

I CAN CONTROL RESOURCES

Chapter 231 - 206: It's Starting Already?

Most importantly, Gao Neng had also discovered a problem: the guard from the Third Guard Army impersonating the Prince was all alone.

How did that saying go again?

You're thirsty.

And it starts to rain.

You're hungry.

And pies start falling from the sky.

Sweet!

'If I don't pull off a robbery and get some saber practice in at a time like this, then getting this strong would have been a complete waste.'

"Halt!" Gao Neng leaped out from the ground, propping the Horse-Cutting Saber on his shoulder. "This tree was planted by me, this road was opened by me. If you wish to pass through here, leave your toll money behind!"

"???" The guard, who had been racing toward the Elf Royal City, was instantly dumbfounded.

'What the hell?'

'How could a robber pop up on the road to the Elf Royal City? And this robber seems to be... a human?'

'What do you call this?'

'This is called courting death!'

"Hmph, looking to practice on me? This is a little interesting!" The guard didn't sense a powerful aura from Gao Neng, which meant the opponent was at most Tier Three.

Although he was also only Tier Three, he was an elite among those in the Tier Three Late Stage. On top of that, he was wearing precious armor that could withstand a blow from a Tier Six expert.

What did he have to fear?

Without any hesitation, the guard drew an Elf Long Saber.

Gao Neng didn't draw.

He was waiting for the guard to come to him.

The distance between the two of them closed continuously.

Then, Gao Neng drew his saber.

"SHING!"

The blade emerged with a flash of white light.

Like a falling star, it slashed straight for the guard's head.

The guard instantly felt an immense pressure. He realized with stark clarity that the human youth before him was strong—at least, stronger than he was.

"BOOM!"

The two sabers collided.

Gao Neng neither retreated nor dodged.

As for the guard, he sprayed blood from his mouth as if it were free. But he still clenched his jaw and used the knockback from the blow to roll backward rapidly.

"He didn't die from one slash?" Gao Neng was a little surprised. 'I have a gut feeling I can one-shot a Tier Four right now, so why isn't this Tier Three dead?'

'Could he be an elite mob?'

'Lots of HP!'

Just as he was thinking this, he saw the guard impersonating the Prince sprint away in another direction without looking back.

'He's pretty fast.'

'But is he as fast as a Flying Earth Dragon?'

"SWOOSH!"

A figure shot out from beneath the ground.

The Flying Earth Dragon spread its wings, its three-meter-tall body blocking the guard's path. At the same time, its two scythe-like serrated blades came slashing down.

"BOOM!"

The guard, already heavily wounded, was slashed down to his knees.

"Judging by your attire, you seem to have a high status. You must have quite a few treasures on you, right? This haul... is going to be huge!" Gao Neng walked over, saber in hand, his gaze chillingly cold.

"Wait!" The guard's face paled in horror. His death wasn't a big deal, but his mission was crucial. "I am the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race! We are a peaceful people; we have never even waged war against humans. If you kill me today... the Wood Elf Race will not let you go!"

"Whoa, a Prince?!" Gao Neng feigned a jump, his expression becoming extremely tense. "But even if I kill you now, you guys won't know it was me, right?"

"Nonsense! Of course we'll know!" the guard bit out through clenched teeth.

"Oh? How would you know? I don't believe in such magical things!" Gao Neng said in disbelief, closing in on the guard step by step.

"A Soul Mark! As long as my Soul Mark exists... the fact... that you killed me will definitely be known!" The guard slowly backed away, his hand tightening on his saber.

"Definitely know? Heh... what a joke. Doesn't your race's rebirth cycle take twenty years? Even if they found out, it would be twenty years from now, wouldn't it?"

"We Dar—no, we Wood Elf Race are different!"

"Different? How are you different!"

"That's our secret. I won't tell you!"

"Trying to trick me? I'm not falling for it. If you don't talk, I'll kill you!" Gao Neng didn't hold back. He raised his Horse-Cutting Saber and swung it down at the guard.

The guard closed his eyes.

Quietly awaiting his death.

He bit his lip so hard it bled, but he still refused to speak.

But the saber...

...stopped right before the guard's forehead.

"So you're really not afraid to die? Alright, let's make a deal. If you can prove you're a Prince of the Wood Elf Race, I'll let you go. Otherwise, I'll kill you!" Gao Neng spoke again.

"You're serious? You'll really let me go?" The guard was clearly surprised. A moment ago, when facing death, a chill had already run down his spine.

No one truly wants to die.

Even he was no exception.

"Of course. We humans always keep our word," Gao Neng said with a nod.

"Alright. This is the identity Token of the Wood Elf Race. You can see for yourself, my name is on it." The guard finally fumbled for an identity Token and produced it.

Gao Neng took it and glanced at it.

Sure enough, the name 'Jami' was written on it, and it also designated him as a member of the Wood Elf Race's Royal Race.

'The information my ability showed...'

'...is really reliable!'

"You're Jami?" Gao Neng asked.

"That is correct. I am the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race." A proud look appeared on the guard's face.

"Then what are you doing in the Dark Night Elf Clan's territory? You can at least tell me that, right? Otherwise, why should I believe a Prince of Wood Elves would travel all this way to get here?" Gao Neng asked again, feigning confusion.

The guard hesitated.

He was weighing the importance of the matter.

"If you're going to give me some excuse like 'just passing by,' don't even bother. I won't believe it. But if you were to say you're here to propose a marriage... I might consider believing you." Gao Neng twitched his Horse-Cutting Saber again, his threat clear.

"You... How did you know I... No, that I am here to propose marriage?!" The guard was visibly startled. This matter was top secret.

'Unless there's a spy within the Dark Night Elf Clan!'

"Alright, I know everything I need to know. The rest... you probably won't say anyway. In that case, you can just die!" Gao Neng raised his saber and slashed down.

"No!!! You said you wouldn't kill me! You're going back on your word!"

"CRACK!"

The guard's head was lopped off with a single slash.

"Naive," Gao Neng commented casually as he glanced at the dead guard before him. But soon after, he saw a small, translucent squirrel dart out of the guard's body.

Previously, he never would have sensed this thing's existence.

But now, he saw it...

And not only did he see it.

He could also feel a familiar aura.

"A Soul Mark!"

"This guard actually had a Soul Mark too?!"

"Kill it!"

With a single thought, Gao Neng released the power of the mark from his own soul, merging it with his Spiritual Power and forging it into an incomparably sharp dagger.

"PFFT!"

The dagger struck the little squirrel.

The little squirrel's body shuddered instantly, its eyes filled with indignation and terror, but in the end, it dissolved into tiny fragments of light.

'That was close. It almost got away. So, does this mean the secret to the Elf Race's resurrection lies within the 'Soul Mark'? But wait, that's not right... When that dumb system assessed it, it said the Soul Fruit came from the Celestial Race. What's the connection here?' Gao Neng couldn't quite figure it out at the moment.

However, that didn't stop him from looting the corpse.

'A guard impersonating a prince to propose a marriage ought to have some betrothal gifts on him, right?'

Gao Neng first stripped the armor off the guard's body. Then, he started searching... and quickly found some decent items.

Among them, the most special was a ring.

'A Spatial Ring?'

Gao Neng probed it with his Spiritual Power and discovered a bow inside. The name of the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang, was engraved upon it.

As for the material, he couldn't identify it.

But it seemed to be made from a very ancient type of wood.

'A treasure!'

Gao Neng had the system appraise it.

"Ding! One High-tier Oak Bow, valued at 67,000,000 Alliance Coins. Do you wish to recycle it?" a mechanical voice soon rang out.

"67 million? Not bad. This bow must be the betrothal gift." Gao Neng immediately put the bow away, then peeled the mask off the guard's face.

He tried it on.

It felt like a pretty good fit.

"Speaking of which, now that I have the identity of a Prince, it should be pretty safe to go take a look at the Elf Royal City, right? Hehe, I really am a genius!" Gao Neng was delighted.

This skin mask was excellent; it even came with two elf ears. His Wood Elf disguise was so good that not even gods or ghosts could see through it.

'A perfect plan.'

'Just one look, not a second glance. The moment there's trouble, I'm out of there!' Having made up his mind, Gao Neng picked up the guard's Elf Long Saber.

After changing into the clothes the guard had used for his Prince disguise, he began to sneak toward the Elf Royal City again.

However, just in case, he still decided to sneak into the Royal City from underground.

'Go through the main gate?'

'I'd have to be crazy to go through the main gate!'

The outfit looked flawless, but if anyone actually questioned him, he wouldn't know a thing. It was only useful for shifting the blame after being discovered.

'A genius's plan must be meticulous.'

'Get cocky? Not a chance!'

...

「Several hours later.」

The time was approaching dawn.

A sliver of the red sun appeared in the sky, slowly dyeing the dark horizon crimson. Sunlight spilled down, illuminating the mist-shrouded forest.

On the walls of the Dark Night Elf Royal City, the guards kept a tight watch.

This was because today was the grand ceremony for the Seventh Princess to receive marriage proposals again, and there could absolutely be no more accidents.

A Great Elf stood at the city gate, looking out expectantly. He was waiting, but even after the sun had risen, the "Prince" he was waiting for had not arrived.

'Why isn't he here yet?!' A flash of anxiety crossed the Great Elf's eyes. 'Based on the timeline, the Prince impersonated by the guard should have arrived by now.'

'There's not much time left!'

Nine o'clock was the time for the Seventh Princess's marriage proposal ceremony.

'Why isn't he here yet?'

'Could there have been an accident?'

'Impossible!'

'The Human Alliance's army has already retreated, and all the spies who infiltrated the city have been caught. What kind of accident could possibly happen at a time like this?'

Chapter 232 - 207: To Lose Both the Lady and the Army

The Great Elf was waiting at the city gate.

And Gao Neng?

He had long since infiltrated the Dark Night Elf Royal City. He was also waiting, but for the guards protecting the Ancient Elf Tree to leave.

'Why aren't they leaving yet? Wasn't it unguarded last time?' Gao Neng wondered, peering through a small hole to observe the guards outside.

Two High-tier Elves!

Ten mid-tier ones!

A total of twelve guards were standing watch at the entrance to the Ancient Elf Tree, refusing to budge.

Gao Neng couldn't possibly face them head-on.

So, he had to wait.

After these guards left, he would sneak in, chop it a couple of times, get some Spring of Life, and then he could happily make a run for it.

He hadn't thought about anything else.

Right now, he had his sights set on the Ancient Elf Tree's Spring of Life.

Time passed again.

By eight-thirty in the morning, outside the cold pool high up on the Ancient Elf Tree, tens of thousands of Elf Race People had now gathered.

The grand ceremony for the Seventh Princess's marriage proposals had officially begun.

What a prestigious event.

All the Elf Race People waited to the side.

The proposal delegations and Princes from more than twenty different races were also waiting respectfully. With the backing of their ancestors, they were all determined to win this time.

"Today's events remind me of a certain human anecdote," a Prince said with a smile.

"What anecdote is that?" a guard immediately asked, playing along.

"There's a classic human story called 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms.' It contains quite a few strategies, including a famous one called 'losing the bride and the army too.'"

"Your Highness is truly well-read!"

"Heh, 'know yourself and know your enemy, and you will never be defeated,'" the Prince chuckled, his gaze shifting to the massive ancient tree above. "I'm really looking forward to this!"

Just then, Elf Queen Una finally made her entrance.

She wore the same crown and royal robes as last time, but on this occasion, Elf Queen Una's expression was tinged with frost.

Because, according to the Great Elf's report, the imposter prince had not arrived yet!

'What should I do?!

Elf Queen Una felt she had calculated for every possible problem, such as how the Princes would make their proposals and what difficulties they might create. However, the one thing she hadn't accounted for was whether the imposter prince would even show up.

It wasn't that she was careless.

Rather, she had instinctively overlooked this problem...

But now that the problem had arisen, the only thing she could do was prepare another treasure as a betrothal gift and find an Elf within the Dark Night Elf Royal City to act as the imposter.

'I hope there's still time!' Elf Queen Una could only think, because she really couldn't wait any longer.

Meanwhile, underground...

Gao Neng was also growing impatient.

He had been waiting for three hours.

These guards hadn't moved an inch. Forget about getting close to the Ancient Elf Tree; he didn't even dare to peek his head out. He had to hold his breath and not even breathe too heavily.

It was torture.

'Forget it. With security this tight, I probably won't be able to get the Spring of Life.' Gao Neng was a persistent person, but not blindly so.

When it was time to give up, he gave up.

Besides, he hadn't received some kind of do-or-die mission for this.

He just had to leave, and it would be over!

With that in mind, he prepared to leave.

In fact, he had realized something was off the moment he entered the Elf Royal City. An empty city? This place was heavily guarded, okay?

Still, he had snuck in to see if there were any pleasant surprises.

There weren't!

In that case, all he could do was go home, wash up, and go to bed.

However, from lying prone for so long, his body had grown a bit stiff and sore...

Gao Neng began to control the Flying Earth Dragon to back away. But as he did, his hand just so happened to brush against a small stone.

CLICK!

An extremely faint sound echoed.

It was impossible to hear without listening intently.

Even Gao Neng himself hadn't paid much attention to it.

However, the two High-tier Elves guarding the Ancient Elf Tree heard it, even though the sound was faint enough to be ignored.

"How audacious! You dare to come again?!" One of the High-tier Elves was the very one who had failed to catch Gao Neng and Fang Tangtang before. Because of that, he had been on guard against them using the Seventh Princess's marriage proposal event as a cover to cause more trouble. His nerves were stretched taut, and he wouldn't let even the slightest sound escape him.

'No way! They heard that?' Gao Neng was shocked. He never thought a tiny stone could trigger such an earth-shattering, bloody incident.

He had to run!

If he didn't run and got caught, he'd be a dead man.

Gao Neng immediately started to flee for his life.

And just like last time, he shattered the tunnel with a single punch.

But his opponent seemed to have been prepared.

The moment they heard the noise, they pounced. A very long, very thick, unidentifiable wooden staff appeared in their hand, and they thrust it forward.

BOOM!

The tunnel entrance was blasted open.

Gao Neng was utterly stunned. 'They can do that?!

"Where do you think you're running? Die!" With preparation, the High-tier Elf's speed was absolutely terrifying. After blasting open the tunnel, he charged right in.

Without any hesitation, Gao Neng turned and fled.

Thankfully, the Earth Dragon had evolved.

Otherwise, his speed truly couldn't compare to the High-tier Elf behind him.

However, he had ultimately underestimated the Elf Race's preparations this time. Seeing Gao Neng's incredible speed, the High-tier Elf sent out a signal without hesitation.

"Have the Lizard Race people lay ground nets at all four gates immediately! Catch this tunneler!"

"Yes!"

"You can't escape, so give up! We knew you were coming. All four gates are now guarded by the Lizard Race. Surrender now, and we might spare your life!"

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'A net from heaven to earth!'

'They were actually lying in wait for me all this time?!'

'You think I'll believe you!'

Gao Neng didn't quite believe him. He decided to just run for it and see what happened, consequences be damned. He extended his Spiritual Power, constantly probing ahead to check the situation.

Soon, he reached the position of a city gate.

And there, he discovered that there really were members of the Lizard Race underground ahead.

'Son of a bitch! They're really here!' Gao Neng was aghast. There really were members of the Lizard Race guarding underground. He was certain now that this marriage proposal ceremony for the Seventh Princess was also a trap to hunt him down.

'What do I do?'

Since the main gate was guarded by the Lizard Race, the other gates must be as well. Moreover, the High-tier Elf was about to catch up from behind. There was no way to retreat now.

'Do I have to fight my way out?!' Gao Neng felt that was no different from suicide. But soon, he thought of a way. It seemed he could bluff his way out.

That's right, he was currently the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elves.

Of course he could leave the city!

Who would dare stop him!

Thinking of this, he immediately found an unguarded spot and burrowed out of the ground. Then, he had the Flying Earth Dragon continue fleeing toward another city gate.

As for himself, he sprinted toward the city gate.

'This is the 'lure the tiger away from the mountain' stratagem!'

"Make way! I am the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race! Open the gate!" Gao Neng shouted as the city gate came into view.

"The Thirteenth Prince?!"

"The Thirteenth Prince, he's here!"

"..."

The Great Elf, who had been staring out from the city gate with anxious eyes, spotted Gao Neng at a glance. For a moment, he was overcome with a mixture of shock, joy, grief, and indignation.

SWOOSH!

The Great Elf leaped down in an instant.

"Wh-what are you doing? I am the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elves!" Gao Neng's eyes went wide. 'This Great Elf is so fast!'

He was like a bolt of lightning; Gao Neng couldn't even react in time.

He wanted to slash out with his blade.

The problem was...

He definitely couldn't win!

"Time is short, come with me!" The Great Elf completely ignored Gao Neng's protests. As soon as he finished speaking, he grabbed Gao Neng and dashed toward the Ancient Elf Tree.

"..." Gao Neng was speechless again.

'Is this a kidnapping?'

'I'm the esteemed Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race! How dare you treat me so disrespectfully?'

He thought about cursing, but in the end, he didn't dare say it out loud.

Less than twenty seconds after the Great Elf had grabbed him and started running, a High-tier Elf burst out from underground at the city gate.

"Did any spies just escape? Did you open the gate?!"

"No!" the guards immediately shook their heads.

"Damn it, where did he go?" the High-tier Elf roared in fury.

Then, another Elf's voice came from underground.

"Chief, there's another tunnel! It leads to the west gate!"

"The west gate?! Let's go! Follow me! We'll definitely kill him today!" Hearing this, the High-tier Elf immediately turned and gave chase in that direction.

As for Gao Neng...

He was currently like a helpless chick.

He was completely bewildered, not because of the Great Elf's speed, but because he was dumbfounded by the exaggerated scene before him.

'What a huge tree!' This was the first time Gao Neng had seen the Ancient Elf Tree head-on. It was so thick, so massive, so straight...

It practically pierced the heavens.

But that wasn't even the main thing. The main thing was that surrounding him were several thousand members of various non-human proposal delegations, as well as spectating Elf Race People.

A sea of people.

There were at least over ten thousand of them.

And he was pushed onto a wooden platform very close to the Ancient Elf Tree. Before him was a cold pool, its surface rippling.

'What a crystal-clear pool!'

Gao Neng marveled again.

Beyond that, he also wanted to marvel at the Elf Queen standing by the pool, who wore a green crown and was draped in black royal robes.

She was a Queen through and through, with the perfect domineering aura.

Mmm...

The best part was that this Queen seemed to be looking right at him. Moreover, a rare smile appeared on her lips, like dewdrops on a winter frost.

"I hadn't expected the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race to rush here for the marriage proposals as well. Una, on behalf of the Dark Night Elf race, asks Prince

'Jami' to convey our greetings... to the king of the Wood Elf Race!" Elf Queen Una finished speaking and nodded at Gao Neng.

"What? He's the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elves?"

"That's impossible. The Wood Elf Race has never allied with other races, let alone intermarried. How could he possibly be here to propose?"

"Yeah, and he didn't even bring any guards!"

The gazes of the other Princes instantly focused on Gao Neng.

Chapter 233 - 208: Marrying In

'What's going on?' Gao Neng glanced behind him. The Great Elf who had grabbed him was nodding gently, seeming to motion for him to speak up.

But would Gao Neng speak?

He would not.

So, he just stood there silently, not saying a word.

Seeing Gao Neng remain silent, the Elf Queen frowned slightly. 'Since you've been questioned, shouldn't you step forward and loudly proclaim your "story"?'

'Ambushed on the road, narrowly escaping with your life... it's not a hard story to tell, is it?'

But Gao Neng stubbornly kept his mouth shut.

Meanwhile, the murmurs from the other Princes grew louder, and there were even voices of suspicion among them. Elf Queen Una could no longer tolerate it.

She had no choice but to speak again.

"Prince Jami was ambushed by the Human Alliance on his journey here. I have already received the report on this matter. For the Prince to still choose to come to our Dark Night Elf Clan and propose marriage is truly remarkable!" Elf Queen Una practically ground out the words.

"Ambushed?"

"What a coincidence... Why isn't he saying anything himself?"

"..."

The other Princes were naturally not entirely convinced.

But just then, Elf Queen Una directly announced the start of the Royal Courtship Ceremony.

Although the other Princes still had their doubts, Una had offered an explanation. With the official start of the ceremony, they naturally wouldn't dwell on the matter any longer.

After all, there were over twenty Princes present...

'What's one more? It's not a big deal, right?'

Just as they were thinking this, the water in the cold pool began to ripple.

Just like last time, the Seventh Princess emerged from the cold pool. Her jet-black hair cascaded over her shoulders, her beauty intoxicating the Princes in attendance.

The difference was that this time, Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang had changed into a more magnificent ceremonial dress.

It was a long, emerald-green gown embedded with nine rubies. It looked noble and holy, and exuded an aura of nature.

"WHOA!"

All eyes in the hall immediately focused on Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang.

The Princes were stunned.

Even though they all had their own agendas, they could never refuse something so beautiful. There wasn't one among them who didn't want to possess the Seventh Princess for himself.

Except... for Gao Neng.

Because right now, all Gao Neng wanted to do was sneak away.

However, the pressure from the Great Elf standing behind him was too immense. He predicted that if he tried to run, he would inevitably be caught and dragged back.

'I'm just a fake Prince! What is this? Are they seriously expecting me to compete with these other Princes? That makes no sense...' Gao Neng had no idea about the agreement between the Dark Night Elf Clan and the Royal Race, nor did he know what conditions had been set between the different peoples. Naturally, he couldn't immediately figure out what was happening.

So, he decided to watch more and listen more...

'Yes, just watch and listen. As for competing?'

'There's no way I'm competing.'

...

Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang's appearance successfully captured everyone's attention, signaling the official start of the Royal Courtship Ceremony.

And what followed was, in Gao Neng's eyes, a classic, tear-jerking melodrama...

After making her appearance, Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang began her performance. She started by shedding silent, sorrowful tears, and then her weeping gradually turned into choked sobs.

In an instant, the Princes' hearts were broken.

"Why is the Seventh Princess crying?"

"On this joyous occasion, is the Seventh Princess troubled by some sorrow?"

"Is it something we've done wrong?"

"..."

The Princes all spoke up one after another.

But the Seventh Princess just kept crying, her tear-stained face a picture of pitiable beauty.

Finally, Elf Queen Una stepped forward.

"Ding Xiang has grown up by my side since she was a child. She has never taken a single step outside the Dark Night Elf Clan. My daughter..." As she spoke, tears welled up in Elf Queen Una's eyes.

The Princes immediately understood.

'She can't bear to part with her!'

'What a display of true emotion!'

'Such a deep bond between mother and daughter!'

'In that case...'

'Should we just take both of them home?'

While the Princes were lost in their chaotic thoughts, a Great Elf standing behind Una stepped forward. Behind this Great Elf stood several rather old Elders.

"Princes, you have all seen it. Her Majesty the Queen truly cannot bear to see the Seventh Princess leave. However, the Princess's courtship is a major affair, so the council of Elders of our Dark Night Elf Clan has reached a resolution!" The Great Elf finished, then paused, his gaze sweeping across the crowd.

"What resolution?" the Princes immediately asked.

"If any Prince is willing to marry into our Dark Night Elf Clan, our Seventh Princess will give him priority consideration. The wedding can be held here in the Elf Royal City today!" the Great Elf declared in a firm tone.

"WHAT!"

"Marry into the clan?!"

"You actually want us to marry in?"

The Princes were instantly in an uproar again.

They were all direct-lineage Princes of their respective clans. If they weren't, they would have had no right to propose to the Elf Queen's most beloved Seventh Princess in the first place.

Moreover, many among them were successors to the title of Clan King.

'Make them marry into the Dark Night Elf Clan?'

'Wouldn't that mean giving up their claim to become Clan King?'

"Impossible! How could we possibly marry into the Dark Night Elf Clan!"

"That's right, absolutely impossible!"

"In terms of status alone, the Dark Night Elf Clan has no Strongest among them! For us to marry the Seventh Princess is already a great honor for the Dark Night Elf Clan, and you want us to marry in?!"

At least half of the Princes rejected the idea immediately.

Their goal was to obtain the special abilities of the Dark Night Elf Clan, and perhaps even pull the clan into their own faction. How could they possibly marry in?

However, the other half of the Princes remained silent.

But they weren't thinking about marrying in either.

Instead, they realized that this move by the Dark Night Elf Clan was clearly an attempt to break the agreement.

"Her Majesty the Queen, we only wish to ask one question!" the Prince from the Beast Race stepped forward.

"Please, ask your question, Prince of the Beast Race."

"Today, must the Seventh Princess choose a Prince from among us to be betrothed to?"

"Mm, yes." Elf Queen Una nodded.

"In that case, can we understand it to mean that if no Prince here is willing to marry in, the Seventh Princess will still choose from among us regardless?" the Beast Race Prince asked again.

"Of course." Elf Queen Una nodded again.

"Very good. I have no more questions. Now, the Princes present can make their choice." The Beast Race Prince gave a slight smile. He had achieved his goal.

And in fact, it was just as he had expected.

Hearing this, the other Princes instantly understood.

The agreement between the Ancestors and the Celestial Race forced the Elf Queen to marry off the Seventh Princess. If none of them agreed to marry in, the Seventh Princess would still have to marry one of them.

'Since that's the case...'

'Who would be stupid enough to stand up and choose to marry in now?'

"We all refuse to marry in!" a Prince immediately declared.

"Yes! We refuse!"

"We refuse!"

Once one spoke up, a second and third naturally followed.

Then, more and more Princes spoke out, not a single one willing to marry in.

This scene, naturally, made the Seventh Princess cry even harder. Her eyes were red and swollen, and her whole body trembled in the cold pool, a heartbreaking sight to behold.

The Great Elf who had spoken seemed to have anticipated this. Without any surprise, he spoke again. "Princes, we know this is an outrageous request, and it is merely a unilateral demand from our Dark Night Elf Clan. You are all free to refuse. Of course, after refusing, you will certainly lose some opportunities..."

"There's no 'opportunity' to be lost! If we all refuse, the opportunity is still equal for everyone!" This time, the Princes didn't wait for the Great Elf to finish speaking.

"That's right, just make your choice!"

"None of us will marry in! Please, let the Seventh Princess choose!"

"That's right!"

The Princes all chimed in, one after another.

Gao Neng had been silently watching the show from the side. He felt the Seventh Princess was quite the actress; at least in terms of crying scenes, her talent points were pretty good.

'Of course, she's still a far cry from me.'

'If I were the one performing...'

'I'd rip open the front of my shirt and scream my lungs out: I won't marry! I just won't! I'd rather die than marry out...'

'That way, probably only a Prince who could stand being cuckolded would still want to marry her, right?'

'Of the twenty-plus Princes here, who likes the color green?'

'No one!'

'Then naturally, she wouldn't have to get married.'

Just as he was thinking this, he felt a kick to his rear from the Great Elf behind him, and his entire body lunged forward off the wooden platform.

At the same time, he heard a loud shout.

"The Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race is willing to marry into the Dark Night Elf Clan!" The one who spoke was, of course, the Great Elf standing behind Gao Neng.

"..."

Silence. Dead silence.

And then, the entire hall erupted into an uproar.

All the Princes stared at Gao Neng in disbelief, because they all knew that the Wood Elf Race also had a Strongest.

'A Prince from a race that has a Strongest is willing to marry into a race that doesn't?'

'What the hell!'

'You must be a damn spy!'

"Prince Jami is willing to marry in, this is wonderful! Princess, Prince Jami says he's willing! You won't have to be separated from the Queen anymore!" the presiding Great Elf immediately exclaimed with delight.

But the other Princes' faces were grim.

Because once "Gao Neng" agreed to marry in, the balanced, unified front was shattered. If nothing unexpected happened, they were all about to miss their chance with the Seventh Princess.

"Damn it, this Jami must be completely blinded by lust!"

"To actually give up the competition to be Clan King just to marry the Seventh Princess, what a useless fool!"

"Other than being handsome, this guy is completely worthless!"

"What right does a Prince like that have to compete with us?"

The Princes were all extremely displeased. They were unwilling to simply hand the Seventh Princess over to such a useless Prince, but they themselves did not want to marry in.

'What are we supposed to do?'

'It's a complete dilemma!'

"Prince Jami... are you really willing to marry into our Dark Night Elf Clan?" Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang seemed to snap out of her stupor, asking with tears still in her eyes.

"No, I'm not willing!" Gao Neng shook his head.

Chapter 234 - 209: Displaying Divine Might, Slaying a High-Rank with One Slash

If he still couldn't figure out what was going on by now, he would be a true fool. This was clearly a setup.

This also explained why he'd run into a fake Prince of the Wood Elves on the road.

To put it bluntly, that guard who had been impersonating the Prince of Wood Elves was just a shill the Dark Night Elf Clan had prepared for today's matchmaking ceremony.

And now, he had become that shill.

'So, what should I do?'

'Play along and follow the path set for the shill?'

'It seems like a good idea, but it's actually a dead end. Once this whole affair is settled, my mission will basically be complete.'

'And then?'

'I can die.'

'As for the supposed wedding tonight and consummating the marriage... I can only dream. If everything goes according to their plan, I'll be taken into custody and then secretly killed.'

'So, my only way to survive is...'

'I haven't figured it out yet.'

'But for now, I need to cause a scene. Or at least take a few of them down with me. Otherwise, the moment I enter that bridal chamber, I'm a dead man.'

Gao Neng didn't speak too loudly.

But his words hit the other Princes like a massive tsunami, leaving them reeling. For a moment, they were all completely stunned.

It wasn't just the Princes. The Elf Queen, the hosting Great Elf, and even the Great Elf standing behind Gao Neng were all frozen in place.

"Not willing?!"

"He actually said he's not willing?"

"..."

Silence. A profound silence.

Finally, the hosting Great Elf recovered, a smile blooming on his face. "Excellent! The Thirteenth Prince says he is very willing!"

"No, I said I am not willing!" Gao Neng repeated.

"..." The hosting Great Elf was speechless. He was seething with rage, but in front of so many Princes, there was nothing he could say.

"Since this is an open matchmaking, everyone should compete based on their own merits. Why should I take a shortcut? It's unfair to the other Princes! As the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race, I would never do such a thing!" Gao Neng shouted.

"Well said!" the Beast Race Prince immediately shouted in response.

"Prince Jami is right! We are all competing for the Seventh Princess's hand based on our own merits. Anyone who dares speak of marrying into her clan is making an enemy of all us Princes!"

"That's right, Prince Jami! We all support you!"

"Absolutely no marrying in!"

Soon, the other Princes began to chime in with their support.

'As expected,' Gao Neng thought, the corner of his mouth lifting slightly. 'My brilliance can't be hidden, even under a mask. No matter where I go, I'm always the most dazzling one here.'

'See? This is what it means to have everyone rally to your call.'

'This is it!'

As Gao Neng was having these thoughts...

...the expressions on Elf Queen Una and the hosting Great Elf turned as black as thunder.

"What the hell is going on?!"

Their gazes, both as cold as ice, fell upon the Great Elf standing behind Gao Neng.

The Great Elf behind Gao Neng was filled with bitterness. 'What's going on? The elf I found was supposed to be reliable! What the hell happened?'

'Could he have been bribed by one of the other Princes?'

'Yes!'

'He must have been bribed.'

The Great Elf suddenly remembered. 'When I found him, Gao Neng wasn't outside the city, but inside. What does that imply?'

'It means he probably entered the Elf Royal City ahead of schedule!'

"Damn you! You dare betray the Dark Night Elf Clan? Aren't you afraid your whole family will be exterminated?" the Great Elf hissed, his voice low enough for only Gao Neng to hear. "If you dare spout any more nonsense, I'll kill you right now!"

"You dare threaten me?!" Gao Neng immediately pointed at the Great Elf. "Her Majesty the Queen! A Great Elf from your Dark Night Elf Clan just threatened me!"

"What?!" The Great Elf's face paled.

He truly hadn't expected Gao Neng to dare turn on him at a time like this.

And it wasn't just him.

The expressions of the other Princes, Elf Queen Una, the hosting Great Elf, and even Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang changed completely.

"Her Majesty the Queen, is this how the Dark Night Elf Clan does things?" Gao Neng shouted, pointing directly at the Great Elf behind him. "You knew I was

robbed by the Human Alliance and left without any guards, so you decided to threaten me? To force me to marry into your Dark Night Elf Clan as a way to control my Wood Elf Race?!"

"So that's what happened!"

"No wonder that Great Elf claimed the Thirteenth Prince was willing to marry in!"

"Dark Night Elf Clan, you've got some nerve! How dare you threaten a Prince of the Wood Elf Race?"

"Prince Jami, rest assured! We will ensure you get justice for this!"

The Princes, who hadn't quite understood the situation, now finally grasped what was happening.

To force the Thirteenth Prince to marry into their clan, the Dark Night Elf Clan had resorted to such underhanded tactics. How could they possibly tolerate this? This was blatant cheating!

"Her Majesty the Queen, we demand an explanation!" the Beast Race Prince declared, stepping forward.

"Nonsense! How could our Dark Night Elf Clan possibly do such a thing?" the hosting Great Elf said, his face pale. "This must be a misunderstanding! Esteemed Princes, do not listen to his baseless accusations!"

'This is a mess. A complete mess.'

'Things have gotten completely out of hand!'

"I am the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race! Would I really stoop to falsely accusing one of your Great Elves?! Do you think a Prince like myself would frame you? Answer me!" Gao Neng shouted again.

"You..." The hosting Great Elf gritted his teeth.

"You what? Are you going to kill me?" Gao Neng shot back. "If you have the guts, go on! Kill me right here in front of all these Princes! My Wood Elf Race will never forgive you!" He paid the Elf no mind. 'If my guess is right, the entire Dark Night Elf Clan knows I'm just a shill.'

'Trying to get back on the Dark Night Elf Clan's good side?'

'That would be a real death wish!'

'I have to latch onto these Princes for support!'

"Prince Jami, rest assured!" the Beast Race Prince declared, stepping forward and setting Gao Neng's mind at ease. "With us here, the Dark Night Elf Clan won't dare touch a single hair on your head!"

Following his lead, the other Princes also stepped forward.

"Let's all compete fairly! Anyone who dares harm Prince Jami or threaten him into marrying in will become an enemy to all of our races! Does the Dark Night Elf Clan dare to commit such an act?"

"That's right! As long as the Hill Giant Race stands, anyone who harms the Thirteenth Prince makes an enemy of us!"

"..."

One by one, the Princes stood up for him.

They were all certain that after such a commotion, any chance of a marriage between the Thirteenth Prince and the Seventh Princess was completely gone.

He was no longer a rival, which made him a potential friend.

Besides, taking a step back...

...the Wood Elf Race had a Strongest among their ranks.

If they truly had to choose sides between the Dark Night Elf Clan and the Wood Elf Race, they would much rather befriend a Prince of the Wood Elves.

At that moment, the situation had well and truly spiraled out of the Dark Night Elf Clan's control.

Elf Queen Una's face was frosty.

'She was absolutely seething.'

'Where in the hell did they find this moron? I told him to act like a Prince, and he's actually method acting? Does he not know who he really is?'

'Something's wrong...'

'There's definitely something wrong here!'

However, her thoughts were no longer on the Thirteenth Prince's identity. Instead, she was focused on how to get the matchmaking ceremony back on track. After all, she had already coordinated everything with the Celestial Race.

If anything else went wrong...

...she feared that even the Celestial Race might withdraw their support.

"This Great Elf dared to threaten me, a Prince. Is Her Majesty the Queen going to give me an explanation?" Gao Neng asked. He clearly remembered this was the same Great Elf who had just manhandled him like a helpless chick.

'This grudge... must be settled!'

"Her Majesty the Queen, I didn't threaten the Thirteenth Prince! I really didn't!" the Great Elf behind Gao Neng pleaded, sensing the tide had turned against him.

"Take him away!" Elf Queen Una commanded with a wave of her hand.

"Wait," Gao Neng interjected. "Why is Her Majesty the Queen having him taken away? Is this an attempt to protect him? Or perhaps... he was acting on your orders? If that's the case, then this matter is far more serious. Are you planning to declare war on all the other races?!"

"This matter requires further investigation!" Elf Queen Una stated, her expression chilling.

"Investigate what? A moment ago, every Prince here heard him shout that the Thirteenth Prince was willing to marry in. On top of that, he kicked me off the wooden platform! That alone is irrefutable proof! For a Great Elf who has committed such an act of insubordination... what should his punishment be? Surely Her Majesty the Queen doesn't need me to spell it out for you?" As Gao Neng spoke his final words, his gaze turned piercingly sharp.

"He's right! The Thirteenth Prince is correct!"

"Her Majesty the Queen, you owe the Thirteenth Prince an explanation! We all saw with our own eyes as your Great Elf kicked him off the platform!"

"Insubordination is a crime punishable by death!"

The other Princes were more than happy to add fuel to the fire.

"You... you actually want me dead?!" The Great Elf behind Gao Neng was incredulous. The very guard he had hand-picked now wanted him killed?

How laughable!

"What? As the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elves, am I not permitted to have you executed?" Gao Neng asked, tilting his head back arrogantly.

"If you were really the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elves, then of course you could have me killed. Unfortunately for you, you're—"

BOOM!

The Great Elf never finished his sentence.

Because Elf Queen Una had already acted.

The Dark Night Elf Clan had no Strongest among them.

But they did have those at the King Realm.

And she...

...was at the Tier Nine King Realm!

This was the first time Gao Neng had witnessed someone at the King Realm take action, and it was happening right before his eyes. The immense power, though not directed at him, still made his heart pound in alarm.

She drew her bow and nocked an arrow.

The motion was seamless.

It gave no one any time to react.

It was too fast!

An arrow flashed through the air.

The Great Elf's skull was pierced by the arrow.

A look of utter disbelief was plastered on his face, his eyes bulging. But it was all over. His body was rapidly being encased in ice.

It spread from his head down to his legs.

CRASH!

The ice shattered.

An almost-solid bird burst forth from the Great Elf's body.

"Trying to run from me, a Prince? Do you think you can escape?!" The moment Gao Neng saw the bird, he acted. He merged his Soul Mark with his Spiritual Power, forging it into a blade.

SWISH!

A single slash struck the bird, shattering it into motes of light.

(The last Chapter didn't have a title. Did Fang Tangtang eat it? Damn it!)

Chapter 235 - 210: The Plan Exploded

"GASP!"

Watching this, the other Princes couldn't help but suck in a sharp breath.

Soul Strangulation!

This Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race...

He was so ruthless!

The Elf Queen had already destroyed the Great Elf's body, which was impressive enough. But the Thirteenth Prince had been so utterly final, not even giving the man a chance to be resurrected.

'With this, does he truly have no chance with the Seventh Princess anymore?'

"Since it's a capital offense, there's no need to leave behind any Soul Mark, am I right?" After using his Spiritual Power to obliterate the Great Elf's Soul Mark with a single mental strike, Gao Neng looked back at Elf Queen Una, the corners of his lips curling into a smile as gentle as a spring breeze.

"Thirteenth Prince... what a move." Elf Queen Una gritted her teeth. By this point, she was well aware that the "guard" before her had betrayed them.

But she had no way of exposing Gao Neng's identity on the spot.

That was precisely why she had been forced to act when the Great Elf was about to say "fake prince." With more than twenty other Princes watching, she had no choice but to continue this charade.

Now that things had come to this, the other Princes would naturally no longer doubt Gao Neng's identity as a prince.

After a moment of silence, the hosting Great Elf finally gritted his teeth and spoke again. "Since the Thirteenth Prince has dealt with the Great Elf who threatened you, the marriage selection ceremony will continue!"

"..." The crowd of Princes looked at one another.

Meanwhile, the surrounding Elf Race People who were watching all wore complicated expressions. After all, they knew nothing about an impostor prince; they only knew that the Dark Night Elf Clan had lost another Great Elf.

"First, I invite the Princes to present their betrothal gifts!" The hosting Great Elf was seething with hatred, but the marriage selection ceremony had to go on.

Presenting the betrothal gifts and making a heartfelt confession.

This was the first round.

The second round would consist of the Seventh Princess posing a challenge and then making her choice. At the end of both rounds, the final winner would become the Seventh Princess's husband.

As the hosting Great Elf's voice fell, the prince from the Hill Giant Race stepped forward.

"My race's betrothal gift is a treasure of my Hill Giant Race, a Heart of Flame Crystal!" A Giant stepped forward, carrying a massive gift box.

The box opened, revealing a stone as red as blood.

It was a full three meters in diameter.

Flames seemed to flow within it. It looked crystal clear, and though it hadn't been processed much, its value was easy to imagine.

"The Northern Cave Race offers one Ten-Thousand-Year Snow Crystal as our betrothal gift!" A member of the Northern Cave Race immediately stepped forward and presented a heart-shaped snow crystal.

At the same time, the Cave Race Prince took the heart-shaped crystal in his hands.

"The Ten-Thousand-Year Snow Crystal is eternally pure, representing my pure and eternal love for the Seventh Princess. If the Seventh Princess is willing to marry me, the Northern Cave Race will form a strategic alliance with the Dark Night Elf Clan. Should the Dark Night Elf Clan have any need, the Northern Cave Race will give its all!" The Cave Race Prince finished speaking and awaited a reply.

But the Seventh Princess didn't even spare the Cave Race Prince a single glance.

Because he was truly ugly.

To put it bluntly, the Northern Cave Race lived in the extreme cold of the north, had scales on their bodies, and hardly ever saw the sun. There was no way she would go to a place like that.

The Cave Race Prince frowned and was about to say more, but another Prince had already stepped forward.

"My clan is willing to offer a bottle of West River Holy Water as a betrothal gift!"

"A bottle of Blood Essence!"

"..."

All sorts of treasures were soon piled onto the wooden stage.

Gao Neng's eyes turned a little red watching them. These were all supreme treasures, at least on par with the two fruits he had snatched.

'If I could get my hands on all this stuff, I'd probably wake up laughing in my sleep.'

'But that's obviously impossible.'

The twenty-odd Princes quickly presented their respective betrothal gifts. Among them, some also showed off their talents. For example, one Prince painted a portrait of the Seventh Princess, depicting a celestial beauty with flowing robes and capturing her heroic grace. Others composed inscriptions or wrote poetry...

In short, it was a flamboyant competition.

Before long, it was Gao Neng's turn.

The lively atmosphere instantly quieted down. All the Princes wanted to see what the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race would offer as a betrothal gift.

Would it be the Holy Spring of the Wood Elf Race?

Or perhaps a Thousand-Year Tree Heart, a specialty from the Wood Elf Race's territory?

The Princes were somewhat expectant. This was a "contest of strength," and the Thirteenth Prince had already offended the Dark Night Elf Clan beyond redemption.

If he still wanted to fight for the last chance to marry the Seventh Princess...

...it would be impossible without making a huge sacrifice.

Did Gao Neng have a betrothal gift?

Of course he did!

He had a high-grade bow prepared by the Dark Night Elf Clan, with the name of the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang, engraved on it. It was a thoughtful gift.

But a high-grade bow worth over seventy million, just given away like that?

'I can't part with it!'

'Why should I?'

'Now that it's in my hands, it's mine. I'd rather have the system recycle it than give it away.'

In fact, by now, he had already made up his mind.

Aligning with the Dark Night Elf Clan.

That was impossible.

Once he married the Seventh Princess, he would have to consummate the marriage, and the only result would be a dead end, regardless of whether he had offended the Dark Night Elf Clan or not.

So, he decided...

...not to marry her!

And he was absolutely determined not to marry her.

As long as he didn't marry her, he could use his identity as the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race to hang out with the other visiting Princes.

To put it bluntly, as long as he had other Princes by his side, the Dark Night Elf Clan couldn't do anything to him.

'Then I'll just stick with the other Princes and seek their protection. Best to eat and sleep with them, maybe even sign a few joint military operation plans while I'm at it.'

'When the marriage proposals are over, I'll follow the other Princes out of the city.'

'A perfect plan.'

Thinking of this, a smile appeared on Gao Neng's lips. "I am a Prince of esteemed status. I have condescended to travel a thousand miles to marry a mere Seventh Princess of the Dark Night Elf Clan, and I'm expected to prepare a betrothal gift? There is no betrothal gift! If the Seventh Princess wishes to marry me, she can. If not... I will absolutely not force her!"

Since he was going to fight them to the bitter end, Gao Neng had figured it out.

Claiming his betrothal gift was stolen would have been leaving himself an out. He decided to leave himself no escape route and just rip the facade off completely.

'I, this Prince, have no betrothal gift!'

'Let's see you pick me now!'

'Hurry up and eliminate me so I can go hang out and freeload with the other Princes.'

As Gao Neng's words fell, not only were the other Princes stunned, but even the Elf Queen and the hosting Great Elf were dumbfounded. They had considered that Gao Neng might not make a confession, or that he might even claim his betrothal gift was lost on the way.

But they truly never imagined...

...that Gao Neng would be so direct.

He didn't even bother with an excuse, and his tone was utterly arrogant.

'Is he not giving us any way to save face at all?'

"Hahaha, Thirteenth Prince, I admire your frankness. However, since you're here to propose marriage, you should still observe the proper etiquette!" a Prince immediately spoke up.

"That's right, Thirteenth Prince. You'll be eliminated in the first round this way."

"Heh heh... It seems the Thirteenth Prince's ambitions don't lie with the Seventh Princess, do they? Could it be that he was forced to come and propose? If so, that would explain it."

"I'd guess so too. The Thirteenth Prince must already have someone in his heart, right?"

"Since that's the case, Thirteenth Prince, how about staying for a drink with us after the marriage selection ceremony is over? I have come to greatly admire you today!"

The other Princes chimed in one after another.

They had no intention of offending Gao Neng, but they were more than happy to use a few words to push him out of the running.

Hearing this, Gao Neng also smiled. "Then I'll be imposing. After the marriage selection ceremony is over, I'll definitely have to ask the Seventh Prince for a drink!"

"Of course, of course!"

"Thirteenth Prince, why not come have a drink in my room as well?"

"Sure! I'll definitely be there!" Gao Neng laughed internally. The plan was going smoothly. As expected, by rejecting the Dark Night Elf Clan, he had naturally closed the distance with the other Princes.

'With so many powerful patrons to cling to... why would I cling to the Dark Night Elf Clan for dear life?'

'Only a moron would marry the Seventh Princess!'

Just as he was thinking this, he heard a clear, bright laugh.

The source was none other than the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang.

The Seventh Princess, who just a moment ago had been wiping tears from her eyes, suddenly revealed a smile as radiant as the sun, which even seemed to hold a hint of shyness.

"Hee hee, does Prince Jami find Ding Xiang not beautiful enough?" the Seventh Princess asked with a smile.

This scene made the other Princes stare. Pitiably when crying, nation-toppling when smiling. She truly deserved her title as the number one beauty of the Dark Night Elf Clan.

You see, among the other races, the Elves and Angels have always been known as the two most beautiful races.

The beauty of the Seventh Princess... was truly comparable to the sun, moon, and stars!

As for Gao Neng, he wouldn't be bewitched by such a seductive vixen. His will was firm. 'What is beauty? Can you eat it?'

"I just think your chest... isn't big enough!" Gao Neng curled his lip, his gaze sweeping over the Seventh Princess's chest, his eyes full of disdain.

"..." The other Princes were stunned once again.

'Not big enough?!'

'Are you spouting such nonsense with your eyes wide open?!'

As a Dark Night Elf, the Seventh Princess's figure was absolutely perfect. Yet this guy had the audacity to say she wasn't big enough? How big did he want?

'Are you planning to play basketball with them?!

"Heh heh, Ding Xiang thinks they're fine!" Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang's fists clenched, but she quickly relaxed and even puffed out her chest.

Gao Neng's gaze involuntarily swept over her again.

'Hmm...'

'They are pretty big!'

'But that's not the point, is it?'

'The point is, aren't you supposed to furiously rebuke me out of shame and anger, then tell me to get lost? Just tell me to scram... I don't want to be here anymore.'

"Mother, I believe that since the Thirteenth Prince traveled a thousand miles to our Dark Night Elf Clan, he must be full of sincerity. Although his tone is unpleasant right now, the fault lies with us. He must have some misunderstanding about our Dark Night Elf Clan. Why don't we allow him to participate in the

second round?" Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang didn't wait for Gao Neng to speak again, immediately turning to Elf Queen Una.

"Mm, Ding Xiang has a point. Since our Dark Night Elf Clan was in the wrong first, the Thirteenth Prince's words are hardly a major offense. As for the betrothal gift... as long as you like him, Mother will grant your wish!" As Elf Queen Una spoke the last words, her lips trembled slightly.

(Last day of the month, last two hours, asking for monthly tickets! Also asking for next month's guaranteed monthly tickets, there's another Chapter before midnight!)

Chapter 236 - 211: No Bottom Line

"No way?!"

"He passed the first round like that?"

"Don't tell me being handsome really lets you do whatever you want?"

The other Princes were stunned. They wracked their brains but couldn't think of any reason for Gao Neng's success other than his good looks.

Gao Neng's jaw dropped, too.

'This isn't how the script is supposed to go, is it?'

'I've been so arrogant, and I haven't left myself any way out. How can you people still tolerate this? Are you dead set on making me the Prince Consort?'

Gao Neng felt a bitter pain in his heart.

He had bet that the Seventh Princess and the Elf Queen wouldn't be able to swallow this insult, but they had. This meant they were willing to sacrifice the Elf Race's dignity just to get him killed.

'The enemy is strong...'

'They've completely abandoned their pride!'

'They have no limits, no bottom line at all.'

Just as he was thinking this, the Great Elf who was hosting spoke again, announcing the list of candidates moving on to the second round.

As expected, Gao Neng made the list.

Additionally, the Dark Night Elf Clan had also considered inter-clan relations, adding some powerful races to the mix, such as the Beast Race, the Hill Giant Race, and so on.

There were ten spots in total.

But Gao Neng was certain that, barring any surprises, he would be the one the Seventh Princess ultimately chose. And then... wouldn't he be right back where he started?

'No!'

'Two things have changed!'

'First, since I'm not marrying into her family, I at least won't be forced into the bridal chamber tonight. That gives me some time. Second, if I had followed the path of a shill, I would have undoubtedly become a common enemy, drawing the hostility of all the other Princes and races. But now, my relationship with the other Princes has become rather subtle.'

These were the only two points he could use to his advantage right now.

But the ending was clearly fixed.

'How can I use these two points to fight back?'

"Alright, will the ten Princes whose names were called please step forward. To the other Princes, our clan can only express its apologies!" the hosting Great Elf continued.

"Hmph..."

"Damn it! It's one thing for me not to be chosen, but how could that Thirteenth Prince get in?"

"It's rigged!"

"Just because he's handsome?"

The unselected Princes were more than a little dissatisfied, but their gifts were indeed a cut below those who were chosen, so it wasn't a complete injustice.

The only thing that truly irked them was Gao Neng.

Hearing this, Gao Neng sighed inwardly. It seemed there were only ten powerful connections left for him to cling to. He just wondered, after he was chosen as Prince Consort, how many of those ten would still be there for him?

"Please present your question, Seventh Princess," the hosting Great Elf said.

"Yes. My question is this..." Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang seemed to have prepared this in advance. "Should two people in love share everything without reserve, holding no privacy from each other? Or should they respect one another, each keeping a private world in their hearts? I would like the Princes to make a choice and then give their reasons."

The question was rather... "romantic."

It was a fitting question for a marriage selection.

It wasn't off-topic.

And the final decision was completely in the hands of Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang. Whatever reason she preferred, others would not be in a position to object.

The nine Princes fell silent.

Gao Neng just stared at the sky.

"So, which Prince would like to be the first to answer the Seventh Princess's question?" the hosting elf asked, seeing the Princes' silence.

"I will!" The Prince of the Beast Race was the first to step forward.

"Prince of the Beast Race, please answer!"

"I believe that if you trust each other, you should be open and honest. This is a fundamental principle of trust. However, since our two races are different, disparities in faith, upbringing, and culture are inevitable. Therefore, for a more harmonious and stable future, it is best to maintain a private world in one's heart regarding faith and certain other specific issues!" The Beast Race Prince finished with a smile.

Hearing this, the surrounding Elf Race People nodded lightly.

It was an answer that covered both sides.

One could say it was perfect.

"Yes, the Prince of the Beast Race has spoken very well. Next, we invite the second Prince to answer!" The hosting Great Elf nodded in agreement and spoke again.

"I believe that if you are together, you should hold nothing back. I respect the Princess, and I would naturally bring the Princess's faith to my own people!" the Prince of the Hill Giant Race declared, stepping forward.

"Excellent. Next, please!"

"..."

"..."

Soon, all nine Princes had given their answers.

The turn to speak came back to Gao Neng.

"Thirteenth Prince, you are the last to answer. I wonder, what is your choice regarding the Seventh Princess's question?" the hosting Great Elf asked, looking at Gao Neng.

"I choose neither!" Gao Neng said without a moment's hesitation.

"Hm? You choose neither?"

"That's right. I am the heavens. If the Seventh Princess wishes to marry me, she must worship me as such. What nonsense about 'holding nothing back'? I will do as I please. What's so strange about having three wives and four concubines? If every woman who married me wanted to keep her own 'private world,' how many worlds would I need to accommodate them all? Therefore, my word is the truth, and you should obey it unconditionally!" Gao Neng said, his words completely at odds with his true feelings.

But he had to say it.

He wanted to struggle just a little bit more. He refused to believe that the Seventh Princess would choose a profligate son like him in front of so many Princes and the entire Elf Race.

This would be a slap in the face to the entire Dark Night Elf Clan!

'So you think you have no bottom line?'

'Then let's see who can sink lower!'

And just as he'd hoped...

The moment Gao Neng's words fell, the Elf Queen's expression changed. And it wasn't just her expression; the cold pool at her feet began to swirl into a vortex.

'This is too much!'

It wasn't just Elf Queen Una; the hosting Great Elf and the surrounding Elf Race People all clenched their fists, their faces filled with rage.

"Throw him out!"

"Yes, get him out of here!"

"We will never allow the Seventh Princess to marry a Prince like him!"

The Elf Race People protested loudly.

Did he really think he could do whatever he wanted just because he was handsome?

No!

They absolutely could not stand by and watch the Seventh Princess leap into a pit of fire!

Meanwhile, the Beast Race Prince and the other eight chosen Princes exchanged smiles. They had already noticed that the Seventh Princess held a certain favor for this Thirteenth Prince.

But this Thirteenth Prince was really something else...

How did he dare to give an answer like that?

He'd incurred public wrath!

Even if the Seventh Princess still wanted to choose him, it would be impossible now, right?

"I choose Prince Jami!!! The Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race!" Just then, Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang's voice rang out once more.

Her voice wasn't particularly loud.

But it was like a clap of thunder, instantly silencing the surrounding uproar.

"Seventh Princess, you can't!" The hosting Great Elf clenched his jaw. Even though he knew the Seventh Princess wanted to kill Gao Neng, he couldn't bear to see her suffer such a grievance.

The other Princes were also frozen in shock.

She still chose the Thirteenth Prince after all that?!

Why?

Had the Dark Night Elf Clan truly abandoned all its dignity?

"Ding Xiang!" The Elf Queen's fists tightened.

"Mother, my mind is made up. You don't need to persuade me further!" the Seventh Princess said, gritting her teeth.

"I refuse to accept this! Why would you still choose the Thirteenth Prince? Doesn't the Seventh Princess owe us a proper explanation?" one of the Princes demanded furiously.

"The reason is simple!" The Seventh Princess's gaze was clear. "The Dark Night Elf Clan and the Wood Elf Race were originally one. Though we are now separated, the blood of the elven lineage flows in all our veins!"

Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang paused here, her eyes fixed on Gao Neng as she spoke again. "The relationship between our Dark Night Elf Clan and the Wood Elf Race was fractured decades ago. I want to mend the relationship between our two peoples. Although the Thirteenth Prince's tone is flippant, I am willing to marry him. I am not doing this for myself, but for our race! I am willing to make a sacrifice. I believe I can change him with my own abilities. And even if I cannot, then I will still give it my all, like a foolish moth drawn to a flame. Even if I am turned to ash by his fire, I am willing!"

"..." The scene fell silent instantly.

All the Elf Race People and the Princes turned to look at Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang.

Even Gao Neng was dumbfounded.

'If he were truly the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race, he probably would have been moved by those words.'

A moth to a flame.

'Even if I am turned to ash, I am willing!'

For some inexplicable reason...

Gao Neng actually felt that perhaps his previous behavior had been a bit excessive. This Seventh Princess was actually quite decent. But the moment that thought flashed through his mind, he snapped back to reality.

'No!'

'I'm being deceived!'

'This Seventh Princess's acting skills are an 85 out of 100!'

'And that's an 85 rated by the "Idiot System." That's an absolutely high score.'

"Prince Jami, noble Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race, I, Wu Dingxiang, am willing to marry you and will worship you as the heavens for my entire life. Will...

you marry me?" Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang walked toward Gao Neng step by step, her long dress creating ripples in the water.

She approached Gao Neng, treading upon the water of the cold pool.

Her eyes were filled with deep affection, and droplets of water clung to her waterfall of black hair.

Moreover, and most importantly, she deliberately puffed out her chest. Beneath her form-fitting dress, the faint, cold mist gave her a partially obscured, ethereal aura.

Gao Neng had to admit, it was an incredibly seductive scene. The cunning of the Seventh Princess before him ran far deeper than he had imagined.

Instinctively, he felt his mouth go a little dry.

But reason told him...he absolutely could not trust the Seventh Princess. She had only one goal: to kill him.

"I am not willing!" Gao Neng shouted, instinctively taking a step back.

"But you proposed to me, didn't you? Even if you were forced by your clan, you still came, no? Since you came and proposed to me, and I have now chosen you, you cannot refuse to marry me, correct?" The Seventh Princess continued to advance, her smile like a flower blooming in the cold pool.

"My heart already belongs to another! And... I've fallen in love with my own sister! Will you still marry me even after hearing that?" Gao Neng gritted his teeth. At a time like this, he couldn't worry about anything else; he had to play the incest card.

(Please vote for a guaranteed monthly pass!)

Chapter 237 - 212: To Find Life in a Place of Death

Silence fell over the hall.

Even the Seventh Princess's expression flickered. Of course, she knew Gao Neng's words were problematic, but she hadn't expected him to be so shameless.

'To actually say he fell in love with his own sister...'

'What a monster!'

The Seventh Princess clenched her teeth, a cold glint flashing in her bright eyes. But just as quickly, her smile returned. "Yes, I still want to marry you!"

"But I don't want to marry you! My heart and my body belong to my sister!" Gao Neng gritted his teeth as well. 'I've truly hit a new low.'

'She's still at it?'

'I can't keep this up!'

"I don't care! I will marry no one but you in this lifetime! Even if you're really involved with your own sister, I don't mind!" The Seventh Princess's voice rose several decibels.

The hall erupted.

This time, all the princes were utterly stunned.

They had desperately tried to win the Seventh Princess's favor, traveled from far and wide to be here, and prepared all kinds of gifts. And for what?

The Seventh Princess was throwing herself at someone...

And not only was she throwing herself at him, but the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race didn't even want her!

'Is there any justice in this world?!'

'What about the law? Isn't anyone going to do something about this?'

'It's infuriating!'

Gao Neng started to say, "Are you that despi—" but he suddenly felt a chill and swallowed the insult that was on the tip of his tongue.

'This feels like a trap!'

'And a particularly vicious one at that.'

He'd already said such outrageous things, yet the Elf Queen and the Seventh Princess were still tolerating it. Why? Were they really willing to suffer this humiliation just to kill him on their wedding night?

'That's not it at all!'

'Because as long as he kept refusing, the issue of his marriage to the Seventh Princess would just go around in circles.'

'But why was the Seventh Princess still insisting?'

'And why was the Elf Queen still tolerating it?'

'The reason was...'

'What Gao Neng had said wasn't outrageous enough!'

The Seventh Princess was baiting him, trying to force him to say something even more outrageous—a personal attack on her, for example, or even the slightest insult toward the Dark Night Elf Clan.

And more importantly, Gao Neng had almost blurted it out just a moment ago.

'The words he'd just swallowed were...'

'Are you that pathetic? So desperate to marry me?!'

He'd also prepared another line: 'No, I won't marry you. You're a seductive tramp who's been with the Sixth Prince of the Celestial Race. I refuse to marry a filthy wife!'

Fortunately, he hadn't said either of those things.

Otherwise, he guessed, the Elf Queen's expression would have already soured. She could have immediately punished him on the grounds of "slandering the Seventh Princess's reputation."

And the other princes would absolutely not have interfered.

'So devious!'

Cold sweat trickled down Gao Neng's back. 'This mother and daughter are truly in sync with each other. No wonder the Seventh Princess is the Elf Queen's favorite.'

"Thirteenth Prince, you... will you marry me? Will you?" The Seventh Princess was now right in front of Gao Neng. A cold glint flashed in her eyes as she lunged at him.

'Looks like this is the final push!'

Gao Neng could already see what the Seventh Princess was planning...

Because, in a normal scenario, he would have violently shoved the Seventh Princess away and started cursing, 'Slut! Shameless hussy throwing yourself at me!'

'But would Gao Neng do that?'

'He wouldn't.'

He just stood his ground, waiting for the Seventh Princess to throw herself at him.

But just then, he saw a dagger hidden in the palm of her hand.

'A blade? Why would she have a blade?!' Gao Neng's heart clenched.

His first instinct was to snatch the blade, but he quickly realized the problem. Why would the Seventh Princess deliberately reveal it to him?

'Shit, this is a fucking frame-up!'

The Seventh Princess was making her move. She wanted a... murder weapon... to appear in his hands!

'What a venomous woman!' Gao Neng's expression changed drastically. He was certain that if he dared to grab the dagger, when the time came to ask whose it was, who would the other princes believe? Him, or the Seventh Princess?

'There would be no way to explain it!'

Moreover, this was the Dark Night Elf Clan's territory. Once they suspected him of trying to draw a weapon on the Seventh Princess, he would surely be captured.

In that split second...

Without a moment's hesitation, Gao Neng mirrored the Seventh Princess's posture and lunged forward.

SPLASH!

Water sprayed up from the cold pool.

The Seventh Princess had approached by gracefully skimming across the water's surface, but Gao Neng was far less elegant. He tackled her headfirst into the icy pool.

At the same time, he seized her hand in a death grip while his other hand clamped around her neck, forcing her down into the cold water.

BLUB BLUB BLUB!

A stream of bubbles rose to the surface.

The Seventh Princess apparently hadn't expected Gao Neng to lunge at her. She didn't even have time to hold her breath before she swallowed several mouthfuls of the frigid water.

Her eyes flew wide, and she began to kick desperately at his body.

Gao Neng winced in pain.

He opened his mouth, and a mouthful of pool water rushed in.

GAH!!!

In an instant, Gao Neng felt a shock so cold it pierced his very soul, yet it was strangely exhilarating—like holding a large chunk of ice in your mouth during a blizzard.

A thrilling chill ran through his entire body.

But more importantly, the Seventh Princess's reaction in the water was completely unexpected.

She was surprisingly nimble.

Though he'd pinned her down at first, her long legs immediately revved up like tiny electric motors, kicking with surprising speed and stability.

Chapter 238 - 212: To Be Reborn from a Deadly Predicament (Part 2)

For a moment, Gao Neng couldn't maintain control.

He'd always considered himself a decent swimmer. Growing up in the Forgotten Land, he'd spent countless hours in its water holes.

But the Seventh Princess was obviously far more familiar with this cold pool.

In fact, after swallowing several mouthfuls of water, the Seventh Princess's face had actually turned a healthy shade of red. Not only did she show no signs of drowning, but she seemed to grow more invigorated with each gulp.

Gao Neng tried to hold the Seventh Princess down and force more water on her.

But she twisted free of his grasp in an instant. She followed up with a backward kick, trying to escape him completely.

'I can't let her surface!' Gao Neng's plan had been to tackle the Princess into the water, subdue her, then find an opportunity to snatch her dagger and toss it into the pool. That would foil her entire scheme.

But now she was about to escape?

There was no way he could let her go!

In his desperation...

Gao Neng cast aside all thoughts of propriety!

With a mental ROAR, he kicked hard through the water, surging forward and clamping both hands around the Seventh Princess's thighs. Simultaneously, he activated his Iron Life Form transformation.

Iron!

'It's very heavy!'

With Gao Neng latched onto her thighs, the Seventh Princess was dragged down no matter how hard she tried to swim up, as if her legs were shackled with hundreds of pounds of pig iron.

GLUG! GLUG!

The Seventh Princess was an excellent swimmer, but she hadn't taken a breath before being pulled under. In an instant, she swallowed several more mouthfuls of the cold pool's water.

Worse, Gao Neng's hands, wrapped around her thighs, were not staying put.

They began to slide up from her calves.

!!! The Seventh Princess grew frantic, cursing inwardly, 'Vile beast, let go of me!'

Her movements, however, showed no hesitation. She curled her body, bringing her hand extremely close to Gao Neng, and the dagger in her hand flashed into view.

But she didn't strike.

She just kept waving it in front of Gao Neng.

Her meaning was clear...

'Grab the dagger! Come on, grab the dagger!'

And Gao Neng did exactly that. He not only snatched the dagger from her hand, but his own hands continued their journey up her thighs to her waist.

Then, he suddenly pulled her close!

Their bodies were pressed tightly together, with no space between them.

The Seventh Princess's expression changed drastically. She fought desperately to push him away, but Gao Neng gave her no such chance. Instead, he took the opportunity to give her rear a firm grab.

"Ah! You beast! I'll kill you!" the Seventh Princess shrieked in a panic.

The crucial part was...

...her voice actually rang out loud and clear.

Because at the exact moment Gao Neng grabbed her, she had broken through the surface of the water.

Immediately after, Gao Neng's body was also flung from the water. He traced an arc through the air before slamming onto the wooden platform beside the cold pool.

Fresh blood streamed from his left arm.

It wasn't a sword wound.

The dagger had already been tossed into the cold pool.

An arrow was embedded in Gao Neng's left arm—an Elf Arrow, unique to the Elf Race. It was buried deep in the muscle, staining his arm red with blood.

And in his right hand, he held a high-grade oak bow.

The watching Princes were momentarily stunned.

The Thirteenth Prince was injured!

'What in the world did they do underwater? What happened?!

Just as they were wondering...

Gao Neng was the first to speak. "Seventh Princess, what a vicious heart! You thought I slighted you by rejecting you, so... so you tried to shoot me dead?!"

"What?! You claim I shot you? You were the one who...!" The Seventh Princess's eyes went cold, but when she saw the arrow in Gao Neng's arm, the words caught in her throat.

She was beginning to understand.

She finally understood why Gao Neng had tackled her into the cold pool.

'So that's what this was all about!'

'He was trying to turn the tables and frame me! But could a single arrow... really convince the other Princes?'

Evidently, the other Princes were not convinced.

They were all looking at Gao Neng.

But Gao Neng was prepared. He immediately raised the longbow in his right hand. "I snatched this bow from the Seventh Princess! Everyone, take a look!"

"That's not my bow at all!" the Seventh Princess said scornfully. "You think you can stick an Elf Arrow in your own arm and then frame me for murder? Ridiculous! Elf Arrows can be bought anywhere. On what grounds do you claim I was the one who shot this?"

"Is that so? Arrows might be easy to come by, but I doubt a bow like this can be bought by just any Elf, right? My fellow Princes, please take a look. This is a high-grade longbow, and what's more, it has the Seventh Princess's name on it!" Gao Neng made a show of inspecting it before pointing to the words engraved on the bow.

Wu Dingxiang!

They were perfectly clear.

The Princes all had astonishing eyesight, so of course they could see it.

"It really is the Seventh Princess's bow!"

"How is that possible?!"

"But that's definitely the Seventh Princess's name! Besides, a high-grade bow like this isn't something a common Elf could wield, is it?"

The Princes found it hard to believe, yet they couldn't help but feel a sliver of conviction.

"That bow is..." the Great Elf presiding over the event began to say.

"Silence!" the Elf Queen roared. How could she not know that bow was the betrothal gift intended for the Seventh Princess? But she couldn't possibly say that out loud.

To admit it would be to reveal their entire scheme was a sham. At that point, the Dark Night Elf Clan would face the wrath of more than twenty different races.

'Damn it!' the Great Elf fumed internally.

Meanwhile, the other members of the Elf Race erupted in curses.

"Frame-up!"

"The Seventh Princess would never try to kill that dandy Prince!"

"Drive him out of Elf City!"

The Elf Race People were furious.

The Seventh Princess was grinding her teeth in hatred. She had been utterly humiliated—not just physically, but mentally as well.

She couldn't accept this!

She absolutely refused to let this man get away with it!

'This man killed one of the Dark Night Elf Clan's Great Elves and ruined our carefully orchestrated recruitment ceremony. I can't possibly let him go.'

Just as she was thinking this, Gao Neng, not far away, turned beet-red.

As if provoked by the angry shouts of the surrounding Elf Race People, his chest heaved violently.

PFFT! Gao Neng spat out a mouthful of blood. "Your Dark Night Elf Clan has gone too far! Or are all the other Princes here cowards? What did the Seventh Princess say when she burst out of the water just now? She said she was going to kill me!"

"Thirteenth Prince!" Seeing this, the other Princes were now convinced. The Thirteenth Prince was seriously injured.

Moreover, they now recalled it.

When the Seventh Princess had burst from the water, she really had screamed that she would kill the Thirteenth Prince!

The evidence was ironclad, leaving no room for denial.

"Seventh Princess, did you really try to kill the Thirteenth Prince?!" one of the Princes couldn't help but ask.

"I did not!" The Seventh Princess bit out, her teeth clenched.

Gao Neng immediately collapsed, his face contorted in a mask of unbearable pain. "Dark Night Elf Clan, I, Jami, will remember this forced marriage today! Third Prince of the Beast Race, my Wood Elf Race is willing to sign an alliance with the Beast Race in exchange for temporary sanctuary! Once I return to my people, I will certainly send a handsome gift. I wonder, Prince, would you be willing to help?"

"This..." The Third Prince of the Beast Race hesitated.

"Is there no one willing to save me? From the moment I set foot in this Elf Royal City, I've been pressured into marriage. You all saw it! I have no desire to marry the Seventh Princess, but... they're trying to force me! They insist I marry her, and when I refuse, they try to kill me! This is a blatant provocation against the Wood Elf Race!" Gao Neng yelled. "I, Jami, Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race, hereby promise that if I can return to the lands of the Wood Elves, I will reward each and every Prince handsomely! In the future, whatever you may require, my Wood Elf Race will be at your beck and call!"

Chapter 239 - 213: Charge, Charge, Charge! Don't Turn Back

"There's no need for this, Thirteenth Prince. Since you have been persecuted by the Dark Night Elf Clan, we of the Hill Giant Race are willing to escort you back to your territory!" The prince of the Hill Giant Race finally stepped forward.

He knew his chances of marrying the Seventh Princess were practically zero.

Besides, now that he knew the Seventh Princess wanted the Thirteenth Prince dead, he certainly had no intention of marrying her. Therefore, if he took this opportunity to form an alliance with the Wood Elf Race, he could return to his clan with a notable achievement under his belt.

After all, the Wood Elf Race was extremely powerful.

"Hey, the Hill Giant Race wants to steal him away?! Prince Jami, if you would do me the honor, my one hundred Beast Race warriors are willing to escort you back to the Elf Territory!" The Third Prince of the Beast Race flared up in anger before turning to Gao Neng with an exceptionally warm expression. He had a plan of his own.

As a prince of the Beast Race, he was proud.

His pride made it impossible for him to pursue a princess who had just been spurned, no matter how beautiful she was.

"Thirteenth Prince, we of the Northern Cave Race are willing as well!"

"We of the Lizard Race are also willing!"

"..."

More princes immediately stood up. They had all realized the key to the situation: if a marriage alliance with the Dark Night Elf Clan fell through, they would ally with the Wood Elf Race instead.

In that instant, the situation took a stunning turn.

Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang's face alternated between pale and flushed; she was clearly incandescent with rage.

The Elf Queen and the presiding Great Elf also looked grim. They truly hadn't expected things to escalate to this point.

'Let Gao Neng go?'

'Impossible!'

The Dark Night Elf Clan had been utterly humiliated during this matchmaking ceremony.

There was no way they would let Gao Neng go.

But if they didn't let him go, what could they do? Were they really going to kill this fake Thirteenth Prince in front of all the other princes?

"Thank you all for your help, Princes. I, Jami, am eternally grateful!" Gao Neng was now thanking the princes profusely. By securing the protection of these powerful figures, he could finally make his escape.

'As long as I can get out of the Elf Royal City.'

'I can escape on my Flying Earth Dragon.'

"Don't be so formal, Prince Jami! How about we go for a drink? Tomorrow, I will escort you back to the Wood Elf Territory," the Beastman Prince offered.

"Tomorrow?" Gao Neng glanced at the sky. It wasn't even noon yet; he felt it would be better to leave immediately. "If it's possible, I'd like to leave right now."

"Thirteenth Prince, why such a hurry?"

Before the Beastman Prince could reply, a voice suddenly echoed from the sky.

This annoyed the Beastman Prince. Just as he was about to shout a retort, a figure descended from the sky, landing directly in front of him and Gao Neng.

An Angel!

With a pair of pure white wings!

The Angel wore a suit of ice-blue battle armor, and her long, black hair cascaded down to her waist. A cold aura emanated from her.

She was an exceptionally beautiful Angel.

If the Seventh Princess's beauty was the unique, ethereal grace of the elves, then the Angel before him embodied the supreme nobility and immaculate purity of the Angel race.

Mu Feifei!

Gao Neng recognized the Angel before him. Though they had only met once, he remembered her vividly, as she was the first Angel from another race he had ever seen.

The Beastman Prince, who had been about to shout back, visibly froze when he saw Mu Feifei. Then, a rare flicker of fear crept across his face.

"Ninth Princess?!" The Beastman Prince subconsciously took a step back.

Although the various races each had their own territories, they interacted quite frequently. As a result, they had a fairly good idea of who they could afford to provoke and who they couldn't.

And Mu Feifei of the Celestial Race...

...was one of the few individuals the princes from any race dared not provoke.

The reason was simple: they couldn't defeat her.

Among the other races, strength was paramount. To put it simply, their method for resolving disputes was a trial by combat.

If a conflict arose between two princes, they could issue a direct challenge, assuming they were of comparable strength.

It was a challenge that could not be refused.

And after the duel, whether you lived or died was left to fate.

The terrifying thing about Mu Feifei was...

She had initiated seventeen challenges in total and held an undefeated record. As for the seventeen royals she had challenged, they were now either hanging from trees or soaking in ponds.

Not a single one of them had "survived."

"Move," Mu Feifei said coldly to the Third Prince of the Beast Race.

"Right away!" The Third Prince of the Beast Race immediately scrambled to the side, not daring to make a peep. His attitude was a night-and-day difference from how he had treated the prince of the Hill Giant Race.

In truth, you couldn't blame him.

The territories of the Celestial Race and the Beast Race were adjacent. While there were no major wars between them, minor conflicts were common, which naturally led to opportunities for them to clash.

He had far too many painful memories...

So naturally, the Third Prince of the Beast Race instantly backed down.

The other princes also took a step back the moment they saw Mu Feifei. Her reputation was in a completely different league from someone like the Celestial Race's Sixth Prince.

If not for the Celestial Race's rule that the Clan King must be male, there would be no need to even select the next one.

Gao Neng also sensed that something was wrong.

He knew Mu Feifei was strong. Back in the underground factory, she had been the one to injure Shen Ning'Er, although Shen Ning'Er had been exhausted at the time.

But even in that state, Shen Ning'Er wasn't someone an ordinary person could get close to.

"Her Majesty the Queen!" Mu Feifei gave a slight bow to the Elf Queen.

"Ninth Princess, you've come because..." The Elf Queen looked a little surprised. Clearly, Mu Feifei's appearance was not something she had arranged beforehand.

"I heard my Seventh Sister was seeking a husband, so I came to see for myself."

"I see."

"So this is the future husband my Seventh Sister has chosen? The Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race!" Mu Feifei's gaze shifted to Seventh Princess Wu Dingxiang.

"He is..." The Seventh Princess gritted her teeth.

"Mm, Seventh Sister has excellent taste. It's just that this Thirteenth Prince's heart already belongs to another, and he's rather unwilling. What a shame to let this union go," Mu Feifei continued.

"Sister Jiu, have you been here long?" The Seventh Princess was a little surprised to hear this.

"For a little while. Why don't you let me handle this matter? Would Her Majesty the Queen and the Seventh Princess have any objections?" Mu Feifei quickly got to the point.

"Then we'll leave it in your hands, Ninth Princess!" The Elf Queen and Seventh Princess exchanged a look and quickly nodded.

Mu Feifei finally turned her gaze back to Gao Neng.

Her eyes were filled with cold indifference.

Her face was an emotionless mask as she quietly looked Gao Neng up and down a few times. Then, she took two steps and stood directly in front of him.

"..." Gao Neng didn't back down, meeting her gaze calmly.

"The Thirteenth Prince is injured?" Mu Feifei's gaze fell on Gao Neng's arm. Then, she reached out her hand.

Before Gao Neng had time to dodge...

...Mu Feifei yanked the arrow out.

SCHLICK!

Blood spurted out.

"This is Healing Medicine from the Celestial Race. The Thirteenth Prince can use it to staunch the bleeding," Mu Feifei said, producing a vial of Healing Medicine.

"Mm, thanks." Gao Neng took it and put the Healing Medicine into the Spatial Ring he had acquired, but he didn't use it.

"Why aren't you using it, Thirteenth Prince?" Mu Feifei asked, puzzled.

"That's a strange question, Ninth Princess. I thought you were unparalleled in strength, but I never expected your knowledge to be so common. Surely you're not telling me you don't know about the abilities of our Wood Elf Race?" Gao Neng shot Mu Feifei a contemptuous look and then held up his arm.

The wound from the arrow was healing at a rate visible to the naked eye.

Very quickly, the bleeding stopped.

"The self-healing ability of the Elf Race!"

"He really is a Wood Elf royal! That self-healing ability is so powerful!"

"How can it possibly heal that fast?"

The other princes watched this unfold, their faces a mixture of shock and envy.

As for Mu Feifei, her indifferent expression finally showed a flicker of emotion. She subconsciously furrowed her brow.

But she quickly reverted to her cold expression.

In fact, it wasn't just her. The Elf Queen and the presiding Great Elf also frowned deeply.

They naturally guessed what Mu Feifei was up to.

'But this isn't right!'

'The person impersonating the Thirteenth Prince is supposed to be an ordinary elf guard. Even if he has a self-healing ability, it couldn't possibly be this powerful.'

Just as the other princes had said...

Only members of the Elf Royal Race who had the chance to eat the 'Immortal Fruit' could possess this level of self-healing.

'So, is this Thirteenth Prince before our eyes really a member of the Elf Royal Race?'

'But that makes even less sense!'

The Spatial Ring and the High-tier Longbow engraved with the Seventh Princess's name were both items they had prepared.

'What in the world is going on?'

"Did you... eat the one that belonged to me...?"

"Seventh Sister!" Mu Feifei cut the Seventh Princess off, her gaze turning frosty.
"Didn't we agree that you'd let me handle this?"

"Yes, Sister Jiu!" The Seventh Princess gritted her teeth and retreated two steps.

"Thirteenth Prince, you've had quite a scare during your visit to the Elf Royal City. How about you rest for two days before leaving? After two days, I will personally open the city gates for you!"

"And what if I don't agree?" 'Gao Neng's heart skipped a beat.'

'Two days!'

'I can't wait two days.'

'I want to leave now, the sooner the better.'

'Too much can change in two days. On top of that, with Mu Feifei's sudden appearance, heaven knows what might happen. I just want to leave right away.'

"Bernie!" Mu Feifei ignored Gao Neng, turning her gaze to the Third Prince of the Beast Race, who had retreated to the side.

"Present, present! What are your orders, Ninth Princess?" The Third Prince of the Beast Race immediately stepped forward with a fawningly pleasant attitude.

"We'll rest for two days before leaving. Do you have any objections?" Mu Feifei said coldly.

"No objections at all! We'll do whatever the Ninth Princess says! We came all this way, why would we want to go back so soon!" Bernie, the Third Prince of the Beast Race, immediately thumped his chest and declared.

"And the rest of you?" Mu Feifei looked toward the other princes.

"None, none! We have no objections!" the other princes immediately chorused.

"Thirteenth Prince, since none of them are leaving, if you insist on going now, you'll have to return to your territory alone. We couldn't possibly feel at ease with that!" Mu Feifei finally turned back to Gao Neng.

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'He finally understood Mu Feifei's methods. From the moment she appeared, she hadn't wasted a single motion. She had detained him cleanly and decisively.'

'And for two days, no less.'

'She had done it so masterfully that he couldn't even find a reason to refuse.'

'So this was the legendary 'cutting the Gordian knot,' huh?'

In a situation like this, there was only one thing he wanted to say to Mu Feifei:
'Gan Liniang!!!'

Chapter 240 - 214: A Forceful Threat, Mutual Harm

Of course, Gao Neng wouldn't say this out loud. He was a refined man, after all, and a refined man should speak in a refined manner.

And Gao Neng felt his next words were very refined indeed.

"The beautiful Ninth Princess of the Celestial Race, Mu Feifei, you insisted on keeping this Prince here for two days. Could it be because of an agreement we made a few months ago?" Gao Neng's tone was perfectly calm.

"A few months ago? An agreement?" A hint of surprise flickered across Mu Feifei's placid face again. She seemed to have no idea what Gao Neng was talking about.

"The Ninth Princess should have an excellent memory. Have you really forgotten so quickly? You were the one who proposed this agreement, after all," Gao Neng continued.

At these words, the other Princes were instantly stunned.

Who was Mu Feifei?

She was not someone the Seventh Princess of the Dark Night Elf Clan could compare to. It wasn't just because of Mu Feifei's status as a Celestial Race Princess; more importantly, it was due to her strength and intelligence.

To put it bluntly, they dared to propose marriage to the Seventh Princess of the Dark Night Elf Clan.

However, they would never dare propose to Mu Feifei. To marry her, one had to meet at least one essential condition: be a Clan King or a future Clan King.

Furthermore, one had to come from a powerful race on par with the Celestial Race.

Among the Alien Race Alliance Army, which races could match the combat power of the Celestial Race?

There were some.

But you could count them on one hand.

And this group of Princes... was clearly not among them.

But what were they hearing now?

Mu Feifei had an agreement with the Thirteenth Prince? And Mu Feifei was the one who proposed it? Could it be that the person the Thirteenth Prince had his heart set on was Mu Feifei?

But that wasn't right. Didn't he say it was his own sister?

'This is getting complicated...'

'Really complicated!'

"Thirteenth Prince, are you trying to mess with me? Your status as the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race alone doesn't seem to grant you that privilege, does it?" Mu Feifei's brow furrowed slightly once more.

"Heh heh..." Gao Neng chuckled.

Of course he knew Mu Feifei didn't understand.

But he was determined to make her understand. He had a growing suspicion that Mu Feifei was the true mastermind behind this whole scheme.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have appeared at this exact moment.

Of course, that wasn't the most important part. The most important part was that Gao Neng could not afford to stay in the Elf Royal City for two days. If he did, Mu Feifei would have at least a hundred ways to kill him.

'Two days...'

'Too many things could happen!'

'For example, she could find a fake Wood Elf Guard Team. In fact, with Mu Feifei's influence, I suspect she could even find a real Wood Elf Guard Team.'

'As long as she promised them enough benefits, the Wood Elf Race might just agree to play along with Mu Feifei's charade.'

'When that time comes, where could I possibly run?'

Escorted back to the Wood Elf Race's territory by dozens of Wood Elf guards, he wouldn't have the slightest chance to escape. Therefore, the only thing he could do was...

'Go for broke!'

"It seems the Ninth Princess truly can't recall. Then allow this Prince to remind you. I wonder if the Ninth Princess remembers visiting a factory a few months ago? Hmm... to be specific, it was an underground factory, with a mental hospital next to it!" A slight smile played on Gao Neng's lips.

"An underground factory? A mental hospital?" Mu Feifei seemed to be trying to recall something. Soon, her eyes widened, and an expression of utter disbelief appeared on her face. "It's you?!"

"That's right, it's me! It seems the Ninth Princess has remembered. I wasn't mistaken, was I? You were the one who proposed the agreement," Gao Neng nodded.

"You have some nerve! Do you have any idea where you are?!" Mu Feifei was genuinely shocked this time. The reason she hadn't dared to expose the identity of this so-called Thirteenth Prince was mainly because she believed his true identity was a 'guard of the Dark Night Elf Clan'.

If he were exposed, the Dark Night Elf Clan would be implicated.

But if that identity changed...

To that of a human!

Then things would be completely different. Under these circumstances, she could kill Gao Neng herself without any hesitation.

Moreover, she could come up with a hundred reasons to explain it away. The most direct explanation, for example, would be to claim that Gao Neng had killed the real Thirteenth Prince and was impersonating him, and that the Dark Night Elf Clan knew nothing about it.

Once the matter was linked to a human, which race would come demanding justice?

Mu Feifei's eyes were fixed on Gao Neng's face. She wanted to read something in his eyes, because she simply couldn't believe that Gao Neng would have the audacity to admit he was a human at a time like this.

'Isn't this just asking for death? What else could it be?'

"Of course I know where I am. You see... I'm so close to the God of Nature!" As Gao Neng spoke, he casually pointed at the Ancient Elf Tree in front of them.

"The God of Nature!" Mu Feifei's face instantly paled.

The God of Nature!

The very source of the Dark Night Elf Clan's survival!

It was also the greatest leverage the Celestial Race held over the Dark Night Elf Clan. Decades ago, it was precisely the Celestial Race's occupation of this place that forced the Dark Night Elf Clan to submit.

And now...

Just as Gao Neng had said.

He was truly close to the God of Nature. Far too close.

In that instant, the battle from a few months ago flashed through Mu Feifei's mind. It was one of the few defeats she had suffered in many years.

The images from that battle were still seared into her memory.

Destruction!

Yes! Utter destruction!

It was a battle of annihilation. She didn't know how Gao Neng had done it, but she was certain that he had indeed completely destroyed an entire underground factory back then.

"So, can we talk about our agreement now?" Gao Neng neither stepped forward nor back, maintaining the faint smile on his lips.

'This bluff!'

'I have to see this act through!'

'If I don't, I'll die. And if I don't perform it well, I'll die too. This really feels like dancing on the edge of a knife—even more thrilling than when Zhuge Liang faced an army of a hundred thousand pursuers.'

"What do you want?" Mu Feifei forced herself to calm down. She never would have imagined that she, the great Ninth Princess of the Celestial Race, would be threatened.

And threatened right here in the Dark Night Elf Clan's Royal City, at the foot of the God of Nature, no less.

'Damn it!'

'Why did it have to be him?'

'Why!'

If it were any other human, Mu Feifei would have attacked without a second thought. But when it came to Gao Neng, she couldn't quite figure him out yet.

Because she had witnessed Gao Neng's destructive power with her own eyes.

'If the Ancient Elf Tree were to be destroyed...'

'Is that a price worth paying just to kill a single human?'

One tree, one race!

The Ancient Elf Tree represented the entire Dark Night Elf race!

The surrounding Princes fell silent. They couldn't understand what Gao Neng and Mu Feifei were talking about. The only thing they understood was that the two of them knew each other.

And that there was some kind of agreement between them?

In fact, even Elf Queen Una was a bit confused now. She could sense that Mu Feifei's emotions seemed to be in turmoil.

This was an extremely rare occurrence.

Connecting this with the man's self-healing ability...

The Fairy Queen faintly guessed that the person before them impersonating the Thirteenth Prince was probably not that guard anymore.

'Could it be a real member of the Wood Elf Race?!'

Gao Neng couldn't care less about what the other Princes were thinking right now. He was walking on a knife's edge and didn't dare relax for a second. He had to act relaxed—extremely relaxed, even reckless—to make Mu Feifei believe he had the power to destroy the Ancient Elf Tree. Otherwise, he was a dead man.

"The God of Nature... it really is tall!" Gao Neng didn't answer Mu Feifei's question immediately. Instead, he tilted his head back, staring at the Ancient Elf Tree with a greedy expression.

Mu Feifei subconsciously glanced up as well.

'The Ancient Elf Tree...'

'It absolutely cannot be destroyed now!'

'But can this guy really destroy the Ancient Elf Tree right in front of the Elf Queen?' Mu Feifei wasn't entirely sure.

Because she had investigated Gao Neng before. A freshman at the Eastern Capital Military Academy, and supposedly someone who had just broken through to become an Energy Warrior?

Of course, this was just the information that had been passed along to her.

Mu Feifei didn't fully believe it. The reason was that this information was accompanied by a list of his achievements. For example, when Gao Neng entered the academy, he had challenged all the freshmen. Then, within a month, he had

challenged the academy's combat rankings. There were even reports that Gao Neng had received an investment from the Celestial King Group.

As for the latest intelligence...

Gao Neng had wiped out an intelligence stronghold and killed three Tier 4 aliens inside!

'Is that **really** something a person who had just become an Energy Warrior a few months ago could do? And would she, Mu Feifei, lose to a human who hadn't even broken through to become an Energy Warrior?'

'The intelligence!'

'It can't be trusted!'