

The Order 10041

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

Chen Ping’s voice seemed to come from the depths of hell. “It can easily annihilate your physical body, and it can also slowly grind away your soul, subjecting you to torment a thousand times more painful than the soul-refining crystal extracting your soul, and the process will be extremely, extremely slow.”

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

The other party wasn’t lying. This power... was terrifying!

“I... I don’t know what you’re talking about...”

Fei Qing gritted his teeth, his voice trembling, still trying to make a final struggle, “Mu Sha... Liu Qingyin... they violated the divine decree, descending to the mortal realm without permission...”

Crack!

Chen Ping’s fingertip gently touched Fei Qing’s shoulder.

No blood splattered, no sound of bones breaking.

But Fei Qing’s shoulder, visibly and rapidly, turned ashen and withered, then... crumbled into fine dust, fluttering away!

It was as if that piece of flesh and bone had never existed!

“Ah!!!”

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

It wasn't mere 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 moment of torment, Fei Qing's mental defenses completely collapsed!

He wept uncontrollably, his voice distorted, "Spare me! Senior, spare me! I'll tell you everything! Please stop! Stop!!"

Chen Ping withdrew his fingers, and the spreading ashen color 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."

Chen Ping sat back in his chair, uttering only one word.

Fei Qing gasped for breath, his eyes filled with boundless fear. No longer daring to conceal anything, he began to recount his story in a hoarse voice, like beans spilling from a bamboo tube.

"It was...it was the order from the Lord of the City...Yu Wuji! About a month and a half ago, that couple named Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin, using some unknown method, infiltrated 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. Although they immediately fled, but...but a faint trace of their aura was still intercepted."

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“The Lord of the City personally intervened, using that trace of aura as a guide, and employed a treasure bestowed by the Divine Race, quickly pinpointing their location and capturing them...capturing them.”

“And then? What did they intend to steal or investigate?” Chen Ping 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 absolutely could 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 Fallen Soul Slope, ensuring absolute certainty, leaving them no chance even for reincarnation!”

“Concerning the Divine Race's plans...” “A colossal secret?” Chen Ping's eyes narrowed. “What scheme?”

“I...I really don't know the details!”

Fei Qing's face was crestfallen. “The Lord of the Manor didn't say it explicitly, only that it was top secret. Even he has to be extremely careful and dare not delve too deeply. He only needs to carry out the divine decree.”

“He instructed me to oversee the execution, to ensure it was handled cleanly, and to properly safeguard the Soul Refining Crystals, reinforcing them regularly, awaiting the arrival of the Divine Race envoy to collect them...”

“Collect them? What do the Divine Race want these Soul Refining Crystals for?”

Lian Xing couldn't help but interject, her face pale.

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

The things hidden behind this sent chills down her spine.

“I...I don’t know either. I only know this is part of a divine decree. Throughout the Azure Nether Immortal Continent, whenever certain high-ranking criminals are executed, a Soul Refining Array is 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...they’re 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 can’t retrieve them.”

Chen Ping remained silent for a moment, digesting this information.

The Divine Clan’s scheme, top secrets, periodically collecting Soul Refining Crystals...all of this reeked of a heavy conspiracy and bloodshed.

The Mu Sha couple likely stumbled upon the core of this conspiracy, which is why they met such a tragic end.

“Where is Yu Wuji now? When will the Divine Clan’s envoy arrive?” Chen Ping continued to ask.

“Lord of the Manor...Lord of the Manor should be in seclusion at the Wuji Hall today, either cultivating or handling manor 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...should be a few months away.” Fei Qing answered every question, hoping to minimize his 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.

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It directly involved the Divine Race, and Yu Wuji likely knew more details.

“Senior, what do we do now?”

Lianxing asked anxiously, “Fei Qing is missing, and Yu Wuji will soon find out. Then...”

“He already knows enough.”

Chen Ping glanced at Fei Qing, slumped in his chair, his face ashen, his eyes devoid of pity. “As for Yu Wuji... since he directly gave the order and is likely aware of the situation, then he will be our next target.”

Upon hearing this, both Lianxing and Mingli were shocked.

Directly attacking Yu Wuji, the Lord of the Jade Immortal Palace, 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 Palace is full of experts. We are no match for him.”

Mingli advised Chen Ping.

“Senior, I think we should consider this carefully,” Lianxing also advised Chen Ping.

Yu Wuji is not someone anyone can easily target.

“Don’t worry, I’m not foolish enough to rush straight to the Jade Immortal Mansion and attack Yu Wuji.” Chen Ping smiled faintly. “Lianxing, I remember you mentioned that Yu Wuji has a daughter, right?”

“Yes, her name is Yu Ranran. She’s a fifth-grade Upper Immortal, a renowned talent throughout Jade Immortal City. Yu Wuji is always very proud of her.”

Lianxing nodded.

“Then I’ll start with his daughter...” Chen Ping smiled wickedly.

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

Lianxing asked 疑惑地.

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

Hearing that Chen Ping planned to infiltrate the Jade Immortal Mansion as Fei Qing, and even potentially plot to get close to Yu Wuji’s daughter, Yu Ranran, Lianxing and Ming Li were speechless with shock.

This plan was too audacious, and too dangerous!

Disguised as Fei Qing, operating within the core area of the Jade Immortal Mansion, and having to navigate the complexities of the Mansion Master’s daughter—a single misstep could lead to utter ruin!

Senior, this...this is too risky!”

Lianxing exclaimed urgently, "As the Grand Steward of the Inner Palace, Fei Qing's daily interactions with people and affairs are extremely complex. Many people are intimately familiar with his words, actions, and relationships."

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"Although you can change your appearance and mimic auras, subtle habits, ways of handling affairs, and even your understanding of certain people could all reveal your true nature! And 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 quick-witted..." "Long is no easy opponent."

"She is also proficient in music, formations, and ancient texts, and enjoys considerable prestige within the manor. If you, as Fei Qing, were to contact her, what if she discovers it..."

Ming Li also said in a deep voice, "Mr. Chen, Fellow Daoist Lianxing is absolutely right. Infiltrating the enemy's lair and impersonating a high-ranking member 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 would be unimaginable. Perhaps we should consider this carefully and find another method."

Chen Ping remained calm, as if the risks they spoke of had already been calculated.

"Risks are inherently present. 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."

"Forcing our way into the Jade Immortal Mansion, facing Yu Wuji and his many experts head-on, has a slim chance of success and will inevitably alert the Divine Race, making them wary."

He looked at Fei Qing, who was slumped on the ground, barely breathing, his eyes icy: "As for imitation... who said we need to completely imitate?"

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

Chen Ping said no more. He walked to Fei Qing, squatted down, and calmly asked, “Fei Qing, are you afraid of dying?”

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

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

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

Soul Search!

This is one of the most domineering and cruel methods in the cultivation world, forcibly seizing another’s memories. The victim of the soul search will 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.

Chen Ping closed his eyes and concentrated, like the most intricate loom, rapidly combing through, 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 the favor of Yu Wuji, climbing step by step to a high position, managing internal affairs, and handling countless shady matters for Yu Wuji.

His understanding of the Jade Immortal Mansion’s internal structure, his deduction of 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 some of his personal habits, catchphrases, hidden preferences, and fears...

A massive amount of information flooded into Chen Ping'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 searching has a weakness: it cannot uncover the secrets deep within the sea of consciousness; it can only reveal ordinary memories.

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Furthermore, it is extremely dangerous for the soul searcher, so few cultivators dare to search another's soul. If the memories are confused, they might become the other person.

A moment later, Chen Ping withdrew his hand.

Fei Qing's body stopped convulsing, slumped to the ground, his eyes empty and lifeless, drool dripping from his mouth—he had completely become a mindless shell.

The soul, under the impact of the soul search and the erosion of the chaotic power, has been shattered and dissipated.

"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes."

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

Having done this, Chen Ping began to undergo strange changes.

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

His clothes, under the influence of the chaotic power, 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 aura. His cultivation level was 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, almost imperceptible arrogance.

In the blink of an eye, Chen Ping had transformed into another Fei Qing!

His appearance, aura, and cultivation fluctuations were all incredibly lifelike, indistinguishable from the real Fei Qing!

Lian Xing and Ming Li watched in utter astonishment.

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

This was not merely a display of superb magic, but a manifestation of unparalleled mastery of one's own power and the art of transformation!

"Senior...you..." Lian Xing was at a loss for words.

"I have a general grasp of Fei Qing's memories. Although I cannot achieve a 100% replication, it should be sufficient for daily interactions and general affairs," Chen Ping said, his voice now bearing Fei Qing's slightly hoarse and somber tone. "Ming Li, go and bring the two guards..."

Ming Li nodded and went to fetch the two guards.

Chen Ping hadn't had Ming Li kill Fei Qing's two guards initially precisely to wait for this moment.

If he had only transformed into Fei Qing's appearance, some might have suspected something, but with two personal guards, no one would have questioned it.

Ming Li quickly brought the two close black-clad guards, both still unconscious.

"They've followed Fei Qing for many years, are his trusted henchmen, and know him best."

"Ming Li, using your 'Netherworld Mind Control Spell,' combined with my Chaos Restriction, can you temporarily control them, making them obedient to me for a certain period and preventing them from actively revealing anything unusual?"

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A glint of light flashed in Ming Li's eyes as he carefully examined the two guards' condition, pondering, "Their souls were injured by my soul threads, already weak, and now sealed by your Chaos Power, Master."

"If we use the 'Netherworld Mind Control Spell' to penetrate deep into their soul core, planting a restriction, and then supplement it with your Chaos Power, Master..." "Sealing key memories and resisting consciousness with this power, controlling them to obey commands for a short time should be feasible."

"However, this method cannot last, and once faced with intense stimulation or terror far exceeding their limits, the restriction may loosen or even backfire."

"It's enough for now." Chen Ping nodded. "We don't need them to obey forever; we only need them to cooperate with me in returning to the Jade Immortal Mansion and handle the initial questioning and attention we might encounter."

"Once we enter the inner mansion, I will find an opportunity to send them away or dispose of them properly."

Ming Li said no more and immediately began casting the 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, Chen Ping flicked his fingers, shooting out two extremely subtle 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 vacant, but upon seeing Chen Ping, they immediately displayed respect and obedience, struggling to their feet and bowing respectfully: "Grand Steward."

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

Chen Ping 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, you are on standby at all times; I may need your backup."

"Yes!" the two replied solemnly.

Chen Ping adjusted his expression and posture one last time, recalling Fei Qing's usual gait and demeanor, 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, 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, can Senior Chen... succeed?" Lianxing asked softly.

Mingli remained silent for a long time before slowly saying, "Mr. Chen's actions seem risky, but in reality, they are meticulously planned and far-reaching."

"Since he dares 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.

Chen Ping appeared quietly with two guards. He used the same method to open the hidden entrance, and the three quickly entered, the entrance closing again.

They couldn't enter openly through the main gate because there was no record of Fei Qing's entry or exit. If Chen Ping led people in through the main gate at this time, the guards would become suspicious.

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Returning along the underground passage, Chen Ping deliberately slowed his pace, rapidly organizing and digesting the complex information he had gleaned from Fei Qing's memories as he walked.

Especially the details regarding the personnel arrangements at 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 Listening Pine Path, Chen Ping had completely assumed the role of Fei Qing.

His face bore his usual gloom and weariness as he instructed the two guards, "Keep quiet about today's events. After returning to Qingxin Pavilion, you two go to heal and rest. Do not show yourselves unless summoned by me."

"Yes, Grand Steward."

The two guards mechanically replied.

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 environment.

Along the way, they indeed encountered several patrolling guards and inner palace stewards.

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

Chen Ping merely nodded slightly, his face expressionless. Occasionally, he would give a brief reply or instruction in Fei Qing's usual tone, tinged with impatience, and it all appeared flawless.

The guards and stewards also failed to notice anything amiss.

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

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

Chen Ping 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 Jade Immortal Mansion, Yu Ranran!

He turned around, following the sound.

He saw a stunningly beautiful young woman gracefully walking towards him along the flower-lined path.

She appeared to be around sixteen years old, dressed in a pale yellow fairy-like dress, the hem embroidered with delicate silver cloud patterns that shimmered with light as she moved.

Her long, black hair was styled into a graceful, flowing 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 exquisitely beautiful, and her clear, bright eyes held a captivating 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, a hint of dissatisfaction and coquettishness in her expression, as she walked briskly towards Chen Ping.

Behind her followed two respectfully bowed maids.

This woman was none other than Yu Ranran.

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In Fei Qing's memory, this young lady possessed extraordinary talent, was deeply favored by Yu Wuji, and while her personality appeared lively and spoiled, she was actually intelligent and sensitive, with an extraordinary interest and mastery of ancient classics and esoteric arts.

She had a fairly close relationship with Fei Qing, her uncle who had watched her grow up. She often consulted him about difficult ancient texts or puzzles related to formations, and Fei Qing, always eager to please Yu Wuji, would try his best to answer her questions or help her find solutions.

"Greetings, Miss."

Chen Ping bowed slightly, forcing a slightly stiff smile. "This old servant was just handling some trivial official business, and I apologize for keeping you waiting, Miss. May I ask what business you have with me?"

Yu Ranran approached, scrutinizing Chen Ping, her delicate brows furrowing slightly. "Uncle Fei, you don't look too well today? Have you been overwhelmed with work at the manor lately?"

She was indeed perceptive; she had noticed the subtle, undeniable weariness in Chen Ping's deliberately maintained appearance.

Chen Ping felt a slight chill run down his spine, but his face remained impassive. He sighed, "Thank you for your concern, Miss. There have indeed been some busy matters at the manor lately, and the city lord has ordered stricter security. This old servant dares not slacken, and perhaps I am feeling a bit fatigued. May I ask what your orders are, Miss?"

Yu Ranran seemed to accept this explanation, her attention shifting to the matter at hand.

She waved her slender hand, signaling the two guards and maid to step back, then took a step 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 is said to have originated from some divine ruins, recording some secret techniques regarding the resonance between 'Zhou Tian Xing Li' and 'Di Mai Ling Shu'."

"There is a passage in it that is extremely obscure. I have studied it for two days, but I still cannot understand it. You are knowledgeable; please help me take a look!"

As she spoke, she took out an ancient jade slip from her storage bracelet and handed it to Chen Ping.

Chen Ping 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 involved the complex interactions and methods of attraction between the movement of stars, the earth's veins, and the tides of spiritual energy—truly profound and obscure.

With Chen Ping's accumulated knowledge of formations and learning, understanding it wouldn't be a problem.

However, Chen Ping was currently posing as Fei Qing, and based on his understanding of Fei Qing's memories, he probably didn't fully understand it!

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

This both demonstrated his diligence and bought him time, preventing him from appearing inexperienced in front of the young lady.

Chen Ping was about to imitate Fei Qing's reaction.

However, Yu Ranran stared intently into his eyes and suddenly asked, "Uncle Fei, do you think the phrase 'The Heavenly Pivot draws in the stars, the Earthly Gate opens and closes' has anything to do with 'Stars shift and constellations turn, acupoints connect to the hidden realms' mentioned in the *Ling Shu Secret Records*?"

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

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

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

Following Fei Qing's memory pattern, Chen Ping pondered, "Miss is intelligent; your thinking is quite insightful. This scripture is indeed extraordinary, and this old servant cannot fully decipher it in a short time."

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"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 examination and comparison with more classic texts...”

He believed his answer was adequate, befitting Fei Qing’s status and level of understanding, and also addressing Yu Ranran’s question.

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

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

The “Uncle Fei” before her, though his answers seemed flawless, gave her a feeling of being overly “fluent” and “standard,” lacking Fei Qing’s characteristic cautiousness tinged with a hint of pretension, and a subtle fear of saying the wrong thing.

Was he truly exhausted, hence the different reaction?

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

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

“Also, I heard that the Wanjuanlou in Xicheng recently acquired a batch of rubbings of fragmented steles unearthed from ancient battlefield ruins. There might be some interesting things among them. When would you be free to take 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.

Chen Ping’s inner alarm bells rang.

He quickly searched Fei Qing's memories.

An ancient annotated edition of the *Yunji Qiqian*?

Fei Qing did recall this matter; Yu Ranran had mentioned it about half a month ago, and Fei Qing had promised to keep an eye on it, but there was no concrete news yet.

As for the newly acquired rubbings of the fragmentary stele at Wanjuanlou... Fei Qing had no relevant information. Either Yu Ranran had just learned of it, or she was testing him!

In a flash, Chen Ping made a judgment.

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

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

He hesitated slightly, then smiled wryly, "I've been busy with household affairs these past few days and haven't heard anything. If Miss is interested, I can send someone to inquire later and then report back to you, arranging 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 initial ignorance—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.

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Moreover, although “Uncle Fei” was trying hard to imitate her, there were still some things that felt... off.

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

Could it be... that there's 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 truly being impersonated or controlled, that would be terrifying!

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 learn 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 Chen Ping's reaction.

If the other party is truly Fei Qing, she should know who the senior she mentioned is and would either do as she says or provide a reasonable excuse.

If the other party is fake, she's likely to give herself away!

Chen Ping cursed inwardly at how troublesome this little girl was.

Fei Qing did indeed know several independent cultivators who studied ancient texts, but her memories of their specific residences, names, and relationships were somewhat vague and fragmented, making it difficult to accurately match them in a hurry.

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

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

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

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

A troubled look crossed his face as he carefully chose his words, "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 deeply in seclusion, so I'm afraid they will be difficult to persuade to come."

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.

Chen Ping's heart sank; he knew 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."