Chapter 6001 - 6005

An extremely simple yet highly targeted temporary trapping and isolation formation.

The core of the formation wasn't lethality, but rather "delay," "interference," and "isolation."

The array patterns, outlined by chaotic energy, cleverly utilized the abundant wood-attribute spiritual energy and earth-stone energy of the area, creating a field resembling a natural chaotic spiritual energy field.

Once triggered, intruders would instantly feel the surrounding space become viscous, spiritual energy flow become sluggish, and divine sense perception be severely interfered with.

Furthermore, sound, light, and even energy fluctuations within the formation's range would be greatly weakened and distorted, making them difficult to transmit.

Setting up such a temporary formation required an extremely high level of mastery of formations and control over chaotic energy from Kai.

He had to complete it without causing any abnormal fluctuations in external spiritual energy and ensure that the formation perfectly integrated with the environment.

Even if someone carefully scanned the area with their divine sense, they would only feel that the spiritual energy was slightly "congested," and wouldn't suspect it was a man-made formation.

Time passed second by second.

The pine trees remained unchanged, and the light and shadow dappled.

Like the most patient hunter, Kai became one with the ancient pine, his breath completely still, even his heartbeat and blood flow almost stopped.

His entire focus was on sensing the movements at both ends of the path.

About half an hour passed.

They're coming!

Kai's mind stirred slightly. His divine sense detected three rapid but deliberately concealed auras approaching from the southern end of the path.

The leader, with a deep and refined aura carrying a chilling quality, was clearly a fifth-grade Upper Immortal—it was Fei Qing!

Two steps behind him were two guards dressed in black, with cold faces and hawk-like eyes.

Both were fourth-grade Upper Immortals, their auras linked, their steps synchronized, clearly well-trained masters of combined attack.

The three moved at a moderate pace, maintaining a high level of vigilance.

Fei Qing's narrow eyes constantly scanned the surroundings, his hand seemingly holding some kind of detection artifact, faintly emitting a spiritual light.

Two guards, one on each side, subtly protected Fei Qing, their sharp eyes scanning every possible hiding place.

Closer and closer... thirty zhang... twenty zhang... ten zhang...

Just as the three were about to step into the range of Kai's array, reaching the bend in the path, a sudden change occurred!

It wasn't an attack from Kai, but from Fei Qing himself!

Fei Qing, walking at the front, suddenly paused, and the detection artifact in his hand flashed a faint red light!

His expression changed abruptly, and he shouted, "Something's wrong! An ambush!"

Before he finished speaking, without even checking what the ambush was, he retreated rapidly to the side and rear!

At the same time, he flicked his sleeve, and several azure ice spikes, carrying a chilling aura, shot out in a fan shape towards the suspicious area at the bend in the path!

These ice spikes weren't random attacks; they contained exquisite ice laws, freezing the air in their wake with white frost—their power was astonishing!

What a vigilant old fox!

Kai inwardly praised Fei Qing, but his movements were swift.

Just as Fei Qing retreated and fired his ice spike, a hazy gray sword light, seemingly breaking through spatial limitations, appeared atop the ancient pine tree where Kai was hiding,

striking the area Fei Qing was about to step into without a sound!
Whoosh!

A deep, muffled sound.

The simple array Kai had set up beforehand was fully activated!

But it wasn't triggered by Fei Qing; Kai himself activated it to its maximum power!

In an instant, the space within a ten-zhang radius of the bend in the path suddenly froze!

The air seemed to turn into viscous glue, the light distorted slightly, and all sound seemed to be swallowed up.

Even the several sharp ice spikes that shot towards them visibly slowed down, and the cold light on their surfaces dimmed slightly.

The two black-clad guards reacted extremely quickly, flanking Fei Qing the moment he shouted.

A pair of jet-black short halberds appeared in their hands, the runes on the halberds glowing, ready to counterattack in the direction from which the sword light was coming. At the same time, one of them opened his mouth as if to shout, clearly to sound an alarm!

However, the array's effects had already manifested.

Their movements seemed to be stuck in quagmire, becoming sluggish.

The guard who was about to shout, his voice reached his throat, but felt blocked by an invisible force, only able to utter a short, sharp "hoarse" sound, unable to form an effective sonic signal!

It was this lightning-fast delay that allowed

Kai's figure to swoop down from the ancient pine tree like a ghost!

His target wasn't the two guards, but Fei Qing, who was being retreated at high speed, slightly shielded by them!

Fei Qing's eyes flashed with cold light. Although he was shocked by the strangeness of the ambush and the precision and ruthlessness of his

opponent's attack, he was, after all, a veteran of countless battles and remained calm in the face of danger.

He reached for his waist with his right hand, and a palm-sized, tortoise-shell-shaped black shield, exuding an ancient and heavy aura, instantly enlarged, blocking his path.

At the same time, his left hand formed a hand seal, and he chanted incantations. A dense surge of Xuan Yin cold energy suddenly erupted around him, condensing into a layer of crystal-clear ice armor covered with mysterious runes! The

"Mysterious Tortoise Spirit Shield" combined with the "Mysterious Yin Ice Armor"—this was his strongest defensive combination!

He was confident that even if he took a full-force attack from a sixth-grade Immortal Realm cultivator, he could survive!

However, Kai's attack wasn't about brute force.

His descending figure twisted strangely in mid-air, like a fish, narrowly escaping through the gaps in the hastily thrown halberds of the two guards, heading straight for Fei Qing!

Facing the Xuan Turtle Spirit Shield radiating a thick spiritual light and the chilling ice armor, Kai neither dodged nor evaded. He simply pointed his fingers like a sword, a point of deep, chaotic gray light, like the beginning of the universe, condensing at his fingertip.

He pointed!

There was no grand display, no dazzling light.

His fingertip gently touched the center of the Xuan Turtle Spirit Shield.

Pop...

a soft sound, like a bubble bursting.

The seemingly invincible, radiant Xuan Turtle Spirit Shield, where the fingertip touched, suddenly lost its spiritual light.

Countless spiderweb-like gray-black cracks rapidly spread across the shield's surface from that point!

Immediately afterwards, the entire shield, like a rock weathered over millions of years, silently turned into ashes, which fell in a flurry! Fei Qing's pupils constricted sharply, utterly horrified!

This Xuan Turtle Spirit Shield was an ancient treasure he had acquired at great cost, possessing extremely strong defensive capabilities, yet it had been shattered by a single finger from the opponent?!

Before he could activate his ice armor or any other means, Kai's finger, imbued with chaotic power, had already struck the Xuan Yin Ice Armor on his chest with unstoppable force!

Crack!

A crisp cracking sound rang out.

The Xuan Yin Ice Armor, strong enough to withstand divine weapons, was equally fragile before the power of chaos, instantly disintegrating!

The terrifying power contained in the fingertip, capable of annihilating all things and returning to chaos, had already penetrated his body!

"Ugh!"

Fei Qing groaned, feeling an indescribable, cold, deathly, and destructive power surge into his body.

Wherever it passed, his meridians froze, his magical power dissipated, and even his soul felt a needle-like sting and a sense of sinking!

His Xuan Yin magical power, cultivated for hundreds of years, melted away rapidly before this power, like snow meeting boiling water!

“Stop him!”

Fei Qing roared hoarsely, desperately channeling his remaining magic power as he retreated rapidly.

At the same time, a crimson jade talisman slid from his sleeve, which he was about to crush! It was the life-saving talisman he had urgently requested from Yu Wuji!

However, the two guards were now in even greater trouble.

Just as Kai attacked Fei Qing, Ming Li, hidden behind the boulder, made his move.

He didn’t reveal himself, but suddenly shot out two hair-thin, almost invisible “Netherworld Soul Threads” from the shadow of the boulder!

These soul threads weren’t physical attacks, but directly targeted the soul, extremely vicious!

The two guards were fully focused on dealing with the pressure from Kai and the slowdown caused by the formation; they never expected such a bizarre attack hidden in the shadows!

The Netherworld Soul Threads instantly pierced the back of their heads!

Their bodies stiffened simultaneously, a look of confusion and pain flashing in their eyes, their movements instantly frozen.

Although Fei Qing’s cultivation at the Immortal Realm and his unwavering will prevented his soul from immediately collapsing, making an effective reaction or issuing an alarm was extremely difficult.

Kai, however, gave Fei Qing no chance to crush the jade talisman.

As he pierced the ice armor and the chaotic power invaded Fei Qing’s body, Kai’s left hand shot out like lightning, grabbing Fei Qing’s right wrist, which was holding the crimson jade talisman!

*Crack!

* A tooth-grinding sound of bone breaking rang out!

Fei Qing's wrist was instantly crushed!

"Ah!"

Fei Qing let out a short scream as the crimson jade talisman flew from his hand.

Kai didn't even glance at the talisman; his right hand transformed from fingers into a palm, striking Fei Qing's dantian!

This palm strike was perfectly controlled.

The vast chaotic power surged in like a raging tide, but instead of immediately destroying Fei Qing's dantian, it transformed into countless fine, resilient gray chains, binding and sealing his dantian, meridians, and sea of consciousness layer by layer!

At the same time, an even greater force surged straight into his soul, forcibly suppressing and imprisoning his consciousness!

Fei Qing felt a sudden darkness before his eyes, and all his strength receded like a tide.

His consciousness rapidly blurred, and the last remaining sensation was the other person's cold, deep eyes, seemingly containing an endless starry sky.

Thump! Fei Qing's burly body collapsed to the ground, eyes closed, breath faint, already unconscious and completely imprisoned by the power of chaos.

From Fei Qing's sudden retreat upon sensing something was wrong, to Kai's appearance, breaking the shield, shattering the armor, and capturing Fei Qing, and then Ming Li's covert intervention to restrain the

guards, the entire process was swift and swift, taking only two or three breaths!

Fast!

Too fast!

And the coordination was perfect, the calculation precise!

The two guards, injured by the Netherworld Soul Silk, had only just recovered a sliver of clarity from the piercing pain in their souls when they saw Fei Qing already lying on the ground.

A calm-faced young man stood beside Fei Qing, looking at them indifferently.

The two men were terrified, knowing they had run into a brick wall; their leader had been captured, and they themselves would likely not escape death.

They exchanged a glance, then simultaneously roared, burning their life essence, and rushed towards Kai without regard for anything else.

The short halberd in his hand erupted with a blinding black light, clearly indicating his intention to perish together with the enemy, or at least to create a commotion that would alert the entire mansion!

“Stubborn fools,”

Kai coldly snorted. Without any visible movement, he simply flicked his sleeve.

An invisible, intangible yet mountain-like force, seemingly capable of suppressing everything, descended with a deafening roar!

The two guards felt as if a towering mountain had crushed them, their forward momentum abruptly halted.

Their bones creaked, their internal organs felt as if they were about to shift, their burning essence was forcibly suppressed, and even breathing became incredibly difficult!

They exerted all their strength, yet they couldn't even move a finger, let alone launch an attack or make a sound.

This was Kai's simulated "Suppress" technique using chaotic power, though not as refined as that of cultivators who specialized in it.

But with his solid foundation and the characteristics of chaotic power, it was more than enough to suppress two injured fourth-grade Upper Immortals.

Without further delay, Kai quickly stepped forward and, using the same method, imprisoned the souls and cultivation of the two guards with chaotic power, plunging them into a deep coma.

He quickly scanned the battlefield.

Apart from the three unconscious men lying on the ground, there were no other traces on the path.

Although the exchange had been brief and intense, the energy fluctuations and sounds had been greatly limited by the isolation and delaying effects of the formation, and had not traveled far.

The pine trees in the distance continued to rustle, as if nothing had happened.

Kai waved his hand to collect the fallen crimson jade talisman and quickly searched Fei Qing and the two guards.

He removed their storage bags, personal jade pendants, and other items that might have tracking or markings, especially several items on Fei Qing that were clearly identification and communication artifacts.

“Ming Li, take these two guards, let’s go back the way we came, and retreat quickly!”

Kai lifted the unconscious Fei Qing with one hand and ordered Ming Li, who had appeared.

“Yes!”

Ming Li replied without hesitation, lifting the two unconscious guards with one hand each.

Kai checked the surroundings again, confirming that no obvious traces had been left, especially the remnants of the temporary array he had set up, which he had completely erased with his chaotic power.

Then, just as they had come, the two of them blended into the shadows and quickly retreated along the path they had taken back towards the hidden cave entrance in the abandoned garden.

The return journey was even more tense.

After all, carrying three living people inevitably hampered their movements, and they had to be even more careful to avoid any potential patrols. Fortunately, Kai chose a sufficiently concealed path, and he seemed to have an intimate understanding of the security patterns around the Jade Immortal City, managing to narrowly avoid several patrolling guards.

Returning safely to the corner covered in old vines, Kai reopened the hidden entrance, and the three of them, along with the prisoner, entered one by one, restoring the entrance to its original position.

Only when they returned along the damp, narrow underground passage did Kai breathe a sigh of relief.

The most dangerous and crucial capture was finally complete.

But what remained were the enormous challenges: how to get the prisoners out of the heavily guarded Jade Immortal City, and how to extract the truth from Fei Qing.

However, once they had captured the prisoners, the initiative was in their hands.

When Kai and Ming Li, carrying the unconscious Fei Qing and two guards, reappeared in the secret room where Lian Xing and the others had moved,

even though Lian Xing and the others were somewhat prepared, they were still speechless with shock at the sight before them.

They really... had captured them!

Moreover, under the full curfew of Jade Immortal Prefecture and with the Inner Palace on high alert, not only was the most crucial Grand Steward of the Inner Palace, Fei Qing, captured, but two of his trusted guards were also rescued!

This efficiency, this method... it's simply unbelievable!

"Senior... are you... are you alright?"

Lianxing looked at Kai's still calm face and Fei Qing, who was being carried by him, his breath weak like a dead dog, her voice hoarse.

"He's fine."

Kai threw Fei Qing on the ground as if he were throwing away a bag of trash. "Find the most secluded, soundproof, and well-isolated secret room, wake him up, I have questions for him. These two guards..."

He glanced at the two men that Ming Li had left in the corner, "lock them up for now, they might be of some use."

“Yes! There’s a specially made interrogation room at the deepest part of the underground, originally used to detain and interrogate important prisoners, it’s fully equipped with arrays, absolutely isolated.”

Leopard Brother quickly said, his eyes filled with awe, and took the initiative to step forward, together with Monkey, to carry Fei Qing underground.

Lianxing took a deep breath, forcing herself to calm down, and began directing her subordinates to handle the aftermath.

“Immediately activate the highest level of concealment array in the safe house. No one is allowed to leave. Leopard, go check the outer perimeter and make sure there are no tails.”

“Monkey, you cooperate with Senior Mingli to deal with these two…” She pointed to the two unconscious guards.

Soon, everyone was busy with their respective tasks.

This seemingly ordinary safe house, like a sophisticated machine, began to operate efficiently.

Kai went straight to the underground interrogation room.

He knew that digging out the truth from Fei Qing might not be much easier than capturing him.

This old fox’s fear of Yu Wuji and the Divine Race might far exceed his fear of death.

But in any case, the truth about the tragic deaths of Senior Mu Sha and his wife had to be revealed.

And Fei Qing was the key to opening this dark door.

In the dim, cold interrogation room, filled with various restrictive runes, Fei Qing was firmly bound to a cold metal chair by special spirit-suppressing chains.

The chains gleamed with a dark light, not only imprisoning magical power but also continuously generating a faint, eroding pain that kept one constantly conscious yet utterly weak.

Kai sat on an ordinary wooden chair opposite him, with Ming Li standing behind him like a statue.

Lian Xing stood in the doorway, observing with a grave expression.

Leopard Brother brought a bucket of icy water and splashed it violently on Fei Qing's face.

"Cough cough... Ouch..." Fei Qing's body trembled, and he slowly awoke.

The pain of the icy water mixed with the chains corroding his soul instantly jolted him fully awake from his unconsciousness.

He struggled to lift his head, and the first thing he saw was Kai's deep, calm eyes, which seemed to pierce through all illusions.

Fei Qing's heart sank to the bottom.

He recognized those eyes—the terrifying young man who had appeared like a ghost on Listening Pine Path, breaking through all his defenses with unbelievable means and capturing him alive!

"You...who are you?"

Fei Qing's voice was hoarse and dry, filled with undisguised weakness and fear.

He tried to circulate his magic power, but found that his dantian felt like it was cast in molten iron, his meridians like they were bound by iron chains, and he couldn't mobilize even a trace of power. Even his divine

sense was suppressed within his sea of consciousness, unable to be released.

This feeling of being completely powerless, a lamb to the slaughter, filled this Grand Steward, who was used to the power of life and death, with immense panic and humiliation.

Kai didn't answer his question, but calmly looked at him and slowly spoke. His voice wasn't loud, but it seemed to carry a thousand pounds of weight, each word striking Fei Qing's heart:

"Mu Sha, Liu Qingyin. Fallen Soul Slope. Soul Refining Crystal, Jiaxu 73."

Fei Qing's pupils suddenly contracted, and his face instantly turned ashen!

Although he tried his best to control himself, the fleeting extreme fear and guilt did not escape Kai and Lian Xing's eyes.

Sure enough!

He knew!

And the impact and shock of this matter on him far exceeded his imagination!

Kai leaned forward slightly, his gaze like a knife, locking onto Fei Qing: "Tell me, why did they die?"

"Who gave the order? What are you hiding? Where is the Soul Refining Crystal now? Tell me everything you know. Perhaps, I can give you a quick death."

Fei Qing trembled, his eyes filled with fear, struggle, and hesitation.

He opened his mouth, as if to say something, but in the end, he tightly closed his mouth, lowered his head, and looked like a dead pig unafraid of boiling water.

He knew that once he spoke, not only would he surely die, but his very soul would likely suffer unimaginable torment.

He knew better than anyone the methods of Yu Wuji and the terror of the gods.

In comparison, the threat posed by this young man before him, though terrifying, perhaps… perhaps there was still a glimmer of hope?

Or perhaps the other party was just trying to trick him?

“Refuse to speak?”

Kai’s voice remained calm, but the temperature in the room seemed to drop several degrees.

He stood up, walked to Fei Qing, and extended his right index finger. A point of chaotic gray light shone from the tip of his finger, like the only light source in the darkness, yet emanating an aura that sent shivers down one’s spine.

“You should have felt it, the power invading your body.”

Kai’s voice seemed to come from the depths of hell, “It can easily annihilate your physical body, and it can also gradually grind away your soul, subjecting you to torment a thousand times more painful than the extraction of your soul by the Soul Refining Crystal, and the process will be extremely, extremely slow.”

Fei Qing’s body trembled uncontrollably. He could clearly feel the cold, lifeless power within him, like a leech, ready to devour everything he had at any moment.

The other party wasn't lying; this power... is terrifying! "I...I don't know what you're talking about..."

Fei Qing gritted his teeth, his voice trembling, still trying to make a last-ditch effort, "Mu Sha...Liu Qingyin...they violated the divine decree, descending to the mortal realm without permission..."

*Crack!

* Kai's fingertip lightly touched Fei Qing's shoulder.

There was no splatter of blood, no sound of bones breaking.

But Fei Qing's shoulder, at a speed visible to the naked eye, rapidly turned ashen and withered, then...turned into fine dust, fluttering down!

As if that part of his flesh and bones had never existed!

"Ah!!!"

A shrill scream, inhuman in its shrillness, erupted from Fei Qing's throat!

It wasn't just simple physical pain, but the extreme agony of having a piece of his soul forcibly ripped out!

The erosion of chaotic power directly affected his life essence and soul!

"I'll talk! I'll talk!!"

In just a breath of torment, Fei Qing's psychological defenses completely collapsed!

Tears streamed down his face, his voice distorted, "Spare me! Senior, spare me! I'll tell you everything! Please stop! Stop!!"

Kai withdrew his finger, and the spreading grayness immediately ceased.

But a fist-sized chunk was missing from Fei Qing's shoulder; the wound was smooth as a mirror, devoid of blood, only a chilling grayness remained.

"Speak,"

Kai said, sitting back in his chair.

Fei Qing gasped for breath, his eyes filled with boundless fear. He dared not conceal anything any longer, and began to recount his story in a hoarse voice, like beans spilling from a bamboo tube.

"It was…it was the Lord of the City…Yu Wuji who gave the order! About a month and a half ago, that couple named Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin, using some unknown method, sneaked into the vicinity of the City Lord's mansion's inner treasury, seemingly…seemingly trying to steal or investigate something…"

"They were discovered by the inner treasury's security array, and although they immediately fled,…but a faint trace of their aura was still intercepted."

"The Lord of the City personally took action, using that trace of aura as a guide, and employed a treasure bestowed by the divine race, quickly locating their position and capturing them."

"And then? What did they want to steal or investigate?" Kai pressed.

"I…I don't know the specifics!"

Fei Qing hurriedly said, "The Lord of the Prefecture interrogated them personally; I wasn't qualified to listen in. But…but later, when the Lord of the Prefecture summoned me, his face was extremely grim. He said that the two had discovered a 'great secret' concerning the Divine Race's plans in the Azure Nether Immortal Continent, and it must not be revealed in the slightest."

“They must be executed immediately, and their souls must be completely refined and imprisoned using the Soul Refining Array at Falling Soul Slope, ensuring absolute safety, without even a chance for reincarnation!”

“A great secret concerning the Divine Race’s plans?” Kai’s eyes narrowed. “What plans?”

“I…I really don’t know the details!”

Fei Qing cried, “The Lord of the Prefecture didn’t say it explicitly, only that it was top secret. Even he had to be careful and dare not delve deeper, only to carry out the divine decree.”

“He instructed me to oversee the execution, to ensure a clean execution, and to properly safeguard the Soul Refining Crystals, reinforcing them regularly, awaiting the Divine Race’s envoy to collect them…”

“Collect them? What do the Divine Race want these Soul Refining Crystals for?” Lianxing couldn’t help but interject, her face pale.

The Divine Race was directly intervening, even regularly collecting Soul Refining Crystals?

The hidden meaning behind this sent chills down her spine.

“I…I don’t know either. I only know it’s part of a divine decree. In various parts of the Azure Nether Immortal Continent, whenever certain high-ranking criminals are executed, Soul Refining Arrays are usually activated to collect Soul Refining Crystals, which are then uniformly handed over,”

Fei Qing said, trembling. “The Soul Refining Crystals of the Mu Sha couple, numbered Jiaxu 73, are…are in the deepest part of the Inner Palace’s secret vault, in the Xuanbing Chamber, sealed by a restriction personally set by the Palace Master. I only have the authority to view them and periodically reinforce them; I cannot retrieve them.”

Kai remained silent for a moment, digesting this information. The Divine Race

‘s scheme, top secrets, regularly collecting Soul Refining Crystals…all of this reeked of a heavy conspiracy and bloodshed.

The Mu Sha couple had probably inadvertently stumbled upon the core of this conspiracy, which led to their tragic fate.

“Where is Yu Wuji now? When will the Divine Race envoy arrive?” Kai continued to ask.

“Lord of the Palace…Lord of the Palace should be in seclusion at the Wuji Hall today, cultivating or handling palace affairs.”

“The Divine Race envoy…their arrival time is uncertain, but they usually come once a year to collect Soul Refining Crystals and deliver new divine decrees.”

“The last time they came was half a year ago, the next time…it should be a few months away.” Fei Qing answered every question, hoping to suffer less torture. Chen

Ping stood up and paced a few steps in the cramped interrogation room.

The situation was more complicated and serious than he had anticipated.

It directly involved the Divine Race, and Yu Wuji was likely to know more inside information.

“Senior, what do we do now?”

Lianxing asked worriedly, “Fei Qing is missing, Yu Wuji will soon find out, and then…”

“What he knows is enough.”

Kai glanced at Fei Qing, who was slumped in the chair, his face ashen, without any pity in his eyes, “As for Yu Wuji…since he was the one who directly gave the order and is likely to know, then our next target is him.”

Upon hearing this, Lianxing and Mingli were both shocked.

To directly attack Yu Wuji, the Lord of the Jade Immortal Mansion, a seventh-rank Upper Immortal with a divine background?

This…this is simply earth-shattering!

“Mr. Chen, Yu Wuji is a seventh-rank Upper Immortal, and the Jade Immortal Mansion is full of experts. We are no match for him at all,”

Ming Li advised Kai

. “Senior, I think we should consider this carefully,” Lian Xing also advised Kai.

Yu Wuji is not someone anyone can just attack.

“Don’t worry, I won’t be foolish enough to rush to the Jade Immortal Mansion and attack Yu Wuji directly,” Kai smiled faintly. “Lian Xing, I remember you mentioned that Yu Wuji has a daughter, right?”

“Yes, her name is Yu Ranran. She is a fifth-rank Upper Immortal and a famous talented woman in the entire Jade Immortal City. Yu Wuji is always proud of his daughter,”

Lian Xing nodded. ”Then I’ll start with his daughter…” Kai smiled wickedly.

“Senior, Yu Ranran almost never leaves the manor, and she certainly won’t let strangers near her. How will you make your move on her?”

Lianxing asked疑惑地.

“I can disguise myself as Fei Qing, enter the Jade Immortal Manor first, and then find an opportunity to get close to Yu Ranran,” Kai said.

Hearing that Kai planned to infiltrate the Jade Immortal Manor as Fei Qing, and even possibly plot to get close to Yu Wuji’s daughter, Yu Ranran, Lianxing and Mingli were speechless with shock.

This plan was too audacious, and too dangerous!

Disguised as Fei Qing, operating in the core area of the Jade Immortal Manor, and having to deal with the manor lord’s daughter—a slight misstep could lead to utter ruin!

“Senior, this…this is too risky!”

Lianxing said urgently. “As the Grand Steward of the Inner Palace, Fei Qing comes into contact with an extremely complex array of people and affairs on a daily basis. There are quite a few people who know his words, actions, and interpersonal relationships inside and out.”

“Although you can change your appearance and imitate auras, subtle habits, ways of handling affairs, and even your understanding of certain people and matters may reveal flaws! Moreover, that Yu Ranran…”

Lianxing paused, lowering her voice, “Although this girl is Yu Wuji’s only daughter and is greatly favored, seemingly innocent and carefree, she is actually extremely talented and shrewd, and is by no means an easy person to deal with.”

“She is also proficient in music, formations, and ancient books, and has a considerable reputation within the palace. If you contact her as Fei Qing, what if she discovers it…”

Mingli also said in a deep voice, “Mr. Chen, Fellow Daoist Lianxing is absolutely right. Infiltrating the enemy’s lair and impersonating a high-ranking official is a risky move.”

“Yu Wuji is a seventh-grade Upper Immortal, with keen divine sense and extraordinary perception. If he detects even the slightest abnormality, the consequences will be unimaginable. Perhaps we should consider this further and find another way.”

Kai’s expression was calm, as if the risks they mentioned had already been calculated.

“Risks certainly exist. But right now, this is the most likely way to get close to Yu Wuji and investigate the Soul Refining Crystal and the secrets of the Divine Race.”

“By forcibly entering the Jade Immortal Mansion and confronting Yu Wuji and many experts from the Jade Immortal Mansion head-on, the chances of victory are slim, and it will inevitably alert the Divine Race, making them wary.”

He looked at Fei Qing, who was slumped on the ground, barely breathing, his eyes cold: “As for imitation… who said we need to completely imitate?”

Upon hearing this, a trace of despair and fear flashed in Fei Qing’s cloudy eyes.

Kai said no more, walked to Fei Qing, squatted down, and calmly asked: “Fei Qing, are you afraid of dying?”

Fei Qing made a hoarse sound in his throat, struggling to beg for mercy, but his body, corrupted by the power of chaos, was no longer under his control.

Kai reached out and placed his hand on Fei Qing’s head. “Your memories, your habits, everything about you… lend them to me.”

As his words fell, a chaotic power far purer and more vast than before, carrying Kai’s powerful divine sense, surged into Fei Qing’s shattered sea of consciousness like a torrent!

Soul Search!

This was one of the most domineering and cruel methods in the cultivation world, forcibly seizing another's memories. The victim of the soul search would at best become an idiot, and at worst, have their soul scattered!

Fei Qing's body convulsed violently, his eyes rolled back, and he uttered unconscious hoarse sounds. His face was contorted in extreme pain, clearly enduring unimaginable agony.

Kai closed his eyes and concentrated, like the most precise loom, rapidly combing, peeling away, and absorbing the chaotic fragments of memory in Fei Qing's sea of consciousness.

Fei Qing's life was a struggle from humble beginnings, gaining Yu Wuji's favor, climbing step by step to a high position, managing internal affairs, and handling countless shady matters for Yu Wuji.

His understanding of the internal structure of the Jade Immortal Mansion, his speculation about Yu Wuji's personality and habits, and his knowledge of the important figures within the mansion. The procedures and methods for handling various affairs, even his personal habits, catchphrases, hidden preferences and fears…

a massive amount of information flooded into Kai's consciousness like a tidal wave.

If it weren't for his unparalleled divine sense, his profound and unfathomable foundation, and the protection of his soul by the power of chaos, such a brutal soul search could easily have caused his own divine sense to become chaotic, or even been corrupted by the other party's memory fragments.

Moreover, soul search has a weakness: it cannot uncover the secrets deep within the sea of consciousness, but can only reveal the other party's ordinary memories.

Furthermore, it is extremely dangerous for the soul searcher, so few cultivators would attempt to search another person's soul; if they were to accidentally confuse the memories, they would become the other person.

After a moment, Kai withdrew his hand.

Fei Qing's body stopped convulsing, collapsed to the ground, his eyes empty and lifeless, drool dripping from the corner of his mouth, having completely become a mindless shell.

His soul, under the impact of the soul search and the erosion of the power of chaos, had shattered and dissipated.

"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.

" Kai sighed softly, his palm emitting chaotic gray light that completely annihilated Fei Qing's corpse, leaving no trace.

After doing this, a strange change began to occur in Kai.

His figure slightly increased in height, becoming similar to Fei Qing's, his facial features rippling like water, gradually transforming into Fei Qing's lean yet sinister appearance.

His clothes, under the influence of chaotic power, also changed into a dark blue brocade robe, even the subtle patterns were identical.

More importantly, his aura rapidly subsided and transformed, becoming deep and condensed, carrying a chilling, profound yin energy. His cultivation fluctuations were suppressed to around the fifth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, exactly as Fei Qing usually displayed.

Even his eyes narrowed slightly, carrying a hint of Fei Qing's characteristic scrutiny and calculation, his back straight yet carrying a subtle arrogance.

In just a few breaths, Kai had become another Fei Qing!

His appearance, aura, and cultivation fluctuations were all incredibly lifelike, making it impossible to distinguish the real from the fake!

Lianxing and Mingli watched in stunned silence.

Changing appearance and simulating aura were not difficult for high-level cultivators, but for Kai to imitate a person's spirit, temperament, and even cultivation details so realistically in such a short time was simply unheard of!

This was not only a testament to the skill of his magic, but also a manifestation of his ultimate control over his own power and the Dao of Transformation!

"Senior…you…" Lianxing was at a loss for words.

"I have a general grasp of Fei Qing's memories. Although I cannot replicate them 100%, they should be sufficient for daily interactions and general affairs,"

Kai said, his voice even adopting Fei Qing's slightly hoarse and gloomy tone. "Mingli, go and bring the two guards…"

Mingli nodded and went to fetch the two guards!

The reason Kai hadn't had Mingli kill the two guards beside Fei Qing was precisely to wait for this moment.

If he only transformed into Fei Qing's appearance, some people might have doubts. But with two bodyguards by his side, no one would think twice.

Chapter 6006 - 6007

Ming Li quickly brought two close black-clad guards, both of whom were still unconscious.

“They have followed Fei Qing for many years and are his trusted henchmen. They know Fei Qing best.”

“Ming Li, can you use your ‘Netherworld Mind Control Spell’ in conjunction with my Chaos Restriction to temporarily control them, making them obedient to me for a certain period of time and preventing them from actively revealing any abnormalities?”

A glint flashed in Ming Li’s eyes as he stepped forward to carefully examine the condition of the two guards. He pondered, “Their souls were injured by my soul threads and are already weak. Furthermore, they are sealed by your Chaos Power, Master.”

“If we use the ‘Netherworld Mind Control Spell’ to penetrate deep into the core of their souls and plant a restriction, and then supplement it with your Chaos Power to seal key memories and rebellious consciousness, it should be feasible to control them to obey commands for a short period of time.”

“However, this method cannot last, and once they encounter intense stimulation or terror far exceeding their tolerance limits, the restriction may loosen or even backfire.”

“It’s enough for now.” Kai nodded. “We don’t need them to be obedient all the time. We only need them to cooperate with me to return to the Jade Immortal Mansion and deal with the initial questioning and attention we may encounter.”

“Once we enter the inner palace, I will find an opportunity to send them away or deal with them properly.”

Ming Li said no more and immediately began casting a spell.

He formed complex and strange hand seals, chanting obscure ghost clan incantations. Streams of gray-black soul power, like fine threads, burrowed into the brows of the two guards.

At the same time, Kai flicked his fingers, shooting out two extremely fine chaotic gray rays that entered the guards' dantian, connecting with the chaotic seals within their bodies, forming a double layer of protection.

A moment later, the two guards shuddered and slowly opened their eyes.

Their eyes were slightly dazed, but upon seeing Kai, they immediately showed respect and obedience, struggling to stand up and bowing: "Grand Steward."

Their voices were somewhat stiff, but there was nothing unusual about them.

Kai nodded in satisfaction and said to Lianxing and Mingli, "I will take them back to the Jade Immortal Mansion now. You two wait here, remain hidden, and do not act rashly without my signal."

"Mingli, be on standby at any time; I may need your backup."

"Yes!" the two replied solemnly.

Kai adjusted his expression and posture one last time, recalling Fei Qing's usual walking manner and demeanor, and then said to the two guards, "Let's go back to the mansion."

With that, he walked out first. The two guards followed silently behind him, like two silent shadows.

Watching the three figures disappear into the secret passage, Lianxing and Mingli exchanged a glance, both seeing deep shock and worry in each other's eyes.

"Senior Mingli, Senior Chen… can he succeed?" Lianxing asked softly.

After a long silence, Ming Li slowly said, "Mr. Chen's actions, though seemingly risky, are actually meticulously planned and far-reaching."

“Since he dared to go, he must have some confidence. Let’s… wait for good news. At the same time, we must prepare for the worst and have backup.”

…

On the west side of the Jade Immortal Mansion, beneath the hidden vines at the base of the wall,

Kai appeared quietly with two guards. He used the same method to open the hidden entrance, and the three quickly entered, the entrance closing behind them.

They couldn’t enter openly through the main gate, as there was no record of Fei Qing’s entry or exit. If Kai led people in through the main gate at this time, the guards would be suspicious.

Returning along the underground passage, Kai deliberately slowed his pace, rapidly organizing and digesting the complex information he had gleaned from Fei Qing’s memories.

Especially the details regarding the personnel arrangements at the Jade Immortal Mansion today, Yu Wuji’s possible location, and how to deal with different people. When the three emerged from the hole in the abandoned garden near Tingsong Path, Kai had fully assumed the role of Fei Qing.

His face bore his usual somber and weary expression as he instructed the two guards, “Keep quiet about today’s events. After returning to Qingxin Pavilion, you may go and heal your wounds and rest. Do not show yourselves unless summoned by me.”

“Yes, Grand Steward,”

the two guards replied mechanically.

The three no longer concealed themselves but walked openly towards Qingxin Pavilion in the core area of the Inner Palace.

Qingxin Pavilion was Fei Qing's daily office and residence, located in the eastern part of the Inner Palace, a secluded and heavily guarded area.

Along the way, they indeed encountered several patrolling guards and Inner Palace stewards.

Upon seeing Fei Qing, everyone bowed respectfully, addressing him as "Grand Steward."

Kai merely nodded slightly, expressionless, occasionally responding or giving brief instructions in Fei Qing's usual slightly impatient tone, without a trace of unease.

The guards and stewards also failed to notice anything amiss.

However, just as they were passing through a garden filled with exotic flowers and plants, imbued with spiritual energy, and about to reach Qingxin Pavilion, a clear, melodious voice, like that of a nightingale, yet tinged with a touch of capriciousness, suddenly came from the side:

"Uncle Fei! Where have you been? I've been looking for you!"

Kai paused slightly, a thought striking him.

According to Fei Qing's memory, the owner of this voice was none other than Yu Wuji's only daughter, the eldest daughter of the Yu Xian Mansion, Yu Ranran!

He turned around and looked in

the direction of the voice. He saw a stunningly beautiful young woman gracefully walking along the flower-lined path.

She appeared to be around sixteen years old, wearing a pale yellow fairy dress with delicate silver cloud patterns embroidered on the hem, shimmering with light as she moved.

Her long, black hair was styled into a lively flying fairy bun, adorned with a delicate jade hairpin, pearl earrings, and a golden bell on her wrist.

Her skin was as white as snow, her features exquisite, and her clear, bright eyes sparkled with charm. Her cultivation aura was pure and solid, indeed reaching the fifth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm.

At this moment, she was pouting slightly, with a hint of dissatisfaction and coquettishness, and walked quickly towards Kai.

Behind her followed two maids with bowed heads.

This woman was Yu Ranran.

In Fei Qing's memory, this young lady was exceptionally talented and deeply loved by Yu Wuji. Her personality seemed lively and spoiled, but in reality, she was intelligent and sensitive, and had an extraordinary interest and attainment in ancient classics and esoteric arts.

She had a relatively close relationship with Fei Qing, the steward who had watched her grow up, and would often ask him questions about ancient texts or formations. Fei Qing, in order to please Yu Wuji, would always try his best to answer her questions or help her find answers.

"Greetings, Young Lady."

Kai bowed slightly, offering a slightly stiff smile. "This old servant was just handling some trivial official business and kept you waiting, Young Lady. May I ask what business you have with me, Young Lady?" Yu Ranran approached, scrutinizing Kai, her delicate brows slightly furrowed. "Uncle Fei, you don't look too well today? Is it because there's been too much going on at the manor lately, and you're exhausted?"

Her keen observation was indeed remarkable; she had noticed the underlying fatigue in Kai's deliberately maintained but undeniably strained demeanor.

Kai felt a slight chill, but his face remained impassive. He sighed, “Thank you for your concern, Miss. There have indeed been some complicated matters at the manor recently, and the city lord has strictly ordered increased security. This old servant dares not slacken, and perhaps I’m simply a bit lacking in energy. May I ask what your instructions are, Miss?”

Yu Ranran seemed to accept this explanation, her attention shifting to the matter she was concerned about.

She waved her slender hand, signaling the two guards and maid to step back, then leaned closer, lowered her voice, and said with a mixture of excitement and confusion, “Uncle Fei, the other day I secretly… um, borrowed an ancient fragment from my father’s study.”

“It’s said to have come from some divine ruins, recording some secret techniques about the resonance between ‘celestial power’ and ‘earthly veins’.”

“There’s a passage in it that’s incredibly obscure; I’ve studied it for two days, but I still can’t grasp it. You’re so knowledgeable, please help me!”

With that, she took out an ancient jade slip from her storage bracelet and handed it to Kai.

Kai took the jade slip and probed it with his divine sense.

It was indeed an extremely ancient scripture, written in some nearly lost ancient divine script, its content involving the complex interactions and attraction methods between the movement of stars, the earth’s veins, and the tides of spiritual energy—truly profound and obscure. However,

with Kai’s accumulated knowledge of formations, understanding it wasn’t a problem.

But Kai was currently posing as Fei Qing, and based on his understanding of Fei Qing’s memories, he shouldn’t be particularly familiar with the situation!

Moreover, in Fei Qing's memories, when faced with this situation, he would usually first comfort Yu Ranran, then say he needed time to consult classical texts or ask knowledgeable friends before giving a reply.

This would both demonstrate his dedication and buy him time, preventing him from appearing inexperienced in front of the young lady.

Kai was preparing to follow Fei Qing's example and imitate his reaction.

However, Yu Ranran stared intently into his eyes and suddenly asked, "Uncle Fei, do you think the phrase 'Tianxuan draws the stars, Dique opens and closes' has anything to do with 'Stars shift and constellations turn, acupoints connect to the hidden realm' mentioned in the *Ling Shu Mi Lu*?"

"I always felt that it seemed to contain a lost method of 'drawing stars into the body and tempering acupoints,' rather than a simple array or feng shui technique."

This question was quite professional and insightful, directly touching upon the essence of the text.

Based on Fei Qing's past behavior, he would likely first acknowledge Yu Ranran's intelligence, then cautiously express that the conjecture was interesting and needed further verification, rather than immediately giving a positive or negative conclusion, because he genuinely wasn't certain.

Following Fei Qing's pattern of recollection, Kai pondered, "Miss is intelligent; this thought is quite insightful. This scripture is indeed extraordinary, and this old servant cannot fully decipher it in a short time." "

However, the technique of 'drawing stars into the body' was indeed rumored in ancient times, mostly used by ancient cultivators with special physiques or those practicing star-related techniques. It is extremely risky, and most of the methods have been lost."

“Whether this passage contains this method requires careful consideration and comparison with more classic texts…”

He considered his answer to be adequate, consistent with Fei Qing’s status and level of understanding, and also addressing Yu Ranran’s question.

However, upon hearing this, a very faint hint of doubt flashed across Yu Ranran’s eyes.

She had discussed ancient text problems with Fei Qing many times and was very familiar with his way of speaking, his thought process, and even subtle nuances in his tone, pauses, and word choices.

The “Uncle Fei” in front of her gave a seemingly correct answer, but it always gave her a feeling that was too “fluent” and “standard”. It lacked the cautiousness that Fei Qing had, which was a bit pretentious and hesitant, and he was also afraid of saying the wrong thing. Was she really tired, hence the different reaction?

Yu Ranran harbored doubts, but didn’t show them immediately.

She blinked her beautiful eyes, suddenly changing the subject, her tone slightly coquettish: “Uncle Fei, is there any progress on that ancient annotated copy of *Yunji Qiqian* that you promised to help me find last time?” ”

Also, I heard that Wanjuanlou in Xicheng recently acquired a batch of rubbings of fragmented steles unearthed from ancient battlefield ruins. There might be some interesting things in them. When would you be free to go with me to see them?”

These two questions, one about a past promise, the other about a last-minute invitation, were excellent opportunities to test the other party’s reaction and memory.

Kai’s alarm bells rang slightly.

He quickly searched Fei Qing's memories.

An ancient annotated copy of *Yunji Qiqian*?

Fei Qing did indeed remember this; Yu Ranran had mentioned it about half a month ago, and Fei Qing had promised to keep an eye out, but there was no definite news yet.

As for the Wanjuanlou's new acquisition of fragmented steles... Fei Qing had no relevant information. Either Yu Ranran had just learned of it, or she was testing him!

In a flash, Kai made a judgment.

His face showed appropriate apology and helplessness: "Please forgive me, Miss, I have asked many people to inquire about the ancient annotated edition of the *Yunji Qiqian*, but there is still no definite news."

"As for the new rubbings from Wanjuanlou..."

he hesitated slightly, then smiled wryly, "I have been busy with household affairs these past few days and have not heard of it. If Miss is interested, I can send someone to investigate later and then report back to you, and arrange a time to accompany you, would that be alright?"

This answer acknowledged the lack of progress on the *Yunji Qiqian* matter while also showing a willingness to investigate the new rubbings from Wanjuanlou despite being unaware of them—the safest approach.

However, Yu Ranran's doubts deepened.

She clearly remembered mentioning to Fei Qing three days ago that Wanjuanlou might have new stock, and Fei Qing had smiled and said he would keep an eye out.

Even if Fei Qing had forgotten these past few days, his reaction shouldn't be one of complete ignorance.

Moreover, although “Uncle Fei” was trying his best to imitate her, there were still some things about his tone and word choice that made Yu Ranran feel…something was off.

It wasn’t a matter of voice or appearance, but rather a deeper, unique quality and thought process belonging to “Fei Qing” himself, which seemed to have subtly changed.

Could it be…that there was something wrong with the Uncle Fei before her?

Once this thought arose, it spread like wildfire in Yu Ranran’s heart.

But she had no evidence, and she couldn’t question the head steward of the manor based solely on her feelings.

Besides, if Uncle Fei was really being impersonated or controlled, that would be too terrible!

Chapter 6008 - 6010

Yu Ranran’s mind raced, but her face remained impassive, instead flashing a sweet smile: “Oh, alright then, thank you, Uncle Fei.”

“By the way, I’m really itching to know about this ancient scripture. Uncle Fei, don’t you know a senior who’s very knowledgeable about ancient scriptures and secret arts?”

“He seems to live in the east of the city? Could you please invite that senior to your residence now to help me understand? I can pay you!”

As she spoke, she carefully observed Kai’s reaction.

If the other party was truly Fei Qing, he should know who the senior she was talking about was and would do as she asked, or give a reasonable excuse.

If the other party was a fake, he might give himself away!

Kai cursed inwardly at this troublesome little girl.

Fei Qing did indeed know several rogue cultivators who were knowledgeable about ancient texts, but their specific addresses, names, and relationships were somewhat vague and fragmented, making it difficult to accurately match them in a hurry.

Moreover, Yu Ranran's immediate invitation was clearly a test.

He couldn't agree, because he had no idea who to ask or how to contact them.

But he couldn't refuse outright either, lest it arouse greater suspicion.

Kai's mind raced, and he made a decision in an instant.

A troubled look appeared on his face as he carefully said, "Miss, are you referring to Mr. Mo? To be honest, Mr. Mo left Jade Immortal City a few days ago for some reason, and his return date is uncertain."

"As for the others... they are either traveling and haven't returned, or they are in seclusion, so I'm afraid it will be difficult to persuade them in the short term."

A glint flashed in Yu Ranran's eyes.

"Mr. Mo has left? I heard someone say they saw him in the west of the city a few days ago." She said with a half-smile, another test.

Kai's heart sank, knowing that he might have said the wrong thing.

But he couldn't show weakness at this moment. He steadied himself and said with a wry smile, "Oh? Perhaps this old servant's information is delayed. If Mr. Mo has already returned, that would be even better."

“However, it’s already late today, and it might be impolite to invite him abruptly. How about this, tomorrow morning, this old servant will personally go to the West City. If Mr. Mo is free, I will invite him to the manor to discuss the scriptures with Miss, what do you think?”

His words offered a concrete and reasonable solution, both responding to Yu Ranran’s request and buying himself time.

Yu Ranran stared at Kai for a few seconds, then suddenly smiled. Her smile was as bright as spring sunshine, yet it sent a chill down Kai’s spine.

“Alright, then let’s do as Uncle Fei says, we’ll talk about it tomorrow.”

Yu Ranran put away the jade slip, seemingly giving up on asking further questions, but then asked casually, “By the way, Uncle Fei, Father seemed to have asked about the maintenance of the Fallen Soul Slope formation this morning. Have you dealt with it? Father seems to be paying extra attention to that place lately.”

Fallen Soul Slope!

Soul Refining Crystal!

Kai’s heart skipped a beat.

This was definitely a deliberate test!

Did Yu Ranran know something?

Or was it just a coincidence?

He forced himself to remain calm and answered as Fei Qing should have: “Reporting to Miss, this old servant has personally checked the array at Fallen Soul Slope, and it is functioning normally.”

“Soul Refining… related matters have also been arranged properly, please rest assured, City Lord.”

He almost mentioned Soul Refining Crystals, but quickly changed his words, appearing even more cautious. Yu Ranran nodded, asking no further questions.

“Then, Uncle Fei, you go ahead with your work. I won’t disturb your rest any longer. I’ll be waiting for your good news tomorrow!”

She waved, then, with her maid, turned and gracefully departed, leaving behind a faint fragrance.

Only after Yu Ranran’s figure disappeared at the end of the flower path did Kai secretly breathe a sigh of relief, a fine layer of sweat breaking out on his back.

This Yu Ranran truly lived up to her reputation; she was sharp-witted, eloquent, and constantly probing, and a slight misstep would leave her with a flaw!

The conversation just now, seemingly ordinary, was actually extremely dangerous. Although he had temporarily weathered the storm, Yu Ranran had clearly become suspicious.

Tomorrow’s appointment was likely an even greater test, or… a trap.

He couldn’t continue to play along with her under the guise of Fei Qing; it was too easy to expose himself.

A cold glint flashed in Kai’s eyes, and he quickly devised a new plan.

Since Yu Ranran is so obsessed with ancient books and secret arts, and Fei Qing happens to know a master who has studied these things…

why not have that master personally take the lead?

A bolder, even somewhat erotic and dramatic plan gradually took shape in his mind.

Approach Yu Ranran, gain her favor and trust, and then through her, contact Yu Wuji to investigate the Soul Refining Crystal and the secrets of the Divine Race!

This is more meaningful than simply impersonating Fei Qing and then making a move on Yu Ranran.

The risks may be greater, but if successful, the rewards will be higher, and he will have more control!

A faint smile appeared on Kai's lips.

With his charm, he could make Yu Ranran fall for him the moment they met.

Once he had Yu Ranran under his spell, becoming the son-in-law of the Jade Immortal Mansion, would he still have trouble getting close to Yu Wuji?

Kai was absolutely confident that Yu Ranran would willingly offer herself to him.

That's charm...

But before that, Kai needed to deal with Mr. Mo from the West City and find a way to get him to leave for a while.

Then, he would have Fei Qing find an excuse to leave Yu Xian Mansion, so that even if Yu Ranran had any suspicions, she wouldn't be able to find any evidence!

After leaving Yu Ranran's sight, he didn't return directly to Qingxin Pavilion, but instead turned and headed towards a relatively secluded small garden at the border of the inner and outer mansions.

He needed to contact Lianxing as soon as possible.

In the corner of the garden stood an inconspicuous ancient locust tree with a hollow trunk.

Kai quickly used his finger to carve several peculiar symbols in a hidden spot on the inside of the trunk.

This was the emergency contact code he and Lianxing had agreed upon beforehand, indicating that urgent assistance was needed.

Next to the code, he left information about the time and location that Lianxing could recognize: “West City, Mr. Mo, leave immediately, without a trace.”

After doing all this, he straightened his robes, regained Fei Qing’s slightly gloomy expression, and walked towards the Yingbin Villa! This is where Jade Immortal Mansion entertains guests!

Kai exchanged a few words with the guards and then left!

Back at Qingxin Pavilion, two controlled guards stood like wooden stakes in the courtyard.

Kai glanced at them, his eyes cold.

These two could no longer be allowed to live.

Although they were controlled, they were still a hidden danger, and as time went on, Ming Li’s mind-controlling spell and chaotic restrictions might gradually loosen or be discovered.

“Follow me to the study,”

Kai instructed the two guards, his voice calm and indifferent.

The two guards silently followed.

Entering the depths of Qingxin Pavilion, they reached Fei Qing’s private study, which was equipped with multiple isolation arrays.

Kai closed the heavy stone door and activated all the silence and isolation restrictions.

Only three people remained in the study.

Kai turned around, facing the two guards whose eyes were slightly dazed, and sighed softly, “You’ve followed Fei Qing for many years, and you’ve done your duty. Unfortunately, it’s fate.”

As soon as he finished speaking, his eyes suddenly sharpened, and he pointed his fingers like swords. Two chaotic gray lights, more condensed and purer than before, pierced the two guards’ brows like lightning!

There were no screams, no struggles.

The two guards’ bodies shuddered simultaneously, and the last glimmer of light in their eyes vanished completely.

Then, their entire bodies, starting from the inside out, silently turned into the finest gray dust, like a pencil drawing erased by an eraser, fluttering to the ground, even their clothes and belongings disappearing along with them.

He had completely eliminated these two potential problems.

Afterwards, Kai called a steward, gave him some instructions, and then let the steward leave!

But after leaving, Kai closed his eyes, and light and shadow flowed around him. His figure, face, and aura began to change rapidly.

His tall figure slightly adjusted, returning to its original balanced and upright posture.

The gaunt, sinister face receded like ripples, revealing Kai’s original youthful, handsome, and sharply defined features.

His dark blue brocade robe transformed into a simple, moon-white long gown in a soft glow, its quality refined yet understated.

In a few breaths, Fei Qing vanished, and standing in the study was once again Kai, his eyes deep and calm.

He stretched his neck, savoring the ease of returning to his original form.

Disguising himself, especially as a cunning character like Fei Qing, required constant mental vigilance.

Next, he would assume a different identity and re-enter the Jade Immortal Mansion.

Kai pondered briefly, then walked to a bookshelf on one side of the study.

Following Fei Qing's memory, he skillfully moved several heavy books aside, revealing a hidden recess in the wall behind them. Inside were several spare guest elder tokens, of lower authority but sufficient for travel within certain areas of the inner palace, along with some blank talismans and disguise supplies.

These were some backup plans Fei Qing had prepared for himself.

Kai took out a cyan guest elder token, along with some blank talismans and disguise materials.

He hung the token at his waist, then, facing a large water mirror in the study, began to subtly refine his appearance.

It wasn't a drastic change, but rather a softening of his already handsome features, reducing some of his sharpness and adding a touch of scholarly refinement.

He adjusted his skin tone to be slightly paler, as if he rarely saw sunlight due to years of studying classical texts.

He shaped his eyebrows to be thinner and longer, and deliberately toned down the sharpness in his eyes, replacing it with a gentle, peaceful, and inquisitive gleam.

Soon, a refined and elegant young cultivator appeared in the mirror, around twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old, the kind of scholar engrossed in ancient texts, seemingly unaware of worldly affairs.

Kai nodded in satisfaction.

This image should match Yu Ranran's expectations of a master, and being young and handsome would make it easier to win the young lady's favor.

He checked himself one last time, confirming that he hadn't left any traces related to his previous actions.

Then, he walked to the window on the other side of the study.

There was a hidden passage leading to a secluded path behind Qingxin Pavilion, a path rarely known to others, which Fei Qing used for private meetings or handling confidential matters.

Pushing open the window, Kai floated out like a falling leaf, his figure blending into the night, and silently left the Qingxin Pavilion area along the path.

He didn't go far, but instead took a large detour, arriving at the outer perimeter of the welcoming courtyard of Yu Xian Mansion, which was used to receive visiting guests.

It was already late at night, and there were guards at the entrance of the courtyard, but it was much less crowded than in the inner core area of the mansion.

Kai straightened his clothes, his face showing a hint of arrogance and curiosity from his first arrival, and slowly walked towards the courtyard gate.

“Halt! Who goes there? Do you have any credentials?” The guard stopped him.

Kai remained calm and composed, taking out his guest elder token and saying gently, “I am Kai, invited by Grand Steward Fei Qing to stay temporarily at the manor to assist with some ancient book verification matters.”

His voice was clear and pleasant, carrying a convincing composure.

The guard took the token, checked it, and after confirming its authenticity, and observing Kai’s outstanding temperament and cultivation, his attitude softened considerably: “So it’s Mr. Chen. The Grand Steward has already instructed that room number three of the Jia class be arranged for you. Please follow me.”

Kai had already spoken to the guard beforehand, so there wouldn’t be any problems!

Kai smiled and nodded: “Thank you for your trouble.”

Thus, Kai, as a guest elder, openly and legitimately moved into the welcoming courtyard of the Jade Immortal Mansion.

The room he chose was quiet and secluded, suitable for meditation and research, and also in line with the persona he had cultivated.

After entering the room, Kai checked his surroundings again to ensure safety before sitting cross-legged and beginning to regulate his breathing, while his mind rapidly rehearsed the meeting scene for tomorrow and various possible scenarios. …

The night was deep. In the western district of Jade Immortal City, outside an elegant courtyard,

a ghostly figure appeared silently. It was Lianxing, who had come on Kai’s orders.

She had changed into night clothes, completely concealing her aura, and her sharp eyes scanned her surroundings.

According to the coded messages and intelligence left by Kai, the Mr. Mo, who was knowledgeable about ancient books, lived here.

Kai wanted her to deal with this person, but not kill him, since Mr. Mo had no grudge against Kai.

Lianxing did not rush in.

She first carefully explored the outer perimeter of Tingyu Pavilion, confirming that there was only a faint aura, about the second rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, inside, and no powerful protective array.

She took out a thin bamboo tube and gently blew out a wisp of colorless and odorless smoke, which drifted into the room through the cracks in the door and windows.

This was her secret sleeping potion, which could induce a deep, dreamless sleep, and was extremely effective on low-level cultivators.

After waiting a moment, Lianxing slipped over the wall like a cat and silently entered the main house.

On the bed, an elderly man with white hair and beard, and a gaunt face, was fast asleep—it was Mr. Mo.

Lianxing placed the sleeping Mr. Mo into a specially made, breath-proof storage bag, cleaned up the scene, erased all traces of her presence, and quietly left.

Following her plan, she smuggled Mr. Mo out of the martial law-bound Jade Immortal City that very night and took him to a secluded cave hundreds of miles outside the city.

Having done all this, Lianxing breathed a sigh of relief and quickly returned to her secret location, awaiting Kai’s next instructions.

…

The next day, the sky was clear and bright.

Yu Ranran arrived at Qingxin Pavilion early as expected. Today, she wore a light green dress, which made her skin appear even whiter.

Her hair was also carefully styled, adorned with a trembling pearl hairpin, making her look fresh and charming, yet also carrying a hint of anticipation.

However, after waiting for a long time in the outer hall of Qingxin Pavilion, Fei Qing did not emerge. Only an ordinary steward nervously served tea.

“Where is Uncle Fei? Hasn’t he gotten up yet?” Yu Ranran asked impatiently.

“Reporting to… Miss,”

the steward said, sweat beading on his forehead, “The Grand Steward… the Grand Steward hurriedly left the manor last night, saying… saying he had urgent official business and needed to leave for several days.”

“Before leaving, he specifically instructed that he had invited a scholar who was extremely knowledgeable in ancient scriptures for Miss, and he is currently waiting at the Yingbin Villa. The Grand Steward told you to go directly there.”

“Left? Several days?”

Yu Ranran frowned slightly.

Fei Qing had promised yesterday to invite Mr. Mo today, so why did he suddenly leave?

And even invited someone directly?

This style of doing things was somewhat unlike Fei Qing's usual meticulous manner, instead revealing a sense of haste.

Could it be… that his probing yesterday made him feel guilty?

Or was there really an urgent matter?

Yu Ranran's doubts remained, but she was even more curious about the scholar who had been invited.

Although Fei Qing is suspicious, the people he brought in might actually have some skills? "Lead the way." Yu Ranran stood up, deciding to see for herself.

The Guest Reception Courtyard.

Kai had already risen and was brewing tea at a stone table beside a clump of green bamboo in the courtyard.

Morning light filtered through the bamboo leaves, illuminating his moon-white robe and his focused, serene profile. The fragrant tea, mingled with the fresh scent of bamboo leaves, created a tranquil and elegant atmosphere.

This was the scene that greeted Yu Ranran when she entered the Guest Reception Courtyard, led by the steward.

Her steps unconsciously slowed.

The young man sitting in the bamboo shadows and morning light was tall and upright, with a gentle and refined temperament. His profile was handsome, and his expression focused and calm—completely different from the stereotypical image of an old, pedantic scholar she had imagined.

Seemingly sensing someone's arrival, Kai raised his head, his gaze turning towards the courtyard gate.

Their eyes met.

Yu Ranran felt a slight jolt in

her heart. His eyes were clear and deep, like an autumn lake, calm and still, yet seemingly capable of reflecting the depths of one's soul.

His gaze was calm and gentle, tinged with inquiry, lacking the usual astonishment or fawning one a man might show upon seeing her.

"Are you Miss Yu?"

Kai set down his tea set, stood up, and bowed with elegant and natural movements. "I am Kai, entrusted by Chief Steward Fei Qing to await your arrival. The Chief Steward said that Miss Yu possesses considerable insight into ancient texts and scriptures, and has encountered some difficulties, thus requesting that I come to discuss them with her."

His voice was clear and gentle, his pace unhurried, making him pleasant to listen to.

Yu Ranran snapped out of her daze and quickly returned the greeting, a faint smile unconsciously appearing on her face. "Greetings, Mr. Chen. Uncle Fei is quick on his feet; he only mentioned it yesterday, and you've already invited me today. But I wonder if you and Mr. Mo from Xicheng..."

"Mr. Mo is an old acquaintance of mine, a man of profound learning, from whom I often seek his guidance,"

Kai replied with a slight smile, responding with ease. "However, Mr. Mo went traveling to visit friends a month ago, and his return is uncertain. Chief Steward Fei knows that I have recently been traveling in the vicinity and have some knowledge of the ancient star power and earth vein theories, hence my presumptuous invitation. I hope you will forgive any abruptness, Miss."

His explanation was reasonable, and his attitude was neither humble nor arrogant.

Yu Ranran's doubts lessened somewhat.

It seemed that Fei Qing had indeed gone to invite Mr. Mo, only to find him unavailable, and thus temporarily sought out this Mr. Chen.

This Mr. Chen possessed an extraordinary bearing and spoke with refined manners; he didn't seem like a charlatan.

"Mr. Chen, you're too kind. It's my great honor to receive your guidance,"

Yu Ranran said, walking to the stone table and sitting down. She naturally placed the jade slip containing ancient texts on the table. "Yesterday, Uncle Fei and I discussed this passage. We couldn't understand the phrase 'Tianxuan leads the stars, Dique opens and closes,' and I wonder if you have any insights?"

As she spoke, she carefully observed Kai's expression and reaction.

Kai picked up the jade slip, scanned it with his divine sense, and a thoughtful look appeared on his face. After a moment, a hint of understanding and admiration flashed in his eyes.

"Young Miss is indeed exceptionally intelligent, grasping the key point at a glance."

He put down the jade slip, his fingers lightly tracing lines on the stone table, using spiritual power to outline a simple star map and earth vein lines. "This phrase is certainly not from ordinary feng shui formations. In my humble opinion, 'Tianxuan' does not simply refer to one of the seven stars of the Big Dipper. In this context, it is more likely to refer to a specific 'traction node' or 'aperture' in the celestial energies;"

"'Dique' is not simply a gap in the veins, but rather a 'gate' in the human body or earth corresponding to 'Tianxuan' in the heavens."

He explained in simple terms, citing classical texts and combining several nearly lost ancient doctrines, making this obscure passage clear and logical.

He not only answered Yu Ranran's questions but also proposed several possible cultivation or application theories, each one substantial and thought-provoking.

Chapter 6011 - 6012

Yu Ranran initially approached the conversation with a somewhat critical eye, but as she listened, her expression gradually became focused, then surprised, and finally, filled with admiration and excitement!

This Mr. Chen's erudition and unique insights far exceeded her expectations!

Many points that had puzzled her were easily clarified with a simple touch from him. Some of his conjectures were completely unheard of, yet logically consistent, leaving her utterly amazed!

Before she knew it, the two had been talking from dawn till mid-morning.

The tea was changed several times, and the spiritual energy patterns on the stone table were replaced repeatedly.

Yu Ranran was completely immersed in this high-level academic discussion, her eyes growing brighter and her cheeks flushing slightly with excitement.

Looking at Kai across from her, eloquent, intelligent, and exuding confidence and charm, the initial attraction she felt for his appearance quickly fermented,

transforming into a complex emotion mixed with admiration, appreciation, and a subtle, almost budding, affection.

How long had it been? How long had it been since she'd encountered a peer with whom she could have such a deep conversation, someone whose knowledge truly impressed her?

The young talents in the manor were either obsequious, empty and dull, or, despite their high level of cultivation, illiterate.

This Mr. Chen, however, was not only incredibly learned, but also...and so handsome.

Yu Ranran felt her heart race. Her gaze lingered on Kai's slightly parted lips as he spoke, his long, clean fingers, and his long, thick eyelashes that drooped slightly as he listened intently...

"Young Miss? Young Miss?"

Kai's gentle call startled her from her reverie.

"Ah? Oh! Mr. Chen, please continue, I'm listening!"

Yu Ranran hurriedly averted her gaze, two blushes rising on her face. She lowered her head somewhat shyly, picking up her teacup as if to cover her embarrassment. Kai

noticed her subtle movements and understood.

The plan was progressing even more smoothly than he had anticipated.

This young lady was not only intelligent, but in some ways, she seemed remarkably naive.

His displayed knowledge and demeanor had clearly succeeded in attracting her attention, even... winning her favor.

This was an excellent breakthrough.

But he had to be careful not to overdo it. He

needed to maintain this attraction without appearing too eager or frivolous.

He had to act like a true, scholarly gentleman, occasionally revealing his appreciation for the intelligent woman, nothing more.

“It’s getting late…”

Kai glanced at the sky and said considerately, “The profound meanings of these scriptures cannot be fully understood in a short time. If Miss is interested, I can stay in the manor for several days and am always ready to discuss them. I just wonder if that would be a disturbance?”

“Not at all! Not at all!”

Yu Ranran blurted out, then realized she had been too eager. Her face turned even redder, and her voice lowered. “What I mean is… Mr. Chen is very knowledgeable. I would be honored to receive your guidance.”

“I’ll have someone arrange it for you right away. You can stay in the manor as long as you wish!” ”By the way, Mr. Chen, do you have any requirements for your lodging? Although the Yingbin Villa is quiet, it’s a bit too simple. Perhaps…”

She had already subconsciously begun to consider Kai’s needs.

Kai smiled inwardly, but his expression remained gentle and humble: “Thank you for your kindness, Miss. The environment here is elegant and suits my taste perfectly. There’s no need to trouble yourself further. However…”

He hesitated slightly, then said, “But Chief Steward Fei left in a hurry and didn’t say when he would return.”

“I am honored to be invited to the manor. Besides discussing scriptures with Miss, is there anything else I can help with?”

“If Miss has any questions about ancient books, or matters concerning the collation and verification of the manor’s classics, please give the order. I am willing to do my best.”

This was a well-chosen statement, both indicating his status as a guest and his willingness to help, and subtly probing whether there was an opportunity to access the more core collections or affairs of the Jade Immortal Manor.

Yu Ranran’s goodwill towards Kai had grown considerably at this moment, and upon hearing this, she immediately said, “Mr. Chen, you’re too kind! Your willingness to stay and guide me is already a great help!”

“The library in the manor does indeed hold many ancient book fragments, some of which even my father may not fully understand. If you don’t mind the trouble, I can take you to the library another day; perhaps we can discover more!”

The library!

Kai’s heart stirred.

Perhaps there he could find clues about the Divine Race, Soul Refining Crystals, or the secrets of the Jade Immortal Mansion!

“In that case, I’ll trouble you, Miss.”

Kai bowed and thanked her, his smile gentle yet like a spring breeze caressing Yu Ranran’s heart.

Looking at his smile, Yu Ranran felt overjoyed; her previous doubts about Fei Qing had long since vanished.

Now, her mind was filled with this handsome and learned Mr. Chen, and the wonderful time she could spend discussing ancient books and strolling through the sea of books with him in the future.

“Well… Mr. Chen, please rest. I’ll come back to consult you later.”

Yu Ranran stood up somewhat reluctantly, leaving Tingzhu Garden with several glances back.

As she stepped out of the courtyard, a smile she couldn't hide lingered on her face. She instructed her accompanying maid, "Go tell the steward of the welcoming courtyard that Mr. Chen is an important guest of mine. He must be treated with utmost care, and all expenses must be in the highest standard. No negligence whatsoever!"

"Also, tell the library that I'll be taking Mr. Chen to consult ancient texts in a few days. Have them prepare accordingly."

"Yes, Miss."

The maid respectfully replied, secretly surprised that her mistress seemed particularly attentive to this new gentleman.

Yu Ranran walked back briskly, pondering which difficult questions she should ask Mr. Chen next, and what clothes she should wear to see him...

Inside the courtyard, Kai watched Yu Ranran leave, the gentle smile on his face slowly fading, replaced by calm.

The first step—approaching the target and gaining favor—had been accomplished well.

Next, it was time to use this goodwill to gradually penetrate the core of the Jade Immortal Mansion, get close to Yu Wuji, and investigate the Soul Refining Crystal and the secrets of the Divine Race.

He walked back to the stone table, picked up the slightly cooled tea, and took a small sip. Yu Ranran left the welcoming courtyard with a heart full of joy and a hint of sweetness, even forgetting to delve into the strangeness of Fei Qing's hasty departure.

However, the atmosphere inside the Wuji Hall, the power center of the Jade Immortal Mansion, was completely different.

The hall was majestic, with black jade as its base and white jade as its pillars. The dome was inlaid with luminous pearls, emitting a soft yet cold light.

Deep within the hall, on a wide throne carved from a single piece of meteorite iron, sat a middle-aged man dressed in a purple-gold dragon robe and wearing a jade crown.

He appeared to be around forty years old, with a square face, eyes that seemed to hold the movement of the sun, moon, and stars, a high nose, and tightly pursed lips, exuding an imposing aura.

His aura was deep and profound, as if he were one with the entire hall and even the ground beneath his feet, his breath subtly stirring the surrounding spiritual energy.

This was none other than Yu Wuji, the Lord of the Jade Immortal Mansion, a supreme expert of the seventh rank of the Upper Immortal Realm!

At this moment, he held a newly presented communication jade slip in his hand, his face so grim it was almost dripping with water.

The jade slip contained the joint investigation report from the Punishment Hall and the Inner Guard: the brothers Tu Gang and Tu Meng were confirmed missing; there were no signs of struggle or residual energy at the scene, as if they had vanished into thin air.

Preliminary investigation revealed that unidentified individuals had been inquiring about the Fallen Soul Slope incident and the Tu brothers' whereabouts in the city recently.

Combined with the fact that someone had offered a high price to inquire about Fallen Soul Slope a few days ago, it was suspected to be targeted retaliation or an attempt to silence witnesses regarding the execution at Fallen Soul Slope. Furthermore, the perpetrator was highly skilled, used unorthodox methods, and was extremely adept at concealing and destroying traces.

“Useless! All useless!”

Yu Wuji’s deep, furious roar echoed through the hall, making the air vibrate. “Two executioners of the fourth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, just vanished silently in their own residence?”

“You don’t even know how they died? What use are you to me!”

The elders of the Execution Hall and the commander of the Inner Guard kneeling below were trembling with fear, their heads bowed even lower, cold sweat soaking their backs.

“Investigate! Continue investigating! Expand the scope, screen everyone who recently entered the city, whose whereabouts are suspicious, and whose cultivation level is unknown!”

“At Fallen Soul Slope, increase manpower, raise the array alert to the highest level! Without my order, no one is allowed to approach within a hundred miles!”

Yu Wuji issued a series of orders, his tone icy. “Also, strengthen the city defenses, shut down all teleportation arrays, leaving only the emergency passages open, which I will personally control!”

“Yes! We will obey the Lord’s orders!” Everyone hurriedly responded.

“Where is Fei Qing? Have him come to see me!” Yu Wuji remembered this trusted steward in charge of internal affairs and the prison.

A steward cautiously stepped forward and reported, “Reporting to the Lord, Chief Steward Fei… said yesterday evening that he had urgent private business and needed to leave the manor for several days. He has already reported to the elder on duty, and at this moment… he should no longer be in the manor.”

“What?”

Yu Wuji's brows furrowed sharply. "He left the manor yesterday? Did he say what private business it was? Where did he go? When will he return?"

"The Chief Steward only said that the private business was urgent, without specifying what it was or where he was going. He only said that he would return in three to five days at the earliest, and half a month at the latest,"

the steward answered with a forced smile.

Yu Wuji's brows furrowed even more deeply. Why did Fei Qing suddenly leave the manor at this time?

And at such a crucial moment when he ordered heightened security and the investigation into the disappearance of the Tu brothers?

A strange unease, like a cold snake, crept into Yu Wuji's heart.

The Tu brothers were Fei Qing's confidants, specializing in handling the dirty work at Fallen Soul Slope.

Their sudden disappearance, followed immediately by Fei Qing's departure from the manor?

This was too much of a coincidence!

Could it be... that something had happened to Fei Qing too?

Or... that he knew something, became afraid, and ran away?

Or perhaps, this was all part of a larger conspiracy targeting Fei Qing, or the Fallen Soul Slope incident?

Countless thoughts collided in Yu Wuji's mind.

He was inherently suspicious, and having risen to the position of manor lord, controlling the vast Jade Immortal City, his cunning and ruthlessness far surpassed that of ordinary people.

“Pass down the order…”

Yu Wuji’s voice returned to calm, but became even colder. “From this day forward, Yu Xian Mansion is on the highest alert. The outside is relaxed, but the inside is tense. All gates are under heightened security checks. Without my warrant or the joint signature of the elders, no stranger is allowed to set foot in the inner mansion!”

“The guest elders currently in the Yingbin Villa, all have their identities and backgrounds re-verified and are under close surveillance! Also, send people to find out Fei Qing’s exact whereabouts after leaving the mansion. Find him alive or dead!”

“Furthermore…”

He paused, a cold glint in his eyes, “Inform the young lady to stay home for the time being. Without my permission, she is not allowed to move around freely, and she is absolutely forbidden from bringing any strangers into the inner mansion!”

“Yes!” The crowd solemnly accepted the order and quickly withdrew to carry it out.

Inside the main hall, only Yu Wuji remained.

He slowly stood up, walked to the huge window, and looked down at the magnificent and heavily guarded Yu Xian Mansion below.

“No matter who you are, daring to run wild in my Jade Immortal Mansion, harming my people, coveting my secrets…”

Yu Wuji muttered to himself, his eyes sharp as knives, “I will make sure you… never return!”

However, Yu Wuji's order seemed to have come a step too late.

Or rather, he underestimated the extent of his daughter's infatuation and overestimated her ability to carry out his orders.

Chapter 6013 - 6020

The next morning, Yu Ranran arrived as promised.

She had clearly dressed meticulously, wearing a pale yellow ruqun (a type of traditional Chinese dress) with a light gauze overlay, her hair neatly styled and adorned with delicate pearl flowers, making her even more beautiful than the flowers themselves.

Seeing Kai open the door, her eyes immediately curved into crescents.

"Mr. Chen, let's go!"

The two walked side-by-side towards the library deep within the inner palace.

Along the way, they encountered several patrolling guards and stewards, who all bowed respectfully to Yu Ranran.

Although they harbored some doubts about Kai beside her, seeing the young lady chatting and laughing intimately with her, no one dared to approach and question him.

Soon, a magnificent and ancient seven-story tower came into view.

The tower was constructed of unknown dark blue-green stones, its surface engraved with countless mysterious runes, exuding an aura of antiquity and weight, its top shrouded in a faint spiritual mist.

This is the Jade Immortal Mansion's library, housing countless cultivation manuals, historical secrets, and formulas for formations and pills. It is one of the important foundations of the Jade

Immortal Mansion's heritage. At the entrance of the tower, four guards with profound auras, at least at the third rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, stood solemnly.

Seeing Yu Ranran approach with a strange man, the gray-robed elder at the head of the group frowned slightly, stepped forward, and bowed, saying, "Young Miss."

"Elder Wu..."

Yu Ranran was in a good mood and said with a smile, "I brought Mr. Chen to the library to look up some ancient books. Mr. Chen is a guest elder invited by Uncle Fei. He is very knowledgeable and can help me with a few questions."

Elder Wu glanced at Kai, his gaze sharp as a knife, and said in a deep voice, "Young Miss, the library is a very important place in the manor. Only core members of the manor or those holding special orders from the manor lord or the elders are allowed to enter. Although this Mr. Chen is a guest elder, but..."

"But what?"

Yu Ranran's smile vanished, and her pretty face hardened. "I am the daughter of the manor lord. Can't I even bring a friend in to look at books? Do you think I would leak the manor's secrets?"

"Someone invited by Uncle Fei, how could there be a problem? Elder Wu, are you questioning me or Uncle Fei?"

She was already spoiled, and now, in order to protect Kai, she put on the airs of a young lady, her tone aggressive.

Elder Wu's face stiffened. Although he held a high position, he dared not truly offend the darling daughter of the manor lord.

Moreover, he had to give some face to Chief Steward Fei Qing.

However, the manor lord had just issued a strict order yesterday…

“Young Miss, please calm down. This old man did not mean that

,” Elder Wu softened his tone. “It’s just that the manor lord ordered yesterday that security be strengthened in the manor in the coming days, and the library is of paramount importance, requiring strict control over entry and exit.”

“If Young Miss wishes to bring people in, may this old man inform the manor lord?”

“Inform what? My father is in seclusion cultivating. Do you have to disturb him for such a small matter?”

Yu Ranran was even more displeased. “I’ll only go in for a short while, look up a few books, and come out. I’ll take responsibility if anything happens! Get out of the way!”

With that, she actually grabbed Kai’s hand and tried to force her way in!

Kai chuckled inwardly, but on the surface, he appropriately showed a hint of embarrassment and apology. The more humble and sensible he appeared, the more Yu Ranran felt Elder Wu was unreasonable, and the more determined she became to take him inside.

“Mr. Chen, there’s no need for that! I said we can go in, so we can go in!”

Yu Ranran glared at Elder Wu, and without further ado, pulled Kai past the guards and directly into the library.

Elder Wu and the other guards exchanged glances, finally sighing and not daring to forcibly stop them.

They knew this young lady’s temper; if they truly angered her, none of them would fare well.

They could only hope the Lord of the Manor wouldn’t blame them…

Entering the library, a rich aroma of books and a faint fragrance of spiritual wood wafted towards them.

The interior space was far more spacious than it appeared from the outside, clearly utilizing a spatial expansion array.

Rows of bookshelves, several meters high, were neatly arranged, filled with all sorts of jade slips, silk scrolls, bone fragments, and metal books—a dazzling array, vast and boundless.

A faint protective aura flowed between the bookshelves.

Yu Ranran knew the way well, leading Kai directly to the third floor.

“This section mainly houses ancient miscellaneous books, geographical anecdotes, and secret histories. Most of the strange records about celestial phenomena and ley lines are on this floor.”

She began browsing with great interest, occasionally pulling out a jade slip and handing it to Kai: “Mr. Chen, look at this… and this…”

While cooperating with her discussion, Kai subtly extended his divine sense like the finest tentacles, cautiously scanning the surrounding bookshelves and books.

He was searching for any records that might be related to “the Divine Race,” “Soul Refining Crystals,” “Soul Falling Slope,” or the secrets of the Jade Immortal Mansion.

Immersed in the world of ancient texts, time quietly passed.

Yu Ranran was frequently amazed by Kai’s profound knowledge, her admiration almost undisguised.

She moved closer and closer to Kai, sometimes almost leaning into his arms to see his finger gestures clearly. Strands of her hair occasionally brushed against the back of Kai’s hand, bringing a slight tickle and fragrance.

Kai maintained his gentlemanly demeanor, gentle and polite.

But occasionally, when he glanced back at Yu Ranran, a hint of appreciation and tenderness would appear in his eyes, making Yu Ranran's heart flutter even more.

"Sigh, these gods are really annoying."

Upon seeing a certain book recording the conflicts between ancient races, Yu Ranran suddenly pouted and muttered in dissatisfaction.

Kai's heart stirred, but his face remained calm. He followed her words and asked, "Why do you say that, Miss? Aren't the gods... supposed to be supreme and rule over the thirteen heavens?"

"Supreme and supreme!"

Yu Ranran pouted, as if she had found someone to confide in. She lowered her voice and said, "They are just human cultivators with better cultivation talent and earlier birth, yet they call themselves gods and look down on us cultivators."

"They act like tyrants in our Azure Nether Immortal Continent, treating all the major families and sects as their vassals and servants! My father... my father has to be careful and obedient in front of them."

Her tone was filled with obvious dissatisfaction and a hint of resentment.

As a favored daughter of heaven, she also had her own pride and had long harbored resentment towards the arrogant and domineering attitude of the gods. Feeling the surging, star-studded chaotic power within him, Kai's eyes gleamed with restrained brilliance.

Although he was still some distance from Yu Wuji, a seventh-grade Upper Immortal, his supreme chaotic power and rich combat experience gave him the confidence to confront him head-on, and even defeat him!

Of course, all this rapid improvement was built upon the long time spent within the tower.

Outside, only two days had passed.

On the morning of the third day, Kai and Yu Ranran emerged from the Demon-Suppressing Tower, radiant with energy.

Their auras were intertwined, their eyes locked, resembling a pair of celestial lovers deeply in love, their restrained cultivation only making them seem unfathomable.

However, just as they stepped out of their residence, preparing for a stroll in the garden, a cold, majestic aura, brimming with boundless fury, descended like a blizzard, enveloping the entire pavilion!

The air seemed to freeze instantly, and the maids trembled, prostrating themselves on the ground in terror.

At the entrance, Yu Wuji, dressed in a purple-gold dragon robe, stood with his hands behind his back.

His face was ashen, his eyes like cold lightning, fixed on Kai and Yu Ranran standing side by side.

Especially when he saw his daughter, radiant and full of spring in her eyes, intimately embracing that strange man, the anger in his chest almost exploded!

He had received Elder Wu's report about Yu Ranran forcibly breaking into the library and bringing back a strange man. He

also received a secret report from Yu Ranran's maid that Yu Ranran and Kai were cultivating together every night!

The dignified young lady of the Jade Immortal Mansion, his precious darling, had been so easily deceived and won over by a man of unknown

origin who had only been in the manor for a few days, and even openly cohabiting with him!

This was an utter disgrace!

It had trampled his dignity and the rules of the Jade Immortal Mansion to nothing!

What shocked him even more was that, with his keen eyesight, how could he not see the change in his daughter's aura?

That clearly shows signs of loss of primordial yin and an abnormal leap in cultivation in a short period of time!

And that kid next to him… he's only an eighth-grade Celestial Immortal!

How could a Celestial Immortal reach the thirteenth level?

What methods did he use? Who exactly is he?!

"Father?!"

Yu Ranran was startled when she saw her father's terrifyingly gloomy face. She subconsciously took a step forward, subtly shielding Kai behind her.

This subtle movement stung Yu Wuji's eyes even more.

"Ranran," Yu Wuji's voice was icy cold, devoid of any warmth, but his gaze shot towards Kai like a sharp arrow, "Come here."

"Father, this is Mr. Kai. Uncle Fei invited him to help me study ancient books. He is very knowledgeable and has been a great help to me…"

Yu Ranran tried to explain, but her voice was somewhat weak.

"I told you to come here!"

Yu Wuji suddenly raised his voice, and the terrifying pressure of a seventh-grade Upper Immortal erupted, like a solid mountain, pressing down hard on Kai!

He wanted to teach this arrogant brat who dared to lay a hand on his daughter a lesson, preferably crushing him to his knees and vomiting blood!

However, the expected scene did not unfold.

Kai stood still, his body not even swaying.

The oppressive aura that would terrify even ordinary third or fourth-grade Immortals vanished upon him like a mud ox sinking into the sea, only causing the hem of his moon-white robe to flutter slightly.

He raised his head, calmly meeting Yu Wuji's icy gaze, and even bowed respectfully: "Junior Kai greets Lord Yu." Neither humble nor arrogant, composed and self-assured.

Yu Wuji's pupils contracted slightly.

This kid... is indeed not simple!

How could he withstand his pressure so easily?

What is his cultivation level?

What kind of technique does he practice?

"Father! What are you doing!"

Yu Ranran was anxious. She felt her father's hostility and pressure towards Kai. She was both anxious and angry. She suddenly spread her arms and completely blocked Kai. "Kai is my guest! You can't treat him like this!"

"Guest?"

Yu Wuji laughed angrily. He pointed at Kai and said sharply, “A scoundrel of unknown origin, who pretends to have cultivation, who used some unknown means to bewitch you, and even… even committed despicable acts, does he deserve to be a guest of my Jade Immortal Mansion?”

“Ranran, get out of the way! Today, your father will kill this scoundrel!”

Before he finished speaking, Yu Wuji had already made his move!

He didn’t intend to waste any more words. He only wanted to use thunderous means to completely eliminate this potential threat that could bring great changes!

He pointed his fingers like a knife and slashed through the air!

A terrifying blade of light, condensed to its extreme, dark gold in color, with edges that seemed to tear through space, carrying a sharp killing intent capable of severing everything, instantly traversed several meters and slashed straight at Kai’s face!

This strike was born of his true rage, containing the power of the laws of a seventh-grade Upper Immortal, its power astonishing!

“No!”

Yu Ranran screamed shrilly. Without thinking, she turned and lunged at Kai, intending to use her body to block the blade of light!

A cold glint flashed in Kai’s eyes.

He hadn’t expected Yu Wuji to be so decisive and ruthless, resorting to killing without a word.

In a flash, he grabbed the lunging Yu Ranran behind him with his left hand, and pointed his right finger.

A chaotic gray light condensed at his fingertip, and without dodging or avoiding, he lightly touched the dark gold blade of light!

Swoosh!

There was no earth-shattering collision.

The dark gold blade of light, powerful enough to cleave mountains, seemed like ice and snow under the blazing sun the moment it touched the chaotic gray light.

It dissolved and annihilated at an astonishing speed, disappearing completely without even a ripple of energy.

Yu Wuji's expression changed drastically!

Although he hadn't used his full strength in this attack, he had still used seven-tenths of his power, yet it had been so easily neutralized by the opponent?!

What was that gray power…?

It could actually annihilate his Gengjin Blade Aura?

Kai slowly withdrew his fingers, shielding the still-shaken and tearful Yu Ranran behind him, and calmly looked at Yu Wuji: "Lord Yu, this junior and the young lady are mutually in love, how can there be any talk of seduction and adultery?"

"Lord Yu, to take a life without asking any questions is far too domineering." Inside the attic, the atmosphere was completely different from the somber atmosphere outside.

After the initial shock and grievance, Yu Ranran quickly became immersed in Kai's gentle comfort and the sweetness of their time alone.

In her view, although her father was angry, he had ultimately compromised and tacitly approved of Kai's existence.

This made her even more convinced that as long as she and Kai truly loved each other, her father would accept it sooner or later.

“Kai, don’t be afraid. With me here, Father wouldn’t dare to really hurt you.”

Yu Ranran nestled in Kai’s arms, her slender fingers gently smoothing his slightly furrowed brows, her eyes filled with heartache and determination. “Once Father’s anger subsides, I’ll go and beg him to formally acknowledge you. You’re so outstanding, Father will definitely agree.”

Kai smiled inwardly, but his face showed deep emotion as he squeezed her hand: “I’m sorry you’ve suffered, Ranran. For me, you and your father…”

“Don’t say that!”

Yu Ranran covered his mouth, her eyes sparkling. “For you, I’m willing to do anything. And… Father… he’s actually had a hard time these past few years.”

“Every time those envoys from the Divine Race come, Father has to be careful in dealing with them. I can tell he’s not happy.”

She brought up the Divine Race again.

Kai’s heart stirred slightly, and he asked, “Are the Divine Race… really that terrifying? Even a power like Jade Immortal Mansion has to defer to them?”

Yu Ranran sighed, her eyes dimming slightly. “It’s more than just deferring to them… Father is ostensibly the lord of a manor, but in reality, he has to obey the Divine Race in many matters.”

“Every time the Divine Race envoys come, they act superior, and Father and the other elders have to greet them respectfully.”

“They demand tributes, issue orders, and if anything is disobeyed, they unleash their wrath.”

“I heard that several disobedient mid-sized powers were wiped out overnight by the Divine Race’s purgers, leaving no one alive. So… Father had no choice.”

She pressed her cheek against Kai’s chest, her voice muffled. “Sometimes, I really wish Father could be like those legendary ancient powerful beings, free from anyone’s control, completely at ease… But the Divine Race is too strong.”

“Just the four Venerables who preside over the Eastern Region’s Divine Punishment Hall are all said to be top-tier experts at the seventh rank of the Upper Immortal Realm. Together, they are invincible in the entire Azure Nether Immortal Continent. Father is just one person…”

Kai gently patted her back, his eyes growing increasingly profound.

Seventh-rank Upper Immortal Realm experts, four of them… indeed, a suffocating force.

But, not insurmountable.

With the power of chaos, coupled with his numerous trump cards and constantly improving strength, he might not be without a fighting chance.

Moreover, the stronger the enemy, the more important the secret discovered by Senior Mu Sha and his wife is, and the more this revenge must be taken!

In the following days, Kai seemingly stayed quietly in the Xiuge Pavilion, reciting poetry and painting with Yu Ranran, discussing ancient texts, and cultivating together. Occasionally, he would use Yu Ranran to access some non-sensitive resources to further solidify and improve his cultivation.

The monitors sent by Yu Wuji didn't discover anything unusual, only seeing a young couple deeply in love, staying indoors, indulging in their tender embrace.

However, Yu Wuji himself was far from as calm as he appeared.

Inside the secret chamber of the Wuji Palace,

Yu Wuji listened intently to the reports from several trusted elders below, his face ashen.

"Lord, we've utilized our networks across various immortal cities and sects to meticulously sift through nearly a century of ascension records and files on native cultivators of the Thirteenth Heaven, but we haven't found anyone named Kai, with a cultivation level at the Celestial Immortal Realm, and matching any of the characteristics." "

It can be confirmed that this person is not a native cultivator of the Thirteenth Heaven. It's highly likely he recently smuggled himself in from the lower realms through unconventional means," an elder in charge of intelligence said gravely. "Smuggled in from the lower realm? How could a mere eighth-grade Celestial Immortal break through so many barriers, deceive the patrolling envoys, and enter the Thirteenth Heaven?" another elder questioned.

"That's precisely the suspicious point ,"

the intelligence elder said. "Moreover, based on what Elder Wu saw that day, and our own observations, this boy's true combat strength is definitely far beyond the Celestial Immortal realm."

"He could easily neutralize the Palace Master's pressure, and even effortlessly withstand one of the Palace Master's attacks. His true strength is probably... no weaker than a sixth-grade Upper Immortal!"

These words silenced the secret chamber.

Geniuses who fight beyond their level are not uncommon, but to cross an entire major realm with such composure is simply unheard of!

“The cultivation technique he uses, and the power he wields, are also extremely strange,”

another elder added. “Gray, filled with an aura of annihilation, as if capable of dissolving all things. We’ve consulted numerous ancient texts, but haven’t found any records that perfectly match it. This young man must have a powerful backer, or perhaps he’s obtained some kind of earth-shattering inheritance!”

Yu Wuji lightly tapped the cold meteorite iron armrest with his fingers, producing a rhythmic tapping sound.

His eyes were deep, his thoughts churning.

A cultivator from the lower realm with a mysterious origin, bizarre strength, possessing immense treasures, and clearly approaching his daughter with ulterior motives…

Fei Qing’s disappearance, the deaths of the Tu brothers, are likely all inextricably linked to this person.

Is he targeting the Jade Immortal Mansion?

Or… the secret of Fallen Soul Slope?

Or perhaps, the Divine Race?

If it’s the former, it’s nothing more than a vendetta or a struggle for power.

If it’s the latter two… then things are complicated.

Deep down, Yu Wuji indeed harbors a deep-seated fear and… hidden resentment towards the Divine Race.

He painstakingly managed Jade Immortal City and cultivated his power, not to forever serve as someone's lapdog, subservient to others, regularly paying tribute, and even having his most precious soul crystals extracted when disposing of prisoners on his own territory!

He once harbored ambitions to break free from the control of the gods and truly become a regional overlord.

But the power of the gods, like a sword hanging over his head, prevented him from making the slightest move.

He had personally witnessed the strength of those four god-level venerables; they were unfathomable.

Compared to them, Jade Immortal City was like a firefly compared to the bright moon.

But now... this suddenly appearing Kai was like a stone thrown into a stagnant pond, creating ripples.

The strange strength and potential he displayed gave Yu Wuji a glimpse of... a variable.

What if... what if this Kai, or the force behind him, truly had the potential to oppose the gods?

Even a sliver of possibility was worth Yu Wuji... observing, perhaps even... secretly giving him a push?

This thought, once it arose, grew wildly in Yu Wuji's heart.

He convened this meeting of core elders not so much to discuss how to deal with Kai, but rather to test the attitudes of his confidants and pave the way for his next possible choice. "Gentlemen,"

Yu Wuji spoke slowly, his voice echoing in the secret chamber, "Let's put this matter aside for now. Just strengthen the surveillance of Xiuge

Pavilion. As long as he doesn't harm Ranran and doesn't leave the pavilion, let him be. Right now, there's something more important."

He paused, a cold glint flashing in his eyes: "The Divine Clan envoy, as is customary, will arrive in three days to collect this season's offerings and Soul Crystals."

The mention of Soul Crystals caused several elders to look somewhat uneasy.

They all knew what they were and what their origins signified.

Although Fei Qing and the Tu brothers were carrying out the orders, the order ultimately came from the Lord of the Manor, and they were more or less aware of it.

"Lord of the Manor, this time the Soul Crystals..." The elder in charge of the manor's treasury hesitated.

The newly collected Soul Refining Crystal from Luohun Slope, numbered Jiaxu 73, was still sealed in the secret treasury.

Yu Wuji's eyes flashed, and after a moment's thought, he said, "The envoy will be received with the highest honors. As for the Soul Crystals... explain that after the last collection, the formation experienced some fluctuations, causing the Soul Crystals to be unstable and of substandard quality. They are currently being reinforced and refined, and their submission will be postponed."

Postponed submission?

The elders exchanged bewildered glances. This was unprecedented!

The Divine Race had strict time and quality requirements for the collection of Soul Crystals; postponing submission was tantamount to challenging the Divine Race's rules!

Would the envoy let this go unpunished?

“Lord, this… might anger the envoy,”

one elder said worriedly.

“Enrage?”

Yu Wuji sneered. “In the past hundred years, has the quantity and quality of soul crystals offered by my Jade Immortal Mansion ever been lacking even a fraction?”

“An occasional accident, explained clearly and compensated, could they possibly destroy my Jade Immortal Mansion because of this? It’s a good opportunity to test their bottom line and reaction.”

He paused, his gaze sweeping over everyone, his tone carrying a deeper meaning: “Furthermore, issue the order that when the envoy arrives in three days, the guards at the Xiuge Pavilion… can be appropriately relaxed. Especially the patrols on the several hidden paths leading to the treasury area, adjust the timing.”

Upon hearing this, the elders were first stunned, then suddenly realized, and then their expressions changed drastically!

The Mansion Master was… deliberately creating an opportunity for Kai to contact the Divine Race envoy?!

Even… condoning him to harm the envoy?

This was simply playing with fire!

No, this was dancing on the edge of a cliff!

Once the Divine Race discovered that the Jade Immortal Mansion was intentionally condoning or even colluding with outsiders to target the envoy, it would be a catastrophic disaster!

“Mansion Master, think it over!” the elders hurriedly advised.

“My mind is made up.”

Yu Wuji waved his hand, interrupting them, his face revealing a ruthless and expectant look, almost like a gambler’s. “Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. Whether this Kai is a jinx or a variable depends on how much trouble he can stir up this time.”

“If he truly has the ability to severely injure or even kill that divine envoy… perhaps, the future of my Jade Immortal Mansion will be different.”

He looked towards the direction of the Xiu Pavilion, his eyes filled with complex and unfathomable emotions.

Daughter, this time, your father may have to gamble everything, including your beloved and even the entire Jade Immortal Mansion, on a colossal gamble. Win, and the world is your oyster; lose, and you’re doomed.

…

Three days passed in the blink of an eye.

The Jade Immortal Mansion was brightly decorated, yet an unusual tension hung in the air.

The gates were wide open, and Yu Wuji, along with several core elders, stood solemnly waiting outside.

As the sun rose high in the sky, a clear, melodious cry of a phoenix echoed across the

heavens. A magnificent carriage, pulled by three snow-white, exceptionally swift jade phoenixes, and escorted by dozens of silver-armored, imposing divine guards, broke through the clouds and slowly descended before the Jade Immortal Mansion.

The curtain was lifted, and a handsome young man in a moon-white, star-patterned robe, with a face that carried an air of arrogance and sinister cunning, stepped down.

He appeared to be only in his early twenties, yet his cultivation was a mere sixth-grade Upper Immortal!

A faint halo of divine light surrounded him, his eyes looking down upon everyone before him as if they were nothing but ants.

It was Yun Ting, the divine envoy who had come to the Jade Immortal Mansion to collect offerings.

“Welcome, Envoy Yun Ting.”

Yu Wuji stepped forward, cupped his hands in greeting, and bowed respectfully.

Yun Ting gave a faint “hmm,” glanced at Yu Wuji and the others, and walked straight into the mansion without lingering, as if returning to his own home.

“Lord Yu, my time is limited. Are the offerings and soul crystals ready?”

Yu Wuji hurriedly followed, forcing a smile. “You have had a long journey, envoy. The offerings are already prepared, and a banquet has been set up in the manor to welcome you. However, there was a slight mishap with the soul crystals.”

“Hmm?”

Yun Ting paused, turning to look at Yu Wuji, his eyes slightly cold. “A mishap?”

Yu Wuji looked troubled and explained, “After the last collection, the array at Falling Soul Slope experienced a brief fluctuation for some reason, affecting the stability of the soul crystal’s condensation.”

“To ensure quality, we had to reinforce and refine it again, which will take several more days to complete. Please grant me a few more days. Once the soul crystals meet the required quality, I will personally deliver them to the Divine Punishment Hall and apologize to the Venerable One.”

Yun Ting stared at Yu Wuji for a few seconds, then suddenly smiled, but there was no warmth in his smile. “Lord Yu, you have been in charge of Jade Immortal City for many years, and you have always been reliable. This time… it has surprised me.”

“Very well, since there’s a reason for this, a few more days won’t hurt. However, this banquet is cancelled; I have to go to the next place. After you’ve checked and handed over the offerings, I’ll leave immediately.”

He seemed reasonable, but a barely perceptible hint of doubt and coldness flashed deep in his eyes.

He didn’t entirely believe Yu Wuji’s excuse.

But at this moment, on Yu Xian Mansion’s territory, he didn’t want to cause any unnecessary trouble. He needed

to get the offerings and leave as soon as possible; he could send someone to investigate the soul crystal incident later.

“Yes, yes, the offerings are ready in the storeroom. Please come and inspect them, envoy.”

Yu Wuji felt a slight chill; he knew this envoy wasn’t so easily fooled, but his expression remained respectful.

The group turned towards the storeroom.