

A Snake 1221

Chapter 1221: What Secrets Can't Be Told?

"Seriously? He didn't teach me anything at all." I glanced at Zhang Zidao, who was sitting there wolfing down the sweet rice wine dessert.

The young man's features were delicate, a face like a piece of fine jade.

After finishing the fermented rice, he went on to walnut crisps and durian puffs, nyonya kueh...

He was really going through, in one sitting, every pastry in this lifetime that I can or can't put a name to.

Zhang Che frowned. "He didn't teach you anything, then where did that whole body of Sharp Gold Aura come from?"

"Didn't you already know? He's the one who put it into my body." Watching Zhang Zidao put away what had to be a hundred catties of pastries by now, I couldn't help feeling bloated for him and burped.

Zhang Che said, "If I'm guessing right, that's the origin power he cultivated and nurtured for many years. From now on, anything from the Zhang Family you study, you'll be able to master at a glance. Of course he wouldn't just superficially teach you specific techniques."

"Oh right, Uncle Che, have you... talked it over with my master yet?" Watching the sun sink in the west and another day slip by, I was indescribably anxious.

Once dawn breaks tomorrow, he probably won't last till dusk—Zhang Zidao could leave at any moment.

Zhang Che shook his head. "I haven't found the chance. I keep feeling he's deliberately hiding something, so ever since we saw the control gu in the patient's body yesterday, he's been avoiding meeting me in private."

"You've seen the control gu? What does it look like?" I hadn't finished asking when Zhang Che handed me a sketch.

It was a strange beetle with a very hard shell.

It looked a bit like a ladybug, but Zhang Che told me its shell was golden.

And it burned with golden flames, the temperature extremely high.

But it had a gentle side as well; when the flames entered a person's body—

The person wouldn't be burned, just controlled.

I was completely at a loss. I'm linked mind-to-mind with the Centipede Gu.

But even Xiao Honghong had never seen this kind of gu and couldn't even name it.

While I was studying the drawing, Zhang Che said to me, "I took it to Granny Long. She told me not to meddle, so then I went to Yan Bashui, and he dodged the issue too. Later I realized the entire Lin Family is staying completely out of anything to do with Su Chongwen—they're neither afflicted by the gu poison, nor do they intend to get involved in the other Mystic Sect members being controlled."

"My grandpa has always looked down on Su Chongwen. When my mom wanted to go with Su Chongwen, he even struck her from the family genealogy. There's no reason he'd help Su Chongwen." In my view, doing nothing is as good as helping, so I couldn't figure it out no matter how I thought about it.

After brooding for a while, Zhang Che said to me, "Whatever the reason, the Corpse Drivers under Granny Long, the Miao Village under Yan Bashui, and the Lin Family under Lin Huan—those three powers stand in a stalemate, and none of them are willing to tell the truth. That's really a headache for us."

I was at my wits' end. The Lin Family, Tianying Village, Long Xiangkui—clearly they'd all agreed among themselves and didn't want to get dragged into this...

After agreeing to several blind dates, Zhang Shuying finally managed to escape the elders' siege and ran over, saying, "You two really sold me out for your own peace and quiet—using me to sell me, and in exchange you get a life of leisure. That's cold."

I asked Zhang Shuying, "Shuying, take a look—do you recognize this kind of gu?"

"If you don't, you can ask your Golden Silkworm Gu. It's lived a long time; it's bound to be well-informed." Zhang Che added.

Zhang Shuying picked it up, glanced at it, and sneered. "This is the control gu Su Chongwen put into people's bodies, the one you saw when you were doing Gu Removal for them, right, Uncle Che?"

This guy is ridiculously smart; we hadn't told him the story, but one look at the picture and he knew.

"You know it?" I asked excitedly.

Zhang Shuying shook his head, then walked over to Zhang Zidao's side.

He swept the butterfly puffs and coconut cakes off the table onto the floor and slapped the picture down on the table. "The two of them have been guessing back and forth, but never came to ask you. Obviously it's because you, you damned old man, won't talk. You're about to kick the bucket—what secrets are there left that you can't tell?"

Chapter 1222: The Secret of the Immortal Gu

"West... West Heaven??" Zhang Zidao's cheeks were puffed up like a hamster's as he listened to Zhang Shuying's words, nearly choking himself. He took several sips of tea to calm down, "I ascended to immortality on a crane, not went to the West Heaven."

"Isn't it the same thing? Either way, you're in a place we can't go." Zhang Shuying replied bluntly, "You're dead, so why try to hide it? What exactly is this thing?"

"Wanwan, come here." After Zhang Zidao called me over, he asked me, "Can you and your stepfather possibly not get involved in this matter, or can the entire Zhang Family stay out of it?"

"Uncle Che, why is your attitude like the Lin Family's?" I noticed the similarity but also a difference.

The Lin Family, Tianying Village, and Long Xiangkui had all coordinated their actions.

But Zhang Zidao coincidentally shared the same view, he probably didn't have the leisure to ally with them, completely expressing his own opinion.

Zhang Che nodded at me, stood next to Zhang Shuying, and whispered to Zhang Zidao, "We can stay out, but tell us the reason."

"No harm in saying, after all, it's Su Wan who's at a loss." Zhang Zidao seemed unfazed and mischievously glanced at Zhang Shuying and Zhang Che, "You treat her as if she's your life, so I'm sure you'll agree once you hear."

"Spit it out, old man!!" Zhang Shuying cursed impatiently.

Zhang Zidao raised an eyebrow, "The Mother Gu that was used should be the Immortal Gu that Tianying Village has protected for thousands of years. That Immortal Gu was supposed to seek out my obedient apprentice as its master, but for some unknown reason... it chose Su Chongwen."

I was inexplicably shocked; the Immortal Gu saw someone as powerful as Su Chongwen.

But why would the Immortal Gu choose Su Chongwen??

And why kidnap Yu Longting and the others?

"There's an opportunity, hasn't the Ten Thousand Poison Hall always wanted that Immortal Gu?" Zhang Shuying snapped his fingers and said, "We can go to the Ten Thousand Poison Hall to find Zhao Zheng. Once she and her people take action, there's no need for us to deal with Su Chongwen."

Zhang Che nodded, "Although the Ten Thousand Poison Hall is not to be trifled with, it's currently the best option. No wonder Tianying Village wants to stay out of it, and the Lin Family was probably dragged into it by Tianying Village."

"Zhao Zheng has already been killed by me." I blurted out the truth.

Zhang Che and Zhang Shuying thought they heard wrong, "What did you say?"

"I said Zhao Zheng is dead, and the Ten Thousand Poison Hall is now leaderless, so it's useless to go to them."

I frowned and said, "The Ten Thousand Poison Hall is no match for Su Chongwen."

"Why are you all bent on opposing Su Chongwen? If the Immortal Gu wants to govern the world, let it do so. It shouldn't do anything too outrageous; after all, it's an immortal." Zhang Zidao said.

I looked at Zhang Zidao, "Originally, we could follow your plan, but... Dumpling, Yu Longting, and Yu Rongling have been kidnapped by Su Chongwen."

"What??" Zhang Zidao abruptly stood up, his eyes glinting with Spiritual Power.

Seeing Zhang Zidao stunned, I explained the situation to him.

Zhang Zidao listened to the speculations me and Zhang Che had, shook his head at us, "I think your guesses are all wrong. The Immortal Gu is something of the Immortal Clan. How could it allow Su Chongwen to control it? What it's doing, I think is..."

After hearing Zhang Zidao's perspective, Zhang Shuying, Zhang Che, and I looked at each other.

If that's the case, there's nothing that can stop the Immortal Gu.

Zhang Zidao shook his head repeatedly, saying since we know in advance the purpose of the Immortal Gu's abduction, we have a way to deal with it.

Rather than waiting to be slaughtered, it's better to fight to the death and not let this thing have its way.

Chapter 1223: Wishing for Longevity, Wanting to Live a Little Longer

Tonight is Zhang Zidao's last day in the mortal world.

During the day, he tasted sweets from all over the world; now he wants to drink wines from all over the world.

The old man's Haotian Peak has countless fine wines, and he only brought me up there.

I'm not one to drink, but when I smell the aroma from the jars of wine,

I couldn't help but crave it a little, yet I didn't dare to recklessly drink his wine.

Afraid the wine's vintage is too long, and its strength is something I can't resist.

"Good apprentice, take good care of this." Zhang Zidao emptied a jar of Jade Liquid, and pulled out a Copper Seal from the wine jar.

I took the Copper Seal, looking at the Nine-Fold Seal Script on it, unable to understand its meaning at the moment, "What is this??"

"Even though Zhang Jia became the family head and has the Family Head Seal, I'm just a mascot without real power." Zhang Zidao opened another jar of wine and gulped down several mouthfuls, "This item is my personal seal, the Family Head Seal is nothing in front of it."

"Master, don't worry, I will take good care of it." I clutched the seal tightly and promised solemnly.

The room was elegant and solemn, much like my first impression of Zhang Zidao's character.

Looking up through the open skylight, you could see the sparse stars in the night sky.

The ground was littered with empty jars of wine, and Zhang Zidao's belly seemed like an endless pit.

It just couldn't be filled, and he didn't even need to relieve himself.

Suddenly, Zhang Zidao let out a particularly loud burp, "Wanwan, why... do you cultivate?"

"I don't know." I replied honestly to Zhang Zidao.

From beginning to end, I never thought about cultivating, I just somehow set foot on this path.

Zhang Zidao started to undo his belt, and I was scared to death.

Hurriedly, I turned my body away.

Behind me, I heard the sound of running water.

That old man!

He actually relieved himself in front of his female apprentice, how shameless.

For a long, long time, the sound of water didn't stop.

I thought it was like a mountain flood, wondering if this room would be flooded.

Suddenly, I felt a tap on my back.

I thought he wouldn't be shameless enough to call me while urinating, so I turned around.

Only to see Zhang Zidao holding a bottle that resembled a Colored Glaze Immortal Vase, with grape wine continuously pouring out of it.

It was that fresh dry white wine, and no matter what, it never emptied.

So, Zhang Zidao asked me, "Good apprentice, why does the wine in this jug never run out?"

"This is Qiankun Technique, in ancient times the Mystic Sect had magic tricks, there's also the Displacement Technique, the flower vase woman." I had seen similar arts before and was quite used to it.

Zhang Zidao frowned tightly, "I was afraid of running out of wine in the future, so I packed it... packed a bit too much, it's really annoying."

As soon as he finished speaking, the last drop of wine fell from the jug.

A key fell out from the jug.

He handed the key to me, saying it was for opening the Haotian Peak Scripture Pavilion.

He told me I could study any Mysterious Art I wanted, and Dumpling could also come to Haotian Peak to study.

At this moment, it felt like he was giving me his last words before dying.

My eyes couldn't help getting wet, soaked with tears.

Images flashed through my mind like a slideshow, from meeting Zhang Zidao to him guiding me along the journey, it felt like a dream.

Not knowing what virtue or ability I possess to meet such a mentor.

"Good apprentice, answer me again now, why do you want to cultivate?" Zhang Zidao, eyes glazed with intoxication, looked at me, as if he were exploring the mysteries of the universe.

I steadied myself, and the memory of falling into the Nether Pond surfaced in my mind, blurting out an answer closest to the truth, "I... don't want to die; I want to live long, to live a bit longer."

Chapter 1224: Golden Cage Atop the City Gate

"Hahahaha..." Zhang Zidao threw his head back and laughed three times, his voice unnaturally loud.

It shook loose a large patch of tiles overhead, which shattered and fell all over the floor.

Dawn had already broken outside, and in the glow of the first light.

A huge white-bright door had just barely opened, and the young man laughing in that radiance dissolved like wind and mist...

The clothes on his body scattered all over the ground.

Just like people's understanding of death: aside from oneself, all worldly possessions are not brought at birth, nor taken at death.

My entire mind and spirit were shaken; I'd never seen such a huge door open in the sky.

Zhang Zidao had already disappeared, but the door was still there.

Not only could I see it, the entire Zhang Family.

Even everyone nearby could see it crystal clear.

This thing... isn't it going to cause a huge commotion??

"The old man did that on purpose, right? Of all times to leave, why pick before dawn?" Zhang Shuying pushed the door open and burst in. Looking at the shattered tiles, there was a faint vicious glint in his eyes.

I shook off my daze and said to him, "I didn't expect Master to leave so early either. Strictly speaking, the three days he mentioned are still a few hours short."

"The Heaven's Gate is going to hang up there in the sky for a whole day. The Zhang Family is in for a good show." Zhang Shuying found a larger wine jar and plopped down on it, sitting with his legs crossed. "I have something to tell you; you need to stay calm."

"Go ahead." I sat cross-legged on the ground, my eyes calm and unfathomable as I met Zhang Shuying's gaze.

Maybe I was too calm, because Zhang Shuying actually seemed a bit distrustful of my reaction.

He hopped down from the wine jar, walked up to me, and whispered in my ear, "There are three Golden Cages hanging on the east, west, and south city gates. Each cage holds a snake."

My heart gave a hard jolt, and my face instantly turned deathly pale.

Zhang Shuying sent three pictures to my phone. "They were hung up the moment the Heaven's Gate opened."

I opened the three photos, and my gaze was immediately drawn in.

Inside the three iron cages were, respectively, a White Snake, a Green Snake, and a little blood-red snake.

Although they were trapped and listless in a way that made my heart ache.

Just seeing that they were still alive made the agitation in my chest ease a little.

"That red one's your son, right? How'd he turn into a snake?" Zhang Shuying pointed at the little blood-red snake and asked.

I also had no idea why Dumpling had turned into a blood-red little snake, but the moment I saw his helpless eyes in the photo, my heart twisted in pain.

"His human body was forcibly stripped away; he's extremely weak. Su Chongwen is humiliating the choice I made." My fingers wouldn't stop trembling, and hatred flooded my eyes despite myself.

The first place I went was beneath the Golden Cage holding Dumpling. Below it, a crowd of morning exercisers had already gathered to watch.

"Dumpling." I looked up at the little red snake that was almost dried out under the sun, my heart shattering to pieces.

Dumpling seemed to hear my voice. He lowered his head to look at me and called weakly, "Mom."

Hearing a child's voice, the onlookers went pale with fright. "Was that snake talking?"

"A snake speaking human words—must be a demon."

"If it wasn't a demon, why would it be hanging on the city wall?"

I had never tried using Mysterious Step to go that high, even though I had that ability.

But without enough practice and technique, I'd probably fail.

"Shuying, help me find a ladder; I need to get up there." I said to Zhang Shuying.

Zhang Shuying looked especially cautious. "Hanging them someplace that conspicuous, it's very likely a trap, Wan Wan."

"I can't worry about that now, Zhang Shuying. If you can help me, you'll be my Su Wan's great benefactor for life. I'll go through fire and water for you." I said, enunciating each word.

Zhang Shuying said, "Isn't it just moving a ladder? Do you have to make it sound that serious?"

In this city, the Zhang Family's influence is huge. It was easy for Zhang Shuying to get a ladder, and he even called in some acquaintances to disperse the crowd.

He went up with me. I was planning to use my Hairpin to split open the Golden Cage, when Dumpling suddenly spat out a mouthful of blood.

He seemed to be using his own power to suppress some speech impediment, and he said to me, "Don't... save me. You can only save one. If you save me, Second Uncle and Dad will die."

Chapter 1225: Meteorite Copper

"What do you mean?" I paused, asking heavily.

Little Dumpling spat out another mouthful of blood, "Grandpa caught me, Dad, and second uncle, hung us up, just to make you choose one out of three, cough cough cough..."

Oh, my Dumpling, it was already hard for him to speak due to his innate condition.

Now every word seems to cost him dearly.

"Stop talking, Mom has a way; no one will die." I carefully inspected the golden cage - it had holes for hidden weapons, and a signal receiver.

Although I wasn't a hundred percent sure about seeing through Su Chongwen's plan.

But I was determined to do everything to protect my family.

I took out the copper badge given to me by Zhang Zidao, blocked the hidden weapon's firing hole, and first destroyed the signal receiver with a hairpin.

Then I went on to dismantle the cage, immediately pulling Dumpling out of the golden cage, "Look, Dumpling, didn't Mom just save you? Mom always keeps her promises, my little darling."

"Dad, second uncle!" The little Red Snake trembled with excitement in my arms, childishly begging me to save his second uncle and father.

I wrapped him in a specially prepared small Cultivation Spiritual garment, and, through the garment, patted his small head, "I will keep my word, don't worry."

"Seems like you were prepared; let me see your badge, it looks familiar to me." Zhang Shuying asked for my badge.

I casually tossed it to him.

He glanced at it, and yelled, "It's a Ghost Needle; it's a good thing it hit the meteorite copper, otherwise it would pierce through even hardened steel!"

"Is this copper refined from a Meteorite from beyond the Sky?" Without stopping, I rushed to the foot of the city wall where Yu Rongling was hanging, indeed noticing a needle in the center of the Green Snake's forehead on the wall.

He lay in the cage, his life or death unknown.

As Zhang Shuying called for a ladder again, he responded, "Yes, typically a meteorite contains iron ore; this one was personally refined by our ancestor when acquired, forged from a Meteorite from beyond the Sky, and serves as a proof of his identity, able to command the entire Mystic Sect."

"I see," I replied absentmindedly.

The ladder had just been set up when I rushed up with the copper badge.

Blocking the hidden weapon hole just like before, I rescued Yu Rongling.

Carrying the twenty-some-pound Great Green Snake in my arms, I jumped off the ladder, tossing the copper badge into Zhang Shuying's hands, "Be careful not to get pricked by the Ghost Needle; it hasn't fully embedded into the badge."

Yu Rongling was simply too big; holding both him and the badge made me vulnerable to injury.

"Second uncle, second uncle~" Dumpling called out in a babyish voice to the unconscious Yu Rongling.

I looked at the Ghost Needle on Yu Rongling's forehead and gritted my teeth to pull it out with my bare hands.

Instantly, a wisp of black energy wrapped around my fingers, yet I couldn't afford to care. After casting away the Ghost Needle, I draped another Cultivation Spiritual garment over Yu Rongling.

"Take good care of Rongling for me, I'm going to find Yu Longting!" Firmly holding Dumpling in my arms, I sped off to find Yu Longting.

In my heart, Yu Longting was truly the first one I wanted to find.

But deep down, I knew well, Dumpling already died once because of our decisions.

Even if both of us were to face misfortune, he could not be sacrificed again.

And then there's Rongling, who was truly an innocent victim.

Entangled by my woes...

I had to save Yu Longting last, as I arrived beneath the city.

Seeing the empty cage, alongside fresh blood inside, and some white scales scattered around.

My heart felt as if it was being hollowed out, such discomfort.

"I told you so, Su Chongwen asked for one out of three, and you rescued two; he definitely wouldn't let you save Yu Longting so easily." Zhang Shuying caught up to me in a hurry, stuffing pills into Rongling's and Little Dumpling's mouths to protect their heart vessels, "What do you plan to do now?"

Chapter 1226: Mystic Palace Dragon Horns

"Wait." I glanced up at the sky.

Heaven's Gate hung high like the noonday sun, showing not the slightest sign of closing.

Vaguely, I seemed to sense a clue, yet it still felt like the truth was beyond my grasp.

Zhang Shuying patted his pocket and took out his pack of Red Pagoda Mountain to smoke.

He ended up pulling out a slip of paper from the cigarette box. Seeing the words on it, his eyes went red at the corners with anger. "So arrogant, insulting my IQ. Stuffing a note in my cigarette box—he was sure I'd never find it."

What was on the box wasn't words, but a hand-drawn map.

"What the hell is this, nothing's labeled, who the hell would know where this is... Su Wan, where are you going?"

Zhang Shuying hurriedly chased after my back, but in the end he still couldn't catch up.

Compared to the city gate just now, which at least gave him a goal, now he had no idea where I was heading, so he couldn't track me at all.

This wasn't really something he could interfere with anyway. Zhang Shuying didn't recognize the map, but I did.

This was the internal layout of that mountain manor owned by Zhao Sihai, and the end point seemed to be a huge lake.

Back then when I passed by with Yu Longting, at most I just thought Zhao Sihai lived in style.

Looking at it now, that lake was definitely not simple.

Besides, Su Chongwen was a dead man. His going in and out of the estate wouldn't trigger the prohibitions.

Arriving at the big lake, I glanced down at Dumpling, who was gradually regaining his human form in my arms, and asked softly, "Dumpling, are you scared? You only need to shake your head, or nod."

One reason I chose to bring Dumpling with me was that I'd forgotten to hand him over to Zhang Shuying.

The other reason was that, deep down, I felt that staying by his mother's side was best for him.

I knew Dumpling would nod, and still I chose to ask him.

Dumpling nodded, wrapped his small arms around my neck, and called to me in a low, milky voice, "Mom."

With that soft baby voice falling in my ears, my heart hardened with resolve, and I decisively leaped into the lake.

Diving down to a certain depth, a massive underwater ancient tomb came into view.

The tomb was completely sealed in Vajra Stone, part of it in the water, part of it built into the mountainside.

On the lakebed lay weapons from many different eras, and several red fox tails.

This should be the ancient battlefield where the famous Orthodox Sects once hunted down Yun Hao, the Ancestor of Foxes, and Xuanjing—the three-person Evil Sect team.

So the manor up above was very likely built after that great battle.

Zhao Sihai had probably learned his lesson from that, and deliberately set up prohibitions, forbidding anyone from entering.

The main gate looked extremely solid and heavy; opening it by force should have been very difficult.

Yet the moment I approached the gate, it swung open to either side on its own.

What was even stranger was that not a single drop of lake water rushed into the tomb.

This place was probably the underground Mystic Palace Zhao Sihai built for himself.

You could say it was impregnable.

I slipped into the ancient tomb, and as soon as I entered, I inhaled the thick, stale reek of grave soil.

The oxygen level inside was terrifyingly low, making me cough violently from the choking air.

If I didn't have Spiritual Power sustaining my body and were just an ordinary person,

I'd probably drop dead on the spot the moment I breathed this stuff in.

The passage from the main gate was very long, lit by Everlasting Lamps that had burned without dying out for a thousand years, casting a ghostly light.

I had thought it would be very quiet inside, or that some mechanism would be waiting for me, yet instead a girl's spoiled, threatening voice drifted out. "Where did you hide my young master? If you don't tell me, I'll freeze you to death, freeze you to death!!"

It was Shenshen's voice!!

Before I had time to feel excited, I saw blood on the ground.

Following the mottled bloodstains forward, I first spotted a dozen or so scattered white scales.

Then, I saw blood-stained dragon horns.

One... dragon horn...

Two... dragon horns...

At the end of the passage lay a sheet of bloody, flayed snakeskin.

"Yu Longting..." I picked up the snakeskin and clutched it tightly to my chest, my heart aching as if it were being torn to pieces.

Chapter 1227: The One Inside the Stone Coffin

The little dumpling cried sadly, "Daddy."

His small hand gently stroked the snake skin that had been peeled off.

"Dumpling, it's okay, your dad will definitely be fine." Besides the heart-wrenching pain, there was an indescribable hatred in me.

I hated Su Chongwen for hurting Snake Brother even before I was born.

All these years, even though he died, I thought he had gotten the retribution he deserved.

But this shameless creature actually came back to life and did this to Snake Brother again.

Even if it means heaven's retribution, I cannot... tolerate him...

I found that when my eyes were bloodshot, everything I saw was a sea of red.

My legs unconsciously moved towards the direction of Shenshen's voice, the deep Mystic Palace flickering with blue flames.

Various strange statues stood among them, and in front of a Stone Coffin stood a stubborn young girl.

Cold white breath continuously sprayed from the girl's sleeves, spraying into the Stone Coffin, "Freeze you, you big villain!"

Inside the Stone Coffin lay Su Chongwen with an unlucky expression, about to thaw after being frozen.

But Shenshen repeatedly froze him, rendering him immobile.

Upon seeing me, a pair of pitch-black eyes kept turning towards me, "Wanwan, save me, save me!! This crazy woman keeps freezing me."

"Y-Young Madam..." Shenshen turned her head to see me, utterly surprised.

I didn't respond to Shenshen's gaze but looked at Su Chongwen in the coffin, "What happened?"

"I don't know why, when I woke up I saw her. Wanwan, I don't know how I offended her," Su Chongwen cried out to me, "If it weren't for her trapping me, I would have already gone to pick you and your mother up, Wanwan!! Just kill her, and our family can live happily together."

"No, Young Madam, he kidnapped the two young masters and the little young master!! I chased him all the way here!!" Shenshen explained to me with all her might, "This man is evil, Young Madam, don't believe him."

Su Chongwen laughed coldly, "I am Su Wan's biological father. Do you think Su Wang would believe my words or the nonsense of a wretch like you?"

"You... you're the Young Madam's... father??" Shenshen was completely shocked, looking at me uncertainly.

I said to Shenshen, "Don't freeze him for now, I have a few questions to ask him."

"Alright." Shenshen bowed her head and stepped back behind me.

Before Su Chongwen could fully thaw and rise, I lowered the flower hairpin onto his brow, "Dad, where is Yu Longting?"

"I don't know where he is, Wanwan, do you not even trust your dad?" Su Chongwen, with corpse-like cold hands, grabbed my wrist earnestly, "When you were little, dad gave you the best of everything, I

could have taken Yu Longting's inner core to save my own life, but I gave it to you. Dad treated you so well."

"Su Chongwen, things have come to this point, I don't have time to play the father-daughter affection game with you. If I don't see Yu Longting today, you will accompany him in death." Previously, I had the patience to act with him because his power was unfathomable.

Now that his power is sealed by Shenshen's Mysterious Ice, I have nothing to worry about. Swiftly forming Hand Seals, I cast the Truth-Spitting Spell on Su Chongwen, "I'll ask again, where is Yu Longting?"

"I... really don't know!" Su Chongwen declared resolutely.

I almost doubted my own Truth-Spitting Spell was ineffective, seeing him completely lost and dazed.

Furthermore, Sharp Gold Aura specifically counteracts evil beings, and since he's a dead corpse, he must be thoroughly restrained. I asked, "Let me ask you in another way, why did you go to Spring Wind Town to capture Yu Longting and the others?"

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Chapter 1228: Come Out and Do My Bidding

"Of course I wanted to devour those blue and white snake brothers." Su Chongwen's expression twisted into a grimace. "Keeping that little brat alive is to threaten my good daughter, have her feed me with her heart's blood every day for forty-nine days, to help me achieve Physical Sanctification."

"Since they were all caught by you, how could you not know where Yu Longting is?" I almost ground my teeth to bits, hugging the shed snakeskin and Dumpling even tighter.

If it weren't for wanting to quickly find Yu Longting, who was badly injured and blind, I would have already torn Su Chongwen's body into ten thousand pieces.

Su Chongwen's expression shifted from ferocious to inexplicably strange. "After I caught those three and brought them back, that damned girl chased me here and kept freezing me!! If you want to ask where those three little bastards went, you should go ask that damned girl."

His bloodshot eyes glared at Shenshen.

"Don't you talk nonsense. When I caught up to you, you were lying in the coffin and I caught you red-handed!" Shenshen shouted angrily, her little face flushed red with rage.

In that instant, I suddenly grabbed onto a thread of a clue. The one lying wasn't Shenshen, nor was it Su Chongwen...

There was a third person involved in this matter.

I took half a step back, eyes half narrowed as I looked at Su Chongwen, who was wearing the Rebirth Clothes. "Did you obtain an Immortal Gu?"

"I snatched it from Tianying Village. Yan Bashui even said only you could use it, but aren't I using it just fine?" The Rebirth Clothes on Su Chongwen's body glowed faintly as he slowly sat up from the coffin, shaking the ice shards off his body. "Immortal Gu, go, take down Su Wan. She dares be rude to her father; I want her to taste a fate worse than death, then turn into my nourishment. The more painful my sacrifice is before it dies, the more it will nourish me."

My gaze turned icy as I looked at this stranger who was my father by blood.

After a long time, not a single Gu Insect appeared.

Su Chongwen froze for a moment, then shouted a few more times, "Immortal Gu!! Come out, hurry up and come out to do my bidding, you useless bug."

Suddenly, in the middle of his cursing, Su Chongwen threw his head back and collapsed.

He fell back into the Stone Coffin.

Not even three breaths later, he suddenly appeared beside me.

Cold, long fingers clamped tightly around my wrist, and a gloomy voice squeezed out from between his teeth. "You have some skill, huh."

"You're not Su Chongwen?" I glanced at Su Chongwen and saw golden flames in his eyes; it felt as if even my mind was being drawn into them.

I hurriedly averted my gaze and looked down at Dumpling in my arms. "Is he speaking gu speech?"

Dumpling nodded.

Because I am a Gu Speaker, when I hear insect chirps, what I hear directly is human speech.

Little Dumpling, as an outsider, could help me judge.

A harsh cackling laughter came from Su Chongwen's mouth. His icy fingers brushed across my cheek. "Such a clever Gu Speaker. I originally... had always, always been waiting for you in Tianying Village. It was this guy who barged into Tianying Village and snatched me away."

"Why would you let him snatch you away?? And even become something he can drive and enslave. You could have resisted completely. Looks like you don't necessarily need a Gu Speaker to acknowledge a master." I tried to circulate Spiritual Power to resist him, only to find that the Spiritual Power in my body couldn't be activated at all. My eyes narrowed slightly.

As expected of an Immortal Gu. My power isn't even on the same level as his; with just a lift of his hand, he suppressed me completely.

If I fought him head-on, I'd suffer. For now, I could only quietly observe the situation and wait for a chance to strike.

"I'm also very surprised that I can actually reside in this guy's body for over two months before it breaks down. In the past, aside from the body of a Gu Speaker, no matter who it was, as soon as I possessed them they would immediately die a violent death." The Immortal Gu clicked its tongue through Su Chongwen's body, lowering its head to stare at itself. "It seems he killed a snake demon that was about to become a True Dragon, which brought retribution on him, and he fell seriously ill and died. But it looks like he'd long been prepared—he tied his own corpse together with the roots of a Demon Vine, nourished it until now, and once he put on the Rebirth Clothes, he could even bring out One Percent of Force of my power... tsk tsk~"

"So when you saw Su Chongwen, you just borrowed his body, and he doesn't even know he's nothing but your Cauldron Furnace!"

After listening to the Immortal Gu's account, I immediately deduced his actions. "Hanging Yu Longting and the other two on the city gate to lure me into rescuing them—that was done while you were in control of his consciousness, so Su Chongwen has no memory of it. What exactly is your purpose in doing all this?"

Chapter 1229: The Treacherousness of Human Hearts

"Return to Heaven's Gate!" The Immortal Gu licked its lips, a mysterious smile appearing on its bloodless face.

My body suddenly turned cold as I held the Dumpling tightly in my arms.

When Heaven's Gate appeared, I sensed something amiss.

The way of ascension for those who have attained the Dao is to open a great gate.

And yet, the Immortal Gu chose this moment to act...

But why torment me for his return to Heaven's Gate? Is there a connection between the two?

In my daze, the Immortal Gu seized my hand and led me to another chamber.

Blood dripped down from the dome, the only sounds in the chamber being the dripping and flowing of blood.

And above, there hung a golden cage.

"Yu Longting... let Yu Longting down!" I felt my blood reverse its flow, my heart violently contracting.

The Immortal Gu laughed softly, speaking chillingly in my ear, "Feeling sad, Gu Speaker?"

"What do you want from me? I'll cooperate with you in every way... just don't torture him, I'm begging you." From extreme anger to trembling helplessly, I plead.

I pressed Little Dumpling's small head firmly in my arms, trying to shield him from the bloody scene.

With a loud crash, the golden cage fell to the ground.

The impact created a hole in the ground, scattering rock and dust.

The Giant Python inside, its snake skin stripped, was jolted and slammed against the metal bars.

It let out a hoarse roar, its skin ripped apart and bleeding profusely, "Wanwan, is that you?"

The Giant Python had lost its eyes, its sockets were dark holes.

Its prideful dragon horns were plucked, leaving two bloody holes as well.

"It's me, Snake Brother, it's all my fault, I shouldn't have run off with Master, leaving you alone at home." Unable to bear it anymore, I rushed to the cage with the Dumpling in my arms.

The cage had special restrictions, any touch would be repelled.

I channeled Spiritual Power into my palm to bypass the restrictions, gently stroking Yu Longting's snake head.

Yu Longting said nothing, only gently moved his snake head toward my palm.

"Daddy." Little Dumpling's tears flowed, his eyes full of endless sorrow.

Footsteps approached from behind; the Immortal Gu was coming. "Do you see that statue?"

"I see it." From the moment I entered the chamber, my focus had been on the golden cage and Yu Longting's blood scattered across the floor.

Following the Immortal Gu's gesture, I noticed the chamber actually contained a life-size statue of Zhao Sihai.

Beside Zhao Sihai stood his wife, Madam Zhao.

Madam Zhao was holding a stone guzheng, her fingers resting on its strings.

"Go, fetch the guzheng," the Immortal Gu commanded.

Understanding dawned on me; although it seemed like a Gu Insect, it knew all about Zhao Sihai and Madam Zhao and where they came from.

"Why don't you fetch the guzheng yourself instead of having me do it?" In terms of cultivation, Su Chongwen is not inferior to me; the Immortal Gu shouldn't need me to act.

The Immortal Gu sneered, "Didn't you say you'd do whatever I asked?"

"Though that's true, is it wrong to be curious and ask?" I pursed my lips, moving toward the guzheng.

If it were merely fetching the guzheng, the Immortal Gu wouldn't need to treat Yu Longting this way.

There's surely more waiting for me...

As I reached the statue, the Immortal Gu's deep, eerie voice rang out again, "You're wearing the Immortal Bell Pendant she gave you; only you can take down her Soul-Breaking Zither."

"Immortal Bell Pendant? You mean my wind chime earrings?" I touched my ears, suddenly recalling Yu Longting's warning about the wickedness of people's hearts.

Was Madam Zhao genuinely kind, or was she using me??

Seeing my hesitation, the Immortal Gu offered no comforting words, instead provoked me further, "It seems you've realized; let me tell you, Ah De knew you were the Gu Speaker, the only one who could understand me, so she deliberately left it with you."

Chapter 1230: Yu Longting, You Must Die First

"So, you and Madam Zhao have a thing?" I could sense it from the Immortal Gu's proud tone.

This thing definitely isn't something like a pet; its status should be on par with Madam Zhao, possibly even higher.

The Immortal Gu didn't pay much attention to me and didn't bother to hide, "I'm her senior brother. As for whether we have a thing, let's say we do. Gu Speaker, since you're going to die today, knowing more won't harm you."

"Your goal is to kill me?" I stood on tiptoe and took the guzheng from Madam Zhao's arms, holding it in my own.

Almost nothing special happened, only the bells on my ears rose up with no wind, producing a tinkling sound.

At this moment, Yu Longting suddenly spoke from inside the cage, his voice carrying a touch of chill and mockery, "Wife, he'll first let you achieve the golden body, then make you his Cauldron Furnace."

"You dirty snake, you do have some skill, even able to pry into my secrets!!" The Immortal Gu grabbed the guzheng from my arms.

To prevent Dumpling from being harmed, I held Little Dumpling tightly.

Quickly spinning around, I let the Immortal Gu snatch the guzheng from my embrace.

My heart was beating very fast, my breath quick and shallow.

Standing opposite the Immortal Gu, I half-squinted my eyes and observed him.

The heavily injured Yu Longting didn't let me resist the Immortal Gu and didn't blame me for bringing Dumpling here.

Instead, he revealed the Immortal Gu's secret, which was worthy of ponder.

Yu Longting twisted his bloody snake body, probing his eyeless snake head out a little, as if mocking the Immortal Gu, "You got it wrong, I'm water-based, not earth-based. You're a Golden Immortal, how can you not even figure out the Five Elements and Eight Trigrams."

In the past, I'd surely find his humor top-notch, unrivaled in his sharp tongue.

But seeing him so severely injured and wretched, my heart was filled with deep, needle-like pricks of frustration.

"Oh, you love to talk, love to talk; at the door of death, still indulging in idle boasts. Yu Longting, you die first, then your son, and finally your wife..." The Immortal Gu suddenly pulled out a silver soft sword from the guzheng.

The soft sword itself emitted the moon's light, vibrating like terrifying, mighty lightning in the tomb.

Yu Longting, though trapped in the cage without even his snake skin, seemed to possess an indescribable superiority, "Oh? Lei Duqian, you want something from my wife, yet you think you can kill us all. Aren't you a bit overconfident?"

"Demon Snake!! Hahaha, you damned rascal, you actually know my name, interesting." Infuriated, Lei Duqian swung the soft sword down.

In a flash, he split the cage in two.

Slicing Yu Longting's snake body in half was not enough for him.

Laughing wildly, he asked what capital Yu Longting had to flaunt before him, and even hacked off Yu Longting's snake head, "They say snakes have nine lives; today I'll chop you into pieces, swallow your Demon Core, and see what you live on."

The sudden change was unacceptable to me.

Sticky blood water and soft tissue fell like raindrops.

Drenched my head and face, watching Lei Duqian cut Yu Longting into nothing.

My whole body stiffened, wanting to cry but unable to.

It felt like a huge shadow of melancholy appeared behind me, suppressing the emotions in my chest.

"Daddy... Daddy... Daddy..." Little Dumpling cried heartbreakingly, his small voice went hoarse.

Constantly coughing blood, he struggled in my arms, trying to break free and fight Lei Duqian.

I only felt his cries becoming small, the snake skin in my arms was cold.

The touch felt real as if he were still here, "Don't cry, don't cry, it's all an illusion, Dumpling, we just had a nightmare. We'll wake up soon, don't be afraid, everything... will be okay..."