

## Versatile 1231

### [Versatile Mage](#)

#### Chapter 1231: He Lost to Mo Fan?

“Didn’t you want to kill me? Come out, I dare you to come out!” Shi Qianshou stood outside the Sandstorm Demon Locusts and yelled like an enraged beast.

Mo Fan did not go out recklessly.

“Aren’t you trying to be a hero? I’m telling you, if you don’t kill me today, I’ll turn the people of a town, a city into sacrifices for the Earth Pistil! Great hero, come out and kill me! Aren’t you a saint, isn’t sacrificing your life for the others something you’re meant to do!?” Shi Qianshou continued to yell at Mo Fan while laughing wildly.

“You must have misunderstood. I never thought of myself as a hero or a saint. It’s just that I despise the actions of a scumbag like you!” Mo Fan stood there at the edge of the noise’s coverage.

He would not go out. Going out was suicidal! Even if Shi Qianshou was threatening him with the lives of the others, Mo Fan believed it was unwise to just go out impulsively.

He would die within a minute out there. Shi Qianshou’s Earth Element was obviously at the Super Level. Instead of living for a righteous cause for just another minute, he preferred to stay alive and call Han Ji or Zhu Meng over to take Shi Qianshou out before he could do any harm. If worse came to worse, he would not mind calling Pang Lai here, too. The man could destroy Shi Qianshou in less than a minute!

Shi Qianshou felt an urge to vomit blood when he saw Mo Fan standing at the edge with no intention of coming out and fighting him!

If Mo Fan insisted on staying inside with the Sandstorm Demon Locusts; wouldn’t that mean he was beaten up inside there for no reason?

He had also killed all his poisonous insects. His Poison Element was basically non-existent!

“You and I are the same kind, we are both selfish!” Shi Qianshou pointed at Mo Fan and claimed furiously.

“There’s still some difference between us. I might be selfish, but I don’t do harm to other people. I do save people’s lives at times, and trample some noisy self-righteous moralists. Don’t worry, even if you yell until your throat is gone, I still won’t go out... I’m a god inside the Sandstorm Demon Locusts. If you want to kill me, you can come in here instead. I’ll go easy on you by not using five of my Elements!” Mo Fan shot back.

Shi Qianshou clenched his teeth. He had an urge to go inside and slay Mo Fan!

How could there be such a shameless young man? Were his righteousness and his devotion to promoting justice eaten by a dog? Any Mage with the slightest conscience would come out and fight him

instead! Shi Qianshou strongly believed if it was Zhang Xiaohou in Mo Fan's place, he would surely come out from the Sandstorm Demon Locusts!

Shi Qianshou stared at Mo Fan. He suddenly burst out laughing as he recalled something.

"HAHAHAHA, you won't dare to let me go. If you do, the people that are trapped in the bunker will all die. The Barrier Core, you need the Barrier Core to save the people! HAHAHA, I've changed my mind. If you dare to come out here, I will give the energy of the Barrier Core back. I will kill you at all costs today!" Shi Qianshou laughed. He felt like he finally had some information that he could use against Mo Fan.

Mo Fan just looked at Shi Qianshou. He said after some time, "Were you born in the Year of the Pig?"

"What did you say!?" Shi Qianshou's smile froze.

"Advisor Shao, I'll leave the rest to you! I feel extremely disgusted saying even an extra sentence to this pile of manure!" Mo Fan called out loudly.

Shi Qianshou was stunned for a second. He quickly looked around.

Lightning halberds slammed down from the sky. The twelve lightning halberds stuck into the ground in twelve different spots!

Advisor Shao was wearing a military jacket. She landed imperiously with the lightning, right beside Shi Qianshou. The twelve lightning halberds instantly produced a powerful sealing force, cutting off the area!

Shi Qianshou's wild expression vanished when he saw the enormous lightning halberds...

A Super Lightning Spell! Furthermore, it was the second-tier Twelve Lightning Condemnation! The powerful terrifying lightning danced wildly around Shi Qianshou. He could feel himself trembling!

Shi Qianshou turned around and saw a woman standing with her hands behind her. It was none other than Advisor Shao, who was controlling the Lightning Punishment Formation. The remaining pride on Shi Qianshou's face dissipated instantly, as he had just seen someone scarier than he was!

"Cap...captain!" Shi Qianshou's legs trembled. He did not even dare to lift his gaze and look at Advisor Shao's face.

"My greatest regret was going easy on a person like you!" Advisor Shao turned around and looked down at Shi Qianshou coldly.

"All...all I did was for the sake of the fortress. Those Councilmen only know to ride roughshod over us. They never knew the hardship we went through and how dangerous this place is. We are risking our lives to expand their territories out of loyalty, earning back our pride and our land from the demon creatures, and yet they ended up sending us further away, asking us to die again for their sake! My men and I didn't want to die..." Shi Qianshou said timidly.

When Mo Fan walked out of the Sandstorm Demon Locusts, he was surprised to see Shi Qianshou kneeling in front of Advisor Shao inside the Lightning Punishment Formation.

To think that even someone as vicious as Shi Qianshou would be so afraid of someone that he could no longer speak properly, this Advisor Shao was surely someone very impressive!

“Hand it over, if you still think that you are a soldier!” Advisor Shao snapped coldly.

“Captain, listen to me, it’s only a matter of time until those Councilmen treat us like cannon fodder and we die in a battle against a horde or a kingdom of demon creatures. We’ve built and managed everything here, why can’t we claim this place as ours!?” Shi Qianshou added.

“Why?” Advisor Shao let out a hollow laugh. “We are humans, not cold-blooded demon creatures with a strong lust for blood. The number of demon creatures is a hundred or even a thousand times ours. Our country has some of the fiercest and the most ambitious demon creatures in the world, but we are still standing today instead of becoming their cattle! Do you know why?”

“It’s our destiny to die battling against the demon creatures. If you didn’t know that the moment you put on your uniform, you should have just stayed in the cities. No one was forcing you to come out here and die. No one would condemn you for being a coward. You could just live in peace. If the demon creatures came, they would have to step over the corpses of soldiers like us, who clearly understood our obligations!”

“However, if you chose to be a soldier, but what you do is worse than a demon creature, I swear I will destroy both your flesh and soul, and you will die in the most gruesome way that you could ever imagine!”

Advisor Shao’s thunderous voice kept striking down on the selfish ideas in Shi Qianshou’s mind. It was also echoing in the ears of the other soldiers nearby.

Shi Qianshou wanted every soldier to behave like demon creatures. He even wanted to tell the world that his path was the only way the people in the West could survive... but could a city that was built on death and hatred really stop the invasion of the demon creatures?

Mo Fan had witnessed how the Sandstorm Demon Locusts dove into the fire on the Burning Mountains. They were not trying to get themselves killed, but seeking a path of survival for their race. They were sacrificing themselves to select those that had a strong resistance to fire to reproduce again, just to prevent their race from being wiped out by fire!

Even demon creatures like the Sandstorm Demon Locusts knew to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their race, but someone was still thinking of harming their own kind just so they could live comfortably after stacking up the bones of hundreds or thousands of people under the walls of his city, while humans were constantly under the threat of demon creatures...

Luckily, people like him were only the minority. Mo Fan believed there were more people like Advisor Shao out there, who was not willing to give up on the life of a single person. They were not afraid to face the demon creatures, and they were not driven by their own greed. They were trying their best to contribute to the survival of mankind; to protect the cities, the lands, and their people. It was true that as soldiers, there might be a day where they had to dive into the flames, but they were doing it in exchange for new lives that were no longer afraid of fire and their nemesis; it was to ensure that humans could become stronger, and their enemy would be stricken with terror by then!

“Mo Fan, I’ll leave the rest to you.” Advisor Shao gave the Earth Pistil to Mo Fan.

The Earth Pistil contained a huge amount of energy. Not only was it able to support the fire barrier of the Anjiao Town, it was enough to protect the entire Tarim Basin Fortress!

However, Advisor Shao did not have the slightest hint of joy on her face.

They would have to give up on everything they had built here for more than ten years. The people would be evacuated to ‘safer’ places. Looking at the dense Sandstorm Demon Locusts, she could not help but admit that the Sandstorm Demon Locusts had indeed won the battle. They had claimed ownership over the land, driving the humans out.

“Sister...” Li Man walked up to Advisor Shao and comforted her.

Li Man was well aware of how much effort her sister had put in, but all her efforts for the last ten years were now in vain.

“I’m fine, as long as the people in Anjiao Town are safe. It’s all thanks to your two friends,” Advisor Shao did not shed a single tear. She fixed her eyes on Anjiao Town.

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Mo Fan had set out for Anjiao Town with the Earth Pistil some time ago. Suddenly, a fiery ripple rose in the center of the Anjiao Town and loomed over the boundaries of the town like a half-sphere. The spectacular flames of the Ardent Sunset dyed the clouds as if the sun was setting, driving the cloudy dust of the Sandstorm Demon Locusts and the darkness away.

The light of the flames shone upon the faces of the soldiers at the front line, including the pale face of Advisor Shao. The warmth was oddly soothing to their uneasy hearts...

As long as the people were safe, the efforts for the past ten years might have been in vain, but they always had another ten years to spare!

“I almost forgot; what plan did you all use to force Shi Qianshou out from the Sandstorm Demon Locusts?” Advisor Shao asked Liu Zhuo after a thought crossed her mind.

“Plan? I believe that young man drove him out using brute force,” Liu Zhuo replied.

“Brute force? Mo Fan, all by himself? Isn’t Shi Qianshou a Super Poison Mage?” Li Man asked in disbelief.

Advisor Shao was astounded too.

They didn’t lure Shi Qianshou out with a plan? Did that mean Shi Qianshou was defeated by Mo Fan?

Advisor Shao turned around and looked at Shi Qianshou, who was kneeling in low spirits.

Shi Qianshou did not dare to exchange glances with Advisor Shao. Perhaps the man was not breaking down because of Advisor Shao’s speech, but the fact that he, a general, had lost to an Advanced Mage!

Even Advisor Shao couldn’t possibly do anything to him when he was hiding in the Sandstorm Demon Locusts!

“So he’s Mo Fan, the strongest participant in the World College Tournament? No wonder the chief has such high hopes for him!” Advisor Shao quickly realized who Mo Fan was. She did not realize they were the same person, since the name Mo Fan was just too common.

“Chief? Which chief?” Li Man was startled.

“Who else would it be?” Advisor Shao answered.

Chapter 1232: The Man That Could Not be Schemed

The people of Anjiao Town were safe and sound. It was a great relief amid all the misfortune.

Unfortunately, the Council still decided to forfeit the plan to construct a city in the desert. The army in the west was being withdrawn from the fortress. They were told to help the government evacuate the people from the fortress.

Mo Fan was well aware of the efforts that the army had put in, but the decision of the Council was reasonable, too. The Sandstorm Demon Locusts were beyond their expectations. They were different from demon creatures hidebound by convention. The Sandstorm Demon Locusts were evolving, just like humans. He could not help but wonder if the Sandstorm Demon Locusts had an intelligent leader that was bold enough to seek new hope amid the destruction. If every demon creature was the same, many human cities would be overrun. After all, despite being one of the smartest species in the world, many humans were at a standstill and resting on their laurels.

The fortress was being evacuated. The people were most likely going to move to the cities they were assigned to. What happened next was no longer Mo Fan’s concern. He believed the people of Anjiao Town and the rest of the towns would be safe with someone like Advisor Shao in charge.

Mo Fan did not keep the Earth Pistil to himself, returning it to Advisor Shao. Mo Fan was not shameless enough to keep the thing to himself out of greed after seeing how selfless Advisor Shao was. However, something beyond Mo Fan’s control still happened. The energy in the Earth Pistil that Shi Qianshou had replenished with the lives of his men was accidentally absorbed by the Essence Orb.

The Essence Orb was very interested in energy obtained from shady methods. Mo Fan could not stop the Essence Orb from doing as it pleased. Luckily, Advisor Shao did not think the energy was obtained by a proper method. The hatred it possessed was just too strong, so she would find some other ways to replenish the energy of the Earth Pistil.

A third of the Essence Orb was refilled. It was definitely a piece of good news for Mo Fan!

Mo Fan felt like his body was left hollowed out after he had used the Demon Element previously. He would be unable to use the Demon Element for some time. On top of that, the Holy Judgment Court had banned him from using it. Mo Fan believed it was necessary to fill up the Essence Orb again. Otherwise, if someone from the Black Vatican suddenly showed up, or Izisha, who held a huge grudge against him, sent a powerful assassin after him, wouldn’t he have no chance of protecting himself?

Mo Fan was not worried that Izisha would try to harm Xinxia, since she had already sworn a curse on her soul to prevent her from directly or indirectly inflicting any harm on Xinxia. The other half of the contract was in Old Bao's possession. As long as Izisha had no intention of being imprisoned for a thousand years, she was restrained from trying to harm Xinxia.

But was Izisha really content with that outcome? Mo Fan believed otherwise.

The woman had suffered great losses, but once she recovered her influence, she was obviously going to pick on him first.

And there was Salan, too...

Izisha was out in the clear. There were people watching her every move, so it would be difficult for her to try anything. It was not easy for her to send someone after Mo Fan.

The same restrictions did not apply to Salan. He was perfectly safe in China, since he had plucked out her fangs in his homeland, but as soon as he left the country, the vicious woman would do anything to take his life. She knew the Demon Element would not be available for some time, which meant now was the perfect time for her to take him out!

"I should just stay in the country while filling up the Essence Orb!" Mo Fan was relieved when he saw a third of the Essence Orb had been refilled.

He sighed, "I can't just keep relying on the Demon Element. It's better if I can become stronger. I'm only lucky that I was able to defeat Shi Qianshou. A Super Mage is just too strong for me to handle now... but once I become a Super Mage, I should be able to go anywhere as I please. I will no longer have to worry about the two Women of Black and White Impermanence."

*{TL Note: Black and White Impermanence are two deities in Chinese folk religion that are said to be in charge of escorting the spirits of the dead to the underworld. As the name suggested, they are dressed in black and white respectively.}*

The Women of Black and White Impermanence were the nicknames Mo Fan came up with for Salan and Izisha.

The Woman of Black Impermanence obviously referred to Salan, while Izisha was the Woman of White Impermanence. They both had listed his cool name of Mo Fan at the very first line of the first page in their 'Death Notes'!

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Huge amounts of snow were covering a little hut by an icy lake, like a giant mink coat made of swan feathers. The wind was knocking on the window and the door. The frost-covered woods kept crackling, as if they were going to collapse at any second.

The wind and snow were landing on a cold face. The woman raised her hand and snatched an icicle from the roof, before stabbing the knee of a man lying on the ground.

The ice punctured the kneecap. The man cried out in pain, his voice echoing across the lake.

“You are quite devoted to the Cold Prince, but it seems like you don’t really understand who I am. Otherwise, why would you dare to set me up with your master?” The woman moved a chair closer and sat in front of the man. His blood was pouring out of his knee, but it soon froze in the cold as she sat there with her legs crossed.

“Master Salan, it’s all a misunderstanding, we had no idea she was related to you, I swear...” the man exclaimed. His tears and nasal mucus had mixed together, but they soon froze too.

The man was well aware that the pain he was feeling was only just the beginning. If he did not satisfy the woman with his answers, he would have to endure a hundred times the pain and torture that he was currently going through.

“I don’t really care if you’re trying to use her. She was never my concern, but I can’t accept that you’re using my name just to achieve something so petty. Many people in the world are waiting for my next masterpiece, and you guys almost destroyed the reputation I’ve worked hard to build in China. Now, tell me what you know, and perhaps I’ll allow the Cold Prince to come retrieve your corpse in one piece.” The woman took out a carving knife and began to trim her nails indifferently.

“I really don’t know anything, the Cold Prince never told me anything! Master Salan, we never meant to offend you, we were just trying to control Izisha and the Parthenon Temple...” the man tearing up in fear exclaimed.

“Idiot, do you seriously think the likes of you are smart enough to control Izisha? Do you think you would still be alive today if she wanted you dead?” Salan kicked the top of the icicle stuck in the man’s knee.

“Master Salan, I’m begging you, please spare my life. I’m just following orders. The plan that I had with the Cold Prince was never meant to set you up...” The man was trembling in pain as he spoke.

“Be gone, tell the Cold Prince to give me the thing he took from the Sacred Hall of Liberty, and I’ll consider sparing your life,” Salan gave a powerful kick to the man’s knee.

The man’s knee broke instantly. He did not dare stay in the hut a second further, despite the incredible pain he was in. He crawled out of the hut, afraid that the woman would suddenly change her mind.

The man left a long trail of blood on the frozen lake as he crawled slowly into the distance.

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Salan sat inside the hut watching him go. She spoke even though it seemed empty, “What do you think?”

“It does seem like the Cold Prince was trying to control the Parthenon Temple,” a voice appeared out of nowhere from the shadow in a corner.

The man had been completely unaware of the person’s existence. Even if he was to look closely, he would only see a blurry silhouette.

“You’re considering it too superficially. The Cold Prince would never have the guts to interfere with my business,” Salan said.

“You’re saying that someone is behind the Cold Prince? But he’s a Red Cardinal, who could possibly order him around...” the man paused for a moment, “It’s... the Supreme Pontiff!”

Salan did not speak. She scratched the surface of the frozen table with her nails.

“Why would the Supreme Pontiff do that?”

“Perhaps he realized the two of us are beyond his control. The things he has put all his effort into have gradually turned into his threats,” Salan said calmly. “He gave me the name of Salan while trying to make that girl a Saintess, but in the end, people are falling to their knees in front of me, and Ye Xinxia has also noticed he’s trying to pull strings.”

“I bet the Supreme Pontiff never expected Izisha to come back to life...”

“Mm, Izisha always likes to be the oriole behind, but it’s better this way. I’ll leave her as my final dish.”

*{TL Note: The oriole here is referring to the idiom ‘the mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind it’.*}

“What about the Supreme Pontiff? If he was trying to take you down...”

“I have both Cardinal Blood Stones now. The Contract of the Blood Stones no longer threatens me. I believe he will express goodwill to me soon and tell me he’s the most content with me among the seven Red Cardinals, hinting that he’s thinking of making me his successor,” Salan said.

“The Supreme Pontiff is looking for a successor?”

“Humph, he thinks he can live for a thousand years! Even if he’s lying in a coffin, he would still be holding onto his Supreme Pontiff Blood Stones. He will never look for a successor. He’s trying to get rid of everyone who is a threat to him!” Salan stated.

“What should we do then?”

“He has been the Supreme Pontiff for a long time, but has kept living on his past achievements. Unfortunately, people are quite forgetful. They always forget about the past, no matter how gruesome it was...” Salan replied calmly.

“We should plan carefully if we are thinking of taking down the Supreme Pontiff.”

“He will reveal his cloven foot soon.” Salan seemed very patient.

“By the way, the Saintess publicly announced her relationship with you recently. She has sworn to take you down, too,” the man in the dark said.

“I’m looking forward to it.”

“You’ve asked me to protect her in the dark, but I believe someone is doing a better job than I am,” the man said.

“I don’t really care if she’s alive, I’m just keeping my promise of making sure she can live until she’s twenty. Perhaps I’ll kill her with my own hands the next time we meet,” Salan replied.

“I can’t do that for you.”



“Then I’ll do it myself, but it won’t be necessary for the time being. She can fulfill her role as Izisha’s stumbling block for now.”

“How about the kid with the Demon Element?”

“We must eliminate him as soon as we have the chance. He’s a disaster!”

“Hehe, to think that there’s someone that master is having trouble scheming against.”

Salan was startled after hearing the comment.

Hadn’t she always been in control of everyone’s lives? She would only allow those that were useful to her to live, and could end the life of anyone when the time came. Since when had Mo Fan become the exception?

Perhaps it was because she once had thousands of ways to kill Mo Fan, but the man eventually became a thorn in her side that she was struggling to kill, and the feeling had grown even stronger as time passed.

“He’s growing stronger at a terrifying rate, so terrifying that I can’t even tell how strong he will be when we meet again next time. We must get rid of him as soon as possible!” Salan stated.

1“You’re right. We should take him out before he becomes a Super Mage,” the man agreed.

Chapter 1233: Teacher Mo Fan, Part One

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Zhang Xiaohou went back to the army in Qinling Mountains. The guy was supposed to go on a vacation with Mo Fan, yet he ended up making a huge contribution. His superior was most likely going to reward him after he went back to the army.

Jiang Shaoxu did not go home empty-handed, either. Advisor Shao mentioned that she had seen Shaoxu’s brother before. The girl had left in a hurry, most likely heading to her new destination.

Mu Nujiao and Mo Fan went back to the Magic City. Mo Fan felt troubled; Little Flame Belle had resurrected, and she had acquired a new Soul-grade Fire, too. On the other hand, Mu Nujiao did not get any benefits even though she had risked her life during the trip. He decided to give the rock crystals he had collected to Mu Nujiao. He could not just leave her empty-handed.

Mu Nujiao gladly accepted the crystals.

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As soon as they arrived home, Mo Fan slammed right onto the couch without even taking a shower, taking up the whole couch. Mu Nujiao went to the fridge to grab some drinks. She gave Mo Fan a can too.

“Did you forget something?” Mu Nujiao asked.

“Oh, thanks,” Mo Fan emptied the drink and responded politely.

Mu Nujiao rolled her eyes and said in a serious voice, “It’s been a while since you last went back to school, right?”

“School? Why would I go there?” Mo Fan was confused.

“...” Mu Nujiao was utterly speechless. Did this guy seriously forget that he was still a student of the Pearl Institute!?

“We haven’t graduated!” Mu Nujiao emphasized, just in case the man was so full of himself that he had completely forgotten that he was still a student.

“Seriously? How is it that we haven’t graduated? We’ve won the World College Tournament and basically beat the crap out of the students of almost every magic university in the world...” Mo Fan said.

“The World College Tournament is one thing, but we haven’t graduated officially yet,” Mu Nujiao repeated.

“Ugh... didn’t they say we would graduate automatically as soon as we reached the Advanced Level?” Mo Fan said.

“Well, no one’s going to stop you from leaving, but are you seriously going to give up on the graduation gifts that the school is planning to give us? We’ve come in first in the World College Tournament, you might be receiving some collaborative gifts from the institutions across the country,” Mu Nujiao said.

“You’re saying that it might be something rewarding?” Mo Fan’s eyes glittered as soon as he heard about the gift.

“Well, since you’re so rich now, you might no longer be interested in the graduation gift that the school has prepared for us. I’ll let the school know that they can keep it for your juniors,” Mu Nujiao said.

“Hehe, I’m not the kind of person that you think.”

“We’ll have to pass the graduation exam first,” Mu Nujiao said.

“There’s an exam still!?”

“It’s just part of the procedures. I heard that the exam isn’t too difficult. The students are allowed to choose the kind of exam they are interested in, too.”

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Mo Fan believed it was no longer necessary for him to go back to school even though he was still a student in the system. The resources provided by the school were negligible. Mo Fan did not even bother to claim them. He decided to graduate in advance so he could claim the reward that the institutions were giving them after they had won the World College Tournament.

“So both of you are thinking of graduating in advance? I’ll check and see who’s in charge of the students that are graduating,” Dean Xiao smiled when he saw Mo Fan and Mu Nujiao.

Dean Xiao had witnessed Mo Fan's growth. He was extremely proud of the young man's achievements. He did feel a little sad knowing that Mo Fan was going to graduate.

"Dean Xiao, don't be sad. Mu Nujiao and I are living nearby, I'll pay you a visit at times," Mo Fan said with a smile. He knew the dean would be sad about them leaving the school.

Mu Nujiao pinched Mo Fan on the arm. Why did he make it sound like they were living together and currently in a relationship?

"Don't bother visiting me, I'm glad that you two are graduating in advance. It's true that there's nothing you can learn anymore in the school," Dean Xiao said.

Dean Xiao flipped through the papers in the files he had just picked from the shelves. The files contained records of the teachers in charge of students that were doing internships, and the teachers that were responsible for students applying for graduation.

The main campus of the Pearl Institute did not have a lot of restrictions on the students. They could stay at school if they wished, they just needed to do the work that the school had arranged for them. The students could also choose to graduate; there were three ways to do so.

The first way was to complete their courses. However, that alone would not grant the students the graduation badge of the Pearl Institute. Most students that chose to graduate that way were having trouble improving their cultivation any further. The Pearl Institute would admit that they had studied in the Pearl Institute before, but they would not qualify them for graduation.

The second way was to graduate officially. These students would be sent on a mission with a mentor. The mentor would report back to school on the performance of the students during the mission. The teachers would then evaluate the students' performance to see if they were qualified to graduate, before giving them their graduation badges.

The graduation badges of the Pearl Institute were quite significant. It was a symbol of their capabilities and identity that they could show to the Magic Association, the Hunter Union, and the renowned clans. A graduate of the Pearl Institute could easily find a job after entering society!

The third way to graduate was called graduating With Excellence.

Students that were planning to graduate With Excellence first had to make enough contributions to the school. The school would then arrange these students to complete some research or mission with a reputable mentor. The students would then be evaluated based on their performance. The mentor, dean, and the Elemental Directors would then decide if the student was qualified to graduate With Excellence.

Students that had graduated With Excellence would be given a Pearl Badge, showing that the Pearl Institute had acknowledged their brilliance. It was no longer as simple as finding a job in society. The different organizations would compete with one another just to recruit them. Those that had graduated With Excellence did not just have outstanding capabilities; most importantly, they were young!

Being young meant they had endless possibilities. It was the main reason why the different factions were active close to the institutions, hoping that they could discover some great talents that had a chance of achieving the Advanced Level. Having an extra Advanced Mage meant adding to their

foundations. If they were lucky enough to recruit someone that eventually became a Super Mage, it was the same as hitting the jackpot!

Those that graduated With Excellence from the Pearl Institute were mostly Advanced Mages below the age of twenty-five. In other words, they were a bunch of crazily-talented monsters!

People that achieved the Advanced Level before the age of twenty-five had a chance of achieving the Super Level. As such, the various organizations would try everything possible to recruit students that had graduated With Excellence from a magic institution.

The standard of graduating With Excellence was the same for all magic institutions across the country, since they were using the difficulty of the missions and the contributions that the students had made to weigh the status and influence of the magic institutions in the country. As a result, the magic institutions were also ranked based on the number of students that had graduated With Excellence from them.

The Pearl Institute was ranked second in the country, and the number of its students that graduated With Excellence was the second-highest in the country, too!

The rewards for graduating With Excellence were gratifying. It was the reason why Mu Nujiao asked Mo Fan to graduate together with her.

On the other hand, the rewards given to the students that had won the World College Tournament would only be distributed after the students graduated. Both Mu Nujiao and Mo Fan needed resources in their current stage, thus the earlier they received the rewards, the earlier they could use them to improve their cultivation!

"I have looked around, and there isn't any mission that's suitable for you. They are just too easy, it won't help much with the evaluation." Dean Xiao flipped through the files and shook his head helplessly.

It was unlikely that he could find a mission that was suitable for their level for the time being.

"We aren't in a rush either. Should we come back when Dean Xiao finds a suitable mentor for us?" Mu Nujiao asked.

"Well... I also did a quick check, and the mentors and professors that are eligible to guide students that are planning to graduate With Excellence are all busy. None of them will be available in the near future. Another reason is because of how talented you two are; I suppose the mentors aren't even that much stronger than you two," Dean Xiao said.

Dean Xiao's lips twisted after finishing the sentence. He was wondering if he should be proud or feel sad about it.

The students were stronger than the mentors. Mm, mm, he should be proud of them... it was important to be open-minded as teachers!

"Doesn't our school have quite a few mentors?" Mu Nujiao asked confusedly.

"Some had gone to undertake advanced studies. A couple of them will go every five years. Two of the directors had gone, too, leaving an old man like me behind!" He sighed. "It has to be done. It's important for the teachers to improve, too. Otherwise, they are going to be left behind by the students

eventually..." Dean Xiao exclaimed. A thought suddenly crossed his mind. He quickly looked at Mo Fan with a different smile.

"Dean Xiao, nothing good ever happens when you look at me like that," the sensitive Mo Fan immediately said.

"Since our mentors have left for advanced studies, there are lots of research and missions that are vacant at the moment. I believe none of them would be difficult for you if you were under a mentor, and since it isn't difficult enough, I won't be able to evaluate your performance properly, right? How about this, Mo Fan; I'll make you a mentor, and you will be leading a bunch of students that are planning to graduate instead!" Dean Xiao said happily.

Mo Fan's expression stiffened.

For some reason, Dean Xiao seemed to be very excited, as if he was overjoyed that he finally found a way to graduate that would be troublesome for Mo Fan!

The Pearl Institute was a reputable institution, after all. Even if Mo Fan wanted to graduate, the process still had to be somewhat unforgettable. Otherwise, he would soon forget about his alma mater!

Dean Xiao never had the intention to let Mo Fan graduate peacefully!

"Dean Xiao, instead of treating the student that has greatly contributed to the school nicely, why did you make the situation even more difficult for me?" Mo Fan said with a wry smile.

"Mo Fan, you've completely misunderstood me. Aren't you familiar with what kind of person I am? I'm only doing this because of how reliable you are. The school does have a lot of work that needs to be done... oh, I mean the target that you have to meet. As a member of the institution, you should feel obliged to lend a hand. Once you're done with it, I will personally hand you the Pearl Badge!" Dean Xiao proclaimed.

"Dean Xiao, how could you set me up like that? This isn't a target for a student, it's an end-of-year evaluation of a teacher!" Mo Fan protested.

"Don't mind the details, feel free to choose a field that you're interested in. See, you are able to make the decisions as you please as a mentor, but if you're just a student, the mentors will choose on your behalf instead, not to mention that you will have to see if your mentor has the time or is willing to guide you..." Dean Xiao added.

"I'm more willing to wait," Mo Fan said.

This is ridiculous, I came to graduate as a student!

Mu Nujiao giggled and said, "Teacher Mo Fan, all the best!"

Chapter 1234: Teacher Mo Fan, Part Two

*In the corridor of a building by the lake at the Pearl Institute...*

The sunlight was passing through the French windows of the classroom, shining upon the desks and chairs, the electrical equipment, and the ceiling lights. The only thing it failed to light up was the grim look on Mo Fan's face as he sat behind the desk beside the speaker's stand.

Mo Fan and Mu Nujiao were the only people in the classroom. The graduates would show up in another half an hour. Mu Nujiao was trying to comfort Mo Fan, although she could not help but laugh hysterically inside.

"There's no way I would accept this if it wasn't for the handsome rewards!" Mo Fan swore.

"I bet Dean Xiao is giving you a chance to experience how it feels to be a mentor. Perhaps he's going to make you an honorable mentor of the Pearl Institute. It's good for you," Mu Nujiao encouraged him.

Mo Fan initially thought Dean Xiao was just joking. After all, he was still a student of the school, while a mentor would have to be qualified before they were allowed to guide a bunch of graduates.

Unfortunately, Mo Fan had underestimated how cunning Dean Xiao was!

Since Dean Xiao was the dean of the institution, it meant his clearance was higher than a mentor, and if the job was only available to the dean of an institution, the dean could then assign anyone to be his assistant mentor as he wished.

Normally, a job at this level would require two to five mentors, each with three to seven graduates under them, to be completed.

Dean Xiao currently had a job in progress, but the mentors under him had yet to make any progress. He had no choice but to put it aside. To his surprise, Mo Fan had suddenly shown up and said that he wanted to graduate. Dean Xiao believed it would be a waste of his talents to assign a job to him like any other graduate. He decided to make Mo Fan a mentor instead and ask him to lead a few students in taking care of the part of the job that had been troublesome so far!

It was impossible for Dean Xiao to handle everything on his own. If Mo Fan managed to get the job done for him, he was more than willing to let Mo Fan graduate With Excellence as he wished. It was killing two birds with one stone!

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"We never thought we would actually be selected. It's a job that Dean Xiao is in charge of. We didn't make it when the four mentors were recruiting graduates for it since the guys that were ranked higher than us claimed all the spots. To our surprise, Dean Xiao ended up appointing another mentor to do the job. Thank God!" a dignified and old-fashioned young man exclaimed.

A few other young and good-looking students showed up. They exchanged glances with one another. A young man with spiky hair said, "Are you all here for the graduation mission too?"

"Yeah, I think the mentor is waiting for us upstairs. I hope it's not a strict old woman. Otherwise, we are going to suffer. I've already signed a contract with the Shoreline Alliance. I'm just waiting to get my Pearl Badge," the young man who seemed like he had walked out of a museum answered.

“Humph, does it matter who the mentor is if we’re good enough?” the young man with spiky hair said arrogantly.

“Hehe, that might be true, but each mentor is responsible for a part of the job. If the part assigned to us is so difficult that we just can’t finish it, we still won’t get our Pearl Badge no matter how good our performance is, right?” the old-fashioned fellow said.

“Let’s go, the mentor should be waiting for us,” a cute-looking girl hurried them along.

There were six of them. The six graduates met up at the ground floor. They gathered their courage and headed for the classroom.

After entering the classroom, the old-fashioned young man saw Mo Fan sitting at the speaker’s stand. He immediately frowned, “Hey, what you are doing? You shouldn’t be sitting on the mentor’s seat, even if he or she isn’t here yet. If the mentor has a bad first impression of us, we aren’t going to get our badges!”

Mo Fan was stunned. He could not react in time.

The handsome man with spiky hair went forward and dragged Mo Fan off the seat. He said, “I’m different from them. I’m aiming to graduate With Excellence, so you better not do anything that would make the mentor mad, or I’m going to make you pay for it!”

The cute-looking girl quickly came up to settle the dispute. “Hey, calm down, we’re a team. Let’s not ruin the mood now!”

Mo Fan glared at the student and snapped, “If you don’t let go soon, I’m afraid you will never graduate With Excellence!”

“What do you mean by that? Are you threatening me? I’ve seen the likes of you quite often, trying to be a freeloader on the team in order to graduate! I won’t be teaming up with you bunch of trash if some idiot hadn’t made a mistake that ruined the whole operation last time. I’m warning you, you don’t want to mess with me!” the man snapped angrily.

It was Mo Fan’s first time seeing such a bad-tempered and proud student.

The energy of the Space Element burst out of his body with a thought and struck the handsome student. The man was knocked all the way to the end of the classroom. His back slammed heavily into the wall.

The man was about to lose his calm and fight back with magic when he saw Mo Fan going back to the speaker’s stand and say to the astonished students, “I’m your mentor.”

The students were dumbfounded when Mo Fan used his magic, but they completely lost their minds after hearing his words!

What? This guy around their age was their new mentor!?

It felt as if the sky had collapsed all of a sudden, especially the old-fashioned student and the handsome young man that was still leaning against the wall with a blank face.

“He’s indeed your new mentor, and I’m his assistant. Nice to meet you all,” Mu Nujiao was done enjoying the show. She said to the students with a broad smile.

Mo Fan was pleased when he saw the disbelief on everyone’s faces. Being a mentor wasn’t as bad as he first thought. He could teach these arrogant students how to behave themselves as he wished...

Mm, the girls were pretty good-looking too. He heard some ill-mannered mentors would coerce female students for sexual favors. Would he be able to do that, too?

“Men...mentor... I’m sorry, I...I didn’t know you are...” The handsome young man completely lost his attitude. He had turned from a savage beast to a stammering little boy. He did not even dare to lift his head.

“Forget it, I won’t dwell on it further. Dean Xiao has asked me to replace a mentor and take on the job. I’m also here to help you graduate. Those that meet my expectations will receive the graduation badge, but those that perform poorly, I’m afraid you will have to stay at the Pearl Institute for a little longer,” Mo Fan coughed and said sternly.

“Sure, we’ll surely do our best. Sir, you look so young, how are you maintaining your skin?”

“Sir, you are so handsome.”

Mo Fan immediately smiled. Why were these students only noticing his good looks when he was a mentor instead of when he was a student?

“I will now brief you on the job. Dean Xiao is a Water Mage, and has constructed a Water Circulating Magic Formation covering the river, drains, and canals in Tongxiang. Not only is it used to irrigate the crops, it can also keep the demon creatures away. It can also be used as protection for humans when necessary. The project was commencing quite smoothly at the beginning. The other mentors had already laid down parts of the magic formation, but recently, the source of water in Tongxiang seems to have a blockage. The water stopped flowing...” Mo Fan explained the background of the job to the group.

“The source of water is usually located outside the safe zone,” the old-fashioned student spoke up.

“Exactly! Our job is to head to the source of water and investigate why the water has stopped flowing. Apparently, there are a few packs of demon creatures close to our destination. We’ll set out tomorrow. Please prepare the equipment that you will need for the journey by then,” Mo Fan said to the students.

“It doesn’t sound like an easy job,” a student with a chestnut hairstyle commented with a wry smile.

“It does sound that way, but we still have the mentor to guide us. We just need to tag along,” a petite female student said with a smile.

“We can’t say for sure yet. Our mentor is so young, so I bet he isn’t strong either. If there’s some powerful demon creature at our destination, not only will we fail to get our graduation badge, we might even die,” someone whispered.

—

Mo Fan and Mu Nujiao went home after briefing the graduates.



Mo Fan took a closer look at the information about the job Dean Xiao was in charge of.

He could not help but admit how bold and smart Dean Xiao's proposal was. The man had suggested utilizing the naturally flowing watercourse as the source of energy, combined with the waterways scattered across Jiangnan to construct a Water Circulation Magic Formation. It would make a significant difference to the region, since it would keep the demon creatures away, protect the crops, and serve as a refuge when necessary. Most importantly, since they were using the natural flowing water to drive the magic formation, there would be no consumption of energy!

The reason why barriers were difficult to set up was because of the enormous amount of magic ores and rock pistils needed to maintain their operation.

However, Dean Xiao's proposal got rid of the biggest expense of maintaining the barrier.

If the proposal worked, it would surely be popularized, and greatly improve the safety of the region!

"By the way, if water is important to every life form, it means the demon creatures wouldn't do anything to stop the flow of water, either. Why would the water stop flowing out of nowhere?" Mu Nujiao said in confusion.

Everyone knew the demon creatures would not bother destroying the flow of water, since they would die without water, too. It was extremely rare for a flowing waterway to go wrong. It was a law that every living creature would obey naturally.

"Are you listening to me?" Mu Nujiao said in a seemingly angry voice when she did not hear any response from Mo Fan.

Mo Fan lifted his gaze and asked her, "Well... it's my first time being a teacher. I think I was handling it pretty well... but what should I do tomorrow so they will think I'm an experienced teacher?"

Chapter 1235: The Lake Without Reflections

Early in the morning, the group took a train to Tongxiang. Mo Fan was excited, since it was his first time being a mentor, especially with how the students were being extremely respectful toward him. Even though he had never treated his teachers respectfully when he was a student, it did feel great when these proud young students were being extremely polite to him!

"Yeah, that's the sore spot, rub it more, harder," Mo Fan leaned on the comfortable seat and instructed the cute-looking girl.

"Is this the spot? Sir, you must have overworked yourself. You should be more careful and get more rest," the girl said seriously.

"It's fine, it's fine, I'm still young and strong, you... Zhou Lixin, right? Get me a glass of orange juice, with ice," Mo Fan looked to the back and said to the old-fashioned student.

"Right away!" Zhou Lixin immediately sprinted to the dining coach.

The handsome young man Bai Hongfei had a displeased look. Wasn't their mentor ordering them about too much?

Besides, their mentor was just too young. Even though some men in their thirties still looked like they were only around the age of twenty if they took good care of their skin, the other mentors under Dean Xiao were already in their forties and fifties. The students under them normally had a better chance of graduating With Excellence. He could not help but wonder if their young mentor actually had the right to let them graduate With Excellence.

"Bai Hongfei, I can tell that you're an arrogant young man that has grandiose aims, but puny abilities. You should keep your feet on the ground instead of reaching for what is beyond your grasp. There's no such thing as reaching the sky in a single bound!" Mo Fan began to advise Bai Hongfei, as he had nothing better to do.

"Yes sir, I understand," Bai Hongfei answered respectfully, despite the unpleasantness in his heart.

Mu Nujiao was amused when she saw how shameless Mo Fan was when he was pretending to be an experienced mentor. Wasn't he arguing with Dean Xiao that he had no intention to be a mentor not long ago? Look at him now, he was fully indulging in it!

— —

Mo Fan opened the map when the group arrived in Tongxiang. He discovered that many canals in Tongxiang had been modified as part of the project. However, it did not feel any different from down here. They could only see how brilliant the modifications were when they were looking down from five hundred meters.

"Let's go, we'll leave the safe zone and follow the waterway to see where it has stopped flowing..." Mo Fan said to the students.

The students were extremely cautious after they left the safe zone. Unlike Mo Fan, who had been dealing with demon creatures since high school, these students did not really have much experience of life and death. They began to feel nervous as soon as they left the safe zone.

"The waterway here should lead us to Biyuan Mountain, which means its source of water should be Qingyi Lake. Sir, I'll go to Biyuan Mountain to do some investigation. I've been there before, so I'm quite familiar with the area," Bai Hongfei volunteered bravely.

"You sure you're going to be fine?" Mo Fan asked.

"We have come here for training. If our mentor is doing all the work, how are we supposed to be better? Besides, we are put on the team because we are expected to lend the mentor a hand. Our goal is to find the reason why the water has stopped flowing as soon as possible," Bai Hongfei said sternly.

The other students quickly looked disdainful after hearing Bai Hongfei's words. The man was acting arrogantly before, but he was shamelessly fawning upon the advisor now!

"Sir, I'll investigate Xujia River then. I will definitely find the reason why it has stopped flowing!" another conceited student blurted out.

"Sir, I'll take charge of Ming River!"

Mo Fan nodded gratifyingly when he saw the students volunteering to split the work.

It felt great to have lackeys doing the work for him. He felt like he did not even need to get his hands dirty.

“Be careful, and give me a signal right away if something goes wrong, I’ll be there as fast as I can!” Mo Fan said.

As a mentor, he was responsible for the students’ safety. He could not afford to be careless.

“Mu Nujiao, you should go after Bai Hongfei. The density of demon creatures at Biyuan Mountain is quite high. I’m worried about him,” Mo Fan said to Mu Nujiao.

“Sure, Biyuan Mountain is huge. I wouldn’t want him to go alone, either,” Mu Nujiao nodded. She suddenly realized something did not feel right after agreeing to the suggestion. She pinched Mo Fan’s waist and snapped, “Are you ordering me around like a student too?”

“Of course not, hehe, you’re the leader, you’re the leader!” Mo Fan smiled awkwardly.

“That’s more like it! I’ll be going!” Mu Nujiao quickly went after Bai Hongfei.

However, Mu Nujiao was only following Bai Hongfei from a distance. After all, the students would be evaluated based on their performance, to see if they were qualified for graduation. The mentor and assistant only had to guarantee the students’ safety. The students had to complete the work themselves.

“Sir, what should we do then?” the cute-looking girl stood beside Mo Fan and asked naively.

Mo Fan looked around him. It was a perfect crime scene consisting of a typical spot in the wild where the victim had no chance of getting any help. He turned around to the female student Cao Qinjin and said, “Let’s take a shower in Qinyi Lake, I’m dying in the heat.”

Cao Qinjin blushed instantly. The others had claimed all the places that needed to be investigated. She had no choice but to stay with the mentor. To her surprise, the mentor had said something that was against the exemplary character he was supposed to have.

“Oh, I meant I’m going for a swim, you just need to wait on land for the others,” Mo Fan quickly corrected himself when he saw the girl giving him a strange look.

“...”

—

Mo Fan realized why the lake was called Qinyi Lake when he saw the surface that was smooth as blue silk. It was a stunning sight, but unfortunately, the lake was located outside the safe zone. Otherwise, many people would have driven to this place late at night. The cars would be shaking as they were enjoying the view of the lake... something that the people living in the cities were fond of nowadays.

*{TL Note: Qinyi Lake literally means Blue Clothes Lake in Chinese.}*

“Damn it, why do I keep having these vile thoughts when I’m a mentor?” Mo Fan murmured. Shouldn’t he be a model of virtue with his sense of righteousness for the students!?

“Sir, what did you say?” Cao Qinqin asked in confusion.

“Nothing, nothing at all. By the way, if we can somehow make a waterway from this Qinyi Lake to Tongxiang, wouldn’t we be able to turn it into an energy generator with a magic formation, too? The water is deep here, and the altitude is high. Unfortunately, it doesn’t flow in the direction of Tongxiang,” Mo Fan exclaimed while looking at the beautiful lake.

“Sir, didn’t you realize something strange?” Cao Qinqin suddenly stood behind Mo Fan as if she had just seen something terrifying.

“Something strange? I don’t see anything. This place has the mountains and the lake, and there’s no sign of demon creatures around too. It’s the perfect place to cleanse your soul... Cao Qinqin, now that you mention it, it does feel a little odd, but I can’t exactly tell why,” Mo Fan was standing around five hundred meters away from Qinyi Lake. Something felt odd to him as he looked at the perfectly calm lake.

“Reflections, sir, the reflections...” Cao Qinqin said in a soft voice.

Mo Fan was startled. He quickly lifted his gaze and shivered in fear after a glance.

The water was so still that he could not see the slightest ripple on it, yet he did not see any reflections on it, either!

The surface of the blue lake was extremely smooth, yet he could not see the reflections of the white clouds on it, nor was it reflecting the mountains and trees nearby. Mo Fan finally understood why Cao Qinqin was terrified!

“How can there be no reflections? Is it not water?” Mo Fan did not get any closer.

The lake had a diameter of over three kilometers. It was occupying a huge space, surrounded by mountains and trees, yet there was not a single reflection on it! It felt incredibly odd!

“Sir, can...can we leave?” Cao Qinqin was panicking.

The lake was so huge. If it wasn’t water, what was the lake filled with?

“Mm, let’s call the others back. Something doesn’t feel right here,” Mo Fan said.

Mo Fan did not go any closer. The heavens knew what the blue thing that had filled up the lake was. He would take a closer look if he was on his own, but he could not afford to do anything reckless when the students were scattered across the place!

—

Mo Fan soon summoned the others back to him. Mu Nujiao and Bai Hongfei were the last to regroup with the team. They were obviously caught in some trouble along the way.

“Anything strange?” Mo Fan asked.

“No, the water is normal. It’s also flowing in the direction of Tongxiang. It doesn’t seem to have a blockage anywhere.”

“Yeah, everything is perfectly normal.”

Mo Fan looked at Mu Nujiao. She spoke after a slight hesitation, “Apart from some Blood-Breaking Mosquito Demons, everything was normal.”

“Did you take a close look?” Mo Fan asked.

“No, we assumed there were demon creatures drinking water from the source, so we didn’t dare to go too close,” Bai Hongfei said.

“Then... did you see reflections on the surface?” Mo Fan asked.

“Reflections?”

The students were startled by Mo Fan’s sudden question. They were struggling to remember it clearly. After all, apart from calm lakes and ponds, it was difficult to see any reflection when the water was flowing.

“I...I believe not!” Mu Nujiao looked shocked as she realized something.

“Maybe the water was flowing...”

“No, I kept feeling that something did not seem right, so it turned out to be the lack of reflections. The surface of the pond that I investigated didn’t have a single reflection on it. It was just blue,” Mu Nujiao said confidently.

Mo Fan’s heart sank. It turned out that it was not just the water in Qinyi Lake that had the problem.

Was something wrong about the water, or was there something on the surface that was difficult to see?

Chapter 1236: Butterflies at Night?

Mo Fan believed things were not as simple as they seemed. He quickly told Dean Xiao what they had found.

Dean Xiao soon contacted another mentor and asked him to investigate the matter together with Mo Fan.

It was night-time before the mentor came. Mo Fan believed they should wait until the next morning since it was difficult to see at night, but to his surprise, the mentor was not in a great mood.

“What’s there to be scared of? I, Zhou Jiantian can easily handle any demon creature that might show up. Let’s go, this is just wasting my time,” Zhou Jiantian said.

Zhou Jiantian had brought around six students along. It was obvious that the students were not too willing to come. After all, it was not part of the work that was assigned to them. If it wasn’t because the waterway that had stopped flowing was hindering the progress of their work, they would not even have bothered to come here.

The journey to Qinyi Lake was surprisingly smooth. They did not encounter any demon creatures along the way.

Mo Fan took a closer look at the surface of the lake when they arrived at Qinyi Lake...

For some reason, the lake no longer felt the same to him.

The surface of the lake was still. There was no wind and no gleaming reflection on the surface. However, when Mo Fan went a little closer, he could see the reflections of the stars in the night sky from the lake. It was like the surface of the lake was embroidered with mysterious gems, resulting in a stunning view.

The stars were glowing across the surface of the lake. The wind blew, bringing along the fragrance of nature. The comfortable feeling was a huge contrast to the spooky feeling in the day.

“Are you kidding me now? So much for no reflection! There’s nothing on the surface of the lake. The water is perfectly normal too,” Zhou Jiantian snapped furiously.

“Yeah, it’s just a normal lake. What a waste of our time.”

“Why the hell are we even here for!?”

Zhou Jiantian glared at Mo Fan and blurted out, “You useless prick, you can’t even handle such a simple task! The whole project was put on hold just because of this. If you are so scared of the mere reflections of a lake, I suggest you quit as soon as possible. I’ll ask Dean Xiao to find someone else for the job!”

Mo Fan was left speechless. The whole thing did not make any sense. Why was the lake normal at night when there was clearly something wrong about it in the day?

Zhou Jiantian left angrily with his students, leaving Mo Fan and his students looking at one another in dismay behind.

“Sir, they are so unreasonable. Did they seriously think we are lying to them? We all knew there was something weird about the lake in the morning,” Cao Qinqin said angrily.

“Forget it, I’ll look into the matter again. Let’s go back and rest. We’ll come again tomorrow,” Mo Fan said.

“Sure.”

—

Mo Fan was even more bothered by the lake when they reached the town in Tongxiang.

He considered himself to be experienced and knowledgeable, yet he was utterly clueless about what had happened today.

First of all, Mo Fan believed there was something on the surface of the lake in the morning, something that made the lake look perfectly still from the distance, and was only visible when he was close enough.

Unfortunately, Mo Fan did not take a close look in the morning. Otherwise, he would know what that thing was!

Mo Fan was unable to arrive at a conclusion. He stopped wasting his time and started meditating by the window.

—

In the wee hours, Mo Fan was still cultivating his Lightning Element. He was hoping to level up his Advanced Lightning Spell to the second-tier to further improve his strength.

*Knock knock knock!*

Someone was knocking hard on his door. Mo Fan stopped cultivating instantly.

“Sir, sir, Bai Hongfei is missing,” Cao Qinqin said in a panicking voice.

“Missing? Did he seriously go out to look for hookers in the middle of the night?” Mo Fan frowned and asked.

“He took his equipment with him,” Cao Qinqin said.

“That idiot, is he trying to find the truth on his own? That’s too reckless even if he’s trying to graduate With Excellence. He should have taken it one step at a time...damn it, why am I talking so much like a typical old-fashioned teacher? Come, let’s go look for him. Hopefully, he’s not in some kind of trouble,” Mo Fan cursed.

He had to be constantly on his toes as a mentor, since the arrogant students kept thinking they could do something impressive on their own. Even Mo Fan felt a great chill running down his spine at Qinyi Lake that morning. Whatever the thing on the lake was, it was extremely dangerous. Bai Hongfei would find himself in great trouble trying to take the matters into his own hands. He had only reached the Advanced Level a short time ago!

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The night was extremely quiet. Not a single cry of an insect was heard. The light emitted by the stars in the pitch-black sky was the only source of light. The whole place felt dead.

“I have to find the reason behind it. I must graduate With Excellence. I don’t want to be a disappointment to my family!” Bai Hongfei murmured angrily.

He pushed the tall grass aside and slowly made his way toward Qinyi Lake.

Qinyi Lake was as calm and beautiful as usual. The lake that was surrounded by the mountains felt like a giant piece of onyx. Bai Hongfei suddenly had a strange feeling as he set his eyes on the lake.

However, he did not back away. He gathered his courage and walked closer to the lake.

Bai Hongfei stuck his head out and looked into the water when he reached the edge...

He immediately realized something. He looked further away for a little longer and was shocked when he did not see a single reflection of the stars on the surface of the lake!

The water was perfectly calm, yet it was not reflecting the glowing stars in the night sky. The beautiful lake was giving Bai Hongfei the chills!

Something soft was beating on the surface of the lake. A pleasant fragrance lingered in the air.

Bai Hongfei heard denser sounds coming from the lake. He soon saw countless thin wings beating across the surface of the lake. When the wings were beating simultaneously, they looked like ripples along the surface of the lake. They were glimmering a little under the light of the stars too...

Before Bai Hongfei could recover from the shock, a huge bunch of the wings flew into the air and covered the sky like a cloudy blue veil. The same blue veil was initially covering the surface of the lake!

Bai Hongfei was absolutely dumbfounded. He stared at the countless wings, the tiny, fragile life forms that were combining into a huge veil that was glimmering magically in the sky!

"What are you doing here?" a gentle voice said all of a sudden behind Bai Hongfei.

The voice took Bai Hongfei by surprise. He quickly turned around and saw a woman dressed in old-fashioned clothes standing behind him. The woman leaned slightly forward. Her fringes were dangling beside her face and in front of her huge bust.

The woman was wearing a faint smile. Her glittering eyes were looking at Bai Hongfei curiously, with a flippant face.

"You...you scared the shit out of me. Miss, why are you here in the middle of the night? It's extremely dangerous here," Bai Hongfei let out a relieved sigh when he saw it was a woman.

"You haven't answered my question," the woman said.

"I'm a student from the Pearl Institute. I'm here for my graduate mission," Bai Hongfei said honestly.

"Why are you alone then?" the woman continued to ask.

"I...I wanted to make some worthy contributions," Bai Hongfei said awkwardly.

"Did you discover anything?" The woman walked to the side with the same faint smile on her face.

"Did you see the things that flew into the sky? They looked like butterflies, but it's my first time seeing so many butterflies. They were so many of them that they had covered up the entire surface of the lake. By the way, you don't look like a Mage to me. It's too dangerous to come out of the safe zone if you're not a Mage. Are you lost?" Bai Hongfei asked.

"Mm, I think I'm lost. I was picking some herbs... am I really outside the safe zone?" the woman replied after a brief pause.

"Yeah, you're lucky that you bumped into me, or the demon creatures would have dragged you into their caves and eaten you. Come, I'll escort you back, where do you live?" Bai Hongfei said.

"So you are a strong Mage?" The woman did not seem to be afraid at all.

"Me? To be honest with you, I am an Advanced Mage," Bai Hongfei said.



“Oh, that’s very impressive. As a matter of fact, you don’t have to worry about me. I grew up in this area, so I’m very familiar with the mountains, the woods, and the lakes here. I know how to avoid the demon creatures too,” the woman said.

“There’s no way I’m going to leave you here. I’ll bring you back home. Where do you live?” Bai Hongfei said.

“How about your mission?” the woman asked with a smile.

“I’ll feel bad if something bad happens to you. Besides, I’ve already seen those things. I’ll go back and tell my mentor about it, and he’ll ask the government to send soldiers over to take care of them. By the way, did you see those things too? Do you think they are butterflies?” Bai Hongfei said.

The smile on the woman’s face gradually vanished. She looked at Bai Hongfei and said in a different tone, “Have you ever seen butterflies showing up at night?”

“Ah? You’re right...wait, what about the things that look like butterflies and would appear at night? What are they called?” Bai Hongfei said.

“Moths,” the woman said.

“Yeah, right, they must be moths. If I didn’t see it with my own eyes, I’ll never believe there are so many moths here. I wonder what kind of disasters they might cause,” Bai Hongfei said.

Bai Hongfei’s mind was preoccupied with the moths.

It was said that moths were similar to locusts, the kind of disastrous creatures that could leave a place barren. It also happened to be the season for the moths to mass reproduce. He did hear about the disastrous demon locusts in the west of his country. He was in the east, thus there were not many locusts around. However, there were lots of moths here!

Bai Hongfei suddenly heard the sound of wings beating, followed by a strong gust of wind that took him by surprise.

“Miss, watch out, the wind is getting stronger!” Bai Hongfei subconsciously tried to protect the woman beside him.

However, when he was about to step in front of the woman, he saw her standing still with her legs crossed and her eyes cold. She also had a pair of giant soft wings on her back...

The wings were clearly not some Wing Magical Equipment. They seemed to have grown out of her back, and the strong gust of wind was produced by the beating of the giant wings!

Bai Hongfei was dumbfounded when he saw the moths diving down from the sky like a tornado and circling the woman with the wings of a moth!

Chapter 1237: The Beautiful Lady Under the Moonlight

Dust-like pollen sprinkled down in the air. It had a unique fragrance. The pollen carried by the wind entered Bai Hongfei's nose. He was overwhelmed by strong drowsiness.

"Who are you?" Bai Hongfei tried his best to stay awake and asked the woman.

"You sure have a lot of questions!" the woman said.

Bai Hongfei tried to run away, but the drowsiness gradually became stronger. He eventually fell unconscious onto the grass beside the lake.

Countless moths soon landed beside him and formed a stretcher to lift him up into the air.

The woman went deeper into the woods. The moths carrying Bai Hongfei followed behind her. The woman and her moths soon disappeared under the moonlight. The lake returned to calm, too!

—

Mo Fan and Cao Qinqin ran all the way to Qinyi Lake, but they did not see anything out of the ordinary. The clouds had started to block the stars, but they could still see some reflections on the surface of the lake. The moonlight glimmered on the lake when the wind blew, resulting in a stunning view.

"Sir, Bai Hongfei isn't here," Cao Qinqin searched around the place, but she did not see Bai Hongfei.

"He was here, and he's most likely in some kind of danger," Mo Fan frowned.

Mo Fan had found Bai Hongfei's school badge on the ground. It was likely that Bai Hongfei had purposely left it behind, since it was hidden below the grass to prevent someone else from noticing it.

"Ah? Was he taken away by demon creatures?" Cao Qinqin said worriedly.

"I don't think so. There's no sign of a fight here. I didn't see any trace of blood either," Mo Fan said.

There was no sign of a fight, but there were no other traces either. Mo Fan fell into deep thought. Where exactly was Bai Hongfei? Did he see something abnormal about the lake?

"Sir, what should we do now?" Cao Qinqin asked.

"Take this, visit the closest Hunter Union's branch and ask them to send someone over," Mo Fan handed his Hunter Master badge to Cao Qinqin.

A Hunter Master had the right to put up a quest. Many Hunters were willing to accept the quest of a Hunter Master to earn contribution points. Mo Fan had saved up quite a lot of contribution points. As long as he offered a certain amount of contribution points, many Hunters were willing to accept a quest, especially when the place was not far away from a safe zone.

"Sir, you're a Hunter Master too? That's so cool!" Cao Qinqin said in admiration.

"Go on, I'll continue to search around in the mountain," Mo Fan said.

"Sure, I'll be going."

—

After Cao Qinqin left, Mo Fan searched around the lake again, but he did not discover anything useful.

He went back to the spot where he found the badge and fell into deep thought again. Meanwhile, the moon that was hiding behind the clouds gradually poked out from behind them. The bright moonlight shone upon the area that Mo Fan was standing on. Mo Fan immediately saw something glowing around him.

“What is this?” Mo Fan sharply noticed the glowing dust.

The glowing dust was sparse, but he could see a trail leading deeper into the woods. Mo Fan could not tell what creature would leave the trail of glowing dust behind. He decisively followed the trail into the woods.

The woods were extremely dark, as the moonlight was unable to penetrate the canopy. The glowing dust continued to grow fainter, making it difficult for Mo Fan to recognize the trail.

Mo Fan suddenly heard the sound of water flowing. He also heard something else.

Mo Fan went closer and discovered a stream. The water was very clear. He could even see the pebbles on the bed under the moonlight.

Mo Fan looked toward the source of the sound and saw an alluring figure sitting on a rock beside the stream. She was soaking her slender legs in the water.

Her hair was black and long, like a waterfall. It seemed like she had just taken a shower. She was combing her wet hair with her hands.

Mo Fan was intrigued. Why was there a woman here? Was she a Hunter hunting some demon creatures around the area?

Maybe he could ask her if she had seen Bai Hongfei.

Mo Fan walked up to the woman. However, he immediately realized he had made a mistake when he went closer!

While the woman was combing her hair, her busty chest was fully exposed to the air. They were shaking a little due to her movement. The moonlight was providing Mo Fan the perfect angle. He could even see glimmering drops of water slowly sliding down her breasts...

It was dark, and the moonlight was the only source of illumination, but Mo Fan could still see how perfect the woman’s skin was. It was fair like jade; her shoulders, waist, and legs were slim, but her bust was shocking. The shape of her bottom imprinted on the rock was like an exquisite piece of art, too!

Mo Fan immediately felt his mouth turning dry. He wanted to back away slowly, but the woman had already turned around. She looked a little confused at first, but her eyes were soon filled with shock and anger when she discovered Mo Fan’s presence!

“It’s a misunderstanding, I didn’t know you didn’t have any clothes on. It’s very dark too, so I wasn’t able to see anything clearly!” Mo Fan turned around and explained himself.

The woman obviously did not believe it. The moonlight was so bright, and she could also sense an aura of darkness from the man. It meant that the man was able to see in the dark to a certain degree. He must have seen everything!

The woman clenched her teeth. If he had not been concealing his presence, she would have noticed him way earlier!

“What are you doing here?” The woman quickly put on her clothes. She was surprisingly calm.

“One of my students is missing. I’m wondering if you have seen him around here. Speaking of which, it’s pretty dangerous for a woman like you to be taking a shower outside the safe zone.” Mo Fan was a little disappointed when he saw the woman quickly put on her clothes.

Why was he so stupid as to expose his presence to the woman? He could have taken a few more glances at her outstanding physique. It was extremely rare to find a woman with such a nice body!

“Could you come closer? I couldn’t hear you properly,” the woman said.

“I was saying that one of my students is missing, so I’ve come here to look for him. Did you happen to see him?” Mo Fan walked closer.

Mo Fan was able to see the woman’s face clearly this time. She was so gorgeous that it felt like she had come out of a painting. Her beauty was surreal. Even Mo Fan, who had seen many pretty women, was astounded by her looks. Mo Fan was aroused when he recalled how he had seen the woman’s naked body just a second ago.

“I haven’t seen him!” the woman snapped.

“Oh, oh, that’s a pity, but why are you here alone?” Mo Fan asked.

“It’s none of your business!” the woman snapped furiously.

“You don’t look like a Mage,” Mo Fan said.

“Who told you that only Mages are allowed to leave the safe zone!?”

“Aren’t you afraid of demon creatures?” Mo Fan asked again.

“Not at all,” the woman said.

“I heard there’s a female man-eating monster in this mountain. Surely you aren’t the one they are referring to?” Mo Fan asked curiously, looking at the woman.

The woman was startled. The color of her eyes gradually shifted.

“HAHAHA, I was just joking. I have never seen a monster as gorgeous as you. By the way, I honestly didn’t see anything just then. I hope you won’t mind. If you do, I’m more than willing to be held responsible for it. I don’t really have any strength, but I’ve always been a responsible man...” Mo Fan said.

The woman had a cold face, yet she was trying not to show it. She pointed in another direction and said, "I heard some strange noise that way. You can go take a look if your student is missing. By the way, if you did see anything just then, I swear I'm going to dig your eyes out. I'm indeed a female monster!"

"I honestly didn't see anything. Is this the right way?" Mo Fan headed in the direction the woman was pointing to. The path was covered by dense bushes and vines. It was difficult for an adult to pass through.

Mo Fan quickly summoned a tongue of flame to clear a path. The light of the Ardent Sunset lit up the surroundings and drove the darkness away.

The light shone upon the woman's face. The icy expression on her face vanished. She seemed a little scared when she glanced at the fire on Mo Fan's hand.

"Back away!" The woman quickly waved her hand, signaling the 'branches' to stop moving.

Mo Fan turned around. When he saw the strange look on the woman's face, he asked, "Aren't you planning to go back? It's too dangerous out here. My student has gone missing in this area."

"I've been living close to this place since I was young. There aren't many dangerous creatures around here..." the woman smiled, trying to conceal her intentions.

Mo Fan smiled too. He looked into the woman's eyes and said, "Or maybe it's because you're the most dangerous creature here!"

The woman was startled by his words. She quickly looked angry.

She never thought the young man could see through her disguise so easily. She could not help but wonder how the young man had managed to learn her true identity, since most people would not be suspicious of her because of her looks and her temperament!

"A gorgeous woman like you is always deadly to men... HAHAA! What is it? If you didn't like what I was saying, I'll take it back then," Mo Fan suddenly burst out laughing. He was acting like a completely different person.

The woman was stunned once again. She immediately felt an urge to curse at the boorish man!

It had given her quite the scare. She thought the man was a Hunter trying to set her up. She almost decided to silence him!

"Lady, what's your name? I'm Mo Fan, nice to meet you," Mo Fan said.

The woman let out a relieved sigh after seeing that the man had not seen through her disguise. She said, "I'm Yu Shishi, I'm quite familiar with this area. Should I help you find your student?"

"That would be great," Mo Fan nodded.

The thought of having a gorgeous woman keeping him company in the wild under the moonlight was so enticing. Tsk tsk tsk... right, why was he here again?

Chapter 1238: The Identity of the Moth Woman

Mo Fan went into the forest together with Yu Shishi, following the directions she gave him.

Mo Fan picked up a fragrance not long after. He blurted out, "Have you seriously been living here away from civilization? Where do you get food and necessities?"

Mo Fan did hear about special groups of people that lived outside the safe zone. They were able to prevent demon creatures from harassing them by using some traditional methods, like the villages outside of the Ancient Capital had.

"Mm, I have a unique fragrance that prevents demon creatures from attacking me," Yu Shishi said in a half-genuine voice.

"That's amazing, let me smell it," Mo Fan stuck his nose closer.

Yu Shishi immediately blushed. She glared at him and snapped, "You're a jerk!"

"I'm just curious. If we can utilize your fragrance, us Mages could move freely in demon creatures' territories as we pleased. We wouldn't have to hide timidly in the cities," Mo Fan said with a stern look.

Yu Shishi did not respond. Her expression was a little cold.

"I'm just joking, what's with the cold look? You should smile more. You look younger and prettier that way. Like me, that's why I'm so handsome," Mo Fan continued.

"How shameless can you be?" Yu Shishi had never met a man like him. The man was going to pay for it once they went deeper into the woods.

"Don't you think I'm handsome? Take a closer look."

"It's too dark, I can't see you clearly."

"You can touch me then."

"Can you please shut up?"

—

The trees gradually became denser. Mo Fan had already lost his sense of direction. He sniffed and discovered the air was a little damp.

The leaves were moist, so was the ground. Even the trees had drops of water on them, as if they were sweating.

However, it was not the kind of moisture that would make people feel itchy and moldy. It seemed to have a faint unique fragrance that was soothing to the mind.

Mo Fan checked his surroundings and asked, "Did you really hear a noise coming from here? Are you sure that my student is here?"

Mo Fan had his back to Yu Shishi. The woman's eyes sharpened. She slowly moved her finger to command the moths that were hiding behind the trees while she was talking to Mo Fan to lower his guard...

"By the way, what was the fire you were using just then? Why was it different from the fire of the Mages I saw before?" Yu Shishi asked curiously, slowly approaching Mo Fan from behind.

"Oh, it's the fire of Ardent Sunset, a powerful fire I found in the desert. It's particularly effective against insects and bugs... huh, isn't this my student's bag?" Mo Fan exclaimed.

Yu Shishi was stunned. She quickly called off the moths that were preparing to ambush Mo Fan!

Yu Shishi knew that some fire was particularly deadly against insect-type creatures. If she failed to subdue this man right away, her little creatures would suffer heavy casualties!

"Great, he's here.. he isn't injured too, but he...he seems to be asleep?" Mo Fan found Bai Hongfei in a wet bush.

The young man was not injured, but he had lost consciousness. Mo Fan was unable to wake him up. If he had not felt the idiot's pulse, he would have assumed that the man was already dead.

"Your student is pretty bold to be sleeping here," Yu Shishi said to Mo Fan after she called off the attack.

"He seems to have been put to sleep by some plants," Mo Fan frowned.

"Let me see," Yu Shishi went up and pretended to be inspecting Bai Hongfei's condition, "I think so too. I did see plants like that on the mountain before."

"Do you know how to wake him up?" Mo Fan asked.

Yu Shishi shook her head.

"Forget it, I'll bring him back to town first. Perhaps the Healers might know how to wake him up. Come with me, I don't want to leave you here in the mountain," Mo Fan said.

"Sure, I live close to the town too," Yu Shishi said.

—

Mo Fan carried Bai Hongfei on his back and chatted with Yu Shishi on the way back. He was quite interested in the fragrance that made her invisible to demon creatures. Unfortunately, Yu Shishi did not seem to be willing to share her secret.

Mo Fan did not force it. It was not like he could just tie her up on a table to experiment on her without her consent.

When they reached the base of the mountain, Mo Fan happened to see a huge group of people heading their direction. He could easily tell they were Hunters judging by the way they were dressed.

Yu Shishi was following behind Mo Fan. She only saw the group of people after turning the corner. She immediately realized something and fixed her eyes on Mo Fan.

"Did you ask them to come?" Yu Shishi said coldly.

“Yeah,” Mo Fan nodded.

Yu Shishi moved her finger again while she slowly unleashed an aura.

She hated being lied to the most. She had gone easy on Mo Fan since she thought he was not posing any threat to her. To her surprise, the man had asked a bunch of Hunters to set up a trap for her!

She had enough of being chased around by Hunters!

Yu Shishi was about to make her move on Mo Fan when the man quickly went up to Cao Qinqin and said, “I found him. Thanks for coming, I will still give you all the contribution points I promised. Sorry about that!”

The Hunters smiled as soon as they heard the words.

They did not even need to do anything to earn the contribution points. What else could they ask for? The Hunters were more than willing to accept it.

Yu Shishi stood still. She could not help but feel annoyed. Was this guy purposely trying to get on her nerves?

“Sir, why is that beautiful lady with you too?” Cao Qinqin looked at Yu Shishi and said in surprise.

“She was lost in the woods, so I brought her with me too. Oh, she helped me find Bai Hongfei too, I should be thanking her instead,” Mo Fan said.

—

Yu Shishi did not like to hang around the Hunters. She left after staying for a brief moment.

Mo Fan seemed reluctant to part ways with Yu Shishi. However, his expression changed as soon as the woman disappeared into the distance.

“Sir, what’s wrong?” Cao Qinqin asked.

“I can feel a strange aura from her. She’s most likely the reason why the water stopped flowing,” Mo Fan said.

“Huh? Sir, why didn’t you catch her?”

“If Bai Hongfei was dead when I found him, I won’t have gone easy on her,” Mo Fan said.

Since Yu Shishi did not kill Bai Hongfei, it meant Bai Hongfei must have seen something that he was not supposed to. Yu Shishi had no choice but to put him to sleep. As such, Mo Fan did not want to alert her. He wanted to find out what Yu Shishi was up to.

“But sir, she seems quite normal to me,” Cao Qinqin said.

“That just means you aren’t experienced enough, since you aren’t alerted when something that might pose a threat to you is around!” Mo Fan knocked on Cao Qinqin’s head.

“Sir, you aren’t that much older than me!” Cao Qinqin protested with a wronged face.



“Tell Zhou Lixin to follow her. She might be suspicious if I keep hanging around her. Besides, I’m just too handsome to keep a low profile. Zhou Lixin has the face of a Mr. Average. He won’t have trouble following her,” Mo Fan said.

“...” Cao Qinqin was left speechless for an instant. She said softly, “Sir, you’re pretty funny.”

“Cao Qinqin, it sounds like you want to spend an extra few years at school,” Mo Fan stared at Cao Qinqin.

“Sir, I’m sorry, you’re the most handsome man I’ve ever met.”

“My back is feeling a little sore after carrying that idiot Bai Hongfei for so long. A little massage might help.”

“Sure thing!”

—

—

Bai Hongfei did not wake up. Even the doctors had no clue what to do after he was admitted into the hospital.

Bai Hongfei was not injured, nor was he under a Curse. He had just fallen asleep like a patient in a persistent vegetative state. His conditions were perfectly normal. His stomach would even growl when he was hungry. The doctors could only feed him with infusions...

Mo Fan was having a headache too. He wanted to know why the river had stopped flowing. It was likely that Bai Hongfei might have found some clues about it, but he was still sleeping!

“Did any of you find any clue?” Mo Fan asked.

Mo Fan had been sending the rest of the students to investigate the river since then, but the river was perfectly normal whenever they were around. However, as soon as they left, the water would stop flowing again. Not a single drop of water could reach Tongxiang, making it impossible for Dean Xiao’s formation to operate as intended.

The Water Circulation Magic Formation would only work when the water was flowing, helping irrigate the crops and protect the cities and towns...

“Sir, sir, we found out that apart from Bai Hongfei, some other people in the town are showing the same symptoms too. Do you want to go and take a look?” Cao Qinqin said.

Mo Fan pondered. They needed more clues. They still had no idea why Yu Shishi wanted to put these people to sleep. What was she trying to hide?

Only the person that tied the bell knew how to untie it. They could only find the answers from Yu Shishi!

Zhou Lixin showed up and hurried over to Mo Fan. “Sir, this is bad! The woman you asked me to keep an eye on was arrested by the City Hunters! When I asked them, they told me she’s an evil moth woman who has murdered many people!”

“The City Hunters? Moth woman?” Mo Fan was astounded.

He suddenly remembered the rumors he heard when he was at Chongming Island in the past. Apparently, there was a moth woman in Wuzhen that would appear at night and murder people!

Was Yu Shishi the moth woman?

“Sr, sir, we have a problem!” Mo Fan had yet to recover from the shocking news when another student hurried over to him.

“What’s going on?” Mo Fan asked.

“Many kids have suddenly fainted in Dongzha, they are on their way to the hospital!” the student blurted out.

Chapter 1239: Man-Eating Monster

Not long after, cries were heard across the hospital, most of them from women and the elderly.

Mo Fan went out and saw many parents had brought their children to the hospital. The medical personnel were awfully busy all of a sudden.

Mo Fan proceeded to the wards and saw that the children were all unconscious. Their auras were extremely weak, as if they had seriously fallen ill.

Every child had similar symptoms, similar to the unconscious Bai Hongfei. However, Bai Hongfei was in a better spot, since he was perfectly fine, apart from unable to wake up.

“Chief Wei, didn’t your men catch the moth woman? She must be the reason why our children ended up like this!” a woman yelled while sobbing in tears.

“Yeah, it must be her. We have had similar cases in the town for some time. Who would have thought that this female monster is so cruel, to even harm the kids! You must save the children!” an old man exclaimed.

“No, we’ll go right now! We should be able to get rid of the curse once the moth woman is dead!” a bunch of farmers snapped furiously.

The men were infuriated when they saw the kids unconscious and the women sobbing, accusing the moth woman of being responsible for it. They quickly left the hospital.

Mo Fan was startled. He followed the group of angry men too.

“Please calm down, none of you knows how to use magic! It’s no use being reckless now. Just leave it to us, the City Hunters will handle it!” Captain Feng Guangkuo said.

“No, we’ll kill her with our own hands!”

“Yeah, she’s been spreading fear around the town for some time, and she’s harming the kids now. We don’t care if she’s human or a monster, we are going to skin her alive!”

Their anger was contagious. The people in the town were constantly living in fear of the rumors about a moth woman after many people had gone missing and died in strange ways in the town. The City Hunters had paid countless visits to the town, yet they had done nothing to put a stop to it. The townfolks were terrified of the moth woman, but now that their kids had fallen ill and the moth woman had been arrested, the pressure they were feeling had turned them into vengeful beasts!

A whole bunch of people quickly made their way to the entrance of the town hall and ran right into the main hall. They were unstoppable.

“Where is the moth woman!? If anything happens to my kid, I’ll make sure that she pays for it!” a muscular farmer snapped furiously.

“There she is!” one of the men quickly noticed a woman tied firmly to a stone pillar close to the center.

The City Hunters were around too. They did not expect the townsfolk to just come rushing in like a furious tide. They immediately went up to stop them.

“Shishi? Why are you here!?” The farmer that was leading the group suddenly froze in his track. He stared blankly at the woman that was tied to the pillar with chains made of ice.

The rest of the men were dumbfounded too. Their murderous looks dissipated as soon as they saw the woman’s familiar face.

“Captain, did...did you make a mistake? Shishi is one of us,” the huge bloke Guan Ping said.

The captain Feng Guangkuo let out a sigh and said, “We didn’t make a mistake. It’s the reason why we didn’t want you to come here.”

“But...”

“Shishi is a kind woman, how is she the moth woman!?” Guan Ping said on behalf of the others.

“A kind woman my ass! Humph, I always thought something wasn’t right about her. She always comes back late at night and is missing most of the time. I thought it was only because her life was slatternly and she was messing around with the men, but I now realize that she doesn’t just flirt with the men, she’s a man-eating monster too!” a relatively plump woman blurted out harshly behind the group of men.

“Huh? Woman, did you really see her eating a man?” The rest of the young women had pale faces after hearing the words.

A number of women had followed the group of farmers to the town hall. They were shocked when they learned that Yu Shishi was the moth woman.

“Of course, did you remember the drunkard on the streets? Didn’t he always go to her place before he went missing!? The man is still missing now. Where else could he be apart from inside that monster’s stomach!?” the plump woman said.

“Yeah, she’s right, the drunkard did visit Yu Shishi quite often before he went missing!”

“Oh my, why would a woman like her eat people!?”

“She’s the moth woman, she can transform!”

“Dear, don’t say that. Why would Yu Shishi do such a thing? Once, our child tripped and fell into the drain when we were away. It was Yu Shishi that saved his life...” Guan Ping said.

“Humph, are you seriously trying to explain on behalf of the monster? Didn’t we all know that the kids like to hang around with her? Look what happened to them; she poisoned them all! She’s just putting up an act all this time, she’s just waiting for her chance to kill us all!” the plump woman Wang Tianhua declared.

“Yeah, she’s right, the kids in the towns and the villages like to hang around with her. She must be the reason why they have fallen ill! Don’t try and stop me, I’ll stab her to death right now!” a woman with bloodshot eyes ran forward holding a pair of scissors!

There were not many City Hunters around, so they were having a hard time calming the townfolk down.

Yu Shishi watched the people expressionlessly. When the woman tried to stab her with the scissors, strings of blue silk suddenly appeared from her and surrounded her like a cocoon. The scissors landed on the silk, but they were unable to move an inch further.

The blue silk was slightly transparent. The people could still see Yu Shishi’s pale face.

“Please calm down! Stop stirring up a mess here if you seriously care about your children! We’re still trying to figure out if the children are placed under a curse. If it’s a curse, we can get rid of it by killing her, but if it’s something else, the children will be in danger if we don’t find a way to save them through her!” Feng Guangkuo yelled.

More City Hunters soon showed up and drove the infuriated townfolk away.

“Captain, you have to save our children! I only have one child, I can’t let anything happen to him.”

“Just go home, you are only interfering with our investigation!” Feng Guangkuo snapped back.

Feng Guangkuo was quite popular among the townfolk. He had helped the town a lot whenever something happened in Tongxiang.

The crowd left while murmuring under their breath. Mo Fan was dumbfounded after witnessing it all. Wasn’t this a typical scene in an ancient drama?

The men in the village were particularly fond of a beautiful woman, so the other women in the village were extremely jealous of her. As such, when something happened in the village, the women would blame it all on the beautiful woman by accusing her of being a monster, and the reason why the disaster had happened in the first place...

The only difference was that Yu Shishi was indeed not an ordinary human. She was the moth woman, and she definitely had something to do with the children that had fallen ill!

“Why are you here still?” Feng Guangkuo asked in an unpleasant tone after he saw Mo Fan.

Mo Fan showed the man his Hunter Master badge and the proof of his identity as a mentor of the Pearl Institute before replying, "I'm here for an investigation. She seems to be the reason why the water has stopped flowing."

"Oh, I didn't expect you to be a Hunter Master at such a young age, not to mention a mentor of the Pearl Institute too. Pardon me!" Feng Guangkuo said.

"Can I have a few words with her?" Mo Fan asked.

"Sure, but I doubt she's going to tell you anything. Whenever we try to do something to her, the silk will show up and protect her," Feng Guangkuo said helplessly.

—

Mo Fan went up to Yu Shishi. The silk had disappeared on its own when Yu Shishi was not in danger.

The woman wearily lifted her gaze and looked at Mo Fan.

"I should have killed you back in the woods!" Yu Shishi was furious as soon when she saw Mo Fan.

She had spared Mo Fan's life, but to her surprise, the man had reported her to the City Hunters instead.

"You've misunderstood me, I didn't tell them anything. I did send someone to keep an eye on you, but I didn't ask the City Hunters to arrest you. Are you the reason why the kids have fallen ill?" Mo Fan asked seriously.

"They won't live if I'm dead, including your student!" Yu Shishi said coldly.

"Why are you doing this?" Mo Fan asked.

"Why?" Yu Shishi suddenly burst out laughing. Her smile was cold and sinister, "Does a demon creature need a reason to eat humans?"

Mo Fan was stunned.

She was right; if she really was a demon creature, she did not need a reason to kill and eat humans. It was part of her nature, just like how humans ate meat.

"Let the kids go, and I'll make sure you leave unharmed. Otherwise, you will have to spend the rest of your life locked away," Mo Fan said.

"Hehe, who do you think is going to compromise when the kids are about to die?" Yu Shishi said coldly.

"Fine, but why did you stop the water from flowing? Are you trying to take out the food supply of the entire Tongxiang valley?" Mo Fan asked.

Food was extremely important due to the limited space of human territories in the safe zone. The space available for crops-planting was limited. Tongxiang was a huge source of food. If the water stopped flowing, it would greatly hinder the production of food.

"That's right! I want them all to starve to death!" Yu Shishi said.

“You are seriously an incisive monster, unlike the ones that pretend to be kind and pure-hearted in the TV dramas,” Mo Fan said.

### Versatile Mage

#### **Chapter 1240: The Truth Behind the Waterway**

Mo Fan had no idea what to do with Yu Shishi. He did not have any other clues to follow, either. It was extremely annoying to roam about like a headless fly without any clue what he was looking for.

Luckily, Mo Fan was still able to remain calm considering the things he had gone through in the past. However, his students were extremely worried about the children that had fallen ill and the possibility that they were going to fail their mission.

“Just go back and rest. Waiting here isn’t going to help much,” Mo Fan told the students.

It was already late at night. The students went to get some rest. The City Hunters were obviously going to keep an eye on Yu Shishi, so it was unnecessary to worry too much about her.

Cao Qinqin quickly ran over to Mo Fan when he was about to leave the hospital. She pulled his arm and said, “Sir, sir, Bai Hongfei is awake!”

“Really?” Mo Fan was overjoyed.

He quickly went to the ward and discovered that Bai Hongfei was indeed awake. He seemed perfectly normal apart from the slightly pale expression.

“Sir, I’m sorry for making you worried,” Bai Hongfei said with an apologetic look.

“It’s fine as long as you’re well. By the way, what did you see at Qinyi Lake?” Mo Fan asked.

“Lots of moths! They were scattered across the surface of the lake. It’s the reason why the water has stopped flowing,” Bai Hongfei said immediately.

“I see!” Mo Fan’s eyes glittered.

The moths were stopping the water from flowing by staying on the surface. However, the moths would fly away when the students went to investigate the watercourse, thus everything looked perfectly normal to them.

“So it turns out that Yu Shishi is still responsible for it. We’ll take turns to guard the water; that way, the Water Circulation Magic Formation should be able to operate as intended!” Mo Fan said.

“Yeah! We can finally report back after we’re done with the job!”

“Mm, Bai Hongfei, well done!”

Bai Hongfei smiled, but his smile stiffened when he heard that Yu Shishi had been arrested.

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Mo Fan went to the mountain with the rest of the students to keep the water flowing so Dean Xiao’s Water Circulation Magic Formation could operate normally.

Cao Qinqin did not go with them. She stayed at the hospital to take care of Bai Hongfei.

Bai Hongfei was unwilling to let Cao Qinqin stay up late just to look after him. He said, "You should go back and rest, I'm perfectly fine here."

"Sir asked me to keep an eye on you," Cao Qinqin said.

"I just fell asleep. There's nothing to worry about, really. To be honest, I don't think the moth woman is trying to harm me. Otherwise, she could have just left me in the wild to be eaten by the demon creatures, right?" Bai Hongfei said.

"Yeah, but everyone said that she's a man-eating monster," Cao Qinqin said.

"You should really go back and rest. I'm just going to meditate here. I know you haven't gotten any rest since last night, as you and sir were looking for me. Look at the dark circles under your eyes," Bai Hongfei said.

"Ah? Really? But...but sir asked me to keep an eye on you," Cao Qinqin said.

"It's going to be fine, go ahead. You can sleep in the next room too. You shouldn't be staying up all night," Bai Hongfei said.

"Alright."

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After Cao Qinqin left, Bai Hongfei was preoccupied with thoughts of Yu Shishi.

Bai Hongfei made sure that Cao Qinqin had fallen asleep. He quickly changed and made his way to the town hall late at night.

The town hall was heavily guarded. Bai Hongfei revealed who he was. The City Hunters did not try and stop him.

The City Hunters had not made any progress even though they had caught the moth woman that was responsible for it. They were hoping that Bai Hongfei could get some information from Yu Shishi.

Bai Hongfei arrived in front of Yu Shishi. He felt sorry for her when he saw the worn-out look on her face.

"It's you," Yu Shishi was the first to speak when she saw Bai Hongfei.

Yu Shishi had a good impression of Bai Hongfei. The man was not cunning and full of lies like Mo Fan. She had only put Bai Hongfei to sleep, as she was hoping that Bai Hongfei would not tell anyone about his discovery.

"Those kids that have fallen ill have nothing to do with you, right? Otherwise, I wouldn't be awake now either," Bai Hongfei asked sincerely.

Yu Shishi lowered her head and bit her lips.

Bai Hongfei knew something was wrong seeing her reaction.

“Tell me the truth if you believe me. You wouldn’t want the poor kids to die too, right?” Bai Hongfei said.

“I don’t want to hurt anyone,” Yu Shishi said.

“Then tell me why they have fallen ill, and why are you stopping the water from flowing? Is it because the water is putting Tongxiang and the people of the town in danger?” Bai Hongfei asked.

Yu Shishi glanced at the young man. The look in her eyes shifted.

“Thank you, everyone is suspecting me and accusing me to be a monster, yet you are willing to trust me even though I put you to sleep,” Yu Shishi said.

“Tell me the truth then. Don’t you worry, I’ll try my best to help,” Bai Hongfei smiled.

“The kids have fallen ill because of the water. There’s a Carnelian-Head Spider at the source of the water. Its poison has a paralyzing effect. I saw it injecting the poison into the water. The poison is extremely strong. Even though it was diluted after flowing through the watercourse, it’s still harmful to humans. The people in the town have been drinking the water, and their bodies would be severely exhausted after some time. The children have fallen ill first because their bodies are weaker,” Yu Shishi said.

“You’re telling me that everyone in the town is poisoned, and the adults aren’t showing any symptom yet because they are stronger?” Bai Hongfei exclaimed.

“Exactly. That Carnelian-Head Spider is my nemesis. I’ve been trying to come up with a plan to take it out, but it has laid down lots of spider webs in the woods. My moths couldn’t fly any deeper. Otherwise, I would have gotten rid of it ages ago...” Yu Shishi said.

“Which means, since Dean Xiao is circulating the water flowing into Tongxiang, it actually makes the situation worse by poisoning the kids and the people further. I have to let the mentor know as soon as possible!” Bai Hongfei said.

Bai Hongfei did not think the situation would be so serious. Luckily, he had decided to come and ask Yu Shishi the truth since he was feeling uneasy about the whole situation. Otherwise, he would never learn the secret.

“By the way, why didn’t you tell the secret to my mentor?” Bai Hongfei asked as he remembered something.

“He doesn’t seem to be reliable. Besides, everyone is treating me like a monster because I’m the moth woman. Who’s willing to trust me? The women in this town have long wanted a chance to set me up. They could not wait to drive me out of town. If I tell them there’s something wrong about the water, they are going to put the blame on me again,” Yu Shishi sighed.

“You’re right, I should tell Dean Xiao instead...” Bai Hongfei said.

Yu Shishi shook her head and said, “I’m happy that you’re willing to trust me, but I believe they are still going to put the blame on me before I have any evidence to prove that I’m innocent. Besides, I’m worried about the kids. It might be too late by then.”



“What should I do then?” Bai Hongfei asked.

“Head to the mountain and continue north. You will find a huge dark red forest that is covered in spider webs. You just need to get rid of the spider webs and my moths will take care of the Carnelian-Head Spider,” Yu Shishi said.

“But isn’t the Carnelian-Head Spider your nemesis? Many of your moths are going to die,” Bai Hongfei said.

“There’s no other choice. We have to take the Carnelian-Head Spider out first,” Yu Shishi said.

Bai Hongfei’s heart shuddered when he saw the determination on Yu Shishi’s face, “You are still willing to help the town when the people are treating you so harshly. Those moths are obviously very important to you.”

Yu Shishi lowered her head in silence.

Bai Hongfei was infuriated after seeing her reaction. Why did the town folks and the City Hunters falsely accuse her before learning the truth? Yu Shishi was seriously a lot more merciful compared to the insensitive and ridiculous town folks.

However, there was nothing he could do about it. The lack of understanding had always been a huge problem for many people!

“And make sure to stop the water from flowing into Tongxiang!” Yu Shishi reminded him.

“Got it...by the way, I’ll set you free first,” Bai Hongfei said.

Yu Shishi shook her head, “If you set me free now, everyone is going to think that I’m the main culprit. You just need to tear down the spider webs in the forest. I won’t run away from here even if the people hate me or are afraid of me. This is my home, I just want to protect it.”

Bai Hongfei took pity on the woman. He was the only person that could help Yu Shishi now. “I promise that I’ll help you.”

“Thank you.”

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Bai Hongfei immediately made his way to the mountain. He ventured deeper by following the instructions from Yu Shishi.

He soon discovered the sinister-looking dark red forest that Yu Shishi mentioned. As soon as he walked into it, he quickly felt something sticky on his face.

He wiped his face and realized that it was some sticky spider webs!

Bai Hongfei was overjoyed. It seemed like Yu Shishi did not lie to him!

He took another few steps forward and soon discovered lots of blue moths stuck on the spider webs. As he went deeper, he saw lots of moths stuck together on the spider webs. Most of them had almost dried up, like specimens.

Bai Hongfei grieved upon seeing them.

It was very likely that Yu Shishi was trying to break through the spider webs forcibly with the moths, but she ended up sacrificing a huge number of them.

“You son of a b\*\*ch, I swear I’m going to kill you today!” Bai Hongfei brushed away the spider webs with a murderous look in his eyes!

It was like the moths were diving into a fire when they were trying to break through the spider webs. Lots of moths were going to die for sure. Bai Hongfei did not want Yu Shishi to sacrifice too much for the town. He decided to kill the Carnelian-Head Spider himself.

That being said, he did not forget to get rid of the spider webs as he was told. That way, the moths could intercept the water to prevent it from flowing into Tongxiang.

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Meanwhile, Mo Fan was leaning against a tree while he was keeping an eye on Qinyi Lake. He was currently in deep thoughts. He kept feeling that something was odd about the whole situation.

“Sir, sir, Bai Hongfei is missing again!” Cao Qinqin yelled in the call.

“F\*\*k me, why can’t he just behave himself!?” Mo Fan cursed.

“I was worried that he’s going to run away again, so I put a locator in his bag. Sir, I think he’s deep inside the woods. You should go and take a look,” Cao Qinqin said.

“That was very smart of you. I’ll head over right now,” Mo Fan said.