

Little Girl 631

Chapter 631: The Power of Steamed Buns

"Surrounded by a flock of chirping and chattering concubines, the Empress Dowager gently pinched her brow.

Her daughters-in-law, each skilled in flattery, lacked a sincere one among them.

Having spent most of her life in the palace, she had tasted the creations of every Imperial Chef and Spiritual Delicacy Master, only to be repeatedly palmed off with the same old dishes.

Empress Feng and the other concubines had no choice but to leave helplessly.

Shi Guiren, standing off to the side and without a chance to speak, had to leave as well.

Holding a food box, she was in a dilemma, unable to decide whether to leave or stay.

Thinking of Xin Lin's instructions, she gritted her teeth, stumbled, and the food box in her hand clattered to the ground.

"Who let this clumsy fool in, disturbing the Empress Dowager with such negligence? Can you bear the responsibility?"

The nanny beside the Empress Dowager scolded.

"Shi Guiren, don't you leave now."

Empress Feng turned around only to see Shi Guiren's food box on the ground.

She frowned, seeing Shi Guiren, who was as timid as a mouse, unable to even carry a food box properly.

Muttering softly, Shi Guiren moved to pick up the lid of the food box.

"Hold on, does that food box contain the Spiritual Delicacy Buns from De Yue Building?"

A fragrant scent wafted out when the food box hit the ground.

This scent was not from the royal chefs' craftsmanship.

Driven by curiosity, the Empress Dowager asked.

Several plump buns were exposed, steaming hot, exuding a unique fragrance of white flour.

The Empress Dowager remembered that the Spiritual Delicacy Buns made by the city's De Yue Building were unmatched, even by the palace's own Spiritual Delicacy Masters, but the Empress Dowager, being a devout Buddhist, had never tasted them due to their scarcity.

"How dare you, Shi Guiren, knowing the Empress Dowager follows Buddhist precepts, bring meat buns here?"

Empress Feng scolded harshly.

"Reporting to the Empress Dowager, Empress. These are White Jade Vegetable Buns, specially supplied by Taichang Temple, not meat buns from De Yue Building."

Shi Guiren quickly knelt down.

Temple's special vegetable buns?

The Empress Dowager's interest was peaked upon hearing this.

The Empress Dowager, being a Buddhist, maintained relationships with the high monks of Taichang Temple.

"What is that dish next to the buns?"

The Empress Dowager, with keen eyes, noticed something else in the food box beside the vegetable buns.

"Replying to the Empress Dowager, it is Candied Hawthorn. Your servant heard that the Empress Dowager's appetite has not been good, and considering elixir pills are harsh on the stomach and broths too rich, I thought of the snacks often eaten in childhood, to help stimulate the Empress Dowager's appetite."

Shi Guiren, eyes and gaze lowered, answered whatever the Empress Dowager asked.

"Commoner's snacks dare to be sent here to the Empress Dowager? If such things harm your precious health, can you bear the responsibility? Shi Ying, what nonsense did you learn during your years among the commoners?"

Empress Feng rebuked.

"Your servant recognizes her wrongdoing."

Shi Guiren bowed her head, not daring to say more.

"Empress, what's wrong with being a commoner? I myself came from the common folk when I was young. It's been decades since I last had Candied Hawthorn. Bring it here."

The Empress Dowager, glancing at Empress Feng.

A chill ran across Empress Feng's scalp; she suddenly remembered.

Before marrying into the palace, the Empress Dowager was just a common girl who grew up among the common folk.

Because of this, the Empress Dowager had always been indifferent to the palace's noble ladies and even to Empress Feng.

The Empress Dowager first tasted a piece of Candied Hawthorn, immediately finding her mouth watering and her appetite open.

She then took a White Jade Vegetable Bun and bit into it.

With that bite, thin skin and tasty filling, refreshing and sweet cabbage, chewy flour skin, the Empress Dowager ate four White Jade Steamed Buns in one breath.

"

Chapter 632: Who Made the Steamed Buns

Empress Dowager was in a great mood after the meal, but Empress Feng felt envious and itchy at the sight.

"Delicious. Shi Guiren, your White Jade Steamed Buns are very good, and the Candied Hawthorn is also great. Among so many concubines, only you are the most thoughtful."

After returning to the palace, Empress Dowager hadn't had such a satisfying meal until today, which she truly enjoyed.

"If Empress Dowager likes it, your servant will send some to you every morning from now on."

Seeing this, Shi Guiren also felt secretly delighted.

"You've been thoughtful as well, and it wouldn't be right for me to always take from you. You've been at the palace for some time now, a trusted old servant by the Emperor's side, and have given birth to a Prince; I will speak to the Emperor later and promote you to concubine."

Empress Dowager felt content, and the more she looked at Shi Guiren, the happier she was. Through a casual remark, Shi Guiren was promoted.

Empress Feng, upon hearing this, felt drastic changes in her expression but couldn't show her displeasure openly, so she had to grit her teeth and made a mental note of the situation.

Shi Guiren, who hadn't been promoted for months, was now elevated to concubine status all because of a few buns and Candied Hawthorn.

The next day, Shi Guiren indeed became Shi Pin.

Once the news spread, the Imperial Palace was stirred up.

Especially the group led by Consort Zhao, they were extremely furious.

They had prepared so many precious medicinal ingredients and soups, all to no avail.

Knowing that the Empress Dowager liked vegetarian steamed buns, after the event, the concubines also ordered the Imperial Kitchen to make steamed buns, all kinds of them - sweet, savory, they tried everything, but when sent to the Empress Dowager, she didn't even spare them a glance and only favored the flavor of the White Jade Steamed Buns sent by Shi Guiren.

These White Jade Steamed Buns were delivered early in the morning by Little Lin.

Xin Lin, although outside the palace, has been always concerned about Shi Guiren. She received a hint from Lu Yuan and knew she needed to act indirectly, starting with Empress Dowager.

Just as Lu Yuan reminded her, Empress Dowager had a poor appetite recently.

After doing some research, Xin Lin found out Empress Dowager's preferences.

Xin Lin thought of her White Jade Steamed Buns and Candied Hawthorn.

Sure enough, the attempt was a success.

When Shi Pin sent the good news to Xin Lin, Xin Lin just smiled and did not say much, knowing that this was just the beginning of acting indirectly.

With the support of the Empress Dowager, Shi Pin's days within the Imperial Palace would be somewhat better.

And consequently, in Qingtian Academy, the antagonism that the Third Prince and others had towards Little Xinzhuo also diminished somewhat.

Inside Fuluan Palace, Empress Feng was seething with anger.

"Spent two whole days and still couldn't find out who made the special steamed buns from Taichang Temple?"

The Empress Dowager was very fond of the White Jade Steamed Buns. It is said that this morning when Emperor Longteng went to greet the Empress Dowager, he also tasted the White Jade Steamed Bun and praised it highly.

Only then did Empress Feng realize that the situation was serious.

She had already ordered an investigation into the origin of the White Jade Steamed Buns, but so far, they had no leads.

Indeed, the Monks from Taichang Temple were consuming White Jade Steamed Buns, but for some reason, they have been out of stock in recent days.

As for who made the White Jade Steamed Buns, it was not from any of the known Spiritual Food Restaurant in the city.

"Continue to investigate and also ask De Yue Building if they can replicate the same White Jade Steamed Buns."

Empress Feng had some connections with Master Chen from De Yue Building.

But the answer she got was that De Yue Building could not make the White Jade Steamed Buns either.

Empress Feng could only continue to order the investigation of this matter, while on the other hand, Master Chen was still racking his brain for a way to acquire the Phoebe Wood Sign.

No matter how he attempted, the words "Chu's Restaurant" remained firmly on the sign, undisturbed, until Empress Feng's people brought her the White Jade Steamed Buns.

Chapter 633: The Secret of the Chu Mansion Is Discovered

After receiving a White Jade Steamed Bun from Empress Feng, Master Chen discovered that this bun was the same as the ones previously sold to Taichang Temple by Chu's Restaurant.

The County Magistrate had already subjected Ma Jingtian to a rigorous interrogation, and Ma Jingtian insisted that he was the owner of Chu's Restaurant.

However, the buns made by Ma Jingtian were simply not at the same level as the White Jade Steamed Bun in front of him.

"There's no doubt that this bun is the true work of the master behind the sign. To claim this sign, you must find the person who made the bun."

The mysterious Master Jiu reminded Master Chen.

"But that person has never shown up; I can't possibly go to the Imperial Palace to search."

Master Chen said anxiously.

Master Chen had yet to figure out the real owner behind the White Jade Steamed Bun when the County Magistrate came to his door.

"You released him? Lord County Magistrate, is there some mistake? Several people fell ill after eating Ma Jingtian's buns; how could you release him?"

Master Chen said with dissatisfaction.

"Master Chen, the monks from Taichang Temple have come forward, claiming that the buns from Chu's Restaurant are fine; they haven't had the White Jade Steamed Buns for several days now, and the temple masters are quite displeased. Moreover, those who were poisoned by the buns have all recovered; they unanimously stated that their illness was not related to the buns. How can I keep an innocent person detained?"

The County Magistrate was visibly troubled.

Especially the monks from Taichang Temple, this group of monks had gotten used to the buns from Chu's Restaurant, and now returning to simple vegetarian meals, they found it a bit hard to adjust.

Even Lord Taichang had spoken up, asking for the release of the detainee.

Unable to resist the pressure, the County Magistrate had no choice but to release him.

"All those who were poisoned have recovered? What is Master Jiu playing at? Didn't he say that unless he took action, no medicine could cure those people?"

Upon hearing this, Master Chen couldn't help but feel suspicious.

As soon as the County Magistrate left, Master Chen sought out Master Jiu.

"They've recovered? How is that possible?"

Master Jiu's face changed upon hearing this.

He knew exactly what was going on with those who were poisoned.

The people who consumed the Delicious Spiritual Food Buns from Chu's Restaurant had insect eggs planted inside them by him.

Since those were ordinary people, Master Jiu wasn't as heavy-handed as he was with Master Ji; he only planted a single egg inside each person.

Even so, just one egg was enough to leave an ordinary person bedridden, and it was indistinguishable from a common illness, seemingly just food poisoning.

Master Jiu intended to use these eggs to force the true owner behind Chu's Restaurant to take action.

But if there was a problem with the insect eggs, how could Master Ji remain so ill?

"Master Jiu, let me be upfront with you, I still have half of the Qi Stone, which I will only give you after I defeat Master Ji and claim that Phoebe Wood Sign."

Master Chen was no fool, he said.

"Don't worry. Master Ji won't live much longer. In a few days, I'll go and smash the sign of Taoyao Pavilion myself. As for the person behind Chu's Restaurant, leave it to me to check."

Master Jiu could no longer restrain himself.

Having absorbed some Qi Stone, his strength had somewhat recovered.

Tonight, he could make his move.

He wanted to see who was truly pulling the strings behind Ma Jingtian, or rather, behind Chu's Restaurant!

In the dead of night, the lights in Chu Mansion were extinguished.

A figure, ghost-like, slipped into Chu Mansion.

The figure first landed in Chu Mansion's back courtyard and let out a light exclamation upon seeing the Purple Cloud Cabbage there.

~Bonus update; additional Chapters for every hundred monthly tickets reached~

Chapter 634: Xin Lin's Countermeasure

Chu Mansion appeared to be just an ordinary household, but the backyard of Chu Mansion was somewhat special.

Especially the Purple Cloud Cabbage growing in the ground.

One has seen plenty of cabbages, but never one so brimming with Spiritual Energy.

"No wonder Chu's Restaurant's Spiritual Delicacy Buns sell so well, it's all because of these cabbages."

A shadowy figure chuckled coldly.

With a wave of his hand, all those Purple Cloud Cabbages were uprooted from the ground.

The next morning, outside De Yue Building, several helpers brought out a large steamer.

"Starting today, De Yue Building will offer, in limited quantity, White Jade Vegetable Buns. These buns have an absolutely authentic flavor, each for one silver, fair and square."

Master Chen personally led the sales, shouting at the entrance of De Yue Building, immediately attracting many patrons.

Since Chu's Restaurant started selling buns, the business of De Yue Building's Spiritual Food Buns had plummeted drastically.

"Isn't this Chu's Restaurant's White Jade Steamed Bun?"

A few patrons stepped forward to look; these people had also bought buns from Chu's Restaurant.

Chu's Restaurant had not opened for the past few days, leaving the patrons feeling anxious.

Upon seeing that De Yue Building also had White Jade Steamed Buns, they couldn't wait to buy several.

"Delicious, just as tasty as those from Chu's Restaurant."

The patrons praised unanimously after trying them.

Seeing this, a gleam of joy flashed across Master Chen's face.

Nearly a thousand buns were sold out in no time.

"Didn't I tell you? The secret to Chu's Restaurant's success lies in those cabbages."

Inside De Yue Building, Master Jiu displayed a smug expression early in the morning.

"With Master Jiu's move, truly remarkable. Those cabbages are indeed special—I've even reserved a batch of seeds and ordered people to plant them. The remaining cabbages will be enough for about ten days' worth of buns."

Master Chen's face was filled with happiness.

He had thought that Chu's Restaurant had some exceptional secret, but it turned out it was just superior ingredients.

This batch of cabbages was the most extraordinary he had ever seen. Without the cabbages, what could Ma Jingtian possibly compete with him?

Furthermore, he planned to make some buns the next morning to send to the Empress.

Earlier, the Empress had been inquiring about who made the White Jade Steamed Buns.

Master Chen had already thought of a plan, to claim they were made by De Yue Building. As long as he could cling to the lofty branch of the Imperial Palace, De Yue Building would hereinafter be Zixiao's top Spiritual Food Restaurant, number one in Longteng!

Master Chen became more and more pleased with himself.

Inside Qingtian Academy, Xin Lin had just received news from Ma Jingtian.

Last night, someone had broken into Chu Mansion and stolen all the Purple Cloud Cabbage to the root.

Now, early in the morning, it was said that De Yue Building had identical White Jade Steamed Buns.

Ma Jingtian sent someone to buy a few and found that they were almost exactly the same as those from Chu's Restaurant. Needless to say, it was clear who stole the cabbages. He was so anxious that he was running around in circles, clamoring to report it to the authorities.

Xin Lin asked him to calm down and wait a little longer.

Early the next morning, Empress Feng went to visit the Empress Dowager with a few fresh White Jade Steamed Buns.

In Jingchao Palace, she ran into Shi Pin, who also came to present White Jade Steamed Buns.

"Empress Dowager, I have brought a few White Jade Steamed Buns as well. They are from De Yue Building, to pay respects to Your Majesty. After this, there is no need for Shi to deliver them day in and day out."

Empress Feng cast a glance at Shi Pin.

Thinking of winning the Empress Dowager's favor with buns, she might as well save the effort.

Shi Pin smiled faintly, saying nothing more.

"Oh? De Yue Building now has vegetable buns too? That's something I must try."

Upon hearing this, the Empress Dowager gestured for Empress Feng to present the White Jade Vegetable Buns from De Yue Building, and took a bite.

Chapter 635: The Empress Dowager's Wrath

Empress Feng and Shi Pin were both nervous, watching the Empress Dowager.

From the outside, the White Jade Steamed Buns from De Yue Building looked no different from those made by Xin Lin.

The Empress Dowager took a bite and after a moment, her face changed slightly, and with a "Pah", she spat the bun out of her mouth.

"What kind of White Jade Steamed Bun is this, what's all this stuff inside, the cabbage is rotten. Empress, what are you plotting?"

The Empress Dowager's face looked displeased.

Upon hearing this, Empress Feng's face turned pale.

"Please calm down, Your Majesty. These White Jade Steamed Buns are fresh, they were made by De Yue Building this morning, how could they not be fresh?"

She quickly picked up a White Jade Steamed Bun and took a light bite.

Upon biting, Empress Feng's face also changed color.

The cabbage was soft and mushy, with a hint of earthy smell, lacking any of the refreshing and crisp sweetness of cabbage.

Seeing this, Shi Pin hurriedly presented her own White Jade Steamed Buns, and after the Empress Dowager ate one, her complexion began to improve.

"De Yue Building really has regressed. Master Chen is a Four-star Spirit Chef, yet his staff dare to sell such buns, it's simply immoral. Have an order sent out, let De Yue Building close for three days for a thorough overhaul, and if they don't improve, they no longer need to open for business."

The Empress Dowager's good mood from the morning was completely spoiled by the rotten cabbage buns.

Empress Feng's face also turned red and white, quite a spectacle.

After apologizing, she quickly left Jingchao Palace.

Speaking of De Yue Building's exterior, the good reputation of yesterday's White Jade Steamed Buns had quickly spread.

After delivering White Jade Steamed Buns to the Imperial Palace in the morning, Master Chen was beaming with joy, standing at the entrance of De Yue Building like the day before, watching the buns being carried out basket by basket, and De Yue Building, like a month ago, had a long queue formed.

The cabbage seeds Master Jiu brought over had also been planted.

In less than a month, new cabbages would grow, and Chu's Restaurant would be out of business sooner or later.

The more Master Chen thought about it, the more pleased he became, but just then, a few customers who bought buns couldn't wait to take a bite.

"Ptui, what is this, it's filled with rotten cabbage!"

"A one silver steamed bun, and you give us leftover leaves to eat."

A few customers almost vomited, each with an unhappy expression, swearing loudly.

"What's going on, are you trying to stir up trouble?"

Master Chen's face lengthened a bit as he stepped forward.

"Master Chef, they said our buns are not fresh."

Master Chen snorted coldly.

"Where did these blind troublemakers come from, daring to make a scene in front of De Yue Building. How could there be anything wrong with the buns from De Yue Building, if there is, punish one to warn a hundred."

But as soon as Master Chen's words fell, with a whoosh sound, a bun hit him squarely in the face.

The bun skin burst open, the hot inside splattered on Master Chen's face, scalding him, and several blisters immediately formed on his face.

"Black-hearted De Yue Building, selling rotten buns."

"I say, how can De Yue Building sell a one silver bun, turns out it's rotten cabbage."

"Ouch, my stomach hurts."

"Compensate us, compensate!"

Among the crowd, people who bought the buns started to react.

One person could be picking a fight, but one after another making a fuss, that's not right.

"Who says our buns have a problem."

Master Chen, covering his face, picked up a bun and took a big bite.

As he bit down, Master Chen's face changed.

Putting aside the bun skin, the cabbage inside the White Jade Steam Bun was mushy and stinky, just like a puddle of stinking mud.

Chapter 636: Cabbage Crisis?

Master Chen was dumbfounded.

"Compensation!"

"Compensation!"

The surrounding guests were all furious, storming into De Yue Building.

At least six to seven hundred steamed buns had been sold.

With the penalty being a hefty tens of thousands of taels of silver.

Words once spoken are like water poured out.

Master Chen wanted to regret it, but it was already too late.

"Close the shop!"

Master Chen spat a few times, but the taste of rotten cabbage still lingered in his mouth.

Before the door could close, he heard a group of government officers with imposing anger rushing in.

"Where is Master Chen?"

The one leading was the County Magistrate.

"County Magistrate, your timing is perfect, these troublemakers are causing a ruckus here. Quickly drive them away."

Master Chen breathed a sigh of relief and stepped forward to greet him.

"How dare you! De Yue Building has been found passing off inferior goods as superior, Empress Dowager commands that De Yue Building be shut for three days, and if it fails to make proper adjustments, it will be permanently sealed."

The County Magistrate seemed to have changed his demeanor completely, radiating a stern impartiality. With a single command, the government officers rushed forward and sealed the entrance of De Yue Building with official seals.

"This... This..."

Master Chen was stunned.

He only then realized the gravity of the situation; earlier Empress Feng had ordered him to make some White Jade Steamed Buns to be sent to the Imperial Palace, hoping to curry favor with the palace. Little did he know, it would lead to a catastrophic debacle.

De Yue Building was being sealed and ordered to reform.

Master Chen was livid, his face ashen.

"Master Jiu, this time you've truly brought disaster upon us; what exactly did you bring back, it's all these cabbages' fault."

Master Chen moved out basket after basket of Purple Cloud Cabbage still in the storeroom.

"What's wrong with these Spiritual Energy cabbages? Didn't we try them before?"

Master Jiu was also confused.

He picked up a head of Purple Cloud Cabbage.

The Purple Cloud Cabbage stolen from Chu Mansion still looked verdant and luscious, full of Water Spirit.

But when Master Jiu sniffed it, he discovered that the fresh green scent was gone, replaced by a musty odor. After chewing a few bites, the cabbage leaves tasted foul.

Just two days stored, and these cabbages, which looked like jade carvings, had all spoiled.

"All the cabbage seeds planted in the field have also rotted."

Master Chen's expression grew increasingly grim.

This time, De Yue Building had really lost out big time.

"I understand now, these Purple Cloud Cabbages can't be preserved once they are out of the ground."

Master Jiu had a sudden realization.

Xin Lin's Purple Cloud Cabbage was grown from seeds soaked in Jade Pure Spring.

This kind of cabbage had much more Spiritual Energy than ordinary cabbages, but it also had a fatal flaw.

Firstly, the shelf life of the cabbage was very short; once removed from the soil, they would deteriorate from the inside out, changing taste. Yet outwardly, they looked no different from fresh Purple Cloud Cabbage.

That's why Xin Lin and others would generally sell them fresh or pickle them directly.

Chu's Restaurant never used overnight Purple Cloud Cabbage for their buns.

Secondly, once the Purple Cloud Cabbage was mature, its seeds couldn't reproduce normally unless soaked in Jade Pure Spring. Otherwise, once sown, the seeds would simply rot.

Xin Lin knew these rules very clearly, but Master Jiu and Master Chen did not.

"It seems that the person behind the scenes at Chu's Restaurant is much more formidable than we imagined."

Master Jiu mused.

"What's the use of saying these things, the gold-lettered signboard of De Yue Building has been smashed."

Just thinking about the three-day rectification period for De Yue Building and the compensation of tens of thousands of taels of silver, not to mention the damage to the reputation caused this time, Master Chen's face twisted with worry.

Chapter 637: Hidden Threat

"Perhaps not."

Master Jiu sneered.

"Do you have any other methods then?"

Master Chen was clearly frustrated.

"Don't forget, we still have a gold-lettered sign. Just by hanging that sign, the reputation and clientele of De Yue Building will quickly be restored, and might even become more illustrious than ever."

Master Jiu was referring to the Phoebe Wood Sign.

"What's the use of saying that? De Yue Building can't use that Phoebe Wood Sign at all."

Master Chen sighed deeply.

"That may not be necessarily true. I have thought of other methods. Without exposing the person behind Chu's Restaurant, we can use this sign."

Master Jiu sneered again.

Although the Purple Cloud Cabbage incident came suddenly, the fact that the person behind Chu's Restaurant had not shown themselves amidst such commotion could mean two possibilities.

Either there is no one behind Chu's Restaurant, and people like Ma Jingtian just used the Purple Cloud Cabbage to make Spiritual Delicacy Buns.

Or the person behind the scenes cannot show themselves, possibly not being in Purple Cloud City or having a concealed identity.

Master Jiu, eager to obtain the final Qi Stone, was not willing to waste any more effort.

"Please enlighten me, Master."

Master Chen looked earnestly for guidance.

"As long as Chu's Restaurant disappears forever, this sign will naturally become invalid. At that time, you can use this sign."

Master Jiu tapped the Phoebe Wood Sign.

The sign was enchanted, but if Chu's Restaurant disappeared, the sign would naturally lose its power.

De Yue Building being ordered to rectify for three days was a piece of news that delighted no one more than Ma Jingtian.

That very day, he rushed to Qingtian Academy.

"Ha-ha, Little Boss, you're simply divine! How did you guess that Master Chen would send someone to steal the cabbage?"

Upon reflection, Ma Jingtian remembered that on the night of the theft, there was no sign of disturbance from the ghost soldiers in the Chu Mansion.

After the cabbage was stolen, he even scolded the ghost soldiers for slacking off, but now he realized, it must have been Little Boss and a high-level figure working together, causing the ghost soldiers to stand down and setting a trap for the thief.

De Yue Building's attempt at pilfering had backfired, and they suffered a significant loss.

"Base people commit base deeds. I was merely speculating, and he fell into his own trap. These few days, keep an eye on De Yue Building. I'm sure Master Chen and his people won't rest easy."

Xin Lin didn't let a small victory make her overly optimistic.

De Yue Building's reputation was indeed damaged, but after all, it is the leading establishment in the Spirit Food World of Purple Cloud City. Its reputation in Purple Cloud City cannot be completely destroyed by a single bun incident.

Otherwise, the Empress Dowager wouldn't have issued just a three-day rectification order after flying into a rage over spoiled buns.

Not to mention, the bun business is not the main trade of De Yue Building; Spiritual Food is their real strength.

"Little Boss, rest assured, after this setback, De Yue Building won't cause trouble for a while. Chu's Restaurant needs to reopen too. We haven't sold buns in days, and our regular customers keep asking about it. While De Yue Building is still closed, we should snatch away their customers."

Ma Jingtian was eager to try.

Xin Lin, however, wasn't as optimistic.

The person behind Master Chen, the mysterious Leech Man she had once seen with the help of her superpower, had yet to show himself.

That night, the one who broke into the Chu Mansion was also him.

According to the ghost soldiers, his skills were very peculiar.

The ghost soldiers wanted to track him, but once they left the Chu Mansion, his presence would disappear.

If this person was not dealt with, he would always be a hidden threat.

Chapter 638: Suppression by Yuheng Class

The incident at De Yue Building came to a temporary close.

Xin Lin still had to continue with her studies at Qingtian Academy.

In the morning, just as usual, Xin Lin went to the Cultivation Center for the foundational classes.

But who knew that as soon as she arrived at the Cultivation Center, she saw the new students of Shaking Light Class with bruised faces and swollen noses. Inside, the place was a mess, charred marks everywhere.

"What happened?"

Xin Lin frowned upon seeing this.

"What else could have happened? It's all your fault. Just now, Yuheng Class's leader Tuoba Liang came. He said you offended someone from Yuheng Class and he came to get even by beating us all up."

The twenty-some new students spoke over each other.

In the morning, Tuoba Liang, accompanied by two or three old students, stormed in with great audacity.

Without saying another word, they used Spirit Art to teach the newcomers a lesson. They left a message that either Xin Lin should come to Yuheng Class to kowtow and apologize, or leave the Spirit Institute.

Otherwise, they would come to teach them a lesson every day.

The Spirit Art of the old students was incredibly powerful, and they were from Yuheng Class. These newcomers from Shaking Light Class who didn't even know how to perform Spirit Art, had no way to fight back.

They were already not very friendly towards Xin Lin, and now, having been implicated by her and getting beaten up, they were full of resentment.

"Xin Lin, you have caused so much trouble since you came to Qingtian Academy, we are bound to be killed by you sooner or later."

"If this continues, do we still want to cultivate?"

"Disaster magnet, why are you in Shaking Light Class? Shaking Light Class can't accommodate you."

The new students were filled with righteous indignation, ostracizing Xin Lin.

"Have you all spoken enough?"

Xin Lin's gaze turned sharp, with a chilling light flashing in her eyes, making the new students' scalps tingle.

"There are more than twenty of you and only three or four of them. You can't beat them and you still have the face to complain here?"

"We are all people of Shaking Light Class. When we enrolled, the supervisor told us that Shaking Light Class is one entity, united in grievances. But what about you? When faced with difficulty, you only know how to whine."

"Do you think that by driving me away, you can get rid of Yuheng Class's oppression? Those who are kind are bullied, and those who are weak are ridden. If you do not know how to resist, Yuheng Class will forever trample over you!"

The new students fell silent.

"Well said."

Then, applause was heard.

Master Mu clapped his hands as he walked in.

"Master Mu, you're finally here. Xin Lin's conduct is improper, she's caused trouble and implicated us all, yet she still thinks she's in the right."

Upon seeing Master Mu, the new students hurriedly surrounded him, all speaking at once to complain.

"Oh? I actually think there is nothing wrong with Xin Lin's behavior, and what she says makes sense. The people from Yuheng Class came, why didn't you resist and let them hit you?"

Master Mu's usual warm and friendly demeanor changed as he looked around at the new students.

The new students were stunned.

"Tuoba Liang is already nearing the cultivation level of a Great Spirit Master. All of us combined are no match for him."

"Exactly, he is after all the leader of Yuheng Class."

Master Mu snorted coldly.

"Do you think that Shaking Light Class is naturally inferior to Yuheng Class? That even if you resist, it's futile?"

The new students kept quiet, but their silence said it all.

From the first day they entered Shaking Light Class, they had been branded as useless by the Spirit Institute, inferior to those Heavenly Chosen Sons from the Yuheng Class.

"Then open your eyes and watch."

Master Mu looked at them with disappointment.

Chapter 639: The Useless Class

Mu Chen flicked his fingertip.

A Water Spirit transformed into mist, spreading out to reveal the Water Spirit Mirror.

Within the Water Spirit Mirror, first there is a blur that gradually becomes clearer, revealing two figures.

A small figure charges forward undeterred.

Her face is lit by the intense glow of the Fire Spirit, turning it a fiery red.

"It's Xin Lin!"

Opposite her is a face full of arrogance.

"It's Chu Miaoyun from the Yuheng Class!"

Several new students recognized the people in the Water Spirit Mirror.

Chu Miaoyun, with her exceptional family background and appearance, and being a Dual Spiritual Roots owner, gained quite a reputation after enrolling in school.

On the contrary, Xin Lin, due to her unique background and her lack of a Spirit Root, fell from grace upon starting school, deemed by Sikong Ran, a super genius of Xuantian Sect, as a cultivation dud.

Yet in the Water Spirit Mirror, Xin Lin doesn't back down an inch facing Chu Miaoyun.

Beside her, Fire Spirits constantly gather, sending one splendid explosion after another onto Chu Miaoyun...

The Water Spirit Mirror vanished.

The students from Shaking Light Class fell into deathly silence.

"Have you seen clearly? Who says Shaking Light Class is naturally meant to be bullied by Yuheng Class?"

Mu Chen's eyes lifted slightly as he swept his gaze over the students.

With Master Guo recuperating, Mu Chen took command in a crisis, yet after taking over Shaking Light Class, he discovered that aside from a few students, it was stagnant like a pool of dead water.

These students, due to the lack of a Spirit Root, had severely given up on themselves.

Whether it was basic classes or Spiritual Technique Class, their progress was slow.

Mu Chen himself is a genius, a genius in Spirit Arts, a genius with women, a genius by talent, first in every aspect—how could he be held back by these stragglers.

The class he taught, needless to say, had to be first as well.

Only Xin Lin was a dark horse.

Mu Chen naturally planned to make good use of this untamed dark horse.

"But Tuoba Liang is the leader..."

Someone murmured softly.

"What about the leader? We have a leader in Shaking Light Class too. Xin Lin is your new leader. Xin Lin, do you have the confidence to beat Tuoba Liang..."

Mu Chen's persuasive eloquence was inspiring, and his speech now was expressive and enthusiastic.

However, after waiting for a while, there was no response from Xin Lin.

"Master Mu, Xin Lin left early."

What?

Mu Chen turned around, and indeed, Xin Lin was no longer in sight.

"Xin Lin, come back here! You're skipping class, I'm telling you, I'll dock your Performance Points!"

Mu Chen's voice echoed behind him.

Xin Lin had already left the Cultivation Center and was heading toward the Cultivation Field.

Inside the Yuheng Class Cultivation Field, a group of old students from Yuheng Class were practicing their Spirit Techniques.

An icicle fell, covering the ground with a solid layer of frost.

"Tuoba, I heard you took some guys this morning to teach those lambs from Shaking Light Class a lesson?"

A group of about four or five old students surrounded the young man who had just used the Ice Sealing Technique.

The young man was in his early twenties, with a decent face. He was not very tall, his skin slightly yellowed, somewhat frail, different from his unremarkable face, his fitted Academy uniform had a Token hanging from it.

On the Token, the conspicuous "Kuiwu" was engraved.

Leader's Order, this young man here was Tuoba Liang, the leader of Yuheng Class.

Tuoba Liang was twenty this year and had been at Qingtian Academy for five years.

Just two days ago, Tuoba Liang advanced from an Advanced Spirit Master to a new Great Spirit Master, and he was also the only Great Spirit Master student in the entire Spirit Institute.

Chapter 640: Leader vs. Leader

Great Spirit Master, being in Qingtian Academy, means that one has qualified to be a supervisor's deputy.

Yet as soon as Tuoba Liang finished his retreat, he heard that Chu Miaoyun had been attacked.

Tuoba Liang's family had an ordinary background. Upon arriving at Qingtian Academy, he had always wanted to find a woman of prestigious family, excellent talent, and striking beauty for a wife.

Among this year's new students, he had set his sights on two candidates.

One was Chu Miaoyun, the daughter of Grand Doctor Chu in the same Yuheng Class, with Dual Spiritual Roots and a delicate beauty.

The other was the new student from the Martial Arts Academy, Murong Ziyue, who had exceptional talent and a stunningly cold beauty but lacked a significant family background.

After weighing the options, Tuoba Liang immediately targeted Chu Miaoyun.

Regrettably, Chu Miaoyun had always been indifferent towards him.

But just yesterday, he suddenly received a letter from Chu Miaoyun's maid.

In the letter, Chu Miaoyun expressed her sorrow, stating that she had always seen him differently, but strict family discipline, enforced by her father Grand Doctor Chu, meant that only a man who had become a Great Spirit Master could catch the eye of Chu Mansion.

Chu Miaoyun had intended to interact more with him once he had broken through to Great Spirit Master level, but before he could leave his retreat, she was plotted against by people from Shaking Light Class and nearly had her appearance ruined.

After reading the letter, Tuoba Liang was overjoyed yet extremely furious.

He was delighted that Chu Miaoyun had feelings for him, yet infuriated that someone dared to touch his woman in Spirit Institute!

Upon inquiry, he learned the full story.

Seething with anger, he took several people to confront those in Shaking Light Class, but not encountering Xin Lin, he vented his anger by beating up that bunch of losers.

"A bunch of losers, only knowing how to beg for mercy after being beaten. Shaking Light Class used to have Zhao Gang; I heard Zhao Gang was seriously injured recently, losing the leader's order, which is simply disgraceful."

Tuoba Liang said proudly.

"Aren't you afraid the Academy Head will trouble you?"

A few other old students voiced their concerns.

"Trouble? What trouble? I am a Great Spirit Master, unless the Academy Head does not want me to participate in next spring's inter-academy exchange."

Tuoba Liang's face was full of reckless confidence.

Just as Tuoba Liang finished speaking, there was a loud boom.

A fireball descended from the sky.

Tuoba Liang's expression changed.

A scorching heat rushed towards his face. The surrounding old students cried out in shock, scattering like birds and beasts.

The Cultivation Field was suddenly thrown into chaos.

Tuoba Liang was also startled, but his outstanding strength and better temperament than the other old students ultimately showed.

He shifted his position, dodging the second Fire Explosion Technique attack.

A golden light suddenly shone around him.

Golden Turtle Shell Technique.

On his skin, Gold Spirit appeared, and Spiritual Energy quickly condensed into golden turtle shell-like armor plates. The fireball exploded on him, the flash of fire disappearing without leaving a trace.

Eighth Rank Spiritual Techniques naturally couldn't be shaken by mere Ninth Rank Spiritual Techniques.

Bang—

But before the smug look on Tuoba Liang's face could fade,

He felt a chill on his back, his body trembled, and he saw a heavy punch landing.

The force of the punch was so fierce that it forced Tuoba Liang, a grown man, to retreat several steps, and a dent appeared on his Golden Armor.

Tuoba Liang was alarmed, flashing his form, only to see a little girl appear before him.

The visitor was not tall, about six or seven years old, with eyes darker than the night, now swirling with rage.

"It's Xin Lin!"

Someone by the side recognized the newcomer.

Shaking Light Class's Xin Lin, had actually come alone to confront them!