

Little Girl 621

Chapter 621: The New Leader

"Who said that Nine Streams Spiritual Technique is inferior to Eighth Rank Spiritual Techniques?"

Xin Lin stood up.

"Sister..."

Little Xinzhuo struggled, wanting to stop his sister.

Sister usually had a good temper, but once her bottom line was touched, she would become a completely different person.

"Did I say something wrong? Oh, I forgot, you are the trash from Shaking Light Class. If I'm not mistaken, you probably only know the Nine Streams Spiritual Technique. I heard you just started learning Spirit Art a few days ago, did you manage to light the candle?"

Chu Miaoyun said this and then burst into loud laughter.

Lighting the candle is a compulsory lesson for students who have just started learning Spirit Art.

Most of the students at the Spirit Institute start learning the Fire Explosion Technique as their first spirit art.

For the students of Yuheng Class, the Fire Explosion Technique is hardly considered a spirit art; it is the lowest of the Nine Streams Spiritual Techniques.

"I did. I was just about to light the candle for you."

Xin Lin hooked her lips, her mouth curling into a slight arc.

"What did you say! Xin Lin, don't think just because you know a bit of Medical Skill, you can show off in front of me. Whatever I can do to him, I can do to you too."

Chu Miaoyun coldly snorted.

Xin Lin really didn't know whether to live or die, she still thought she was the Chu Miaoyun from Chu Mansion back then.

Chu Miaoyun's eyes were filled with malice.

"That's exactly what I wanted to tell you. Chu Miaoyun, I formally challenge you."

Xin Lin walked up to Chu Miaoyun.

Chu Miaoyun was initially stunned, then burst out laughing so hard that tear came out.

"Xin Lin, you must be joking, you challenge me? Everyone come and see, this trash from Shaking Light Class wants to challenge me?"

The students from Yuheng Class also looked at Xin Lin with contempt.

Qingtian Academy is a place where the strong feed on the weak, and the gaps between classes are immense.

Shaking Light Class has been the weakest class in the Spirit Institute for decades.

Xin Lin, a trash without Spirit Root, actually dared to challenge Chu Miaoyun, it's a wonder Xin Lin dared to say such words.

"To fight or not to fight?"

Xin Lin had only one sentence.

"Fight? What qualifications do you have to fight me?"

Chu Miaoyun said contemptuously.

"By the right that I am the leader of Shaking Light Class."

Xin Lin said solemnly.

Leader?

"Bluffing, you dare claim to be the leader of Shaking Light Class? The leader of Shaking Light Class is Advanced Spirit Master Zhao Gang."

Chu Miaoyun snorted.

Zhao Gang's skills are indeed commendable, and if it weren't for Zhao Gang backing them, Shaking Light Class in Qingtian Academy would have an even harder time holding their heads high.

Xin Lin didn't say much more, and produced a wooden token from her clothes.

On this token was written 'Kui Qi'.

At that moment, the students from Yuheng Class present all froze.

They recognized that token.

In the entire Qingtian Academy, there are only seven of these types of tokens, only leaders of the seven classes can possess the leader's order.

Starting from the first, Tianshu Class is 'Kui Yi', and going downwards until Shaking Light Class is 'Kui Qi.'

This token symbolizes leadership, unable to be faked.

"Are you really Shaking Light Class's leader? What is Zhao Gang playing at?"

Chu Miaoyun looked at the token and then back at Xin Lin.

If Xin Lin is the leader of Shaking Light Class, that changes things.

The three main classes of the Spirit Institute have always been covertly competitive.

Chu Miaoyun as a new student, if she could use this opportunity to thoroughly humiliate Xin Lin, it would mean slapping the entire face of Shaking Light Class, and she could make a name for herself in the Spirit Institute.

Chapter 622: The Fire Spirit Is Gone!

"To fight or not to fight, or is it that Yuheng Class dares not accept the challenge from Shaking Light Class?"

Xin Lin, alone, stood in front of a dozen Yuheng Class students.

"Miao Yun, beat this blind fool to death."

"How dare someone from Shaking Light Class act recklessly in front of our Yuheng Class, show her some color!"

"It's true, she's as oblivious as a horse unaware of its long face or a monkey unaware of its red butt; she really thinks herself a leader."

"The leader of Shaking Light Class doesn't even qualify to carry shoes for us in Yuheng Class."

If Zhao Gang were standing here today, those people from Yuheng Class certainly wouldn't dare to talk like this.

But the one before them is not Zhao Gang; it's Xin Lin, a waste with no Spirit Root.

The students of Yuheng Class didn't take her seriously at all and only felt she was here to humiliate herself.

"Since you're asking for it, I'll accept your challenge. For fairness, I'll also use a Ninth Rank Spiritual Technique to face you. You probably only know the Fire Explosion Technique, so I'll use that too."

Chu Miaoyun had an expression that said 'I'm indulging you,' but inside, she was very pleased.

It's better to use the Fire Explosion Technique.

Xin Lin is as brainless as her foolish father.

Does she really think that having taught her a lesson at the Chu Mansion, she can do so without fear?

Nowadays, Chu Miaoyun possesses Dual Spiritual Roots, both Wood and Fire, and wood fuels fire, which makes her Fire Spiritual Root stronger.

This means that, using the same Fire attribute Spirit Technique, Chu Miaoyun can wield it much more powerfully than the average person.

Not to mention that her opponent is Xin Lin, someone without a Spirit Root.

The same Fire Spirit Technique, when used by both, would have vastly different effects.

"Fine, we'll use the Fire Explosion Technique."

After saying this, Xin Lin walked to the center of the Cultivation Field with Chu Miaoyun.

The Cultivation Field of Yuheng Class is several times larger than that of Shaking Light Class.

The two stood in the center, with students and the injured Little Xinzhuo surrounding them.

Little Xinzhuo was extremely nervous.

"Don't worry, Sister will definitely not lose. Besides, there's Brother Hu."

Little Xinzhuo comforted himself.

The students from Yuheng Class all had a look of anticipation for a good show, waiting to see Xin Lin beg for mercy.

The female student who had been called out by Xin Lin earlier acted as the referee; she looked at Xin Lin, then at Chu Miaoyun, her lips quivering slightly.

"Begin!"

Xin Lin and Chu Miaoyun brought their five fingers together, facing towards the sky, which is the standard Gathering Spirit gesture.

Inside Chu Miaoyun, both her Wood Spirit Root and Fire Spirit Root shivered, beginning to absorb the surrounding Fire Spirit.

Her face was filled with smug satisfaction, just waiting to blast Xin Lin into an unrecognizable state.

"Hmm?"

After gathering spirit for a moment, Chu Miaoyun, full of pride, had a slight change in her expression.

What's going on?

Her Fire Spiritual Root couldn't feel even a whiff of the Fire Spirit.

Not even the slightest bit; the Fire Spirits floating around the Cultivation Field seemed to have vanished in an instant.

For Spiritual Practitioners below the level of Great Spirit Master, when they use a Spirit Technique, they have to first gather spirit, which means drawing in Spiritual Energy from the surrounding environment to transform into a Spirit Technique.

The Fire Explosion Technique is likewise.

But now, Chu Miaoyun's Fire Spiritual Root couldn't feel any Fire Spirit at all.

"It can't be, where did all the Fire Spirits go?"

Chu Miaoyun felt something was amiss.

Her Wood Spirit Root moved again, trying to find some Wood Spirit.

But the same thing happened; there were no Wood Spirits around.

She couldn't feel any Spiritual Energy!

Chu Miaoyun had never encountered such a situation since she obtained her Spirit Root!

Chapter 623: Pleading for Mercy

Chu Miaoyun was utterly shocked for a moment.

But she quickly regained her composure.

"Could it be just a coincidence that all of the Spiritual Energy around us has been depleted? Even I, with Dual Spiritual Roots, cannot sense any Spiritual Energy, let alone Xin Lin, that trash without a Spirit Root; needless to say, she can't perform Gathering Spirit."

Chu Miaoyun felt somewhat relieved.

But at that moment, she suddenly felt an intense heat.

Boom—

A Fireball shot out in front of her.

The Fireball exploded with a bang.

The fierce Fire Spirit struck Chu Miaoyun.

Chu Miaoyun screamed, her body flying straight out.

"Impossible! Fire Spirit, how did you manage to condense it!"

Chu Miaoyun could smell a burning stench in her chest, her clothes caught fire.

She rolled on the ground ungracefully, trying to snuff out the flames on her.

But then, several more Fireballs exploded one after another in front of her, behind her, each one striking with uncanny accuracy.

"Help!"

Chu Miaoyun realized the situation was dire.

She wanted to condense Fire Spirit, but there was still not a trace of it to be found around her.

The Fire Spirits, as if discriminating against her, Chu Miaoyun couldn't sense them at all.

In contrast, on Xin Lin's side, Fireballs kept exploding one after another beside Chu Miaoyun.

In a blink of an eye, Chu Miaoyun had become a living torch.

The students of the Yuheng Class were also stunned.

What happened?

Chu Miaoyun had no means of fighting back against the trash from the Shaking Light Class.

"I give up! I admit defeat! Save me!"

Chu Miaoyun, unable to perform Gathering Spirit, was utterly defenseless under Xin Lin's barrage of Fire Explosion Techniques.

"Stop!"

Suddenly, there was a thunderous roar.

The supervisor of the Yuheng Class, Fang Dushi, quickly rushed in.

He had hurried over after hearing the commotion here.

But he arrived to see Chu Miaoyun ablaze.

Fang Dushi formed a hand seal for a Spirit Art; a mist of water surrounded him, and suddenly, a large serpent with a coiled body appeared.

The giant snake spewed a jet of water, extinguishing the flames on Chu Miaoyun's body.

Looking at Chu Miaoyun again, her hair was disheveled, her clothes tattered, her delicate skin charred black, flesh burst open, her appearance no longer recognizable.

At this moment, she couldn't speak, only sob and wail in pain.

"I recognize you, you are Xin Lin from the Shaking Light Class, you have some nerve, setting fire and assaulting someone!"

Fang Dushi was furious.

Chu Miaoyun had Fire and Wood Dual Spiritual Roots, and was this year's key cultivation target for the Yuheng Class; moreover, Fang Dushi had received many favors from Chu Tianyi, who asked him to take good care of Chu Miaoyun.

How was he supposed to explain this to Chu Tianyi now that Chu Miaoyun had ended up in such a state?

"This was a normal Spirit Art duel. If you don't believe me, you can ask the Yuheng Class students who were present."

Xin Lin quickly moved the Qi Stone from her left sleeve into the Tuling hairpin.

The fundamental reason why Chu Miaoyun could not perform Gathering Spirit was of course not because the Fire Spirit in the Cultivation Field had truly been depleted.

It was because Xin Lin had absorbed all the nearby Fire and Wood Spirits first with the Five Elements Gathering Spirit Technique.

Without Fire Spirit, Chu Miaoyun couldn't possibly use the Fire Explosion Technique.

"Supervisor Fang, my Sister didn't lie; Chu Miaoyun agreed to the Spirit Art duel with my Sister herself. Please, do not blame Sister; she was merely standing up for me."

Little Xinzhuo struggled to stand up.

Seeing the bloodied Little Xinzhuo, Supervisor Fang then glanced at the students around.

The students looked at each other, none daring to speak.

Chapter 624: Who Dares Touch My Student

"One is an unfavored prince, one is the beloved daughter of Grand Doctor Chu, and yet another is a spirit rootless person."

Master Fang's sense of justice had already been skewed in his heart, and he snorted coldly.

"I don't care what your reasons are for starting a fight, the fact that you used Spirit Art to severely injure a fellow student is undeniable. A violent student like you cannot remain in Qingtian Academy; come with me to see the director."

"I did nothing wrong, why should I go see the director?"

Xin Lin said defensively.

"You must go, whether you want to or not!"

Master Fang was even more infuriated upon seeing Xin Lin's defiance.

Spirit Light flickered between his fingers, Water Spirit condensed into a snake, and the giant snake spat out a net of water, ready to trap Xin Lin and forcibly subdue him.

"Who dares to touch my student."

As the water net spread, Xin Lin felt the Spiritual Energy around him binding, and his limbs suddenly became less agile.

Suddenly, thump, thump, thump.

From the ground, sharp black-gold thorns burst forth.

The water net shattered instantly, turning into a mist of blue water.

Mu Chen came walking over from a distance, unhurriedly.

"Mu Chen, what do you mean by this! Are you condoning your student's violent behavior?"

Master Fang was full of anger, but when he saw Mu Chen, he dared not act rashly.

The Shaking Light Class had recently changed supervisors.

The former Master Guo was weak-willed, often bullied by several Spirit Institute supervisors including Master Fang.

The students of the Shaking Light Class suffered along with him.

But Mu Chen was different.

This fellow, invited by the Spirit Institute Director, had impressive skills and mastery of Spirit Art that other supervisors dared not underestimate.

Mu Chen appeared all smiles, seemingly affable, but in reality, he was very protective of his own.

"Violence? I didn't see any violence. Oh, are you talking about children fighting? Yes, I did see a few children fighting just now. Let me think, first there's that charcoal head on the ground..."

Mu Chen pointed at Chu Miaoyun who was still lying on the ground.

Chu Miaoyun's body was scorched black, not much different from a charcoal head.

Upon hearing this, Chu Miaoyun felt both pain and rage, fainting on the spot.

"She hit the prince first. Then, when my Xin Xin saw the injustice, she stepped forward and fought as well. Children fighting each other, you call this violence? If it truly counts as violence, then that person

lying on the ground has to be expelled as well; she has harmed a royal descendant, inflicting several large holes on the little prince. Oh, such severe injuries, if it weren't for my Xin Xin's superb medical skills, the little prince would have been beyond saving. Tsk tsk, a prince dies in your class, I see your career as a supervisor coming to an end. Oh, you might not believe it, no worries, I've recorded it all."

Saying this, Mu Chen muttered something under his breath.

Behind him, a pool of Water Spirit condensed.

A Water Spirit Mirror smooth as glass appeared, and recorded on it was the earlier scene of Chu Miaoyun provoking Little Xinzhuo, Little Xinzhuo getting injured.

Followed by Xin Lin's arrival, timely treatment of Little Xinzhuo, and the duel between the two girls, with both using the Fire Explosion Technique, unfolded before the students and supervisors present.

The more Master Fang saw, the uglier his expression became.

The Water Spirit Mirror was a Sixth Rank Spirit Art; Mu Chen could condense it with a flick of his finger, his Spirit Master level undoubtedly much higher than what he usually displayed.

With irrefutable evidence, Master Fang, even if he wanted to pursue the matter further, dared not do so.

"Master Mu, lucky you saw it, it's just children fighting, no need to make a big fuss. This bunch, they are getting more and more unreasonable, don't worry, I will take them back and make sure they're properly disciplined."

Master Fang dared not say more and hurriedly led people away.

Chapter 625: A Well-Intentioned Warning

The cultivation field suddenly emptied.

"Ah Zhuo, let's go."

Xin Lin didn't thank Mu Chen and was about to leave while supporting Little Xinzhuo.

"Xinxin, don't you think you've forgotten something?"

Mu Chen had a look of grievance.

She didn't even offer him a word of thanks.

"I didn't ask you for a fee to watch the show, that's good enough."

Xin Lin harrumphed.

Mu Chen had even used techniques like the Water Spirit Mirror, which showed he had been watching closely from the side.

He had her come to rescue Little Xinzhuo, not out of kindness.

But Xin Lin also had her own backup plan. She had used the Five Elements Gathering Spirit Technique without a single flaw, and the Water Spirit Mirror couldn't record a trace of it.

"You're being too harsh. I just casually left behind the Water Spirit Mirror, that's all. If it wasn't for me, the Seventh Prince might have been in great peril today."

Mu Chen retorted, not pleased.

He admitted that he did indeed tell her about Little Xinzhuo to force Xin Lin into action.

But that wasn't his only opportunity; if he had wanted to, he could have chosen to do nothing.

"Master Mu, thank you."

Little Xinzhuo was a polite child, giving Mu Chen a bow.

He had a poor impression of Mu Chen and had even openly refused him before, so he felt somewhat guilty.

Little Xinzhuo's bow unexpectedly made Mu Chen feel a bit embarrassed.

"Hey, hey, Seventh Prince, please don't do this, I'm not really a good person."

A rare blush appeared on the handsome face of Mu Chen.

Someone like him, used to being shameless, felt uncomfortable being kind-hearted, even if it's just for once.

"But I must warn you, he lived through sheer luck this time. Next time he might not be so fortunate. Xin Lin, you were able to protect him once, but you can't protect him forever."

Mu Chen watched Xin Lin and her brother walk away and commented in a moderate tone.

Xin Lin did not pause, escorting Little Xinzhuo to the Medical Hall.

"This girl, she's not simple. Her Spirit Art... it's a bit strange."

Mu Chen looked around.

Tut-tut, after that duel, the surrounding Spiritual Energy was clearly off.

Fang Dushi, the supervisor, was too enraged earlier to notice.

But Mu Chen did notice. Even he couldn't sense a trace of Fire Spirit or Wood Spirit around here now.

Those two types of Spiritual Energy had completely disappeared.

Where had all that Spiritual Energy gone?

Mu Chen pondered thoughtfully.

Xin Lin arrived at the School Clinic with Little Xinzhuo.

"Hey, isn't this the little pretty boy? What happened to you to end up looking like this?"

Master Mo saw Little Xinzhuo, couldn't help but pinch his cheeks, and got his hand slapped away by Xin Lin.

Master Mo, this old lecher, couldn't stand up straight when he saw a handsome man.

From his own silly father to Mu Chen, and now to Little Xinzhuo, a budding flower of the nation, Master Mo couldn't resist the urge to torment them.

"Did someone from Yuheng Class bully you? Oh, poor thing. Why don't you just stop attending Yuheng Class and study Medical Skill with me instead? If anyone offends you in the future, I'll help you poison them!"

Master Mo mumbled to himself.

"You'd rather spend your time poisoning people than digging out some lotus roots for a lotus root and pork rib soup tonight."

Xin Lin said irritably, sending Master Mo away under the pretext of bandaging up Little Xinzhuo.

Upon hearing about the soup, Master Mo eagerly ran off to find the free laborer Lu Yuan.

"Sister, you don't have to worry, I may look small, but my body is strong. I'll recover quickly."

Little Xinzhuo was well-behaved. He didn't want Xin Lin to worry, so he comforted his sister.

Chapter 626: Pride Corpse's Suggestion

Seeing Little Xinzhuo's obedient appearance, Xin Lin's heart felt even more uneasy.

Due to the influence of Gui Hu's Ghost Energy, Little Xinzhuo's physique is indeed much stronger than that of an ordinary person.

With such severe injuries, once the bleeding had stopped, his recovery had already begun.

All it would take is some recuperation, and a few days of rest, then he would spring back to life like a lively dragon.

But what good is that?

The words of Mu Chen earlier were right.

He might escape this time, but not the next.

Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo were not in the same class. This time it was Chu Miaoyun, and next time it could be someone else from the Yuheng Class, or even someone from the Spirit Institute or the Martial Arts Academy.

Those who saw Little Xinzhuo as a thorn in their side were the Empress and the Third Prince among others; Purple Cloud City was their turf, how many times could she possibly fend them off?

Xin Lin brewed some calming medicine and let Little Xinzhuo take it; the little guy had lost too much blood and soon fell asleep.

"Pride Corpse, I know you've seen and heard everything, can you help Little Xinzhuo?"

There was no one Xin Lin could discuss Little Xinzhuo's plight with—the only one was Pride Corpse.

"The grass that isn't removed at the root will grow back when the spring breeze blows. That idiot from Fengdu was right."

Gui Hu spoke indifferently.

"If I could get rid of the Empress and the Third Prince, I would have acted long ago."

Xin Lin snorted.

"Since the root of the problem cannot be removed, one must find ways to strengthen oneself. The little ghost has a good foundation, but it's not enough."

Gui Hu hinted meaningfully.

Every Cultivator knows that it is impossible to make great progress in their cultivation overnight.

"Are you referring to the situation with Noble Shi?"

Xin Lin's heart stirred, catching the extra implication in Gui Hu's words.

One of the main reasons Little Xinzhuo had always been bullied, even ignored by his supervisor Fang Dushi regarding similar acts of bullying, was because the Third Prince and others, or rather, because Noble Shi had fallen out of favor.

Noble Shi had returned to the Imperial Palace for so long, and although Emperor Longteng had favored her for a few days and even expressed verbally that he wanted to bestow her the title of consort, the official decree never came.

It was said that during the ceremony, they were obstructed by Grandmaster Jin and a group of civil servants.

Those civil servants said that Noble Shi was the daughter of a defiant General Shi.

The misdeeds of the elder General Shi from the past were disastrous; if Noble Shi were conferred the title so soon, there would certainly be opposition within and outside the court.

As long as Noble Shi's status is not rectified, Little Xinzhuo cannot have peace at Qingtian Academy.

"It seems that a two-pronged approach is necessary. But how can we ensure that Noble Shi receives Emperor Longteng's decree?"

Xin Lin fell deep into contemplation.

Outside the School Clinic, Master Mo was enjoying the sight of a sturdy, handsome man emerging from bathing. Um, no... it was a picture of a handsome man digging lotus roots.

"Master Mo, are these lotus roots the ones you planted a few days ago? Goodness, in just two or three days, they've grown this big; I almost didn't recognize them."

Since passing the Five Meridians test, Lu Yuan's True Qi had been improving daily.

In these few days, he had grown several inches taller than before, and his muscles, bathed in the afterglow of the setting sun, shone with the color of amber, almost making Master Mo drool.

"Isn't that the truth, they've really grown huge."

Master Mo stared at Lu Yuan's chest muscles and muttered to himself.

Lu Yuan dug up several dozen pounds of lotus roots.

These lotus roots, like the cabbage seeds and sweet potato stems soaked in the Jade Pure Spring that Xin Lin had used before, had absorbed the spirit of the Jade Pure Spring and grown rapidly, becoming as thick as the arms of a Martial Artist like Lu Yuan, clearly extraordinary!

Chapter 627: I Respect No One But You

During dinner, Xin Lin stewed a fragrant pot of lotus root and pork rib soup.

When fresh, the lotus root is moist and crisp, biting into it produces a crunchy sound without any residue.

After simmering with high-quality pork ribs, the lotus root becomes tender and mushy, both floury and sticky. The aroma of the pork ribs permeates the lotus root, making each spoonful of soup taste fresh and smooth. Drinking it at the end of summer and the beginning of autumn makes one feel much more nourished.

The large pot of lotus root and pork rib soup was quickly devoured.

Lu Yuan had worked hard on digging lotus roots and other tasks, so he managed to secure two bowls of soup for himself.

Xin Lin also set aside a small pot of soup specifically for Little Xinzhuo.

"I heard that the Seventh Prince was bullied again? And you burned Chu Miaoyun of the Yuheng Class beyond recognition?"

Lu Yuan glanced at Little Xinzhuo inside.

He was now a familiar face at the School Clinic and knew about the brotherly relationship between Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo.

Today's incident at the Spirit Institute had caused quite a stir.

Although Fang Dushi had managed to keep the news under wraps, Lu Yuan's good relationship with the Gua Alliance allowed him to hear quite a bit.

Xin Lin nodded.

"Tsk tsk, I, Lu Yuan, look up to no one but you. However, this situation with the Seventh Prince cannot continue like this; the key is at the Imperial Palace."

Lu Yuan whispered.

"Are these your own words or your father's?"

Xin Lin gave Lu Yuan a sidelong glance.

Lu Yuan coughed lightly.

With his own wit, he certainly couldn't have come up with all this. Besides the reason of befriending Xin Lin, part of why he dared to mooch meals every day at the Medical Hall was his father's instruction.

As for the person behind Lu Yuan's father, it was undoubtedly General Zuo.

After that day's visit to the Medical Hall, General Zuo had not made another appearance.

But everyone knew about his close relationship with the Lu Family.

General Zuo's decision to stay out of direct involvement was also to avoid drawing attention.

"Enough said, what does your father want to tell me?"

Xin Lin was perceptive and smart, but when it came to matters within the Imperial Palace, she truly had no idea.

The people in there were all formidable.

"A snake must be hit on its seven-inch to be killed, this principle you understand. The Emperor has not conferred the title on Shi Guiren because the civil servant headed by Jin Chen disagrees, which in reality means Empress Feng disagrees. However, sometimes, the Empress isn't the one with the most influence. The Emperor is a sentimental and filial person; besides those civil servants, he listens to the Empress Dowager the most. So..."

Lu Yuan gave her a knowing look.

The Empress Dowager?

Xin Lin pondered upon hearing this.

That night, Little Xinzhuo slept in the School Clinic.

Xin Lin took extra care and watched over him, and Little Xinzhuo slept very soundly.

However, the same night presented a starkly different scene elsewhere in Purple Cloud City.

"My dear Miao Yun, how did you end up like this!"

After spending the entire day at the Imperial Hospital dealing with the parents from the Martial Arts Academy who came to make trouble, Chu Tianyi returned home only to find Chu Miaoyun charred beyond recognition.

Seeing his daughter's once beautiful face turned into this state almost made Chu Tianyi faint.

"Who did this!"

Chu Tianyi gripped Fang Dushi, demanding an explanation.

"It was Xin Lin from the Shaking Light Class, ah, Grand Doctor Chu, this matter... the fault lies with Miao Yun too. She was in a Spirit Art duel with Xin Lin, when suddenly her Spirit Root malfunctioned, leaving her unable to Gather Spirit, which led to her being severely injured by the Fire Explosion Technique."

Fang Dushi learned about her failing to Gather Spirit and the issue with her Spirit Root after hearing Chu Miaoyun's account.

Chapter 628: Problem with the Spirit Root

The Spirit Root is in trouble!

When Chu Tianyi heard this, his expression changed.

"Fang Dushi, thank you for your concern. This matter is a domestic issue of the Chu Mansion, and I will handle it myself."

Chu Tianyi had a guilty conscience and sent Fang Dushi away with just a few words.

Once Fang Dushi left, Chu Tianyi quickly moved to the bedside and looked at Chu Miaoyun.

"Daddy, my face hurts so much, it won't be ruined, right?"

Chu Miaoyun's face was red and swollen, and despite the medication, the pain was unbearable. What worried her most was whether her face and her injuries would heal.

If not, she didn't want to live anymore.

"With daddy here, what external injury can't be cured? But what's the matter with your Spirit Root? With three fingers dual Spiritual Roots, how could you not handle even a piece of trash? Could there be a problem with your master's Spirit Root?"

Chu Tianyi asked sternly.

"Daddy, keep your voice down. If master hears you questioning her ability, she will kill you and me."

Chu Miaoyun was shocked, forgetting the pain in her fright.

"Otherwise, how could you not be a match for that bastard. I lost to Chu Beiqing originally because I didn't have the Dark Spirit Root. I paid a huge price for you to have your Spirit Root, wanting you to uplift my dignity."

"I don't know what happened; Fire Explosion Technique is one of the Spirit Arts I'm best at. I intended to burn that wretched girl to death, but I couldn't gather Spiritual Energy at all."

Chu Miaoyun could gather Spirit again once she left the Cultivation Field.

It was unclear if it was due to the Cultivation Field or just her bad luck that her Spirit Root had problems at that time.

A normal person's Spirit Root naturally wouldn't experience such issues.

But what exactly was going on with Chu Miaoyun's Spirit Root, nobody knew better than Chu Family's father and daughter.

"This incident, you were reckless too, attacking the Seventh Prince directly, how am I supposed to complain to the Emperor now."

After all, the Seventh Prince is the Imperial Heir, and if an investigation were to be held, Chu Miaoyun would be the first to be blamed.

This time, Chu Tianyi and his daughter could only accept their misfortune quietly.

"That Xin Lin is also bizarre, she is clearly a waste, yet she could use the Fire Explosion Technique, managing to execute eight explosions in a breath. She even became the leader of the Shaking Light Class."

Chu Miaoyun said hatefully.

"That dead girl really has some tricks. It's said that her Medical Skill is very skilled. A few students who were injured during this school term and treated by her, all survived."

A fire of anger burned in Chu Tianyi's stomach.

Ever since Xin Lin, that little bastard appeared, his life has been fraught with problems.

First, his daughter failed the Zixiao Palace Exam, then the Chu Mansion was split, costing Chu Tianyi a great deal. Subsequently, he was disgraced at the parent's meeting, and now, because someone was killed by medical malpractice, the reputation of the Imperial Medical Hall was damaged.

These incidents, more or less, were all related to that father and daughter of the Chu Family.

"Daddy, I must avenge this insult."

Chu Miaoyun gritted her teeth, her face full of injuries appearing even more fierce.

"Miao Yun, do you think the trouble isn't big enough? I'll find a way to deal with that girl. You should just focus on cultivating well at Qingtian Academy. Instead of idling, why not cozy up to the Third Prince more, becoming a Princess Consort will give us father and daughter a strong support in the future."

Chu Tianyi lectured.

Chu Miaoyun remained silent.

She had her own plans in her heart.

The leader of the Shaking Light Class, huh? There's nothing so special about that. Some things, she doesn't need to lift a finger; someone else will take care of Xin Lin for her.

Chapter 629: Firefly and Pearl

Within the Zixiao Palace.

As soon as dawn broke, Empress Feng rose to dress and adorn herself, draped in a phoenix dress, her hair piled in high buns; her beauty was radiant and delicate.

"Why has the Empress risen so early today?"

A palace maid beside her expressed her surprise.

"The Empress Dowager has just returned from the Summer Palace, and as the head of the Six Palaces, I naturally ought to visit her."

Empress Feng glanced at her own reflection in the mirror, dignified and luxurious; even after a decade, her beauty remained as striking as ever.

Empress Feng stood up and, assisted by her palace maids, headed towards the Empress Dowager's Jingchao Palace.

Upon arrival at the entrance of Jingchao Palace, she saw many noble concubines, concubines, and Nobles kneeling outside.

Empress Feng's gaze swept over and spotted Shi Guiren kneeling off to the side.

In contrast to the heavily made-up noble concubines and concubines, Shi Guiren's makeup was understated and elegant.

Even though she was now a mother, Shi Guiren still retained her youthful, delicate beauty.

With her petite face and slender eyebrows, her limpid eyes shone like gentle ripples on water; her figure was as willowy as a weeping willow in spring, seemingly ready to sway and collapse at the faintest breeze. Such a woman could even inspire pity in other women who laid eyes upon her.

Among all the noble concubines and concubines, Shi Guiren was particularly striking.

Emperor Longteng once said that Shi Guiren's beauty was different from that of Empress Feng.

If Empress Feng was a bright pearl, then Shi Guiren would be the glimmer of fireflies.

Fireflies and pearls indeed could not be spoken of in the same breath.

But sometimes, after growing accustomed to the rich luster of pearls, a glimpse of firefly light could still be remarkably captivating.

This was why Empress Feng, the bright pearl, always found Shi Guiren difficult to tolerate.

"Looks like my dear sisters have risen early; have you all come to pay respects to the Empress Dowager? And have you all brought gifts, too?"

Empress Feng's eyes flicked to the side, noting that the concubines' palace maids carried various large and small packages, and some even held food boxes.

No palace maids accompanied Shi Guiren; she herself carried a small octagonal food box lacquered in red.

Hmm~

All were of high eye and low hand, fawning over themselves when the Empress Dowager was away from the palace, and now they eagerly curried favor as soon as she returned.

Empress Feng's eyes glinted coldly as she pursed her lips, which were as delicate as flower petals, revealing a profound and enigmatic smile.

"Your Grace, we have come to see how the Empress Dowager is feeling upon hearing that she may be unwell after returning to the palace," said a pleasing and melodious voice, belonging to a beautifully featured concubine dressed in pink.

"Consort Zhao, you truly are thoughtful. The last time the Emperor had too much to drink, you were the first one to send over a sobering soup. You seem to be even more alert to news than I, who am the Empress."

Empress Feng chuckled dryly.

The concubine in pink was Consort Zhao, the same one who used to be intimate with Shi Guiren.

Consort Zhao's voice was sweet and delicate, and she was skilled in song and dance, thus greatly favored by Emperor Longteng.

Ever since Shi Guiren received a warning from Xin Lin, she had distanced herself from Consort Zhao.

Consort Zhao, seeing that several months had passed since Shi Guiren's return to the palace without being granted a title, gradually lowered her guard and focused all her attention on currying favor with the newly returned Empress Dowager.

"The Empress is jesting; I am simply concerned for the Empress Dowager," Consort Zhao said with a dulcet laugh.

While the Empress Dowager was still freshening up, a crowd of concubines and Empress Feng waited outside.

"Shi Guiren, how has Little Qi been doing recently?"

Asked Empress Feng, feigning warmth.

Shi Guiren's body trembled slightly, as if startled, and she took a deep breath to appear calmer.

"Replying to Your Grace, the royal son is doing very well."

Shi Guiren spoke quietly, her hands tightly gripping the food box, while her heart ached as though bleeding.

Chapter 630: Playing to Their Preferences

Injuries lie in the child's body, but the pain resides in the mother's heart.

Little Xinzhuo suffered serious injuries, and Shi Guiren had already received the news from Xin Lin.

Empress Feng pursed her lips and smiled lightly.

"That's good, if there are any difficulties, you can speak freely to me, and I will ensure that Third Prince takes good care of Little Qi."

Having said that, Empress Feng, with her exquisitely adorned hands, gently patted Shi Guiren's shoulder a few times.

"Empress truly cares about Shi," said Consort Zhao from the side, flattering.

The other concubines immediately echoed in agreement, their compliments unceasing.

Shi Guiren, with her head lowered, wished she could smash her food box on the faces of the Empress and these hypocritical women.

For the sake of my son, I must endure. I must.

Shi Guiren forcefully suppressed her rage.

"Additionally, let me remind you, the Empress Dowager isn't in the best of health. Some unsuitable words should not be spoken, to avoid upsetting the Empress Dowager; even I can't protect you then."

Empress Feng's tone was neither too soft nor too hard as she gave this reminder.

Empress Feng's early arrival was certainly not about jealous trivialities; in fact, with all these women combined, they still couldn't shake her status in the Emperor's eyes.

She was here to prevent Shi Guiren from snitching.

The news of Little Xinzhuo's serious injury last night within the Qingtian Academy certainly did not escape Empress Feng's notice.

Shi Guiren lifted her head and said with a smile.

As soon as her words finished, an old nanny walked out from Jingchao Palace.

"Empress Dowager requests the presence of the Empress and all the esteemed madams."

After the old nanny spoke, Empress Feng and the concubines adjusted their attire and followed in procession according to their ranks.

Shi Guiren, being merely a Noble, had just enough status to be invited and stood on the outermost edge.

As the head of the Six Palaces, Empress Feng stood at the forefront.

Empress Dowager Longteng, now in her early fifties, appeared well preserved with an oval face, dignified features, smooth skin, and not a single wrinkle; today, she wore a golden robe beautifully embroidered with peonies, exuding elegance and nobility.

Yet, the Empress Dowager's face showed signs of fatigue, perhaps from the physical toll of recently returning to the palace.

"Empress Dowager, your servants are here to pay their respects," declared Empress Feng as she took a step forward and bowed deeply with utmost respect.

The other concubines and Nobles also bowed respectfully.

"Your servant has heard that the Empress Dowager has been unwell recently, and I have specially prepared some Elixir Pills and medicinal herbs," said Empress Feng.

With that, palace maids presented several bottles of Elixir Pills.

"More Elixir Pills? The Emperor also just sent some last night. The Elixir Pills from the Imperial Hospital are mostly bitter, and I dislike them. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated," said the Empress Dowager, frowning a bit as she saw the medicine bottles, bitter taste flooding her mouth.

Located inland, Purple Cloud City experiences intense heat in summer, and the Empress Dowager, sensitive to heat due to her constitution, thus sought refuge in the Summer Palace.

Autumn had arrived, and she had returned to the palace; however, the tail end of summer's heat persisted, keeping Purple Cloud City sweltering.

Since her return, the Empress Dowager had been sleeping poorly and eating sparingly.

The filial Emperor Longteng had thus ordered the Imperial Hospital to prepare medicines, but the pills the Imperial Physician provided did not relieve the heat and instead worsened her appetite.

The Empress Dowager was troubled by this.

"If the Empress Dowager dislikes Elixir Pills, perhaps some cooling soups would be better. I have instructed my servants to prepare some," suggested Consort Zhao, her eyes lighting up as she eagerly stepped forward with the soup.

"Soup and water, day in, day out from the Imperial Kitchen, I've grown tired of them too. I appreciate your kindness; you may all withdraw," the Empress Dowager waved them off.