

Dawn of a New Era

Chapter 50: Chapter 50: Nightfall

Before reaching downstairs, Chen Shouyi heard Mrs. Chen speaking.

"Really, such a creepy thing, others can't avoid it fast enough, yet you're eager to go there, truly blinded by money."

"Mom!" Chen Xingyue hugged Mrs. Chen's arm, playfully said:

"I'm a Martial Artist Apprentice, what's there to be afraid of? Their family is fine."

"What if that filthy thing still recognizes people?" Mrs. Chen remained uneasy: "Others haven't dared to go, why would an outsider like you go?"

"By then, wouldn't I know how to run! If I can't even run, staying at home isn't safe either. Mom, don't worry!"

"You're driving me crazy."

"Alright, alright, since you want to go, be careful tonight and take care of your brother," said Chen Dawei.

Beside him, Chen Shouyi, who was watching Chen Xingyue being teased, couldn't help but open his mouth.

I'm already quite competent, okay!

But ultimately, he said nothing.

If I did, you'd think I was bragging.

In his heart, he decided to take the martial artist apprentice assessment as soon as social order restores.

Don't underestimate the status of a Martial Artist Apprentice; it's a reflection of social status itself.

In another sense, it's akin to having political power early, enjoying corresponding rights and duties, and possesses the status of a militia.

Especially in a small place like Dongning, having the status of a Martial Artist Apprentice, others often hold you in high regard, always casting respectful and admiring glances, a natural reaction by ordinary people when facing powerful peers who can easily take their lives.

If Chen Xingyue wasn't a Martial Artist Apprentice, her parents wouldn't have agreed so easily for her to go out.

Of course, no one would have asked her either!

...

Cold moonlight carried a slight chill.

Two shadows, one tall, one short, walked in succession.

The alley was quiet, only the sound of their footsteps rang clearly.

Chen Xingyue, dressed in cotton sportswear, carried a sword box on her shoulder, using her phone for light in front.

Looking at his phone, Chen Shouyi couldn't help but ask:

"How do you still have power?"

"Charged in the car, didn't you know?"

Chen Shouyi: "..."

If it weren't for Chen Xingyue's reminder, he would have forgotten cars could charge too.

...

This area's communities are self-built European-style, two-and-a-half-story houses, separate with private yards, due to initial unified planning, the vertical and horizontal layout doesn't seem chaotic at all.

Yet his house is by the street, stepping out right onto the road.

Chen Shouyi seldom walked inside the community, now coming, it felt a bit unfamiliar.

Though it wasn't yet seven o'clock, the community's streets were empty.

If it weren't for the faint lighting through the houses, one might suspect everyone had already gone to sleep.

Uncle Wang's house was easy to find.

The yard had black tarpaulins set up, hauntingly dark.

The iron gate was closed.

The two approached for a knock, barely tapping twice, the door opened quickly.

The opener was Wang Debiao's wife, Ah Fen, a woman in her forties, dressed in white mourning clothes with a black cloth flower pinned to her chest.

She looked haggard, with deep eye bags.

Her eyes left a deep impression on Chen Shouyi, they were eyes filled with fear and anxiety.

Then again, anyone encountering this sort of thing would feel restless.

"Oh, Xing Yue, you're here, please come in."

"Hello, Auntie," said Chen Xingyue.

Chen Shouyi also followed with a greeting, entering behind Chen Xingyue.

The yard was filled with a faint corpse smell.

Cold and deserted, with pitifully few people.

Besides Uncle Wang's brother and two sons, there was only Wang Debiao's wife, Ah Fen, the rest of the relatives hadn't come, clearly scared away.

Upon seeing Chen Xingyue, they seemed to have seen a lifeline, rushing over to greet her.

Uncle Wang's brother, a man in his seventies or eighties, stood from his seat, shakily walking ahead:

"Xing Yue, we count on you this time, your Martial Artist Apprentice yang energy is strong, can most suppress evil Qi, hope today my brother can be peaceful, us living folk can't endure repeated turmoil."

Elderly people tend to be superstitious, especially given such occurrences, they're compelled to believe.

Being her first encounter with this situation, Chen Xingyue was clumsy, flushed, "Well... I'm not sure if it'll work?"

"Even if it doesn't work, it's okay, having you here reassures us," Wang Debiao squeezed out a smile.

Whether the evil Qi can be dispelled is one thing, what matters is having courage.

"Yes, yes!" Uncle Wang's second son echoed, fearing she might get scared and leave: "Now my father's corpse is bound up, there's no danger."

"Sit down, Xing Yue!" Ah Fen hurriedly invited: "And Dawei's son, don't just stand."

She used her sister's name, but for him, it's someone's son.

The difference in address reflects the disparity in their status in people's hearts.

Chen Shouyi didn't mind, long accustomed to it.

"It's been a while since you've come with Xing Yue, I barely recognize you," Ah Fen forced a smile, making tea and setting snacks.

Chen Shouyi replied perfunctorily.

...

The night gradually deepened.

Several sat sipping strong tea, chatting.

The sorrowful atmosphere had vanished amidst recent events, replaced only by fear and unease.

As they talked, they discussed last night's occurrences.

Words seemed regretful, shouldn't have taken the corpse back, should've let the police handle it.

Through bits of conversation.

Chen Shouyi roughly pieced together the situation.

Originally, after Uncle Wang's body was shot down by police, it became motionless like a genuine corpse.

The police were also unsure how to proceed; they weren't trained for such bizarre occurrences.

Chen Shouyi suspected the police might've been quite shaken too.

The deceased's family came, explained the situation, and took the body back.

In hindsight, the event was full of twists and turns.

Listening for a bit, Chen Shouyi just dazed off silently.

He glanced at Chen Xingyue intently focused on gaming.

Feeling somewhat regretful, realizing he should've brought a book, even memorizing a common language dictionary would've been better than having nothing to do.

Bored, he rose, walking a few steps in the yard.

Then, turning to the mourning hall, curiosity overcoming him, he went over.

Others glanced but didn't intervene.

...

By now, it was midnight, candlelight flickering within, dim and yellow, two white candles on the desk dancing flames, largely burned down.

The air mixed an odd scent of corpse stench and incense, with white drapery behind the altar.

Uncle Wang's corpse lay behind it.

He instinctively lightened his steps, slowly threading past the drapery, peeking at the body.

Bound tightly to the bed with rope, the skin waxy, lacking any blood hue.

Dressed in oversized traditional funeral garments, evidently his muscles had shrunk.

Since returning last night, the corpse hadn't been cleaned.

Dust-covered dark-grey funeral clothes bore bullet holes, with an ominous wet stain at wound spots.

Due to the grey garment, he couldn't determine if it was blood or body oil.

Aside the body had bullet scars, the most noticeable was the head; a bullet entered from the cheek into the brain, leaving a terrifying black wound.

He then noticed a peculiar detail on the corpse, the dried thin fingers' nails were dark, eerily black.

Besides, those fingers occasionally twitched slightly.

PS: Seeking recommendations. Also, thanks to Fantasy Chronicles and Ren Yanjin for their generous reward!