

## I. Dynasty 384

### Chapter 384: Fireworks and Killing Intent

With no moon in the sky, the night was exceptionally dark.

Only the palace lanterns emitted a faint, dim light.

At this moment, Xiao Ming said a few words to Feng Deshui, who then left and quickly returned with a palace eunuch from the Bi Shui Pavilion. The eunuch placed a box in front of the door.

Xiao Ming opened the box to reveal Qingzhou fireworks.

These were a batch of brand new fireworks, not the ones Xiao Ming had used during the New Year, but a type of rocket firework.

Xiao Wenxuan, looking at the cylindrical and conical items in the box, asked, “Seventh Brother, what are these?”

“Father Emperor, are you familiar with firecrackers?” Xiao Ming first gave them a warning—these fireworks could explode.

“Of course, I know about them.” During the New Year, the palace would also set off firecrackers, so he wasn’t unfamiliar with them. Upon hearing the word “firecrackers,” the younger princes’ eyes brightened.

Xiao Ming continued, "These are similar to firecrackers, but they release beautiful flames when they explode."

"Beautiful flames?" Xiao Wenxuan looked confused. Firecrackers were just firecrackers—what did flames have to do with them?

"Father Emperor, rather than explain, let me show you," Xiao Ming said with a smile.

He had brought the fireworks for the wedding, hoping to add some excitement. Since he was getting married in this world, he wanted to make it a lively occasion.

Moreover, if these fireworks pleased Xiao Wenxuan, it would also give Xiao Ming the opportunity to impress his father.

Xiao Ming picked up a rocket firework, which was about a meter tall, and lit a candle to ignite it.

"Father Emperor, this firework is called 'Flying Immortal from the Sky,'" Xiao Ming said with a grin, placing the rocket-like firework at an angle against a small tree in front of Fulin Hall and lighting the fuse.

"Zzzzz..." The fuse burned quickly.

In just ten seconds, the rocket firework suddenly shot into the sky at an angle.

After disappearing into the dark night, as everyone watched intently, the firework exploded with a loud “boom.” The silver flames spread like raindrops across the sky, tearing through the darkness in a dazzling array of colors.

“Ah...!”

At the moment of the explosion, some of the younger princes and princesses screamed in shock.

But once they saw the beautiful display, they were instantly captivated by the stunning spectacle.

Xiao Ming looked up, and the fireworks filled the sky, their explosion covering an area of five to six meters. He stood with the others, admiring the view.

Actually, these fireworks weren’t difficult to make. It was a creation of Chen Qi when he was researching the Hu Zun cannon.

With the development of the Qingzhou army, the military had grown dissatisfied with weapons like the catapult. Not only were they heavy, but they also had a short range and were prone to damage.

So, Chen Qi had started producing Hu Zun cannons, a type of curved artillery.

In modern times, the Hu Zun cannon was invented during the Ming Dynasty under Qi Jiguang and was used in mountain warfare, excelling at hitting enemies hiding behind cover due to its curved trajectory.

After researching it, Chen Qi figured he could use the Hu Zun cannon to launch small gunpowder barrels. He began working on making short and wide barrels for the cannon.

But before the cannon was finished, he realized that by shrinking the gunpowder barrels to the size of cherries, he could make fireworks that exploded in the sky, thus solving Xiao Ming's earlier regret that fireworks couldn't fly.

So, during his experiments, he boldly created this batch of sky-bound fireworks.

"Xiao Ming, what is all this?" Xiao Wenxuan asked, his eyes wide with surprise as he stared at the fireworks.

"Father Emperor, these are fireworks from Qingzhou, filled with gunpowder."

"I'm familiar with gunpowder, but why does it make such colorful, beautiful flames?" Xiao Wenxuan said, incredulously.

"Father Emperor, it's the work of craftsmen," Xiao Ming explained.

Xiao Wenxuan nodded, “Indeed, you Qingzhou always have something new. Let me give it a try.”

Xiao Ming took out another firework, showing Xiao Wenxuan how to light it.

Xiao Wenxuan understood, and following Xiao Ming’s example, he lit the firework with a candle, moved a few steps back, and once again, a beautiful firework exploded in the sky. Everyone around them was mesmerized by the spectacle.

“I want to try one too! I want to try one!” After the next firework exploded, the princes and princesses eagerly surrounded Xiao Ming.

Xiao Wenxuan laughed heartily, seemingly approving of the fireworks display. Xiao Ming began teaching each of them how to light the fireworks.

“Boom boom boom...”

One by one, the fireworks flew into the sky, filling the heavens with colorful explosions.

The princes and princesses had a great time, while the concubines watched, equally fascinated.

The palace guards and maids also noticed the spectacle, but they didn’t understand what was happening. They thought something serious had occurred, so they rushed to protect the royal family. However, when they saw everyone enjoying the fireworks, they returned to their posts.

Meanwhile, in the common districts of Chang'an, the citizens also saw the beautiful fireworks above the palace.

Some were amazed by the sight of the multicolored display in the sky. A few even knelt toward the palace, believing that the Emperor had received divine favor.

While everyone was enjoying the display, a small eunuch hurried over.

The eunuch knelt before Xiao Wenxuan and said, "Your Majesty, the citizens in the common districts are gathering. They say that Your Majesty is the Son of Heaven, blessed by the heavens, and that the auspicious fireworks are a sign of divine favor for the Great Yu Empire!"

"Hahaha..." Xiao Wenxuan, who had been preparing to light another firework, suddenly laughed loudly.

The ancient belief in the divine right of kings had deeply influenced the people, and Xiao Ming's unintentional fireworks display had further solidified Xiao Wenxuan's supreme status, strengthening his claim to the throne.

Laughing, Xiao Wenxuan suddenly threw his arm around Xiao Ming's shoulders and said, "Xiao Ming, you truly are my lucky star. Tomorrow, I'll grant you the Three Pearl Crown and make you a Three Pearl Prince!"

Upon hearing this, Princess Xiangcheng and the Ninth Prince smiled happily.

However, the Crown Prince, Second Prince, and others looked extremely displeased.

“Thank you, Father Emperor.”

Xiao Ming smiled, showing his teeth. The title of Three Pearl Prince meant he was now on par with the King of Wei and others. It also signified Xiao Ming’s growing position in Xiao Wenxuan’s heart.

The banquet ended in a joyful atmosphere. Xiao Ming hadn’t expected that a few fireworks would earn him the honor of becoming a Three Pearl Prince.

But since it was late, the princes couldn’t stay in the palace any longer. They left the palace and returned to their respective places.

Outside, a carriage was waiting for Xiao Ming. As he was about to board, another carriage blocked his way. The curtain was lifted, revealing the face of the Third Prince.

“Seventh Brother, it’s hard to travel in the dark,” the Third Prince said, smiling.