sea” on the calendar, but was also very doubtful whether Mo Yan would really go.

The weather was good today, Min Rou and Weng Ran had arranged to go boating on the lake with Nangong Qian. Min Rou came early to the Su Mansion, and when she saw Weng Ran, Yan Shiba was also there. She had been impersonating Su Liang for most of the past month, everyone in the mansion knew this, but Min Rou was not aware of it and did not recognize her, she laughed and asked Yan Shiba, “The weather is so nice, let’s all go boating on the lake together with Nuannuan.”

Yan Shiba’s imitation of Su Liang’s smile had become indistinguishable from the real one. He shook his head at the question, “I really want to go out for a stroll, but I’ll leave Gu Xiaonuan at home, she is troublesome.”

Weng Ran tried to hold back her laughter, and Nangong Qian was covering her mouth and smiling too.

Min Rou was puzzled, “What are you laughing at?”

Weng Ran and Nangong Qian looked at each other, shook their heads and said, “Nothing, let’s go.” They were planning to see when Min Rou would find out Yan Shiba’s loophole.

The four young ladies left Su Mansion together, riding horses towards Jingyue Lake. Passing by the capital city’s main street, they became a beautiful scene, attracting the attention of many people.

At this time, the door of Su Mansion was tightly closed, Su Liang was teaching two young disciples how to make medicine in Yuanming Pavilion, while Cen Man walked along the lake with Gu Xiaonuan in her arms.

“Master’s wife, today is the day master and the big villain meet, right?” Ji Xiaoshu asked Su Liang.

Su Liang nodded, “Yes.”

“I hope Master is successful in killing that villain.” Zhengzheng’s young face looked serious.

Su Liang smiled, “That would be best.”

“When Master comes back, let’s go to the north together! Didn’t Master’s wife say she would take us to her hometown?” Ji Xiaoshu excitedly proposed.

Su Liang nodded slightly, “Alright, I’ll take you all.” Recently, she had received another letter from Su Family Village. Bai Xiaohu and Zhuzi, the two brothers, were now studying well and their letters were becoming more eloquent.

Yan Shiba and Min Rou, along with their group of four, played on a boat at Jingyue Lake for half a day. Approaching noon, they went ashore and headed to the Wan Family Restaurant for lunch.

Min Rou had never realized that the “Su Liang” beside her was actually Yan Shiba in disguise, because Yan Shiba was earnest about this matter and had overcome the small flaws that had

appeared before with the help of reminders from the people around her. Especially Zhengzheng and Ji Xiaoshu, who had given Yan Shiba a lot of “guidance” on this matter.

However, Yan Shiba had yet to succeed in deceiving Gu Xiaonuan every day, trying to get her to call out for her mother, and she still hadn’t succeeded once.

Yesterday, Ji Xiaoshu bluntly pointed out why it couldn’t succeed: Gu Xiaonuan was clever, and she knew that her mother wouldn’t force her to call her mommy. Yan Shiba could only say, “Nuannuan is too smart, but I won’t give up!”

After having lunch at the restaurant, Yan Shiba followed Su Liang’s habit and packed some dishes that the children liked. When it was time to leave, they were ready to take them home.

The four of them rode on their horses, with Yan Shiba and Min Rou in the front, and Nangong Qian and Weng Ran in the back. Since Yan Shiba was present, Cen Man didn’t specifically come out to protect Nangong Qian. Today was a girls’ gathering.

Weng Ran and Nangong Qian stealthily made a bet. Weng Ran thought Min Rou would recognize Yan Shiba before they got home, but Nangong Qian thought otherwise. So the two of them were observing Min Rou and Yan Shiba in secret, which was rather interesting.

As they were walking, someone suddenly shouted not far ahead, “My child! My child has been kidnapped!”

Yan Shiba’s eyes slightly narrowed and saw a black shadow darting into an alley.

Min Rou rode her horse over without hesitation. Yan Shiba leaped into the air and moved even faster, overtaking Min Rou in the blink of an eye and entering the alley first. Before entering, she didn’t look back but made a stopping gesture to Weng Ran and Nangong Qian.

Nangong Qian frowned, “Sister Yan’s martial arts are very high, she shouldn’t be in any trouble, right?”

However, Weng Ran understood the meaning of Yan Shiba’s gesture and sighed, “She should… be in trouble.”

When Min Rou arrived at the alley, she saw a masked man in black throwing away the kidnapped child and clashing with Yan Shiba!

Just as Min Rou was about to dismount and help, she saw a shocking scene: Yan Shiba, who had just drawn her sword, disappeared in front of her!

“Su Liang!” Min Rou cried out in shock and looked into a pair of unfamiliar yet familiar old eyes. She widened her eyes and said, “Mo…”

The masked man in black looked deeply at Min Rou and then soared into the air, disappearing from her sight after a few leaps.

When Min Rou rushed into the alley, all that was left was her and the frightened, shivering child.

As Min Rou, pale-faced, carried the child out and handed it to the panicked woman, Weng Ran dismounted and supported her.

“Su Liang... Su Liang was captured by Mo... Mo Yan! It must be Mo Yan! I recognize him!” Min Rou suddenly grabbed Weng Ran’s arm. “He actually... that thing can actually take people away...” She didn’t know how to describe it.

But Weng Ran knew what was going on. Because Su Liang was so busy, the person Yan Shiba was closest to in Su Mansion was actually Weng Ran. She had told Weng Ran long ago why she wanted to impersonate Su Liang and what she might encounter.

Therefore, when she heard today that a child had been kidnapped in broad daylight, Yan Shiba knew that it was very likely Mo Yan had come, and she wouldn’t hide from it. Because when Gu Ling went to Jiaye City to confess her secret to Old Mu and the others, Su Liang had also told some people in her family that she was a Transmigrator and that Mo Yan had a portable space.

Yan Shiba knew that if Mo Yan really came, with his powerful magic treasure hidden in the dark, no one could stop him from capturing people, and what he would definitely capture was Su Liang. If he broke into Su Mansion, the consequences would be disastrous, and the children might be captured as well.

So, as long as she could deceive Mo Yan and let him take a fake Su Liang away, it would be like guarding their home in the capital city.

To achieve this, Yan Shiba was extremely serious, very dedicated, with the sole purpose of deceiving Mo Yan. She wanted to be the perfect Su Liang substitute, and she had to be captured to be safe. Because at present, they had no good way to defeat Mo Yan, they could only avoid becoming too passive. She made it. The gesture she gave Weng Ran meant that she wasn’t nervous at the time, meaning “not to worry, don’t care about her.”

Last night, Yan Shiba went to sleep with Weng Ran and said before going to bed that she owed Su Liang a lot. Although she was determined to be a good person, her life now was peaceful, but to be honest, it lacked excitement for her; she was born restless. From the day Yan Shiba started impersonating Su Liang, she had told Weng Ran more than once that she was looking forward to Mo Yan, the old bastard, coming to capture Su Liang and taking her away; it would be so exciting. She would wait for Su Liang to save her again.

Fortunately, today Min Rou didn’t discover Yan Shiba’s impersonation, and she was someone Mo Yan knew and was familiar with. Her performance at the critical moment made Yan Shiba’s substitution plan even more successful.

“Let’s go home first and talk about it.” Weng Ran looked at the empty alley and patted Min Rou’s shoulder.

Chapter 473: 473. A Kind of Yearning

Min Rou arrived at the entrance of Su Mansion on horseback, with teary eyes as she dismounted. She had imagined the scene of seeing Mo Yan again, but she never expected to witness “Su Liang” being captured by Mo Yan, while being completely powerless to stop it.

Although Min Rou knew that Su Liang was Mo Yan’s granddaughter, she still couldn’t help tightening her heart, worried that Mo Yan would resort to unscrupulous means to harm Su Liang or

force her to do something, or even threaten Gu Ling with Su Liang. Thinking of this, Min Rou felt both worried and distressed, blaming herself for her incapability.

“Let’s go.” Weng Ran held Min Rou’s wrist and entered Su Mansion together.

Qi Yan came to lead the horses. Seeing that four horses had gone out, but only three people had returned, he guessed that something had happened. He looked around cautiously, led the horses in, and then immediately closed the gate.

As for those who saw “Su Liang” save the kidnapped children in the street, some people noticed that the children were safe and sound when they came out of the alley later, but Su Liang did not appear. However, they didn’t think much of it. They knew Su Liang’s Martial Arts skills were strong, and they believed she must have gone to catch the trafficker. Helping others in need was a common thing for the couple of Su Liang and Gu Ling in the capital city.

After tying the horses in the stable, Qi Yan saw Nangong Qian still standing there in a daze, so he took her hand and walked out, asking softly, “What happened?”

Nangong Qian and Yan Shiba, although they saw each other every day, didn’t interact much due to their different personalities. The first time these two had an intersection was in the former Yin Country when Nangong Qian took a fancy to Gu Ling, Qiao Cong and Nangong Lin kidnapped Gu Ling for her, and Yan Shiba helped Su Liang rescue him. Yan Shiba wasn’t a fan of Nangong Qian because of that experience, which left a deep impression on him.

“Shiba... she was captured.” Nangong Qian said softly.

Qi Yan had also guessed, even guessing that Mo Yan had come to the capital city. Few people would be able to easily take Yan Shiba, who was skilled in Martial Arts and experienced in battles. And Qi Yan was well aware of the purpose of Yan Shiba’s recent interest in disguising as Su Liang.

Qi Yan squeezed Nangong Qian’s hand, “Let’s go back first.” What to do next would depend on Su Liang’s decision.

On the way to Yuanming Pavilion, Qi Yan looked left and right. When they arrived at the entrance, he didn’t go in, letting Nangong Qian enter by herself. Then Qi Yan found Zhu Zan, and the two of them meticulously searched every corner of the garden and forest in the mansion, confirming that there were no suspicious people or footprints. This was to prevent Mo Yan from sneaking in without their knowledge.

At this time, the worried Min Rou, who really thought Su Liang had been captured, and Weng Ran, who hadn’t told Min Rou the truth outside for fear of being overheard, had already arrived on the second floor of the Yuanming Pavilion and saw Su Liang.

It was after noon, Zhengzheng, Ji Xiaoshu, and Gu Xiaonuan were all napping, while Su Liang sat alone in the small hall on the second floor reading a book, which could be seen by turning the corner of the staircase.

Min Rou was shocked, “Su... Su Liang?”

Su Liang closed her book upon hearing the sound, and seeing Min Rou’s astonished expression and reddened eyes, she felt a sudden pang in her heart. Noticing that they had gone out together but Yan Shiba hadn’t returned, she guessed something had happened.



“Mo Yan came?” Su Liang put down the book and stood up.

“Yes...it must be him, I saw it!” Min Rou was a bit flustered, “How come...I clearly saw you being...”

“The one who went out with us today was not Su Liang, but Yan Shiba.” Weng Ran sighed.

Min Rou suddenly realized, “No wonder you were laughing at the time... Why did she pretend to be Su Liang? Did you foresee that Mo Yan would come?”

Su Liang nodded, “We did consider that possibility. Yan Shiba disguised as me to protect me; her goal was to be captured by Mo Yan in my place.”

While speaking, Su Liang returned to her room. The children were all sleeping next door, and on the table was a calendar made by Gu Ling, on which the latest date had four words written: “Meeting at sea,” followed by a question mark, since she didn’t know if Mo Yan would really go or not.

Now, the fact had shown that Mo Yan had not gone to meet Gu Ling, but had secretly entered the capital city to capture Su Liang instead.

As for this, it is because Mo Yan guessed or Sheng Yue informed him that Su Liang is the Transmigrator and Gu Ling is not, or Mo Yan doesn’t know that Su Liang is the Transmigrator, but he wants to catch Su Liang to control Gu Ling. It’s unclear, and either possibility exists.

Regardless, Yan Shiba has been waiting for many days, and the goal has been achieved. Even though Yan Shiba didn’t tell Su Liang so much, Su Liang knew what she was thinking and what she was doing.

Su Liang didn’t stop her. Firstly, she couldn’t stop what Yan Shiba wanted to do; secondly, from a rational perspective, what Yan Shiba did was an essential step to prevent their whole family from falling into passivity. It’s not about who is more important between Su Liang and Yan Shiba, but because Mo Yan wants to capture Su Liang, he must not be allowed to succeed, and his goal must be thwarted. It is possible that he already knows Su Liang is the Transmigrator. Thus, by capturing a fake Transmigrator and bringing them back, Su Liang and Gu Ling would have more time to deal with him.

Su Liang picked up the pen and wrote the two characters “Mo Yan” on the calendar.

Upon learning that it was Yan Shiba who was captured, Min Rou breathed a sigh of relief, “As long as you’re not the one captured, that’s good. I believe you can rescue Miss Yan, but if you were the one taken, our family would lose its backbone.”

Weng Ran sighed, “Yeah. Although Gu Ling is our strongest, precisely because of that, Su Liang can’t have an accident; otherwise, he might lose his sanity.”

“The most important thing is to gain more time to deal with Mo Yan.” Su Liang didn’t panic, as what had happened today was somewhat expected.

“Mo Yan is not on Xingluo Island, and he has not gone to the appointment. Gu Ling should be back soon, right?” Weng Ran asked.

But Su Liang shook his head, “Gu Ling went south to kill Mo Yan. If Mo Yan didn’t show up, he would know that Mo Yan had come to catch me. He won’t return directly; he must take the opportunity to seize control of Xingluo Island.” They wanted to destroy Xingluo Island, but since they were uncertain whether or not Mo Yan had captured Su Liang, Gu Ling would probably keep the forbidden area as a bargaining chip even if he had control. Moreover, there was also the key figure Sheng Yue, who was likely guarding the island, making it not so easy to steal Xingluo Island away.

“What should we do then? Do we just wait at home?” Min Rou asked. She thought of her fiancé Qiao Jing, who must be with Gu Ling at this time.

“You guys don’t have to worry; just do what needs to be done. As long as Mo Yan can’t discover that Yan Shiba is fake and takes her straight back to Xingluo Island, the capital city will be safe.” Su Liang pushed open the window and looked out, “As for me, I still need to think.”

Weng Ran sensed Su Liang might want to find Gu Ling and wanted to persuade him, but ultimately held his tongue. If Su Liang really wanted to go, it must be after careful consideration.

Weng Ran and Min Rou went downstairs to see Nangong Qian sitting alone, and didn’t approach her.

“It’s alright.” Weng Ran shook his head at Nangong Qian, “Just wait for Su Liang’s decision on what to do or not to do.”

Zhengzheng and Ji Xiaoshu woke up to find Gu Xiaonuan still asleep, and didn’t wake her. Zhengzheng watched Gu Xiaonuan while Ji Xiaoshu ran to find Su Liang.

“Has Miss Yan returned? We should go to class!” Ji Xiaoshu asked the moment he entered and saw Yan Shiba. The reason was that he and Zhengzheng were going to Lin Mansion for classes every afternoon, with Yan Shiba personally taking them there. This morning, Yan Shiba specifically said she would be back in the afternoon.

Su Liang shook her head, “No, she has been captured.”

Ji Xiaoshu was momentarily dumbfounded, “That big bad guy...old devil Mo Yan, he actually came?”

Su Liang nodded slightly, “Yes, he kidnapped a child in the street, lured Yan Shiba, and then took her away.”

This wasn’t too surprising for Ji Xiaoshu as he knew the whole story from beginning to end. Su Liang even joked with them not to go playing with Yan Shiba, as they might be captured together.

“Didn’t Master’s trip become a waste then?” Ji Xiaoshu furrowed his little brows.

“Today should have been the day Master met that old devil at sea, but he came to the capital city instead. We fell into his trap of luring the tiger away from the mountain, but he also fell for our body double plan! That man is simply too difficult to deal with!

So, did he really use a magic treasure to make Miss Yan disappear with just a snap of his finger?"

Seeing Su Liang nod, Ji Xiaoshu's eyes widened, "There's really such a magic treasure? That's too scary! I really want it!"

Su Liang coughed softly, "If we can snatch her back, your master will do his best."

"Aunt Yan... sigh! She should have fulfilled her wish. She said that day that if she really gets caught by Mo Yan, we should not worry about her but be happy for her because that's what she hopes for." Ji Xiaoshu sighed, "Aunt Yan has been working hard to imitate Ms. Su. It wasn't in vain, right? Will master be back soon? When he returns, he and Ms. Su can plan together to take down the evil man and save Aunt Yan."

Su Liang shook her head, saying that Gu Ling would probably not return soon.

After listening, Ji Xiaoshu went to share the latest news with Zhengzheng.

Actually, these two kids knew more about the current situation than some adults in their family and they analyzed the situation together.

When Gu Xiaonuan woke up, her two elder brothers skillfully helped her wash her face and hands, fed her water, and then hugged her to find Su Liang.

"Ms. Su, I talked to big brother, and you can't go to Xingluo Island." Ji Xiaoshu's little face was serious.

Zhengzheng nodded, "Yes. We think Ms. Su might want to find the master and join forces to deal with Mo Yan. Although Ms. Su and master are invincible together, it's also important to take care of the family. As long as Ms. Su and sister are fine, master can focus on dealing with Mo Yan."

"Master must not want Ms. Su to go." Ji Xiaoshu added.

Su Liang smiled and hugged Gu Xiaonuan, "Hmm, you're right. I did think about going, but it's better not to." Her martial arts skills are the weakest, and as for the poison techniques, they're not the kind that can be used on the spot. Gu Ling took all the necessary poisons with him.

If Mo Yan didn't find out that Yan Shiba was fake all the way and took her to meet Gu Ling, he would recognize at a glance whether she was Su Liang or not, and there would be no need to worry about being deceived.

Su Liang doesn't need to hide anymore. If Mo Yan didn't find out about the flaw in Yan Shiba's disguise, he wouldn't return to the capital city. If Mo Yan discovered that Yan Shiba was fake and returned to the capital city, and if Su Liang couldn't be caught, he might do something unpredictable. For the sake of her family's safety, Su Liang couldn't just hide.

If Yan Shiba's substitute plan really failed, Su Liang could only and must choose to face Mo Yan directly. She won't surrender herself easily, and fighting is still necessary. There might still be a chance of winning.

“It would have been great if master had that magic treasure.” Ji Xiaoshu habitually leaned against Su Liang, “So we could all be kept in it and go wherever he wanted.”

“I hope that treasure is an object,” Zhengzheng said with great seriousness. “That way, even if it can’t change ownership, master can separate the treasure from Mo Yan.”

“It’s still unclear now.” Su Liang replied, “I can’t go out for the time being, so go find Master Cen Man to send you to class.” Today Mo Yan just took Yan Shiba away, so Su Liang needs to be cautious in case Mo Yan hasn’t gone far yet.

Zhengzheng and Ji Xiaoshu went to find Cen Man.

Cen Man already knew about Yan Shiba being caught and came to talk to Su Liang before leaving with the two children.

After Cen Man left with the two kids, Old White came again.

“If you need to hide for a while, I have a secret place.” Old White told Su Liang earnestly. He had already mentioned it when Gu Ling left, but Su Liang said it wasn’t necessary at that time.

It’s still not necessary now. Su Liang explained the situation to Old White, who sighed deeply, “Old Qiao would scold me, saying I can’t be depended on for serious matters, and yet I can hold Nuannuan at home.”

Su Liang comforted Old White, “The family needs master, and Nuannuan needs protection. Third master may grumble a bit, but he’s just jealous that master can hold Nuannuan. He misses Nuannuan too much. Once this trouble is over, you can meet and have a good fight.”

Old White nodded, “I won’t let him win then. If he wins, he’ll definitely want to take advantage of the situation and be the boss. I don’t necessarily want to be the boss, but since I am, I can’t give it up to him.”

Su Liang chuckled lightly. The friendships between old friends can only be described as childish. Now that old Bai has gone to the south, it’s not that useful; what he could do, Gu Ling and Qiao Cong could do as well. If old Bai really went to replace Qiao Cong, then Qiao Cong would probably be the one who’d be unhappy. This is because his initial trip to Jiaye City was mainly due to his grandson, Qiao Jing, who was stationed there. As long as Qiao Jing didn’t return, Qiao Cong would not go home by himself.

Evening arrived in the blink of an eye.

All the children who had gone out for classes had returned, with no accidents occurring.

Chang’an was ordered to come to Su Mansion to inquire about Su Liang’s well-being. Due to the incident which happened on the streets today, the palace was also aware of it.

Su Liang spoke a few simple words with Chang’an and asked him to report back to Duanmu Chen.

That night, Zhengzheng and Ji Xiaoshu still slept in Su Liang’s room.

First, they coaxed Gu Xiaonuan to sleep, then listened to Su Liang tell them stories. The stories she told were naturally not ordinary stories, but some classic ones from her previous life. Ever since she told them she was a Transmigrator, the two children almost transformed into a hundred thousand “whys.” However, because Su Liang warned them not to tell outsiders about this matter, they were very cautious, only asking her about her previous life when they were alone with her.

After telling today’s story, Su Liang patted the two children and told them to go to sleep. She thought of Gu Ling again; at the beginning, there was a long period of time when Gu Ling would listen to her tell stories every night before going to sleep. At that time, the two of them were not together yet. Thinking about it now, it was really interesting.

At this moment, Gu Ling and Qiao Jing had returned to Jiaye City, preparing to set off again for Xingluo Island.

The wind by the seaside at night was cool, and the boat was ready, with Gu Ling and Qiao Jing both returning to their own faces. They had only brought the two of them and no soldiers.

After setting off, the two were silent for a long time. It was not until Jiaye City was out of sight that Qiao Jing broke the silence, “I suddenly thought of a question today – when did you know that Su Liang was a Transmigrator? Did she tell you, or did you find something unusual?”

Gu Ling’s voice was faint, “The first day I met her.”

Qiao Jing was surprised by this answer and couldn’t help holding his forehead, “Well, perhaps it truly was destiny that made you meet. By the way, when was that day? You met her in Su’s village, right?”

Gu Ling replied, “It was the day we first got married.”

Qiao Jing looked up at the starry sky and sighed, “You really are very lucky. You probably know almost everything about Su Liang’s previous life, right? Since we’re on our way, why not tell me about it? I’m really curious.”

“Not in the mood.” Gu Ling said, kicking Qiao Jing, “If you’re bored and don’t want to sleep, get up and steer the boat.”

Qiao Jing frowned, got up, and took over for Gu Ling, who then went into the cabin and lay down, ready to sleep.

“Are you sure you can sleep? Maybe Mo Yan went to the capital city today to take Su Liang away...” Qiao Jing started to speak but then realized his mistake and shook his head, “That’s just a possibility, not a certainty. Su Liang is so smart, she won’t let Mo Yan succeed easily.”

“I can sleep, you shut up.” As soon as Gu Ling’s words fell, he closed his eyes. The boat gently swayed with the sound of water flowing by. Because of the recent conversation, his mind played the image of Su Liang wearing her wedding dress, her small face looking astonished. He didn’t know if he was talking to himself or speaking to Qiao Jing, “She was sent to me by the heavens.”

Qiao Jing: ...Envious, jealous, hateful. Once he and Min Rou get married, he must show off his affection in front of Gu Ling and Su Liang, making up for the “injury” he has suffered these past few years!

The small boat quickly headed towards Xingluo Island, getting further and further away from the capital city and home, but Gu Ling had already entered the dreamland, reunited with Su Liang...

Chapter 474: 474. A dish of loose sand

Approaching noon, the sky was cloudless, and the sea sparkled.

Qiao Cong and Old Mu had just finished eating their dried food and were resting. Feng Ming was steering the boat, his eyes vigilant as he observed the surroundings.

Since they left Xingluo Island, they hadn't seen a single person or boat for several days. Along the way, they came across a deserted island. Old Mu had explored it last year when he first traveled to Xingluo Island with Cen Man and found it covered in rubble, with no signs of human habitation.

The sunlight was glaring, and Feng Ming, with his focused attention, was beginning to tire. He rubbed his eyes, took out his water bag, and drank a few sips. Then he raised his arm, used his sleeve to wipe his mouth, and recapped the water bag.

Just as he was putting the water bag back around his waist, Feng Ming looked into the distance and suddenly his expression changed. “Seniors! Someone’s approaching!” he exclaimed.

Old Mu, who was about to doze off, immediately became alert and stood up with Qiao Cong. The small boat rocked violently twice but didn't lose its balance.

All three of them looked ahead and saw a boat approaching them. It was still far away, and they couldn't see it clearly.

Feng Ming frowned. “Could it be the people from Xingluo Island who went to meet with the prince returning?” The timing would be about right.

Old Mu shook his head immediately. “If Sheng Yue didn't lie to us and the person he went to meet was a fake Mo Yan, Xiaogu wouldn't let them return alive.” This was because they had sent the real Gu Ling, who should have been able to handle Mo Yan, who possessed a magic treasure, let alone an imposter.

“Then who could it be...?” Qiao Cong had a thought, but he wasn't sure.

Old Mu confidently stated, “If it's not unrelated people, it must be Xiaogu!”

“Do you really think he wouldn't go home immediately after discovering the Mo Yan is fake?” Qiao Cong thought there was still a possibility that Gu Ling went home.

Old Mu shook his head. “No. There wouldn't be any point in going home at that time.”

Old Mu was the decision-maker among the three. Hearing his certainty, Feng Ming's expression relaxed slightly, while Qiao Cong furrowed his brows. “You mean, by now, Mo Yan has captured our apprentice?”

“I didn’t say that. Xiaoliang is not a helpless weak woman. Without seeing it with my own eyes, I wouldn’t believe that she was captured by Mo Yan.” Old Mu still had confidence in Su Liang. It was a realistic problem that she couldn’t block Mo Yan’s sneak attack, but that didn’t mean she would definitely be captured.

As they spoke, the boat came closer and closer. They could now see that there were only two people on the boat, and the one standing at the bow was tall and sturdy. Qiao Cong squinted and called out, “Jingjing! Is that you, Jingjing?”

Soon they heard a familiar voice. “Grandpa! It’s me!”

Qiao Cong let out a sigh of relief. No matter what, at least for now, everyone was safe. Qiao Jing’s arrival meant that the incident on the sea on the first day of the third month was probably consistent with Old Mu’s conjecture. As for the other person on the boat, it must be Gu Ling.

Soon, Qiao Cong and Old Mu saw Gu Ling and Qiao Jing.

The two boats stopped side by side, and Qiao Jing first asked about Old Mu and their experience on Xingluo Island.

Hearing Old Mu say that Sheng Yue even used a group of children on the island to guard the forbidden area, Qiao Jing frowned. “His methods are, as expected, quite ruthless.”

Old Mu shook his head. “Sheng Yue claimed it was Mo Yan’s idea. Regardless of whose idea it was, his attitude was clear. If you were going to destroy the forbidden area, you would have faced the same situation.”

Qiao Cong snorted. “That may not be the case. Don’t forget, Xiaogu infiltrated the island alone, rescued us as if it was unguarded, and caught Sheng Yue off guard. As long as Sheng Yue isn’t holed up in the cave all the time, Xiaogu will find a way to capture him once he leaves.”

Old Mu nodded. “I know what you’re saying, but what if there are always innocent children in the cave? What if Sheng Yue uses the lives of the island’s women and children as bargaining chips? These possibilities need to be considered. Acting recklessly could easily be controlled by him in return.”

Qiao Cong was somewhat speechless, “Being a good person is really difficult! Those things were clearly caused by Mo Yan, yet we still have to worry about this and that! By the way, was that Mo Yan a fake? Have you already killed him?”

Qiao Jing briefly explained what happened on the sea on the first day of the third month.

Old Mu sighed, “That old villain is indeed cunning. Knowing that it would be difficult to get at you openly, he acted in secret. Xiaoliang is his granddaughter after all!” Mo Yan and Su Liang were both transmigrators, but their blood relationship was real.

“Will the prince go to Xingluo Island next?” Feng Ming asked.

Gu Ling nodded slightly, “Yes. You will go with me.”

Qiao Jing frowned when he heard this, “You want me to go back? No, I promised this time that we brothers would join forces.”

“I’m not asking you to go back; you’re not my brother.” Gu Ling said indifferently.

Qiao Jing: ... Deeply suspected that Gu Ling was deliberately saying this, just like he always teased Lian Shun...

“We’ll go back together!” Qiao Cong said, “We’ll listen to Xiaogu’s instructions from now on!”

Gu Ling thought for a moment. He originally wanted Qiao Cong and Old Mu to go home, but in the end decided that since everyone was already so close to Xingluo Island, it would be better to act together. He would need help for what he was going to do next. As for the situation at home, it was still unclear, but more people would be useless against Mo Yan, and it would be too late to go back now.

“Let’s go together then.” Gu Ling said.

“Let’s go!” Qiao Cong clapped his hands, “We’ll slaughter that despicable Sheng Yue when we get back!”

Two boats, Qiao Cong and his grandson Qiao Jing together, Old Mu and Gu Ling’s apprentices together, and Feng Ming was also on their boat.

Old Mu inquired about Cheng Yun, who had gone to Jiaye City with Gu Ling earlier. Gu Ling said that he had left him in charge of the city.

Old Mu had a hard time imagining Cheng Yun leading soldiers to defend the city, but he thought that since Gu Ling had arranged it this way, he must have given Cheng Yun the appropriate training. Besides, Cheng Yun had always been obedient in front of Gu Ling, and he was not lacking in martial arts or intelligence, he just wasn’t very familiar with worldly matters and needed someone to guide him. Moreover, it was unlikely that anything would happen in Jiaye City now.

That night, Gu Ling steered the boat, letting Old Mu and Feng Ming rest.

Feng Ming couldn’t sleep, so he stood beside Gu Ling and talked to him about the current situation on the island.

After seeing Feng Ming, Gu Ling confirmed one thing: Su Liang’s speculation that Mo Yan’s magic treasure could take people in and release them was true. Before this point, it was only speculation, now it was confirmed.

Moreover, Feng Ming had learned from Xie Jun, who had been captured and taken into the space, how big the space inside the magic treasure was and what it looked like, and he had told Gu Ling everything.

This information was very useful. Gu Ling now had an understanding of Mo Yan’s portable space, and it was no longer just based on the concept of the stories Su Liang had told.

Gu Ling previously had no way of knowing about Mo Yan capturing almost all of the island’s masters into his space on New Year’s Eve, so even if he went to the island now without Feng Ming’s information, it would take him some time to find any useful information.

It wasn’t until now that Feng Ming truly felt that his trip back to the island, arranged by Su Liang, was somewhat useful.



Having lived on Xingluo Island for more than three years, Feng Ming knew all the people on the island quite well. The population of the island was not very large, only about the size of a village in the outside world. Feng Ming was very cautious and meticulous, so he recognized every person on the island and had as much understanding of them as possible, even including things like how many months pregnant an elder's kidnapped daughter-in-law was, and he had observed and memorized everything in his heart during the few days he had been back on the island.

"Ever since the incident on New Year's Eve, the He family was wiped out, and the people on the island were terrified. Following last year's failed attempts to leave the island and the loss of many masters, the island's masters no longer hold out any hope that Mo Yan can bring them wealth and honor. They only have fear for Mo Yan, and they all know one thing very well – they could become Mo Yan's sacrificial pawns at any time." Feng Ming said seriously, "Therefore, my subordinate believes that if the prince goes to the island now to incite rebellion, he might be met with a great response! From what I've heard myself, there are already quite a few people who curse Mo Yan and insult Sheng Yue behind their backs. Although Sheng Yue has a brilliant mind and is powerful, he has never won the hearts of the people, nor has he tried to win them over."

As for the fact that Sheng Yue had told Feng Ming himself that he didn't need friends and didn't have enemies, just things he wanted to do – Feng Ming had quickly relayed this information to Gu Ling after meeting him.

Gu Ling nodded, "That's exactly what I was thinking."

"We can start with the Coast Guard. The captain is Xie Jun, who I mentioned to the prince. He's not a bad person, but he had to follow the tide to survive on the island. He didn't do anything evil." Feng Ming said.

Gu Ling knew that the real villains on Xingluo Island were those old martial arts masters. They were also the earliest followers of Mo Yan, and most of them had already died. Among the young people, besides the second and third-generation islanders, many were either captured or deceived back to the island, including Feng Ming, Zhu Zan, and Xie Jun. Those with low status on the island were just cannon fodder for the elders and their descendants. After a few years, those who were left after the island's survival rules were screened would get a "distributed" wife, and once they had children, they would be completely tied to Xingluo Island and unable to break free.

"Alright," Gu Ling nodded, "You'll make contact with Xie Jun when the time comes."

Feng Ming's expression changed, "Thank you for trusting me, Prince. I will do my best."

In the middle of the night, Xie Jun was still standing on the shore, with only one young man who usually had a good relationship with him. As for the grandchildren of the elders, they all went back to sleep early. Although Xie Jun was the captain, his power was limited, and he dared not complain to Sheng Yue casually.

"I wonder how Feng Ming is doing now?" said the young man beside Xie Jun.

"Actually, he's quite lucky. He was in the dungeon for a while, but someone came to rescue him. That Divine Doctor Su is like her name suggests, even if Feng Ming didn't accomplish anything, she would still save him. Not like us, the island isn't that big, but we are oppressed and have no say, and our lives may be taken at any moment."

Xie Jun smiled bitterly, "What's the use of saying all this? We're not as clever as Feng Ming. He's not just lucky, he knows how to adapt to the situation and has the courage to make different choices than us. I only want to survive and am afraid of getting into trouble... I don't aspire for wealth or honors, I just hope that one day I can leave this place alive, return to my hometown, and pay my respects at my grandfather's grave."

The young man patted Xie Jun's shoulder, "Don't be so disheartened. With the current situation, it's hard to say what will happen next."

"No matter what, we are just insignificant ants that no one cares about." Xie Jun shook his head, "Let's go."

"The people who are supposed to relieve us are half an hour late and haven't come yet." said the young man.

"We'll continue to keep watch. If you're tired, go to sleep first," Xie Jun said.

The young man shook his head, "We'll do it together. Actually, I think you should tell Young Master Sheng. Those young masters have been getting more and more out of hand recently, and Young Master Sheng must have a way to deal with them."

Xie Jun, however, shook his head, "It's enough that someone is keeping watch. If I went to complain and Young Master Sheng punished them, I'm afraid I wouldn't know how I died afterward."

The two men continued talking as they walked in another direction.

The wind was chilly in the latter half of the night, and Xie Jun had barely slept in the past few days. He was exhausted and thought he was hallucinating when he heard Feng Ming's voice.

The next moment, a hand grabbed Xie Jun's shoulder. He was startled and turned around to see a familiar face, "How...how did you come back?"

Feng Ming pulled Xie Jun into a small wooden house by the sea where the night watchmen rested temporarily. It had been blown away by the wind previously but was quickly repaired. At this point, Xie Jun's companion had already dozed off in another wooden house.

"Will anyone come?" Feng Ming closed the door and listened for any sounds outside.

Xie Jun subconsciously shook his head, "No...no one will come in the second half of the night."

"There aren't enough people on night watch, and Sheng Yue doesn't care?" Feng Ming asked.

Xie Jun sighed, "Young Master Sheng has been in the forbidden area lately and hasn't come out. Since the Island Master isn't here, a few elders are plotting behind the scenes to escape. I overheard it accidentally and didn't dare to make a fuss."

Hearing this, Feng Ming grabbed Xie Jun's shoulder once more, "I know you've always wanted to leave, and now your chance has come!"

Xie Jun trembled slightly, pressed his lips together nervously, "What do you mean?"

"You know who my master is now. I can tell you, the Island Master won't be back anytime soon. You can leave, everyone on the island can."

"You didn't come back alone, did you?" Xie Jun asked.

Feng Ming nodded, "No, but you don't need to worry about the others. Go pack your things now, prepare dried food, find a boat and leave. If you have any trustworthy companions, you can invite them to join you. I promise no one will stop you before dawn."

"What about you?" Xie Jun asked.

"I still have things to do." Feng Ming said, "To avoid running into the Island Master, you should head west first, then north. That way, you can reach the shore of the former Yin Country."

Xie Jun hesitated for a moment, but after seeing Feng Ming's sincere gaze, he finally made up his mind, "Alright! I'll listen to you this time! Take care of yourself!"

Dawn broke.

It was another ordinary day on Xingluo Island.

The first to notice Xie Jun's disappearance was the grandson of an elder since he was supposed to replace Xie Jun's shift and lead the patrol. Instead of making a fuss, he went straight to his grandfather.

"Is he really gone?" The elder's eyes sparkled with intrigue.

"Definitely! The guy who was with him last night is also gone! And I checked, there's one less boat at the dock! I never thought that the usually timid and scared bottle gourd could be so bold!"

Upon hearing this, the elder paced back and forth in the room before slamming his fist on the table, "Tell your parents and siblings to pack their bags quickly! Let's take advantage of the chaos and leave too!"

"Should we leave in broad daylight? Will it cause any problems?"

"We can't afford to worry about that! If anyone dares to leave, more people will want to flee, and there won't be enough boats! If we delay any longer, we won't be able to leave at all! That despicable Sheng Yue is only concerned with the forbidden area,

and he won't be able to stop anyone when everyone wants to run. No one will listen to him then! Hurry up!"

About an hour later, Xingluo Island was still peaceful, but an elder had secretly taken his family on a boat. In the meantime, another elder's family discovered them but didn't raise the alarm, choosing to quickly follow suit instead.

The forbidden area was the quietest place on the island, containing nothing but Sheng Yue, a few trusted men left by Mo Yan, and a group of children. However, even if their children and grandchildren were inside the forbidden area, some people would rather abandon them if they had a chance to escape.

Today's weather was great, and people with rebellious hearts on Xingluo Island started their escape one after another.

However, a problem soon arose: there were too many people and not enough boats.

Consequently, fights erupted on the dockside as people fought for boats, leading to casualties.

Gu Ling sat on a tree in the dense forest by the coast, not far from the largest dock, and watched all this unfold with cold eyes.

This was his plan with Feng Ming, which was going more smoothly than expected because people's hearts had long been divided on Xingluo Island. They didn't need the wind to blow them apart, they were already scattered.

Gu Ling glanced at the dock again and quietly left the dense forest, heading towards the forbidden area. He thought that Sheng Yue must be waiting for him...

Chapter 475: 475. Do you dare to come over?

Xingluo Island has been the most "lively" it has been since New Year's Eve. News of people successfully leaving the island spread quickly, and more and more people began to head towards the seaside with their luggage in tow.

At first, those in the forbidden area were genuinely unaware of this. By the time Sheng Yue received the report, quite a few people had already successfully left Xingluo Island by boat. The first to leave, Xie Jun and his companions, had already fled far away by this point.

"Young Master Sheng, we must find a way to stop those traitors from leaving as soon as possible!" The one who reported to Sheng Yue was one of the two elders guarding the forbidden area. Although these two were elders, like Mo Yan, they have no descendants on the island. They can be said to be Mo Yan's "followers", following him faithfully and without the same level of ambition as He Wei.

Upon hearing this, Sheng Yue casually asked, "Was it really Xie Jun who ran away first?"

The elder frowned, "Yes, it was him! He left last night!"

Sheng Yue's expression remained calm, "I see. If they have the ability to leave, let them go. Without Master here, we wouldn't be able to stop them anyway."

The elder snorted, "It's easy for young master Sheng to say! How will you explain this when the master returns? Will you just say that you let them go?"

Sheng Yue's expression was indifferent, "Master has instructed that the most important thing is to guard the forbidden area. Under any circumstances, I will not leave the forbidden area. Anything else doesn't matter as much."

"So, Young Master Sheng, are you going to ignore those traitors? Are you seriously letting them go?" The elder asked again.

Sheng Yue nodded, "If you two want to take care of it, you can try. However, if everyone on the island other than those in the forbidden area wants to leave, can you two stop them? Or do you plan to kill them all?"

The elder's face darkened. Even though the number of masters on Xingluo Island had been dwindling over the past two years, there were still quite a few of them left. They couldn't possibly handle everyone's attacks on their own. The only person who could truly deter these people was Mo Yan, but everyone knew Mo Yan wasn't on the island; the chances of him returning today were extremely slim.

"I need you two elders to keep an eye on the water source in the forbidden area. At a time like this, some people may try to poison or set fire to kill us." Sheng Yue said.

Hearing this, the elder's face turned ugly, but he agreed with a grunt and quickly left.

Sheng Yue was still in the cave, but he was not alone. Three children were by his side, two little boys around five or six years old, identical twins dressed in the exact same clothes. Additionally, a one-year-old girl lay sleeping soundly on a small bed beside the pool.

During Old Mu's previous visit, there had been seven or eight children in the cave. Sheng Yue had chosen these three to "accompany him" afterward. The rest had been sent back to their parents. One of them had already left Xingluo Island with their family by now.

"Master, will there be enemies coming today?" One of the little boys asked Sheng Yue.

Sheng Yue sat cross-legged and raised his only hand to ruffle the boy's hair, "Perhaps."

Another boy asked when they would be able to meet their parents. Sheng Yue replied that it wouldn't be much longer, as long as they behaved and listened well. Afterward, they would be rewarded for their deeds.

The little girl on the bed woke up crying, and Sheng Yue picked her up, gently swaying her. She stopped crying after a while, her small face curiously looking at Sheng Yue. A pot of porridge was being warmed on the stove nearby, so Sheng Yue had the two boys bring a bowl of it and started to feed the little girl.

At this time, the two elders guarding the forbidden area followed Sheng Yue's instructions and did not care about the chaos elsewhere on the island. One guarded the water source and the other patrolled the periphery of the forbidden area to prevent arson. This was because the island was full of trees and a fire would easily break out.

There were actually two other people in the forbidden area, a cook and a handyman, both mute, who did their jobs without talking.

Early in the morning, as people discovered that Xie Jun had disappeared and a boat was missing, they didn't notice the increase in boats. This was because Gu Ling and his party had arrived on two boats the night before. After dropping off Gu Ling and Feng Ming, the other four people left by boat and stayed in the nearby waters, not yet landing on the island. This was because Gu Ling anticipated today's situation and wanted to avoid conflicts with those on Xingluo Island who wanted to escape, as well as to prevent their boats from being stolen. They were few in number and couldn't defeat the many masters on Xingluo Island in terms of Martial Arts. Also, if they exposed themselves openly, they might be targeted by Mo Yan's trusted followers. It was not necessarily out of fear, but more so to minimize trouble.

Gu Ling did not ask Feng Ming to "win over" Xie Jun for their own use and to continue winning over more people for one main reason. Firstly, Xie Jun was afraid of death, which Feng Ming had mentioned earlier, and he had no influence on the island. The only people with real influence on the island, besides Mo Yan, were He Wei, who had already been beheaded. At the moment, Gu Ling did not intend to do anything to the masters on Xingluo Island. Just because he didn't have the time to deal with them doesn't mean he considered them innocent. Most of the masters on the island had low moral character and were untrustworthy.

Right now, Feng Ming was skillfully searching for food in the City Lord Mansion, intending to put it in the agreed meeting place with Gu Ling. The island was in chaos and no one noticed him. In the future, their small group might still need to live on the island.

By the time Feng Ming entered the City Lord Mansion for the second time, he had already heard people talking about building boats. With so many people wanting to leave the island, there were no boats left to use, so building one now wouldn't necessarily be too late. After all, there was no movement from the forbidden area, and it seemed they were not planning to intervene.

With the boats gone, the fighting subsided. In terms of leaving, they were actually all in the same boat, and no one wanted to cause trouble. What Xingluo Island had most of were trees, so there was plenty of materials for boat building.

Originally, landmines had been placed in the forest as traps for enemies, but now, to avoid harming their own people, members of the Coast Guard who knew the locations of the landmines dug them up and threw them into the sea.

So, during the day, a strange sight appeared on the coast of Xingluo Island: people everywhere, in groups of three or five, cutting down trees and building boats. These busy people occasionally glanced at the vast sea, with longing for the distance on their faces.

As for looting, it happened, but rarely. The island had formed its own small society, where people didn't need money for food and clothing. Gold, silver, and jewelry were brought back by people leaving the island, but there was not much of it, and many people living on Xingluo Island had lost their concept of money. Mo Yan held almost all of the wealth on the island, while others had only monotonous days of contentment and dreams of future prosperity.

At this time, Gu Ling had already entered the forbidden area and was in Mo Yan's study. He knew where Sheng Yue was but decided not to go there immediately.

There was a painting on the wall with a poem written on it, which Gu Ling recognized. Su Liang had told him about it, and Min Rou had mentioned the painting; she had been here before.

Gu Ling lifted the painting to reveal another one behind it, which Min Rou and Su Liang had also mentioned. Mo Yan claimed that the woman in the painting was his lover.

The face of the woman in the painting was not visible, nor were there any similarities to Su Liang. But it was clear that Mo Yan had lifted the outer painting countless times to look at this hidden one, as there was a deep crease in the outer painting.

Gu Ling examined the other parts of the study and found that about half of the books on the shelf were written by Mo Yan about his previous life, many of which Gu Ling had heard from Su Liang.

This was evidently a transmigrator's room, and a "fellow species" would quickly recognize it when entering.

Gu Ling didn't discover any hidden mechanisms or passages, and he didn't know if Mo Yan had the habit of keeping a diary. But when he tried to find something similar, he had no success. It seemed that any important and sensitive items could be kept in Mo Yan's portable space, which was safer.

Gu Ling's purpose in searching was to learn more about Mo Yan, especially to confirm whether his portable space was an independent object or existed within his mind.

Unfortunately, he still couldn't be sure.

Afterward, Gu Ling left Mo Yan's room and headed secretly in the direction of the cave.

Sheng Yue's room was not in the forbidden area, as he had never lived here before and now stayed in the cave.

Nearing the cave, Gu Ling heard faint children's voices, confirming that there were children inside.

Gu Ling, wearing a mask, walked straight into the cave. His footsteps were light, and the children's voices became clearer as he moved closer – a boy was reciting poetry.

When Gu Ling stopped at the last corner Elder Mu had reached, his shadow didn't cast onto the ground. He knocked on the stone wall, and after the child inside recited another line of poetry, it became quiet.

A moment later, Sheng Yue's voice entered Gu Ling's ears, "Gu Ling, is that you?"

For a moment, there was the feeling of a long-awaited reunion.

Gu Ling remained silent for a while before speaking, "It's me."

"I thought you would come, and it's about time." Sheng Yue's voice was calm, "Xie Jun is a coward, he wouldn't dare to leave for no reason unless someone gave him the courage. I assume Feng Ming has returned too?"

"Yes," Gu Ling said.

Sheng Yue's tone shifted, "You must want to go home very badly, so why not show yourself? There are some places here that resemble your home. You know I won't harm you, and I don't think I can. At the same time, you still need me. I don't want to die; I'm just seeking an amulet for myself, which you can understand, I presume.""

The next moment, Gu Ling walked around the corner, finally seeing the legendary Transmigration Road and Sheng Yue himself.

Sheng Yue held a young girl in his arms, with two little boys sitting beside him. At first glance, he looked like the father of the three children.

Gu Ling immediately understood what Sheng Yue meant when he said some places here resembled his home. There were not few children on the island, and him keeping these three at his side was clearly an imitation of Gu Ling and Su Liang's daughter and the pair of young disciples, almost the same age as them.

"They have no mothers, just like me," Sheng Yue said to Gu Ling.

"You don't look like a father, but a trafficker," Gu Ling said indifferently.

Sheng Yue chuckled, but his smile couldn't be seen, "Please take a seat."

There were no chairs, so Gu Ling sat down cross-legged on the ground, facing Sheng Yue and the three children from a distance of about three meters. The two little boys looked at him warily, apparently considering him an enemy.

"What do you want?" Gu Ling asked directly.

"I've already told you and your wife what I want when I visited your house before," Sheng Yue said, "At that time, we didn't discuss real cooperation. Now is the perfect time for that, don't you think?"

"Continue," Gu Ling said.

"Since you want to hear my plan, I'll be straightforward," Sheng Yue said, "I guess by now Mo Yan has captured your wife, and perhaps even your daughter and those two favorite disciples of hers. Of course, if Mo Yan fails and is killed by Divine Doctor Su, I can only say I admire her. But considering the power of his magic treasure, I think the former possibility is greater. Mo Yan should be back soon with his granddaughter."

Gu Ling listened expressionlessly, and still did not speak. Sheng Yue continued, "First of all, let me clarify that I haven't told Mo Yan about who the Transmigrator is. But I suspect that he already knows. If not, that's even better. When he brings Su Liang back, he'll definitely control you through her, making you jump into this pool and not allowing you to come out until a miracle happens. If he knows it's Su Liang, there's no need to catch only her, controlling her through the child would be enough, and you won't even have to be bothered. If you appear, he just needs to lift a finger and lock you in an inescapable cage."

Gu Ling interrupted Sheng Yue, "Is it that ring?" By now, others might not know, but Sheng Yue might as well.

Sheng Yue then talked about the New Year's Eve night when he saw Mo Yan using the magic treasure to capture someone, "I was indeed paying close attention. He took off the ring and showed it to me, saying it was just a memento and not his magic treasure. His magic treasure, he said, was in his thoughts, a gift from heaven that allowed him to draw anything he touched into it. No one could steal it, and no one else could use it."



“Do you believe it?” Gu Ling asked.

Sheng Yue shook his head, “No. He said that, maybe just to prevent me from trying to take it. He knows that I can’t be trusted either. He values only my desires, needing me to guard the forbidden area when he leaves. He realizes that I’m not on the same side as you, or else I could have escaped countless times when I was first captured on Xingluo Island.”

“Is Mo Yan immune to poison?” Gu Ling asked.

Sheng Yue shook his head, “I’ve never seen him poisoned, but he claims he isn’t and once said that he envies my physique.”

“Tell me your plan,” Gu Ling said concisely.

Sheng Yue continued, “I’ll be in the open, you’ll be in the dark. We’ll snatch Mo Yan’s magic treasure, at least stripping him of his ability to use the treasure, and then send him into the pool. You know, I want to see a miracle happen too. We’ll have to act on the spot when we see Mo Yan, and what he has and plans to do.”

After Gu Ling listened, he only said two words, “Nonsense.”

Sheng Yue was neither angry nor annoyed, “If I asked you and you answered, it would probably sound the same. If you really have a different idea, I’m all ears.”

“I’ll kill you, take control of Xingluo Island, and negotiate directly with Mo Yan,” Gu Ling said lightly.

Sheng Yue nodded, “It could work, and it would be very beneficial for you. Indeed, it’s a plan I wouldn’t think of. Of course, I don’t agree. This is also nonsense.” With that, Sheng Yue lifted the little girl’s hand in his arms and swayed it towards Gu Ling, his voice suddenly softened a bit, “Do you think that uncle is handsome? Would you like him to hold you?”

The little girl actually reached out her hands, wanting Gu Ling to hold her. Sheng Yue looked at Gu Ling with a calm expression, challenging him in his words, “Perhaps I also have a plan to kill you first – do you dare to come over?”

Gu Ling stood up but did not walk forward. Instead, he turned and walked out, leaving behind three words, “Crazy person.”

Chapter 476: 476. Just waiting for Mo Yan

Upon leaving the cave, Gu Ling discovered that the weather had turned, with dark clouds filling the original clear sky, and gusts of wind, thunderstorm was approaching.

This was not good news for those who wanted to leave Xingluo Island as soon as possible. However, the people on the coast were still busy building ships. Most of them had already packed their belongings, waiting to set off.

Gu Ling secretly left the forbidden area without being detected by the two elders who were guarding it. He had visited the City Lord Mansion to save people last year and had become very familiar with the distribution of buildings on the island due to the information provided by Min Rou. He quickly found the place where he had agreed to meet Feng Ming.

It was the garden of the City Lord Mansion, where there was a jade-like green lake. It wasn't very big, but the scenery was extremely beautiful. By its side stood a three-story Bajiao Pavilion designed and built by Mo Yan himself. The top floor of the pavilion offered the best view on Xingluo Island and was quite concealed, with numerous tall trees surrounding it.

At this moment, the people on the island were in a state of panic. The smartest had already fled, while the slow-minded were struggling to find a way to escape, fearing that Sheng Yue and the two elders might suddenly make a move to stop and kill them. So aside from the forbidden area, people were either building boats or hiding, not daring to wander around.

Gu Ling climbed to the third floor of the Bajiao Pavilion, where Feng Ming had lowered the curtains on three sides. The curtain facing the forbidden area was only lifted halfway, allowing a view of the situation inside.

Feng Ming sat on it, and as soon as he saw Gu Ling coming, he stood up and gestured that they needed to be careful. Only half of the area was safe, while the other half might be seen by others.

Gu Ling nodded, didn't observe the situation on the island, but sat down and started eating the food prepared by Feng Ming.

Feng Ming glanced at the forbidden area again, then turned his gaze back and sat down opposite Gu Ling, "Has Your Highness seen Sheng Yue? How is he?"

"I've met him. He wants to cooperate." Gu Ling replied.

"Does Your Highness trust him?" Feng Ming asked.

Gu Ling shook his head, "No, I don't. Let's wait for Mo Yan to come back. Be careful not to let anyone in the forbidden area other than Sheng Yue discover us."

Feng Ming nodded, "Understood. If we kill those two elders now, Mo Yan will know we've arrived as soon as he comes back." It wouldn't be a big issue if something happened elsewhere on the island and people left, but nothing could happen in the forbidden area.

Once Gu Ling had eaten enough, Feng Ming looked at the gloomy weather outside. "If it rains heavily, it'll be safer for young master Qiao and the others to come ashore, but the boat might be discovered at that time."

"It won't be a problem." Gu Ling had faith in Qiao Cong, who had lived on the sea for many years. Experience was important.

"Where does Your Highness plan to stay tonight?" Feng Ming asked.

"Where is Sheng Yue's courtyard?" Gu Ling asked in return.

Feng Ming stood up and pointed towards a certain direction within the City Lord Mansion, "It's over there. Does Your Highness want to stay at Sheng Yue's place? It's a good idea, as ordinary people wouldn't think of it, and Sheng Yue won't come out of the forbidden area."

They had agreed with Qiao Jing and the others to come ashore again in three days, and there was enough dried food and fresh water on the boat for them to use.

Before long, Gu Ling entered Sheng Yue's courtyard.

It was deserted, with no people around, and even those who walked nearby would take a detour, fearing Sheng Yue might be inside and cause trouble for them.

Gu Ling entered Sheng Yue's room, closed the door, and began searching all over the room.

However, after searching all around, he didn't find anything of value. There were not many possessions in Sheng Yue's room, which was quite simple considering his position on the island.

So, Gu Ling lay down on the bed and took a nap to conserve energy.

By the time Gu Ling woke up, it was dusk. The weather seemed to be rainy in the afternoon, but it cleared up suddenly. There was no rain after all.

Today's sunset was especially brilliant, covering Xingluo Island with a radiant red halo.

Gu Ling stood by the window, gazing at the sky outside, and let out an almost inaudible sigh. He didn't know whether Su Liang was safe at home or had already been captured by Mo Yan. Both possibilities were plausible. At this point, he had to face whatever situation arose and do his best to solve problems.

After a while, Gu Ling left Sheng Yue's courtyard and returned to the Bajiao Pavilion in the garden.

Feng Ming was still there, but he had left during the interlude.

"Your Highness, about half of the people on the island left today. Many who haven't left yet are waiting for the ships to be completed, and they may leave overnight," Feng Ming updated Gu Ling after secretly investigating the island's situation a quarter of an hour ago. Under these circumstances, some people still chose to stay, but very few remained outside the forbidden area. Leaving Xingluo Island meant a wide world and a potential future, continuing to follow Mo Yan offered no hope.

Seeing Gu Ling looking towards the forbidden area, Feng Ming sighed, "There is a woman who claims her two sons were taken away by Sheng Yue. The family's boat is ready to go, and the men don't intend to care about the kids anymore. They just want to leave. I even heard them say that they can have as many children as they want after they settle down outside. However, the woman refused to leave, even after being dragged onto the boat, she jumped into the water and returned alone. The family didn't bother with her anymore, and now she's kneeling outside the forbidden area, begging Sheng Yue to release her sons."

The sky had darkened, and Gu Ling couldn't see the crying woman outside the forbidden area, nor could he hear her voice.

"Did anyone look for the girl?" Gu Ling asked Feng Ming.

Feng Ming sighed again, "I found the little girl's family, and they had already left her behind."

At this time, inside the forbidden area, Sheng Yue was dining with the two boys, while the little girl was asleep again.

An elder entered, and Sheng Yue asked what was going on. The elder glanced at the two children and gestured to Sheng Yue to talk privately.

Sheng Yue stood up and walked outside, stopping at the entrance of the cave without actually going out.

“Master Sheng, the fathers and uncles of those two boys have run away. Their mother is crying outside the forbidden area,” the elder informed.

Sheng Yue’s expression was indifferent, “Even if I return her sons now, the three of them won’t be able to leave. Don’t bother with her.” With that, he turned and went back inside.

One of the twins saw Sheng Yue returning and asked again, “Master, can we go home and sleep tonight and come back tomorrow?”

Sheng Yue shook his head, “No.”

The eyes of the two boys dimmed instantly, and they silently clasped each other’s hands, not daring to make a sound. After their meal, they obediently went behind the stone screen to sleep, where blankets were laid out.

The mute servant came in to collect the dishes and brought hot water.

There was no bed for Sheng Yue in the cave, so he sat cross-legged by the water pool with his eyes closed, facing outside, and with the little girl lying on the small bed within reach.

Gu Ling and Feng Ming stayed in the Bajiao Pavilion until just before midnight, then secretly went to check the coast. There were fewer people than during the day, but some were still building boats under lanterns, while others were carrying their luggage, waiting to leave.

As things stood, apart from the forbidden area, there would be hardly any people left on the island after tomorrow.

On the way back to the City Lord Mansion, Feng Ming asked Gu Ling whether they should intervene on behalf of the woman crying outside the forbidden area, “The night is cold, and she won’t last long like this.”

“Do you know her?” Gu Ling asked in return.

Feng Ming nodded, “Her name is Awu, and she seems to be from the Peng family. I’ve seen her taking her two sons to pick mushrooms before and exchanged greetings with her, so I guess we know each other.”

“What did you say her name is?” Gu Ling asked again.

After Feng Ming answered once more, Gu Ling seemed lost in thought.

“Could Your Highness know her identity?” Feng Ming asked. Most of the women on the island were captured, and there were only a few who were born here, like Min Rou. Peng Wu was brought back to the island by an elder from outside to be his granddaughter-in-law, but that elder has died last year in the capital city of Qian Country.

“Not sure, perhaps.” Gu Ling said. He had heard that a former veteran of Yuanliang Country who had a good relationship with Su Liang, Peng Wei, originally had a great-

granddaughter, who was the sister of Peng Fan, but she had died in an accident when she drowned. When her body was found, it was already unrecognizable. That was about seven years ago, and Gu Ling didn't pay much attention to the name of the deceased Miss Peng at the time. But the woman named Peng Wu on Xingluo Island, with twin sons around 5-6 years old, might be Peng Wei's deceased granddaughter.

Gu Ling thought of the pair of twin boys he saw in the cave during the day. At the time, he didn't pay much attention, but now that he knows the name Peng Wu, Gu Ling feels that the eyebrows and eyes of those two children resemble Peng Fan.

Originally, Gu Ling did not intend to act hastily for fear of startling the snake and being discovered by others on the island other than Sheng Yue. He thought that the woman would eventually return and would not die, so it wasn't time to take care of her yet. And there was no way to take those two boys away from Sheng Yue's side.

However, since the woman might be Peng Wei's granddaughter, Gu Ling let Feng Ming have a look. It's not because Peng Wei's granddaughter was more important than other women on the island, but if this woman came from a military family and was strong-willed, she wouldn't cause them trouble.

As for those who have already left Xingluo Island, Gu Ling will settle accounts with them afterwards, and save those who need to be saved.

Late at night, the City Lord Mansion on Xingluo Island was very quiet, with almost no light.

The door to the forbidden area was tightly locked, and there were no lanterns hanging. As Feng Ming approached cautiously, he heard a hoarse cry.

Feng Ming waited for a while, and seeing no movement in the forbidden area, he quickly rushed forward, pulled up Peng Wu who was sitting on the ground, covered her mouth, and dragged her into the shadows.

"It's me, Feng Ming." Feng Ming whispered.

Peng Wu stared at him incredulously. They had known each other before, and Feng Ming had returned to be the captain of the Coast Guard and was imprisoned in the dungeon. He was a somewhat famous person on the island.

Upon seeing Feng Ming's face, Peng Wu immediately calmed down.

Feng Ming held her hand and ran in the direction away from the forbidden area, all the way into the garden, and finally stopped at the Bajiao Pavilion.

"You've returned, are there others with you?" Anxiously, Peng Wu grabbed Feng Ming's arm and asked, "Is that Divine Doctor Su with you?"

Feng Ming shook his head, "No. I have a question for you, please answer truthfully. Before you came to this island, you had a family, right? Where is your home?"

Peng Wu's beautiful face was gaunt and haggard, her eyes reddened and swollen. When she heard Feng Ming's question, she pressed her lips together, hesitating for a moment. After coming to the island, besides her real name, she had never mentioned her background to anyone, and there were

very few who even knew her family name. Feng Ming had made a special effort to inquire. She knew that no one could help her escape, and the men on the island were all like wolves and tigers, while the women were merely possessions of the men. At first she tried to escape but was caught and beaten badly. Later, after having children, she couldn't leave anymore.

However, thinking that Feng Ming was considered a traitor of Xingluo Island, Peng Wu still answered his question, "My home is in Yao City, Liang Country."

Feng Ming then asked, "Was your grandfather General Peng Wei?"

Peng Wu widened her eyes, "How did you know?"

"I'll take you to meet someone." Feng Ming said and climbed up the ladder in the middle of the pavilion.

Peng Wu hurriedly followed and, due to being physically exhausted, almost fell but still managed to climb up.

Gu Ling was at the top, but Peng Wu didn't recognize him. He was only astonished by his stunning appearance.

"My name is Gu Ling. My wife is a close friend of your grandfather," Gu Ling got straight to the point. He had heard the conversation between Feng Ming and Peng Wu below, and Peng Wu's appearance was quite similar to Peng Fan's aunt, whom Gu Ling had seen before.

Peng Wu was dumbfounded. She had dreamed day and night of leaving this demon cave, but all she received was daily disappointment because she had witnessed her own death being staged by the person who captured her. Her clothes and everything with her identity were taken and placed on someone else's body. Over the years, the thought of her family believing her dead and not looking for her weighed heavily on her heart. But sometimes she felt it was a good thing that her family believed she was dead because not knowing her fate would be an even greater torment.

"Your brother's name is Peng Fan, and your father's name is Peng Qian," Gu Ling said.

"Yes! My father, he..." Peng Wu's eyes filled with tears in an instant. She remembered her father being in poor health and didn't know if Peng Qian was still alive.

"Your grandfather, your parents, and your brother are all alive," Gu Ling said with a faint expression. "My wife cured your father's illness."

Peng Wu was overwhelmed with great joy. Her legs suddenly gave out, and she nearly collapsed to the ground, but Feng Ming caught her and helped her sit down.

"Thank you... Thank you all... Please, save my children! They're only six years old!"

Peng Wu tried to kneel before Gu Ling again.

Gu Ling glanced in the direction of the forbidden area, "I saw your two sons today. They're alright, just under Sheng Yue's control. I can't bring them out for now."

“You’ve seen them? They’re really okay?” Peng Wu cried out in joy.

“I’ll do my best to get you off Xingluo Island and send you home. In the meantime, you need to take care of yourself and not do anything unnecessary,” Gu Ling said as he looked at Peng Wu.

Peng Wu nodded repeatedly, “I understand. I can’t save the children. It’s up to you. I won’t cause any trouble! Rest assured!”

“Send her back to where she’s staying,” Gu Ling instructed Feng Ming.

Peng Wu insisted on kneeling and bowing to Gu Ling before being escorted away by Feng Ming.

Feng Ming returned Peng Wu to her residence on the island, an isolated house outside the City Lord’s Mansion. All the others had already fled, leaving her alone.

“That must be the famous Beautiful Gu, right? I’ve heard about him since I was a child,” Peng Wu said, slightly relieved. “He and Divine Doctor Su are our family’s benefactors.”

Feng Ming advised Peng Wu to eat something and go to sleep. She would stay here for now. During the day, she could wander around near the forbidden area and then return to avoid arousing suspicion.

“I understand what you mean. I’ll be careful. You all be careful too!” Peng Wu expressed her gratitude.

Apart from the first day on the island when Gu Ling met Sheng Yue, the two hadn’t crossed paths for the next two days. Sheng Yue remained rooted in the forbidden area, while Gu Ling wandered around the island, watching as the people became fewer and fewer.

By the third day, the only ones left on the island were those inside the forbidden area, Peng Wu who refused to leave due to her sons, and Gu Ling and his group hidden away.

Qiao Jing and the others arrived on the island at a planned time, hiding the boat in a cave beneath a cliff that Feng Ming had told them about. Few people knew about this place, and most of them had already left. Feng Ming met the group and led them to Gu Ling.

Learning that Gu Ling found Peng Wei’s long-deceased granddaughter on the island and that Peng Wei also had two great-grandsons in Sheng Yue’s hands, Qiao Jing couldn’t help sighing, “At least it’s good news, but we should do our best not to let Mo Yan and Sheng Yue know about their mother’s connection to us. At this point, all we can do is wait for Mo Yan’s return.”

Chapter 477: 477. Return

Qiao Cong and Old Mu both had lived in seclusion for many years, they quickly chose an empty mansion to stay after they arrived at Xingluo Island. The mansion was right behind Peng Family’s residence.

As the only person who could leave but decided to stay on the island, Peng Wu would definitely attract attention from the forbidden area. However, the most dangerous place is often the safest one.

Old Mu said this was called “darkness under the lamp.” Moreover, Feng Ming had been in contact with Peng Wu secretly, knowing that Gu Ling had companions who lived nearby. Once elders from the forbidden area came to “care” for her, all she had to do was cry out loud and plead for mercy for her son.

Gu Ling still lived in Sheng Yue’s room, and Feng Ming was responsible for the meal delivery. She would bring Gu Ling’s meal to Bajiao Pavilion at mealtime, and later the meals were made by Peng Wu herself, often still warm.

Peng Wu wandered outside the forbidden area for three days, returning home to cook when it was time to eat, and then going out again after she had eaten.

On the fourth day, Peng Wu packed a basket with the meal she had prepared herself and went to knock on the gate of the forbidden area. She knocked for a long time before an elder appeared with an unfriendly tone, telling her to leave.

With tears in her eyes, Peng Wu said, “Elder Song, this is the meal I made for my child. I only ask you to help me bring it inside and give it to Mr. Sheng. He will surely accept it!”

Elder Song frowned, looking at the basket in Peng Wu’s hand, and took it, “I can bring it in, but if Mr. Sheng doesn’t accept it, I will throw it away!”

“Thank you, Elder Song! Thank you, Elder Song!” Peng Wu looked grateful.

The door of the forbidden area closed quickly, and Peng Wu stood outside waiting. She looked up at the sky and saw that the sun was warm today. She thought of her son’s past days and the peaceful and happy days at home before she was captured. She took a deep breath, not allowing tears to flow.

Elder Song really took the basket to Sheng Yue. He didn’t think that Peng Wu would play any tricks. After all, she said it was for her child and wouldn’t poison her own son.

Inside the cave, mealtime hadn’t begun yet, and the two boys were teaching the little girl how to speak, looking like real siblings.

“Brother, I’m hungry...” one of the boys’ belly grumbled.

The other one patted his back, “We’ll have food soon, don’t worry.”

Suddenly, they smelled the aroma of food and looked towards the entrance of the cave.

Elder Song brought in the basket, and Sheng Yue opened his eyes to look at him.

“It’s for the two boys; their mother made it,” Elder Song handed over the basket.

The eyes of the two boys lit up instantly. The younger one couldn’t help but ask, “Is my mother outside?”

Elder Song snorted lightly, and the older boy hurriedly covered his brother’s mouth, fearing he might say the wrong thing and cause trouble.

Sheng Yue’s expression was calm, “Put it down, thank you, Elder Song. If she comes to deliver food again, just let her in.”

“In that case, why not let her be a cook in the forbidden area?” Elder Song suggested.



Sheng Yue shook his head, “No.”

Elder Song’s suggestion was casual. If Peng Wu was really allowed into the forbidden area and her focus was entirely on saving her son, she might cause some trouble. It’s not that he was afraid of her, but with few people in the forbidden area, it was better to avoid problems. Delivering food shouldn’t be an issue.

After Elder Song left, Sheng Yue turned his head and saw the two boys staring eagerly at the basket on the ground.

Sheng Yue nodded, “Go ahead and eat.”

The two children rushed over immediately, the little girl stumbled behind them, calling out for her brothers.

There was a plate of steamed buns, white and plump with steam rising from them. The younger twin picked one up and started eating, “I love mom’s meat buns the most!”

The older brother took one and ran to Sheng Yue, “Master, try my mom’s steamed bun!”

Sheng Yue’s gaze fell on the steamed bun, recalling the bun he had eaten at Su Liang’s house last year, which was said to be made by Gu Ling herself.

Sheng Yue took it and said “Thank you.” The boy’s lips curled up slightly before he ran back, picked up another bun, and broke off a piece to feed the little girl who had thrown herself into his arms.

After finishing the meal, the younger brother asked the older one whether their mother would continue to send food to them. The older brother was unsure, so he looked at Sheng Yue.

Sheng Yue gave an affirmative answer again, “She will.”

Both children were happy and, in the afternoon, Sheng Yue taught them swordsmanship in the cave, and they studied it with great diligence.

So, every day, Peng Wu focused single-mindedly on cooking delicious meals, sending a portion first to the forbidden area, where Feng Ming would secretly come to collect his and Gu Ling’s food, and Old Mu would come to collect meals for the four of them. No one paid any attention to the cooking smoke rising from Peng Wu’s area every day.

During this time, Gu Ling had secretly explored all the places on the island other than the forbidden area, including the forests and the coastline situations. Qiao Jing and the others also became familiar with the island.

As such, after most people on Xingluo Island had left, the island appeared to be very peaceful on the surface, as if only a few people were secluded there.

Inside the forbidden area, Sheng Yue knew that Gu Ling and Feng Ming would not leave the island and that there might be other companions. However, apart from him, other people in the forbidden area knew nothing about it. Peng Wu’s two sons and the little girl had met Gu Ling, but they couldn’t figure out the situation and didn’t know that Gu Ling was an outsider. They were always controlled by Sheng Yue, so they quickly forgot about Gu Ling.

Qiao Jing said they now only awaited Mo Yan’s arrival. And so they waited for more than half a month.

Mo Yan returned to the island alone by boat, during a blood-red sunset.

On the way, he did not run into those who had left the island, because they all knew he would come back, and also knew that the coastal area near Jiaye City was impassable. So they deliberately went further away to avoid bumping into him or being caught by the government soldiers on land.

However, before reaching the shore, Mo Yan knew that an accident had occurred on the island, as he could see from a distance that many trees on the seaside had been cut down and the cabins used for rest by the guard team had been torn down. There was not a single boat near the dock, and there were discarded clothes, food residues, and damaged lanterns on the coast.

Mo Yan docked his boat at the harbor, jumped ashore, secured his boat, and then entered the forest.

Afterward, instead of coming out the other side of the forest, Mo Yan moved stealthily and took a detour to the back of the forbidden area.

Aside from Elder Song, another elder named Pang had been guarding the forbidden area throughout the year. He was currently sunbathing atop a large tree at the back of the forbidden area, holding a dry tobacco pipe in his arms and feeling drowsy.

Suddenly feeling someone approaching, Elder Pang straightened his back, his eyes narrowed, and a flash of silver light emanated from the dry tobacco pipe, which was his weapon.

"It's me." Mo Yan's old and deep voice rang in his ears as he lightly landed on the branch next to him.

Elder Pang's expression changed, "Master is back!"

"What happened?" Mo Yan asked coldly.

Elder Pang truthfully reported that the people on the island had fled while Mo Yan was away.

"At that time, Elder Song and I asked Young Master Sheng Yue whether we should stop them, but Young Master Sheng Yue instructed, all we needed to do was guard the forbidden area well and not bother about those traitors." Elder Pang said respectfully, "Young Master Sheng Yue has been in the forbidden area with the three children and has never come out."

Mo Yan turned his ruby ring that he wore on his left index finger and looked at Elder Pang, asking, "Has any outsider come here?"

Elder Pang instinctively shook his head, but then remembered Feng Ming's rescue, "Someone did come and rescue him, but we did not see who it was, much like when Gu Ling came to the island to rescue people."

"Are there any people left elsewhere?" Mo Yan asked again.

Elder Pang shook his head, "There is only one woman left, Old Zhong's eldest grandson's wife. Young Master Sheng Yue seized her twin sons, and the woman refused to leave. She has been left behind and cooks meals every day, sending them to the entrance of the forbidden area, and Elder Song takes them to Young Master Sheng Yue. There are no other people."

After listening, Mo Yan did not ask any more questions and flew away.

At nightfall, two lamps were lit in the depths of the cave.

Sheng Yue was having dinner with the three children, and their meals were now prepared and delivered by Peng Wu every day.

Sheng Yue held the little girl in his arms and fed her porridge, while the two boys sat upright and ate by themselves, their actions quite orderly.

Hearing footsteps approaching, Sheng Yue put down his spoon, wiped the rice stuck to the corner of the little girl's mouth with a napkin, and looked over.

First, a shadow appeared, but Sheng Yue didn't move. Then he saw Mo Yan's face appear in the light.

Sheng Yue immediately got up with the little girl in his arms and bowed, "Master has returned."

Mo Yan glanced around, noticing the traces of a "family of four" living by the pool, and his gaze finally fell on the three children. He asked Sheng Yue, "Are you trying to imitate my granddaughter's husband? Don't tell me you have taken a fancy to my granddaughter?"

Mo Yan's suspicion wasn't entirely baseless. Anyone who knew the situation in Su Liang and Gu Ling's home would think that Sheng Yue was deliberately imitating Gu Ling, with three children corresponding to Gu Ling's one daughter and two young disciples.

Sheng Yue's expression remained calm. "I am indeed imitating Gu Ling, but my disciple has no such intentions towards Su Liang. I suspect that Gu Ling might come to the island, so I purposely wait for him here. If he does come and sees this scene, he would inevitably be moved."

Mo Yan snorted lightly, "If he comes, he would probably want to kill you even more."

"I'm only doing this to guard the forbidden area," Sheng Yue said.

Mo Yan nodded, "It's very useful. I knew that leaving this most important task to you would not be a problem."

Mo Yan didn't bother asking about the people who fled the island or whether Sheng Yue had discovered the substitutes he had arranged earlier. Because there was no need to ask; Mo Yan already knew the answers.

Mo Yan also sat down cross-legged, and both little boys lowered their heads nervously, not daring to speak.

"You can continue eating," Mo Yan said.

The two little boys then picked up their spoons again, still not daring to raise their heads. The little girl looked at Mo Yan curiously, not afraid of him.

Mo Yan smiled faintly at the little girl, "It's a pity that I didn't get to see Su Liang's daughter on this trip."

Sheng Yue didn't actively inquire about anything, just listening to Mo Yan say, "I thought Gu Ling had already come to the island."

Sheng Yue nodded, "This disciple also had some suspicions, but due to the changes on the island, those people who wouldn't leave were untrustworthy. Elders Song and Pang had to guard the forbidden area, so this disciple didn't dare to leave here rashly, and never investigated."

"What you did was right. There's no need to investigate," Mo Yan picked up a steamed bun and finished it quickly. "Whether they are here or not, we will know soon."

After Peng Wu's dinner was finished, Mo Yan stood up, "I will go back and clean up, change clothes, and then come back."

"Yes, Master," Sheng Yue nodded.

After Mo Yan left the cave, he returned to his small courtyard in the forbidden area.

At this moment, Gu Ling was standing at the highest point of Bajiao Pavilion in the garden, looking in this direction.

No one saw Mo Yan when he came to the island. Gu Ling did not arrange for anyone to watch the beach because if Mo Yan came back and met with him, he might be caught.

Since Gu Ling came to Xingluo Island, the lights in Mo Yan's room had never been turned on at night because no one else dared to enter, and Sheng Yue, who could enter, always stayed in the cave.

But at that moment, Gu Ling suddenly saw that the lights in Mo Yan's courtyard were on.

"Feng Ming," Gu Ling spoke.

Feng Ming, who was standing behind him, immediately replied, "What are your orders, Your Highness?"

"Mo Yan may have returned. Go and tell my master and the others to hide well and not to approach the forbidden area. If they encounter Mo Yan, don't do anything, just run farther away," Gu Ling said.

Feng Ming's expression changed, nodded his agreement, and left.

Then, under the moonlight, Gu Ling skillfully disguised himself as Qiao Jing and left Bajiao Pavilion, heading in the direction of the forbidden area.

Knowing that Mo Yan had returned, Gu Ling told them to hide further away, and Lao Mu agreed, "We need to avoid being captured, so we have a chance to save people!"

Qiao Cong felt frustrated, "Heaven is really blind to grant such powerful magic treasures to such a despicable person with a bad character! It's simply helping a tyrant commit evil acts!"

Cheng Yun hurriedly stopped Qiao Cong's rant, "Senior, there is a fate in the dark, let's not talk about it anymore."

"We understand," Qiao Jing said calmly, "If you see Gu Ling again, tell him to be careful. The next plan mainly depends on him. We will stay here and wait for his order."

Feng Ming returned to Bajiao Pavilion to find Gu Ling gone, suspecting that he had gone to the forbidden area, so he stayed in the pavilion and waited.

In the middle of the night, Mo Yan entered the cave again.

The twins were already sleeping behind the stone screen, and the little girl was sleeping on a small bed next to the pool. Sheng Yue was sitting cross-legged, and when he heard the familiar footsteps, he stood up.

“You did well.” Mo Yan once again affirmed Sheng Yue’s merit in guarding the forbidden area and went straight to the point. “I have brought Su Liang back.”

Sheng Yue didn’t show any surprise as that would be too fake. He just asked, “What are master’s plans next?”

“All this time, I have been unable to determine whether Su Liang or Gu Ling is the Transmigrator.” Mo Yan just confessed that he never truly believed Gu Ling to be the Transmigrator and Su Liang not to be, “Before I knew that Su Liang was my granddaughter, I sent He Wei to ‘kill’ her, but actually to test her. A real Transmigrator wouldn’t be killed by them.”

Mo Yan paused for a moment, looking at the calm pool, and said, “Perhaps, both husband and wife are.”

“Do you want to find a way to make Gu Ling reveal himself?” Sheng Yue asked.

Mo Yan shook his head, “We will talk about it tomorrow. No need for us to do anything; he will come out by himself. There is something tonight that I need to confirm.”

After saying that, Mo Yan took a step back, and Sheng Yue quietly stepped back as well.

Then, Mo Yan raised his hand, and a person appeared out of thin air between them. Before they could stand steady, Mo Yan grabbed their arm.

It was Yan Shiba, who was disguised as Su Liang.

She was not wearing the clothes she had on when she was captured but the ones Mo Yan had prepared for her in his portable space. Her hair was loose, covering most of her face.

Before being captured, Yan Shiba had always prepared for being taken away, so she had Disguise Medicine on her. After being locked in Mo Yan’s space, she suspected that every move was being watched by Mo Yan. But after a while, she had to repair her disguise. To avoid exposing herself, Yan Shiba would only fix her disguise while bathing naked – after all, Su Liang was Mo Yan’s granddaughter; he wouldn’t be so perverted as to watch his granddaughter bathe, right? – This was Yan Shiba’s thinking.

As it turned out, Yan Shiba succeeded. Up to this point, Mo Yan still hadn’t discovered that she was a fake. This was also because Mo Yan had never let Yan Shiba out and there had been no communication between the two characters.

“Xiaoliang.” Mo Yan’s eyes were gentle, “I had no choice but to bring you to Xingluo Island like this. There’s a big misunderstanding between us, and I hope you won’t hold a grudge for what happened before.”

Yan Shiba’s eyes were cold, and her voice was icy, “Grandfather and granddaughter? What a joke!”

The smile on Mo Yan’s face disappeared in an instant, “Whether you admit it or not, it is the truth. I have a question for you, and I hope you will answer honestly.”

Yan Shiba snorted coldly, without speaking.

Mo Yan asked, “Are you the Transmigrator?”

Yan Shiba sneered, then retorted, “What do you think?”

Mo Yan looked past Yan Shiba to Sheng Yue and then to the little bed.

Sheng Yue immediately understood and held the little girl in his arms.

“Xiaoliang, I didn’t bring Nuannuan with you, not because I couldn’t.” Mo Yan said, “If you cooperate, we can talk about anything. Otherwise, you will regret it.”

Yan Shiba glanced at the child in Sheng Yue’s arms, “I’m not surprised at all that you guys would resort to such despicable and shameless tactics.” She looked back at Mo Yan, “There is no misunderstanding between us, and I don’t have any relatives as helpless as you. At this point, it seems meaningless for me to deny it any further, you guessed right, I am the Transmigrator, and Gu Ling is not.”

Upon hearing this, Mo Yan sighed, “Perhaps, it is fate. In this case, are you still my granddaughter, or a spirit from another world who has taken over her body?”

Yan Shiba scoffed, “As soon as you heard that I am the person you are looking for, you immediately disown me? I admire your shamelessness; it is truly rare, even in my two lifetimes.”

Mo Yan sighed again, then his eyes darkened, and he forcefully pushed Yan Shiba into the pool!

Yan Shiba ate the food Mo Yan put in his space every day, which contained medicine to suppress her internal strength. But her body was normal because Mo Yan still needed her to dive underwater to explore the way.

The reason why Yan Shiba didn’t resist was that she had anticipated all of this and planned to experience it. As for whether it was dangerous or not, that was not her main concern.

“You know what I want; go and try it. Don’t make me force you. I think you are also very curious about what is down there.” Mo Yan stood on the shore and said.

Chapter 478: 478. The next plan

A gust of wind blew into the cave, and Mo Yan looked back before returning his gaze to the gradually calming surface of the water.

Sheng Yue still hadn’t put the sleeping little girl in his arms, and he was also looking at the pool.

From behind the stone screen, the younger of the twin brothers peeked out, only to be quickly pulled back by the older brother, soon becoming quiet again.

The time Yan Shiba spent in the water was almost the same as Ying Ying's previous attempt.

The "miracle" Mo Yan was waiting for did not happen, as the water surface rippled again, and Yan Shiba's head emerged, gasping for air.

Mo Yan's eyes narrowed slightly, and he glanced at Sheng Yue, "Pull her up."

Only then did Sheng Yue bend down to put the little girl back on the bed, then walked forward two steps, and reached out to Yan Shiba.

After Yan Shiba's breathing stabilized, she glanced coldly at Sheng Yue, swam over, didn't take his hand, and climbed up on her own.

The water in the pool wasn't very cold, and Yan Shiba was dripping wet, with her hair and clothes dripping water. She wiped her face with her hand and said to Mo Yan, "No luck."

This wasn't a phrase from this world, but one Yan Shiba had heard from Su Liang, learned what it meant, and found it interesting enough to remember.

"You didn't see anything?" Mo Yan questioned skeptically, "You need to try harder."

"People have an instinct to survive," Yan Shiba scoffed. "Otherwise, you press my head down and not let me come up? Drowning me would only make the thing you want to see even less likely to happen."

Mo Yan looked at Yan Shiba's face, his eyes devoid of warmth, "You know what to do, but you're unwilling. Don't make me force you."

Yan Shiba sneered, "Using that kid? Or those people you captured into the magic treasure?"

Sheng Yue's eyes flickered slightly. He had already suspected that Mo Yan wouldn't just bring one person back, and sure enough, there were others, and it seemed like quite a few.

"You know that's enough," Mo Yan didn't deny it. "Gu Ling might be on the island too. If I lock him up, you'll learn to behave."

Yan Shiba frowned and fell silent.

"Tell me, did you find anything, or keep going until you tell me something useful?" Mo Yan's tone was icy.

Yan Shiba wrung out the water on her sleeve and closed her eyes, "I did find something, but I couldn't hold on any longer."

Mo Yan's eyes narrowed, "What did you find?"

Yan Shiba countered, "Did you guard this lousy water hole for so many years without ever going in yourself?"

"Answer my question!" Mo Yan said coldly.

Yan Shiba continued to wring out her clothes, "I saw a white light at the bottom of the pool."

Mo Yan's face lit up, "What kind of light? Is it a passage?"

Yan Shiba snorted, "Can't you understand human language? White light, not a passage. The light was dazzling, and I couldn't see what was beneath it. When I tried to get closer, I couldn't breathe and came back up."

"You go back down and head straight for the white light!" Mo Yan said, grabbing Yan Shiba's arm, trying to push her back in.

Yan Shiba shook off his grip, stepped back two steps, her back against the stone wall, and frowned at Mo Yan, "Do you think you finally see hope? Can't you let me catch my breath? If I drown, will you be satisfied?"

The exchanges of words and looks between the two had nothing to do with "family" or "grandparent and grandchild." Mo Yan's actions showed that he didn't care about his supposed granddaughter. Bringing back "Su Liang" made him eager to have her scout the way, even without waiting for the next day.

"You can rest, and when you're rested, you can go back down." Surprisingly, Mo Yan didn't get angry. On the contrary, his tone became even gentler, "Are you hungry?"

Yan Shiba responded without hesitation, "I'm very hungry. I need to eat meat to recover my strength."

Mo Yan looked at Sheng Yue, and Sheng Yue immediately nodded, "I will arrange it right away." With that, he walked towards the entrance of the cave.

Mo Yan took a dry towel from his space for Yan Shiba. Yan Shiba took it and sat down against the stone wall, covering his face with the towel. "I need to rest for a while. Call me when the meal is ready."

"Alright," Mo Yan replied.

A moment later, Mo Yan had a blanket in hand. He walked over and covered Yan Shiba with it before asking, "Do you want to go inside to change your clothes?"

"Why didn't you say that earlier?" Yan Shiba grabbed the blanket.

The next moment, Mo Yan's left hand grabbed Yan Shiba's arm, and they instantly disappeared from their original location.

Mo Yan sat cross-legged by the pool, and as he stared at the now-calm water, he exhaled a long breath.

After leaving the cave, Sheng Yue headed towards the forbidden area's kitchen.

Halfway there, he was hit squarely on the head by a falling pine cone from a tree.

Sheng Yue glanced around. Elder Song and Elder Pang should be guarding the front and back gates at this time. He leaped up and climbed the tall ancient pine tree.

"Is it Mo Yan?" Gu Ling's voice rang out from a nearby tree.

Sheng Yue spotted a shadow and replied, "He's back, and he's captured Su Liang."



Gu Ling's heart sank, "Just her?"

Sheng Yue shook his head, "Your daughter and disciple are not there, but there are other people trapped in his magic treasure. I only saw Su Liang being released."

"How is she?" Gu Ling asked.

But Sheng Yue said, "Earlier in the cave, I thought you would not be able to resist barging in. After all, it's Su Liang. You should know what Mo Yan would do when he captured her."

"If I had entered, I would have been captured too," Gu Ling coldly replied.

"It was wise of you not to go in." Sheng Yue said. "You wait here, I'll go and order the kitchen to cook dinner. Su Liang said she's hungry. We'll talk later." With that, Sheng Yue jumped down from the tree, checked his surroundings, and continued towards the kitchen.

Sheng Yue called the cook and asked her to prepare a meal for one person as soon as possible. The meal had to be well prepared and include meat. He would come back for it later.

After leaving the kitchen, Sheng Yue did not return to the cave. Instead, he climbed back up the ancient pine tree.

"Su Liang has already been pushed into the pool by Mo Yan once." Sheng Yue said, "She came up and said she saw a white light. Mo Yan plans to let her eat first before going down again. What do you plan to do?"

At this moment, Gu Ling still didn't know that the captured Su Liang was a fake. Before he left, he hadn't discussed the matter of arranging a stand-in with Su Liang. Yan Shiba acting as Su Liang's stand-in was her own idea, not arranged by Su Liang.

Therefore, when he heard Sheng Yue's words, Gu Ling felt terrible. But he constantly reminded himself that he must not lose his rationality in such circumstances, and that he should trust Su Liang to protect her own life. He couldn't act recklessly.

However, Sheng Yue then said, "There's something I have to tell you. The Su Liang captured by Mo Yan is a fake."

Gu Ling wanted to slap Sheng Yue to death! Since he was saying this, he must have evidence. But he deliberately kept this from Gu Ling until now.

"Don't get angry. I just wanted to see if you would rush to save her if it really was Su Liang." Sheng Yue said, "But it seems you won't, which is for the best. If you act impulsively, it won't benefit any of us."

"How do you know she's fake?" Gu Ling asked.

Sheng Yue replied calmly, "I couldn't be sure if it were anyone else, but that's Yan Shiba. She had been under my control for a long time, so I know her to some extent. Of course, she disguised herself very successfully, acting exactly like Su Liang, completely unlike her own character, which was why she was able to deceive Mo Yan, who still hasn't discovered her true identity. Mo Yan doesn't understand Su Liang or Yan Shiba. The proof is the scar I saw on her right arm when she

came out of the water—that's a cut I made. If Su Liang has the same scar in the same place, I have nothing more to say."

Gu Ling, of course, knew best whether there were scars on Su Liang's body. Hearing what Sheng Yue said, her heart loosened. As for whether it was Su Liang who anticipated that Mo Yan would capture her and asked Yan Shiba to act as her substitute, or whether Yan Shiba decided to do it on her own, it was still uncertain. Gu Ling tended to think it was the latter, which was more in line with Yan Shiba's preference for pursuing excitement and caring the most about Su Liang.

Since Yan Shiba came as Su Liang's substitute, Gu Ling would not leave her alone. But as long as it was not Su Liang, he wouldn't be so passive. Because Su Liang was the real Transmigrator, if there really was a way to another world in that pool, and as Mo Yan wished, only the Transmigrator could go there, the result would be unpredictable if Su Liang was forced to go. Mo Yan wanted to see Su Liang go in and disappear inside, but that was something Gu Ling could never accept.

Of course, regarding this matter, Su Liang and Gu Ling had discussed the possibility of returning to their original world before they knew about Mo Yan. Both of them agreed that it was impossible, as a one-way transmigration was already an inexplicable miracle.

But now, considering that Ying Ying, the descendant of the Transmigrator, had seen a white light at the bottom of the pool, Gu Ling had to take into account all possible situations. After all, his special ability and Su Liang's transmigration itself transcended common sense and cognition. As for Yan Shiba's claim of seeing the white light, Gu Ling thought it was to deceive Mo Yan because she knew Ying Ying had seen it before.

"So it's Yan Shiba, and you won't save her tonight." Sheng Yue looked at Gu Ling and said, "That's right. She knows what she is here for, and she won't die in the water. Mo Yan's hope lies with her, and he won't let her die before he realizes she's not Su Liang. Now, can you tell me your plan? I'm sure you have one."

Something flew towards Sheng Yue, who caught it. It was a small medicine bottle.

"There's a pill in here. Tomorrow, find a way to make Mo Yan take it." Gu Ling said.

Sheng Yue opened the bottle and couldn't see the medicine inside. "What is it?"

"Truth-telling drug." Gu Ling said.

Sheng Yue's eyes narrowed slightly, "After taking this drug, people will speak the truth obediently?"

"Yes," Gu Ling replied.

"Made by Su Liang? Truly a Divine Doctor." Sheng Yue understood the power of this kind of medicine, of course. To deal with a tricky enemy and get them to confess important information, it's often difficult to verify the authenticity of the enemy's words. If this drug could ensure that someone's words couldn't be faked, it would solve the problem easily.

At the moment, both Sheng Yue and Gu Ling were most wary of Mo Yan, and what made them difficult to deal with was his magic treasure – whether it was an object or exists in his mind,

whether it could change ownership, and how to use it. Only by figuring these out could they truly deal with Mo Yan. Otherwise, Gu Ling would hesitate even to approach him.

“Will he know what he said afterward?” Sheng Yue asked.

“No, but he will be unconscious for a while.” Gu Ling said.

“In that case, once the drug is given, I will be exposed as well. And if we can’t take his space, there will still be hostages in his hands that we can’t save. We still can’t do anything to him.” Sheng Yue sighed almost inaudibly.

“You object?” Gu Ling asked.

Sheng Yue shook his head, “Of course not. I agree with your plan. We have to do something, or the situation will only get worse. Even if the magic treasure can’t change its owner, having a showdown with him face to face is just a matter of time. But I am not sure when I will have the opportunity to drug Mo Yan tomorrow. You won’t be present, aren’t you afraid that the magic treasure can change hands and be snatched by me?”

“If you can take it, I can seize it back.” Gu Ling replied indifferently.

“That’s good, then we both have a chance to try.” Sheng Yue nodded, “I should go now. If there’s news tomorrow, I don’t need to look for you; you will show up.”

“Find an opportunity to release the child in the cave.” Gu Ling said.

Sheng Yue shook his head, “Doing this now will arouse Mo Yan’s suspicion.”

“After drugging him.” Gu Ling said, “I will take care of the two elders.”

“As you say.” Sheng Yue disappeared into the night after leaving the ancient tree.

Gu Ling did not leave and waited for a while. Seeing Sheng Yue carrying a basket and walking under the tree, Gu Ling secretly followed, keeping a safe distance. Watching Sheng Yue enter the cave, he hid outside the cave, not leaving or approaching the entrance. He couldn’t hear the movement inside, but if someone came out, he could see it.

Sheng Yue entered the cave, only to see Mo Yan, not “Su Liang”.

Mo Yan looked at him as he entered, and Yan Shiba, who had changed her clothes and had half-dried hair, appeared not far from him.

“Miss Su, let’s eat.” Sheng Yue took out the food and placed it on the small square table where he usually ate with the three children. He handed the chopsticks to Yan Shiba.

Without saying a word, Yan Shiba started eating at a not slow pace but with elegance, which she had also learned from Su Liang on purpose. At that time, imitating Su Liang at home, there was another reason: Yan Shiba tried her best to deceive Gu Xiaonuan, desperately wanting Gu Xiaonuan to call her “mother.” Unfortunately, she put a lot of effort into it, fooling many people at home, but Gu Xiaonuan never fell for it. The reason, which Yan Shiba later knew, was that Ji Xiaoshu told her

– Gu Xiaonuan was very smart, knowing her real mother would not suddenly ask her to call her like that.

But when Yan Shiba “floated by” around Gu Xiaonuan, or appeared suddenly before her, Gu Xiaonuan would not call him ‘mom’, which left Yan Shiba at a loss. Ji Xiaoshu clarified for her—Yan Shiba looked at Gu Xiaonuan with an overly doting gaze, something Su Liang would never do.

As they ate, Yan Shiba’s gaze wandered to a small bed nearby, where a young girl around Gu Xiaonuan’s age lay wrapped in a blanket, fast asleep.

Yan Shiba’s eyes dimmed, and she suddenly missed her children at home. This trip had indeed been exhilarating, and she had genuinely been able to help Su Liang. She would not regret it, even if she were injured or lost her life, but she felt bored at home and missed it when she was far away. Now that she had a family, she was not afraid of death, but she absolutely did not want to die. She had to go back, continue her efforts, and trick Gu Xiaonuan into calling her mom.

Mo Yan and Sheng Yue saw Yan Shiba’s gaze fixed on the sleeping child. Mo Yan naturally assumed that “Su Liang” missed her daughter, while Sheng Yue thought that Yan Shiba’s acting was quite good...

Yan Shiba had eaten half of the food Sheng Yue brought, then put down her chopsticks and wiped her mouth before asking Mo Yan, “If I go down again and can’t come back but successfully travel back, don’t you think this is too cruel for me? I won’t be able to take my child with me, and I won’t even have a chance to say a proper goodbye.”

It sounded like something “Su Liang” would say after seeing the little girl in the cave and thinking of her own daughter.

Mo Yan’s expression was indifferent, “Do you want me to bring Nuannuan here, too?”

Yan Shiba shook her head, “No. I want to go home, my home is here. You want me to willingly search for Transmigration Road, but I can’t do it.”

Mo Yan was silent for a moment, “I understand your intentions. But your home is not here, you have already left a child for Gu Ling. Father and daughter will keep each other company in the future, and in your absence, they will live well. You should return to the place where you truly belong. If you don’t cooperate, I won’t go looking for Nuannuan if you get too far away for the time being, but Gu Ling is probably on the island. If I let him into my space, I can starve him to death inside without doing anything, and no one can save him. He won’t be able to see you or even your child ever again.”

Yan Shiba’s face showed anger, but soon calmed down, looking coldly at Mo Yan and said, “Release the children in this cave and the people in your space first. I can’t escape your control and will listen to you.”

Mo Yan shook his head, “You know that’s not possible. The premise of me releasing them is to capture Gu Ling or your friends. Are you sure you want to make matters more complicated?”

Yan Shiba clenched her fist, then released it, “You already have plenty of hostages in your hands, so there’s no need to torment the children, right? You can keep the people in your space, but release the children in the cave and let them return to their parents. It’s not an unreasonable request. I’ll

cooperate with you, so you should show some sincerity. Having children around makes me feel terrible and will affect what you want me to do.”

“Their parents have already abandoned them and ran away,” Mo Yan said coldly.

Yan Shiba stared at him, “I don’t believe it.”

Mo Yan frowned, “Fine, as you wish. But that girl has really been abandoned. Sheng Yue, send all three children to the woman who stayed behind.”

Sheng Yue replied respectfully, “Yes.” With that, he went behind the water curtain and brought out the two children who were merely pretending to sleep out of fear.

Yan Shiba hadn’t seen these twins before and wouldn’t recognize them even if she had seen them. She didn’t know if Sheng Yue would play any tricks, but she felt that with hostages in Mo Yan’s hands, there was no need to hurt the children, so she still insisted on doing this.

Sheng Yue carried the little girl from the small bed and walked out, with the twins holding hands and following behind.

Yan Shiba watched them disappear from her sight, “We’ll continue talking when Sheng Yue comes back.”

Mo Yan didn’t say anything either.

Sheng Yue really sent all three children to Peng Wu. Late at night, Peng Wu was already in bed but tossing and turning due to worrying about her children. Suddenly seeing her children being sent back, she was overjoyed.

Peng Wu didn’t just get her two children back, but also took in another child. She knew the child had been abandoned by her parents and felt very sorry for her, so she promised to take good care of her without waiting for Sheng Yue to speak.

Sheng Yue said nothing, simply setting down the child and leaving.

When Sheng Yue returned to the cave, he saw Yan Shiba holding a pillow from the small bed and standing by the pool.

Mo Yan said coldly, “I fulfilled my promise to you.”

“Fine.” Yan Shiba said icily, putting down the small pillow, “There’s nothing more to say now. I’ll do what you want me to do, but I have no idea what the result will be, and I might not even encounter the white light next time.”

“You can try several times. Delaying will be of no benefit to you. If you want to see Gu Ling and be reunited with him in my space, I’m not against it.” As Mo Yan finished speaking, he reached out and made a “please” gesture, “Go on.”

Yan Shiba took a deep breath and dove back into the water.

Chapter 479: 479. Evil cannot defeat righteousness

The little girl was in a daze and almost woke up, but Peng Wu managed to lull her back to sleep.

After settling the little girl, Peng Wu turned around and saw her two long-lost sons. She couldn't help crying, and the mother and sons embraced and wept together.

Once their emotions calmed down, Peng Wu asked the children if they were hungry. The younger boy said he was, so Peng Wu took him to the kitchen to make a late-night snack. The older boy volunteered to stay and watch his sister.

"Mom, the Island Master has returned, and a lady jumped into the water," the younger son told Peng Wu.

Feng Ming had covertly informed Peng Wu about Mo Yan's return, so Peng Wu suspected that the woman who jumped into the water might be Su Liang. A worried expression crossed her face. Her children were now back with her, but they were still on Xingluo Island, unable to leave. She believed in Gu Ling's promise but still felt apprehensive, not knowing what would happen next.

"Mom, is Dad asleep?"

At the mention of this, Peng Wu came back to her senses. As she looked at her son, who was eagerly awaiting her answer, she sighed inwardly. She had never felt any affection for the man who had forced her to beat and abuse her. That man had left, and Peng Wu's only regret was not being able to kill him herself, even though he was her two children's biological father.

However, in Peng Wu's eyes, her family on the island consisted solely of her sons. She had no connection with the man who abandoned them. Besides feeling disgusted, Peng Wu had no other thoughts about his decision to abandon his two sons. She was also not sad for her children, as she knew she would take good care of them; they might need a father, but not one with such a corrupted character.

Since getting to know Gu Ling and Feng Ming, Peng Wu had regained hope. Now, she was just waiting for the opportunity to take her children back to the Peng Family – her true home, with her real relatives.

"He left," Peng Wu told her son truthfully without any attempt to deceive him. "They were afraid the Island Master would come back and harm them, so they all ran away."

The child couldn't understand this and his eyes reddened. "Will Dad ever come back?"

Peng Wu shook her head. "None of them will come back, and we will leave eventually too."

The child was heartbroken. "Dad doesn't want my brother and me."

"Don't cry for someone who isn't worth it." Peng Wu, who was usually very gentle with her children, showed a stern expression. "As for someone like that, just pretend he doesn't exist. He abandoned you, and you should abandon him."

The child was shocked and stopped crying. He stared at Peng Wu for a while, then got up from the small stool and went behind her, wrapping his little arms around her leg. "Mom, you will never abandon us, right?"

Peng Wu turned around and embraced her son. "Of course not. Don't worry, I'll take you back home after some time. There will be grandfather, maternal grandparents, and uncles."

The child had never heard Peng Wu mention the Peng Family before, and he couldn't help but be curious. "Where is Grandfather's home?"

Peng Wu smiled. "It's very far away, and it's beautiful. There's heavy snowfall in winter."

The little boy's eyes lit up. "My brother and I both want to go to a place where it snows in winter!" Peng Wu had told them about snow before, and the children were very curious about it.

As Peng Wu continued to prepare food, the child asked about the people in the Peng Family. Peng Wu began to recount her most beautiful memories from her past.

After making the late-night snack, Peng Wu took her younger son back to the room and called her older son to join them.

"The sister is still asleep." The elder boy had just sat down when the younger boy said, "Brother, Mom said Dad doesn't want us anymore!"

The older boy pursed his lips, "I know."

"Mom also said that she will take us to Grandfather's house after a while! Grandfather's house is great – it snows in winter, and our great-grandfather is a very powerful General!" The younger boy was excited.

The older boy looked at Peng Wu, and she nodded with a tender expression in her eyes. "Yes, we will go home soon, to our true home."

Feng Ming had been waiting at the Bajiao Pavilion. It wasn't until late at night that he saw Gu Ling return.

"Prince, is everything alright?" Feng Ming asked. He wanted to know if Mo Yan had captured Su Liang.

Gu Ling shook his head slightly. "He captured decoys – Yan Shiba disguised as Su Liang, and there are other hostages."

Feng Ming breathed a sigh of relief, "As long as the one who was captured isn't our Master. For the others, we'll figure something out."

"Mo Yan freed the three children from the cave. Sheng Yue has already sent them to Peng Wu," said Gu Ling.

Feng Ming's face lit up with joy, "That's great! Even if there are hostages, as long as the children are released, things will be much better."

"Go find Peng Wu and have her get ready to leave before daybreak," Gu Ling said.

Feng Ming's expression changed, "I'm afraid she won't be able to make it with just the children. The journey isn't safe either."

"Ask my master to escort them." Gu Ling said, "I'll go find them, you go help Peng Wu prepare."

“Yes.” Feng Ming saluted and left Bajiao Pavilion with Gu Ling, heading in the same direction.

Inside the cave, Mo Yan and Sheng Yue had to wait slightly longer than last time. Yan Shiba surfaced, choking on water, struggling with both hands, and sank again.

Without waiting for Mo Yan’s order, Sheng Yue jumped into the water to rescue Yan Shiba, quickly pulling her up.

Yan Shiba didn’t have the strength to stop Sheng Yue from touching her this time. Sheng Yue helped her, vigorously patting her back. She spit out several mouthfuls of water, coughing and gasping for breath, looking quite miserable.

Seeing this, Mo Yan’s face showed disappointment, his eyes still void of any warmth as he coldly asked, “What about this time?”

After a while, Yan Shiba caught her breath and replied, “I didn’t see it.”

Mo Yan’s face darkened, “I don’t believe it!”

Yan Shiba coldly looked at Mo Yan, “I don’t know what’s down there, and neither do you. I’m risking my life to explore for you, and if you don’t believe me, go down there yourself! I don’t know what’s going on, but this time I tried my best, and the white light didn’t appear again! Maybe it only appears once a day, or maybe it only appears at certain times a day! Who knows!”

Mo Yan snorted coldly, “You’re deliberately stalling for time, waiting for Gu Ling to save you.”

Yan Shiba nodded, “If you say so. Right now, I don’t have any strength left, and I need to rest. I can’t go down there for the time being.”

“I thought you didn’t want Gu Ling to fall into my hands,” Mo Yan said coldly.

“Of course, I’m not crazy. But that’s a separate matter.” Yan Shiba frowned, “First, I tried my best and didn’t find anything new. That’s true. Second, I don’t want to leave or die. Even if you force me to leave, I still want to say goodbye to my man. That’s also true. You can’t think I could choose not to enter the Transmigration Road when it opens for me, right? The situation in the water can only indicate that I haven’t seen the right moment to move.”

When Mo Yan heard the last two sentences, his eyes narrowed, “Su Liang, don’t play tricks.”

“In any case, if you don’t believe whatever I say, then there’s nothing to talk about.”

Yan Shiba got up and wrapped herself with the quilt on the small bed, “Even if you want to force me to go back down there by killing innocent people, let’s wait until I’ve completely recovered before talking about it. I’m cold, tired, and irritable right now.”

Mo Yan didn’t say a word, walked over to Yan Shiba, and put his hand on her shoulder.

Then, Sheng Yue once again saw Yan Shiba disappear before his eyes.

Mo Yan turned his head and asked Sheng Yue, “Do you think what she said is true?”



Sheng Yue respectfully replied, "She's an extremely clever person. Apprentice believes that her words may be a mixture of truth and lies."

"How can I make her willingly go?" The question was both for Sheng Yue and for Mo Yan himself.

Sheng Yue sighed softly, "Tomorrow, Gu Ling is likely to show up. At the moment, Su Liang is waiting for Gu Ling to save her and will not be willing to explore the way for Master. Perhaps, once Master catches Gu Ling, Su Liang will truly be obedient."

Mo Yan's eyes slightly narrowed, "That's the only way."

Sheng Yue asked if they needed to search for Gu Ling's whereabouts.

Mo Yan shook his head, "No. We'll just guard the forbidden area and wait for him to show up voluntarily. If we go looking for him, we might fall into some kind of trap."

"Master's words make sense." Sheng Yue nodded.

"I'm here, you should go rest, and come back when it's daylight. You've had a hard time these days," Mo Yan said.

"To be on the safe side, I'll rest here. If I leave the forbidden area alone, I'm afraid Gu Ling might catch me or kill me," Sheng Yue said.

"That works too," Mo Yan nodded.

Peng Wu had just finished having a late-night snack with her two sons and was preparing to wash them up and send them to bed quickly when Feng Ming appeared. Peng Wu's oldest son looked vigilant at first, but soon recognized him, "Uncle Feng, didn't you leave already?"

Peng Wu told her children that Feng Ming was their ally and had helped them a lot.

Feng Ming smiled at the children, then quickly said to Peng Wu, "There's no time to explain too much. The prince has ordered you to leave Xingluo Island tonight. Prepare now, take extra clothes for the children, and as much food as you can manage."

Peng Wu hesitated for a moment, "I can't navigate, I don't know how to sail, and we have three children. What if we encounter rough seas on the way..." These were all very real concerns.

Feng Ming shook his head, "The prince has arranged everything next door. There will be someone to escort you, so you don't have to worry about that."

Peng Wu's expression brightened, "Really? That's great, thank you! Thank you so much!" She then asked Feng Ming if this would hinder Gu Ling's plans.

Feng Ming shook his head, "No, you don't have to worry, the prince must have weighed the pros and cons. You staying here actually might give Mo Yan a chance to use you as threats against us again."

Upon hearing this, Peng Wu immediately went to pack her luggage.

The two children were a little baffled. Feng Ming walked over and rubbed their heads, assuring them everything would be alright. They would have someone escort them to their grandfather's house.

"Who is the prince?" Peng Wu's eldest son asked curiously.

"You should have met him, a very beautiful man, like a celestial being," Feng Ming smiled, "and incredibly powerful."

The older son thought for a moment, "Is it that uncle who met us in the cave that day? The one with our teacher... No, Sheng Yue is not our master, he's a bad person. Anyway, that uncle is the most beautiful person I've ever seen!"

Feng Ming nodded, "Yes, he's been trying to save you all along."

"I knew it! An uncle who looked so good must be a good person!" the younger son said.

Feng Ming chuckled, "Well, that's not necessarily true."

Next door, Gu Ling was discussing with Qiao Cong and Laomu who should go.

"I'm not going," Qiao Cong frowned. "I've come such a long way twice and haven't accomplished anything, and now I have to leave you and Jingjing behind. How am I going to explain this to Xiaoliang?"

"Grandfather, escorting Peng Wu and their children away is the most important thing to do right now, it's also very crucial," Qiao Jing said earnestly.

Qiao Cong frowned, "You just want me to go, so there will be no one to nag at you, right?"

Qiao Jing shook his head, "Of course not. It's because grandfather has the richest experience in living at sea, and the highest Martial Arts skill. After all, there are three children and a woman who need a reliable person for protection, and grandfather is the safest person to do this job."

Hearing this, Qiao Cong couldn't argue, and looked at Gu Ling, "You decide. If you think I'm the safest person to go, then I'll listen to you!"

Gu Ling nodded, turned to Qiao Jing, "You go too."

Qiao Jing was taken aback, "Me? No, I can't! I need to stay here and help out!"

They all knew by now that the Su Liang caught by Mo Yan was a stand-in impersonating Yan Shiba, but they were still not very optimistic about what was to come next.

Old Mu knew why Gu Ling made such arrangements and advised, "You and your grandson should just go back. You've guarded Jiaye City for such a long time before, and you haven't been able to go home during the New Year. It's time for you to go back and rest. The house needs someone to watch over it these days. It's not useful to have more people here since we can't confront Mo Yan directly for now."

Qiao Cong refuted, "Old Mu, didn't you also fail to go home for the New Year?"

"I don't have a grandson or a grand-disciple. Xiaogu is my disciple, and your disciple is Xiaoliang." Old Mu shook his head.

"That's settled then," Gu Ling said. "You all pack up as soon as possible, take them with you, and go straight back to the capital after disembarking."

Qiao Jing pulled Gu Ling aside and asked privately, "You're not arranging this because you think I have a grandpa, a sister, and a fiancée, so I can't afford to have an accident, are you?"

Comparatively speaking, Old Mu and Cheng Yun both had no relatives with similar relationships.

Gu Ling shook his head, "No, it's just that the three children need at least two people to escort them. An old and a young are the best pairs. Your grandfather has the most experience at sea, but if Cheng Yun goes with him, both of them are not reliable enough, and I won't be at ease. I need my master to stay and help here, so you and your grandfather are the best choice."

Qiao Jing frowned, "Alright, you convinced me. In that case, I'll go with Grandpa and leave the rest to you..." He sighed, patted Gu Ling's shoulder and said, "I trust you'll handle whatever trouble comes your way, but still, be careful. Remember, Su Liang and Nuannuan are waiting for you at home."

"Nonsense." Gu Ling left as soon as he finished speaking.

Qiao Jing shook his head, "Really...why can't he say something nice? I'll be sure to complain to Su Liang when I get back."

They didn't have much time; if they couldn't leave before daybreak, there might be trouble. Qiao Cong and Qiao Jing packed in a hurry, and picked up the kids from next door.

Feng Ming held the little girl, while Qiao Cong and Qiao Jing each carried one, with Old Mu and Cheng Yun escorting them to the beach.

Gu Ling followed them in secret without showing himself, to make sure they got away safely.

By the time they reached the spot where Qiao Cong and the others had come ashore before, the sky was already brightening.

They pulled a boat out of the pool cave, put Peng Wu and the children on board first, and let them sit down.

"Uncle Feng, aren't you leaving too?" Peng Wu's older son asked Feng Ming.

Feng Ming smiled, "There are still things to do. I'll leave after they're done, and I'll come to find you then. Listen to your mother on the way and take care of your sister."

"Okay!" The twins nodded together.

Qiao Jing looked back one last time, but did not see Gu Ling. With a sigh, he followed Qiao Cong onto the boat.

Old Mu and Cheng Yun waved from the shore. Their boat set sail and disappeared gradually into the vast morning mist.

Old Mu and Cheng Yun left the shore quickly as well. They knew why Gu Ling didn't show up; for the sake of safety, it was risky for them to gather together. Mo Yan might capture them all at once with his magic treasure.

As the sun rose, the fog over the sea dispersed, making the sky bright and warmer.

The twins were asleep, and the little girl was awake, but she stopped crying after Peng Wu cooed her for a bit.

Peng Wu held the child and stepped out of the cabin, watching the eastern sunrise. She looked back and could no longer see Xingluo Island in her sight. She had finally escaped from the Demon Cave after so many years, and she felt somewhat unreal, as if she was dreaming.

Qiao Jing took the child from her and told Peng Wu to sleep a little longer, so she could have the energy to take good care of the children.

Peng Wu thanked him again and then fell asleep next to her sons.

Qiao Jing stood at the bow with the little girl in his arms, pointing at the birds flying overhead and teaching her to speak, "Flying bird."

The little girl's voice was clear and crisp, "Fly-fly!"

Qiao Jing laughed at her and noticed Qiao Cong was also smiling, "We're finally going home. I'll fight anyone who tries to take Nuannuan from me when we get there!"

Qiao Jing looked back towards Xingluo Island, with a determined expression in his eyes, "I believe that evil won't triumph over righteousness, and Gu Ling will be alright."

Chapter 480: 480. Third time

Today, Peng Wu, who had been punctually delivering food to the forbidden area for several days, did not come. Elder Song did not know about the children being sent out of the cave last night, so he decided to go check on Peng Wu's residence before reporting to Mo Yan.

The mansion was quiet. Elder Song entered the courtyard, saw that the door was closed, and called out, "Zhong Family!" The father of the two children has the surname Zhong.

With no response, Elder Song forcefully pushed the door open.

Although Peng Wu left in a hurry last night, he has always been an organized person. The room was not messy, and the bowls and dishes on the table were still stacked together.

Confirming that there was no one in the room, Elder Song felt that something was wrong. Just as he was about to leave and turned around, a dark shadow flashed in front of him. His eyes widened in shock, and before he could make any sound, he passed out.

Cheng Yun had already closed the door to the room. Old Mu took a look at Elder Song's figure and nodded, "About the same as me."

This was not a spur-of-the-moment decision for them; it was Gu Ling's idea. As long as someone came out of the forbidden area, they would deal with them.

Feng Ming was also present. He stripped off Elder Song's clothes while explaining what he knew about Elder Song's habits to Old Mu. Although Feng Ming didn't know much, Old Mu wasn't too worried. Even if their cover was blown, the current situation wouldn't get any worse.

Soon, Old Mu finished disguising himself, dressed up as Elder Song, and practiced speaking like him. Feng Ming thought it was convincing enough, so Old Mu left for the forbidden area.

Afterward, Cheng Yun and Feng Ming tied up the real Elder Song and took him to the garden.

Most of the time, Gu Ling still stayed in the Bajiao Pavilion, where he could see some of the movement in the forbidden area.

Elder Song was thrown to the ground. After Gu Ling stuffed a truth-telling drug into his mouth, he slapped him awake.

After a while, the truth-telling drug began to take effect. Gu Ling questioned Elder Song about whether he knew Mo Yan's plans for the future.

Elder Song unconsciously replied that he didn't know. Mo Yan only discussed matters with Sheng Yue, and he and Elder Pang were only responsible for guarding the forbidden area.

Gu Ling then asked if there were any secret passages or mechanisms on the island, including inside the forbidden area.

Elder Song answered yes, but they were not in the forbidden area. Instead, they were in the dungeon of the City Lord Mansion. There was an underground passage in the dungeon that led directly to a cave under the cliff by the sea, from where one could leave.

This seemed strange. The dungeon was used to imprison criminals, yet it contained a hidden escape route.

"Most people would never think of it there," Feng Ming thought it must be for this reason.

Gu Ling commented, "Perhaps it is just because the terrain of that location is suitable." Mo Yan did not dig in the forbidden area, perhaps to protect his most precious place, afraid of destroying the "divine power."

Afterward, Gu Ling asked for the location of the hidden mechanism in the dungeon and how to activate it.

"Does Mo Yan have any weaknesses?" Gu Ling asked.

Elder Song shook his head slightly. "No."

Gu Ling inquired further, "Is there anything he detests?"

This time, Elder Song nodded, "Yes... Master hates snakes very much and does not allow them on the island."

"Is Mo Yan immune to all poisons?" Gu Ling asked.

Elder Song shook his head, "No. Master was once poisoned many years ago and has been very cautious since."

“Is Mo Yan’s magic treasure the ring on his hand?” Gu Ling thought Elder Song probably wouldn’t know this either, but he asked for confirmation anyway.

To his surprise, Elder Song nodded, “Yes.”

“Did he tell you himself?” Gu Ling frowned.

Elder Song assured him once again, “Yes.”

The drug’s effects wore off, and Elder Song passed out again.

Cheng Yun was delighted, “If it’s that ring, it’s simple! We can snatch it!”

Gu Ling turned to look in the direction of the forbidden area, shaking his head slightly, “Not necessarily. Mo Yan told Sheng Yue that it was not the ring. Perhaps he wanted people to think it was, just to test their loyalty.”

Feng Ming agreed, “It’s very likely. If I had such a powerful treasure, I would definitely not wear it openly in a place where it could be seen by others. That would be too dangerous.”

Cheng Yun frowned, “What if Mo Yan is confident that we will overthink it and assume it’s definitely not the ring, thus acting against our own interests?”

Gu Ling shook his head, “That’s not an ordinary treasure. He would eliminate any risk of it being stolen, and it’s not like it’s impossible to hide.”

Cheng Yun sighed slightly, “You’re right. I think that ring is a decoy he wears deliberately. The real magic treasure, even if it’s an object, must be hidden somewhere else on his body, invisible to others.”

“I don’t know if Sheng Yue will poison Mo Yan today. It’s a pity that we can’t be there to witness it and let Sheng Yue acquire the most direct information,” Feng Ming sighed.

Cheng Yun then said to Gu Ling, “I have an idea. I can disguise myself as you and sneak into the forbidden area to eavesdrop. If I’m caught, it’ll fall right into Mo Yan’s plan and make him use his full strength. After all, he has hostages, and one more person won’t make a difference.”

Gu Ling nodded after a moment of silence, “Alright. You go.”

Cheng Yun looked delighted at the prospect of being Gu Ling’s substitute. He was not afraid of the risks it might bring him.

Soon, Cheng Yun disguised himself as Gu Ling and sneaked towards the forbidden area.

After entering the forbidden area, Old Mu went straight to Mo Yan.

At this time, Mo Yan and Sheng Yue were eating breakfast in the cave. Old Mu had been to the cave before and was familiar with it. Seeing Mo Yan and Sheng Yue, he immediately stopped and bowed his head respectfully, “Master, I haven’t seen Zhong Family’s delivery of food, so I went to check and found them missing.”

Mo Yan didn’t look at Old Mu, but Sheng Yue’s gaze fell on him before quickly returning to his meal.

Mo Yan spoke after swallowing the food in his mouth, "I know."

Sheng Yue said, "It must've been arranged by Gu Ling in secret."

"It proves that he is on this island, and not alone," Mo Yan said indifferently. "Let's see how long he can hide. Elder Song, tell Elder Pang that both of you shouldn't leave the forbidden area."

"Yes, Master," Old Mu replied, then respectfully retreated.

Mo Yan put down his chopsticks, wiped his mouth with a handkerchief, got up, and walked to the edge of the pool. He let out a long sigh, "I've waited so long to find a suitable person, only to have him unwilling to leave as soon as he arrived."

Sheng Yue replied while cleaning up the bowls and dishes on the small table, "Master, there's always a solution. Su Liang has many weaknesses."

"I've always been reluctant to hurt children, which is why I didn't capture Nuannuan. Although I knew Gu Ling was on the island last night, I let all three children go," Mo Yan said. "I've shown my sincerity. You should rest as well."

Upon hearing the sound, Sheng Yue saw that Yan Shiba had already been released by Mo Yan and was standing next to him, close enough to push him into the water.

Yan Shiba had changed her clothes but had still left her hair uncombed. Her long hair hung behind her, covering half of her face.

The cook in the forbidden area had prepared breakfast, including portions for the people confined in Mo Yan's portable space. Yan Shiba had just finished eating, and Mo Yan did not stop her as she walked towards the stone screen.

Yan Shiba walked behind the stone screen and saw the bedding on the ground, but no children were in the cave.

"How do I know you haven't locked those three children somewhere else or brutally harmed them?" Yan Shiba stood next to the stone screen, looking at Mo Yan on the other side of the pool.

"They're indeed no longer on the island because Gu Ling is here." Mo Yan said coldly, "He arranged for the children to leave overnight. If you want to see Gu Ling, I can arrange for you to go out and call him."

Yan Shiba sneered, "You want to use me to catch him? Mo Yan, we must talk about the current situation." Yan Shiba pointed at the pool between them, "You have to tell me how you got here, so I can find the way."

Mo Yan was silent for a moment before speaking, "I like adventures. When I dived into a cave almost identical to this one, I somehow ended up here."

"You came here with your body, and I didn't. You know very well that even if there really is a way down there, perhaps only you can go. I can't. This is your way, not

mine.” Yan Shiba said coldly. She had already asked Su Liang in detail about many transmigration matters. If it had been in the past, she would have thought it nonsense and absurd tales.

Mo Yan’s expression darkened, “That’s just your guess.”

Yan Shiba chuckled lightly, “Who isn’t guessing? If you had the courage to jump down yourself, maybe you would’ve returned decades ago. I don’t understand why you caused so much trouble and hurt so many people for so long. Do you really think you can go back?”

“Everything lies in the hands of men.” Mo Yan said.

Yan Shiba shook her head, “That’s not true. The events that happened to us are mostly due to fate and are beyond human reach.”

“Enough with the nonsense.” Mo Yan said, “Even if we don’t consider your identity as a Transmigrator, you are still one of the most outstanding people among the younger generation in this world. If there’s a way, you’ll certainly be able to reach it.”

Upon hearing this, Yan Shiba’s face revealed a mocking expression, “Are you saying that Transmigrators are all dragons and phoenixes among men chosen by heaven and that you’re praising yourself?”

Mo Yan stared intently, “Stop the nonsense! You can either go down now, or I’ll take you out to find Gu Ling. Choose!”

Yan Shiba’s gaze shifted to Sheng Yue, her expression a mix of amusement and seriousness, “Mo Yan, do you truly understand your disciple?”

Mo Yan’s expression turned impatient, “Don’t try to sow discord among us!”

Yan Shiba laughed, “Sheng Yue visited me last year to discuss cooperation. She must have told you, right?”

Mo Yan narrowed his eyes, listening to Yan Shiba continue, “You also know that Sheng Yue is actually the son of a Transmigrator. His mother was the woman who was once captured by you on the island, and later released by your daughter.”

Mo Yan’s face changed dramatically, while Sheng Yue remained calm, “Master, she’s just applying what she knows about Xingluo Island’s affairs onto me.”

“Stop pretending!” Yan Shiba said coldly, “If it weren’t for the fact that your mother was a Transmigrator, how could you have possibly come to Xingluo Island and follow Mo Yan? No normal person would believe in transmigration, let alone have delusions of transmigrating to another world. You’ve known about the transmigration and coveted his magic treasure all along!”

“Why didn’t you say this last night?” Sheng Yue retorted, “Did you not want to go into the water today, or are you trying to sow discord between me and my master to protect yourself and Gu Ling?”



"I initially thought it would be fine to let you continue deceiving Mo Yan, but now it's time for you and your master to truly recognize each other. After all, you've had such a deep connection, and you've been hiding it from your master all along, which is very dishonest." Yan Shiba sneered.

"Master, don't believe her." Sheng Yue remained unfazed, "She's always been scheming and just wants to provoke infighting among us."

"I know." Mo Yan nodded and looked at Su Liang coldly, "Is this your tactic? Honestly, I'm very disappointed. Have you made your choice?"

"You actually trust Sheng Yue so much?" Yan Shiba nodded, "I'm not disappointed about this. Continue, he'll repay you well. Isn't it just going underwater? I'll do it."

As the words fell, Yan Shiba took off his coat and jumped into the pool for the third time without waiting for Mo Yan's urging.

Mo Yan walked to Sheng Yue's side, put his hand on his shoulder, and said with a solemn face, "Is there anything you want to tell me?"

Sheng Yue knelt down with a bend of his knees, "Please forgive me, Master. Indeed, my mother has been to Xingluo Island before, and it is because of her influence that I share the same wish with you. I didn't dare to tell you earlier because I was worried that it would cause trouble."

Mo Yan looked at Sheng Yue with icy eyes. After a while, he said, "You should have told me earlier. I wouldn't have done anything to you. I would have trusted you more."

"It was my stupidity," Sheng Yue said respectfully.

"Did you talk to Su Liang about cooperation? How else would she know your background?" Mo Yan asked.

Sheng Yue shook his head, "That is not true. If I had gone to Su Liang and Gu Ling, they would have killed me. They must have known my background because of my father. After my mother's death, my father became a monk. I have a younger brother who stays with my father and is also a monk. Master, you might know him, his name is Cheng Yun. He has a very good relationship with Su Liang, and he has already returned to secular life. Both my father and brother stand on Su Liang's side. It must have been my father who told Su Liang about my mother and me, because he has been trying to dissuade me."

"I didn't harm your mother," Mo Yan said.

Sheng Yue nodded, "I know. After leaving Xingluo Island, my mother wanted to come back and return to her original world, just like you, Master. My father tried his best to stop her and accidentally killed her. I saw it with my own eyes, so I left my father when I was young and lived on my own. It was only last year when I went out and found out where they were, but I didn't see them again."

"So it was like that." Mo Yan bent down, helped Sheng Yue up, and asked, "You went down before, did you see the white light?"

Sheng Yue shook his head, "I didn't find anything when I went down that time."

At about the same time as last night, Yan Shiba came up again. This time, he didn't choke as much.

But Mo Yan's patience was not as good as last night, "You're just going through the motions!"

Yan Shiba climbed ashore, gasping, and looked at Mo Yan slantingly, "Aren't you going to ask if I found something new this time? Didn't you notice that I stayed longer below this time?"

Mo Yan's eyes narrowed slightly, "Speak!"

"I saw the white light and got closer. I saw the road behind the white light," said Yan Shiba.

"Really?" Mo Yan looked doubtful.

Yan Shiba rolled his eyes, "If you don't believe it, then forget it."

"You go on," Mo Yan's tone softened a bit.

"I reached out my hand, but it seemed like there was a force pushing me back," Yan Shiba shrugged, "So I think the road is there, but not just anyone can go."

Mo Yan walked to Yan Shiba, grabbed her neck, and lifted her off the ground, "You're making up stories to deceive me! You don't want to leave at all, so how could you reach out? Do you think I'll believe it?"

Yan Shiba laughed, "You're just a madman... a lunatic...seeing ghostly roads! What white light or black light? In fact, I didn't see anything!"

"You refuse to toast only to be forced to drink a forfeit!" Mo Yan threw Yan Shiba on the ground. "Wait until I capture Gu Ling, and I will first ruin his appearance, then chop off his hands. Let's see if you can still laugh!"

A moment later, Yan Shiba was taken back into Mo Yan's portable space again.

Mo Yan, still angry, turned around, picked up his teacup from the small table, and drank it all in one gulp.

Sheng Yue, who had been standing quietly with his head down, slowly raised his head...