

Starlit Path 37

Chapter 37: Blood Stains the Long Street for Ten Li

The young master's words fell, and the entire street plunged into silence.

"Then... let them all be executed."

The casual utterance sent shivers through the crowd. Luo Cheng's sword rasped free from its sheath, his eyes blazing with fervor. His blood surged—this was the command he'd awaited. "Your orders, Young Master!" he declared.

Raising his blade, he roared, "Those bearing weapons—kill! Those conspiring in rebellion—kill!"

His ironclad soldiers sprang into action, their blades drawn with a unified shing. Chen Beixun's eyes widened in disbelief. He hadn't imagined Lu Ping'an would act so decisively, so fearlessly. Such an act would make him a target of universal condemnation. But then, having slaughtered dozens of titled scholars, Lu was already marked for infamy. Chen Beixun's mind reeled. Despite Lu's frail, jade-like appearance, he was far more ruthless than Lu Changkong.

Liu Ye and Zhu Yishan, their newfound confidence shattered, slumped in fear. The mob—hired by the three noble families and their allied merchants—was no small force. Composed of thugs, gangsters, and idle ruffians, they were seasoned at stirring chaos. But Lu's command stunned them.

A thug roared, "You villain! We'll fight you to the death!" The mob surged forward, brandishing farm tools and blades. Though numerous, they faced Luo Cheng's elite squad of only a few dozen. Yet these

were disciplined soldiers, not a ragtag mob. Luo Cheng's blade swept out, cleaving a thug in half. His soldiers, cold and efficient, cut through the crowd.

Nie Changqing joined them, his butcher's knife flashing. With a sixth-rank grandmaster in the fray, the mob stood no chance. Resistance crumbled swiftly, and panic set in. Weapons clattered to the ground as thugs wailed, "We were just paid! We're not rebels!"

"We were wrong! Spare us!"

"We had no treasonous intent!"

But their cries didn't sway Luo Cheng. His blade rose and fell, blood soaking the street for ten li. Onlookers froze, some who'd joined the mob for bragging rights now trembling, faces ashen, some so terrified they wet themselves. Amid the carnage, the young master toyed with a chess piece, his expression serene.

The mob was no match for soldiers. Soon, they were subdued—or rather, slaughtered. Lu's order to "execute them all" left no room for mercy, and Luo Cheng left no survivors. They knew exactly who'd orchestrated this—there was no need for captives. Yi Yue pushed the wheelchair forward, its wheels rolling over blood-soaked bricks. The air was thick with killing intent, the sun high but chilling every heart.

Liu Ye and Zhu Yishan stared in despair at the hellish scene, their defenses shattered. This could be their fate. Chen Beixun, though defiant, betrayed his fear through his trembling beard.

Boom! Luo Cheng kicked open the Liu estate's gates, storming inside. The family's private guards, already weakened by Lu Changkong, brandished weapons but were swiftly overwhelmed. Blood flowed freely. Prominent Liu family members were dragged out, and those who resisted were buried under a flurry of blades, their bodies bleeding rivers.

*Chen Estate

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At the nanmu table, the gathered elites continued their feast, clinking cups. A Chen family disciple burst in, scrambling. "Disaster! The city lord's manor, under the charge of rebellion, slaughtered the mob and raided the Liu and Zhu estates! They're coming for us next!"

His terror was palpable, the blood-drenched street haunting him. Lu's decisiveness and the ironclad soldiers' brutality shook him to his core. The Liu and Zhu patriarchs leapt up, faces pale. The Sword Sect masters exchanged incredulous looks. Hundreds of citizens—how could Lu dare slaughter them all? The law spared the masses, yet Lu defied all convention, quelling chaos with blood.

The merchants trembled. "He wouldn't dare wipe out the three families and all our businesses, would he?" one whispered. "That'd throw Beiluo into chaos. Our role in stabilizing the economy is undeniable. He's bluffing."

The Liu and Zhu patriarchs, near fainting, said nothing. The Sword Sect masters frowned. "Rumors say Young Master Lu, due to his leg ailment, is volatile," one said. "It seems true. But such slaughter will incite universal outrage—a demonic act. Today, the Sword Sect will slay this fiend."

The Sword Sect elites rose, swords in hand, cheered by the merchants. Chaos in Beiluo meant profit for them. The Liu and Zhu patriarchs remained silent, hands and feet ice-cold.

“Brother Jingyue, why not join us to slay this demon?” the lead swordsman, with a three-sword case, asked a man still seated, sipping wine.

Jingyue—the swordsman who’d fled Beiluo Lake—shook his head. “Wait. I’ve summoned the Sword Sect’s other six heroes. Only when the Seven Heroes unite can we secure victory.”

He knew Nie Changqing’s strength was beyond him alone. At least four heroes were needed to stand a chance. The three-sword swordsman scoffed. “The Seven Heroes? You’re too cautious, Brother Jingyue. Together, we could fend off a seventh-rank grandmaster. What’s to fear from Lu’s two guards?”

Ignored, he snorted, flicked his sleeve, and tapped his sword case. A blade shot out, caught in his hand, and he strode out. Other Sword Sect members and curious merchants followed, leaving the hall.

As the lead swordsman crossed the threshold, his heart clenched. His fifth-rank grandmaster instincts screamed. Boom! Five bursts of blood energy erupted within him. A black streak slashed through the air from beyond the estate, blindingly fast.

The streak dissipated, revealing a black butcher’s knife. Before the swordsman could even roar, the blade cleaved his head. Dead at the doorstep.

The Chen estate fell deathly silent, the stench of blood overwhelming the stunned crowd.

