

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

Seeing Lu Chen agree, He Dongqi and Lu Yu both breathed a sigh of relief; they were most worried that Lu Chen wouldn't recognize his own strength and insist on going to the Deceit Suppression Bureau.

For aristocratic children like Lu Chen, the more they are forbidden to do something, the more they want to do it. It's not uncommon for aristocratic children to have visited the Deceit Suppression Bureau before.

Most of these aristocratic children are arrogant, believing their strength is formidable and wanting to kill supernatural threats to prove themselves. But when they face those threats outside for the first time, they are often too scared to even walk.

Most families keep some supernatural threats for cultivation purposes, treating them as consumables for Spirit Martial Artists. Therefore, they ensure these threats are not too strong, leading those aristocratic children to mistakenly believe that the external threats are similar to the ones raised by their families.

Whenever those aristocratic children go outside on missions and are scared witless by supernatural threats, the Deceit Suppression Guards from the Bureau always clean up after them.

Therefore, the Bureau members are quite annoyed by the family children visiting. Suppressing supernatural threats is inherently dangerous, and they also have to protect the children without letting them get hurt, which is quite troublesome for them.

Thus, He Dongqi and Lu Yu felt quite happy that Lu Chen was willing to stay at Zhen Nan Prince Manor. As long as Lu Chen doesn't go on missions and stays within the Capital City, he is unlikely to encounter any trouble.

At this moment, He Dongqi spoke again: "Now that Master Lu has agreed, we'll take our leave. Later, we'll have uniforms, waist badges, and dossiers sent to Zhen Nan Prince Manor."

"As for the Deceit Suppressing Guards of the Bureau, you can freely choose them, Heir."

Lu Chen replied: "Alright, thank you, Lord He."

He Dongqi bowed to Lu Chen and said: "No trouble, it's our duty. We shall take our leave now."

Once the words were spoken, He Dongqi and Lu Yu turned and left the reception hall, while Lu Chen merely smiled faintly. When a person has a high enough status, others will naturally pave the way for them.

Although being the Heir of Prince Zhen Nan was somewhat useful, Lu Chen also knew that the people of the Deceit Suppression Bureau revered him now mainly because Prince Zhen Nan was still alive and the powerful figures of Zhen Nan Prince Manor hadn't left.

Once his father—albeit in name only—dies and the Earth Realm Strong Persons of the manor leave, the Bureau may not show him a kind face anymore.

Thus, until he grows strong, his father cannot die. He must find a way to extend his father's life.

While Lu Chen was lost in thought, a shadow appeared in the hall, and the next moment, Zhao Yu's figure emerged. Zhao Yu anxiously said to Lu Chen: "He... Heir, quickly go to the Royal Highness's room; His Highness can't suppress the spiritual evil within him any longer."

Upon hearing this, Lu Chen's heart sank; he truly feared what might come.

When a Spirit Martial Artist can no longer control the spiritual evil within, there are generally two outcomes: death, or turning into a supernatural threat. But once

someone becomes a supernatural threat, they lose consciousness entirely and are eventually killed, which is no different from dying.

After snapping back to reality, Lu Chen didn't hesitate and went straight to Prince Zhen Nan's room.

As soon as he entered, Lu Chen felt a strong presence of Death Qi. Prince Zhen Nan lay weakly on the bed, eyes open, staring at the ceiling, a glimmer of tears visible in his muddled eyes, already seeming to be in a pre-death state.

The room was filled with important figures from Zhen Nan Prince Manor, who stepped aside immediately upon seeing Lu Chen, allowing him to approach the bedside.

Lu Chen crouched by the bed and grasped one of Prince Zhen Nan's hands, saying, "Father, I am here."

Hearing Lu Chen's voice, Prince Zhen Nan finally reacted; his eyes slightly turned towards Lu Chen, his mouth moved, attempting to speak, but no sound came out.

Just then, the spiritual evil within him erupted again, agony appeared on his face, and black spiritual evil kept releasing from his body.

Witnessing this, everyone present frowned. Judging by Prince Zhen Nan's condition, he might not die immediately but could become a supernatural threat, posing significant trouble.

Prince Zhen Nan's strength is formidable, and his body rich in spiritual evil; once transformed, his power could greatly amplify, making his elimination conspicuously troublesome, alerting any spies outside.

Thus, the best solution would be to free Prince Zhen Nan before he changes into a supernatural threat.

Yet, such a proposal is unspeakable, for who would dare suggest non-natural death to Prince Zhen Nan?

Seeing Prince Zhen Nan incapable of speech, Lu Chen sighed inwardly; would he now have to face Emperor Zhou's Royal Family alone?

Dealing with the Royal Family poses little difficulty for him, as he's lived countless lifetimes and reincarnated many times, having encountered even more perilous situations.

From experiencing so many power struggles, Lu Chen has grown weary of political maneuvers. He now wishes only to get stronger, find the Burial Furnace, and uncover the world's secrets.

While contemplating his succession of Zhen Nan Prince Manor, Lu Chen suddenly noticed the black spiritual evil released from Prince Zhen Nan was entering his own body without causing any discomfort.

Instead, he faintly sensed he was nearing the threshold of the Spirit Realm.

Lu Chen quickly realized his unique physique—Netherworld Evil Control Body—was activated, rendering the black spiritual evil harmful to Prince Zhen Nan beneficial for cultivating Spiritual Liquid.

Without hesitation, Lu Chen frantically absorbed the black spiritual evil from Prince Zhen Nan's body. Witnessing this, the room's Earth Realm Strong Persons were all astonished.

The darker the spiritual evil, the more dangerous it is; rarely does anyone dare absorb black spiritual evil.

Yet Lu Chen not only dares to absorb it, but openly does so, prompting Zhao Yu to urgently advise: "Heir, absolutely not, this black spiritual evil can't be absorbed!!!"

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Lu Chen paid no attention to Zhao Yu and continued doing his own thing, constantly absorbing the black spiritual evil emanating from Prince Zhen Nan.

Soon, the black spiritual evil exuding from Prince Zhen Nan's body was entirely absorbed by Lu Chen. However, Lu Chen didn't stop; he held Prince Zhen Nan's hand, continuing to absorb the spiritual evil within him.

Prince Zhen Nan was at death's door, unable to control the spiritual evil inside his body. When Lu Chen began to absorb it, the spiritual evil was easily drawn out.

The people in the room thought Lu Chen was eager to save his father and quickly urged him to stop.

"Princely Heir, you mustn't! This black spiritual evil is difficult to refine. If you keep absorbing it, you'll be easily countered!"

"Princely Heir, stop! The great king wouldn't want to see you doing this."

"Princely Heir, you are the great king's only heir, you mustn't take such risks!"

...

Hearing their noisiness, Lu Chen suddenly turned to them and coldly said, "Shut up, all of you!"

Seeing Lu Chen's anger, they instantly quieted down. At that moment, they also sensed the aura around Lu Chen rising, faintly showing signs of a breakthrough.

After calming himself, Lu Chen addressed the crowd, "I have a special constitution, able to absorb any kind of spiritual evil. This spiritual evil won't harm me, so there's no need to worry."

This...

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, the crowd exchanged looks with each other, their eyes filled with disbelief of such a constitution.

A special constitution? What kind of special constitution can refine even this Black Evil?

However, observing Lu Chen's demeanor, it seemed that he was indeed unaffected. Typically, anyone who absorbed black spiritual evil would quickly suffer from backlash. Even if they suppressed it, their body would be in agony.

Yet, despite having absorbed so much black spiritual evil, Lu Chen appeared completely fine, proving he wasn't lying. He genuinely possessed the ability to refine black spiritual evil.

Lu Chen then said, "Quiet down now, do not disturb me."

With those words, Lu Chen closed his eyes and accelerated the absorption of the spiritual evil within Prince Zhen Nan.

As the black spiritual evil was drawn out from Prince Zhen Nan's body, his once muddy eyes gradually cleared. Regaining consciousness, he felt his body with disbelief.

At that moment, he could clearly feel the rapid depletion of the Black Evil within him. Without it, his Dragon Qi easily suppressed the spiritual evil, and his body began regaining its vitality.

This...

Prince Zhen Nan immediately turned to see who was holding his hand, discovering it was Lu Chen absorbing the Black Evil from him. His expression changed drastically as he hastily tried to stop him, "Chen'er, what are you doing? You can't absorb that Black Evil..."

Lu Chen opened his eyes, looking at Prince Zhen Nan and said, "Don't worry, father. I'm fine. This Black Evil holds no danger for me. Instead, it's actually helping me improve my realm."

Prince Zhen Nan found it hard to believe what he heard; someone in this world could refine Black Evil!

He then observed Lu Chen closely. Noticing the steady rise in Lu Chen's aura and the absence of any backlash, he finally felt at ease.

Yet he found it hard to comprehend. If Lu Chen possessed such a special constitution, how could he have failed the test back then?

If he could absorb Black Evil, passing the test involving drawing spiritual evil into one's body should have been easy.

Surely such a special constitution couldn't be acquired later in life, right?

Or was there someone who had sealed his special constitution? Thinking of this possibility, Prince Zhen Nan recalled Lu Chen's mother consort.

Prince Zhen Nan surmised that it might indeed be possible; Lu Chen's constitution was quite unique. Perhaps she feared that he would absorb spiritual evil too quickly, damaging it, and sealed it until his constitution fully matured before allowing him to absorb, thus sealing his special constitution.

Prince Zhen Nan fell into silence, wary of disturbing Lu Chen and causing a distraction that might lead to a spiritual evil backlash.

Refining spiritual evil was an incredibly painful process; it's best not to have others disturb at such times.

Prince Zhen Nan waited there continuously.

After about two hours, Lu Chen realized that even after refining the Black Evil, his realm hadn't improved. He thought to himself that it seemed he still needed to fight the malevolent forces.

Lu Chen released Prince Zhen Nan's hand and asked, "Father, how do you feel now?"

Smiling, Prince Zhen Nan replied, "Much better. Thanks to you, otherwise, I might have joined your mother consort today."

"But tell me, are you really okay?"

Lu Chen said, "I'm fine."

Prince Zhen Nan then asked, "When I saw you refining Black Evil just now, it seemed effortless?"

Lu Chen replied, "That is thanks to my special constitution. Ever since it's been activated, I feel no discomfort while refining spiritual evil."

Upon hearing this, Prince Zhen Nan and those in the room were astounded. Refining spiritual evil without any discomfort?

Can that really be true?

Is a special constitution so overwhelmingly powerful?

If that's the case, wouldn't he be able to cultivate continuously?

In this world, the biggest challenge for Spirit Martial Artists is the inability to continuously absorb spiritual evil. Refining spiritual evil is detrimental to the body, and doing it without pause could one day lead to backlash, with the pain of refining worsening over time.

Prince Zhen Nan regained his composure and looked at the people behind Lu Chen, then said, "Folks, you should understand what Chen'er's words signify."

Upon hearing Prince Zhen Nan, the people in the room snapped back, in unison they said, "Congratulations, Your Highness! Congratulations, Princely Heir!"

With someone like Lu Chen possessing such a special constitution, they had a premonition that Lu Chen's future achievements might rival those of the First-Generation Prince Zhen Nan. The thought of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor producing a Heavenly Realm powerhouse filled them with immense excitement.

They had once thought that with Prince Zhen Nan's passing, the Zhen Nan Prince Manor would soon fall. Little did they know their princely heir possessed such a special constitution. Luckily, they hadn't been hasty in abandoning the Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

Just then, Prince Zhen Nan sat up from the bed. Noticing this, Lu Chen quickly went over to support him.

With Lu Chen's assistance, Prince Zhen Nan sat up effortlessly and told Lu Chen, "I feel much better now. You don't need to hold me."

Hearing this, Lu Chen realized that Prince Zhen Nan wanted to test his current condition.

Lu Chen then slowly withdrew his hand. Once Lu Chen removed his hand, Prince Zhen Nan promptly threw off the quilt and got out of bed, standing directly on the ground.

Witnessing this scene, everyone in the room found it hard to believe. The man who had seemed at death's door just moments before could now walk again.

Chapter 2243 - 1933: I Intend to Enter the Palace and Petition Emperor Zhou for Chen'er's Marriage

After Prince Zhen Nan set foot on the ground, even he found it hard to believe his own condition; now he felt exceptionally good physically.

Ever since he suffered the backlash of spiritual evil, he had been lying in bed, and he had long grown weary of such days. After all, he was once one of Dazhou's top strong people, and had the dignity of a strong person. Letting a strong person lie in bed all the time, resolving all necessities in bed, naturally hurt his dignity.

Prince Zhen Nan was unbelievably excited inside. He tried taking steps forward, walking two steps ahead.

When people present saw Prince Zhen Nan easily take two steps forward, they were even more amazed. Could it be that Prince Zhen Nan will recover?

If that were the case, then Zhen Nan Prince Manor could sustain for a long period. With their princely heir's talent, it wouldn't take long for Zhen Nan Prince Manor to produce another Earth Realm Strong Person. By then, the princely heir can take over Prince Zhen Nan's position, and the crisis of Zhen Nan Prince Manor would be resolved.

At this moment, Prince Zhen Nan took a deep breath, looked up at Lu Chen, and said, "Chen'er, I feel filled with vitality, maybe I can live a few more years. In the coming years, as long as I'm alive, go ahead and do whatever you want."

Originally, Prince Zhen Nan intended for Lu Chen to keep a low profile. After all, if he died, the Royal Family of Zhou might act against Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

If the Royal Family knew Lu Chen has great talent, they would be even less likely to tolerate his existence, and would certainly try every means to assassinate Lu Chen.

However, after Prince Zhen Nan's body regained some vitality, his thoughts changed. Since Lu Chen's talent is so high and his realm advances quickly, it's best to help Lu Chen grow rapidly while Prince Zhen Nan can still protect him. As long as Prince Zhen Nan is alive, the Royal Family will dare not act recklessly.

Of course, the most important thing is Lu Chen displaying enough talent, to better stabilize the associates or forces of Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

Anyway, the Royal Family has already shown signs of acting against Zhen Nan Prince Manor. If Zhen Nan Prince Manor does nothing, it will only make the Royal Family take more advantage.

Moreover, they are already involved in the power struggle between Emperor Zhou and the Empress Dowager. Even if they do nothing, the Empress Dowager will not spare Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

Upon hearing Prince Zhen Nan's words, Lu Chen immediately said, "Yes, Father."

Then Prince Zhen Nan glanced at the people in the room and said, "I plan to enter the palace and ask Emperor Zhou for a marriage for Chen'er."

As soon as Prince Zhen Nan finished speaking, Zhao Yu immediately asked, "Is the lady Princess Yun'an?"

Nowadays, Ji Yunmeng and Lu Chen are quite close, and there is speculation outside about whether Ji Yunmeng has any intentions towards Lu Chen. Especially considering Ji Yunmeng recently gifted a sword to Lu Chen, which indicates her standing with Zhen Nan Prince Manor, so the princess Prince Zhen Nan wants Lu Chen to marry is most likely Ji Yunmeng.

Prince Zhen Nan replied, "Indeed it's Princess Yun'an. I had planned to burn vitality and enter the palace to meet Emperor Zhou at the time of my passing, but unexpectedly, the backlash of spiritual evil suddenly became so fierce, nearly taking me directly."

"Now that I've returned from the gates of hell, this matter cannot be delayed any further, to prevent anything else from happening."

Although Prince Zhen Nan can now walk, the backlash of spiritual evil is permanent. Lu Chen temporarily absorbed the Black Evil within Prince Zhen Nan. He temporarily regained some vitality, but in a while, such Black Evil will be generated again within him, and he will still suffer backlash.

If the next backlash of spiritual evil comes suddenly, he might not withstand it, so he must arrange the marriage between Lu Chen and Ji Yunmeng while he can still move.

At this moment, Lu Xun stepped forth and said, "Your Highness, to meet Emperor Zhou may not be easy. Now Emperor Zhou is already confined by the Empress Dowager in the Long Life Hall."

Upon hearing Lu Xun's reminder, Prince Zhen Nan said indifferently, "It might be difficult for others, but for me, it's an easy matter. I don't believe anyone would dare stop me from seeing Emperor Zhou."

He possesses Dragon Qi; in the Capital city, ordinary people can't harm him. If they prevent him from seeing Emperor Zhou, he will certainly run to find Pei Shuhua. Everyone knows he is a dying man; if they don't comply with a dying man, what he might do is uncertain.

Prince Zhen Nan scanned the people in the room again and said, "That's all for today. You all may leave. I just recovered and need to calm down the spiritual evil in my body."

The crowd replied in unison, "Yes, Your Highness."

Afterward, the people left the room. Once everyone had gone, Lu Chen spoke up, "Father, rest well. I'll also go back now."

Prince Zhen Nan said, "Okay."

Lu Chen then turned to leave the room. As Prince Zhen Nan watched Lu Chen's departing tall figure, a smile of comfort appeared on his face.

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On a street in the Capital city, a carriage was slowly heading towards the Deceit Suppression Bureau.

Inside the carriage, Lu Yu curiously asked He Dongqi, "Sir, weren't you planning to test Zhen Nan Prince Manor to see if Prince Zhen Nan is a Wolf Demon? Why did you leave so soon?"

He Dongqi went to Zhen Nan Prince Manor mainly for two purposes: one was to keep Lu Chen in Zhen Nan Prince Manor to sort the files of the Deceit Suppression Bureau; the other was to see if Prince Zhen Nan really faced any trouble.

But since He Dongqi arrived at Zhen Nan Prince Manor, he hadn't inquired about Prince Zhen Nan, leaving the possibility of the Wolf Demon being Prince Zhen Nan unresolved.

Upon hearing Lu Yu's question, He Dongqi said blandly, "No need to probe intentionally. A simple visit to Zhen Nan Prince Manor is enough to ascertain that the Wolf Demon is not Prince Zhen Nan."

If Prince Zhen Nan had truly transformed into a Wolf Demon, everyone at Zhen Nan Prince Manor would be extremely tense, and entering Zhen Nan Prince Manor would probably not be easy. But they welcomed us directly into the reception hall.

Of course, the most telling thing was Lu Chen's reaction. Lu Chen is merely a playboy. Generally, when a family undergoes major changes, such playboys often are at a loss.

If Prince Zhen Nan truly faced something, Lu Chen would be the least willing to let it be leaked. When meeting outsiders, he would inevitably show some worry or anxiety.

But when He Dongqi met Lu Chen, he did not sense any concern or anxiety for the future from Lu Chen's face, which indicates the support behind Lu Chen hasn't fallen, meaning Prince Zhen Nan hasn't faced trouble.

He Dongqi continued, "Facing the visit from the Commander of the Deceit Suppression Bureau, Lu Chen was so calm, proving that Prince Zhen Nan hasn't become a malevolent creature."

Lu Yu said, "Could it be possible that he's just putting on a brave front?"

He Dongqi partially closed his eyes, crossed his arms, and said indifferently, "He's just a playboy; facing such a big change in Zhen Nan Prince Manor, there's no way he could be this calm. He would definitely show a hint of unease."

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After basically confirming that Prince Zhen Nan was not the Wolf Demon, He Dongqi began making preparations to eliminate the Wolf Demon.

However, He Dongqi was still worried that the Wolf Demon might actually be someone from a noble family in disguise, so he specifically submitted a memorial, explaining the dangers posed by this Wolf Demon.

If this Wolf Demon were just an ordinary strange evil, then once it was dealt with, that would be the end of it. But if it was a strange evil transformed from an Earth Realm Strong Person, then it could not be handled so simply.

A clan capable of nurturing an Earth Realm Strong Person would definitely be a noble family. If the Deceit Suppression Bureau took care of it without even notifying them, they would inevitably offend those noble families. Although those noble families have no way to interfere in the affairs of the Deceit Suppression Bureau, they can still trip up the Bureau and cause trouble for it in the court.

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In Dazhou, inside the Hall of Political Affairs.

Pei Shuhua, dressed in a dark robe, sat on the Dragon Throne, her gaze sweeping over the officials in the great hall. She then opened her mouth and said, "Last night, the new Commander of the Deceit Suppression Bureau submitted a memorial. He suspects that the Earth Realm Wolf Demon that recently slipped into the Capital city is not an ordinary evil spirit, but a strange evil formed after a Spirit Martial Artist suffered backlash from spiritual evil."

Pei Shuhua's tone was very calm, as if she were describing a trivial matter.

After hearing Pei Shuhua's words, the officials in the hall looked at each other.

An Earth Realm strange evil breaking into the Capital city was indeed a major event, but for the Imperial Court, such matters could be treated as big or small.

Although an Earth Realm strange evil is powerful, the Capital city has many strong experts. Even if the Deceit Suppression Bureau cannot handle this Earth Realm strange evil, those experts of the Royal Family can still eliminate it.

There was no need to deliberately bring this matter to the court. Since the Empress Dowager brought it up, it clearly meant that she wanted to turn this into a big issue.

Pei Shuhua now asked, "What do you all think?"

At this moment, a court official stepped out and said, "The Capital city is protected by a Great Array. For an Earth Realm Strange evil to slip past the eyes of the City Defense Army soldiers and quietly sneak into the Capital city is indeed no easy task, so this old official believes Commander He's speculation is not without reason."

As officials belonging to the Empress Dowager's faction, once they heard her bring up this matter, they immediately understood that she wanted to use this as a pretext.

Right after that official finished speaking, another official from the Empress Dowager's faction stepped out and said, "Although there are many Earth Realm Strong Persons in the Capital city, when ordinary Earth Realm Strong Persons suffer backlash from spiritual evil, their clans or factions will generally ask the Deceit Suppression Bureau for help. If it were an ordinary Earth Realm Strong Person who suffered spiritual evil backlash, the Deceit Suppression Bureau should have long known who that Wolf Demon used to be."

Although there are many Earth Realm Strong Persons in the Capital city, when divided among each faction or Aristocratic Family, the number of Earth Realm Strong Persons in each is not large.

A family with even a single Earth Realm Strong Person sitting in town counts as a great clan, so most Earth Realm Strong Persons, after suffering spiritual evil backlash, will basically inform the Deceit Suppression Bureau and have it send experts to keep watch.

Because those families are very clear in their hearts that if the Earth Realm Strong Person of their clan becomes a strange evil after suffering spiritual evil backlash, the first ones to be slaughtered would be their entire family.

The only ones with the confidence to handle an Earth Realm Strange evil on their own are those few super noble families, or the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, as well as the Royal Family.

As soon as that official spoke, almost everyone thought of the same person: Prince Zhen Nan.

If a Royal Family Earth Realm Strong Person suffered backlash from spiritual evil and turned into a strange evil, the Royal Family would certainly deal with it at the first possible moment. There is simply no way they would allow that Earth Realm strange evil to run loose.

As for those noble families, they have no reason to keep an Earth Realm strange evil alive.

Only the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, in order not to let people notice that something had happened to Prince Zhen Nan, might think of ways to suppress him, force him back into human form, and pretend that he was still alive.

What's more, during this period, Prince Zhen Nan had indeed suffered backlash from spiritual evil, and his physical condition had worsened by the day. He could turn into a strange evil at any time.

Seeing the Empress Dowager's faction members all speak up one after another, shifting the conflict and attention toward the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, the officials present instantly understood what the Empress Dowager wanted to do.

After all, not long ago Emperor Zhou had just issued a Holy Decree lifting Ji Yunmeng's confinement, and the reason Ji Yunmeng was confined in the first place was also because of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor. Now that the Zhen Nan Prince Manor had more or less stood together with Emperor Zhou, the Empress Dowager would absolutely not allow it to continue existing.

If Prince Zhen Nan really had turned into a strange evil, then destroying the Zhen Nan Prince Manor would be an easy task. They would only need to get rid of Lu Chen, the sole heir, and the Zhen Nan Prince Manor would naturally dissolve.

If Prince Zhen Nan had not turned into a strange evil, the Empress Dowager's faction could still spread rumors, claiming that the Zhen Nan Prince Manor had concealed the matter of Prince Zhen Nan becoming a strange evil. After all, everyone knew that Prince Zhen Nan had suffered backlash from spiritual evil, so people would naturally assume he had already fallen.

As long as the rumors spread, even if Prince Zhen Nan had not become a strange evil, people would still treat him as one. After all, he could hardly even get out of bed and walk; who could tell what was true or false?

Once the news that Prince Zhen Nan had turned into a strange evil spread, the entire Zhen Nan Prince Manor would soon fall into chaos, and all the subordinate forces and affiliated families of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor would distance themselves from it.

At this moment, a court official stood out and said directly, "In that case, that Wolf Demon must be what Prince Zhen Nan turned into after suffering backlash from spiritual evil. Your Ladyship, the Zhen Nan Prince Manor has actually hidden such a terrifying strange evil; their intentions are ill, and they must be severely punished!"

As soon as that official finished speaking, one of Pei Shuhua's Maids hurriedly came over from the side hall to her side and whispered something in her ear.

After hearing what the Maid said, Pei Shuhua's expression instantly grew overcast. She had been about to use this matter to launch an attack on the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, yet Prince Zhen Nan had actually taken the initiative to enter the palace—and he had come to see Emperor Zhou.

This clearly showed that Prince Zhen Nan had truly taken Emperor Zhou's side.

What Pei Shuhua could not understand was that, wasn't it said that Prince Zhen Nan had suffered backlash from spiritual evil and had only a short time to live? She had even thought that the Wolf Demon was him. Yet now she was being told that not only was he fine, he had even entered the palace.

Seeing that the Empress Dowager remained silent for a long time with a dark expression, the officials in the hall did not know what to say. By rights, they had already turned all the spearheads against the Zhen Nan Prince Manor; next, the Empress Dowager should have followed up on their words, then ordered a lockdown and investigation of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor. Why had she fallen silent after hearing the Maid's words?

After an unknown amount of time, Pei Shuhua finally spoke. "As for the Wolf Demon, let's end it here. I believe the Deceit Suppression Bureau will handle it properly."

This...

Hearing the Empress Dowager's words, the officials were once again stunned. The Empress Dowager had clearly brought up this matter today because she wanted to strike at the Zhen Nan Prince Manor. The atmosphere had already been built up to this extent—why did she suddenly back down?

What exactly had that Maid said to the Empress Dowager that could make her change her mind?

Right then, Pei Shuhua directly said, "Prince Zhen Nan has entered the palace."

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Upon hearing Pei Shuhua's words, the Hall of Political Affairs instantly fell quiet, so silent that even the faint sound of people's breathing could be heard.

The expressions on the faces of the ministers revealed a trace of disbelief. Wasn't Prince Zhen Nan suffering from the Ling Sha backlash and supposedly not long for this world?

Why would he enter the palace at this moment?

They all thought that the wolf demon was indeed Prince Zhen Nan transformed, but now that Prince Zhen Nan had willingly entered the palace, they couldn't even spread rumors if they wanted to.

But speaking of it, what was Prince Zhen Nan doing coming to the palace now?

Even if the wolf demon wasn't him transformed, his suffering from Ling Sha backlash surely wasn't false, right? After all, the palace's imperial physicians personally went to treat Prince Zhen Nan; what would a dying man want, not staying at Zhen Nan Prince Manor, but coming to the Imperial Palace now?

For a time, a bad premonition arose in people's hearts, yet the ministers of the Imperial Faction were extremely excited at this moment.

Just recently, Emperor Zhou had lifted Ji Yunmeng's restriction, hinting at his support for Zhen Nan Prince Manor. Now that Prince Zhen Nan had willingly entered the palace, it was very clear why he had come.

Prince Zhen Nan must be entering the palace to meet the Emperor.

In this manner, Prince Zhen Nan has decided to stand with Emperor Zhou. With the strength of Zhen Nan Prince Manor, the Empress Dowager and the Pei Family can no longer act recklessly.

At this moment, the ministers in the hall lowered their heads, not daring to meet Pei Shuhua's eyes, only daring to secretly glance at Pei Shuhua's that somber jade-like face.

After an unknown length of time, Pei Shuhua finally spoke again, "If there is no other business, today's court session will end here."

Everyone understood well that Pei Shuhua ending the session early was certainly to handle the entrance of Prince Zhen Nan into the palace. If Prince Zhen Nan were allowed to meet the Emperor at this time, it would be very unfavorable for her.

At this moment, the ministers from the Imperial Faction wanted to say something to delay, trying to win some time for Prince Zhen Nan to meet Emperor Zhou, but Pei Shuhua had already risen, swished her robe, and directly left the Dragon Throne, leaving the Hall of Political Affairs.

Meanwhile, Prince Zhen Nan's carriage had already passed the second gateway of the Imperial Palace. One more gateway and they could proceed to the Long Life Hall.

However, at this moment, a Guard Commander stood before the carriage, Pei Zhan glanced at the carriage ahead. In the palace, other than the Empress and Noble Concubine who live in the palace, only one person could ride a carriage into the palace, and that was Prince Zhen Nan.

As the Guard Commander of the palace's inner courtyard, Pei Zhan was very familiar with the carriages of those women in the harem. Although their carriages were luxurious, none were as luxurious as this carriage before him.

Ordinary carriages had two horses pulling them, while this carriage was pulled by six horses. Normally, even when the Emperor left the palace, without any major ceremonies, he would most likely sit in a carriage pulled by four horses.

In Dazhou, the only person daring to ride in a carriage pulled by six horses was Prince Zhen Nan. As a member of the Pei Family, a staunch supporter of the Empress Dowager's faction, Pei Zhan obviously wouldn't allow Prince Zhen Nan to enter the Long Life Hall to meet Emperor Zhou.

If Emperor Zhou really united with Zhen Nan Prince Manor, the court could undergo major changes.

Pei Zhan then saluted the carriage and said, "May I ask who is the esteemed person inside the carriage? What is your purpose in entering the palace?"

Though already guessing it was Prince Zhen Nan, Pei Zhan still feigned ignorance, pretending not to know.

Driving the carriage was a late-stage Xuan Realm spirit martial artist, who coldly glanced at Pei Zhan and then said, "Commander Pei, you have quite the guts to dare block our great king's carriage!"

Upon hearing the coachman's words, Pei Zhan nonchalantly continued to ask, "I wonder which great king it is? For what purpose have you entered the palace?"

Even knowing it was Prince Zhen Nan on the carriage, Pei Zhan's inner heart felt no fear. Prince Zhen Nan was nothing more than a dying man, and their Pei Family was powerful, not to mention the Empress Dowager now controlled the entire Great Zhou Court; furthermore, the Empress Dowager had long planned to take action against Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

Before long, once Prince Zhen Nan dies, Zhen Nan Prince Manor will completely disappear from Dazhou.

Inside the carriage, upon hearing the coachman address the person blocking the carriage as Commander Pei, Prince Zhen Nan asked indifferently, "Are you a member of the Pei Family?"

Hearing Prince Zhen Nan's voice from inside the carriage, Pei Zhan was taken aback. He had heard Prince Zhen Nan's voice before, and this voice was indeed Prince Zhen Nan's.

Except...

Wasn't Prince Zhen Nan already on the brink of death? The voice sounded nothing like that of a dying person.

What's going on?

After a momentary stupor, Pei Zhan regained his composure, staring warily at the carriage; he faintly felt something amiss, and a sense of crisis suddenly arose inside him.

Yet, thinking of being a member of the Pei Family with the Empress Dowager behind him, Pei Zhan didn't yield as he responded, "Yes."

As soon as Pei Zhan finished speaking, a terrifying aura was released from the carriage, black Ling Sha instantly enshrouding the vicinity of the palace gates. Pei Zhan and the gathered guards were immediately suppressed to the ground by the aura released by Prince Zhen Nan.

Pei Zhan's expression changed drastically—is this a dying man?

Could the carriage really not contain Prince Zhen Nan?

For a moment, cold sweat poured from Pei Zhan's forehead. If the carriage really held Prince Zhen Nan, and Prince Zhen Nan had not, as rumored, suffered the Ling Sha backlash and was still at full power, then even the Pei Family and the Empress Dowager wouldn't dare disrespect Prince Zhen Nan.

Pei Zhan couldn't bring himself to accept that the carriage contained Prince Zhen Nan; if it really was a peak-strength Prince Zhen Nan, then even if Prince Zhen Nan killed him, the Empress Dowager wouldn't say anything.

Pei Zhan gritted his teeth and said, "Who are you? How dare you trespass in the Imperial Palace; do you think having Earth Realm strength allows you to act recklessly here!"

Pei Zhan had barely finished speaking when another Earth Realm aura appeared at the palace gates. The moment Prince Zhen Nan released his aura, the Earth Realm Strong Persons inside the Imperial Palace sensed it, and one of them immediately rushed to the scene.

When Royal Family Tributor Zhuang Wei came to Pei Zhan's side and found there was a carriage pulled by six horses before him, his heart instantly skipped a beat.

There weren't many who used four-horse carriages, let alone six, so the carriage could only possibly belong to Prince Zhen Nan.

However, how could a dying Prince Zhen Nan release such a terrifying aura?

Is it really Prince Zhen Nan in the carriage? Or is someone impersonating him to sneak into the palace?

Feeling the Earth Realm Strong Person behind him, Pei Zhan turned and saw Zhuang Wei, his heart leaping with joy as he quickly remarked, "Master Zhuang, someone is pretending to be Prince Zhen Nan to break into the palace, quickly kill him!"

Zhuang Wei didn't respond to Pei Zhan's words; he gazed seriously at the carriage before him, sensing an aura far beyond his own. Most importantly, the black Ling Sha released by the other could affect his own Ling Sha within.

This Black Evil was characteristic of someone who had suffered severe Ling Sha backlash, so perhaps the carriage did indeed hold Prince Zhen Nan.

Zhuang Wei then bowed toward the carriage and said, "Greetings, Prince Zhen Nan. May I ask the purpose of your entrance into the palace?"

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

Seeing Zhuang Wei bow toward the carriage, Pei Zhan, who was half-kneeling on the ground, froze.

He lifted his head, several faint trails of sweat sliding down his forehead. He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but in the end only pressed his dry, cracked lips together.

Was it really Prince Zhen Nan inside the carriage? How was that possible?

Could it be that Zhuang Wei had mistaken him for someone else?

Though he wanted to remind Zhuang Wei that it was impossible for Prince Zhen Nan to be in the carriage, Pei Zhan still sensibly kept silent at this moment. He wanted to see what Zhuang Wei intended to do next.

Whether the person inside was Prince Zhen Nan or not, barging into the Imperial Palace this hard-handedly was definitely out of the question. Besides, Pei Zhan

believed that as a Tributor of the Royal Family, and someone standing on the Empress Dowager's side, Zhuang Wei absolutely could not possibly allow the person inside this carriage to enter the Long Life Hall.

At this moment, Prince Zhen Nan's low voice came again from within the carriage, "Master Zhuang, it seems the Royal Family has valued you greatly these past few years, given you quite a few resources. You've actually already broken through to Mid Earth Realm."

Zhuang Wei straightened his back and said with a smile, "Prince Zhen Nan is joking. The Royal Family treats us Tributors all the same."

Zhuang Wei then continued, "Prince Zhen Nan, His Majesty is now devoted to cultivation and permits no one to disturb him. If you've come to see His Majesty, then please return."

Hearing Zhuang Wei's words, Prince Zhen Nan said blandly, "Devoted to cultivation? Is it that he wishes to cultivate himself, or that he is being forced to cultivate?"

The matter of Emperor Zhou being placed under house arrest was common knowledge, but under normal circumstances, no one would say it outright. Even those of the Imperial Faction would not speak plainly of it—saying an Emperor was imprisoned would damage the Emperor's majesty.

Zhuang Wei had not expected Prince Zhen Nan to bring it up so directly. His brows furrowed, the vertical line between them deepening. For Prince Zhen Nan to openly point out that the Emperor was under house arrest proved that in his heart he indeed stood on Emperor Zhou's side, and that he had already formed the intention to change the current situation. Otherwise, he would not have spoken so bluntly.

In political struggle, before both sides completely tear off all pretense, they will maintain a veneer of mutual decency.

Zhuang Wei now directly reminded him, "The situation of Zhen Nan Prince Manor is not good at present. Prince Zhen Nan ought to be focusing his mind on Zhen Nan Prince Manor." His voice was pressed very low, as if squeezed up from the depths of his throat.

Hearing this faint note of threat, Prince Zhen Nan let out a cold laugh. The next instant, a ferocious aura surged out from within the carriage, a streak of black Spirit Evil Qi shooting straight toward Zhuang Wei.

Zhuang Wei did not dodge. He stamped down hard with one leg, several fine cracks splitting across the bluestone beneath his foot, then raised one hand and blasted out a palm. The spiritual evil in his hand collided with Prince Zhen Nan's Black Evil. In an instant, the Spirit Evil exploded, and the soldiers around them were directly blown away. Several soldiers crashed to the ground, their helmets rolling off, revealing foreheads slick with sweat.

Zhuang Wei couldn't help but retreat a few steps, then spat out a mouthful of black blood. The blood splattered onto the bluestone and quickly seeped in. The

moment that Black Evil touched his body, it began to corrode him. At this moment he faintly felt signs of backlash within his own spiritual evil. His right hand trembled slightly, his sleeve blown to tatters in one area, revealing a thin wrist.

After stabilizing his stance, Zhuang Wei stared at the carriage in some disbelief. A man who had suffered spiritual evil backlash like Prince Zhen Nan—how could he still possess such strength? His breathing was a bit hurried, the rise and fall of his chest clearly much more violent than just now.

But then again, judging by aura alone, the person sitting inside this carriage was indeed Prince Zhen Nan.

While Zhuang Wei was still perplexed as to why Prince Zhen Nan's strength was so great, the carriage door opened, and an old man slowly stepped down from the carriage.

The old man wore a long robe of black gold, the hem embroidered with dark-patterned gold thread. His hair was already completely white, combed meticulously and tied into a topknot at the back of his head. The wrinkles on his face were deep, especially the crow's-feet at the corners of his eyes, like knife-carved lines. His eye sockets were slightly sunken, yet his eyes were exceptionally deep, impossible to see to the bottom.

Seeing that it was Prince Zhen Nan himself, Zhuang Wei was stunned once more. It really was Prince Zhen Nan, and judging from his appearance, he did not seem at all like a man rumored to be at death's door.

Though Death Qi coiled around him, the fact that he could get out of bed and walk was enough to show that he was still far from death. His steps were very steady, making almost no sound on the bluestone, only occasionally giving a light cough. When he coughed, his shoulders would twitch slightly.

Could it be that Prince Zhen Nan had been feigning illness all this time?

Or had Prince Zhen Nan taken some miraculous elixir, or perhaps found someone of extraordinary medical skill to save him from the brink?

While Zhuang Wei was distracted, Prince Zhen Nan's turbid yet deep voice sounded again, "Can this Prince see His Majesty now?"

Hearing this, Zhuang Wei's brows knitted tightly. If Emperor Zhou truly joined hands with Prince Zhen Nan, that would be troublesome.

At the same time.

Within the Imperial Palace, atop the Observatory.

Pei Shuhua, dressed in a dark robe, stood by the stone balustrade of the Observatory, her gaze fixed on Prince Zhen Nan as he descended from the carriage. A light breeze lifted the hem of her robe, revealing the deep-red lining within. Her hair was coiled high, a jade hairpin thrust crosswise through it, the head of the pin carved into a blooming peony. There was little expression on her face; her thin lips were pressed into a line.

The Observatory was the tallest structure in the entire Imperial Palace and even the entire Capital city. Standing atop it, one could see nearly all the courtyards of the palace.

After leaving the Hall of Political Affairs, Pei Shuhua had gone straight up to the Observatory. She had not expected that just as she reached it, she would see Zhuang Wei and Prince Zhen Nan directly exchanging blows.

What surprised her even more was that a single move from Prince Zhen Nan had actually forced Zhuang Wei back. Her fingers rested lightly on the stone balustrade, her fingertips pressing down slightly, the ancient patterns on the stone digging into the pads of her fingers.

Though at his peak Prince Zhen Nan had indeed been far stronger than Zhuang Wei, Prince Zhen Nan now had suffered spiritual evil backlash and was supposedly a man on the verge of death—how could he still possess such power?

Thus her first suspicion was that the person inside the carriage was not truly Prince Zhen Nan, but someone else. Yet just as this thought formed in her heart, she saw Prince Zhen Nan step out from the carriage.

Seeing that it really was Prince Zhen Nan, Pei Shuhua's expression turned incomparably cold. The air around her grew unnaturally frigid, as though a layer of frost had formed over the stone railings of the Observatory. Her breath condensed into a faint white mist before her face, quickly blown apart by the wind.

Just then, Prince Zhen Nan seemed to sense something and lifted his head to look toward the Observatory. The distance between them and the Observatory was great, but for a Spirit Martial Artist of the Earth Realm, such a distance was nothing.

Prince Zhen Nan's gaze met Pei Shuhua's exactly.

Seeing that Prince Zhen Nan had spotted her, Pei Shuhua gave a cold snort and turned directly to leave the Observatory. As she walked, she said to the Maid at her side, "Inform everyone that no one is to stop Prince Zhen Nan from seeing His Majesty." Her voice was not loud, yet it carried an unquestionable authority.

As she descended the steps, the hem of her skirt swept over the stone stairs with a faint rustling sound. The Maid beside her kept her head lowered, hurrying along behind, not daring to speak.

Though Pei Shuhua worried that Emperor Zhou might join hands with Prince Zhen Nan, she did not believe that even if the two of them allied, they could immediately overturn the balance of the court.

Most importantly, in her view, Prince Zhen Nan was already a dying man. It was impossible for him to suddenly recover, and the Death Qi emanating from him, as well as the Black Evil he used when he struck, could not be faked.

Prince Zhen Nan had lain in bed for who knew how many months. For him to suddenly be able to walk today, and even take the initiative to come to the Imperial Palace, meant there was only one possibility: either he had taken some medicine to temporarily suppress the spiritual evil backlash within his body, or he was burning his vitality.

Whichever it was, Prince Zhen Nan was not far from death.

Perhaps once Prince Zhen Nan returned, he would suffer an even more severe spiritual evil backlash. Since he was willing to risk his life to see Emperor Zhou, she would let him have his wish.

There was no need for her to haggle with a dying man. If at this moment she refused to let Prince Zhen Nan see Emperor Zhou and pushed him too far, and Prince Zhen Nan, with a jade-burns-and-stone-breaks mindset, struck at her, that would spell trouble.

She was not like Emperor Zhou, who bore Dragon Qi.

A dying Earth Realm Spirit Warrior who burned his vitality without regard for anything would likely erupt with power close to the Heavenly Realm. Pei Shuhua did not dare to gamble.

At this moment, Zhuang Wei still wanted to summon other Royal Family Tributors to join him in blocking Prince Zhen Nan from going to the Long Life Hall. Yet just then, a Maid at Pei Shuhua's side came to stand before Zhuang Wei and said, "Her Ladyship commands: no one is allowed to obstruct Prince Zhen Nan from seeing His Majesty."

This...

Hearing the Maid's words, Zhuang Wei and the soldiers present were all taken aback.

Zhuang Wei quickly came back to his senses. Since it was the Empress Dowager's order, he naturally had to obey.

He then stepped aside of his own accord.

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

After Zhuang Wei made way, Prince Zhen Nan directly walked towards the Long Life Hall.

Watching Prince Zhen Nan's back, those present and those secretly observing looked extremely concerned. At this moment, those paying attention to Prince Zhen Nan's every move were essentially all people from the Empress Dowager's faction, who naturally did not want to see Prince Zhen Nan and Emperor Zhou unite.

However, thinking of this as an order from the Empress Dowager, they could only watch helplessly, believing that the Empress Dowager had her own deeper reasons for doing this.

At this time, inside the Long Life Hall.

Emperor Zhou, dressed in a Dragon Robe, sat upright on the mat. Sensing the aura coming from the palace gate, he couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows.

What is going on?

Is someone taking action in the Imperial Palace?

Judging from the aura, both sides involved are at least Earth Realm.

Are two Earth Realm warriors fighting inside the Imperial Palace?

Emperor Zhou then said to the eunuch in the hall, "Go and see what's happening."

"Yes, Your Majesty." The eunuch promptly left the hall.

Only moments passed before the eunuch returned to the hall, showing a hint of pleasure on his face, and excitedly said, "Your Majesty, Prince Zhen Nan seeks an audience!"

Hearing this, Emperor Zhou and Mu Yunxi in the shadows of the Long Life Hall were both stunned.

Prince Zhen Nan?

Isn't he a dying man? How did he come to the palace at this time?

Considering the commotion outside earlier, could it be that Prince Zhen Nan clashed with a member of the royal family?

Emperor Zhou immediately dismissed this thought; Prince Zhen Nan had been bedridden, unable to rise, how could he possibly have the strength to clash with a powerful Earth Realm member of the royal family? Likely, an Earth Realm Strong Person from the Zhen Nan Prince Manor tried to escort Prince Zhen Nan into the palace, and a royal family member objected, leading to a conflict.

Regardless of who was involved outside, the fact that Prince Zhen Nan personally came to the palace surprised Emperor Zhou greatly.

Emperor Zhou, after regaining his composure, said, "Let him in."

Emperor Zhou was now very curious why Prince Zhen Nan sought him out at this time; could it be because he lifted the confinement order on Ji Yunmeng, leading Prince Zhen Nan to perceive him as siding with the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, prompting this alliance gesture?

While Emperor Zhou was lost in thought, Prince Zhen Nan's figure emitting Death Qi appeared in the Long Life Hall. Seeing Prince Zhen Nan walked in, Emperor Zhou, sitting on the mat, raised his eyebrows.

Is this a dying man's behavior?

Didn't the Imperial Physician say Prince Zhen Nan's backlash was severe and he was close to death or being transformed into a spiritual evil? How can he still manage to get out of bed and walk?

Earlier, he thought Prince Zhen Nan would be carried in by people from the Zhen Nan Prince Manor; even in the best scenario, he should be supported by someone. Yet Prince Zhen Nan was not only unguided but walked steadily.

Seeing Emperor Zhou seated on the mat, Prince Zhen Nan symbolically bowed to Emperor Zhou, "This old minister pays respect to Your Majesty!"

Emperor Zhou immediately stood up, personally approached Prince Zhen Nan, and supported his shoulder, saying, "Prince Zhen Nan, please dispense with the formalities."

Getting closer to Prince Zhen Nan, Emperor Zhou sensed the spiritual evil emanating from his body; the Black Evil felt incredibly ominous, indicating Prince Zhen Nan indeed suffered severe backlash and was nearing death.

Emperor Zhou asked directly, "I heard that Prince Zhen Nan recently suffered backlash from spiritual evil, making it difficult to move around. Why did you personally come to my Long Life Hall today? Did Prince Zhen Nan burn off his vitality?"

Prince Zhen Nan knew the situation of Lu Chen refining the Black Evil must never be known, so he proactively admitted, "Yes, Your Majesty, I had to do so to meet Your Majesty."

Emperor Zhou was slightly stunned, as Prince Zhen Nan's physical condition was already dire and he might not last long. Now, burning vitality, he would only die faster.

Prince Zhen Nan risking so much to visit the palace couldn't just be a simple meeting with him, the puppet emperor.

Emperor Zhou suspected Prince Zhen Nan wanted to beseech him to protect the entire Zhen Nan Prince Manor, hence the personal visit.

Emperor Zhou then said, "Prince Zhen Nan, is there a major issue you wish to discuss with me?"

At this point, Emperor Zhou promptly reminded, "Prince Zhen Nan should understand that I am focused on my cultivation, paying little attention to court affairs. If you came for the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, you might have chosen the wrong person."

Currently, the Empress Dowager controls the court, and his edicts rarely leave the palace. Requesting protection for the soon-to-be overwhelmed Zhen Nan Prince Manor from him, a puppet emperor, was sheer impossibility.

Upon hearing Emperor Zhou's reminder, a trace of humor surfaced on Prince Zhen Nan's wrinkled face, "Your Majesty misunderstands; my purpose for entering the palace is to seek a marriage alliance for my son."

Emperor Zhou was stunned once more, and the entire hall plunged into silence.

Emperor Zhou was somewhat doubtful if he was hearing correctly.

But soon, Emperor Zhou reacted; Prince Zhen Nan specifically sought him out for a marriage alliance, implying the intended bride wasn't an ordinary Aristocratic Family daughter but a princess.

Currently, only Princess Ji Yunmeng had any connection to the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, indicating who Prince Zhen Nan intended for Lu Chen to marry was transparent.

Emperor Zhou coldly said, "Prince Zhen Nan has calculated well; do you wish to bind the Zhen Nan Prince Manor and the royal family together?"

Emperor Zhou perceived Prince Zhen Nan's intention to firmly establish the alliance between the Emperor and the Zhen Nan Prince Manor. Once Ji Yunmeng entered the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, people would surely think Emperor Zhou was firmly aligned, allowing the Zhen Nan Prince Manor to leverage his name for protection from the Imperial Faction.

Upon hearing Emperor Zhou's remarks, Prince Zhen Nan calmly stated, "Your Majesty, the Zhen Nan Prince Manor has always been tied to the Royal Family. Your Majesty surely remembers that the First Generation Prince Zhen Nan and the Grand Ancestor of Zhou were sworn brothers."

Hearing Prince Zhen Nan, Emperor Zhou couldn't help but want to laugh; back during the dynasty's founding, the relationship between the First Generation Prince Zhen Nan and the Grand Ancestor of Zhou was indeed very strong, the firmest allies. But that was ages ago.

Since the Grand Ancestor's death, every Emperor of Dazhou has viewed the Zhen Nan Prince Manor with contempt, employing various means to suppress and weaken its power. The conflict between Zhen Nan Prince Manor and the Dazhou Royal Family reached a point where reconciliation was impossible, how could they still be bound together?

Nonetheless, Emperor Zhou understood why Prince Zhen Nan brought up the First Generation's relationship with the Grand Ancestor now, merely as preparation for what he was about to say.

As expected, Prince Zhen Nan continued, "The Royal Family and the Zhen Nan Prince Manor are inherently linked; mutually dependent. Nowadays, with the

dragon stranded in shallows and the Emperor Star obscured, the Zhen Nan Prince Manor faces adverse effects."

"I, as Prince Zhen Nan, should stand up, like the First Generation Prince Zhen Nan, and remove obstacles for Your Majesty."

Hearing Prince Zhen Nan's loyal words, Emperor Zhou inwardly scoffed, these words are merely pleasant sounds.

Prince Zhen Nan continued, "However, the reason I seek a marriage alliance for my son is mainly due to my son's affection for Princess Yun'an, nothing more."

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

Upon hearing that Prince Zhen Nan had indeed mentioned Ji Yunmeng, Emperor Zhou's expression darkened immediately.

The conversation had reached this point, and Emperor Zhou essentially understood Prince Zhen Nan's intentions.

He didn't respond immediately, but slowly stood up, strolled to the window, turned his back on Prince Zhen Nan, and gazed at the sky outside.

Clearly, Prince Zhen Nan's intention was for the Royal Family and Zhen Nan Prince Manor to form a marriage alliance by marrying Ji Yunmeng to Lu Chen, so that the entirety of Zhen Nan Prince Manor would stand by his side to help him overthrow the Empress Dowager.

As for the notion that Lu Chen had affections for Ji Yunmeng, it was nothing but nonsense.

Emperor Zhou was momentarily silent.

The wind blew in through the window lattice, carrying the chill of early autumn, fluttering the hem of his robe.

Ever since the death of the great ancestor, the Dazhou Royal Family had always regarded the Zhen Nan Prince Manor as a thorn in their side, wanting to erase it from Dazhou.

But times had changed, and the Zhen Nan Prince Manor was now in decline. Prince Zhen Nan presently had only one descendant; if something happened to Lu Chen, the entire Zhen Nan Prince Manor would almost dissolve.

Most importantly, Prince Zhen Nan wouldn't live much longer. Emperor Zhou turned around and sized up Prince Zhen Nan, whose complexion indeed wasn't good, his brows subtly shading in pallor and decay.

If he could seize control over Zhen Nan Prince Manor at this time, making it his own strength, his chances of overthrowing the Empress Dowager, settling scores with the Pei Family, and reclaiming power would significantly increase.

Emperor Zhou was already tempted at this moment.

In his eyes, sacrificing a princess for such powerful backing was an extremely worthwhile trade.

Moreover, once Ji Yunmeng was married into the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, she might seize control of it. Once Prince Zhen Nan died, wouldn't Ji Yunmeng then be in charge of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor? As for Lu Chen, that useless person, Emperor Zhou's mouth curled in a faint smile. Despite rumors that he might also be a Spirit Martial Artist, Emperor Zhou didn't believe Lu Chen had much potential.

Even if Lu Chen was indeed a Spirit Martial Artist, starting cultivation at such an age and only beginning to draw spiritual evil into his body, his future prospects were bleak, so Ji Yunmeng taking control of Zhen Nan Prince Manor wouldn't be difficult.

Seeing that Emperor Zhou remained silent, Prince Zhen Nan decided to press on, saying: "If Your Majesty is unwilling, then let's leave it be." With that, he feigned to turn and leave.

Upon hearing Prince Zhen Nan's voice, Emperor Zhou snapped back to reality.

Unwilling?

No, no, he was more than willing. He couldn't let the cooked duck fly away.

Emperor Zhou hurriedly said, "What Prince Zhen Nan says is right, the Prince's Manor and the Royal Family indeed share glory and disgrace. Since Lu Chen has affections for Yun'an, and Yun'an likes him too, I will fulfill their wish."

"I will issue the decree right away, and I ask Prince Zhen Nan to wait a moment."

The decree granting Ji Yunmeng and Lu Chen a marriage was unlikely to be sent out successfully, as everything sent from Long Life Hall would probably be inspected by the Empress Dowager's people. Therefore, Emperor Zhou intended for Prince Zhen Nan to take the decree himself, and after he left with it, announce this, presenting a fait accompli. By then, even if the Empress Dowager was unwilling to see their alliance, she'd have no means to intervene.

Emperor Zhou then ordered a eunuch to bring in brush, ink, paper, and inkstone. A young eunuch, head bowed, respectfully brought the writing implements, laid the paper on the Imperial Desk, and prepared the ink.

Emperor Zhou seated himself at the desk in Long Life Hall and began writing the marriage decree with the brush.

The brush softly scraped the paper, and a moment later, the decree was completed. Once the decree was finished, Emperor Zhou personally handed it to Prince Zhen Nan.

Prince Zhen Nan extended a slightly withered hand to receive the decree, glanced over it, then lifted his head to express thanks, saying, "Thank you, Your Majesty!"

Emperor Zhou then reminded, with his brows slightly furrowed, "You should be aware of the repercussions that spreading word of this marriage will bring to Zhen Nan Prince Manor, and I hope the manor is prepared."

Undoubtedly, the Empress Dowager would not wish to see Zhen Nan Prince Manor allied with his puppet emperor persona and would endeavor to dismantle their alliance, certainly looking to destroy Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

The weaknesses of Zhen Nan Prince Manor were glaringly apparent: Lu Chen. Once Lu Chen was dealt with, and Prince Zhen Nan passed away, the manor would naturally dissipate.

Upon hearing Emperor Zhou's reminder, Prince Zhen Nan carefully stored the decree into his sleeve, raised his head, and with determined eyes, said, "Rest assured, Your Majesty. I will not allow anyone to disrupt this marriage."

Emperor Zhou nodded and said, "With your word, I am relieved." His face showed a trace of satisfaction.

Prince Zhen Nan then clasped his hands and said, "If there is nothing else, Your Majesty, I'll take my leave for now." He slightly bowed in salute.

Seeing that Prince Zhen Nan took the marriage decree and intended to leave, Emperor Zhou thought that his internal vitality might not hold much longer, wanting to depart the Imperial Palace before being exposed. Emperor Zhou raised a hand and said, "Very well."

Prince Zhen Nan said no more, holding the decree, he turned and left Long Life Hall.

His footsteps echoed through the vast hall, growing more distant.

The hall doors, opened and closed by the eunuch on guard, emitted a dull thud.

Watching the departing figure of Prince Zhen Nan, a glint of light flashed in Emperor Zhou's eyes.

He stood there, motionless, until the doors of the hall were completely closed.

After Prince Zhen Nan exited the inner courtyard gates, a graceful figure emerged from the shadows of the pillars in the Long Life Hall.

Mu Yunxi walked slowly to Emperor Zhou's side and softly said, "Congratulations, Your Majesty. With the assistance of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, it will be even easier for Your Majesty to reclaim that position."

Upon hearing Mu Yunxi's words, Emperor Zhou's face showed no expression.

Even without the help of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, he could reclaim that position— it was merely a matter of timing.

However, being able to take this opportunity to eliminate the threat of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor was a double blessing for him.

Emperor Zhou then turned his head to glance at Mu Yunxi beside the pillar, his gaze lingering on her face for a moment, and then he asked, "Saintess, I wonder when your people will arrive in the Capital city?"

Mu Yunxi replied, with a slight bow, "Your Majesty need not worry, they are already on their way to the Capital city."

Upon hearing this, a barely noticeable shadow crossed Emperor Zhou's eyes.

In his heart, he thought: I hope these people will not interfere with my plans.

...

After Prince Zhen Nan left the Long Life Hall, those placed by Pei Shuhua in the Long Life Hall began to take action. They quickly relayed the information they had gathered to Pei Shuhua's ears.

Although few knew the contents of the conversation between Prince Zhen Nan and Emperor Zhou in the Long Life Hall, the fact that Prince Zhen Nan departed with a Holy Decree in his hand, the bright yellow scroll standing out in the moonlight, indicated that Emperor Zhou was preparing to make a move.

At this moment, in the Empress Dowager's sleeping quarters.

Within the hall, the calming scent of sandalwood incense curled into the air.

On the soft couch, Pei Shuhua reclined against a pillow, her jade-like hand supporting her forehead.

Listening to the eunuch's report below, her fair complexion grew cold to the extreme. She could hardly believe that Emperor Zhou dared openly give a Holy Decree to Prince Zhen Nan and allow him to walk out with it so brazenly.

Clearly, Emperor Zhou calculated that she would not dare to offend a man on the verge of death or take action against him, hence the Holy Decree was given to Prince Zhen Nan.

Although the content of the Holy Decree in Prince Zhen Nan's possession was unknown, Pei Shuhua had a vague sense of foreboding.

She sat up straight, her phoenix eyes slightly narrowed, and immediately ordered the eunuchs and maids in the hall in a clear and authoritative voice, "Investigate immediately, I want to know the content of that Holy Decree!"

"Yes!" The eunuchs and maids hurriedly knelt to receive the order, then quickly exited the hall.

...

Zhen Nan Prince Manor.

After returning to the manor, the first thing Prince Zhen Nan did was summon Lu Chen to the Meeting Hall.

He first sat down in the main seat of the hall, placed the Holy Decree on the table beside him, and sipped on his tea to moisten his throat.

By the time Lu Chen arrived at the Meeting Hall, most of the strong figures of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor were present.

They were lined up on both sides, some standing, some sitting, their eyes all directed towards the doorway.

At this moment, Lu Chen glanced at Prince Zhen Nan seated in the main position, then looked at the people on both sides, and finally his gaze fell on the table.

It seemed Prince Zhen Nan was holding a roll of Holy Decree in his hand, the bright yellow silk glowed gently under the candlelight, and he looked very pleased, with a smile he couldn't hide on his face.

Lu Chen walked to the center of the hall, stood firm, and directly asked, "Father, what Holy Decree has Emperor Zhou issued again?" His voice was calm, betraying no emotion.

With a smile, Prince Zhen Nan said, as he picked up the roll of Holy Decree and hefted it in his hand, "A good thing."

Upon hearing this, most of the others in the hall already guessed the purpose of the Holy Decree in Prince Zhen Nan's hand.

Earlier, Prince Zhen Nan had visited the Imperial Palace primarily to propose marriage on behalf of Lu Chen.

And now he returned with a Holy Decree, indicating that the content of the Holy Decree was very likely Emperor Zhou's grant of marriage to Lu Chen.

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

Hearing Prince Zhen Nan say it was a good thing, Lu Chen asked in confusion, "What good thing?"

Lu Chen was still unaware of Prince Zhen Nan entering the palace to request a royal marriage for him.

Prince Zhen Nan did not answer, directly tossing the Holy Decree in his hand to Lu Chen, who quickly caught it and opened it to take a look.

Upon seeing the contents of the decree, Lu Chen's heart shook.

A royal marriage?

Emperor Zhou actually wants to marry Ji Yunmeng to him?

He was still pondering how he could win Ji Yunmeng over, and now Emperor Zhou had proactively decreed the marriage.

After a moment, Lu Chen came to his senses. He closed the decree and looked at Prince Zhen Nan, asking, "Did Father personally go to the Imperial Palace?"

Lu Chen understood that under normal circumstances, such a decree would not be issued. The Empress Dowager's faction was currently very afraid that Emperor Zhou might find an ally, so it would be impossible for her to allow Princess Yunmeng to marry him, the Heir of Prince Zhen Nan.

Since the decree was in Prince Zhen Nan's hands, it proved that he likely went to the Imperial Palace in person and received it directly from Emperor Zhou.

Prince Zhen Nan said, "Yes, if I had not gone to the palace myself, this decree probably wouldn't have been issued."

Lu Chen immediately thanked him, saying, "Thank you, Father, for risking danger to request this marriage for me."

Prince Zhen Nan said, "It's not really dangerous; the Empress Dowager dares not provoke someone like me who's nearing the end."

"Let's not dwell on this. Since Emperor Zhou has already issued the decree, let's spread the news quickly; the more people know, the better. Additionally, Zhen Nan Prince Manor should start preparing for your marriage to Princess Yun'an."

Saying this, Prince Zhen Nan's gaze fell on the Mansion Steward, Wei Heng, and he began instructing Wei Heng to prepare for Lu Chen and Ji Yunmeng's wedding.

...

A day later, Prince Zhen Nan entered the palace to meet Emperor Zhou, and the news that he received the royal marriage decree from Emperor Zhou spread throughout the Capital City.

When various factions heard that Emperor Zhou intended to marry Ji Yunmeng to Lu Chen, they were incredulous. Emperor Zhou was actually going to marry his most cherished daughter to the rival that the Royal Family had long wanted to eliminate.

But soon someone realized that Prince Zhen Nan was suffering a backlash from the spiritual evil and was nearing death. And his ability to enter the palace indicated he had likely burned his vitality, leaving him with even less time. Once Prince Zhen Nan died, Lu Chen would become the new Prince Zhen Nan.

And Lu Chen was merely a profligate son. Although he could now practice cultivation, he certainly could not compare to Ji Yunmeng.

If Ji Yunmeng were to marry into Zhen Nan Prince Manor, the whole manor would probably be under her command, equivalent to being controlled by the Royal Family—in particular, Emperor Zhou.

After the news of Emperor Zhou's decree for marriage spread throughout the Capital City, some rejoiced while others worried. Those who rejoiced were naturally the Imperial Faction that supported Emperor Zhou in regaining power, as having Ji Yunmeng control Zhen Nan Prince Manor would provide Emperor Zhou with a force capable of countering the Pei Family, making it much easier for him to return to court.

Those who worried were from the Empress's faction, who believed that if Emperor Zhou gained the support of Zhen Nan Prince Manor, his return to court would only be a matter of time, and the first thing he would do upon returning would definitely be to settle accounts with the Empress's faction.

...

Imperial Study Room.

Pei Shuhua sat in a chair made of Golden Silk Nanmu, her jade hands tightly gripping the armrests, her fingertips slightly pale. Hearing the report from the eunuch before her, Pei Shuhua's expression completely sank.

She never expected that the decree Emperor Zhou handed to Prince Zhen Nan would order Ji Yunmeng to marry Lu Chen.

If Ji Yunmeng went to Zhen Nan Prince Manor, once Prince Zhen Nan died, wouldn't the manor be under Ji Yunmeng's control? If Ji Yunmeng controlled Zhen

Nan Prince Manor, it would be the same as Emperor Zhou controlling the entire manor. If Emperor Zhou had the power of Zhen Nan Prince Manor, he would have the strength to contend with her.

This cannot happen!

Ji Yunmeng must not be allowed to marry Lu Chen!

The political marriage must either be sabotaged, or Lu Chen must be eliminated soon so that Zhen Nan Prince Manor vanishes quickly.

Pei Shuhua pondered for a moment and coldly instructed the maid in the Imperial Study Room, "Have He Dongqi enter the palace; I have something to discuss with him."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

A maid responded and quickly left the Imperial Study Room.

Deceit Suppression Bureau.

In the council hall, directors of various departments and commanders gathered with troubled expressions, silent, seemingly faced with a significant event.

After a long pause, Wu Feng, Director of the Investigation Bureau, finally spoke, "We didn't expect that the wolf demon hasn't been caught yet, and now something like this is happening in the Capital City. If we can't deal with the village-massacring threat quickly, the Empress Dowager might be angered."

They had gathered not because of the wolf demon in the Capital City, but due to the village-massacring incidents that had been occurring recently.

In Dazhou, such village-massacring events involving spirit evil occur occasionally, but because of the Deceit Suppression Bureau, these threats are quickly addressed.

However, the village-massacring threats recently all point to the same evil entity, which seems particularly fond of cutting out human hearts, as nearly every victim's heart was missing.

Initially, the threat only targeted villagers in remote areas, likely fearing discovery by the Deceit Suppression Bureau. Yet later, the threat grew bolder and started attacking increasingly populated areas, now even reaching the Capital City.

Previously, Ji Yunmeng had been tracking this threat, and Lu Chen had been encountered by her while she was on this mission and brought back.

However, Ji Yunmeng's investigation yielded little; the threat was well-hidden, even untraceable by the Deceit Suppression Bureau's Pursuing Evil Disc.

Hearing Wu Feng's words, He Dongqi felt overwhelmed. He had hoped to distinguish himself through the wolf demon incident to establish his authority.

But soon after assuming office, he found himself facing one problem after another.

At this, He Dongqi, with a gloomy expression and a cold tone, asked, "Director Wu, does the Investigation Bureau still have no information on this threat?"

Upon He Dongqi's question, Wu Feng sighed and said, "Sir, the entire Investigation Bureau has done its utmost. We've used nearly all available methods. Apart from knowing that the threat enjoys cutting out hearts, we've found no other clues."

Each time a village-massacring incident occurred, Deceit Suppressing Guards from the Investigation Bureau would immediately search for residual Spirit Evil Qi at the scene, but no matter how hard they looked, they found nothing left by the threat.

It appeared as though it wasn't the work of a spirit evil at all.

However, judging by the scene's devastation and the traces left behind, it could only have been the work of a spirit evil.

After hearing Wu Feng's response, He Dongqi's expression turned even grimmer.

If it were only the wolf demon matter, it would be manageable—he could dispatch all the Deceit Suppression Bureau's forces to hunt the wolf demon, which was hiding in the Capital City, and such a large number of Bureau members would eventually find some trace.

But with the added threat of the village-massacring evil, he had to divert some efforts to locate this new menace.

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

At this moment, He Dongqi only felt an immense pressure weighing on him.

If he cannot simultaneously handle the matter of the Wolf Demon and the village massacre by evil spirits, his role as Commander of the Deceit Suppression Bureau would come to an end.

If it is just the loss of his official hat, that would be fortunate; the real fear is the Empress Dowager holding him accountable.

As He Dongqi frowned in distress, a Hundred Households from the Deceit Suppressing Guards entered the council hall, first bowing to everyone present and saying, "Greetings, Commander, greetings, lords."

After finishing the formalities, the guard looked at He Dongqi and said: "Master, someone from the palace has come."

Upon hearing this, He Dongqi was stunned, believing that the Empress Dowager had heard of the village massacre by evil spirits and sent someone to confront him.

Once he regained his senses, He Dongqi quickly said, "Please invite them in."

After He Dongqi spoke, the guard turned and left the council hall, and shortly afterward, a woman dressed in Qingyi entered the hall.

He Dongqi had already stood up, smiling as he approached the Qingyi woman, "What instructions does Her Majesty have?"

The woman said expressionlessly, "Her Majesty asks Master He to come to the palace."

He Dongqi's heart sank, feeling an ominous premonition, and he tentatively asked, "Miss, could you tell me what Her Majesty requires of me?"

The maid calmly said, "Master He will understand once you reach the palace; Her Majesty awaits in the Imperial Study Room."

After saying this, the maid turned and left directly.

This...

Watching the maid's departing figure, He Dongqi's heart sank to the bottom.

Even with a bad premonition in his mind, He Dongqi immediately headed to the Imperial Palace; now that the Empress Dowager holds power, her words are a Holy Decree, not to be defied.

Shortly after, He Dongqi arrived at the Imperial Study Room.

At this moment, Pei Shuhua sat at the Jade Table, her indifferent eyes sweeping over He Dongqi.

Feeling the Spirit Evil Qi emanating from Pei Shuhua, He Dongqi felt tremendous pressure and promptly bowed, saying, "Your servant greets the Empress Dowager!"

Pei Shuhua replied coldly, "Rise."

He Dongqi tentatively asked, "What does Her Majesty require of your servant?"

Pei Shuhua, expressionless, asked, "Did I hear correctly that you ordered the Heir of Prince Zhen Nan to sort through documents at the Prince's Mansion?"

Upon hearing this, He Dongqi's mind went blank, thinking the Empress Dowager was there because of the village massacre or the Wolf Demon, but realizing it was about Lu Chen.

However, He Dongqi quickly came to his senses, having heard today that Lu Chen plans to marry Ji Yunmeng, so Empress Dowager mentioning Lu Chen probably means she intends to eliminate Lu Chen quickly, thus thwarting the marriage.

With this possibility in mind, He Dongqi broke out in cold sweat, fearing more to offend the Zhen Nan Prince Manor than the Empress Dowager's pursuit of accountability for failing to stop the village massacre.

If he assists the Empress Dowager in dealing with Lu Chen, he is certain Lu Chen would die today, and he himself the next day, perhaps even without a trace of his body left.

He could never afford to make enemies with the Zhen Nan Prince Manor before, not to mention now that Emperor Zhou has allied with the Prince, with many in the Imperial Faction supporting the Prince's side; no matter his status as an Earth Realm Strong Person, he couldn't withstand their retaliation.

Returning to his senses, He Dongqi struggled to calm his emotions and then replied, "Your Majesty, Lu Chen's strength is weak; sending him on a mission could endanger his life."

"Furthermore, the Deceit Suppression Bureau boasts of numerous talents, and doesn't lack a Mortal Realm Spiritual Martial Artist."

Pei Shuhua's eyebrows flashed with anger at He Dongqi's words, coldly saying, "Lu Chen, after all, is the Heir of Prince Zhen Nan and is meant to inherit the title eventually; without undergoing rigorous training and strengthening himself, what qualifies him to succeed his father's princely title?"

"Besides, Yun'an is set to marry him; I do not wish Yun'an's husband to be a useless one."

This...

He Dongqi momentarily didn't know what to say, sharing Fan Yaodong's thoughts of passing the buck and quitting.

If it were only concerning the Earth Realm Wolf Demon, he could still manage; now evil spirits have invaded the capital's villages, combined with the Deceit Suppression Bureau caught up in the court struggle, He Dongqi feels utterly powerless.

With He Dongqi silent, Pei Shuhua asked, "Commander He, surely you understand my well-meaning intentions?"

Regaining his composure, He Dongqi quickly said, "Your Majesty, Lu Chen is the sole offspring of the Zhen Nan Prince Manor..."

Here, He Dongqi hesitated, trying to convey that if Lu Chen were harmed, the Zhen Nan Prince Manor would stop at nothing to retaliate against the Deceit Suppression Bureau, but such words need not be spoken; the Empress Dowager surely knows what he intends to say.

In any event, the Deceit Suppression Bureau cannot shoulder this blame, nor can He Dongqi; as an Earth Realm Strong Person, no matter where he joins, he'll receive good treatment.

Should he assist the Empress Dowager in eliminating Lu Chen, he'd be on a path to death; he'd rather offend the Empress Dowager than Prince Zhen Nan, for typically, the royal family wouldn't target an Earth Realm Strong Person, especially not the Commander of the Deceit Suppression Bureau, as attacking him without cause could easily provoke dissatisfaction within the bureau, which isn't favorable for the Empress Dowager who aims to control its power.

But aiding the Empress Dowager in eliminating Lu Chen would mean blood feud with the Zhen Nan Prince Manor, which wouldn't care if he's an Earth Realm Strong Person or the Commander of the Deceit Suppression Bureau.

So, He Dongqi knows well what choice he must make.

Seeing He Dongqi unwilling to side with her, Pei Shuhua, too, couldn't be bothered to waste words and said: "I'm exhausted, you may leave."

He Dongqi promptly bowed and said: "Your servant takes leave."

Upon speaking, He Dongqi fled from the Imperial Study Room.

Watching He Dongqi's departing figure, Spirit Evil Qi surged uncontrollably from Pei Shuhua, instantly sweeping through the entire Imperial Study Room.

Her Spirit Evil Qi is a deep color, akin to Prince Zhen Nan's Black Evil, yet she hasn't suffered any backlash from the Qi, its color has always been as such.

After a while, Pei Shuhua calmed her inner anger; despite her dissatisfaction, she couldn't move against He Dongqi directly.

Pei Shuhua contemplated that if He Dongqi wouldn't shoulder this blame, she'd seek another who would; she couldn't believe everyone in the Deceit Suppression Bureau would be so fearful.

...

After returning to the Deceit Suppression Bureau, He Dongqi's first task was to write a memorial, resigning as Commander of the Deceit Suppression Bureau.

At the Bureau, in the office room.

He Dongqi held his brush, gazing at the memorial on the desk, furrowing his brows, appearing somewhat displeased.

If he merely submits the resignation like this, the Empress Dowager may not approve it.

The Empress Dowager and the Pei Family surely won't directly confront the Zhen Nan Prince Manor; to eliminate Lu Chen, they undoubtedly need a scapegoat, with the Deceit Suppression Bureau evidently targeted to bear this blame.