

Chapter 3951: A Donkey Breaking Wind

Long Chen frowned slightly at the yellow-robed woman. Was she intentionally making things hard on him? Were the Zither Sect's disciples so petty?

She was the one who insisted on letting Long Chen point out her flaws. But after he refused, she also refused to let him refuse. At the very least, after he did as she asked, whether he was right or wrong, it still counted as helping her, no?

However, was she not forcing Long Chen now? She wanted to see him play the flute? Did she think that if he could judge her, he could show her how to do it himself? Upon thinking all this, Long Chen's expression darkened.

Just as Long Chen was about to coldly reject her, he saw the bewildered Liao Yuhuang to the side, and his icy words were swallowed back down.

Liao Yuhuang had helped him before. If he were to become hostile with this yellow-robed woman, Liao Yuhuang would be very embarrassed.

Liao Yuhuang had invited him here with good intentions, being very sincere. Thus, Long Chen didn't want to put her in a difficult position.

"Hmph, I knew that he was only good in theory and worthless in practice. He's worse than dogshit. What? Do you not dare?" sneered the pale, pudgy scholar. He finally had a chance to counterattack.

"A typical person with high standards but low skill. He acts like he knows everything, but it's all superficial."

"Superficial? You're overestimating him. He doesn't even know anything superficial. It's all just him blindly making stuff up to con others. In the end, he's caught."

The other scholars also began to jump in when they saw a chance for revenge.

Liao Yuhuang hastily stepped forward when the situation turned sour. She then gave Long Chen an apologetic look and said, "Brother Long, I'm sorry. Senior apprentice-sister Wan Yi, please don't make things hard on..."

In front of the scholars' taunts, the yellow-robed woman's hostility, and Liao Yuhuang's apologetic pleading, Long Chen suddenly wore an unfathomable smile. Just like that, he received the flute.

"Brother Long...!" Liao Yuhuang was startled.

"I've never played the flute, nor do I know how to play any musical instrument. Just like those mouth-sprayers said, I really only know a superficial amount. However, since I agreed to give her pointers, I will embarrass myself. Fairy Wan Yi does not agree with my judgment, so let's try it. Fairy Yuhuang, can you play the complete Thousand Mountains Reflecting the Snow for me?" Long Chen looked at Liao Yuhuang.

“Brother Long, if you’ve never played the flute before, how are you going to...?” Liao Yuhuang was startled. She didn’t want Long Chen to embarrass himself, and she also blamed herself for being meddlesome and causing trouble for Long Chen.

“It’s fine. Although I’ve never played before, I know the theory. I’ll just treat it as playing around. As for embarrassing himself? Hehe, I don’t care about that. I’ve done many embarrassing things, and this much won’t count as anything,” laughed Long Chen.

As Long Chen took hold of the flute, it became apparent to Liao Yuhuang that he was a novice, evident from his unsteady grip and posture. Witnessing this, the yellow-robed woman couldn’t help but feel a pang of remorse. She shouldn’t have taken out her anger on Long Chen as that was repaying kindness with enmity.

“Brother Long...” The yellow-robed woman also spoke up, wanting to take back what she had said.

“It’s fine. Sometimes, there’s a huge difference between theory and practice. It just so happens that I can now corroborate my theory. But I feel like it’s a bit taboo for me to use a fairy’s flute. Does fairy have another flute?” asked Long Chen with a smile.

This was a flute with ancient marks carved into it and was made with top grade immortal metal, so it was clearly not ordinary. Moreover, it was the one that the yellow-robed woman had just used. Considering the taboos between men and women, Long Chen wanted to use a different flute.

The yellow-robed woman looked at Long Chen and finally appeared apologetic. She then shook his head. “Brother Long’s magnanimity is admirable. If you want to try it, you can just use my flute.”

Only then did the experts around take note that this flute was her beloved item. If Long Chen were to use it, would she use it again? Wouldn’t that be indirectly kissing?

Everyone looked from the yellow-robed woman to Long Chen, not knowing what was going on. They were on opposing ends just a moment ago, so why did the atmosphere suddenly become strange?

“Then my apologies,” said Long Chen. Suddenly, he asked, “May I ask if fairy Wan Yi’s cultivation technique is different from the other fairies?”

“Brother Long, how did you know?” asked the yellow-robed woman in surprise.

As expected. Long Chen simply smiled and didn’t reply. He then indicated for Liao Yuhuang and the others to start playing.

Liao Yuhuang and the others began playing the music once again. The sound of their zithers was like the babbling of a creek, causing everyone to become quiet and at peace in an instant.

When Long Chen raised the flute to his mouth and lightly blew on it, it left everyone speechless. His posture was a bit correct, but as soon as he blew the flute, he almost blew them away. That sound was completely wrong, akin to the whistling wind blowing through a valley.

“This is the sound of a flute? Is he making us laugh to death?” The scholars laughed when they heard this.

“How is it any different from a donkey’s fart?”

“Just get off the stage! Don’t ruin the performance of the fairies.”

“How shameless! If I was you, I’d have long since killed myself just to get it over with.”

The scholars had previously been left speechless by Long Chen, and now they finally had a chance to rain insults on him.

Seeing this, Liao Yuhuang had a guilty expression, while the yellow-robed woman was even more ashamed. This time, it was all her fault. But now that things had reached this point, there was no way for her to stop things. Seeing so many people insulting Long Chen, she felt terrible, but there was nothing that she could do. It was her first time feeling such remorse.

However, Long Chen’s expression didn’t even ripple in front of so many curses and insults. His display was like that of a master of the Music Dao, completely immersed in the Music Dao’s realm.

But then, the sound he was making was terrible. It was especially discordant amongst the beautiful zither music, ruining such beautiful zither music.

Thousand Mountains Reflecting the Snow was split into three parts. When the first part was done, Long Chen finally figured out how to properly make sound with the flute. He was no longer just blasting some noise.

When the second part was over, Long Chen was capable of blowing a complete note. However, it was just a single note and not even a tune.

“This Long Chen might be strong in other areas, but he has no talent in this regard. He’s terrible at music.”

“I heard that the Music Dao requires a certain musical mind as a foundation. It isn’t something that just anyone can master.”

“I don’t understand. He clearly knows that he can’t play. Why did he do this? Is embarrassing himself fun for him?”

“I have to admire his guts. He can still look like an expert after playing so badly, and he’s still playing like he’s serious.”

“He’s only playing a single note and incapable of matching the rest of the music. It’s like unleashing a single black crow in a flock of larks. The harsh cackling of the crow ruins the overall picture.”

The scholars were still mocking Long Chen. As for the cultivators, they were unable to bear it either. They had originally been very satisfied with his display against the scholars, but now his flute music agitated them.

Fortunately, the sound of his flute wasn’t that loud. It was unknown if it was because he was intentionally playing quietly or because he knew that he was terrible and didn’t dare to blow harder.

When the song reached the climax, the zither music began to rapidly climb. Long Chen then took a deep breath. The next moment, the flute quivered and a loud, resounding sound instantly formed a resonance with the zither music.

It was like a Kunpeng suddenly leaping into flight, soaring through the heavens. At that moment, the yellow-robed woman was filled with disbelief. She slowly covered her mouth.

Chapter 3952: Zenith Star Covering Art

This melody directly brought the people around beyond the clouds, surpassing even the majestic and powerful tunes played by the yellow-robed woman.

At that moment, a profound realization dawned upon everyone. They finally understood that all of Long Chen's previous plays had been mere stepping stones, leading up to this very note. Everything beforehand had served as a preparation for this.

The sound of the flute surged like a tsunami that split rocks and blasted apart the clouds. Its pitch was high, but it wasn't piercing; instead, it carried people effortlessly into the vast expanse of the cosmos. It was like their souls were brought into an endless starry sea, which allowed them to see an unprecedented space.

Furthermore, although Long Chen played the same note as the yellow-robed woman, it gave off a completely different feeling. Previously, her tune had felt like jumping off a tall tower that the zither music had constructed.

On the other hand, Long Chen's note was like an underwater volcano erupting, unleashing a pillar of water that pierced the dome of the heavens. Its power was continuous and unstoppable.

Most importantly, Long Chen's note was not played on his own. It was something that followed Liao Yuhuang and the others' zither music.

Thus, when this high note reached its peak, it was like a volcano exploding. The sound seemed to linger in the air, echoing throughout the cosmos and not dissipating for a long time.

A profound silence enveloped the crowd, leaving everyone awestruck. Even the scholars who had relentlessly mocked Long Chen the whole time were now taken aback. Their disbelief was palpable, and they didn't dare to believe their ears.

Even as amateurs, that final note shook them, piercing them deep into their souls. They would never be able to forget it in this lifetime. Even if they didn't understand music theory, they knew that this final note was higher in realm than the yellow-robed woman's.

As for the cultivators, they were simply stunned. Long Chen's final note possessed a spiritual will, the desire of a transcendent figure that wished to live beyond the struggles of the mortal world, the will of a saint who bemoaned the state of humanity. It was a realm that had reached that height.

A cultivator that was immersed in endless slaughter and bloodshed would have long since lost their original character. How could they have such a pure spiritual will?

At this moment, it was so silent that even the faintest sound of a pin dropping would have reverberated. Everyone was still immersed in their shock from that final note. But after a long moment, the silence gave way to a thunderous applause that echoed throughout the surroundings.

Now, the scholars who had looked down and insulted him were too ashamed to even raise their heads. They wanted to find a hole to hide in.

Long Chen's final high note completely eclipsed all his previous flaws. It was like the perfect final dot on a painting that perfected it, so brilliant that even all his previous flaws were nothing in comparison.

"I've embarrassed myself."

Long Chen cupped his fists toward the crowd and then turned to the yellow-robed woman. "In this world, there is no natural leader. A true leader will need to form a resonance with those that they lead. Without a flourishing root system, how can the tree flourish? It was the same song, and your skill was a million times greater than mine. If you can comprehend the principles behind this, the effect will definitely be countless times better."

"I apologize for my rudeness, and I am endlessly grateful for senior's pointers. Please accept this kowtow." The yellow-robed woman directly knelt in front of Long Chen, not calling him brother Long anymore. She directly called him senior, even treating him with the etiquette of a disciple greeting a master.

Seeing this, Long Chen was shocked. He hadn't expected her to suddenly do such a thing; thus, he hastily lifted her back up. "Fairy Wan Yi is too courteous. I only know a little about musical theory. I really cannot accept such a thing."

"Senior, are you still angry with me? If that is the case, I beg you for forgiveness." Although Long Chen was gripping Wan Yi's arms, not letting her kneel, she was still half-kneeling, refusing to fully rise.

Long Chen truly had been a bit angry with her, feeling like she was too petty. He had felt like he had overestimated her.

However, seeing her do such a thing, his anger was gone and he hastily said, "What are you saying? Everyone has different Daos, different opinions. Only when everyone gives their own view, clashing and corroborating with each other's viewpoints, can there be growth. I am not so petty. Also, you can't call me senior. If you don't look down on me, you can just call me brother Long. We can converse as members of the same seniority."

It was only when Wan Yi saw that Long Chen truly wasn't angry that she finally rose. She once more thanked Long Chen, "Brother Long's pointers have opened a path for me. I hope to hear brother Long's pointers more often in the future!"

Long Chen bitterly smiled. "I really don't dare. I was just viewing things from the point of a spectator. Moreover, the Music Dao is the cultivation form closest to the Heavenly Daos. There's no way I could dare to give you pointers."

"Brother Long is too humble. I was caring too much about my own performance that I neglected to cooperate with my sisters. Moreover, when you tried to correct me, I didn't let your words of wisdom enter my head. I'm truly ashamed," said Wan Yi. Thinking of her previous reaction, she felt like she had lost all face.

Long Chen smiled and said, "There's no need to feel so conflicted. Just like that pale, pudgy fellow said, it was ridiculous for me to criticize such a beautiful song. In truth, music is the sound of the heart, an

expression of an idea. As long as you feel like it is beautiful and are immersed in it, then that is the true Music Dao. If you only pursue technique but neglect the artistry, then you are putting the cart in front of the horse.”

That pale scholar’s expression sank when Long Chen mentioned him. He had never been so humiliated in this lifetime.

Unable to bear this anymore, he could only lower his head and examine his tea. As for the other scholars, they also didn’t dare to look at Long Chen. They wanted to leave but also felt like leaving would be telling everyone that they were afraid of Long Chen. Thus, they simply thickened their faces and sat there, not looking at Long Chen.

“I will remember brother Long’s pearls of wisdom. I will work hard to digest all the understanding that I’ve gained today,” said Wan Yi. She truly held Long Chen in great esteem now.

Long Chen was like a mirror. Today, she finally saw another side to herself clearly.

Long Chen suddenly had a thought and silently transmitted to her, “Junior sister, your cultivation technique doesn’t seem to match your character. Do you feel anything like that?”

“I cultivate the Zither Sect’s Zenith Star Covering Art...” Wan Yi was so surprised by Long Chen’s statement that she replied without thinking, but she suddenly stopped herself. This was a secret that shouldn’t be shared with outsiders.

“The Zenith Star Covering Art? Star Covering?”

Long Chen’s heart thudded. This name seemed a bit off. Was it related to the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art? Was this uncomfortable feeling because of these two cultivation techniques?

“Brother Long, where are you staying? If you don’t mind, I’d like to pay you a visit when it’s convenient.”

“I just arrived and haven’t found anywhere to stay,” answered Long Chen truthfully.

“Then why not come to our Zither Mansion? We can immerse ourselves in the Music Dao together. It just so happens that I can ask for your pointers.” Wan Yi’s eyes lit up as soon as she heard Long Chen’s reply.

Long Chen didn’t know if he should decline or accept. Luckily, there was a disturbance in the crowd that saved him from answering. At this moment, a group of martial artists wearing imperial robes walked over.

Those people startled the princes and princesses as they knew these people’s origins.

“The Emperor decrees that Long Chen is to have an audience with him!”

When this slimy voice rang out, Long Chen saw Eunuch Wei’s cold gaze.

Chapter 3953: Beating Up Eunuch Wei

Long Chen hadn’t expected Eunuch Wei to suddenly appear here. But upon looking at the sinister smile hanging on his face, Long Chen knew that he was up to no good.

To his surprise, the princes and princesses all stood up when this eunuch appeared. It seemed that his status was not something that they could disrespect.

Long Chen hadn't expected a single eunuch to possess such prestige. It seemed that he had underestimated him.

Eunuch Wei's arrival startled everyone. Why would the emperor wish to see Long Chen? Just what kind of background did he have?

The Vermilion Bird Empire's emperor was not an existence that just anyone could see. However, Long Chen was specifically named to see him? Because of this, countless people began to make guesses about his background.

At this moment, Eunuch Wei strode purposefully toward Long Chen, his smile revealing a malevolent glint in his eyes. Trailing behind him was a group of Supreme Divine Venerates.

However, they all stared at Long Chen coldly, their gazes exuding an innate arrogance. Even in front of the princes and princesses, their faces were icy, not even looking at them.

"Long Chen, I've waited a long time for you. You've finally appeared. Ah, I've reported your matter to his majesty, so shouldn't you thank me? Hahaha!" Eunuch Wei laughed, feeling very pleased with himself.

Clearly, he had told the emperor about Long Chen and Yu Qingxuan. Moreover, he had definitely embellished the narrative with unfavorable details, designed to cast Long Chen in a negative light.

He knew that Long Chen would come here, so he had long since set up eyes around the city. In truth, the moment Long Chen appeared outside the capital and clashed with the crown prince, someone already went to report Long Chen's arrival to him.

The reason Eunuch Wei only arrived now was because he had gone to see the emperor first. After he got to meet the emperor, he wasted no time in divulging the news of Long Chen's presence. By skillfully interjecting some extra details, he managed to bring an imperial summons for Long Chen.

Hence, he was exceptionally pleased with himself now, thinking that he had already won. Now, he was just waiting to see how Long Chen would be executed.

"Oh, Eunuch Wei, why are you smiling so brilliantly? What happened? Have you been short of money lately that you were forced to work as a prostitute?" Long Chen smiled.

Upon hearing Long Chen's words, everyone jumped in shock. Eunuch Wei was one of the emperor's personal servants. Did Long Chen not want his life anymore?

As anticipated, a cold expression replaced Eunuch Wei's smile, and a flicker of murderous intent glimmered in his eyes. "Let me see just how long you can act this arrogant. You should know your place and obey the rules."

"Well, you won't get to live to see how long I can be arrogant," said Long Chen lightly.

Eunuch Wei smiled sinisterly. "There is no Xia Guhong to protect you now. Without his support, your status is even lower than a dog's, but you still dare to come to the Vermilion Bird Empire to propose?"

Why don't you take a piss first and look at your own reflection there? Do you think that princess Qingxuan is someone that you can touch?"

"Princess Qingxuan?!"

The crowd was startled. This black-robed man had come to propose to princess Qingxuan? It had to be known that princess Qingxuan was said to have inherited the Vermilion Bird Empire's strongest Jiuli bloodline. Was this little fellow crazy?

As for Yu Qianxue who had wanted to wager with Long Chen, she was startled. So Long Chen's target was actually Yu Qingxuan. Thinking of how he had rejected her wager, she was angry.

"Take a piss and look at my reflection? I really haven't done that before. Can you give me a demonstration? I wonder... did your respected-self piss while standing or squatting?" Long Chen's smile didn't even twitch in front of Eunuch Wei's mocking.

At this moment, everyone fell deathly silent. Even the Divine Venerates accompanying Eunuch Wei were struck with astonishment as their gaze fixated upon Long Chen, their expressions a mix of disbelief and incredulity.

Long Chen's words had just touched upon a major taboo for any eunuch. It was the greatest insult for them.

As expected, Eunuch Wei's face twisted with fury. "You little brute! You-!"

Before Eunuch Wei could finish, Long Chen already swung out his hand.

In one breath, Long Chen had slapped Eunuch Wei thirty-six times in the face. After he finished, before those Divine Venerates could even react, Long Chen was holding Eunuch Wei's throat, lifting him into the air.

Eunuch Wei's hairless face, once plump with a healthy layer of fat, now bore the marks of repeated blows. It had swelled to three times its normal size, resembling nothing short of a grotesque pig's head.

"Stop!"

It was only now that those Divine Venerates recovered from their shock. They had never dreamed that a little Immortal King would dare to strike someone here, so they brandished their weapons.

However, Long Chen didn't even look at those weapons. Instead, he icily stared at Eunuch Wei. "Do you want to try cursing me again?"

Although Eunuch Wei was shocked and enraged, he couldn't unleash any power as his throat was caught. In that one moment of carelessness, his life was caught in Long Chen's grasp.

"Release Eunuch Wei, or don't blame us for being merciless!" shouted one Divine Venerate.

"If you dare to attack me, I will crush this white-skinned pig. If you don't believe me, try it. Boss Long San never submits to threats," said Long Chen coldly.

"You...!"

They had never seen someone so arrogant in this lifetime. This guy was practically lawless.

“Oh really? What if I were to demand that you let him go?”

Suddenly, the void quivered and a voice came from a great distance, shaking the world, invading people’s souls with its unquestionable might.

As soon as that voice rang out, everyone present, be it the princes and princesses, scholars or commoners, all knelt on the ground.

This voice spread far and wide with immense divine might, shaking the entire Vermilion Bird City.

“Your majesty, this person is too arrogant! He looks down on your dignity and laws, and he even wishes to lay his hand on the princess! He deserves to be killed!” Eunuch Wei immediately shouted when he heard this voice.

As a result, Long Chen slapped him thirty-six times again. Now, his swollen face split open and bled, looking like it was on the verge of exploding.

“I told you, Boss Long San doesn’t submit to threats, not from anyone. Try it again.” Long Chen looked at the almost crippled Eunuch Wei in his hand.

“Brat, you’ve got guts!”

As this roar rang throughout the city, the entire city began to quiver.

“You’re right, my guts have always been big. Otherwise, how would I dare to come to the Vermilion Bird Empire by myself to take a wife?” Long Chen shrugged in front of this imperial rage.

“Brat, come see me now!” A roar once more rang out.

Long Chen simply tossed Eunuch Wei to the ground, eliciting a pained grunt from him. As Eunuch Wei attempted to rise, Long Chen ruthlessly stomped a foot on his head, causing the very bricks beneath them to shatter and explode. As a result, Eunuch Wei’s head was mercilessly driven into the ground, leaving a big imprint.

However, acting as if he had done nothing at all, Long Chen swaggered away.

All the experts then looked from the unconscious Eunuch Wei whose head was in the ground, to that arrogant figure that was walking away from them, feeling supremely dumbfounded.

“Just where does this fellow come from?”

Chapter 3954: Mediocre?

“You little bastard, you have big guts to defy my will!”

Inside a glorious palace decked in splendor, a square-faced middle-aged man sat atop the dragon throne, radiating an aura of dignity and prestige, but there was now a hint of anger on his face.

His aura was strong like the sea, with a natural ruler qi. But despite displaying an electric gaze, his complexion was gloomy.

On both of his sides, there were dozens of old experts wearing golden robes, all having white hair. But despite their age, the auras that they gave off were very frightening.

The middle-aged man was precisely the current emperor of the Vermilion Bird Empire, Yu Xiaoyun. Atop his dragon throne was a giant sign: Royal Family Hall.

The Royal Family Hall was only opened to judge matters relating to the emperor's family, and those who could enter this hall were the highest, noblest existences within the royal family. So, these elders were mostly cousins and relatives of the emperor.

To put it frankly, this hall was only opened when a prince or princess committed a grave taboo. The elders would then decide what to do with them jointly here.

"Your majesty, calm yourself. I've already asked around. This Long Chen's origins are not ordinary, moreover, it's only natural for a youngster to feel prideful and arrogant."

There were two spots beside the dragon throne and two beautiful women were sitting there. One of them looked somewhat similar to Yu Qingxuan. She was Yu Qingxuan's mother, and she was the one speaking.

"Hmph, youngsters don't know how high the heavens are. I want to see just what skill he has to dare speak so arrogantly to me," snorted Yu Xiaoyun.

Hearing this, Yu Qingxuan's mother exchanged a glance with the other woman. There seemed to be a teasing expression in their eyes. Now, there would be something interesting to watch.

"Long Chen has arrived!"

After the eunuch at the door shouted, the people in the room instantly turned to see a black-robed man slowly walk in.

This time, there was no need for anyone to say anything to him. Long Chen had already put away the Minghong Saber, after all, he had come to propose. Carrying a saber while doing so was a bit improper.

Even so, as soon as Long Chen walked in, the atmosphere in the room became tense. All of their gazes swept over his body like sharp blades, as if they were trying to see through him.

Ignoring these gazes, Long Chen looked around and saw that the hall was very large. Yu Xiaoyun was seated atop the dragon throne, looking down from high above and coldly watching as Long Chen walked in.

As others sized Long Chen up, he also did the same to them. But then, randomly looking around like this in the presence of the emperor was a very rude conduct. A prince or princess who did such a thing would be struck by the rod twenty times.

However, Long Chen did not seem to care. One reason was because he didn't know, and the other reason was that even if he did know, he still had to do the same. Otherwise, how would he show his power to them? How would they talk in a bit?

When Long Chen looked at Yu Xiaoyun, his tense heart instantly relaxed a great deal. This Yu Xiaoyun was completely different from the Yu Xiaoyun on the Martial Heaven Continent, be it his look or his aura.

After that, Long Chen looked at the woman beside the emperor, instantly recognizing her to be Yu Qingxuan's mother.

"Junior Long Chen greets mother-in-law. I am indebted to you just for allowing me to meet you. In my hurry to come here, I did not prepare a good gift. I truly apologize." Long Chen actually ignored Yu Xiaoyun and first bowed to Yu Qingxuan's mother.

Yu Qingxuan's mother smiled and nodded to him, her expression very friendly. However, she didn't speak as it wasn't her time to.

"You are not just lacking in manners, it looks like you have no manners at all. Don't you know that there is a proper order of etiquette? Are you not even able to differentiate the hierarchy here?" said an elder.

It was clearly a lack of respect to not kowtow to the emperor and instead greet the empress first. Such an offense could result in a severe punishment.

Only then did Long Chen look at Yu Xiaoyun, who was also looking straight at him. As they stared at each other, the atmosphere in the palace seemed to freeze.

Long Chen was patient. He stared at Yu Xiaoyun and Yu Xiaoyun stared at him darkly, both not saying a word to each other.

The silence lasted a full hour before Yu Xiaoyun finally shouted, "What a rude brat! How dare you not pay respect to me? Do you think that I am not worth it?"

"I, Long Chen, will only kneel to my father and mother. Not even heaven and earth can make me kneel. Well, since you've spoken, it means that you've agreed. Alright, father-in-law, accept your son-in-law's respect." Long Chen started to kneel.

"Stop! When did I agree to this?!" raged Yu Xiaoyun. He waved his hand, and before Long Chen could fully kneel, a wave of power crashed into him.

As a result, Long Chen was forced back three steps before he could stabilize his swaying body, causing his heart to shake. Yu Xiaoyun was truly powerful.

That power was not just strong; it was a mix of soft and hard energy. Considering Long Chen's current strength, someone who could silently push him like this was definitely an absolutely terrifying existence.

As for the others in the hall, seeing Long Chen able to stabilize himself in three steps, they were all shocked, including Yu Xiaoyun.

Considering Yu Xiaoyun's power, under normal circumstances when Long Chen was caught off-guard, he should have been directly blown outside the palace.

Moreover, even if Long Chen was prepared and unleashed his full power to resist, the earth shouldn't be able to endure that power, and the protective formation would activate.

However, Long Chen simply retreated three steps. Let alone damaging the ground, he didn't even damage the carpet, which meant that Yu Xiaoyun's power was dispelled within Long Chen's body, not dispersed beneath his feet. Thus, everyone looked at Long Chen with a new level of respect.

"What? Your majesty, are you going back on your word? I don't think that matches your status, no?" Long Chen smiled slightly.

When Long Chen said this, Yu Xiaoqian's mother smiled. She thought that Long Chen was quite crafty, grasping this chance to be absolutely shameless. His face was truly thick.

"What nonsense. To kneel to me is to greet the emperor of the Vermilion Bird Empire. Now that you have entered the Vermilion Bird Empire, you must abide by the empire's laws. As the ninety-fifth generation's emperor, am I not worthy of this?" demanded Yu Xiaoyun coldly. He didn't particularly care about this etiquette, but Long Chen's expression greatly displeased him.

Long Chen shrugged indifferently. "Ninety-fifth generation, ninety-eighth generation, what does it matter to me? I only offer my respects to you because you are my father-in-law."

"What shamelessness! Your cultivation base is average, and your looks are mediocre. What qualifications do you have to marry my most beloved daughter?!" barked Yu Xiaoyun.

"My looks are mediocre? Have you ever looked in the mirror? Even with your looks, you could marry my peerlessly beautiful mother-in-law. So what right do you have to say such a thing to me?" demanded Long Chen angrily while looking at Yu Qingxuan's mother.

At that moment, the entire Royal Family Hall fell deathly silent. All those imperial experts were struck as dumb as wooden chickens.

Chapter 3955: Using Force

"Hahaha!"

Yu Qingxuan's mother and the other woman laughed at the same time. But they quickly remembered that this wasn't a place to laugh, so they turned their faces away.

On the other hand, Yu Xiaoyun's face was dark with fury. He had seen all kinds of existences in this world, but he never met someone who dared to point and curse at him.

As for the other experts of the imperial family, they looked from Yu Xiaoyun to Long Chen, not a single one of them daring to make a noise. But they had to admit that while Yu Xiaoyun was not ugly, he had no connection with the word handsome. Long Chen was right, but no one else would dare to state this truth.

"You're spouting bullshit!" Yu Xiaoyun cursed at Long Chen.

"Your majesty, take note of your propriety!"

At that moment, an elder sternly shouted at the emperor. His face bore deep wrinkles, including his eyes, reflecting the passage of time. Also, he stood as a living relic, the most senior member of the imperial family within the Vermilion Bird Empire

As a result, even the emperor had to be respectful toward him. Blessed with great authority, if he felt that the emperor was being unfair to his sons and daughters, he had the authority to veto the emperor's rule. That would activate the imperial parliament, and the decision would be made by casting votes.

Thus, when the elder spoke up, Yu Xiaoyun took a deep breath and quelled his rage.

Long Chen's gaze roved around quickly. It seemed that this elder was someone who even dared to scold the emperor. The Vermilion Bird Empire truly did care about seniority.

"Big brother Xia Guhong was wrong. If there are no good methods, then I can only use force," murmured Long Chen quietly.

Before Long Chen left, Xia Guhong had warned him that Yu Xiaoyun had a bad temper. Even if you were nice, he wouldn't like you. And if you weren't nice, he still wouldn't like you. Thus, if things couldn't be discussed in peace, it would be better to just barge through.

However, there was one thing that Long Chen had to make sure of. He couldn't offend the two empresses. As long as he pulled those two to his side, there shouldn't be any problem.

On the way here, Long Chen had been pondering over whether or not he should get along with Yu Xiaoyun amicably. However, his own temper wasn't good. Would he really be able to restrain himself?

Other than that, if he did restrain himself too hard, would it produce too many negative emotions? Would it trigger his dark energy and awaken his heart-devil?

Hence, when Eunuch Wei appeared, Long Chen decided to use force. Otherwise, if he was constantly enduring insults and provocations, wouldn't he be bullied to death by Eunuch Wei?

"You don't know anything about rules or etiquette! You even beat people on the streets! With your character, what qualifications do you have to touch my daughter?!" shouted Yu Xiaoyun coldly.

"What use do rules and etiquette have? In the Heavenly Flame World, why didn't you talk about rules and etiquette to Yan Xu's son when he was going to devour your daughter? Also, why did I beat up Eunuch Wei? Wasn't it because he insulted me first? Not killing him was giving Qingxuan face. Otherwise, not even ten of his lives would have been enough to quell my anger," snorted Long Chen.

Yu Xiaoyun was enraged. "You... you're using your previous favor as blackmail material? A nobleman would not do such a thing."

Long Chen brought up how Yan Xu's son, Yan Hong, had wanted to devour Yu Qingxuan for the Heavenly Rainbow Flame back in the Heavenly Flame World and how he had saved her. This fact was known to all.

With his status as Yu Qingxuan's savior, after he brought this matter up, the air in the room changed.

"What damn blackmail? Qingxuan and I sincerely love each other. For her, I am willing to even sacrifice my life. How is that blackmail?"

"You better keep your fucking mouth clean!" Yu Xiaoyun couldn't endure it and barked back at Long Chen.

“Your majesty! Your dignity! Your decorum! Is spouting obscenities the manner of the ruler of a nation?” warned the elder again.

“But he’s clearly the one who did it first! Why don’t you scold him?!” Yu Xiaoyun’s face darkened with fury.

“He is but a child. Without a name or status in the Vermilion Bird Empire, he would be considered the most common commoner. On the other hand, you—the ruler of a nation—are shouting at a commoner inside your palace and even spouting such obscenities! What kind of decorum is that?”

Being reprimanded like this, Yu Xiaoyun quivered with rage. He could only point at Long Chen. “Alright, brat, count yourself vicious!”

Long Chen was startled and quickly realized that his calculations were wrong. It seemed that the emperor wasn’t the sole decision-maker here. Instead, the important decision seemed to be made in a discussion between multiple parties.

Long Chen quickly put away his wild attitude when he realized this. “Your majesty, although I am arrogant, it also depends on who I am facing. Qingxuan is my beloved, and she is even more important than my life. Although I come with nothing, I have a sincere heart. I have no betrothal gift because there is simply no gift that can compare to Qingxuan. Any betrothal gift would be a blasphemy to her. So, all I brought is my life.”

This time, Long Chen’s words could count as pleasant. But Long Chen truly had no experience in this regard; he didn’t know how he was supposed to offer a betrothal gift. If he brought out something and was rejected, that would be too awkward.

Hearing this, Yu Qingxuan’s mother and the other woman nodded slightly. Although Long Chen was arrogant, at least, he knew how to take a step back.

However, Yu Xiaoyun was still enraged as he heard a different kind of meaning in Long Chen’s words. Thus, he furiously shouted, “Are you saying that if I don’t agree to this marriage, you will face me with your life? What a joke! Do you think I’m afraid of you?!”

Hearing this, Long Chen almost lost control of his temper. Just how did the man before him manage to twist his words into a threat? Could it be that this idiot emperor lacked the ability to comprehend the meaning behind words?

“Your majesty, Long Chen is only saying that he is willing to die for Qingxuan and that he would walk through fire for her. He is expressing his sincerity,” said the other woman.

Seeing one of the empresses speak up for him, Long Chen was gratified. He suddenly realized that Yu Qingxuan had probably told her mother about him. Otherwise, why would this other woman also speak up for him?

Upon thinking of that, his confidence inflated. With the support of both empresses, everything could be handled.

"Sincerity? Hmph, marriage is a major matter. It is the fathers and mothers that must discuss this matter. There can't be a marriage without going through this process. If you were to act arbitrarily, you would only make others laugh at you. What sincerity?" said Yu Xiaoyun irritably.

"That's right, child, why haven't your father and mother come?" asked that beautiful woman.

Upon hearing this, Long Chen's expression instantly darkened. His first thought was about his parents in the mortal world. He had no idea how he could bring them here.

He also thought of his biological parents. He had no memory of them and didn't even know where they were. As a result, his mouth quivered a few times, but he had no idea what to say.

Yu Qingxuan's mother and the other empress saw the pain in his eyes and exchanged a glance. They both sensed something wrong. Was this child an orphan?

Yu Qingxuan's mother hastily said, "Long Chen, if you wish to marry Qingxuan, it probably won't be that easy. You have to be mentally prepared."

"Empress, you..." Yu Xiaoyun stared at his wife a bit unhappily.

This was essentially an open warning to Long Chen. It meant that they didn't reject Long Chen, but there would be many tests awaiting him.

"Little fellow, do you really wish to marry the princess?"

Just then, the elder that had repeatedly chided the emperor spoke to Long Chen for the first time.

Chapter 3956: The Rules

Long Chen turned to the elder, realizing that it was this fellow whose word truly carried weight.

"Of course." Long Chen nodded.

The elder smiled and an indescribable expression appeared in his turbid eyes. "Do you know that this won't be easy?"

"Difficult isn't impossible, and only something difficult is worth doing. No matter how difficult it is, I must marry Qingxuan," said Long Chen resolutely.

The elder nodded. "Good. Your majesty, youngsters are full of vigor and don't pay attention to the rules. In order to not lose your propriety, let this old man take your place to explain. According to the Vermilion Bird Empire's laws, commoners cannot marry royalties. Thus, you would need to pass the scholar exams or reach the rank of general. Only then would you be qualified to propose to a princess. In order to take the scholar exams, you'll need to provide three generations of background checks. If there is no record of any crimes, then the lowest requirement would be for you to become a Hanlin scholar."

"No wonder that pale pudgy fellow was so arrogant. It seems that a Hanlin scholar is actually on par with a princess," realized Long Chen.

"It is forbidden to use such obscene language in the palace," said an elder behind Long Chen.

Long Chen then eyed the elder and the latter's face drooped like noodles. Long Chen had the urge to ask him what obscene language he had just used.

On the other hand, the ancient elder explaining things to Long Chen continued, "A Hanlin scholar spends decades studying and learning. Perhaps one in ten thousand students might reach this rank. They are the pillars of the empire, so naturally their status is not ordinary. The other option would be to reach the rank of general. That would be a struggle on the martial path. You would need to start off as an ordinary soldier, and through accumulating merit, you would rise to the rank of general. That is a rank equivalent to a Hanlin scholar and is also qualified to propose to a princess."

"Are there any further conditions?" asked Long Chen.

"Of course. Everything I said before is just to gain the qualifications to propose. After that, you will need to present a marriage contract, which must be thoroughly studied by the royal family. In other words, everyone here would evaluate if the marriage contract is acceptable. The main question is your character, your conduct, and your morality. Also, the contents of this evaluation would be the process through which you reached the rank of Hanlin scholar or general. Was there any cheating or immoral conduct? We will vote on this, and if you pass, you will need to undergo three trials. After these three difficult trials are complete, you can get married to a princess. Of course, after all this is said and done, if the princess does not wish to marry you, then everything is meaningless," said the elder.

"Anything else?" asked Long Chen.

"After you are married, in order to make sure that the bloodline is not lost, the children must take the surname of the mother or one of the other surnames of the Vermilion Bird Empire. For example, Zhu or Huo. In other words, you would be marrying into the Vermilion Bird Empire," continued the elder.

"Anything else?"

The elder smiled and looked at Yu Xiaoyun. "Other than that, the most important point is that even if you satisfy all these requirements, as the father, his majesty naturally has veto power."

At this moment, Yu Xiaoyun smiled, looking a bit sinister.

Everyone thought that Long Chen would be dejected or erupt in a rage. Unexpectedly, his expression was still calm and he indifferently said, "None of that is difficult. No matter what challenges you give me, Qingxuan will marry me."

Seeing that calmness, the experts present were moved. The process that had just been explained to him was frighteningly difficult. Did this youngster really have so much assurance?

Yu Xiaoyun was also stunned. It had to be known that he had veto power. If he rejected Long Chen in the end, then all his efforts would be for nothing. But Long Chen's confidence made him feel slightly uneasy. Did this youth really come prepared?

Yu Xiaoyun couldn't help looking at his two empresses. They seemed to rather admire Long Chen's display, but there was nothing else that he could see.

In truth, Yu Xiaoyun had overestimated Long Chen. How could he have any assurance or preparations? What Long Chen was thinking about was that if they were going to make things impossible for him, then there was no point in doing this.

If they planned to do so, then why bother with the exams or trials? Thus, Long Chen would stick around for a bit and see. If things really were impossible to do, he would just run away with the princess. From the start, he had never cared if he would lose face from doing so. He was capable of enduring all kinds of things.

If Yu Xiaoyun and these royal experts knew what Long Chen was thinking, they would definitely beat this shameless fellow to death.

"Do you clearly understand the rules?" asked the elder.

"Yes, I understand. For Qingxuan, I will put in all my effort. I don't care what trials I have to go through." In any case, he had no intention of following their rules, so he instantly relaxed and looked noble.

"According to the rules, you do have the right to appeal once. If your appeal is reasonable and receives approval, you can change the trial to one of more suitable difficulty," said the elder.

Long Chen hastily waved his hand. "No, no, Princess Qingxuan is an unparalleled fairy. In my heart, she is like a heavenly fairy from the heavens, my beloved that is even more important than my life. Even if I have to die a million times for her, I am willing. You cannot lower the difficulty. If the difficulty is lowered, I will not be able to fully express my sincerity. That would then be blasphemy to Princess Qingxuan. Let me tell you, I will fight anyone who dares to lower the difficulty."

Seeing Long Chen be so firm, all the elders exchanged glances, startled. It seemed that Long Chen deserved praise for his courage.

"Since that is the case, you can sign the appraisal document. If you cannot pass, you can't blame anyone else." The elder took out a document.

Who cared about this piece of paper? If Yu Xiaoyun simply had veto power, all these formalities were nothing more than decoration.

If they wanted to play like this, Long Chen would play with them. When the time came, they would see who beat who and who was more shameless than who. Long Chen had never been afraid of anyone when it came to this regard.

After signing the document, Long Chen took out two small cases, respectfully offering them to Yu Qingxuan's mother and the other empress.

"Junior came too hastily to be able to prepare any good gifts, but I hope you won't laugh at me for these meager offerings."

"Are you trying to bribe the empresses?" demanded Yu Xiaoyun coldly.

"Your majesty, pay attention to your words. This child is offering filial piety. If you blame him for it, that would be too rude. How could the Vermilion Bird Empire's etiquette be simply tossed aside like that? How can we reject a child's filial piety?" Yu Qingxuan's mother smiled and received Long Chen's gifts.

Upon hearing this, Yu Xiaoyun's expression changed. He suddenly had a bad feeling and looked at his two wives in disbelief. It seemed that these two wives of his didn't dislike Long Chen. He smelled the hint of a scheme.

"Child, as your seniors, we have nothing good to give you. You have come to my Vermilion Bird Empire to marry the empire's princess. Whether you succeed or not, for now, you can count as a member of the Vermilion Bird Empire. So, I'll give you this status plate for now. It will make it easier for you to move within the empire." Yu Qingxuan's mother handed a golden tablet to Long Chen.

When they saw this tablet, everyone's countenance changed and even the ancient elder frowned.

"Empress, aren't you being a bit inappropriate?"

Chapter 3957: The Empresses' Attitude

"How can I not reciprocate? Long Chen is so modest that he has given up his chance to appeal. Giving him a status plate in exchange for his gift is simply natural. Furthermore, this status plate will only let him skip some unnecessarily complex procedures. Even if I didn't give it to him, if he wanted to get one, it would only be a matter of time before he got it. Rather than wasting time on complex procedures, why not be more direct and formally bring him into the loop? You should know just how valuable time is to cultivators. There's no point wasting it," said Yu Qingxuan's mother.

Ah, this mother-in-law was truly great. Long Chen smiled inside. There was definitely nothing to fear now.

It seemed that Yu Qingxuan had long since told her mother about him, and this future mother-in-law approved of him. Everything would definitely go smoothly.

Even if the emperor didn't like him, so what? Xia Guhong had already said that Yu Xiaoyun was an idiot. If it weren't for his outstanding empresses, he wouldn't have his current accomplishments. In the Vermilion Bird Empire, perhaps his word was law, but when it came to the family, these two empresses were definitely stronger than him.

"Cultivators that are arrogant and prideful have fickle characters. I feel like some procedures cannot be skipped. After all, these procedures are evidence for us to see whether Long Chen is hardworking. It is a trial for his character," said an elder who gave off no aura or fluctuations. This elder was a scholar and also a member of the royal family. The imperial family's disciples were skilled in martial arts and culture. Although they leaned more on martial learning, they had to treat scholarly learning as important as well. Thus, there were quite a few scholars within the imperial family.

"That is correct. Empress, if you give Long Chen this status plate, it would be giving him special treatment. It's unfair. If this trial starts off unfair, then there is no point to it," said another elder.

Clearly, they disliked Long Chen, especially his arrogant and unrestrained character.

As more and more people voiced their dissent, the once warm smiles of the two empresses slowly transformed into icy expressions. As for the emperor, seeing this situation, he chose to keep his mouth shut.

Long Chen saw that his two mother-in-laws were about to get angry, so he hastily said, "Junior is grateful for your kind intentions. However, these trials are simple to me. My heart will remain devoted to Qingxuan forever, and thus, how could I fear such tiny trials? I have confidence in myself and in Qingxuan, so I hope my two esteemed mother-in-laws will also place some trust in me. Trust me. I can handle it all."

The countenance of Yu Qingxuan's mother was darkening with so many people opposing her. She couldn't help but feel bad considering Long Chen, a junior, had graciously presented her with a gift. As a senior, it seemed only appropriate for her to reciprocate with a gift of her own. However, their opposition didn't give her any face, leaving her naturally displeased.

However, Long Chen's smiling confidence did make her expression improve a bit. "Good child. Treat it as auntie owing you. There will be plenty of time for auntie to pay you back."

How could Long Chen not understand what she was saying? She was clearly telling him that there was no need to be afraid. She would open a backdoor for him.

Seeing the delight in his eyes, Yu Qingxuan's mother smiled. Inside, she thought to himself, "This child is quite clever."

"Since it's decided, junior will bid farewell to auntie. I have to go prepare for the trials." Long Chen once more bowed to Yu Qingxuan's mother and the other empress before leaving.

Once Long Chen left, all the elders paid their respects to the emperor and empresses. The emperor personally sent off that ancient elder.

He only returned once he had sent that elder off. Now, there were only three people left in the palace.

Without everyone else around them, Yu Xiaoyun's wives stared at him, and he stared at them as well. He coldly said, "Don't look at me. I dislike that little fellow, and I will not accept him marrying my daughter. I don't care what you say. I refuse to approve!"

"And your reason?"

The two of them spoke up at almost the exact same time.

"I am the ninety-fifth emperor, and Qingxuan is my daughter. If I don't like him, if I disapprove, that is all. Why would I need to give any reason?" said Yu Xiaoyun angrily.

"That might not be up to you," said Yu Qingxuan's mother.

"What? Do I not get authority over my daughter's marriage?" raged Yu Xiaoyun.

"Just look at yourself. You know that you're the ninety-fifth emperor, yet you start roaring after just a few sentences. What's the point of roaring? If roaring was useful, donkeys would have taken over the world by now. All roaring can do is scare a group of well-behaved children. Did your roars scare off Long Chen?" Yu Qingxuan's mother shook her head disappointedly.

"You are Qingxuan's father, but big sister Huixin is still Qingxuan's mother. She came from her body, so big sister has to have at least a fifty percent voice in this decision. Furthermore, I can count as her

mother as well. I should have at least a ten percent voice, right? The two of us added together is sixty percent-" said the other empress.

Before she could even finish, Yu Xiaoyun already waved his hand dismissively. "I knew that you were working together. Don't even try it. What I say about my daughter is what counts."

Yu Xiaoyun directly turned and left, not even giving them a chance to reason with him. After so many years, Yu Xiaoyun had understood one principle, and that was to not talk reason with his women because he could not win.

These two women of his were incredibly powerful. Knowing that he couldn't outreason them, he directly left.

Now it was just the two of them in the palace. Yu Qingxuan's mother shook her head.

"This fellow's temper gets worse as his cultivation base grows. He's getting even more pigheaded."

"Big sister Huixin, don't worry. Big brother Xiaoyun will realize the truth sooner or later. It's just a matter of time. Let us be patient and give him a bit of time," consoled the other empress.

"Thank you. Lanxin, I feel much better with you by my side." Yu Qingxuan's mother sighed.

Yu Qingxuan's mother was named Jiang Huixin. As for the other empress, her name was Xu Lanxin. They were the two empresses of the current dynasty of the Vermilion Bird Empire.

"Qingxuan wanted me to give Long Chen this tablet and help him, so I can see that she truly loves that little fellow. Unfortunately, as her mother, I was unable to help her at all." Jiang Huixin sighed with shame.

"Big sister Huixin, to tell the truth, although Long Chen is handsome and doesn't appear ordinary, his tongue is glib, and his character is a bit too arrogant. I'm not sure whether he's the right choice for her!" Xu Lanxin hesitated but still decided to speak her mind. In truth, she did not have a high opinion of Long Chen.

"As long as Qingxuan likes him, I will support her. No one knows this better than a mother: loving someone is like being struck with incurable poison. Was that not what happened to us? Just look at Yu Xiaoyun's terrible temper. His looks are only average, but why did we end up falling for him?"

The two of them exchanged a look, suddenly recalling when Yu Xiaoyun had called Long Chen's looks mediocre and Long Chen had directly struck back.

The two of them burst into laughter. Yu Xiaoyun's furious, helpless expression back then almost made them cry with laughter.

"That's right, we should see what gift that child gave us!"

After that, the two of them curiously opened the cases. When the cases opened, their expressions became one of immense shock.

Chapter 3958: Long Chen's Betrothal Gift

Within the cases were two mesmerizing reddish-brown jugs, each about the size of a fist. Adorning the surface of these jugs was an intricately carved Vermilion Bird with seven ethereal clouds around it. Also, the image of the Vermilion Bird was so vivid, as though it would fly off of the jug and into the clouds.

Upon closer examination, millions of tiny runes actually formed a complete formation in each cloud, emanating different colors. To their surprise, the seven clouds were seven formations with energy flowing within them.

Actually, even an amateur could see that the jugs were amazing treasures just from the fact that such complicated formations were carved into them.

Moreover, the auspicious clouds covering the Vermilion Bird possessed immense power. It was like they were their own world.

“Could this be... the legendary Vermilion Bird Pear Flower Wine?” Jiang Huixin was filled with shock as she looked at the jug in her hand.

“Seven auspicious clouds, with the Vermilion Bird’s eyes being dark purple. The Purple Eye Vermilion Bird loves the Divine Flame Pear Flower, and it will only make its nest on top of it! It probably is real!” Xu Lanxin looked closely at the carvings, also feeling shocked.

“If it is real, then this gift is too precious. Look at the seal. This wine is at least a million years old, and it might be one-of-a-kind. Furthermore, the jug has a formation that will absorb the essence of heaven and earth to nourish the wine. Who knows what purity this wine has reached after a million years?” Jiang Huixin rubbed the jug lightly. Long Chen had style when it came to spending money.

It was because the Divine Flame Pear Flower was essentially extinct. Even if it did exist, every petal would be a priceless treasure, costing an astronomical amount of money. What kind of person would gather millions of such flower petals to make wine?

“Open it and look! There’s no way I can calm myself without looking,” urged Xu Lanxin.

However, Jiang Huixin hesitated. This was a priceless treasure. If it was real, then the formation would be ruined once opened. After that, the wine would need to be drunk within a few days, or its power would gradually fade away.

Although the two of them were empresses of the Vermilion Bird Empire, they had only ever heard of such a legendary wine and had never seen it before.

Thus, the two of them were very curious. These two wine jugs had extraordinary origins. But once opened, they would be lost forever, akin to destroying a heavenly treasure.

“Big sister, open it! There are two jugs anyways. If they’re real, there will still be one more. What if that little fellow was toying with us? You saw how strange he was. I feel like he really would be capable of anything,” said Xu Lanxin.

If Long Chen really had given them two counterfeits thinking that they wouldn’t open them, wouldn’t it be embarrassing if one day, someone opened one jug in front of everyone to find it empty or backed with some terrible wine?

After hesitating for a long time, Jiang Huixin finally decided to slowly open the seal. As soon as the seal was touched, a fiery energy blew away her hand.

The next moment, the wine jug floated in the air, a vast aura erupting out of it like a volcano, causing the entire palace to shake.

Countless runes lit up on the walls, pillars, floor, and ceiling. The defensive formation was automatically triggered.

Seeing this, the two of them exchanged a look. It seemed that this wine was not fake.

The seal on the jug turned into two layers of runes flowing around it. When that happened, a brilliant bird cry rang out as if it had come from ancient times, accompanied by a burst of divine light.

When the jug's runes all lit up, the two women could vaguely see the image of a Vermilion Bird raising its wings. Following that, a dense wine fragrance emerged, somehow causing the temperature to rapidly rise.

In the end, the Vermilion Bird flew out of the jug and flew once around the hall before slowly fading away. As it disappeared, divine flame energy slowly fell.

After that, the palace stopped shaking and the formations faded away. Everything returned to normal.

However, now the hall was filled with the scent of wine. Just smelling it could intoxicate someone. Now when they looked at the jug, they saw that the Vermilion Bird on it was gone. As for the seven clouds, they were still there, but they were growing dim.

Jiang Huixin and Xu Lanxin exchanged a look, seeing each other's shock. Jiang Huixin then took out two cups.

She slowly poured the wine into the cups. At first, the wine was amber, but after being poured into the cup, it actually began to boil, looking like roiling lava. The powerful flame fluctuations shook their hearts.

After that, they raised their cups and gulped the wine down in one go. When it passed through their throats, it was even more fiery than they had expected. In the mouth it was like honey, covering their tongue and teeth with its flavor. But when it entered the stomach, a rich heat rapidly spread throughout their bodies.

The next moment, flames ignited throughout their bodies. Even when they were actually set ablaze by this wine, they slowly closed their eyes, immersing themselves within the flames. In their minds, the image of the Vermilion Bird soaring in the sky above a sea of pear flowers appeared.

The two of them only opened their eyes after a long moment, unable to calm themselves.

"This Vermilion Bird Pear Flower Wine is stronger than the legends. Even with our high cultivation bases, our energy was further purified. Perhaps this can give us an opportunity to break through our current bottleneck! This gift is too precious!" Jiang Huixin looked at the tiny jug of wine with a complicated expression.

Although it was only a tiny jug of wine, the space inside could fit thousands of cups of wine. Moreover, wine on this level was something priceless, even if it was just a single drop.

"That child has a heart." Xu Lanxin sighed. She hadn't liked Long Chen before, but after he had taken out such a priceless treasure, she had no choice but to revise her judgment.

In truth, Long Chen had no idea just how precious this gift was. It was simply prepared by Xia Guhong for Long Chen to be given to the two empresses, and Long Chen only did as he said.

"If you accept other people's food, you can't say no to them. Let's go. We'll get Xiaoyun to try it as well." Jiang Huixin picked up the wine jug.

"If big brother Xiaoyun knows it is from Long Chen, he definitely won't drink it." Xu Lanxin shook her head. She understood his temper far too well.

"No problem. He doesn't need to know it was from Long Chen. We can use something else and pretend that it was Long Chen's gift, then give him the wine. Once he knows, it'll be too late." Jiang Huixin smiled.

"That's a good idea." Xu Lanxin laughed. The two of them left the palace just like that, laughing.

...

"Long Chen!"

Long Chen had just left the palace and had not gone far under the lead of a eunuch when he heard someone calling to him.

He turned in delight to see Yu Qingxuan wearing an imperial dress. She was like a noble fairy appearing before him, wearing a sweet smile on her face as beautiful as a flower blooming.

"Qingxuan!"

Long Chen hastily walked to her side. However, just as he reached out to grab her hands, a large figure blocked his way.

"What mountain village did you come out of to not know the rules? You dare to show disrespect to the princess?"

Chapter 3959: Starting From Zero

Long Chen glanced at the imposing figure before him. The man appeared to be in his forties or fifties, towering over Long Chen by a full head.

Despite his stature, he didn't appear elongated at all because of his solid, thick build. However, his pale and hairless face, as well as his loose skin, made his fatness look more apparent.

From his shoulders down, his body was like that of an upside-down triangle. If he was a muscular man, that would be normal. However, it was extremely odd for someone with such a fat face.

At this moment, this large eunuch and several other smaller eunuchs behind him were looking at Long Chen coldly.

"Long Chen, this place is the palace..." Yu Qingxuan looked apologetic while saying this. Sadly, this was not somewhere else. The rules were even stricter here.

"I understand. There would only be eunuchs in the palace," said Long Chen. He smiled, but he very much disliked these strange people.

"Stay further back. Maintain a proper distance from the princess." The eunuch tried to push Long Chen, indicating for him to get away.

However, before his hand reached Long Chen, a powerful force struck him, causing him to grunt and stagger back.

The eunuchs behind him cried out and tried to support him, only to end up being knocked down by him.

"Long Chen!" Yu Qingxuan jumped in shock and hastily grabbed Long Chen.

"I am not someone that just anyone can touch. Next time you try to touch me, I'll relieve you of your arm." Long Chen glared at the large eunuch coldly.

"You...!" The eunuch was enraged.

"If you dare to say anything obscene, I'll take your head off instead. Oh, I have never made empty threats. Do you want to try me?" Long Chen didn't like trouble, but he wasn't afraid of it. He didn't care if they didn't respect him, but if they were to dare to insult him, he wouldn't care about their status.

The large eunuch was about to shout curses at Long Chen, but when he met Long Chen's gaze, it felt like an ancient beast had set its sights on him. In an instant, an intense sensation of death enveloped his heart.

He was also an expert with sharp senses toward danger; thus, he could smell death at this moment.

He was shocked. This was the imperial palace. Who dared to kill people here? However, he couldn't risk his life by uttering a curse or expressing his anger. As a result, his plump figure simply jiggled with rage, and his fists creaked from how hard he clenched them.

"You fool, this is the imperial palace! Do you not want your life any longer?!" demanded Yu Qingxuan.

"I refuse to believe that my father-in-law would kill me." Long Chen shrugged indifferently.

Yu Qingxuan forgot her anger and blushed when Long Chen said this. She then rebuked him. "How is your face so thick? You haven't passed the trials yet!"

Long Chen chortled, "I won't fail at what I want to do. Trust me."

"Did you get the tablet? I asked my mom to give it to you. With it, you can directly register for the army. With your power, passing the trial will be very easy. After that..."

"Ah... that tablet? I didn't get it." Long Chen's heart warmed when he learned that the tablet came from Yu Qingxuan.

"You didn't get it?" Yu Qingxuan was surprised.

Long Chen explained what had happened in the hall. Hearing this, Yu Qingxuan grew more and more worried. "Without that tablet, it will be more complicated for you to fulfill the prerequisites. It'll take much longer!"

"Foolish girl, isn't that a good thing? For you, I can always spend some time. I already said that for you, I'm not afraid of anything," said Long Chen with a smile.

"Long Chen, why do you treat me so well?" asked Yu Qingxuan. She knew just how busy Long Chen was. He had many important matters to deal with.

It was precisely because she knew this that she didn't want Long Chen to waste so much time and energy on her. Thus, she did her best to give him a head start.

"Because I like you!" said Long Chen softly.

"Long Chen, I saw many things in big sister Meng Qi's eyes. Also, all your brothers looked shocked when they saw me. I'm very curious. Long Chen, are you hiding something from me?" Yu Qingxuan looked at Long Chen.

Long Chen shook his head. "I will never hide anything from you. The only reason I haven't told you is because the time hasn't come yet. When the time comes, I will tell you everything."

The reason Long Chen hadn't told Yu Qingxuan about her previous reincarnation was because he didn't want her to feel burdened. He didn't want their relationship to be based on the ties of her past life but rather on genuine connection. He also desired to pursue her openly, giving her the joy and fortune that a woman like her deserved.

After all, the pain of reincarnating a thousand times was unimaginable. Long Chen felt that this was the only way to repay her, even if only the slightest bit.

Hearing this, Yu Qingxuan smiled sweetly, and the worry on her brows vanished. "Without that tablet, you can only start from the lowest status and walk your way up step by step. I'm very worried about you... my dear. Your temper will cause you to run into a great deal of trouble!"

Long Chen's heart melted to hear Yu Qingxuan calling him dear. That was the most intimate thing that she had ever called him.

"Hahaha, I could go from a tiny person in the mortal world who was always bullied to where I am now. That wasn't because of luck!" Long Chen laughed. With just this one word from Yu Qingxuan, he was overflowing with confidence.

"Princess, your time for receiving visitors is up. You should go back and cultivate," reminded the large eunuch.

"So fast?" Yu Qingxuan frowned. She had only said a few words to Long Chen.

"Qingxuan, you can go. No need to worry about me. I've spent my entire time in the immortal world fighting and killing, so it's perfect for me to calm my heart and cultivate my character in the Vermilion Bird Empire. With this chance, I can raise my character and temperament to become the most outstanding son-in-law for the Vermilion Bird Empire. I will become someone possessing integrity and talent, wisdom and bravery," said Long Chen.

Yu Qingxuan nodded. She still had many things to say to Long Chen, but the Vermilion Bird Empire had many rules that she had to abide by. With a heavy heart, she bade her farewell and departed, a tinge of sadness evident in her expression.

The large eunuch glared at Long Chen before leaving along with her.

As for the eunuch guiding Long Chen's way, he brought Long Chen out of the palace. Once Long Chen was out, he went to get a status plate for himself. That way, he would become an ordinary member of the Vermilion Bird Empire.

Once he obtained the status plate, he went to the Huayun Trading Company. However, he had just passed through their gate when several figures in the distance coldly glanced at Long Chen and vanished.

"The Bloodkill Hall still refuses to give up? Enpuda, are you going to personally come this time?"

Once they were gone, Long Chen turned back and looked at where they had vanished. A sinister smile then appeared on his face.

Chapter 3960: Evolving the Seven Star Battle Armor

Those people didn't have high cultivation bases and their auras were weak. In fact, they looked just like ordinary commoners. However, no matter how they concealed themselves, they were unable to conceal their faith energy from Long Chen.

After all, Long Chen had spent years fighting the Bloodkill Hall. Even with his eyes closed, he would be able to smell them as soon as they got close.

Ever since Ji Wuming's death, Long Chen seemed to become the primary target of Enpuda's wrath. It was because despite Long Chen's discreet arrival in the Vermilion Bird Empire, he was still found, which indicated that Enpuda had mobilized all his resources to track him down. From this, it seemed highly probable that Enpuda intended to personally confront Long Chen.

However, Long Chen wasn't afraid of him since the Vermilion Bird Empire was filled with experts. For example, Long Chen knew that Yu Xiaoyun and the two empresses were three-flower Divine Venerates.

As for that ancient elder within the palace, there was no way to estimate his age, and Long Chen couldn't see through his cultivation base. He was unfathomable, so he was probably another terrifying expert.

Furthermore, the grand formation in the capital was the most powerful formation Long Chen had ever encountered. If Enpuda dared to manifest himself in the capital, it would be no different than sending himself to his death.

Long Chen didn't mind if Enpuda was just going to scout where he was. As long as Enpuda didn't personally come, Long Chen wasn't afraid of anyone else.

Inside the Huayun Trading Company, Long Chen directly exchanged thirty million silver. But these silver coins were no ordinary silver. They were Vermilion Bird Starry Fine Silver, a kind of mithril that was only produced within the Vermilion Bird Empire.

This was an incredibly rare metal, but it was not actually valuable and only suitable to be a currency. If it was too precious, then the silver would leave the empire. After all, there was a limited quantity of this rare metal.

Beneath the silver coins were copper coins that were also made with the Vermilion Bird Empire's special copper ores. They both had the totemic mark of the Vermilion Bird on them. Within the Vermilion Bird Empire, they would give off special fluctuations, so it was easy to tell the real ones from the fakes.

There were also gold coins, but this gold currency couldn't be used by the commoners. Only members of the royal family, Hanlin scholars and above, or perhaps some high level officials would be qualified to use them.

Thus, commoners that somehow received gold coins would go to places set up to exchange them for silver and copper because they were not qualified to directly use the coins.

At this moment, Long Chen's status was nothing more than the lowest commoner within the Vermilion Bird Empire. The majority of people in this category typically relied on copper currency and rarely possessed silver. However, Long Chen was extremely wealthy. By giving a single devil crystal from an immemorial devil corpse to the Huayun Trading Company, he obtained a full thirty million silver.

According to the Vermilion Bird Empire's pricing system, the value of a single silver coin was roughly equivalent to a hundred immortal king crystals. Therefore, thirty million silver coins would be valued at around three billion immortal king crystals. It is worth noting that even the princes and princesses of the empire received only thirty thousand silver coins per month. As a result, Long Chen could be considered a moneybag.

With the help of the Huayun Trading Company, Long Chen directly registered as a martial artist for the Vermilion Bird Empire without even having to leave their gate. However, he would have to participate in a martial stage competition once every seven days to display his power and raise his rank.

The martial artists were just like the scholars and were split into many ranks. But Long Chen couldn't be bothered to ask about those ranks. After registering for the martial art competition, he also registered for the scholar exams.

In any case, he just needed to register. If he felt like it, he could go. But if he didn't feel like it, there was no one forcing him to participate. Long Chen was purely playing around.

The next afternoon, there was a martial art competition, and thanks to the connections of the Huayun Trading Company, Long Chen had an early match arranged for him.

When Long Chen stepped onto the martial stage, he saw that his opponent was in the Divine Flame realm, dumbfounding him. His opponent was also stunned when he saw him.

"You're a fucking Immortal King?! What are you doing registering for this?!" raged that person sullenly.

"I didn't have a fucking choice, alright?" Long Chen was also speechless. How could this be blamed on him?

"I look down on you."

After saying that, this person directly fled. As the realm difference was too great, what was the point of fighting? They were fundamentally not on the same level.

Most of the spectators were also Divine Flame cultivators. Hence, for an Immortal King to appear here was like an adult entering a competition for children.

This time, Long Chen was required to participate in three battles. Each battle was a week apart, and only upon winning all could he proceed to the next stage. Therefore, after emerging victorious this time, Long Chen had to wait for another seven days before his next challenge.

Long Chen took advantage of this chance to increase his cultivation base. After all, Yu Qingxuan had reached the third Heavenstage after leaving the three thousand worlds. As for himself, he was still in the initial Immortal King realm.

It went without saying that Yu Qingxuan's talent was amazing. The speed at which she advanced was incredible, so Long Chen had to put in some effort to keep up.

Long Chen directly rented the most luxurious training room, which came at a price of a thousand silver per day. Despite the high cost, the room provided a wide array of supplementary formations. It was equipped with various facilities for activities such as cultivation, pill refinement, exchanging blows, and testing moves, all designed to assist and enhance the training experience.

In these training rooms, even Divine Venerates had the freedom to unleash their full power. Furthermore, due to the prohibition of fighting anywhere else in the capital, businesses such as training rooms thrived. These establishments offered a safe and controlled environment for individuals to engage in rigorous training and combat, catering to the needs of martial practitioners at all levels.

The price difference between the lowest grade training rooms and the best was massive. As for this training room, it was packed with tools: from pill furnaces, training dummies, to forging tools. If Long Chen wished, he could even pay more money to get an expert to accompany him in training. A Supreme heavenly genius could also be brought to help his training if given enough money.

It was said that the princes and princesses often paid money to have someone accompany them in their training. However, finding training partners who could match their level was a challenge, as only peak experts were capable of meeting their requirements.

Even so, countless experts still wished to become the training partners of the princes and princesses. Successfully obtaining such a position not only provided a chance to soar through the ranks by leveraging connections but also came with additional benefits. Other than status and honor, they would also be granted an imperial salary and access to valuable imperial resources. It was a coveted opportunity that held both prestige and practical advantages.

When Long Chen entered this training room, he decided to activate the pill refining formation. After that, the spiritual qi in the room grew incredibly dense, and even the laws of heaven and earth were drawn in to further aid in refining pills, increasing the chance of success.

Long Chen had the Demon Moon Furnace and the Moon and Star Refining Furnace get to work. Fortunately, the materials for the Immortal King Pills had long since been prepared. They just hadn't had the time to refine these pills until now.

All the pills that the two had refined were essentially given to the Luo family's disciples. In the three thousand worlds, Long Chen had passed a mountain of pills to Qin Feng to give to the Luo family.

Now, it was time to refine his own pills. Immortal King Pills weren't that difficult to make. Long Chen showed them how to do it a few times, and the Demon Moon Furnace and the Moon and Star Refining Furnace directly got to work, working together with Huo Linger to refine the pills themselves.

After leaving the matter of the pill refinement to them, Long Chen's mind sank into the primal chaos space, and his spiritual body sat beneath the Seven Treasure Colored Glass Tree. Its divine light then fell, enveloping his soul, making Long Chen's mind clearer than ever.

Seven large stars appeared in his empty mind. Behind them were 108,000 smaller stars forming a giant star diagram.

"It should be time to study my future path of the nine stars."

Long Chen examined the stars as he had to find his own path. In an instant, the star diagram began to go through constant transformations, manifesting different diagrams. He had to find the most suitable star diagram within the countless possibilities, and that would be the design of his seven stars.

On the third day that he was in seclusion, someone unexpectedly came to call him out of seclusion.