

Doctor 441

Chapter 441: Teacher Qin, what's wrong with you?

Fang Bai knew that once Zhou Dabai received his call, no matter if a fierce wind blew or a torrential rain fell, he would definitely rush back as soon as possible.

Indeed, after just over ten minutes, the wooden gate of the courtyard was struck open by a worn-out bicycle, and a tall figure pushing the bike barged in hurriedly.

Upon seeing Fang Bai in the courtyard, Zhou Dabai casually threw the bicycle to the ground and came forward to fiercely hug him, shouting, "Fang Bai! How did you find this place? Damn, I've missed you so much!"

Fang Bai pushed him away and punched him in the chest, saying irritably, "You're really something, running away without even leaving a message!"

Zhou Dabai scratched his head and chuckled, "Heh, I know your temper. If I told you that my family had gotten into huge debt with loan sharks coming after us, you would definitely stand up for us. There's no good in those who lend money at crazy interest rates, and I didn't want to drag you into it!"

Fang Bai said, "Remember what you once said, 'In a lifetime, we are brothers twice over.' We're supposed to share both happiness and hardships, together in adversity! When you're in trouble, you should tell me! Have you forgotten that I'm a lot more capable now than before?"

Zhou Dabai said, "I know you've become a lot better at fighting and you've got some money. If it was just ten or eighty thousand that my family owed, I would have definitely asked you first, but it's hundreds of thousands! You don't have that kind of money either!"

"Son, it's my fault that you and your mother have suffered!"

Zhou Houde, hearing his son mention this matter, couldn't help but sigh again, squatting on the ground with his head in his hands, looking pained.

"How do you know I don't have it? Did you ask me? If you had alerted me earlier, would you need to hide all the way here? Look at what you've become now! You used to be fair and plump, but now you've turned a lot darker and lost weight compared to before..."

Fang Bai intended to say more, but seeing Zhou Dabai speechless and wide-eyed, his heart softened, and he swallowed the rest of his words. He patted Zhou Dabai's shoulder and said, "Remember, if you run into something you can't solve, you must tell me! No matter how big the problem, we'll shoulder it together!"

Zhou Dabai's eyes reddened, and he nodded vigorously.

Fang Bai turned around and said to Zhou Houde, "Uncle Zhou, I will pay off the debt your family owes. Call Auntie now, and once she gets back, your family should pack up and get ready to go back to Zhongzhou with me!"

"Fang Bai, we owe four or five hundred thousand! Where did you get so much money? Your family's traditional Chinese medicine clinic hasn't been open for long and needs money right now... Never mind, we'll find another way to pay off the debt..."

Zhou Houde, though grateful for Fang Bai's righteousness, didn't believe he could come up with hundreds of thousands. Even with full support from Fang Gang and his wife, it wasn't likely they could provide that amount.

Zhou Houde couldn't imagine that since his family had left Zhongzhou, the business of "Fang's Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic" had become increasingly booming. Describing it as making money hand over fist wouldn't be an exaggeration; they could indeed come up with hundreds of thousands of yuan.

Nor could Zhou Houde have imagined that Fang Bai's net worth had already exceeded ten digits; to him, hundreds of thousands of yuan were truly insignificant.

"Just wait here for a moment!"

Seeing that Zhou Houde didn't believe he had the money, Fang Bai turned and walked out of the courtyard. After returning to the sedan, he took out five hundred thousand in cash from his Spatial Ring, put it in a plastic bag, then got out of the car, went back inside the courtyard, and handed it to Zhou Houde.

"Uncle Zhou, here's five hundred thousand. Take this for now and go pay off the debts! Once we get to Zhongzhou, I'll lend you more money so you can find a stable business to run!"

In Zhongzhou, Fang Bai had connections like Xia Chenyu, Ruan Hongpeng, the Su Family, and even the mayor of Zhongzhou City, Lu Xinghe. Finding some work for Zhou Houde's family would indeed be effortless.

Looking at the money in the plastic bag, Zhou Houde finally believed it was true. He and his son Zhou Dabai looked at each other, thinking they could return to their home in Zhongzhou and no longer have to live like refugees. They were so moved, they almost cried.

"Damn, Fang Bai, you've made some serious windfall! From now on, I'm sticking with you, and don't forget to give your bro a hand!"

Zhou Dabai took the plastic bag from his father's hand and looked inside; his eyes instantly bulged round with shock.

"Sure! Once we get back to Zhongzhou, tell me whatever you need!"

"You've got yourself a deal!"

With the money Fang Bai had given them, Zhou Houde felt revitalized. He immediately called his wife, who was working in a nearby hotel, and asked her to come home.

Soon, Zhou Dabai's mother, Wu Yufen, arrived. Upon seeing Fang Bai, she grabbed his hand, and a wave of sighs and lamentations was inevitable.

When she learned that Fang Bai had given them 500,000 to pay off their debts, this woman, whose hair had already turned half white, burst into tears on the spot.

After a brief exchange with Zhou Dabai's family in the courtyard, Fang Bai's phone suddenly rang. He looked down and saw that it was a call from Qin Yaorao.

"You're already in Jinling? That's great!"

Upon knowing that Fang Bai had arrived in Jinling, Qin Yaorao on the other end of the phone obviously breathed a sigh of relief, then she spoke in an almost pleading tone, "Fang Bai, I've run into some trouble here. If you have time, could we meet up? I prefer to discuss it in person... I didn't want to trouble you, but after thinking it over, it seems like you're the only one who can help with this!"

"Okay, name the place. I'll head over right now."

Fang Bai could tell from Qin Yaorao's tone that she was anxious, and it made him quietly curious.

This was Jinling, the Qin Family's turf. With the Qin Family's influence, what could Qin Yaorao possibly not handle?

Fang Bai, new to Jinling and without any local connections or networks, wondered what help he could provide for an issue that even Qin Yaorao couldn't resolve.

The more he thought about it, the more he realized that, in Qin Yaorao's eyes, the only thing he had of value was his extraordinary medical skills. Yet, if Qin Yaorao wanted his medical assistance, she could have just said so over the phone. There was no need for all this secrecy and beating around the bush, right?

With questions in mind, Fang Bai temporarily said goodbye to Zhou Dabai and his family and drove to the coffee shop where he and Qin Yaorao had agreed to meet.

The two met at a suburban café. Qin Yaorao looked distressed, her face marred by sorrow and far from the spirited individual he had seen last time. Her complexion was clearly worse, and there were even traces of bloodshot eyes beneath her dark circles.

"Teacher Qin, you seem very haggard. What happened?"

Surprised, Fang Bai appraised Qin Yaorao, thinking that someone from a prominent clan like hers should be living a comfortable and happy life. So why did Qin Yaorao in front of him look as if she had suffered a great injustice?

Qin Yaorao forced a smile and said, "Fang Bai, I'm sorry, I didn't want to drag you into this matter. But... but..."

Chapter 442: Do you think I'm better than that man?

Fang Bai saw Qin Yaorao with a look that seemed hard to articulate and laughed, "Teacher Qin, I respect you as both a mentor and a sister. If there's anything you need help with, just say it directly. I'm just a bit curious, your Qin Family is one of the biggest, most influential families in Jinling City, what could be so problematic for you?"

Qin Yaorao let out a light sigh, a wry, helpless smile creeping over her lips, "If it were anything else, it could easily be resolved, but this matter... it's a long story!"

She picked up the coffee in front of her and sipped it gently, her movements as graceful as a swan. After a brief silence, she continued, "When I was twelve, my family arranged a marriage for me. At that time, I was clueless, not even aware of what had happened..."

An arranged marriage at twelve?

Fang Bai was at a loss for words. The Qin Family was a prestigious clan, and they arranged a marriage for Qin Yaorao at twelve; were they worried she wouldn't be able to marry when she grew up?

But then again, it wasn't uncommon for Huaxia's wealthy and prominent clans to arrange marriages between their children for the sake of family interests.

Among the people Fang Bai knew, Tang Wenrou, Ye Wumei, and Xia Chenyu had all been set up by their families for matchmaking with offspring from other wealthy clans, but each of these arrangements fell through because of Fang Bai's, the "third party's," interference.

Because of these incidents, Fang Bai had attracted quite a bit of resentment and made a fair number of enemies.

"Yesterday, a bunch of people suddenly came to my house and had a long talk with my parents in private. It was only later that I learned from my mother that they came to propose marriage. That was the moment I realized that my family had already decided on my lifelong affair..."

"At the time, I found it inconceivable. How could such a thing happen in this day and age? Heartbroken, I ran into my room and cried my eyes out. Later, my mother tried to console me, saying that this man I had never met was an outstanding man..."

At this point, a mocking smile appeared on Yaorao's lips as she went on, "Later I met that man, and he really was outstanding. Tall and handsome, with a graceful demeanor, he perfectly fit the image of a Prince Charming in a girl's mind..."

Fang Bai interjected, "With your personality, you must resist this arrangement made by your family, and hence, felt repelled by that man, right?"

Qin Yaorao nodded, "That's right, without any emotional foundation, no matter how outstanding the man is, I cannot accept him."

Fang Bai said, "Haven't you tried to interact with that man, to see if the two of you could get along?"

"I have."

Qin Yaorao said, "In the past two days, I've met with that man three times. He's only thirty this year, yet he already manages several big businesses successfully. Plus, he comes from an Ancient Martial family and is a formidable martial artist. My father can only manage a draw with him..."

Fang Bai laughed, "I've heard that the Qin Family isn't just a scholarly family, but also part of the Ancient Martial world. Uncle Qin's strength must be remarkable, shouldn't it?"

Qin Yaorao shook her head, "I don't understand ancient martial arts, whether it's remarkable or not is beyond me. My father said he's a Profound Level martial artist in the initial stage, considered a first-class expert in the Secular Ancient Martial World; however, he's still a lot behind the top experts."

Fang Bai said cheerfully, "Uncle Qin is being modest. A Profound Level initial stage martial artist is quite remarkable!"

Qin Yaorao said, "That man being able to match my father indicates his own strength. Furthermore, my father says that the man reaching Profound Level in his thirties shows he's a rare talent, destined to be a top expert in the Ancient Martial World someday."

Fang Bai nodded; a thirty-year-old Profound Level Martial Artist in the Secular Ancient Martial World was indeed rare, and to call him a "genius" wasn't an exaggeration.

"According to my parents' wishes, marrying that man would give the Qin Family a strong ally in Huaxia, ensuring greater security for our family interests. Most members of our Qin Family are also very supportive of this marriage!"

"If that man is so outstanding, why won't you agree?"

Fang Bai asked, puzzled.

From Qin Yaorao's expression and the words she used, Fang Bai could guess that she was strongly opposed to the arranged marriage.

"First, I'm already an adult; I do not wish for my parents to control my life decisions, so I've developed a rebellious attitude. Second, I cannot accept that man's personality..."

Qin Yaorao smiled mockingly and said, "Not only is that man arrogant, but he's also narcissistic. He thinks whatever he says or does is right, everyone should revolve around him, not tolerating any dissent... I've only met him three times, but there were several times I felt the urge to slap him across the face!"

Fang Bai managed a dumbstruck smile, thinking that the man must be incredibly arrogant and narcissistic for Qin Yaorao, with her intelligent and elegant demeanor, to say such a thing.

"If you agree, I could secretly teach that man a lesson and then threaten him to call off the marriage. What do you think?"

Fang Bai offered his suggestion with all seriousness, believing that forcing the man to cancel the marriage with his methods would be quite simple.

"That's definitely not possible!"

Qin Yaorao shook her head quickly.

Fang Bai shrugged and said, "Then you tell me what to do! You were so eager to have me come over, it must be because of this, right?"

Qin Yaorao, looking troubled, said, "That man's parents want my parents to give them a response early tomorrow morning, and my parents are pressing me hard. How could I not be anxious! I really had no other choice, that's why I turned to you..."

Fang Bai asked, "How can I help you?"

Qin Yaorao's eyes intently fixed on Fang Bai's face, her cheeks suddenly a tad red, she whispered, "After I expressed my opposition to my parents, my dad said... said that if I can find a man more outstanding than him, he would help me call off the marriage..."

Fang Bai caught Qin Yaorao's unusual gaze and contemplated her words. Suddenly understanding, he pointed to his own nose and said, "You mean... you want me to pretend to be your boyfriend for a while and mess up this marriage?"

"Out of respect for our teacher-student relationship... Fang Bai, I'm begging you! I know this is difficult for you, but... I really have no other choice! Don't worry, once the marriage is called off, I'll explain everything to my parents..."

Qin Yaorao was resorting to this as a last resort, truly not wanting to have any connection with that arrogant and narcissistic man, otherwise, she could be miserable and depressed for a lifetime.

"You think I'm better than that man?"

Fang Bai asked with a wry smile.

Qin Yaorao nodded and said, "Of course! The last time my second uncle almost had a conflict with you, he said afterward that you must be much more powerful than my father. So that man is definitely not your match!"

Chapter 443: Playing the Boyfriend Role Again?

Not long ago in Yanjing, a conflict arose between Qin Yujie of the Qin Family and Baili Mingyue. Later, Qin Shan, accompanied by his nephew, went to Baili Mingyue's home to demand an explanation, only to encounter Fang Bai. It was thanks to Qin Yaorao's mediation that the matter was finally settled.

Since that incident, Qin Shan had developed a sense of fear towards the unfathomable Fang Bai, and he told his niece, Qin Yaorao, that this young man was not simple and that she must make a good connection with him—by no means should she offend him.

"My father wants me to marry that man simply because he values the man's potential, as well as the Ancient Martial family behind him. If you can outperform him in martial arts, my father's scales will tip in your favor. Add to that your profound medical skills, and he will be completely inclined towards you... Our ages are only three or four years apart, he won't suspect a thing,"

Qin Yaorao continued speaking.

Qin Yaorao was naturally beautiful. At the age of twenty-three or twenty-four, she appeared to be just over twenty. If she stood beside Fang Bai, they would not look out of place in a "sister-brother romance", and indeed they seemed quite a match.

Fang Bai looked into Qin Yaorao's eyes, which bore a hint of pleading, and sighed inwardly.

Regardless, Qin Yaorao had once taught his class; she was his teacher. How could he possibly have the heart to refuse a teacher's request?

Forget it, he agreed!

After all, it wasn't the first time he was doing something like this!

In the past, when the Ye Family from Lingnan wanted to form a marriage alliance with the Wang Family from Yanjing and arranged for Ye Wumei to meet with Wang Dong, hadn't he played the role of "fake boyfriend" at Ye Wumei's request?

Having had that experience, this time he was simply reprising the role of "boyfriend"!

"Teacher Qin, I have no problem playing the boyfriend, but when we go to your house, how should I speak and act? We need to practice first so we don't give ourselves away,"

Fang Bai pondered and said.

Seeing Fang Bai's agreement, Qin Yaorao breathed a sigh of relief and said, "That man is arrogant, narcissistic, and haughtily aloof. My parents actually like him for that, thinking it's the manner of a true master. When the time comes, you just need to act even more arrogant and more disdainful than him! Hmm, it's best if you can outshine him in every aspect!"

Fang Bai said, "If he dares to be arrogant in front of me, I'll beat him until even his parents don't recognize him!"

Qin Yaorao quickly interjected, "That won't do! The Ancient Martial family that man belongs to is not simple; even our Qin family doesn't dare to provoke them. If you harm that man, it might incite retaliation, and then our Qin family might not be able to protect you!"

"After all this talk, I still don't know the man's name! And which Ancient Martial family is he from?"

Fang Bai asked.

"That man's name is Wen Shiba; he's a scion of 'Misty Rain Tower' from Jiangnan!"

"Misty Rain Tower?"

Fang Bai's eyebrows raised, a streak of cold light flitted through his eyes, and he sneered, "So he's from Jiangnan's Wen Family! Wen Shiba... Heh, that name is quite interesting!"

"You also know of the Wen Family and Misty Rain Tower? Oh, Wen Shiba is so named because there's a set of sword techniques passed down through Misty Rain Tower that contains only eighteen moves, and Wen Shiba mastered that sword technique to perfection at the age of eighteen—that's why he got his name..."

Qin Yaorao did not notice the cold light in Fang Bai's eyes or the change in his tone as she cheerfully shared what she knew about Wen Shiba.

Misty Rain Tower, like Shaolin, Wudang, Qingguan City, and Myriad Medicine Valley, belonged to the Semi-Hidden Sects. Its disciples focused on cultivation and maintained a low profile, making them relatively unknown in the secular world, but they wielded great influence in the Ancient Martial World.

Fang Bai said, "As a martial artist, I naturally have some understanding of things in the Secular Ancient Martial World. I've also heard about Jiangnan's Misty Rain Tower... Heh, now I can't wait to meet that Wen Shiba!"

After agreeing on the time and place to meet the next day with Qin Yaorao, Fang Bai left the coffee shop and returned to the small courtyard where Zhou Dabai's family lived.

On the way, Fang Bai made a call to Ghost Hand, who was far away in Zhongzhou, asking him to rush to Jinling overnight.

Among the three powers that slaughtered Ghost Hand's mentor's Sect, Myriad Medicine Valley, were included Misty Rain Tower, which, like Qingcheng Temple, was also one of the main forces.

In the end, when the three Sects divided the spoils, Misty Rain Tower, as they wished, obtained a Heaven Rank Technique. The other Heaven Rank Technique and the dagger that could slice through iron as if it were mud were obtained respectively by Qingcheng Temple and Shaolin.

Ghost Hand had long harbored intentions of killing the three major Sects to seek justice for his mentor's deaths. Now that the people from Misty Rain Tower were in Jinling, it was the perfect opportunity for him to settle accounts with them.

When facing the people from Misty Rain Tower and the Wen Family tomorrow, if there was a fight, Fang Bai did not plan to take action himself, but was prepared to let Ghost Hand fight on his behalf.

When he returned to the small courtyard where Zhou Dabai and his family lived, the family of three, having listened to Fang Bai's words, had already temporarily saved the money that Fang Bai had given them. They had freshened up from head to toe, each buying and changing into new clothes, ready to take Fang Bai's car back to Zhongzhou early the next morning.

"I have some things to do tomorrow morning, so our return might be delayed a bit. Uncle Zhou, if you have nothing else to do tomorrow, your family can go around the city, buy whatever you like and don't be afraid to spend money! Dabai, take this..."

Fang Bai fished a bank card from his pocket and stuffed it into Zhou Dabai's hand.

"Fang Bai, why are you giving me a bank card?"

Zhou Dabai looked down at the bank card in his hand and scratched his head, asking.

Fang Bai smiled and said, "This is me repaying you!"

"Repaying me? You've never borrowed money from me! Did you make a mistake?"

Zhou Dabai was completely puzzled.

"Do you remember when we were in school? Uncle Zhou and Auntie would give you one or two yuan for pocket money, and no matter what you bought, you would always share half with me... You said it—us two brothers will share fortune and hardships, together through thick and thin! Now that I have more money than you, I'm giving you some..."

"This... this..."

"Just take it! If you don't, we can't be brothers anymore!"

"Then I'll take it!"

Zhou Dabai was not at all embarrassed to accept from Fang Bai; he didn't care that his parents kept making faces at him on the side, signaling that he should not take Fang Bai's money anymore. He chuckled and stuffed the bank card into his pocket.

"Dabai, I remember during the second year at the medical college, you took a summer class and got your driving license, right? Can you drive now?"

Seeing that Zhou Dabai had taken the bank card, Fang Bai asked with a smile.

"Yes, I can! My uncle has a car at home, and during the year I got my license, I would often borrow it to practice. It might be a bit rusty now, but if I have a car, I can get the hang of it quickly!"

Zhou Dabai said with animated eyebrows.

Although Zhou Dabai couldn't afford to buy a car, he was a car enthusiast. Back when he was in school, he used to light up upon seeing luxury cars on the way home, filled with envy and boldly declaring that once he had money in the future, luxury cars, beauties, and grand villas were all must-haves.

"Come on, let's try out my car!"

As Fang Bai spoke, he turned to walk outside the small courtyard, and Zhou Dabai, rubbing his hands with excitement, quickly followed.

Chapter 444: The Prominent Clans Skilled in Both Letters and Arms

The matter of the young people was something Zhou Houde and his wife couldn't bother with. Watching their son and Fang Bai leave, they went back into the house to continue tidying up.

Although Fang Bai's car wasn't a luxury vehicle, it still made Zhou Dabai enviously run his hands all over it, expressing his admiration as he got in, saying, "Fang Bai, you've really struck it rich! I've decided to hang out with you from now on, you've got to cover for me!"

"Yeah, what's mine will be yours! Don't speak words of thanks; you deserve this!"

Fang Bai said earnestly.

"Psh, as if I'd be polite with you! Anyway, I'm counting on you for my luxury cars, beauties, and big villas. You have to lead me to wealth! Dammit, I will definitely buy a Ferrari one day and drive it out to pick up girls every day!"

Zhou Dabai chuckled and blabbered informally.

"If you want to pick up girls, first you've got to lose some of that fat on you!"

"I'm not fat; I'm plump! Plump, get it? Noble Consort Yang was praised for this beauty standard!"

"Alright, drive your car."

Zhou Dabai claimed he was a good driver, and it wasn't just talk. After hitting the road, it only took him a few miles before he excitedly started to speed.

It wasn't until the evening when Zhou Houde called the two to come back for dinner that Zhou Dabai reluctantly drove the car back.

"Dabai, after you get back to Zhongzhou, go buy a car for yourself, whatever kind you like! The money in the card I gave you should be enough!"

The sedan returned to where Zhou Dabai's family lived, and when it stopped by the gate outside the courtyard, Fang Bai patted Zhou Dabai's shoulder and said.

Fang Bai speaking earnestly, yet Zhou Dabai thought he was joking, and so he jested back, "I was actually thinking of buying a Ferrari... hahaha..."

He laughed a few times, but seeing Fang Bai looking at him seriously, his expression gradually became somber, asking, "How much money is in that card...?"

"One hundred million!"

"What?"

Zhou Dabai was so shocked he stood up from the driver's seat but accidentally bumped into the roof of the car with an "Ouch" before sitting back down, holding his head.

"Keep the money and spend it slowly; for now, don't tell Uncle Zhou and Auntie."

Fang Bai whispered, then got out of the car alongside Zhou Dabai, walking shoulder to shoulder into the yard.

Zhou Dabai's mind was almost blank at this moment, with the words "one hundred million" echoing incessantly in his ears.

"Dabai, what's the matter with you?"

After entering the yard and seeing her son in a daze as if possessed, Wu Yufen asked with concern.

"Auntie, Dabai hasn't touched a car for a long time, he just drove my car out for a spin, he's excited, that's all! Right, Dabai?"

As he said this, he gave Zhou Dabai a meaningful look, and Zhou Dabai snapped out of it, quickly saying, "Yes, yes! Excited... Excited..."

After finishing his words, he rushed to the tap, washed his face with cold water to calm his mind down, and then turned around and said, "Mom, after going back to Zhongzhou, I want to buy a car..."

"Buy... buy your head off!"

Wu Yufen rolled her eyes at her son and said irritably, "Our family is buried in debt and you're still thinking about buying a car? Let me tell you, the money for repaying the debt is considered borrowed from Fang Bai, and we must pay it back! Go find a job after you return, work hard to earn money, and stop daydreaming! Got it?"

"If you do not get your act together after returning, I'll break your legs!"

Zhou Houde also puffed up his beard and glared, chiming in to scold their son along with his wife.

Fang Bai saw Zhou Dabai being scolded by his parents until he was downcast and with a sorrowful face, and couldn't help but burst into loud laughter.

That night, Fang Bai took Zhou Dabai to a nearby hotel to stay for the night and performed the Marrow Cleansing for him, improving his physique.

Unfortunately, Zhou Dabai did not possess an Innate Spiritual Root, so if he wished to set foot on the path of Martial Dao, he would have to wait until Fang Bai's realm advanced enough to refine elixirs that could improve one's physique.

The next day, before dawn, Zhou Dabai left the hotel and went to the city center with his parents to sightsee.

Shortly after Zhou Dabai left, Ghost Hand Feng Chen arrived in Jinling from Zhongzhou and met up with Fang Bai at the hotel.

Around eight in the morning, Qin Yaorao called Fang Bai and told him she was waiting for him outside the gates of the Qin Family Manor in the West Suburb of Jinling, urging Fang Bai to make sure to arrive before nine o'clock.

The Jinling Qin Family is a household renowned throughout Huaxia for scholarly achievements, and it is also one of the Prominent Clans with Ancient Martial inheritance. In Huaxia, it is one of the rare families that excel in both literature and martial arts.

The Qin Family members are well-learned and have outstanding literary talents. Many of them hold important positions in universities and colleges across Huaxia, and numerous high officials and influential figures in all sectors of Huaxia are their disciples.

It could be said that in the realm of education in Huaxia, the Jinling Qin Family holds a unique position, with an influence that is unrivaled.

By comparison, although the Qin Family is also an Ancient Martial family, it has never had a Martial Dao Genius emerge, which is why its influence within the Ancient Martial World is much weaker.

In this world where strength represents greater say and influence, the Qin Family recognized its weakness, hence the reason it sought an alliance with Misty Rain Tower—to use the influence of this famous Ancient Martial family in Huaxia to strengthen their own influence.

The location of the Qin Family Manor, apparently chosen by a master of feng shui, is nestled against the mountains, near the water, bathed in abundant sunlight, and has excellent feng shui.

In the eyes of Fang Bai, a Martial Artist, the Essence Energy in this area was much more abundant than in other places. It was an ideal place for cultivating oneself and a suitable place for prolonged residence.

A few hundred meters from the entrance of the Qin Family Manor, by the roadside, there was a small pavilion in the classical style. At this moment, Qin Yaorao was sitting there alone, her face etched with worry.

The trees surrounding the pavilion were dotted with figures—these were the Qin Family's bodyguards, carrying out their protective duties.

"There are only five minutes left until eight o'clock, why hasn't he arrived yet?"

Qin Yaorao glanced at the time on her watch with a look of anxiety, frequently turning her head to peek at the gates of her family's manor, fearing her parents would send someone to urge her to return.

The representatives of the Misty Rain Tower's Wen Family had arrived at the Qin Family half an hour earlier and were speaking with Qin Yaorao's parents; they were discussing the marriage arrangement between Qin Yaorao and Wen Shiba.

Actually, when Qin Yaorao was twelve years old, the Wen Family had already provided a betrothal gift to the Qin Family, finalizing this marriage. At that time, Qin Yaorao was, in name, already the fiancée of Wen Shiba, a bride-to-be not yet wed into the Wen Family.

Now, the Wen and Qin families were discussing setting a date to hold a grand wedding for Wen Shiba and Qin Yaorao, to have them officially married.

In the previous encounters with Wen Shiba, he had been aggressively forward, while Qin Yaorao often responded with silence to express her resistance, leaving both parties dissatisfied in the end.

When disputes occasionally arose, Qin Yaorao could see a kind of frustrated anger in Wen Shiba's eyes, an anger born from a loss of control, from not being able to dominate.

Just now, when the Wen Family people arrived, Qin Yaorao had made an excuse to leave, and as she passed by Wen Shiba, she saw on his handsome face, which nonetheless disgusted her, a triumphant expression typical of a victor.

Chapter 445: Since you're acting, make it a bit more realistic!

Qin Yaorao faintly guessed what Wen Shiba was feeling smug about. That man must be thinking that once the wedding date is set today, after she marries into the Wen Family, she would be at his mercy, unable to escape his clutches ever again.

At that moment, Qin Yaorao felt very angry and wanted to tell Wen Shiba loudly that she would never marry him, but in the end, she held herself back.

Qin Yaorao came to the small pavilion outside the manor, eagerly awaiting Fang Bai's arrival, hoping with all her heart that her former student could help her out of this arranged marriage.

When the clock struck eight in the morning, a black sedan appeared far away and sped towards her.

Seeing the sedan, Qin Yaorao's furrowed brows relaxed, and a slight smile played on her lips.

"Teacher Qin, I'm not late, am I?"

After parking the car, Fang Bai walked up to Qin Yaorao and asked with a smile.

"You, couldn't you have come a few minutes earlier? You made me wait here for so long!"

Qin Yaorao chided lightly, but as she glimpsed Ghost Hand following behind Fang Bai, her expression turned serious and she asked, "Who is this...?"

Fang Bai stepped to the side, pointed at Ghost Hand, who wore a naïve smile, and introduced, "His name is Ghost Hand, and he's my disciple I took on in Yanjing! Ghost Hand, this is Teacher Qin, from now on you can call her Sister Qin!"

"Sister Qin, hello!"

Hearing that Qin Yaorao was his master's teacher, Ghost Hand immediately became solemn and stepped forward to bow deeply.

"You... you... there's no need to be so formal!"

Ghost Hand was indeed older than Qin Yaorao, so how could she accept such a gesture? She quickly stepped aside in embarrassment.

"Teacher Qin..."

"Still calling me Teacher Qin?"

Fang Bai was about to speak when Qin Yaorao interrupted him.

"Oh right... now that we are in a relationship, calling you Teacher Qin would give us away... So from now on, shall I call you Sister Qin?"

"Just call me Yaorao!"

Qin Yaorao's face heated up slightly, then she took on a bravely straightforward demeanor and said firmly, "Since we are acting, we need to make it as real as possible. Calling me this way seems more intimate and won't make my parents suspect anything."

"That makes sense, let's do that!"

Fang Bai nodded in firm agreement.

"Let's go. My parents are probably waiting for me in the reception hall right now!"

Qin Yaorao hesitated a moment, then took two steps forward and gingerly hooked her arm through Fang Bai's, her cheeks flushing as she said, "This looks more like a couple!"

While she felt slightly embarrassed, Fang Bai was as composed as ever. After all, playing the role of a boyfriend wasn't his first time, and he had grown used to it.

"When you meet the people from Misty Rain Tower later, keep your cool and don't get agitated. There will be a time for you to give them a good thrashing!"

Having walked a distance, Fang Bai suddenly turned his head and addressed Ghost Hand, who was following a short distance behind.

"Master, I understand."

Ghost Hand nodded, his eyes flashing with a thick aura of combativeness and murderous intent.

"What are you and Ghost Hand discussing? What do you mean by 'viciously torment them'?"

Upon hearing this, Qin Yaorao, driven by curiosity, couldn't help but quietly ask Fang Bai.

She didn't know that Ghost Hand and Misty Rain Tower were mortal enemies, and that her journey with Fang Bai was to seek justice from Misty Rain Tower.

Fang Bai chuckled, "Heh, Ghost Hand has come to discuss some matters with the people from Misty Rain Tower... As for what exactly, you'll know when the time comes."

Seeing Fang Bai's mysteriously secretive demeanor, Qin Yaorao grew even more curious. However, since Fang Bai wasn't elaborating, she refrained from questioning further.

At this moment, the only thought occupying Qin Yaorao's mind was the hope that Fang Bai would display his formidable strength in front of her parents and completely overwhelm Wen Shiba, thereby disrupting the arranged marriage entirely.

As the trio passed through the gate of the Qin Family Manor, they moved unobstructed. Along the way, Fang Bai and Ghost Hand detected the fluctuation of Martial Artist Auras in concealed areas beside the road, evidently bodyguards of the Qin Family covertly lurking, ensuring the safety of the manor.

Yet for powerhouses like Fang Bai and Ghost Hand, these bodyguards hardly posed a threat. If they wished, they could have forcibly stormed their way in, unstoppable by anyone.

The architectural style of the Qin Family Manor was entirely classical, featuring artificial mountains, ponds, pavilions, and terraces. The members of the Qin Family they encountered en route were all clad in traditional Tang-style garments.

Led by Qin Yaorao, the three of them followed a winding, cobblestone path, passing through several corridors and courtyards, arriving before a bamboo forest on the west side of the manor.

Between the concealment of the bamboo, a large pavilion stood erect, where a group of people sat chattering and laughing.

"Among the six people, there are five Martial Artists: two at the initial Profound Level, two at the mid Profound Level, and one at the high Profound Level..."

Fang Bai and Ghost Hand, sensing the energies of several Martial Artist Auras coming from the pavilion among the bamboo, exchanged knowing glances.

Although Ghost Hand was currently at the initial stage of Profound Level, his unique Cultivation Technique meant he feared no Profound Level Martial Artist. Even if the high Profound Level Martial Artist in the pavilion was from Misty Rain Tower and the Wen Family, Ghost Hand, by going all out, might still hope to emerge victorious in battle.

Approaching the front of the bamboo forest and hearing the laughter from the pavilion, Qin Yaorao visibly grew more tense, involuntarily tightening her grip on Fang Bai's arm.

Fang Bai gently patted the back of Qin Yaorao's hand and gave her a reassuring look, whispering, "Relax, I've got this."

Qin Yaorao managed a strained smile, then closed her eyes and took several deep breaths, steadying her slightly anxious heart. Together with Fang Bai, they walked slowly toward the pavilion in the bamboo forest.

The six people in the pavilion, five men and one woman, young and old, were seated around a stone table.

The only one who was not a Martial Artist was the woman.

The woman appeared to be in her mid-forties, but due to good maintenance, she looked closer to forty.

Judging by her current appearance, one could imagine she had been a rare beauty in her youth. Though now middle-aged, her charm and grace remained.

Sitting next to a middle-aged man, the woman wore a smile as she listened attentively to him and the other four speaking, displaying an air of elegant nobility.

The moment Fang Bai saw the woman, he knew she must be Qin Yaorao's mother, Yang Yun, because the mother and daughter bore at least a seventy percent resemblance.

The middle-aged man dressed in a blue Tang suit, exuding an aura of scholarly refinement and possessing the strength of the initial Profound Level, must certainly be Qin Yaorao's father and the current Family Head of the Qin Family, Qin Ling.

Fang Bai then understood why the Qin Family of Jinling held so little influence in the Ancient Martial World, given that Qin Ling, head of the family, was only at the initial stage of the Profound Level. His

Cultivation Level was significantly inferior compared to those of the Sect Leaders from the major Sects in the Ancient Martial World.

Chapter 446: Wen Family's Wen Shiba

Across from the Qin Ling couple sat four people, all dressed in loose white practice robes. Even though they had all deliberately contained their unique martial artist aura, they couldn't escape the keen perception of Fang Bai and Ghost Hand.

The person sitting directly opposite Qin Ling was an old man of around sixty years old, lean, with half-white hair and beard. His temples were slightly protruding, and sparks of sharpness flashed in his eyes as he opened and closed them, conveying a sense of awe without anger.

The elder sat there leisurely, twirling his beard with a faint smile on his face, conversing with Qin Ling. With every gesture, he exuded the demeanor of a master who was detached from the mundane world.

Sitting to the left and right of the elder were two middle-aged men, one fat and one thin. The fat one always had a smile on his face and occasionally interjected a few words, appearing very amiable.

The thin one had a cold and solemn expression, barely cracking a smile, giving off an air of distancing oneself thousands of miles from others.

To the right of the thin man sat a young man in his thirties, with eyebrows shaped like swords and eyes like stars, a prominent nose, and thin lips. Set off by his white shirt, he looked even more spirited and graceful, ethereal and refined—a man who could make countless young girls swoon.

However, the young man's demeanor always carried an air of superiority and disdain for everything below him, which made it uncomfortable to look at him. Clearly, he was not an easy person to get along with.

"Wen Shiba?"

Fang Bai's gaze swept over the young man, guessing his identity.

One had to admit that, based only on appearance, the young man was indeed very popular with girls. If he could restrain that uncomfortable arrogance, perhaps Qin Yaorao wouldn't despise him so much, and the likelihood of a successful marital alliance between the Qin Family and Misty Rain Tower would greatly increase.

"On the north side are my parents. The four across from them are people from Misty Rain Tower of the Wen Family... The oldest one is Wen Xiangxin, the Tower Master of Misty Rain Tower; seated next to him are two elders of Misty Rain Tower, and that young man... is Wen Shiba..."

Qin Yaorao introduced the identities of the people in the pavilion to Fang Bai in a low and rapid voice.

At this moment, Qin Yaorao saw no trace of nervousness or constraint on Fang Bai's face; on the contrary, he had a faint smile and an air of having a well-thought-out plan.

Very different from Wen Shiba's arrogance, what Fang Bai now exhibited was a powerful confidence that everything was within his control.

Qin Yaorao secretly breathed a sigh of relief. As if influenced by Fang Bai, her mentality also became more peaceful.

Ghost Hand, following behind Fang Bai, his eyes swept over the four from Misty Rain Tower of the Wen Family, and a sharp light suddenly appeared in his eyes. An infinite desire to kill and an endless fighting spirit surged up momentarily and then were retracted.

The people in the pavilion, who were in the midst of conversation, felt the fleeting battle intent and desire to kill emanating from Ghost Hand, and were shocked at heart, involuntarily turning their heads to look this way.

When they saw Fang Bai and Qin Yaorao with their hands intertwined, the Qin Ling couple's gaze stalled, filled with astonishment and surprise.

The faces of the four Wen Family members, on the other hand, became quite colorful.

Wen Shiba's eyes landed on Qin Yaorao's arm firmly linked with Fang Bai's, and seeing her expression of bliss and sweetness, a nameless jealousy rose in his chest and he suddenly stood up.

A strong sense of anger and combativeness exuded from Wen Shiba, spreading out and pressing towards Fang Bai beside Qin Yaorao.

In Wen Shiba's eyes, Qin Yaorao was his fiancée, soon to marry into the Wen Family and become his woman.

And now, this woman whom he regarded as forbidden fruit was actually latching onto another man's arm and leaning her body against that man. This made him unbearably angry and intolerant.

That man, deserved to die!

Qin Yaorao, this woman, is such a bitch!

Wen Shiba wished he could rush forward and smash that man's skull with a fierce punch, then slap Qin Yaorao across the face to quell the anger in his heart.

Wen Shiba's undisguised fury was, of course, visible to the Qin couple, who exchanged worried looks, seeing the depths of each other's concerns.

Earlier, when their daughter mentioned that a friend was coming to visit, the couple thought it was her bestie coming over to hang out and didn't take it seriously. They never imagined their daughter would bring home a strange man.

Seeing their daughter arm-in-arm and shoulder-to-shoulder in an intimate manner with that strange man, even the foolish Qin couple understood what that implied.

When a surge of Qi fluctuation emanated from Wen Shiba, pressing towards Fang Bai, Qin Ling's eyebrows rose, knowing Wen Shiba was trying to intimidate Fang Bai.

The pressure of a Profound Level Martial Artist is unbearable for an ordinary person; once enveloped by this pressure, Fang Bai would probably collapse on the spot, making a fool of himself.

Understanding his daughter, Qin Ling knew that given her resilient nature, if Wen Shiba caused the man by her side to look foolish, she would definitely confront Wen Shiba verbally. This could lead to complications in the marriage arrangements, which Qin Ling did not want to see happen.

However, Qin Ling wanted to intervene and stop Wen Shiba, but it was already too late.

The oppressive wave formed by the True Yuan fluctuations had already reached Fang Bai in an instant.

Qin Ling sighed inwardly and closed his eyes, not wanting to see the scenario of Fang Bai collapsing to the ground.

"Hmph, you dare to challenge me with that little ability? Overestimating yourself!"

Fang Bai flicked the corner of his mouth, revealing a mocking, disdainful smile.

"Presumptuous!"

Before Fang Bai could react, Ghost Hand, who was following behind him, let out a light drink and, with a flicker, positioned himself in front of Fang Bai.

The True Yuan in Ghost Hand's body circulated, and the air around him was swayed by his True Yuan, creating intense fluctuations. It transformed into an invisible force that collided against the pressure released by Wen Shiba.

The collision of the two invisible forces caused a slight ripple in the space, and as the forces spread in all directions, the clothes of the few people inside and outside the pavilion fluttered without any wind.

"Eh?"

Wen Shiba, seeing the pressure he released so easily neutralized by Ghost Hand, was secretly surprised and took a closer look at this man who was even younger than himself. He then realized that their Cultivation Levels were actually on par, both being initial stage Profound Level Martial Artists.

At the same time, inside the pavilion, Wen Xiangxin, the Tower Master of Misty Rain Tower, along with two Wen Family Elders, also scrutinized Ghost Hand with burning curiosity, speculating the young Ancient Martial Master's identity.

The young experts of the various major Sects within the Secular Ancient Martial World, they mostly recognized, but this young martial artist with initial stage Profound Level strength was someone they had never seen before, and his Master's origin was unknown.

Although Misty Rain Tower was a Sect on par with the Ghost Hand's former Sect, "Myriad Medicine Valley," Ghost Hand was nothing more than an obscure junior there, so it was normal for the Wen Family members present not to recognize him.

Wen Xiangxin had no idea that this Ghost Hand in front of him was the elusive target that both Misty Rain Tower and Qingcheng Temple had been pursuing - the one that slipped through the net from "Myriad Medicine Valley."

Chapter 447: The Fake Boyfriend Steps Up

"Yaorao, are these two your friends?"

Concerned that Wen Shiba and Ghost Hand would clash again, Qin Ling hurriedly stepped forward, positioning himself between the two men, and turned to his daughter to ask.

The Wen family members were concerned about Ghost Hand, but Qin Ling was even more concerned about Fang Bai.

Qin Ling noticed that Ghost Hand had followed Fang Bai all the time, with a respectful demeanor, as if he were a loyal bodyguard. This piqued Qin Ling's intense interest in Fang Bai's identity.

Having a Profound Level early-stage Martial Artist as a bodyguard indicated that Fang Bai's identity was certainly not simple.

After scrutinizing Fang Bai carefully, Qin Ling discovered that not only was Fang Bai a Martial Artist, but, with his own discerning eyes, he found it somewhat difficult to see through Fang Bai's depth, which made him draw in a breath of cold air.

Among Martial Artists, if the stronger party deliberately conceals their strength, the weaker one cannot detect the true strength of the stronger. Fang Bai had intentionally released a strand of aura, giving a slight display of his power, and that was why Qin Ling could sense it.

What shocked Qin Ling the most was that Fang Bai appeared to be only about twenty years old. For someone of his age to possess strength stronger than Qin Ling's own, it was truly inconceivable.

Wen Shiba had been lauded as a genius of the Secular Ancient Martial World when he advanced to the Profound Level at the age of thirty, but compared with Fang Bai, his brilliance dimmed and seemed insignificant.

A twenty-year-old Profound Level Martial Artist would normally have caused a major sensation in the Secular Ancient Martial World, so why had this young man remained unknown, with no news about him whatsoever?

In the Secular Ancient Martial World, which Sect could have nurtured such a young and astonishingly talented Martial Artist?

Racking his brains and thinking at the speed of lightning, Qin Ling went through all the outstanding young disciples of the major Sects and Prominent Clans in the Secular Ancient Martial World, yet he could not think of anyone like Fang Bai.

"Dad, this is Fang Bai, and this is Ghost Hand. Fang Bai is my... my boyfriend..."

Upon hearing her father's question, Qin Yaorao pointed to Fang Bai and Ghost Hand as she introduced them.

When she said "Fang Bai is my boyfriend," a shy blush crept onto her face.

This shy expression wasn't something Qin Yaorao feigned on purpose; she truly felt embarrassed by the absurdity of having one of her students play the role of her boyfriend.

"This..."

Although he had suspected it, hearing his daughter's confirmation still stunned Qin Ling, who stood with his mouth agape, unsure of what to say.

The Wen family's visit to Jinling was specifically for a marriage proposal, but now his daughter had brought a boyfriend of her choice to their doorstep, and the two of them appeared quite intimate. How was he to explain this to the Wen family members?

"Yaorao, stop fooling around! Your father and I have already discussed it with your Uncle Wen. Your wedding to Eighteen is set for ten days from now... What are you waiting for? Come and have a chat with Eighteen!"

Walking beside her husband, Yang Yun frowned as she glanced at Fang Bai, then with a majestic look in her eyes, she spoke to her daughter.

Yang Yun was just an ordinary woman, unlike her husband Qin Ling who recognized that Fang Bai was a Martial Artist and could infer that Fang Bai's background was not simple.

In Yang Yun's eyes, Fang Bai may be a sunny and handsome young man, well-matched standing beside her daughter, but when compared with Wen Shiba, who came from a wealthy and prominent Ancient Martial family, he simply was not on the same level.

Misty Rain Tower's Wen Family is Qin Family's most ideal match for an arranged marriage.

Although Wen Eighteen is somewhat arrogant, which of today's youth isn't spirited and untamed?

"Mom, how... how could you decide on my lifetime affair without even asking for my opinion?"

Upon hearing that her parents were arranging for her to marry into the Wen Family in just ten days, Qin Yaorao felt as if she was being sold off, and under great urgency, her voice trembled as she spoke.

"Yaorao, calm down! Listen to mom..."

Yang Yun also knew that her daughter was very stubborn at heart and feared that speaking too harshly might provoke an even stronger defiant reaction in her. With a slightly softened expression, she gently said, "Your father and I are doing this for your own good! Eighteen is outstanding in both talent and appearance, with immeasurable potential. Marrying him will be a match of talent and beauty, a perfect pair..."

No matter how much Yang Yun praised Wen Eighteen, Qin Yaorao simply shook her head vigorously, using this to express her opposition.

Fang Bai and Qin Yaorao linked arms, and he could feel her body trembling slightly at this moment; he knew it was time for him, the "fake boyfriend," to step in.

"Aunt..."

Fang Bai cleared his throat and addressed Yang Yun with a stern voice, "I must respectfully disagree with your opinion. If you truly want what's best for Yaorao, then she should be the one to choose her lifetime partner, not you. Also..."

He turned a blind eye to Yang Yun's increasingly cold expression and turned his head to look at Wen Eighteen, not far away, his gaze carrying provocation and disdain as he said, "Talent and appearance... that's barely acceptable, but as for outstanding strength... Heh, I think that's a bit of an overstatement..."

As soon as he said this, Qin Ling and his wife immediately changed their expression, knowing that things were going to get bad.

In the Ancient Martial World of Huaxia, although the prominent clans seem to keep a low profile, they all possess sky-high pride. If you don't provoke them, it's fine, but once you do, be prepared to face their overwhelming fury.

Indeed, the four from Misty Rain Tower of the Wen Family, after hearing Fang Bai's words, all had bright sparks in their eyes and anger on their faces, as a Martial Artist Aura began to emanate from around them.

"What are you, to dare speak so presumptuously?"

Wen Eighteen shouted forcefully, and with a swift motion, he was already standing in front of Fang Bai, his hate-filled eyes fixed intently on Fang Bai's face, his handsome features now somewhat distorted.

Fang Bai looked calmly at Wen Eighteen and indifferently said, "In Martial Artist cultivation, one does not merely cultivate the physical body and True Yuan, but also the mindset. Lacking any one of these three aspects, one will find it hard to achieve great success in the Martial Dao. Your quickness to anger shows that your cultivation of mindset is lacking. If you don't change promptly, that's as far as you'll go on the Martial Dao!"

Wen Eighteen, hearing the preachy tone in Fang Bai's voice, which demeaned him to almost nothing, felt even more annoyed but laughed sarcastically, "If you have the guts, state your name and sect. I want to see which clan's son is so arrogant!"

Fang Bai smiled and said, "Your asking for my sect is nothing but an attempt to probe my background. Let me tell you, I belong to no sect, I'm a Loose Cultivator."

Among the Martial Artists of the Secular Ancient Martial World, there are those from Sect families as well as many Loose Cultivators.

The disciples from Sects inherit their Cultivation Techniques and martial skills from their ancestors, whereas Loose Cultivators mostly come across such techniques and skills by chance and cultivate alone.

Compared to the disciples of Sects, Loose Cultivators are isolated and weak, at an absolute disadvantage, and are not taken seriously by the disciples of major Sects and clans.

Upon hearing that Fang Bai was a Loose Cultivator, a look of disdain appeared on Wen Eighteen's face as he said contemptuously, "Just a Loose Cultivator, daring to provoke our Misty Rain Tower, you've got some nerve!"

Chapter 448: Marry You? He's Not Worthy!

In his previous life, Fang Bai, who was once an Immortal Emperor, had slain not a few of the great emperors that reigned over the nine great domains of the Immortal Realm. He had also forcibly intruded into many top-tier Immortal Sects with a million disciples. Although he was now reborn in another body and his strength was far from what it had been, he still wouldn't take a Sect like the Misty Rain Tower from the Secular Ancient Martial World seriously.

"I've always been daring! Let alone the insignificant Misty Rain Tower, there isn't a single Sect in the world I wouldn't dare to provoke!"

If you are arrogant, I'll be even more arrogant!

If you are proud, I'll be prouder than you!

If you want to kill me, then wait to be slain by me!

If you won't accept this, then I will fight until you do!

That was the domineering and assertive attitude of Fang Bai, who had been an Immortal Emperor in his past life, when faced with opponents—taking delight in vengeance and enmity.

"Young man, it's good to be confident, but don't overdo it!"

Qin Ling said in a deep voice.

In Qin Ling's eyes, although Fang Bai, at twenty years old with Profound Level initial stage strength, could be called a genius of the Ancient Martial World, the words he had just spoken were a bit too bold.

In particular, the words "insignificant Misty Rain Tower" undoubtedly belittled the Misty Rain Tower; it was no different from publicly slapping the Wen family's face.

At this, not only did Wen Shiba nearly explode with rage, but even the experienced and prudent Tower Master Wen Xiangxin, along with two Misty Rain Tower elders, were also enraged by Fang Bai.

Wen Xiangxin walked out from the pavilion at a measured pace, stopping in front of Fang Bai. His eyes sharp as eagles', he stared at Fang Bai's face as if trying to peer into the depths of his heart.

"I'm not sure what reasons you have for your strong confidence and the audacity to back it up, but today you will pay the price for belittling my Misty Rain Tower!"

Wen Xiangxin said, articulating every word.

If Fang Bai had come from a major Ancient Martial World Sect, Wen Xiangxin might have had some reservations, but knowing that Fang Bai was just a Loose Cultivator, he had nothing to hold back.

If this weren't the Qin family's place, just based on Fang Bai's previous remark, Wen Xiangxin would have already taken action and struck him down!

Being in the presence of the Qin family, it wouldn't be appropriate for him, the Tower Master of the Misty Rain Tower, to strike a junior; that would be beneath his dignity.

However, the fact that Wen Xiangxin could speak such words showed that he was already extremely angry and determined to teach Fang Bai a lesson.

Qin Yaorao knew well that Fang Bai was very strong. The only reason she had asked him to pretend to be her boyfriend was to suppress Wen Shiba and sabotage the arranged marriage with the Wen family. She never anticipated that Fang Bai would end up infuriating Wen Xiangxin.

Looking at Wen Xiangxin's eyes, filled with killing Qi, Qin Yaorao couldn't help feeling nervous and worried, and she also regretted involving Fang Bai in the matter.

But it was too late for regrets now, all Qin Yaorao could think of was doing everything in her power to protect Fang Bai.

The arm she had linked with Fang Bai pulled in slightly, tightening their embrace, while her eyes looked towards her father, Qin Ling, pleading for help,

As the Family Head, Qin Ling had absolute authority in the Qin Family, his words went unquestioned; even Tower Master Wen Xiangxin had to show him some respect.

Fang Bai was such a rare young Ancient Martial talent, a prized catch for any family. Seeing his daughter's almost pleading gaze, Qin Ling thought it over briefly and then greeted Wen Xiangxin with a cupped fist, attempting to smile it off, "Brother Wen, the young can be rash and thoughtless. Please, give me some face..."

"Brother Qin, I would usually extend that courtesy, but not in this matter that concerns the reputation of my Misty Rain Tower. I must refuse!"

Wen Xiangxin interrupted Qin Ling's following words with an emotionless wave of his hand, saying coldly.

Hearing this, Qin Ling knew further persuasion would be futile. He gave a wry smile, shook his head, then glanced at Fang Bai, thinking You brought this trouble upon yourself; now you'll have to deal with it. I'm powerless to help.

"Yaorao, come here!"

Qin Ling called to his daughter, waving her over to his side to keep her out of harm's way just in case the Wen family lashed out at Fang Bai, preventing any unintended injuries to her.

"I won't!"

Qin Yaorao looked at Wen Xiangxin with a solemn face and said with firm resolve, "Fang Bai is my boyfriend, whoever wants to touch him has to go through me first!"

"Yaorao, don't be willful! Come here!"

Qin Ling glared and his voice took on a stern tone.

"I..."

"Yaorao, go!"

Fang Bai withdrew his arm, smiled at Qin Yaorao, and said, "We're martial artists, let's solve this matter in the way of martial artists! Trust me! I will keep the promise I made to you!"

"You... you really can do it?"

Seeing the confident smile on Fang Bai's face, Qin Yaorao hesitated and said.

"Just watch! What Misty Rain Tower, what Wen Family, in my eyes, they're not worth a sneer! And that Wen Shiba, wanting to marry you? He doesn't deserve to!"

Fang Bai said proudly.

"Fang, come and fight me! If I lose to you, I'll cancel the marriage arrangement with the Qin Family, and Qin Yaorao will be yours. I also won't set foot in Jinling ever again!"

Wen Shiba's eyes were bloodshot, his gaze fixed firmly on Fang Bai, and his fists were tightly clenched, making a "pop pop" sound that sent shivers down one's spine.

"Your words don't count!"

Fang Bai glanced at Wen Shiba with disdain, with an air of "I can't be bothered to talk to you", he jerked his chin towards Wen Xiangxin, who stood behind Wen Shiba, and said dismissively, "You should ask your elder if they agree with what you're planning!"

"You..."

Seeing Fang Bai treating him as if he was a child with no say in the matter, Wen Shiba, who had always been arrogant and self-loving, was almost about to explode with rage.

"Eighteen, go ahead with what you've decided! Men of the Misty Rain Tower Wen Family are true to their word, never regretting their actions!"

Wen Xiangxin said with a serious expression, his voice steady and forceful.

Wen Shiba nodded vigorously, staring daggers at Fang Bai, and bitterly said, "Fang, did you hear that?"

"Hmm, I heard that."

Fang Bai smiled, nodded, took a step back, patted Ghost Hand on the shoulder, and said, "I leave it to you!"

Ghost Hand stepped forward boldly, confronting Wen Shiba with flames rising in his eyes.

To Wen Shiba, Fang Bai was merely a source of spite, but to Ghost Hand, the enmity with the people of Misty Rain Tower ran bone-deep, his anger boundless.

In any other situation, Ghost Hand would use all his strength, even risking his life, to slay the four members of the Misty Rain Tower Wen Family to avenge his sect's massacre.

When Fang Bai let Ghost Hand fight, he was just giving Wen Shiba a little lesson, as for avenging the sect, they would leave that for another day at Misty Rain Tower.

After all, this was the Qin Family's place, not an ideal location to settle personal vendettas.

"Fang, what do you mean by this?"

Seeing Ghost Hand standing in front of him, eagerly looking ready to fight, Wen Shiba angrily questioned Fang Bai.

"Defeat my disciple first, then you'll be qualified to fight me!"

Fang Bai said this, took Qin Yaorao by the hand, walked to the pavilion amidst the bamboo, and sat down inside it. He watched the scene leisurely, effectively turning himself from a participant into a spectator.

Chapter 449: Wen Shiba's Sword

Wen Shiba was about to rush into the pavilion for a fight with Fang Bai, but Ghost Hand stepped across, blocking his path.

"You're not worthy of crossing hands with my Master!"

Ghost Hand looked down on Wen Shiba with contempt and sneered, "Even fighting with me, you're not worthy!"

Wen Shiba was a young man with tremendous talent but also an extreme arrogance. For the past thirty years, all he had heard were praises and flattery. He had barely faced any setbacks or hardships, which led him to develop a narcissistic attitude that he was "the number one young master in the Secular Ancient Martial World."

Yet now, this "number one young master" was not only scorned by Fang Bai but even his disciple dared to mock him, which completely infuriated Wen Shiba.

"Seeking death!"

With bloodshot eyes, Wen Shiba bellowed and suddenly leaped into the air. His legs swept out in rapid succession like autumn leaves before the wind, targeting Ghost Hand with a barrage of kicks.

As a Profound Level early-stage Martial Artist, Wen Shiba aimed to overwhelm with a single strike and give Ghost Hand a harsh lesson. Therefore, he held nothing back in his attack.

His legs, infused with True Yuan, created a whooshing wind sound as they cut the air with rapid, relentless kicks, seemingly unstoppable in their momentum.

The full-force blow of a Profound Level early-stage Martial Artist was awe-inspiring. If it were any other Martial Artist of the same realm, they surely wouldn't dare to face Wen Shiba's attack head-on, likely electing to dodge its edge.

However, Ghost Hand showed no fear. As a Profound Level early-stage practitioner with battle prowess far exceeding his peers, he regarded Wen Shiba's powerful strike with only disdain.

Thump—

Ghost Hand threw a punch, following Fang Bai's simple and brutal style. His fist smashed directly into the shadows cast by Wen Shiba's kicking legs,

Wen Shiba let out a muffled grunt. The graceful movements of his legs' rapid kicks came to an abrupt halt mid-air, akin to a speeding bicycle wheel suddenly jammed by a steel rod. If he hadn't retracted his moves swiftly and reacted quickly, he would have fallen straight to the ground and ended up bruised and battered.

Even so, upon landing, he stumbled backward seven or eight steps before he could barely steady himself, his legs searing with pain—a truly sorry sight.

"Come on! Keep going!"

Ghost Hand beckoned to the still unsteady Wen Shiba with a taunting expression on his face.

Wen Shiba did not launch a second attack immediately.

When his move failed to achieve the intended effect and he faced a setback, Wen Shiba, surprisingly, calmed down.

His eyes fixed on Ghost Hand's hands, which looked gentle and smooth like jade, even more feminine than a woman's, with an unfathomable glint in them.

"You're strong!"

Wen Shiba regarded Ghost Hand seriously and said solemnly, "Among my peers, you are the first one worth drawing my sword against!"

There was no grand gesture; with a casual flick of his right hand, a soft sword had already appeared in his grasp.

The sword was three feet long, subtly radiating a chill. With just a slight shake, the flexible yet sharp blade seemed to slither like a snake, as if choosing its next victim to bite.

With the long sword in hand, Wen Shiba seemed like a different person. The rage was gone, replaced by a terrifying calm.

At this moment, Wen Shiba was the sword, and the sword was Wen Shiba. He was nearing the Martial Artist's acclaimed realm of "the unity of sword and man"—the ultimate swordsmanship realm.

And still, Ghost Hand's face was etched with scorn, utterly unmoved by Wen Shiba.

In the eyes of Ghost Hand, Wen Shiba simply wasn't an opponent worth his full effort.

The target of Ghost Hand was the only one at the scene with Profound Level High Rank strength, the contemporary Tower Master of Misty Rain Tower, Wen Xiangxin.

"In terms of fist and foot combat, I admit I'm no match for you, but now... take out your weapon, let's see who's superior with our weapons!"

Wen Shiba's fingers glided along the blade as if caressing his beloved woman, a rare gentleness appearing in his eyes.

A martial artist who uses a sword isn't terrifying, but one who is obsessed with the sword is.

A sword fanatic might dedicate their entire life to the way of the sword, and such a person would definitely achieve incredible mastery in swordsmanship.

Seeing how Wen Shiba fondled his flexible sword, intoxicated and enraptured, it seemed he was on the verge of becoming such a fanatic.

No wonder Qin Yaorao had made a point of mentioning the origin of the name "Wen Shiba"; it was because he had practiced the eighteen sword moves passed down in his family to perfection, making him extremely formidable.

Qin Ling, standing by, looked at Wen Shiba holding his sword, his expression grave and inwardly astonished.

He found that at this moment, Wen Shiba appeared to have merged with his sword, both exuding a sharpness like that of the blade's edge, which made people dare not approach.

"This Wen Shiba really does have the capital for his arrogance. If I were to face him, I wouldn't be certain of victory either!"

Thinking this, Qin Ling couldn't help but glance again at Fang Bai, standing beside his daughter, thinking that even if this young man was a genius with strength surpassing Wen Shiba, how could he, a Loose Cultivator, contend with Misty Rain Tower, teeming with talents and numerous experts?

This time, he and his disciple had enraged Misty Rain Tower, and even if they could leave Qin Family Manor safely, they would face endless troubles in the future, possibly even endangering their lives.

The secular world has its laws, and the Ancient Martial World has its rules.

Misty Rain Tower and Fang Bai and his disciple were all Martial Artists; once a grievance arose between them, it had to be settled according to the rules of the Ancient Martial World, through combat, with no hard feelings over life or death.

Now, their battle wasn't about resolving private grudges, but rather for the matter of Qin Yaorao's marriage, and since it took place within the Qin Family Manor, it wouldn't be a fight to the death.

But once they leave the gates of the Qin Family, all bets are off.

If the four from Misty Rain Tower and the Wen Family harbored deep hatred toward Fang Bai and his disciple, and wanted to quickly rid themselves of them, then it would be difficult for Fang Bai and his disciple to escape unscathed in a fight of four against two.

Although Qin Ling thought highly of Fang Bai and was inclined to help him, he dared not offend Misty Rain Tower and, with a sigh, also felt a great sense of regret.

Everyone present was watching the standoff between Ghost Hand and Wen Shiba, some with solemn faces, others tense, except for Fang Bai, who wore a light smile, as carefree as the wind.

"Do I even need a weapon to deal with you? These fists of mine are more than enough!"

Ghost Hand raised his arms in front of his chest, forming fists, and proudly declared.

"Then I shall chop off those fists of yours!"

Wen Shiba's pupils suddenly contracted, his formidable aura surging to the sky, and he thrust out the flexible sword in his hand at that moment.

Moving with his sword, he crossed the several meters to Ghost Hand in just one step, the flexible sword striking like a venomous snake, casting a phantom shadow, and darting toward Ghost Hand's fists like lightning.

This thrust was swift, sharp, precise, embodying the essence of swordsmanship, and if Ghost Hand's reaction was even slightly slow, he could kiss his fists goodbye.

Chapter 450: Whirlwind and Rainstorm Eighteen Swords

Qin Yaorao's right hand, without anyone's notice, had already tightly clasped Fang Bai's left hand, both palms now drenched with sweat.

Although she did not understand martial arts, when Wen Shiba's sword thrust forward, she too could feel the endless intent to kill embedded within it. Her heart skipped a beat, her eyes tightly shut, not daring to look.

"Nephew Wen, please show mercy!"

Qin Ling's voice was somber and urgent as he reminded Wen Shiba, hoping he would not be too ruthless and harm Ghost Hand. Otherwise, the enmity forged between them would be one of life and death.

Wen Shiba ignored Qin Ling's words, his sword thrust carrying an even greater momentum. True Yuan roared, sword qi crisscrossed, sealing all of Ghost Hand's escape routes.

Wen Shiba was full of confidence in his sword strike, believing it to be the most brilliant and pinnacle thrust of his life.

He seemed to have already seen the scene of Ghost Hand's fists being cut off, his screams of terror. A cold, cruel smile even began to tug at the corner of his mouth.

When the soft sword in Wen Shiba's hand was still a foot away from his chest, Ghost Hand moved.

Ghost Hand dodged Wen Shiba's seemingly guaranteed strike with inconceivable speed, then swung his fist directly at the soft sword's blade.

Wen Shiba's soft sword, forged from special materials, was incomparably flexible and sharp. With the fierce sword qi wrapped around the blade, ordinary martial artists did not dare to touch it with their flesh, as injury was certain.

Yet Ghost Hand, audaciously, struck at the soft sword with his fist. In Wen Shiba's view, that hand was doomed to a bloody, blurry end.

Clang—

Ghost Hand's fist striking the blade of Wen Shiba's soft sword produced a resonant sound akin to the clash of metals.

In the moment of the fist meeting the sword, the arm that Wen Shiba used to hold his sword trembled as if electrocuted.

Subsequently, a domineering and wildly aggressive force spread from the blade to his arm, causing severe pain in his palm, almost causing him to lose grip on the soft sword and send it flying.

"What a hard fist! What overbearing force behind the punch!"

Wen Shiba was shocked, his face slightly changing. He quickly retracted his soft sword. After a flourish in the air, he leveled it and then slashed horizontally at Ghost Hand's waist.

The punch Ghost Hand had just thrown made Wen Shiba drop all his condescension and execute his family's ultimate technique, "Swift Wind, Sudden Rain Eighteen Swords."

"Swift Wind, Sudden Rain Eighteen Swords" was a hereditary sword technique of the Misty Rain Tower's Wen Family. Though it was comprised of only eighteen moves, each was more powerful than the last. Fully executed, the sword intent spread far and wide, engulfing all directions like a sweeping gale or a torrential downpour, its momentum astounding.

Wen Shiba began practicing this familial sword technique from a young age, and by the age of eighteen, he had fully mastered it, no disciple under forty from Misty Rain Tower could withstand his continuous eighteen sword strikes. Hence, he renamed himself "Wen Shiba."

With the first sword strike launched, not waiting for the move to finish, Wen Shiba rapidly followed with the second, third, fourth swords...

Each strike was faster than the last. By the sixth, the combined power of the six strikes surged, then burst forth instantaneously.

Where the sword passed, the air and fallen leaves on the ground stirred into a frenzied dance, swirling towards Ghost Hand in the direction of the thrust.

Those around them, except for Fang Bai, were all moved by Wen Shiba's swordsmanship,

"If it were me, not giving it my all, I probably wouldn't be able to withstand this combined force of six strikes, either! Misty Rain Tower is indeed a grand sect of the Secular Ancient Martial World, truly profound!"

With a grave expression, Qin Ling watched Wen Shiba and once again grew concerned for Ghost Hand.

Wen Shiba's "Swift Wind Rapid Rain Eighteen Swords" was several times more powerful than the first sword he had thrust out. Although Ghost Hand was able to block that one, it wasn't necessarily the case that he could fend off the continuous onslaught of this sword technique's killing move.

In Wen Xiangxin's eyes, there was even more a look of admiration. In his opinion, his son's sword technique had significantly improved from before, and perhaps Ghost Hand would suffer an injury and be defeated without even having to face all eighteen swords.

When that time came, he would make sure to harshly have his son humiliate those two ignorant brats, letting them know that Misty Rain Tower is not a force to be trifled with by just anyone.

Ghost Hand who was now enveloped in Wen Shiba's sword momentum, remained composed, his eyes still carrying a mocking light, as if Wen Shiba's ultimate sword technique was still not worthy of his attention.

Meanwhile, Ghost Hand was quietly circulating the Golden System Technique "Buddha's Fury Golden Staff Technique", with his Golden Attribute True Essence carrying an unstoppable momentum whirling rapidly inside him, and infusing into his fists.

Ghost Hand possessed a Metal Spirit Root, and Fang Bai, considering his constitution and foundational strength, had passed on the Golden System Technique "Buddha's Fury Golden Staff Technique" to him.

This Golden System Technique, which Fang Bai had learned years ago from a Buddha, was not of a very high rank in terms of cultivation techniques; however, when practiced to the peak of perfection, the force of True Essence unleashed by a single punch was like a ten thousand pounds Zen Staff crashing down, capable of splitting mountains and parting rivers.

Although Ghost Hand's cultivation level wasn't high, when he circulated this Golden System Technique, an ordinary punch from him was no longer something that martial artists of Wen Shiba's level could contend with.

As Wen Shiba's six-fold sword momentum surged with the force of a raging torrent, Ghost Hand's fist struck out once again, like a Buddha waving a Zen Staff, with a faint golden glow even discernible at the fist.

Clang—

The sound of metal clashing rang out again, followed by gasps from several onlookers.

Nobody had anticipated that Ghost Hand's seemingly simple punch could not only dissipate Wen Shiba's sword momentum but also send his flexible sword flying out of his grip, landing in a distant pond.

Wen Shiba's flexible sword was forged from special materials. Had it been an ordinary sword, it would have already been shattered into pieces by the force within Ghost Hand's punch.

Silence!

The sword momentum disappeared, and the tumult subsided, bringing a deathly silence to the scene, punctuated only by the sound of the wind, falling leaves, and the breathing of onlookers.

Qin Ling sharply noticed that Wen Shiba, who stood there dumbfounded, had an expression tinged with both fear and pain. The hand with which he held his sword was continuously trembling slightly, and drops of blood were falling to the ground from his fingers.

Clearly, in that brief and intense clash, Wen Shiba had been injured and had suffered a considerable loss.

"Shiba! Are you alright?"

Wen Xiangxin, who had also noticed his son's abnormal state, wore a shocked expression and called out in a deep voice.

He couldn't fathom how Ghost Hand's simple punch could cause his son to lose his sword and even sustain injuries.

Wen Shiba stood as if soulless, his arms hanging by his sides, showing no reaction to his father's questioning.

At that moment, his mind was buzzing with a "hum". The scene that had just unfolded replayed over and over in his head, filling him with panic.

When Ghost Hand's punch had smashed out, he seemed to have heard faint Buddhist chanting near his ear, and before his eyes appeared the image of a towering Buddha clad in Buddhist robes, whose height spanned several meters. That imposing Buddha glared down with fierce eyes, sinewy arm holding a Zen Staff, and struck out angrily towards him.

That Zen Staff seemed to carry the weight of ten thousand jin, falling like a small mountain, striking him with awe and rendering him too terrified to resist.

By the time he came back to his senses, his flexible sword had already flown from his grasp, and the base of his palm had splintered, his entire body felt as uncomfortable as if it had fallen apart.