

Walker 351

Chapter 351 - The Carriage Ride

The carriage driver stepped down and opened the door for Lin Mu, which he was not expecting as he had already extended his hand and was now standing awkwardly.

"Umm, thank you..." Lin Mu stated before entering the carriage.

There he saw long seats placed in the front and back side of it. They were covered in high quality soft furs and were stuffed with springy beast feathers. There was also a table placed in the middle on which a few bottles of wine were kept.

"Greetings, Brother Lin Mu." Wu Hei said as he scanned Lin Mu from top to bottom.

"Looks like the role of an aristocrat suits you much better than I thought." Wu Hei praised.

"I guess, but I still prefer my usual robes better. These are just... not comfortable for some reason." Lin Mu replied.

"I understand that, I have a similar position on that matter as well. I'd much rather prefer my own scholarly robes than these. Similarly, I do not like attending events such as these either, but considering the situation, I believe we do not have a choice in this matter." Wu Hei explained.

Lin Mu nodded and reclined in the seat, finding it to be quite comfortable.

"So why did brother Lin Mu visit the alluring wisteria pavilion for?" Wu Hei questioned with interest.

Lin Mu had still not told him the reason behind it, as he didn't think it would be wise to pass it through a messenger. Besides, there were still a few things that he needed to hide such as the fact that he sneaked into the courtyard of the Tri cauldron peony sect.

"I discovered more clues about the Gu legion," Lin Mu revealed.

The gaze of Wu Hei turned serious as he tapped the armrest.

"And what did you find?" He asked.

"It seems like Lord Cai was targeted by the Gu legion and they wanted to get control of the alluring wisteria pavilion. Even the disciples of the Tri cauldron peony sect have been ordered to kill or capture if anyone belonging to the Gu legion was discovered." Lin Mu answered.

Wu Hei stroked his chin before asking, "so we are going to meet some potential allies?"

"Yes... if things work out." Lin Mu replied.

"And you are fine with this? Despite your... infraction with the Tri cauldron peony sect?" Wu Hei questioned.

"It can work, as long as the Junior Elder Fa Shiu never appears..." Lin Mu stated with a knowing look.

Wu Hei nodded his head and took out a scroll from his spatial storage treasure.

"As you asked before, we spread out our people to look for this Junior Elder Fa Shiu. We were able to find some traces of him in the Southern town, he was seen with some unknown people that were also cultivators." Wu Hei said as he passed Lin Mu the scroll with the report.

Lin Mu's face darkened as he read the report. It was exactly as Wu Hei had said, but the strange thing was the Junior elder had disappeared when the members of the Hei corps tried to follow him further. This had actually made even Wu Hei surprised, as it was rather rare that his people were unable to finish a mission like this.

"Seems like I may need to pay a visit to the Southern town," Lin Mu spoke.

"No, that would be a waste. It's likely that the man already left it and is in the city. I'll increase the surveillance here as well." Wu Hei replied.

"Alright, as long as the junior elder doesn't meet the others, it will be fine." Lin Mu said, "and what did you say about presenting me as your friend from another kingdom?" Lin Mu asked.

"I just found an aristocratic clan with the Mu surname that I had once visited before. They are from the Fenlong kingdom and are rather unknown here, so it shouldn't be a problem. You shouldn't get questions that are much problematic either, and if you do, you can simply not answer them. The people will not dare to force you anyway." Wu Hei answered.

Lin Mu went over the list of kingdoms that he had read and recalled the information about Fenlong Kingdom. It was a rather small kingdom southeast of the Shuang Qian kingdom. It didn't share a border with it though and was a few kingdoms away.

They were actually only the size of the entire Wu Lim county. Which was rather small compared to most other kingdoms. Lin Mu referenced this with the other smaller kingdoms and realized that they were the third smallest kingdom in the empire.

The other two smaller kingdoms were not located on the Continent itself and were actually island nations. Still, they were not that far, being a few hundred kilometers from the mainland.

The carriage came to a halt just as they finished talking and they could hear the people outside.

"Looks like we're here," Wu Hei said as he pulled out a fan from his spatial storage ring.

"Just act normally as you do, the people here are... rather unrestrained, anyway." Wu Hei said one last time before stepping out of the carriage.

Lin Mu looked outside and saw that the entire look of the Alluring wisteria pavilion had been changed. The streets were decorated with red lanterns and banners as well, while beautiful women strolled around presenting themselves.

He looked to the other side of the street and saw that the entrances had actually been restricted. The Alluring Wisteria Pavilion had in fact reserved the entire district for this event.

"Welcome Lord Hei!" A person greeted at the entrance.

Wu Hei simply gave a slight nod before gesturing to Lin Mu. They continued onward and received the seductive looks of a lot of women that were standing around. Lin Mu was feeling a bit strange, as this was the first time he had been to a big event like this.

~Sigh~

"I'll just take this as practice for the marriage later on..." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

But then he suddenly felt something soft squishing his arm.

Chapter 352 - Officially Meeting Lord Cai

"Ah~ Young Lord Mu Lin! You finally came back~" A woman spoke.

Lin Mu instantly knew who it was just from the feeling on his arm and turning around to look at the source confirmed it.

A bright smile greeted Lin Mu as the woman named Yue looked into his eyes.

"Young lord looks even more handsome today... Ah~ I'll melt~" Yue flirted as she squished his arm even more.

Lin Mu looked at her closely and saw that she was wearing a different type of robe today. It was multilayered and had fairy bands hanging from it. The robe was quite revealing like the previous one but was of a much better quality from what he could perceive.

He had to admit that it did look good on her.

"Thank you..." Lin Mu replied simply.

"Ahem," Wu Hei interrupted.

Lin Mu gave him a thanking look for that and waited for him to speak.

"I believe we are getting late. We should pay our greetings to Lord Cai." Wu Hei said, saving Lin Mu from the awkwardness.

"Oh, I'm sorry." Yue apologized. "Please come, I'll guide you to the owner. They are sitting in the private section for now and are waiting for the rest of the guests to arrive. After half of them arrive, we will move onto the central area for the banquet." She explained.

"Alright, that's fine." Wu Hei replied.

Lin Mu nodded in approval as well, and she left his arm. They were then guided into a different part of the Alluring Wisteria pavilion. This was opposite to the one that Lin Mu had been to and was rather small. Yue nodded to the pair of guards that were standing at the entrance and they cupped their hands in salute.

"Owner some honored guests are here to meet you," Yue said after knocking on the door of the room.

~Slide~

The door was opened by a servant woman and an old man walked out of it.

"What a pleasant surprise, Lord Hei! I never expected that you would visit when I sent you the invitation." Lord Cai joked.

"Lord Cai was correct, I must admit..." Wu Hei countered, "but my friend here was invited as well, so how could I not present him." He added.

"Ahaha, you jest." The old man lagged before taking a look at Lin Mu. "And may I have the honor of knowing your name, sir?"

"This is Young Lord Mu Lin that I informed you about before owner," Yue spoke with excitement.

Lord Cai's eyes lit up at this moment as he scanned Lin Mu from top to bottom. Looking at his clothes he could tell that he was an aristocrat, but his temperament showed something else. In his life, he had met a lot of people from all walks of life and could gauge them rather easily.

Just from the faint aura that Mu Lin exuded, he could tell that he was no simple man. He had heard the entire report from Yue and the madam before, thus knew that Mu Lin was quite strong; at least stronger than himself.

He was now even more interested, as he knew who Lord Hei was. Perhaps he was among the few people in the city that actually knew Lord Hei was none other than the youngest son of the city mayor Wu Xun. Just from this, he increased the importance attached to Mu Lin.

'He must be someone influential if Wu Hei was willing to present him.' Lord Cai thought.

"So it is, Lord Mu Lin. I am happy that you are willing to give us another chance. I believe your experience this time will be better." Lord Cai spoke.

"I am happy to meet with you too, Lord Cai. Hopefully, we'll have some good conversations." Lin Mu replied.

"Oh, I almost forgot. The few imbeciles that offended Lord Mu Lin have been punished well. But if the Lord wants, he can do whatever he wants with him as he pleases." Lord Cai stated with a toothy grin.

"No, it is fine. I do not wish to be bothered." Lin Mu said as he lightly shook his head.

"Let's talk inside then. We have some other guests that I would like to meet you too." Lord Cai gestured for them to enter.

Lin Mu and Wu Hei walked in while Yue followed behind. The room was rather large, much larger than the other rooms in the eastern and western wings that Lin Mu had seen. He did a quick sweep with his spirit sense and got a layout of the entire building.

There were multiple smaller rooms attached to this one, and Lin Mu could also feel the Formations that were set up. Finally, he saw the other people that were in the room currently. They were none other than the disciples of the Tri cauldron peony sect. Including the three he saw before, there were four more, all of them men.

"Seniors! Please meet Lord Wu Hei and Lord Mu Lin!" Lord Cai introduced.

Yue's ears perked up after hearing the full name of Lord Hei.

'Wu Hei? The youngest son of the mayor, who's elusive. Then this means... young lord Mu Lin is even more special than I thought. No wonder Lord Cai had that look in his eyes.' Yue thought to herself as she stole a glance from Lin Mu.

The people in the room looked at them, but not all of them spoke, some merely nodding their heads gently.

"Pleased to meet you, I am Fa Lao," The man who Lin Mu only knew as senior brother greeted.

The others greeted and introduced themselves as well, but Lin Mu's mind was on the senior brother.

'Fa Lao? Is he related to the junior elder Fa Shiu, perhaps?' Lin Mu wondered.

"Ahaha! Lord Wu Hei is as impressive as was described to us by Lord Teng. The peak master was also wondering when he would have the chance to meet you seeing the two of you are going to be related soon." Quan Hong stated.

Chapter 353 - Investment

Lin Mu did not say anything and simply listened on. He didn't want to interfere and wanted to see how Wu Hei would react to this. He looked at Wu Hei from the corner of his eyes and saw that there was no change in his expression.

But when he felt his aura, he could sense the disturbance. Lin Mu also got a peek into his cultivation base for the first time properly. But it didn't look like others felt it, only Lin Mu's sensitive spirit sense did.

'Didn't expect that he would be in the core condensation realm as well... but what stage is he in?' Lin Mu wondered.

While he could perceive the fluctuations of a core condensation realm cultivator from him, he couldn't tell the exact stage as they were not strong enough. But if he estimated it from Hei Yingjie's cultivation as a mid stage core condensation realm expert, Wu Hei must be at least equal or higher to him.

"Ha ha! I've been intending to do the same, but I've been busy with some research. But do not worry, I'm free now and we can meet soon. Just send a message to my mansion whenever the peak master is free, I'll be sure to visit." Wu Hei said with a smile.

"He's good... but still needs more practice in hiding his true intentions. Though it may be enough for these people." Xukong analyzed.

Lin Mu didn't say anything and kept on observing.

"Of course, of course! I will inform the peak master." Quan Hong replied with a smile as well.

"Please gentlemen, let's sit," Lord Cai said.

Everyone sat down and the servants started serving them all wine.

"I propose a toast! To all the men here and to our glorious future relationship!" Lord Cai raised his cup.

"To a glorious future relationship!" Everyone joined in, but Lin Mu was a bit slow in responding.

He was not used to things like this and was not expecting it. Seeing as how everyone picked up the cups, he looked at the one that was kept in front of him.

"Go ahead, pick it up, you have to join in certain etiquettes," Xukong said.

Lin Mu picked up the cup and brought it to his lips before swallowing the wine in one go. At first, he didn't feel anything. But a second later the strong burning taste of the wine spread in his mouth. The wine flowed to his stomach and a warmth filled it.

He would have gagged if it were not for him forcibly holding his expression.

'Ugh! That's gonna take a while to get used to...' Lin Mu thought.

Everyone placed their cups down and the servant poured them all another serving. Lin Mu looked at it with a slight aversion.

"Ah, Brother Mu Lin here prefers tea," Wu Hei interrupted.

"Oh! Is that so? Please get some of our finest tea for lord Mu Lin." Lord Cai ordered.

A minute later a fresh pot of fragrant tea was brought and poured for Lin Mu. He nodded his head to the servant girl who giggled in response.

~Sip~

"Good tea..." Lin Mu muttered.

Seeing that Lin Mu was satisfied, Lord Cai nodded his head in approval.

"Now then, I believe you already know the cooperation between my Establishment and the peak master. And since lord Wu Hei is also here, I wonder if you would be interested in this venture too?" Lord Cai finally asked what he really wanted to.

A slight smirk appeared on Wu Hei's face as he had expected this to happen.

"Why not, I think it could be beneficial to us all? Besides, Lord Mu Lin and I have a few things of our own to discuss with you." Wu Hei stated.

A big toothy smile appeared on the old man's face after hearing his reply. He had truly not expected him to say this straightway and had a lot of plans ready in his mind to convince him. Lord Cai had even thought of a few ways to threaten Wu Hei but it seems like his preparations were wasted.

'Hah! What waste? This is simply good luck. If I was going to waste my effort like this every time, I would do it without regret.' Lord Cai said in his mind.

"Hahaha! Good, good, Lord Wu Hei has a good eye for business. I promise you it will be one of the best decisions you make." Lord Cai said.

"I'm fine with it... but what of the peak master?" Wu Hei questioned, taking a sip of the wine.

"We are fine with it... actually we would be happy seeing another good party investing together. Besides the peak master wouldn't mind it, you are gonna be family after all." Fa Lao replied.

"Well then, this all works out." Lord Cai affirmed with a clap and then looked at Lin Mu.

"Lord Wu Hei said that you and Lord Mu Lin have something to discuss with me, may I know what it is?" Lord Cai questioned.

Lin Mu calmly turned to see how Wu Hei would make this work.

"Well, you see brother Mu Lin here has a bit of a trouble. A certain group of people have offended him, and the last he heard of their traces was here in this region." Wu Hei answered.

Lord Cai raised his brows while the disciples continued to listen with interest.

"And who would be so unfortunate so as to offend Lord Mu Lin?" Lord Cai asked.

While he did not know the background of Lin Mu, he knew that he must not be someone simple if Wu Hei was friends with him. And with Lin Mu's strength,, he wondered even more about his background. But this also meant that the people who offended him must not be weak either.

"I don't know if Lord Cai has heard of the 'Gu Legion'." Wu Hei revealed.

Upon hearing the two words, the faces of everyone turned serious while the servants tensed up due to the change in the room.

"What..." Yue muttered under her breath.

Chapter 354 - I'm From Fenlong Kingdom Too...

Lord Cai and the disciples of the Tri cauldron peony sect looked on with furrowed brows.

"How did this... Gu legion offend Lord Mu Lin?" Lord Cai asked after thinking carefully.

Wu Hei was about to say something when Lin Mu secretly tapped him on his arm. Knowing he wanted to do this himself, he stopped himself.

"The Gu Legion did not actually offend me, but rather my master." Lin Mu revealed.

Wu Hei Raised his brows in surprise but then calmed down and understood Lin Mu's idea.

"My master is not someone who likes to be disturbed and as such directed me to deal with it." Lin Mu stated.

He didn't say why or when but knew that Lord Cai would not question this. They knew of the respect that was between a master and Disciple, the Tri cauldron peony sect disciples knew it even more, thus no one questioned Lin Mu coming after the Gu Legion.

"I see..." Lord Cai muttered and thought for a bit.

"May I know where Lord Mu Lin is from?" Quan Hong asked with a bit of apprehension.

Quan hong knew of nearly all clans and sects in the Shuang Qian kingdom and he didn't think that there was any clan surnamed Mu. From Lin Mu's attire and his friendship with Lord Wu Hei, he knew that he was an aristocrat but not from where.

If he was from a rival sect or a clan that they didn't have a good relationship with, it would make things complex.

"I come from the Mu clan of Fenlong kingdom." Lin Mu answered.

"Fenlong Kingdom?" Tie Dan said unfamiliar with the name.

A similar response was presented by most of the people except for Yue.

"I... I'm afraid I do not know of any kingdom such as this," Lord Cai said.

A small smile appeared on Wu Hei's face as this was exactly what he wanted to happen. Lin Mu also kept a calm expression and did not panic.

"Umm... owner Cai may I speak something?" Yue said in a meek voice.

Lord Cai looked up at her and then at the others. Seeing that no one was bothered by the interruption he nodded his head.

"Go ahead," he stated.

"I know of the Fenlong kingdom, owner Cai." Yue stated.

Now it was the turn for Wu Hei and Lin Mu to be surprised. The Fenlong kingdom was truly low key and barely anyone knew them. In fact, some of the powers and kingdoms didn't even consider them to be a true kingdom and merely thought of them as a vassal that was ignored by the emperor.

The Fenlong kingdom didn't really have many resources either thus it was easily ignored by the Empire. The only contact they had with them was of the yearly tributes that were sent by them, which wasn't much either.

"You know of it? Then please say more, I'd like to hear what the others know of my kingdom." Lin Mu suddenly said with a slight smile.

"Seems like Lord Mu Lin and I have more in common than we thought... I'm from the Fenlong kingdom too~" Yue said with a blush.

Lin Mu's smile turned flat and Wu Hei almost dropped the cup in his hands.

"You are?" Lord Cai asked while tilting his head.

"Yes, owner. I came to the Shuang Qian kingdom ten years ago along with a trade caravan. Before that, I used to live in Fenlong kingdom." Yue answered.

Lin Mu and Wu Hei now truly did not know what to say. If it was found out that Lin Mu was not from the Mu clan, things could become troublesome. Wu Hei's expression tensed up for a bit and he wondered if he should interrupt here.

"I've even had the fortune of visiting the Mu clan once, Lord Mu Lin," Yue stated.

Now Wu Hei and Lin Mu truly were shocked. Lin Mu's finger slightly rubbed the ring on his hand and his spirit sense spread out. He was ready to act if anything wrong was said.

"If I killed them all it shouldn't really bother, Wu Hei right?" Lin Mu asked in his mind as some red veins appeared in his eyes.

"Why are you asking me, ask him. But I'm pretty sure if you kill them in the middle of a big event like this, it would be quite hard to hide it." Xukong advised.

For a moment there, everyone in the room felt chills going down their spine but didn't know why. Lord Cai even flinched slightly and looked around, but couldn't find anything troublesome.

'Am I still jumpy from the attack?' the old man questioned himself.

"Oh? You did? That's unexpected..." Lin Mu said, continuing the conversation.

"Yes, the Mu clan bought some goods from the caravan once. But I only got to see it from the outside and didn't really meet anyone from there except for the steward and servants." Yue replied.

~pew~

A breath of relief was taken by both Lin Mu and Wu Hei.

"Ha ha!" Wu Hei suddenly laughed. "Even if you had met brother Mu Lin back then, I doubt you would have recognized him now." Wu Hei added.

"Oh? Why so? I'm good at remembering people." Yue asked in a teasing tone.

"Because I would have been six years old." Lin Mu answered that.

"Huh? What...?" Yue had a blank expression after hearing that.

Lord Cai and the disciples also looked at Lin Mu like they had seen something shocking.

"Senior he can't really be... that young can he?" Tie Dan whispered.

Fa Lao secretly sensed the fluctuation coming from Lin Mu and had a doubtful expression on his face too.

"He's at the peak stage of the qi refining realm..." Fa Lao muttered.

His fellow disciples and the old man were all cultivators and thus were able to clearly hear this.

"A peak stage qi refining realm cultivator... that too at the age of sixteen..." Lord Cai repeated.

Now the looks on everyone's faces had changed after hearing the confirmation.

Chapter 355 - BROTHER!

There were not many people that could reach the peak stage of the qi refining realm, but the age of sixteen and this kind of talent was usually only found in sects. There were the disciples of the Tri cauldron peony sect sitting here in this room, and even they couldn't help but compare themselves with Lin Mu.

Among them, the highest cultivation was that of the senior brother Fa Lao and Quan Hong. They were first and second in the seniority among the disciples of Peak master Ye Jing. Thought Fa Shiu was once

the Senior most disciple, but he had been promoted to the position of a junior elder after he reached the core condensation realm.

In the entirety of the Tri cauldron peony sect, there was no one that could compare with Lin Mu currently. The record that they had was reaching the peak stage of the qi refining realm at the age of twenty. This record was held by the current patriarch of the Tri cauldron peony sect and hasn't been broken for the past forty years.

Lin Mu reaching the Peak stage of the qi refining realm at the age of sixteen meant that he was easily comparable to the disciples of the top sects. They even wondered if there was a chance that he would reach the core condensation realm before the age of twenty.

If he really did, then he would take over the position of the fastest person to reach the core condensation realm which was held by none other than Crown Prince of the Great Zhou Empire. While the sects also had a lot of disciples that achieved this, they could not be compared to mortal kingdoms. Their baseline was much lower.

Still, it was an inevitable fact that reaching it at such a young age meant that there would be many sects willing to recruit Lin Mu as a disciple. In fact, the first thought they had was to none other than to report to the Peak master about this.

Even if Lin Mu currently had a master, all they had to do was to get them both. The sect would definitely be willing to get a cultivator that could teach a person like Lin Mu and would not be stingy with benefits.

"Lord Mu Lin is impressive! I never would have thought that I would get to meet such a talented person such as you today." Lord Cai said in a humble tone.

He now knew that he had to develop a good relationship with Lin Mu no matter what. The old man had a hunch that this boy in front of him would one day be a big power, perhaps. If he was able to grasp this opportunity today, his future may be bright and he may even have the chance to reach the core condensation realm.

Lord Cai was around sixty years old by now and had already expended half of his lifespan. He knew that he didn't have that great of a talent, and his only chance at progress would be a better cultivation technique or alchemical pills.

But both of the things were not something he could obtain easily. Another thing he wondered about was Lin Mu's master, who could be so good so as to raise a disciple such as him. Not to mention he now wondered about this Mu clan. He wondered if he should pay attention to them now and also to the Fenlong kingdom.

"You flatter me, Lord Cai. I dare not speak of talent here." Lin Mu humbly replied.

The disciples also praised him but did not do it as overtly as Lord Cai. They knew that they had to make a good impression but not repulse him. Besides, they still had to get the confirmation from the Peak master first.

"Well then, Lord Cai, do you know about this Gu Legion?" Wu Hei interrupted bringing the conversation back on track.

~Cough~

"Ah yes, I unfortunately do Lord Wu Hei. I had a few run-ins with them and they threatened me to hand half of my Establishment to them." Lord Cai replied.

"Indeed, this is one of the reasons why we are cooperating with each other now." Senior brother Fa Lao revalued.

"Actually, all the sects in the kingdom have been alerted about the Gu legion and have been asked to capture or kill them if they are found." Quan Hong spoke.

"I see, then I guess our cooperation should only be of benefit." Lin Mu stated.

"Yes, yes. This is in line with both of our goals." Lord Cai agreed with a toothy smile.

~Knock~Knock~

Someone knocked on the door and the room suddenly went silent.

"Owner Cai, nearly all of the guests have arrived now." A person spoke from outside the room.

~clap~

"Seems like we will have to discuss the rest of the matters later, let us all go and enjoy the banquet for now." Lord Cai said before standing up and walking towards Yue. "Take care of Lord Mu Lin and if any one displeases him you know what to do. He is now far too important for us to treat him the same." He whispered in her ear.

"Yes Owner," Yue replied.

Everyone stood up one by one and followed behind Lord Cai while Yue stayed behind to talk something with the servants. They appeared in the garden and saw the tens of people who were all mingling. Lin Mu did a quick scan of the area and saw that the people here in the garden were only half.

The other half were already in the rooms of the Alluring Wisteria pavilion, having their fun with the courtesans. He thought of something and walked close to Wu Hei.

"Wasn't your brother supposedly spending his time here at the Alluring Wisteria Pavilion?" Lin Mu questioned.

~Sigh~

"Yes, he was. But mother called him back after she felt someone was targeting her a day ago. He is back at the mayor's manor now with mother. They are checking the arrangements for the ceremonies, the last I heard of them." Wu Hei answered.

But then suddenly a loud shout was heard.

"BROTHER!"

Chapter 356 - The Two Wu Brothers

Wu Hei and Lin Mu both heard a rambunctious voice shouting from behind them. Lin Mu was wondered who would be so unrestrained to shout like this here, while Wu Hei instead felt a headache approaching him.

"Who shouted like that?" Lin Mu asked.

~Sigh~

"Who else could it be other than my elder brother..." Wu Hei said as he rubbed his forehead and turned around.

"Ahaha! I knew I recognized that back. I'll find you anywhere little brother!" Wu Teng said as he approached them with a pot of wine in his hand. There were even two courtesans that were accompanying him and were clutching his arms.

~Swig~

~Gulp~gulp~gulp~

~Burp~

He finished the entire pot of wine in one go and wiped his face after a loud burp. Now he had become the center of attention and everyone was wondering who could be making so much disturbance here. While this was a rather unrestrained banquet considering it was held at the Alluring Wisteria pavilion, there was still a level of decorum they followed.

At the very least they would not act like this in the open and would go to a private room for that.

"Hehe~ Lord Teng is so dashing~" One of the courtesans that were accompanying Wu Teng spoke.

"Not only is he dashing, but he's also so strong~" The second courtesan said as she trailed a finger on his bulging biceps.

"Aiya~" both the courtesans let a little scream as Wu Teng pinched their supple waists.

"My two lilies are quite naughty, I see," Wu Teng said as looked at them with a hungry gaze.

Lin Mu was now feeling as if he was seeing the most typical aristocrat that he had heard in all of the stories of the nobility. Usually, people like him were weak that liked to use their positions and clan to suppress others while taking advantage of them.

"What disrespect, this person has no sense of decorum..." Someone commented.

"Indeed, I wonder if Lord Cai will throw him out?" Someone else spoke.

"WHO SAID THAT?!" Wu Teng shouted, looking around.

The people flinched upon hearing the sudden shout.

"I asked who said that? Who dares taunt me? Come out!" Wu Teng yelled as the waves of spirit qi emanated from his body.

Everyone that was a cultivator could feel the pressure coming from him, and their faces turned pale.

Lin Mu took a closer look at the agitated man and realized that he was at the mid stage of the core condensation realm. Wu Teng was over six feet tall and had bulging muscles all over his body. He was clean shaven and had short hair as they did in the army.

Yet this only accentuated his demeanor and made him look unrestrained and dominating.

Lin Mu couldn't help but compare Wu Teng with Wu Hei. The two brothers seemed to be polar opposites. Wu Teng was unrestrained and wild, while Wu Hei was calm and scholarly. Still, both of them were strong being at the core condensation realm. This was not something that could be denied.

"Make way! Make way! Owner Cai is coming though!" A couple of servants announced.

Lord Cai had just gone to meet a few guests when suddenly he heard the ruckus. Sighing to himself, he just hoped it was not someone too unreasonable. But when he heard the shout, he instantly recognized the person. There was only one person who would dare to do something like this in the presence of the disciples of the Tri cauldron peony sect.

But when he felt the spirit qi waves, he knew that he had to hurry or the matter may become problematic.

"This lieutenant is so unbecoming of his title. Where is his military discipline? He acts like some common village gangster..." Lord Cai muttered under his breath.

Soon the crowd of people separated and the old man saw Wu Teng.

"Lord Wu Teng! Please be calm, I'm here now. Let us talk separately," Lord Cai said.

"Humph!" Wu Teng harrumphed unwillingly but still decided to follow Lord Cai's words.

"Brother, please keep some semblance of respect for your image, if not for yourself then for mother..." Wu Hei also spoke.

~haa~

"Alright... if you say so..." Wu Teng said and followed them to the corner.

A table had been set up under a gazebo and they could see the entirety of the garden from it. Lin Mu stayed silent and simply followed behind them without interfering. He wanted to see how this would progress and was now quite interested in this Lieutenant.

"I didn't expect that Lord Teng would also be coming to the banquet, seeing how you've been busy with the predations." Lord Cai said, starting the conversation to take Wu Teng's mind of the previous thing.

"Ah yes, of course... but how can I miss the chance to attend a banquet like this! Ahaha!" Wu Teng laughed while slapping the table which shook under his strength.

Wu Hei gave a look to his brother, which made him stop.

"Come one little brother you are no fun..." Wu Teng complained.

"This is no time for fun brother, you should be back home not here at this... 'establishment'. What will sister-in-law think of this?" Wu Hei scolded lightly.

"Oh, she'll be fine~" Wu Teng replied while waving his hand.

Wu Hei looked at the two courtesans that were still clinging to his brother and stared at them. The two women froze up and didn't know what to do.

"Go! Bring us some refreshments!" Lord Cai ordered, noticing Wu Hei's intentions.

~sigh~

"When will you learn brother..." Wu Hei muttered while rubbing his forehead.

~Chuckle~

Lin Mu lightly chuckled, seeing the banter between the two brothers. While on the surface it seemed like they did not like each other, the reality was rather opposite. Lin Mu could tell this now and felt like laughing a bit.

"Oh? And who's this? Don't tell me... did little brother finally make a friend?" Wu Teng spoke upon seeing Lin Mu.

Chapter 357 - Opposites

Wu Teng had seen the boy accompanying his brother right from the very start but did not know who he was. At first, he had guessed that he was just one of the people that were trying to get close to the mayor through his little brother, but Wu Teng knew that his younger brother would not tolerate people like that near him.

Seeing Lin Mu freely accompanying Wu Hei and seeing that he did not mind his presence and was actually accommodating of him made Wu Teng suspicious. But now that they had sat down on this private table and Lin Mu was still here, confirmed it for him.

Ever since he had been a child, Wu Teng had seen his younger brother staying alone. His sole companions were none other than books and more books. The very few people that he tolerated were the family and the servants. He would never play with the other children, and even he had to coerce him a lot to make him play.

Years passed by like that, and his younger brother only became more and more distant. Then, back when he was fourteen, he decided to go on a scholar's journey. His father Wu Xun was opposed to this and wanted Wu Hei to stay at home and cultivate properly.

Compared to him, he knew that his brother's talent in cultivation was quite low, and even after twenty years of cultivating he had barely reached the peak stage of the qi refining realm. While he himself had reached the mid stage of the core condensation realm, just one stage below his father, the mayor.

Still, under the incessant petering of his little brother, their mother eventually caved and pleaded Wu Xun to let him go. And thus Wu Hei went away on his scholar's journey throughout the empire. He spent ten years like this and only returned six years ago.

But after his return, he had only become more cold. Their mother had also become dissatisfied with their father during this time, and their relationship was cold. While his brother stayed in contact with

him throughout the years he was gone, Wu Teng still felt as if he had greatly changed and was hiding something.

No matter how much he tried he couldn't get him to open up, and at this point, he had just given up and had accepted that Wu Hei was simply just like this. This was his natural personality and there was nothing he could do to change it.

Even now Wu Teng had fully expected that his little brother would deny his teasing question, but he didn't know that today was going to be surprising to him.

"Yes, elder brother. Brother Mu Lin is a friend of mine." Wu Hei accepted.

Wu Teng was dumb stuck and was frozen for a bit. Then finally a big grin appeared on his face.

"AH HAHAHA! Today is a truly great day! My brother brought a friend, an actual friend I say!" Wu Teng laughed out loud.

"No need to be so loud, brother. You are needlessly disturbing others." Wu Hei chided again.

"Alright, alright... But now I wanna know who this is," Wu Teng said.

"Fine, then. Elder brother, meet Lord Mu Lin from the Mu clan of Fenlong Kingdom." Wu Hei introduced.

"Greetings Lieutenant Wu Teng," Lin Mu greeted as well.

"What's that I hear? Lieutenant? No, you shall not use words such as these. A friend of my little brother is a friend of mine. You can simply call me brother Teng." Wu Teng replied with a smile.

"Well... he's certainly easy going..." Xukong spoke in Lin Mu's mind.

"Indeed Senior. Comparing the two brothers... they're simply the opposites. But this man is also quite strange... he has no decorum of a military personnel or even an aristocrat." Lin Mu replied.

"There can be certain exceptions to them, of course. This man Wu Teng is probably one of them." Xukong said while shaking his head.

"Alright then, I'll call you Brother Teng too." Lin Mu replied to Wu Teng.

"ha ha!"

~Clap~

Wu Teng gave Lin Mu a clap on the back in a celebratory manner. Lord Cai's eyes went wide and so did Wu Hei's. Even Wu Teng only realized a second later what he had just done. He was at the mid stage of the core condensation realm and had just given the boy in front of him a clap on the back with nearly his full force.

He was suddenly worried that he may have injured him. But then when he looked at him, he saw him to be completely fine and sitting without any discomfort. In fact, now that a couple of seconds had passed, Wu Teng could feel his palm getting slightly numb, as if he had accidentally hit a hard wall.

'What is this boy... Does he practice some kind of qi skills that specialize in defense?' Wu Teng wondered to himself.

Seeing that suddenly everyone was looking at him, Lin Mu felt awkward.

"Umm... is there something on my face?" He asked.

"Oh, no, no! Everything is fine, Lord Mu Lin." Lord Cai hurriedly spoke.

"Yeah, I kinda was a bit disrespectful there... shouldn't have done that." Wu Teng apologized too.

"Oh, that's fine. No harm done," Lin Mu replied.

Just as they finished this conversation, a stream of courtesans and servants arrived with trays in their hands. They were carrying various dishes and wine with them. Just from the aroma that they were emitting, Lin Mu could feel it.

"Hmm... spirit beast meat? ~*Sniff~Sniff*~ and what's this... herbs of some kind?" Lin Mu wondered.

"Oh, seems like lord Mu Lin is quite a gourmet. Yes, these are some of our finest dishes that include spirit beast meat and of course some spirit herbs as well. While the herbs are low grade spirit herbs, they can still be eaten directly unlike the others that needed to be refined into alchemical pills." Lord Cai explained.

Seeing that he now had some truly good food to eat, Lin Mu's eyes brightened while Wu Hei suddenly had a bad feeling in his guts.

Chapter 358 - An Appetite To Shock The Masses

The three men, Wu Hei, Wu Teng, and Lord Cai were currently sitting with their eyes wide open, staring at the ridiculous thing that was happening in front of them.

The servants and Courtesans had grown tired of going back and forth bring trays upon trays of food. But it was not because everyone was enjoying it a lot. But rather because of the monstrous appetite of the person sitting there.

At first, everything had been normal, and they had finished their first round of food. Lord Cai noticed that Lin Mu had enjoyed it a lot and asked him if he wanted more. Lin Mu's eyes lit up upon hearing that, and he straightway answered yes.

More food was brought for him and he finished it all in five minutes. This was when they noticed the anomaly that was Lin Mu. After finishing it all, he looked up at Lord Cai and asked if he could have even more. Lord Cai didn't know what to say, except that he could have as much as he wanted.

After all, this was a banquet organized by him. What face would he have left, if he was not even able to satisfy the appetite of one guest properly? It wasn't really a problem for the Alluring wisteria pavilion to prepare such kind of food for a few hundred people, thus he did not mind at all.

Even Wu Teng was someone who ate a lot of food, but he was shocked by this too. He even praised Lin Mu's appetite and told him he ate like a true warrior.

Dishes upon dishes were brought; there were entire roasted pigs, fried chicken, steamed fish, stewed vegetables and various fruit juices. Yet Lin Mu was able to fit them down in his stomach with ease. The people there could do nothing but simply watch him eat.

It was now that a rather large cow beast was brought. The portions had been cut into large steaks that were stacked on top of each other. Each slab had bones attached to them, which were left there to enhance the flavor of the meat.

Lin Mu picked some of these steaks and started eating them. But then Lord Cai noticed something. Seeing that Lin Mu was about to bite into a bone, he suddenly spoke.

"Lord Mu Lin, watch out! That's a..." but before he could finish his sentence, a sound was heard.

~CRUNCH~

~Gulp~

"Hmm? You said something?" Lin Mu asked, oblivious to his actions.

"Uhh... no, nothing. Please continue." Lord Cai spoke with difficulty.

Seeing that Lin Mu was totally fine, Lord Cai didn't know what to say. He had heard of people chewing on bones before for flavor, but they would spit them out. Lin Mu was snapping them in his mouth as if they were crispy fried dough sticks.

"Sister is he... eating a bone?" A courtesan whispered to another, feeling amazed at this scene.

"Looks like it... but I don't know how it's possible..." The other courtesan muttered in response.

Another ten minutes passed and by now Lin Mu had eaten enough food that was enough to feed about thirty people easily. Even Wu Hei was left speechless at this and didn't know what to think of it. This simply did not make sense to him.

He scanned Lin Mu from top to bottom and found him to be completely normal. If someone else had eaten even ten percent of the amount of food that Lin Mu had eaten, their belly would have definitely been bulging out. But looking at Lin Mu, no such thing could be seen.

It was as if his stomach was an endless void that only kept on sucking more and more of the food in it.

"Lin Mu, stop! This is enough! At this point, everyone will be suspicious of you!" Xukong shouted in Lin Mu's mind.

Lin Mu snapped out of his mechanical actions and his focus returned to him. While he was eating he had entered a strange kind of state and was fully focused on absorbing the spirit qi and vital energy that was slowly being released from the food in his stomach.

Because of this, he barely paid any attention to his surroundings. Lin Mu realized this and was a bit scared.

"This was strange... what exactly happened to me?" Lin Mu questioned Xukong.

"I don't know either. But from the looks of it, seems like we found another side effect of the nameless technique of the lost immortal. You lose sense of your surroundings when you have a large amount of food with you." Xukong explained.

"I understand senior. I'll take a note of it and think of a solution to it." Lin Mu replied.

~Phew~

Seeing that Lin Mu had finally stopped eating, everyone took a breath of relief. They didn't know why, but the more they saw him eat the more uncomfortable they got. They even felt as if he would keep on eating till they ran out of all food and if he was still not satisfied then they would be the next ones to be eaten.

The servants quickly took away the empty and dirtied dishes, and the table was replaced. They were originally going to discuss a few things while having a meal, but Lin Mu's actions were something that they could not ignore and simply stared at him eat.

"Now that our meal is done, I believe we can have a nice conversation..." Lord Cai spoke, trying to dissipate the awkward silence.

"Ah yes, of course. Pardon my manners." Lin Mu said, seeing that Lord Cai was taking the initiative. He looked at Wu Teng and asked, "brother Teng, how are the marriage preparations coming along? I've been waiting for it too and wanted to see all the ceremonies that have been planned."

~Sigh~

"Oh, yeah... the marriage." Wu Teng said with a sigh, almost as if he was unwilling to do this. "The preparations are coming along fine and mother had decided that we will have the official ceremony in five days." He continued.

Chapter 359 - Cheap Tricks?

Both Wu Hei and Lord Cai seemed shocked at this revelation and have not expected this. From the information that Wu Hei had told Lin Mu, he remembered that they had at least ten more days till the marriage ceremony. For some reason, they had switched back to an earlier date.

"What Elder brother? How did this happen?" Wu Hei questioned.

This matter was actually quite important to Wu Hei too, and he needed to make appropriate changes in the plans that he had made, if the ceremonies were going to be hurried up. Wu Teng sighed again before speaking.

~Sigh~

"Mother said that father deserves what has happened to him and even if he doesn't return, we will be having the wedding. It doesn't matter to her if he even gets punished by the king." Wu Teng stated.

"I see..." Wu Hei muttered upon hearing this.

'Looks like mother found out something as well... but what could it be? Perhaps she suspects father as well?' Wu Hei thought to himself.

"I must congratulate on the finalization of the date then, Lord Wu Teng." Lord Cai spoke.

"Ah, yes. Thank you." Wu Teng replied before picking up another cup of wine and gulping it down.

"Now that the date of the marriage ceremony has been confirmed, when will the tournaments be starting?" Lin Mu questioned curiously.

~Tap~

Wu Teng placed the cup down and thought for a bit before answering.

"Mother said something about finishing up the smaller tournaments first and keeping the martial tournament for the very last. So I guess they will start from tomorrow afternoon. Mother is sending out the invitations as we speak right now." Wu Teng answered.

"Wait a minute, elder brother! Is that why you are here? Did you skip out on work?" Wu Hei questioned with a strong gaze.

"Ehehe~ Umm... yeah..." Wu Teng responded awkwardly, like a child that was caught doing mischief.

Wu Hei rubbed his forehead in frustration and knew the problems this would cause later. If mother got pissed, it would fall upon his head to resolve whatever happened, which was not something that he wanted to do at all.

Just as they were speaking about this, a Steward approached Lord Cai.

"Lord Cai, there is something for you," The steward said.

Lord Cai took the item from the steward, which was an ornate box. He opened the box and saw the scroll inside. As soon as he saw it, he knew what it was.

"Looks like I got the invitation too," Lord Cai said as he opened the scroll and read it.

Wu Hei suddenly felt the communication jade slip lightly buzz on his waist as well, and he held it in his hand before closing his eyes. About ten seconds later, he opened his eyes and nodded his head.

"Was that mother?" Wu Teng questioned.

"Yeah, it was her. She told me about the updated dates of all the events and also told me to come to meet with her as soon as possible." Wu Hei answered.

Wu Teng's eyes went wide as soon as he heard this and he almost japed up.

"Little brother, you absolutely cannot tell her where I am right now. I don't want to hear another one of her lectures again..." Wu Teng stated.

Wu Hei was about to protest, but then simply sighed.

"Fine, but you need to return home quick too and you cannot spend the night here." Wu Hei said before looking at Lord Cai. "Elder brother shall not stay here for the night, ensure this." He ordered.

~Gulp~

Lord Cai could faintly feel the threatening aura coming from Wu Hei and knew better than to disagree with him.

"As you wish, Lord Hei," Lord Cai replied with cupped hands.

"Hmm, wait does the Tri cauldron peony sect know of this? I mean, won't they have to get ready for it?" Lin Mu asked, feeling curious.

"They should know about it by now as well. Mother should have informed the peak master and Ye Zi Jin too. But you don't really have to think about them getting ready, they have always been ready." Wu Teng replied.

"Oh... I see." Lin Mu said before nodding his head.

Seeing that silence had descended again, Lord Cai remembered what they wanted to discuss before.

"Oh yes, Lord Mu Lin, you wanted to know about the Gu Legion," Lord Cai said.

Wu Teng's ears perked up upon hearing about this, and he turned to look at Lord Cai.

"You know about the Gu Legion?" He questioned in a straight tone.

"Yes, elder brother. Both Lord Cai and brother Mu Lin have been offended by the Gu Legion." Wu Hei was the one that answered the question this time.

"You too? I had a conflict with them as well when I was coming to the City from the capital." Wu Teng replied.

"What? How did I not know of this?" Wu Hei questioned.

"Father didn't inform you? I already told him a while ago and I thought he must have told you as well, that's why I never talked about it." Wu Teng answered.

"Dammit, father!" Wu Hei silently cursed under his breath.

Wu Hei's men had been rather concentrated around a few areas of concern recently due to which his information network had been slowed down. Otherwise, there was no chance that he would have had not known that the Teng Battalion had a conflict with them.

"What exactly happened in the conflict, tell me?" Wu Hei questioned again.

"Well, nothing too much really. A few of their men sneaked into one of the towns we were resting in and I noticed them. They were killing one of the patrons of the inn that I was staying at, and I sensed them. Regardless, they were dead soon and couldn't even bear a couple of blows from me." Wu Teng answered.

"But how did you find out they were from the Gu Legion?" Wu Hei questioned.

"They told me themselves. Those bastards thought they could fool me with cheap tricks. Can you imagine, they called father master; hah, the audacity!"

Chapter 360 - Wu Hei's Story

"Hahaha! Ridiculous... absolutely ridiculous!" Lord Cai exclaimed.

Lord Cai couldn't help but laugh at the words of Wu Teng. Even he couldn't understand how the people of Gu Legion who were all smart and threatening till now, would act dumbly like that. But Wu Hei had a different reaction, he was deep in thought.

Still, the one who was the most shocked yet didn't have any expression on his face was Lin Mu.

'So it really is Wu Xun who's the master of the Gu Legion and not someone else.' Lin Mu thought.

Hearing the words of Wu Teng pretty much confirmed it for Lin Mu as he understood that the men were trying to convince Wu Teng to spare them.

"Seems like while the people of the Gu Legion know Wu Teng is Wu Xun's son, they don't know that he isn't aware of their existence." Xukong suddenly spoke.

"Hmm, seems like a misunderstanding... a misunderstanding that we can take advantage of. At least his confirms another thing for us... Wu Hei and Wu Teng are truly unaware of the actions of their father." Lin Mu replied.

"Indeed, this makes it both easier and complex for us now. While we know that they are not involved with their father now, we can't say the same in the future. Perhaps, when they learn of it, they may choose to stand with their father than us." Xukong explained.

"That is true. We can't reveal this to Wu Hei yet and still need more information." Lin Mu stated.

Wu Teng looked at Lin Mu who was silent and wondered why he was acting like this for.

"Brother Mu, how did the Gu Legion offend you?" Wu Teng asked.

"They offended my master and I'm looking for them in his stead." Lin Mu simply answered.

"Aha! I see. Still, any enemy of my brother and his friends is my enemy too! I swear to find them for you if I get the chance!" Wu Teng declared slamming his fist on his chest.

"Thank you, brother Teng. That would be great." Lin Mu replied.

"I'll also assist them in this matter, Lord Mu Lin. I believe they will eventually try to make contact with me. That is when we'll get the." Lord Cai stated.

"So you'll inform us if anything happens?" Wu Hei asked again.

"Yes I will, Lord Hei. I swear on my honor!" Lord Cai affirmed.

Lin Mu and Wu Hei both nodded and felt like their task was made slightly easier.

"Well then, Elder Brother, Lord Cai; I need to leave now. Mother does not like to be delayed." Wu Hei said.

"That is fine, Lord Hei. Please take care and don't hesitate to contact me if you need help in any matter. I'll do my best." Lord Cai replied respectfully.

"Yeah, little brother take care... and don't tell mother about me. I'll be back in a couple of hours after having a bit of fun." Wu Teng stated in response.

Wu Hei then looked at Lin Mu and asked, "will you be leaving with me or staying here?"

Lin Mu could sense a few gazes on him, particularly of one woman who was none other than Yue. He hesitated for a second before deciding.

"I'll come with you. Perhaps I'll visit the Alluring Wisteria Pavilion later." Lin Mu answered.

His answer made Yue sigh in a helpless tone, but Lord Cai was the same. He already knew that he had achieved what he wanted, and it didn't really matter if Lin Mu wanted to stay here or not. He could care even less about what a courtesan wanted.

"I'll see you out, my lords." Lord Cai offered.

"No need. We'll leave on our own." Wu Hei said and Lin Mu nodded in acknowledgment.

The two of them then left the boisterous banquet, much to the sadness of Yue who had a frown on her face. They left the building, and the carriage was soon brought to them. After entering the carriage, the two of them sat down on the opposite sides and Wu Hei suddenly spoke.

"Brother Lin Mu, I may have a suspicion about the person behind the Gu Legion." Wu Hei said in a serious tone.

Lin Mu tensed up and gestured for him to continue, "please speak."

"I think... it may be my father, the mayor." Wu Hei revealed.

Lin Mu showed no reaction to this and simply kept a calm face.

"And what made you think this, Lord Hei?" Lin Mu questioned.

~Sigh~

"Honestly, I had the suspicion for a long time now. About fifteen years ago I found some documents in my father's study which showed that he was involved in some dark businesses. I thought that he was just the same as all aristocrats and did some things in the shadows.

I had this in my mind for a few years till I first had the encounter with the Gu Legion. I didn't know who they were, but knew they were bad. I was quite naive back then with ambitions of justice. Of course, like a naive kid, I went to fight with a few of their members when they were attacking a village under the guise of a bandit group.

I sustained injuries but thankfully had my servants who protected me. They died protecting me while the Gu Legion members retreated. While I was busy fighting with them, the other part of the bandits had raided and killed half of the village.

I swore to not be helpless like that and took an oath to become stronger. That was also where I started my group, which I later named the Hei corps. Hei Wen was one of the villagers that were attacked back then.

She was a mere teen back then and was severely injured. I rescued her and she vowed to follow me, becoming part of the Hei corps. And just like this, I would recruit more and more people till it reached the level it is today." Wu Hei revealed.

Lin Mu was silently listened to his story and could feel the pain in it.