

Ghost 137

Chapter 137: the storm

Morning in the barbaric camp began with noise.

Not normal noise.

Testing noise.

Drums. Chanting. The clanking of weapons.

The leader announced loudly:

"Newcomers will be tested today.

We do not accept weaklings."

The Empress' heart fell into her stomach pillow.

Fen Yu clutched her sleeve like a terrified child.

Li Shen pushed up imaginary glasses.

Wei Rong narrowed his eyes, ready to protect.

The Emperor looked calm...

but only because he was about to murder someone.

Yao Qing, meanwhile, ate a grilled corn happily.

"This camp has good food!"

She spoke at the top of her lungs.

The barbaric guards watched her like she was a foreign animal.

The twins sat dramatically on the ground.

"Father... must we be tested? We are weak..."

The boy twin whispered loudly.

The new man limped.

"My leg still broken... still very broken..."

The Emperor wanted to bury himself alive.

The Barbaric Clan's Test Begins

The leader stomped to the front of the clearing.

His voice shook the trees.

"Line up! You will show your strength."

The Emperor stood calmly.

The Empress stood nervously.

Yao Qing stood proudly.

The twins trembled like leaves.

The new man fell on purpose.

The Empress thought:

This is already going wrong.

The Emperor whispered low to her: "Stay behind me. Don't draw attention."

She nodded.

But before anything started—

Yao Qing stepped forward and shouted,

"MY HUSBAND IS VERY STRONG! HE CAN FIGHT TEN TIGERS!"

The whole camp turned.

The Emperor froze mid-breath.

The Empress covered her face.

The twins screamed: "Yes! Father is strongest!"

The new man rolled: "And my goats too!"

The leader looked impressed. "Very well. Show us."

The Emperor closed his eyes.

Opened them again.

Then whispered to the Empress:

"Your friend... will die today."

First Test: Carrying Boulder Stones

The guards brought forward huge stones — easily 70 kg each.

"Lift," the leader commanded.

The Emperor stepped forward, lifted one with one hand effortlessly.

Gasps spread.

The clan murmured: "He is strong."

"Has he trained with bears?"

"Not normal..."

The Empress tried to clap discreetly.

Yao Qing shouted, "That's my husband!!!"

The Emperor shot her a deadly glare.

Next: the Empress.

Everyone looked at her belly.

Fen Yu whispered, "You can't lift! Don't kill the pillow baby!"

Li Shen shook his ghost head. "If she tries, her stomach will fall on the ground."

Wei Rong said calmly, "I'll assist if needed."

The Empress held a tiny stone — for children.

The leader nodded approvingly. "A mother must protect her child. She is excused."

The Empress almost cried with relief.

Second Test: Running Skills

A long track was drawn.

"Run around the circle! We select only fast people."

The Emperor was ready.

He looked at the Empress:

"Stay behind me."

But before he could start—

Yao Qing grabbed her skirt and ran lightning fast.

She zoomed past barbaric people, twins, animals, and even startled chickens.

Everyone stared.

The leader whispered: "She runs like a possessed goat."

The Empress groaned, "She is supposed to PRETEND WEAK!"

The Emperor grabbed his forehead.

Yao Qing finished the run, panting dramatically.

"I run like this every day for my HUSBAND so he doesn't leave me!"

The Emperor choked.

The Empress punched him softly. "You deserve this."

Third Test: Loyalty Oath

The leader had everyone stand in a circle.

"We test loyalty through truth fire. Step close. If you lie, the flame changes color."

The Empress' heart stopped.

The truth fire was dangerous.

She held her stomach, panicked.

Fen Yu whispered, "It can reveal your lie about pregnancy!"

Li Shen said, "It reacts to spiritual energy too!"

Wei Rong prepared to shield her.

The Emperor moved subtly to block the fire's line of sight.

But Yao Qing stepped inside the circle FIRST.

And yelled:

"I AM LOYAL TO MY HUSBAND AND MY FAMILY!"

The flame stayed normal.

The camp clapped.

The Empress blinked.

"How... did she pass?"

Fen Yu whispered, "She believes her own lies. Fire reads sincerity."

Next: The Emperor.

He stepped forward.

"I am loyal to my family."

The flame flickered... but stabilized.

Then the Empress stepped forward.

Her heart pounded.

"I... am loyal... to my family."

Suddenly—

BOOM!

The fire burst bright gold.

Everyone gasped.

"She has strong spirit!"

"She will give birth to a powerful child!"

"She is chosen!"

The barbaric clan went crazy with excitement.

The Emperor swallowed hard.

He whispered: "They think your FAKE CHILD is holy..."

The Empress wanted to die.

Chaos Explosion: Yao Qing Opens Her Mouth Again

Before the clan could celebrate...

Yao Qing shouted:

"OF COURSE SHE'S POWERFUL! SHE ENDURED HER HUSBAND'S SECOND WIFE FOR YEARS!"

The camp stilled.

The Emperor froze.

The Empress froze.

Ghosts screamed.

Fen Yu: "THIS WOMAN MUST DIE!"

Li Shen whispered, "We will be kicked out..."

Wei Rong facepalmed hard.

The leader frowned. "Second wife?"

The Emperor coughed violently. "No—no—NO—she mis-speaks—"

"Yes!" Yao Qing continued proudly.

"He used to ignore her for another woman!"

The Empress stepped forward, smiling painfully.

"Hahaha! Pregnancy emotions! She talks nonsense!"

Yao Qing looked confused. "But—"

The Empress pinched her hard.

"OW—okay okay!"

The leader waved a hand. "If she is strong and can do spiritual tasks, she stays."

Everyone relaxed.

Until—

Emperor Drags the Empress Aside

As soon as the crowd scattered, the Emperor grabbed her wrist and dragged her behind a tent.

His voice was low, furious.

"Why did you bring your friend? WHY?!"

The Empress glared.

"I DIDN'T! She followed!"

"You could have stopped her."

"How? She's louder than thunder!"

"She could ruin everything! This is dangerous! We still don't know who controls the barbaric clan. We saw signs of black magic — forbidden magic. Someone stronger is behind them."

The Empress paused.

His anger wasn't royal anger.

It was fear.

Fear for her.

She softened slightly.

"You don't need to shout."

He stepped closer, voice trembling with frustration.

"If anything happens to you, I—"

He stopped.

Looked away.

But she heard enough.

Her heart twisted.

Then she punched his arm lightly.

"Stop yelling. I can protect myself."

His eyes softened just for a breath.

Then Yao Qing yelled from far:

"HUSBAND! WE NEED MORE FOOD!"

He nearly collapsed.

The Empress laughed.

"See? If anyone dies today, it's because of HER, not me."

He covered his face and sighed: "We will never survive this mission."

The Empress patted his shoulder.

"Relax. Tomorrow will be worse."

A barbaric soldier marched past their tent with a bucket of water when suddenly—

THUMP!

The boy twin collapsed dramatically in front of him.

"UNCLE HELP! I'M DYING!" he wailed loudly.

The soldier panicked, spilling the water everywhere.

"What happened?!"

The twin clutched his chest.

"I haven't eaten in FIVE HOURS.

My poor body... my weak heart... I am a fragile flower..."

The soldier blinked.

The Emperor pressed his fingers to his temples.

Please, heavens, take me away.

The Empress kicked the boy lightly. "Get up."

"Nooo," he cried dramatically, "the ground is soft... the earth calls me..."

Fen Yu the ghost snorted. "He should win an award."

Wei Rong muttered, "At this point even ghosts pity him."

Li Shen shook his head. "His acting has improved."

The barbaric soldier carried the boy to a seat, murmuring sympathetically:

"Poor child... life must have been hard."

The Emperor whispered at the Empress:

"Your twin is going to blow our cover."

She whispered back,

"YOUR twin. You adopted them in front of the clan."

He choked.

The Second Disaster — The Girl Twin "Blessing" People

The girl twin wandered into the center of the camp holding a bowl of water.

"I BLESS YOU!" she declared.

And splashed a grown barbarian warrior in the face.

Everyone stared.

She splashed another one.

"You too! Blessing!"

The warriors wiped their faces, confused.

One asked, "Why are you blessing us?"

She smiled mysteriously.

"Because my mother is holy and pregnant.

I am spreading her sacred water."

The Empress dropped her stick for stirring porridge.

The Emperor's soul left his body.

The barbaric camp burst into excited murmurs.

"She is blessed child!"

"She brings fortune!"

"She is from the holy line!"

"She shall bless the whole camp!"

The Emperor dragged the Empress aside.

"THIS— is your fault."

"How?? She's YOUR daughter here."

He opened his mouth — then closed it.

He had no retort.

The Third Disaster — The New Man and the Goat Story

The new man sat surrounded by barbaric men, telling stories.

"So my goat... was a scholar."

The men leaned in.

"What?"

"Yes. Smartest goat in the province. Could read books."

"Books??"

"Oh yes," he nodded seriously, "and she once fought ten bandits."

The Empress smacked her forehead.

The Emperor groaned into his hands.

But the men were amazed.

"A goat warrior..."

"We must recruit the goat!"

"Is your goat alive?"

The new man shook his head dramatically.

"She died... saving my life."

The men stood up in respect.

"We honor the goat."

A small shrine of rocks was immediately built.

Suspicion Rises in the Barbaric Leader

The leader stood on a high rock watching all the chaos below.

He squinted at the twins blessing people...

At the boy fainting...

At the new man receiving worship...

At the Emperor trying not to scream...

Then looked at the Empress, glowing strangely, spiritual pressure around her higher than before.

The leader frowned.

"These villagers... are odd."

He called his lieutenant.

"Keep an eye on them."

The Ritual Summoning Attempt

Later that day, the clan prepared a low-level spiritual task.

The Empress was supposed to watch quietly.

But of course—

The twins insisted on following.

"We are family!"

"We support Mother!"

The new man followed too.

"I bring emotional support!"

The Emperor's face twitched.

"If you three make ONE SOUND—"

Before he could finish...

The boy twin screamed, "MOTHER! The ground is shaking!"

It was not.

The girl twin added, "I saw a ghost!"

She did not — she only saw Li Shen floating.

The new man shouted, "SAVE THE GOATS!"

There were no goats.

The entire ritual collapsed.

Drums stopped.

Chants broke.

The fire flared dangerously.

The barbaric shaman glared.

"Your family has disrupted the ceremony!"

The Emperor clenched his fists.

The Empress stepped forward before he exploded.

"We apologize. Children are nervous because of my... condition."

She placed a hand on her fake stomach.

The shaman softened.

"A pregnant woman's aura is fragile.

Fine. We will excuse it once."

The Emperor exhaled.

The Empress glared at the twins:

"Sit. Quiet. Or I give you to the bears."

Both nodded fearfully.

The new man whispered: "Do bears like goat meat?"

Wei Rong ghost replied: "Sadly, yes."

He fainted.

Back in the Tent — Emperor's Eruption

The moment they returned to the tent, the Emperor snapped.

"WHAT PART OF UNDERCOVER DID YOU ALL NOT UNDERSTAND?!"

The twins hid behind the Empress.

The new man sat on the ground hugging his knees.

The Emperor pointed at them one by one.

"You fainted. You splashed people. You created goat religion. YOU—"

He pointed at the Empress.

"YOU brought them!"

She crossed her arms.

"Did I? Or did YOU fail to stop them?"

He blinked.

"Why are you yelling at me? WE are here risking our lives!"

"Yes," she replied calmly, "and you are the one who wanted me to come pretending pregnant."

He opened his mouth...

Closed it...

Opened again...

Fen Yu ghost whispered, "He's losing."

Li Shen ghost added, "Empress wins this round."

Wei Rong ghost nodded respectfully.

The Emperor groaned. "I'm surrounded by idiots."

The Empress smiled sweetly. "You married me. That counts as one good choice."

He nearly collapsed.

Final Straw — Girl Twin Announces Something Terrifying

As everyone tried to relax, the girl twin peeked outside the tent flap.

Then rushed inside.

"MOTHER! They are preparing a higher ritual!"

The emperor stood immediately.

"Describe it."

"They are drawing a huge circle... with bones."

Fen Yu trembled. "That's dark magic!"

Li Shen's ghost eyes widened. "That ritual summons spirit-eaters."

Wei Rong's ghost went cold. "Someone strong is controlling them."

The Emperor and Empress locked eyes.

This was no longer a small undercover mission.

This was real danger.

And the clan was preparing something forbidden.

The twins gulped.

The new man whispered: "Should... should we run?"

The Emperor shook his head.

"No. We find answers.

Tonight, we infiltrate the ritual."

The Empress nodded, eyes sharp.

The ghosts floated forward behind her — stronger now after their cultivation.

The chaotic little group suddenly looked like a real force.

The Emperor took a deep breath.

"...Just try not to faint again."

The boy twin saluted proudly.

"No guarantees, Father."

The Emperor nearly passed out.