

War God 411

Chapter 411: The Portrait Weeps!

"What?" Liu Qingshan looked at Lin Mu in shock. "Master Lin, you refuse?"

Lin Mu replied nonchalantly, "What? Does Sect Leader Liu have an opinion on the matter?"

With that slightly provocative remark, the atmosphere in the hall immediately tensed. The eyes of the Crane Immortal Sect elders also filled with hostility. Although they knew they were no match for Lin Mu, their Sect Leader was, after all, a Martial Arts Grandmaster ranked on the Heavenly List. If they joined forces, they were still confident they could detain him.

Besides... who is this 'Master Lin'? they wondered. We have no impression of him. He's probably just some newcomer who thinks he's a master because he has a bit of strength.

Liu Qingshan thought the same. He had only just learned from Liu Su that the man's surname was Lin.

And that aura is indeed quite strong, he admitted to himself. Regardless, the priority now is to have Liu Xiaolin become my disciple.

Therefore, even though Liu Qingshan was displeased, he suppressed his feelings.

"Master Lin, you've misunderstood." Liu Qingshan's smile faded slightly. "I simply believe this child has an extremely strong talent for the Sword Dao. Joining my sect would absolutely be the best choice for him."

Liu Qingshan was indeed confident in this. The Crane Immortal Sect was a sect of the Sword Dao; since its founding, all its disciples had practiced swordsmanship. Countless Sword Dao cultivation techniques had been passed down through the generations. If Liu Xiaolin were to join, he would surely bring glory to the Crane Immortal Sect.

"Heh." Lin Mu smiled faintly. "It seems Sect Leader Liu is unaware of my true purpose in coming here."

Liu Qingshan was taken aback. Isn't he here to have the boy join the Crane Immortal Sect to cultivate?

"Father, it's like this..." Liu Su came over and quickly explained the situation to Liu Qingshan. Having just emerged from seclusion, he was indeed unaware of what had transpired.

He was completely stunned. A four- or five-year-old child is to become an Honorary Guest Officer of my Crane Immortal Sect? This... What is an Honorary Guest Officer? Although they hold no real power, they are honored as an Emissary of the sect. They receive the same treatment as an Elder, and they cannot be denied any of the resources they are entitled to. Moreover, Guest Officers only intervene selectively when the sect faces a crisis. This means that if Liu Xiaolin truly became our Honorary Guest Officer, he could read and practice anything he wished, aside from a few secret cultivation techniques. Not only would the Crane Immortal Sect be unable to stop him, but we would have to find ways to provide him with all sorts of cultivation resources. And when the sect faced a life-or-death crisis, he might not even lift a finger to help!

"I do not agree!" Elder Cen declared, his expression grim. "To make a five-year-old child who hasn't even reached the Entering Vigor stage an Honorary Guest Officer of our Crane Immortal Sect... do you want us to become the laughingstock of the Martial Arts World?"

"Indeed!" another elder chimed in.

"Sect Leader, you must not agree to this!"

All the elders objected, their gazes turning hostile as they stared at Lin Mu. They were convinced that Lin Mu had come only to humiliate the Crane Immortal Sect.

Qing Yan dropped to his knees with a thud, his voice filled with anguish. "Master, if you agree to this, the Crane Immortal Sect will truly become a joke!"

The Crane Immortal Sect was declining with each passing generation. If not for Liu Qingshan, a Martial Arts Grandmaster, holding the sect together, they would have been swallowed up by rivals long ago.

"Master Lin, is there truly no room for negotiation?" Liu Qingshan asked, his expression complex as he looked at Lin Mu, seemingly having made a decision.

"Master, you still call him 'Master Lin' at a time like this!" Qing Yan roared furiously. "He's no master! He's just here to deliberately humiliate our Crane Immortal Sect!"

Pointing a finger at Lin Mu, Qing Yan demanded, "Speak! Who sent you? What is your purpose in coming to the Crane Immortal Sect!"

Elder Cen's expression was just as hostile. "That's right, speak up! Who exactly are you?! You won't be leaving the Crane Immortal Sect until you talk!"

Lin Mu laughed mockingly. "So this is what you're like. I've finally seen it for myself."

"What are you laughing at!" Enraged, Qing Yan strode toward Lin Mu, intending to teach him a lesson.

"Qing Yan, stop!" Liu Su intercepted him just in time. With a troubled expression, she addressed the crowd, "Father, Elders, you've all made a grave mistake!"

"A mistake?" Qing Yan snorted coldly. "Senior Sister, I don't see what we did wrong. Is making a five-year-old boy our Honorary Guest Officer the **right** thing to do?"

"I..." Liu Su was suddenly at a loss for words.

"Master Lin, please give me some time. I can convince them," Liu Su pleaded, worried that Lin Mu would become enraged.

However, Lin Mu simply shook his head. "There's no need. I've already given you two days, and this is the result."

"Since the Crane Immortal Sect doesn't want this opportunity, then I will take my leave." Lin Mu turned. "Xiao Lin, let's go."

"Yes, Godfather."

As they watched Lin Mu and the boy walk straight out of the hall, the expressions of the sect members changed subtly.

Liu Su grew even more anxious and stamped her foot. "You're all truly mistaken! That man is Lin Wudi, Master Lin, ranked tenth on the Heavenly List! How could he possibly deceive you!"

With that, she turned and immediately chased after them.

Meanwhile, everyone left in the hall was shaken to the core, their expressions changing drastically.

That man was actually a Martial Arts Grandmaster! Not just any Grandmaster, but Lin Wudi... ranked tenth on the Heavenly List!

"Impossible!" Qing Yan's face turned ashen, and his eyes became bloodshot.

"Stop right there!" Qing Yan bellowed, chasing after Lin Mu to block his path.

But Lin Mu completely ignored him, continuing to lead Liu Xiaolin back the way they came.

"I said stop!" Feeling utterly humiliated, Qing Yan suddenly drew the longsword from his waist and thrust it at Lin Mu's back. He unleashed the Crane Immortal Sect's ultimate technique: Sword Qi Rainbow. A flash of light shot from his blade, howling through the air like a rainbow as it slashed down.

"Qing Yan, don't!" Liu Qingshan and the other elders' faces fell, but it was already too late for them to intervene.

However, just as the brilliant sword light was about to strike Lin Mu, everyone saw the child beside him suddenly turn and lightly tap it with his finger.

HUM!

A sword hummed. A lotus flower bloomed from the tip of Liu Xiaolin's finger, transforming into a blade of light that instantly shattered Qing Yan's technique. But it didn't stop there. The blade of light continued forward, unstoppable, and pierced straight through Qing Yan's shoulder.

Struck as if by lightning, Qing Yan was sent flying backward, spitting a mouthful of blood mid-air.

"That is..." Liu Qingshan and the others were utterly shaken. They exclaimed in horror, "That's Ancestor Mu Bai's ultimate technique!"

KREEE!

At the same time, an even more piercing crane cry echoed from the back mountains of the Crane Immortal Sect before fading into silence.

"There's a disturbance in the Ancestral Master Hall!"

Liu Qingshan and the others rushed to the Ancestral Master Hall, their expressions grave as they stared at the dozen or so portraits on the wall. The central portrait was of a woman whose painted eyes now seemed to be shedding tears of both joy and sorrow. Beside her, a blank space had appeared, as if the person who once stood there had vanished from the painting.

"Ancestor Bai He has shown a sign... and Ancestor Mu Bai has vanished!"

A sudden realization struck Liu Qingshan. Deeply shocked, he rushed back outside, but the mountain path was empty. There was no sign of Lin Mu and the boy.

"This descendant, Liu Qingshan, has failed the ancestors!"

With those words, Liu Qingshan coughed up a mouthful of blood and collapsed.

Chapter 412: Fang Family's Fury!

In the Crane Immortal Sect's assembly hall.

Liu Qingshan sat in the main seat, his complexion pale and his expression weary, a hint of regret and anger in his eyes.

"We wrongly blamed Master Lin." Liu Qingshan heaved a long sigh and painfully closed his eyes.

"Sect Leader..." Elder Cen and the others also wore pained and regretful expressions, laced with a trace of fear and trepidation.

Elder Cen immediately knelt. "If the Sect Leader must punish someone, then punish me!"

He was the disciplinary elder of the Crane Immortal Sect. With such a serious incident occurring in the sect, he was duty-bound to assume responsibility.

"Alas." Liu Qingshan shook his head and sighed. "As the Sect Leader, I ignored the sect's affairs and even wronged Master Lin. How could I possibly blame any of you?"

The crane had spread its wings, the ancestor had manifested, and the portrait had wept!

Even the portrait of Ancestor Mu Bai had disappeared!

All these signs told them one thing: they had made a grave mistake. Master Lin had come with that child to bring a great opportunity to the Crane Immortal Sect!

The Lotus Sword Technique was Ancestor Mu Bai's strongest secret art. Besides his direct disciple, who could possibly cultivate it?

Although the Crane Immortal Sect was established single-handedly by Ancestor Bai He, the entire lineage of the sect had been passed down through the Liu family for hundreds of years. The records stated that Ancestor Mu Bai had traveled the world and later disappeared without a trace, all his cultivation vanishing with him. From that generation's Sect Leader onward, the sect was resolved to find Ancestor Mu Bai's legacy to memorialize Ancestor Bai He.

But...

The one who carried it had clearly come, yet they had driven him away. When he left, he even left the legacy of Ancestor Mu Bai behind.

Thinking of this, Liu Qingshan's heart was filled with ever-deepening regret and guilt.

"Sect Leader, what should we do now?" Elder Cen asked anxiously. "The child has now delivered Ancestor Mu Bai's legacy to the Crane Immortal Sect, but in doing so, we have offended Lin Wudi. If this matter remains unresolved, it might not be a blessing for the sect, but a calamity!"

Liu Xiaolin's sword strike had caused the Crane Immortal Sect's white crane to cry out and the portrait of the founding ancestor to weep. Then, in the very spot where Ancestor Mu Bai's portrait had disappeared, a lotus flower appeared. Within that lotus flower was hidden the Sword Dao left by Ancestor Mu Bai.

However, neither Liu Qingshan nor any of the sect's elders could fathom the opportunity within, let alone grasp its profound Sword Dao. Although Ancestor Mu Bai's legacy had been recovered, no one in the sect could cultivate it, filling Liu Qingshan and the others with regret and deep lament.

"I will go and ask for Master Lin's forgiveness!" Liu Su suddenly spoke up. "I'll find Master Lin and beg for his pardon!"

Asking for forgiveness is the truth, but the real goal is to have Liu Xiaolin return to the Crane Immortal Sect.

"Ask Master Lin for forgiveness?" Liu Qingshan gave a bitter smile. "I wish to as well, but how could our Crane Immortal Sect possibly have the face to ask him?"

"There is one other possibility!" Liu Su said, looking at Qing Yan, who knelt on the ground with vacant eyes. "As long as Qing Yan apologizes to Master Lin and that child, I believe Master Lin will agree!"

The root cause of all this was the suspicion of Liu Qingshan and the elders, and Qing Yan's subsequent attack, which led to Lin Mu taking Liu Xiaolin away.

"But..." Liu Qingshan still hesitated. After all, Qing Yan was his disciple.

"Father, if you continue to be so indecisive, we'll lose our last shred of hope!" Liu Su said indignantly.
"Do you want our Crane Immortal Sect's legacy to end here?"

"Fine!" Determination flashed in Liu Qingshan's eyes as he stood up. "But I will go personally to ask for Master Lin's forgiveness!"

「...」

"Do you have any regrets about leaving that item with the Crane Immortal Sect?" Lin Mu asked.

Liu Xiaolin scratched his head. "Didn't Godfather bring me here specifically to return it to them? After all, it's their property. When I saw that lotus pond, I already knew that Master hoped I would bring it back to the Crane Immortal Sect."

"Actually," Lin Mu said, "if you had kept those Sword Dao techniques, the Crane Immortal Sect couldn't have said anything."

Liu Xiaolin thought for a moment, then said, a little embarrassed, "To be honest, I wasn't thinking that much at the time."

Lin Mu was slightly taken aback, then burst into hearty laughter.

"Godfather, can I still follow you and cultivate in the future?"

Although Liu Xiaolin was only a child of four or five, he had been so deeply influenced by Liu Mubai that he was more mature than most adults. It was only because his mind was still that of a child, retaining an innocent heart, that his understanding of the Sword Dao was deeper than that of ordinary people. He

knew what it meant to give away such an opportunity. Asking this question now, he was somewhat nervous.

Patting Liu Xiaolin's head, Lin Mu said, "Of course you can."

Liu Xiaolin immediately broke into a happy smile. At this moment, he truly looked like a child.

Taking Liu Xiaolin with him, Lin Mu returned to Jiangbei. After discussing his development plans for Jiangbei with Liu Zijian, Lin Mu did not go back to River City.

Because he still had many things to do. That was to go to Jiangling and annihilate the Fang Family.

「Jiangling. The Fang Family.」

Several figures knelt at the entrance to the Fang Family estate, their expressions desolate, not daring to raise their heads.

"Family Head, that Lin Mu has gone too far, torturing Shaoning to this extent!" a member of the Fang Family with bloodshot eyes loudly condemned Lin Mu.

"Exactly, Family Head! Look at what Shaoning has become! It's all Lin Mu's doing!" a woman sobbed, cradling Fang Shaoning's body.

At this moment, Fang Shaoning's hair was disheveled and his eyes were vacant. His entire body was twisted into an extremely grotesque arc, for every bone in his body had been shattered. In just a few days, he had lost all semblance of the young master of the Fang Family. His body was reduced to skin and bones, a terrifying sight, like neither human nor ghost. If not for the single thread of breath keeping him alive, he would have died long ago.

Fang Shaoning's lips trembled, repeating the same phrase over and over: "Don't kill me... don't kill me..."

Hearing these words, the Fang Family members seethed with rage.

"Lin Mu, you've gone too far!"

"This Lin Mu deserves to die!"

"Kill him! Kill Lin Mu and destroy the Qin Family!"

Hearing the angry shouts of his clansmen, Fang Tang roared, "All of you, shut up!"

He pointed to a clansman kneeling on the ground. "Have you investigated Lin Mu's identity? What is his relationship with Lin Wudi?"

The clansman trembled. "Reporting to the Family Head. I investigated in River City for three days and asked many people. This Lin Mu is just a live-in son-in-law of the Qin Family and has always been a good-for-nothing. He definitely can't be Lin Wudi!"

Fang Tang was slightly startled, clearly not expecting Lin Mu to be a mere live-in son-in-law.

He confirmed again, "Fang Tong, are you certain what you're saying is true?"

"I stake my life on it!" Fang Tong immediately replied. "Right now, Lin Mu is preparing to head to Jiangling, claiming he's coming to visit our Fang Family. Meanwhile, Lin Wudi, Master Lin, is heading to Dragon Tiger Mountain, preparing for a battle with Heavenly Master Zhang Daoyun!"

Another Fang Family member spoke up. "Family Head, we heard news of that battle a year ago, so it can't be false. This Lin Mu is just relying on River City being his territory to disregard our Fang Family."

"Yes," said another, "I heard he has deep connections with the Guan Family. Could it be that the Guan Family is acting in the shadows?"

"What a Guan Family! What a Lin Mu!" Fang Tang said icily. "Since that Lin Mu wants to come to Jiangling, our Fang Family will see him to the end! I want to see for myself if this Lin Mu really has three heads and six arms, as the rumors claim!"

Chapter 413: Enemies on a Narrow Road!

A lone figure walked slowly down the road, but each stride he took was as precise as if measured with a ruler.

This person was Lin Mu.

After departing from Jiangbei, Lin Mu headed to Jiangling alone. He didn't bring anyone with him.

Although eliminating the Fang Family was an urgent matter, it would barely take him any time at all. Besides that, he also had to challenge the Fire Cloud Sect.

That's right—he was going to fight an entire sect by himself!

At the moment, neither the Fang Family nor the Fire Cloud Sect knew his true identity. Back in River City, he had already locked down all information. Outsiders could only learn what he allowed them to know.

He was certain that when the Fang Family and the Fire Cloud Sect learned the truth, they would be in for a huge shock.

And this was precisely the gift Lin Mu had prepared for them.

He was sure they would appreciate it.

A faint smile touched Lin Mu's lips at the thought.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Just then, a red supercar came speeding toward him. Its tires screeched against the pavement, leaving behind the acrid smell of burning rubber.

Hmm? The car seems to be out of control.

Lin Mu's brow furrowed slightly, but he decided not to get involved. He had no intention of meddling in other people's business. But while he didn't want to attract trouble, it seemed trouble was determined to find him.

Lin Mu watched as the sports car sped toward him from a distance, showing no sign of stopping.

It even seemed to speed up deliberately.

Behind the wheel sat a young man with a mischievous glint in his eyes and a look of pure scorn on his face.

Is he... deliberately trying to hit me?

A chill flashed in Lin Mu's eyes.

"WOOOO!"

In the passenger seat, a girl with a crazed look on her face cheered wildly.

Clearly, they were trying to scare Lin Mu for their own amusement. In an instant, Lin Mu understood their intentions, and his lips curled into an icy arc.

And so, Lin Mu stood his ground, motionless.

The two in the car were taken aback. Has this kid been scared stiff?

"Get out of the way!" the girl shouted, suddenly alarmed. She waved her hands frantically, urging Lin Mu to dodge, her face a mask of terror.

If he got hit at this speed, he would surely die!

The car was already going two hundred kilometers an hour!

"Shaobin, stop the car!" the girl screamed, grabbing the young man's arm.

"If he's asking to die, then let him die!" A savage look appeared on Shaobin's face.

"But you'll kill him!" The girl's face was pale, her eyes wide with horror.

"Kill him?" Shaobin sneered. "Hmph, with my Fang Family's status in Jiangling, so what if I kill someone?"

As the words left his mouth, Shaobin didn't slow down. Instead, he slammed his foot on the accelerator.

VROOOM!

The distinctive roar of the engine sounded as the supercar shot forward, aimed directly at Lin Mu.

Two hundred meters!

One hundred meters!

Fifty meters!

Ten meters!

"Go to hell, kid!" Shaobin's eyes were bloodshot. The girl's continued screams were useless.

BANG!

Just as the sports car was about to collide with him, Lin Mu suddenly raised a hand and punched out.

Seeing this, both Shaobin and the girl were stunned.

Does this idiot really think he can stop my car with his fist? Shaobin sneered coldly. "What a moron."

CRUNCH!

A deafening noise erupted. The two in the car felt a terrifying force slam into them, and the entire vehicle shuddered violently.

The girl shrieked once and fainted from shock.

The young man, meanwhile, let out a bloodcurdling scream as he was flung from the vehicle.

It turned out he hadn't even been wearing his seatbelt.

THUD!

Shaobin slammed into the pavement. The impact broke several of his bones, twisting his leg at an unnatural angle.

"Ah, my leg!" Shaobin lay on the ground, screaming frantically. "Quick, save me! Save me!"

Lin Mu slowly walked over and stood beside him, looking down with a cold, indifferent expression.

The man reeked of alcohol, clearly having had a lot to drink. Upon seeing Lin Mu, he had decided to have some fun by scaring him.

"Save me! Quick, call 911!" Seeing Lin Mu standing so close, Shaobin sobered up considerably and began to beg.

"Save you?" Lin Mu chuckled coldly. "But you were just trying to kill me."

"No, no! I was just trying to scare you!" Shaobin was frantic. He was severely injured and just wanted Lin Mu to call for an ambulance. "I can give you money, lots and lots of money! My family is rich!"

"Sorry, I'm not interested in money," Lin Mu said, shaking his head. An ordinary person would have been killed instantly. The man had tried to run him over, and now he expected to be saved? What is he thinking?

Shaobin's face was contorted in pain. "Dammit, just call someone to take me to the hospital!"

"Hmm, you're awfully loud. It seems your injuries aren't that severe," Lin Mu said with a small smile before stepping on Shaobin's leg.

"AARGH!"

Shaobin shot upright, his face twisted into an ugly mask of agony.

"I'm dying! I'm dying!" he howled miserably. "Let go! I'm from the Jiangling Fang Family! Let me go this instant!"

"The Jiangling Fang Family?" Lin Mu paused for a moment, then a cold smile touched his lips. "To think I'd run into someone from the Fang Family on my very first day in Jiangling. My enemies and I sure are destined to meet."

Lin Mu smiled faintly and patted Shaobin's cheek. "Do you know who I am?"

"How the hell would I know who you are?" Shaobin yelled, the pain making him want to kill Lin Mu.

"Remember, my name is Lin Mu," he said with a small smile. "Try not to die. We'll be seeing each other again."

With that, Lin Mu stood up to leave.

"You... you wait!"

Someone called out to him. It was the girl from the car. She had a bleeding gash on her forehead.

"I'm sorry, it was Shaobin who wanted to prank you," the girl said weakly. "He's drunk; he didn't mean it."

Lin Mu replied coldly, "Sorry, but I think he meant it completely."

As Lin Mu turned to walk away, the girl cried out again.

"Wait!" she said in pain. "My hand is stuck! Please, just make a call for us! I'm begging you." She pleaded, "In return... I can spend the night with you."

"Sorry, I'm not interested in you," Lin Mu scoffed. "You should worry about yourself first."

Just then, a Cadillac pulled up in front of Lin Mu. A flawless, pretty face peered out from the window, flashing him a brilliant smile. "Handsome, need a lift?"

"Sure." Lin Mu smiled faintly and turned to the girl in the wrecked car. "Sorry, my ride's here."

With that, Lin Mu opened the passenger door and got in. With a roar of the engine, the Cadillac sped away, leaving the girl in the wrecked supercar with a look of utter despair.

Chapter 414: One Leg, One Life!

"What happened just now?" Qin Luoli glanced at the rearview mirror and asked with a hint of a smile.

Lin Mu spread his hands. "It was nothing, just a minor traffic accident."

"Oh." As Qin Luoli drove, she asked, "Do you need to make a call?"

"No need," Lin Mu said. "By the way, have the matters in River City been dealt with?"

Qin Luoli replied, "For the most part, yes. Once the Luo and Chen families fell, the rest were no threat."

Lin Mu nodded, trusting Qin Luoli's capabilities completely. Besides, with Cheng Bugui and the others watching over River City, nothing could go wrong.

"Speaking of which, why did you insist on coming to Jiangling with me?" Lin Mu asked, genuinely curious. The Qin Corporation desperately needed her to oversee things, yet she insisted on following him, which was something he couldn't quite understand.

"Guess," Qin Luoli said, her clear eyes twinkling as she blinked playfully. "I was worried you'd get involved with other women here. I wouldn't be able to rest easy."

Lin Mu laughed heartily. "Funnily enough, there was one just now, but she was the one who hit on me."

Qin Luoli pouted in feigned anger. "Should I turn the car around and take you back, then?"

Lin Mu broke into a loud, carefree laugh. He took her hand and said, "Thank you."

Qin Luoli paused for a moment before a sweet smile graced her lips. "You're my man. Wherever you are, that's where I'll be."

Gazing at Qin Luoli's stunning profile, Lin Mu's heart swelled with emotion. This woman always buried her feelings deep inside, never expressing them. But every time he needed her most, she would appear by his side. No words were necessary; a single look between them was enough to convey everything. The longer he was with her, the more he understood just how fervent and deep her feelings for him were.

Cold on the outside, warm on the inside! Once she commits to someone, it's for all of eternity!

Only in his presence did Qin Luoli let down her guard, unleashing a fiery passion that could melt the hardest of substances—even a heart as hard as his.

With a wife like this, what more could a man ask for!

At that moment, Lin Mu felt deeply fortunate to have met her.

...

「Jiangling.」

This place was not only rich in resources and economically developed, but it was also the preferred capital for successive dynasties. Historically, Jiangling was home to the prosperous Chu State. Coupled with its brilliant people and auspicious land, which produced a steady stream of famous figures, Jiangling had remained one of Huaxia's most important economic and cultural ancient capitals.

Countless families had thrived here for generations, collectively creating the great and culturally profound city of Jiangling.

The Fang Family was one of them.

With a legacy spanning hundreds of years, the Fang Family was considered a true powerhouse in Jiangling. Their network and foundations were immense. As a result, every member of the Fang Family was treated with the utmost respect. If anyone dared trample on the Fang Family's dignity, they would surely be incinerated by the wrath of the clan and its allies.

At this moment, Fang Tang was thundering with rage in the main hall. The reason was that his youngest son, Fang Shaobin, had been rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

"Speak! What exactly happened!" Fang Tang stared at a girl in the hall, his face burning with an anger he couldn't hide.

The girl was Yang Qing, the one who had been in the passenger seat.

In Jiangling, the Yang Family was just a minor clan that survived under the Fang Family's protection. They had little power of their own and subsisted on the scraps the Fangs left behind. There were many such vassal families beholden to the Fangs. The younger generations of these families grew up as attendants to the Fang Family members. Their men were reduced to being lapdogs and enforcers, while their women became playthings.

Yang Qing was one of them.

Fang Tang, of course, knew that Yang Qing was just one of his son's many women, and he didn't care. After all, such matters were an open secret among the major families. Not only did many smaller families readily accept this arrangement, but they would even, openly or covertly, push the women of their families to latch onto the Fang Family, hoping for a meteoric rise. If a woman from their clan could marry into the Fang Family, her entire family would be elevated by her success.

Fang Tang naturally didn't mind; in fact, he was pleased to see it happen. After all, this method gave these smaller families a glimmer of hope, ensuring their continued respect and loyalty toward the Fang Family.

But today, his son had been in an accident, and with this Yang Qing, no less.

Yang Qing's face was deathly pale, her eyes filled with fear. Facing the Fang Family Head, a man even her grandfather dared not offend, she was on the verge of tears.

"You little slut! I'm asking you a question!" Mrs. Wang, Fang Tang's wife, stepped forward and slapped Yang Qing across the face, shouting furiously, "If anything happens to my son, you'll pay with your life!"

"No... It wasn't my fault!"

Yang Qing didn't dare to dodge and took the full force of Mrs. Wang's slap. In Jiangling, the Wang Family was a great house on par with the Fang Family. Marriage alliances between such powerful families were commonplace. So, how could Yang Qing dare to move?

She covered her cheek, her voice full of grief and indignation. "It was Shaobin! He was drunk! He said he wanted to scare a pedestrian and drove right at him. But the man didn't dodge, so Shaobin plowed straight into him."

"I didn't ask you about that!" Mrs. Wang said coldly. "I want to know who that person is and why he just left my son there for dead!"

Her own son had nearly killed someone, yet instead of blaming him, she directed her fury at the victim, faulting him for not saving his attacker. This revealed just how arrogant, domineering, and utterly disdainful of others the Fang Family was in Jiangling.

"I..." Recalling the scene, Yang Qing shuddered violently, clearly still consumed by fear. "Back then, I just saw..."

Seeing Yang Qing hesitate, Mrs. Wang raised her hand for another slap. "What did you see? Spit it out!"

"That person raised his hand and punched the hood of the car... then... then Shaobin was thrown out..." As she spoke, Yang Qing sank to the floor and began to weep.

She had been so terrified at the time that she didn't see what happened next. When she came to her senses, she tried to ask the man for help, but he completely ignored her. He verbally humiliated her before getting into another beautiful woman's car and driving away.

"Family Head, the young master's car is outside. Would you... like to take a look?" the Fang Family butler said as he walked in, a trace of shock still on his face.

"Let's go!"

Fang Tang and the others went outside. When they saw the deep depression smashed into the hood of the sports car, they all gasped. Imprinted clearly in the dent was the mark of a fist.

"Are you sure a man did this with his bare hand?" Fang Tang asked Yang Qing gravely, a sense of unease creeping into his heart.

"Yes, yes! That's it!" Yang Qing pointed at the fist print, her face a mask of terror.

HISS!

The members of the Fang Family drew a sharp breath, exchanging looks of utter shock.

To leave a fist print on a supercar worth tens of millions with a single punch? Was this man really that terrifying?

"Family Head, we have news from the hospital," the butler said, his head lowered. "They said that after the young master's foot was injured, someone stepped on it, so... they couldn't save it."

"Find him!" Fang Tang roared. "Even if I have to tear Jiangling apart, find the bastard who hurt my son!"

"He crippled my son's leg, so I'll take his life!"

Chapter 415: Trouble, Make Way!

"Honey..."

「Jiangling Hotel.」

Qin Luoli's eyes fluttered open. Seeing no one beside her, she sat up abruptly.

"Lin Mu?"

Qin Luoli called out again, a hint of nervousness in her voice.

After a long drive, the two had finally arrived in Jiangling in the afternoon. An exhausted Qin Luoli had suggested they find a place to rest properly. But when she woke up, Lin Mu was nowhere to be seen.

Despite being the president of a large corporation, she was, after all, still a woman. At heart, she was naturally timid. This was especially true when she was with Lin Mu; Qin Luoli would shed the strong exterior she maintained for others, always revealing a demure, girly side. Now, in an unfamiliar place, she was a little scared.

Glancing at the bracelet on her wrist, Qin Luoli took a deep breath, which calmed her considerably. This bracelet had once saved her and Shi Potian from danger in River City. Since then, Qin Luoli had never taken it off.

KNOCK! KNOCK!

A knock sounded at the door. Qin Luoli's head snapped toward it. "Who is it?"

"Someone here to rob you of your money and your beauty!" a cold voice replied from outside, sounding eerie enough to send shivers down her spine.

However, Qin Luoli let out a huge sigh of relief. Pouting playfully, she said, "I have neither money nor beauty, so you should go find someone else."

With that, she quietly slipped on her shoes and walked to the door.

"Is that so?" The voice outside sounded deeply disappointed. "Then I'll go find someone else!"

"You dare!"

Qin Luoli's playful anger flared. She flung the door open and huffed at the young man on her doorstep, "Aren't you childish!"

Lin Mu chuckled, holding up the food in his hands. "I brought you something to eat."

But to his surprise, Qin Luoli threw her arms around him and said with mock fierceness, "I want to eat *you*!"

BANG!

With a hook of his foot, Lin Mu kicked the door shut behind him.

...

Lying in his arms, her face flushed with a hint of crimson, Qin Luoli looked at Lin Mu with eyes brimming with star-like affection.

"Lin Mu."

"Hm?"

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could stay like this forever?"

"Don't worry," he murmured. "We will."

"Mhm!"

After they exchanged some sweet nothings, Qin Luoli suddenly sat up. "Oh no, oh no!"

Seeing her frantic expression, Lin Mu was momentarily taken aback. "What's wrong?"

Qin Luoli tossed the covers aside, searching for her clothes. "Where are my pants?"

"Right here."

Watching Qin Luoli fumble around, Lin Mu couldn't help but find it amusing. "What's the big rush?"

"Get up!"

She shoved Lin Mu aside, pulled her pants out from under him, and then asked, "And my... my underwear?"

Speechless, Lin Mu picked up her underwear from the floor and handed it to her.

Qin Luoli snatched it away, hugging it to her chest as a blush crept up her lovely face. "You hurry up and get ready too. I'm going to take a shower. And don't you dare peek, or I'll gouge your eyes out!"

As she fled into the bathroom like a startled fawn, Lin Mu shook his head with a mix of amusement and disbelief. "You weren't this shy earlier."

"Lin Mu, you jerk!" came her indignant, flustered cry from the bathroom.

Lin Mu shrugged helplessly. What's gotten into this woman?

When Qin Luoli emerged fully dressed and ready, she saw Lin Mu still sitting motionless on the bed, and a wave of frustration washed over her.

"Hey, are you ready?"

"Yeah, sure," Lin Mu replied.

Glancing at his casual attire, Qin Luoli pressed her hand to her forehead. "You're wearing *that*?"

Lin Mu gave a wry smile. "What else would I wear? I think it's pretty comfortable."

"Forget it, never mind." Qin Luoli grabbed her purse and pulled Lin Mu toward the door. "Come on, we're running late."

Seeing how urgent she was, Lin Mu was completely baffled.

「Half an hour later, he understood.」

It was a luxurious restaurant. Inside a private room sat seven people—three men and four women—all of them appearing quite young. Judging by their clothes and accessories, it was clear they were all well-off. Indeed, a single meal at this restaurant cost more than what many people earned in a year.

"What's going on? Didn't Luo Li say she'd be here in ten minutes? Why isn't she here yet?" a short-haired girl grumbled, glancing at her watch with dissatisfaction.

"Maybe there's traffic," the young man beside her offered with a smile. "You know how it is at this hour."

"If she knew there'd be traffic, she should have left earlier," another woman with heavy makeup sneered impatiently. "Making so many of us wait for her... Who does she think she is?"

"Yang Zi!" the young man beside her warned, his expression souring.

"Zhou Tao, why are you raising your voice? Did I say something wrong?" Yang Zi retorted, displeased. "Don't think I don't know that this Qin Luoli woman is your old crush." She then gave a disdainful, cold smirk. "Are you getting all excited to see your old flame again?"

"That's enough!" Zhou Tao's face flushed crimson. Unable to take it anymore, he shot to his feet. "If you don't want to wait, then leave!"

"Hmph, I'm not going anywhere!" Yang Zi declared coldly. "I want to see for myself what this woman you've been hung up on for so many years actually looks like."

"You..." Zhou Tao's face darkened, but as he was about to scold her, he saw her cold, mocking expression, and the fire in his eyes dimmed.

"Alright, let's all just drop it," a well-proportioned young man interjected, playing the peacemaker. "It's not often we all get to meet up. Let's just try to enjoy the meal."

"The class monitor is right. We should just enjoy our dinner," a petite girl piped up in agreement. She then discreetly nudged the class monitor and whispered, "Class monitor, I heard you used to like Luo Li too?"

The class monitor smiled faintly. "Who wouldn't like a girl like Luo Li? Back in the day, she was our school's belle. Plenty of guys pursued her, but unfortunately, she wasn't interested in any of them."

"That might not be true anymore," the petite girl giggled behind her hand. "I heard from Lu Jia that she's married now, and they're supposedly a very sweet couple." She glanced at a quiet girl sitting nearby. "Right, Lu Jia?"

The quiet girl simply offered a faint smile, neither confirming nor denying.

Zhou Tao's expression shifted subtly, and he forced a wistful, bitter smile. This only seemed to annoy Yang Zi further. I'll deal with that fox spirit when she gets here.

The class monitor's gaze sharpened for a moment before he too smiled. "True or not, we'll find out when Luo Li arrives."

However, he was inwardly dismissive. He simply couldn't imagine that anyone other than himself could possibly be worthy of Qin Luoli.

"I'm so sorry, everyone! The traffic was terrible. I'm late."

Just then, the door to the private room opened, and Qin Luoli walked in, her face etched with a sincere apology.

At the sight of her, the men's eyes instantly lit up, while the women's expressions became somewhat strained. Qin Luoli's beauty had only grown more enchanting, and she radiated an almost otherworldly elegance.

"Luo Li, come sit here!" the class monitor said, standing up like a gentleman and pulling out the empty chair beside him, which he had deliberately saved for her.

Qin Luoli gave him a polite smile. "Thank you, class monitor, but I'll sit over here."

With that, she chose a seat near the door where two spots were free—perfect for when Lin Mu arrived.

The class monitor didn't seem offended. He simply walked over to her. "In that case, I'll move too. I can help serve the dishes when they come."

Seeing the class monitor sit down right next to her, Qin Luoli's brow furrowed slightly. Just as she was about to say something, a calm voice cut through the air.

"Excuse me."

Chapter 416: Order Everything on the Menu!

"Who the hell are you to tell me to move?"

The class monitor was furious. Turning around, he saw a young man standing behind him, a faint smile on his face.

It was Lin Mu.

"Oh, you're here to take our order? Give me the menu," the class monitor said, assuming Lin Mu was a waiter based on his casual clothes.

"Please move aside."

The smile on Lin Mu's face widened, a sight that only further irritated the class monitor.

"Are you fucking kidding me?" the class monitor raged. "Are you here to take an order or kick people out? I happen to be acquainted with your restaurant's manager."

"Do you not understand English?"

Seeing Lin Mu remain motionless, the class monitor shot up from his seat, his face contorted with rage.

"Class Monitor!" A petite girl tugged at his sleeve. "He's not a waiter."

The class monitor paused, only then noticing that Lin Mu wasn't wearing the restaurant's uniform. His anger flared even hotter as he demanded, "Who the hell are you? Did you walk into the wrong private room?"

The corner of Lin Mu's mouth quirked up. He gestured toward Qin Luoli with his chin and said, "I'm her husband."

"Huh?"

The crowd was stunned. Following Lin Mu's gaze, they saw Qin Luoli smiling softly, and their faces filled with disbelief.

Qin Luoli is really married? And she brought her husband to dinner with them? Did the class monitor really just try to sit next to her?

For a moment, the atmosphere in the private room turned strangely tense.

The class monitor took a deep breath, then forced what he considered a gentle smile. "My apologies," he said meaningfully. "I didn't realize."

"It's fine. I don't stoop to the level of people with bad eyesight," Lin Mu chuckled, casually taking the seat beside Qin Luoli, who shot him an indignant glare.

This guy... Is he a professional troll? He picks a fight wherever he goes, never letting himself get the short end of the stick!

The others exchanged odd glances, studying Lin Mu more closely.

But aside from being handsome and having deep-set eyes, there's nothing remarkable about him, is there? Is this guy really Qin Luoli's husband? Why is he so aggressive?

The class monitor's expression darkened, the smile vanishing from his face. "Everyone's hungry," he said flatly. "Let's just order."

At this, Qin Luoli spoke up. "I was late, so to express my apologies, everyone can order whatever they like. My... husband will cover the bill." She shot Lin Mu a quick wink, signaling him to play along.

Lin Mu nodded with a beaming smile. "Of course. Since my wife said so, go ahead and order whatever you want."

"You're the one who said it!" the petite girl exclaimed, her eyes lighting up with excitement.

"Luo Li, this restaurant is very expensive..." the girl named Lu Jia spoke for the first time, trying to give her a subtle warning. It wasn't that she looked down on Lin Mu, but the prices here were truly exorbitant. It was normal for a single meal to cost millions. That's because some of the liquor here wasn't available on the open market, and a single bottle could cost several hundred thousand.

Lu Jia was worried that the class monitor and his friends would deliberately try to embarrass Lin Mu.

"It's fine. We're all classmates getting together. As long as everyone is happy, that's all that matters," Qin Luoli said with a slight smile. Most of her classmates had no idea about her true background. They didn't know that with her current wealth, she could buy the entire restaurant without batting an eye, let alone pay for one meal.

And that wasn't even mentioning Lin Mu. Qin Luoli knew exactly how rich he was.

This guy might even have more money than I do!

"Well, since they insisted, let's not be polite," Yang Zi said, flipping open the menu. "I'll have a king crab and a bottle of Tequila Ley .925."

Closing the menu, she smiled sweetly. "I'm done ordering. How about the rest of you?"

"Yang Zi!" Zhou Tao grabbed her arm, his face turning pale. A single bottle of Tequila Ley .925 cost over three million—in US dollars. That was equivalent to tens of millions of yuan! The thought of the number made Zhou Tao's body go limp.

"What?" Yang Zi snapped, shaking his hand off. "They said we could order whatever we want, so I'm ordering what I want to eat and drink. Is there a problem with that?"

"But..."

Before Zhou Tao could continue, Qin Luoli interjected, "It's alright, Zhou Tao. Actually, I've been wanting to try that liquor for a while now."

"See? I told you!" Yang Zi shot Zhou Tao a provocative look, but inwardly she was sneering.

You Fox Spirit, keep pretending! I'll see what you do when you can't pay the bill later!

After Yang Zi's extravagant order, the others felt awkward ordering anything expensive, so they quickly picked a few modest items and put their menus down.

Lin Mu suddenly laughed. "What? Is everyone done ordering?" Glancing at the menu, he shook his head. "This isn't nearly enough food. Let me add a few more things."

Then, with his pen, Lin Mu drew a circle around the salt-and-pepper peanuts.

"PFFT!"

Seeing his action, the petite girl next to him burst out laughing before quickly stifling it, her face turning bright red.

This guy is hilarious! And here I thought he was going to order some fancy dish.

The class monitor and the others didn't bother to hide the looks of utter disdain on their faces.

Lu Jia, however, let out a quiet sigh of relief. She decided that if Qin Luoli couldn't afford the bill later, she would step in and pay for it.

Once he was done, Lin Mu called for the waiter. He pressed the menus everyone else had used onto the table and handed his own over.

Everyone's gaze sharpened.

Is this guy really going to treat them to a single plate of peanuts? How insulting!

The class monitor was about to stand up and leave when he heard Lin Mu say casually, "Except for the item I circled, bring us one of everything else on the menu."

The moment he finished speaking, you could hear a pin drop in the private room.

Disbelief was written on every single face.

One of everything else on the menu? The total cost of all the dishes on this menu could feed countless people for a lifetime. That's several tens of millions!

Even the waiter's hand trembled slightly. "Sir," he stammered, "are you sure you want one of everything?"

"Is there a problem?" Lin Mu asked.

"Well, because you've ordered so many dishes, I'm worried..." the waiter said, repeatedly trying to catch Lin Mu's eye, hoping he wouldn't act so rashly.

Lin Mu just said, "Oh. And right, the Tequila Ley .925? Bring us three bottles to start. We can order more if that's not enough."

HISS!

This time, everyone audibly sucked in a breath of cold air.

Three bottles of Tequila Ley .925! That alone was over thirty million!

"Sir..." The waiter's expression turned serious. "Are you certain?"

Lin Mu feigned annoyance. "What? Do I need to say it a third time?"

"No, no, that's not it," the waiter apologized hastily, his tone becoming deferential. "It's just that the total for your order is extremely high. It's beyond my authority to approve."

Lin Mu waved a dismissive hand. "Then go find someone who has the authority."

Chapter 417: Supreme Emperor Card!

"Luoli, isn't this getting a bit out of hand?" Lu Jia whispered to Qin Luoli after the waiter had left.

The drinks alone cost over thirty million. With everything else, this meal would easily top fifty million. Even though the Lu Family was wealthy and influential in Jiangling, she was only a member of the younger generation and had no authority to spend so much money.

Since Qin Luoli hadn't revealed her true identity to them, Lu Jia naively assumed her family background was similar to her own, or perhaps even a step below the Lu Family.

So, can Lin Mu really afford such a huge sum?

She wasn't the only one; everyone except for Qin Luoli was thinking the same thing.

Fifty million! Forget about them; even the wealthiest members of their families would never spend so much on a single meal.

"Tsk, ts. Fifty million," Yang Zi tutted. "My family has a little money, but if they found out I spent this much just for one meal, they'd skin me alive."

Her words were dripping with sarcasm, clearly aimed at Lin Mu for what she saw as a desperate attempt to show off.

Besides, can he even come up with that much money?

"By the way, I heard that if your bill is over one hundred thousand here, you have to pay upfront. Is that right?" a boy wearing glasses suddenly asked, deliberately glancing at Lin Mu as he spoke.

The class president replied, "That's right. It's the restaurant's policy. Otherwise, what would they do if customers eat and can't pay? The restaurant would take a huge loss, wouldn't it?"

A petite girl asked nervously, "But what if he really can't pay?"

She was starting to regret it. She should have given Qin Luoli a warning earlier. Now, if the restaurant made Lin Mu pay first, wouldn't it be incredibly embarrassing?

The class president laughed. "It's probably not a big deal. They verify their guests' identities. Anyone who dares to order such expensive food obviously wouldn't care about a little money like this."

"A little money?" the petite girl repeated. "This is fifty million! That's not a small sum."

The class president shrugged. "Then they'll just have to follow the house rules."

"What rules?" everyone asked, their curiosity piqued.

"If the dishes haven't been served yet, it's still negotiable. At worst, they'll just ask you to leave." The class president glanced at Lin Mu and continued, "But if the food has been served and you can't pay, well... in a light case, they'll just break your legs. In a serious case, you might lose your life."

"What?" Lu Jia and the others cried out in alarm. This time, even Yang Zi started to feel a pang of regret.

However, when she saw Lin Mu's completely unconcerned expression, a fresh wave of anger surged within her.

"Qin Luoli, if your husband can't pay later, it has nothing to do with us," Yang Zi snapped, making it clear she didn't want to be implicated.

Zhou Tao nudged Yang Zi from the side. This is all your fault for insisting on ordering such expensive wine.

Yang Zi shot him a fierce glare that screamed at him to shut up. Zhou Tao flinched and immediately fell silent. After graduating from college, he met and married Yang Zi, but their relationship was far from good. Moreover, he had married into Yang Zi's family and was never treated well. Facing the domineering Yang Zi, Zhou Tao felt resentful but didn't dare say more.

"Maybe... maybe we should just go?" the petite girl whispered, thoroughly frightened. Her intentions hadn't been malicious; she just wanted to test if Qin Luoli's husband was truly generous. But hearing how serious the class president made it sound, she was terrified.

"It's alright," Qin Luoli said, taking the girl's hand. "Wenwen, we haven't seen each other in so many years. You can't just leave like this."

"But..." Wenwen's face was a mask of anxiety; she felt Qin Luoli was being just as reckless. Can't you see? The class president and the others are just waiting to see you make a fool of yourself!

Qin Luoli smiled reassuringly. "Don't worry. Leave it to Lin Mu."

It's only fifty million. To her, let alone to Lin Mu, it's just a drop in the ocean.

"That's right. He's so kindly treating us to a meal, we can't be rude and leave," the class president said with an inward sneer, his words dripping with sarcasm aimed at Lin Mu.

Back in college, Feng Yang had fallen for Qin Luoli at first sight. People even secretly said they were a match made in heaven. Although Feng Yang never said it out loud, he believed it in his heart. After graduation, however, Qin Luoli vanished, and he couldn't get in touch with her at all. When he finally heard she was in Jiangling, Feng Yang's long-dormant heart had begun to race with excitement again. He just never expected that after all these years, she would already be married.

The news hit Feng Yang with a huge sense of disappointment, leaving a bitter taste in his mouth. If Qin Luoli had married some wealthy and powerful young talent, he might have accepted it. But this Lin Mu?

He didn't look rich at all. He was clearly just a poor loser! The clothes he was wearing couldn't have cost more than two hundred yuan combined, right? This only fueled Feng Yang's resentment.

"By the way, your name is Lin Mu, right? May I be so bold as to ask what you do for a living?" Feng Yang asked, as if the thought just occurred to him.

Everyone turned to look at Lin Mu curiously.

Lin Mu smiled. "Since you know it's presumptuous, why are you asking?"

Feng Yang was speechless.

So was everyone else.

Qin Luoli shot a glare at Lin Mu. This man could exasperate anyone to death with his words. But when they were out, she always deferred to him and never interfered in such matters.

"Heh," Yang Zi sniffed. "It's not like it's some shady business. Why be so secretive? My Zhou Tao helps me manage a small company. It's not huge, but it still pulls in tens of millions a year."

"Impressive, very impressive," the others murmured admiringly. Zhou Tao simply took a sip of tea to hide his embarrassment.

"Senior Feng Yang is impressive too! He joined a multinational corporation right after graduation. I heard he works at Fang's Consortium now, making over a million a year, right?" someone else added.

Hearing this, Feng Yang's spirits lifted, but he said modestly, "I'm just getting by."

His words immediately earned a round of praise.

"Still, I'm not like some people who pretend to be rich when they clearly don't have the money for it," Feng Yang continued. "I could never bring myself to spend tens of millions on a single meal."

The comment was an obvious jab at Lin Mu's supposed extravagance.

"That's right, Luoli," Yang Zi chimed in, piling on Lin Mu. "I've been meaning to tell you, frugality isn't just a virtue for women."

Qin Luoli's expression soured slightly. Just as she was about to speak, the door to the private room swung open.

"Excuse me, everyone." A man who appeared to be the manager walked in. "I'm the manager of this restaurant. Which of you is Mr. Lin?"

Seeing the bill in the manager's hand, Yang Zi immediately pointed at Lin Mu. "It's him! He's the one!"

"Mr. Lin, hello," the manager said politely. "Welcome again to our restaurant. I do apologize, but given the exceptionally large total for your order, our policy requires prepayment. I hope you understand..."

As the manager spoke, he and Feng Yang exchanged a subtle glance and a faint smile. They clearly knew each other, and this so-called 'policy' was just a scheme they had concocted together.

All eyes turned to Lin Mu, waiting to see what he would do.

"I don't have that much cash on me," Lin Mu said suddenly.

The group sneered inwardly. Who carries that much cash around these days anyway?

The manager's smile didn't waver. "Mr. Lin, we accept cards as well."

"Oh, you should have said so sooner," Lin Mu replied. He pulled a few cards from his pocket, casually selected one, and handed it to the manager. "The PIN is six sixes."

The moment he saw the card, the manager drew a sharp breath, his voice trembling as he exclaimed, "The Supreme Emperor Card!"

"What's a Supreme Emperor Card? I've never heard of it," Yang Zi said, her face full of confusion. He must have just pulled out some random card to fool us.

"There are fewer than one hundred Supreme Emperor Cards in the entire world, and it's not something you can get just by being rich," the manager explained, his face a mask of utter shock. "Every owner of a Supreme Emperor Card is either the wealthiest person in their region or the head of a major consortium."

"That's because the overdraft limit on a Supreme Emperor Card is ten billion!"

At this revelation, everyone in the private room was utterly stunned.

Chapter 418: Betting Life!

Ten billion!

For them, that was an astronomical sum of money!

Forget ten billion; even one hundred million was beyond what anyone present could produce.

And yet, Lin Mu had only taken out a single card. When he had pulled them from his pocket earlier, it was clear he had more than one! This meant that Lin Mu had several Supreme Emperor Cards, each with a ten-billion overdraft limit!

"This..."

Everyone was utterly stunned. They never imagined that the person they thought was the poorest was, in fact, the richest among them. This revelation caused their faces to turn pale, and a hint of fear even flickered in their eyes.

What is Lin Mu's background?

"Not only that," the manager said, his voice slightly hoarse, "each holder of a Supreme Emperor Card must possess over fifty billion in fixed assets."

HISS!

Everyone gasped again, their gazes fixed on Lin Mu, filled with utter shock.

Fifty billion for just one card? With so many cards on him, just how massive was Lin Mu's fortune?

"Impossible!" Feng Yang shot to his feet. "This is absolutely impossible!"

He slammed his palm on the table and pointed at Lin Mu. "Him? A Supreme Emperor Card? I don't believe it!"

"Manager Wu, are you sure you're not mistaken?" Feng Yang stared intently at him. "Perhaps someone deliberately made fakes. It's possible you wouldn't know, right?"

"That's right!" Yang Zi chimed in. "The card is definitely fake! How could he possibly have one, let alone several?"

"I suspect he's just putting on a show to deceive us all!"

Clearly, aside from Qin Luoli, no one else believed the Supreme Emperor Card Lin Mu had produced was real. A ten-billion overdraft limit and fifty billion in fixed assets... it sounded fake and completely unbelievable.

"That's not possible!" Manager Wu asserted confidently. "I've seen a Supreme Emperor Card once before, so the memory is still vivid!"

"And..." Manager Wu said, stroking the card, "the Supreme Emperor Card is impossible to counterfeit. Its material is special, and each card has a unique mark tied only to its owner. It's even integrated with fingerprint, retinal, and genetic recognition functions. Forgery is absolutely impossible!"

"What if he stole it?" Feng Yang challenged. "Manager Wu, you said it has unique recognition features. If it was stolen, wouldn't it be unusable?"

"Exactly!" another man with glasses chimed in. "If he stole it, how would we know?"

"Yeah, I bet he stole them!" Yang Zi accused, pointing at Lin Mu. "He didn't just steal them; he faked them! Otherwise, how could one person have so many cards?"

Manager Wu hesitated. "In principle, that's impossible. Why would the owner of such a valuable card ever let it get stolen?"

"Manager Wu, I still think you should check it carefully to avoid being deceived," Feng Yang said nonchalantly. "It's no big deal for us, but if your restaurant gets scammed, you, as the manager, will also be held responsible."

The hint was blatant. Manager Wu couldn't miss it. He took a careful look at Lin Mu, but he didn't match any of the young masters from Jiangling's prominent families that he could recall. Moreover, Lin Mu was dressed plainly. Although he had a decent aura, it was vastly different from that of the scions of wealthy families. The more Manager Wu looked, the more his suspicion grew.

"What is wrong with you all?" Wenwen couldn't stand it any longer. "He kindly invited you to dinner, and you're here doubting him. What are your intentions?"

Feng Yang retorted, "Wenwen, don't be angry. We just want to be clear. If the card is fake, we can change our order before the food arrives and avoid an awkward scene later."

Wenwen sneered. "And what if it's real?"

"It can't be real!" Feng Yang snapped, sounding flustered.

This Wenwen! She always used to be so respectful, calling me 'Class President' this and 'Class President' that. But today she dares to talk back to me for an outsider? How infuriating!

"I also believe it can't be real!" Yang Zi declared. Because of her feelings for Qin Luoli, her impression of Lin Mu had already soured. This guy looks like a total country bumpkin. How could he possibly have such a valuable card?

"What if it is real?"

Lu Jia spoke up. She rarely spoke, but when she did, her words always carried a firm conviction. Even Feng Yang didn't dare lose his temper with her.

"If it's real, I..." Feng Yang thought for a moment before slamming the table again. "Then I'll eat this table!"

Everyone looked at Feng Yang with surprise, then glanced at Qin Luoli, and suddenly understood. So Feng Yang is deliberately trying to embarrass Lin Mu in front of Qin Luoli.

"You'll stand by your words?" Lin Mu, who had been silent, finally spoke, his gaze locked on Feng Yang.

Lin Mu's eyes were deep, and a faint azure divine light flickered within them, resembling a brilliant, starry sky that could make one lose themselves in its depths. Feng Yang involuntarily shuddered, a sense of inexplicable fear creeping over him.

"Class President Feng Yang is a man of his word!" the man with glasses immediately chimed in. "But what if the card is fake?"

"If it's a fake..." Lin Mu began, but Feng Yang immediately cut him off.

"Then you'll divorce Qin Luoli! How about it?!"

As soon as these words were spoken, the faces of Lu Jia, Wenwen, and the others changed drastically.

How could Feng Yang be so malicious?

"Class President Feng Yang, aren't you going too far?" Qin Luoli said, her voice icy as anger surfaced on her face.

She didn't care how Feng Yang and the others looked down on or mocked Lin Mu, but to use their marriage as a wager... Feng Yang was simply despicable.

"Darling, don't be angry." Lin Mu squeezed Qin Luoli's hand. His eyes flashed with a cold light as he stared without a trace of warmth at Feng Yang. "I will not wager my marriage with Luo Li."

Feng Yang's face twisted. "Are you scared?"

"No," Lin Mu said, shaking his head. "But if you insist on a bet, we can wager something else."

Feng Yang sneered. "And what do you propose we bet?"

"Let's bet our lives."

The declaration shocked the entire room. Even Qin Luoli's expression shifted, and she gently shook her head at Lin Mu. He, however, simply smiled, though his smile was cold.

Lu Jia and Wenwen's eyes trembled as they stared intently at Lin Mu. This man would rather bet his life than wager his marriage with Luo Li. How deep and sincere must his love be to make a man go to such lengths for a woman?

At that moment, Lu Jia felt a sudden pang of envy toward Qin Luoli.

"I think... maybe we should just drop it?" Zhou Tao stammered. "We're all classmates. There's no need for this."

"A bet it is!"

At this point, Feng Yang was blinded by rage. With everyone watching, he couldn't back down. His eyes were bloodshot, like a gambler who had lost everything. Gritting his teeth, he snarled, "I'll bet my life against yours!"

Chapter 419: Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card!

"Class monitor..."

Upon hearing Feng Yang's words, the man with glasses beside him suddenly tugged on his arm, hoping to stop him from acting rashly. Wenwen also began trying to talk him down.

Lu Jia, however, was pulling on Qin Luoli's arm. "Luo Li, let's just let it go. We're all friends here."

She had secretly sent a message to her family to ask about the card. It turned out the Supreme Emperor Card was exactly as Manager Wang had described, possessing unique markings that were impossible to counterfeit. Moreover, her family's elders had told her that there were fewer than ten Supreme Emperor Cards in all of Huaxia. The owner of each and every one was either the head of a massive consortium or a regional tycoon. All of them were middle-aged men over fifty; not a single one matched Lin Mu's description.

Because of this, Lu Jia also began to suspect that Lin Mu's Supreme Emperor Card was either a fake or a forgery. She started to advise Qin Luoli, urging her to convince Lin Mu not to be so impulsive.

This is a matter of life and death! It's not child's play; one wrong move could lead to a disaster.

"Lu Jia, you don't need to say anymore," Qin Luoli said coolly. "A wife follows her husband, for better or for worse. I married Lin Mu, so I will listen to him in all things."

"Even if it means death, I will die together with Lin Mu!"

Qin Luoli lifted her chin slightly, a queenly aura radiating from her.

The atmosphere in the private room fell silent. Everyone stared at Qin Luoli, their eyes filled with an incredibly complex mix of emotions.

Is this the same aloof goddess we used to know? Is this the same Qin Luoli who thought no man in the world was her equal?

A confident and proud expression appeared on Qin Luoli's face as she declared forcefully, "Furthermore, the man I, Qin Luoli, have chosen, is beyond suspicion from anyone!"

"Luo Li!" Lu Jia panicked. How could Luo Li join in this foolishness? This could turn into a huge mess. If this isn't handled well, we might not even be able to be friends anymore.

"Luo Li, I think we should just forget it, okay?" Wenwen added, trying to mediate.

"There's no need for persuasion!" Qin Luoli said flatly. "We all know who started this, so I won't rehash it. But this is a matter between men, so let them resolve it themselves!"

"Fine!" Feng Yang, as if provoked, roared with bloodshot eyes, "Lin Mu, do you dare make a man's bet with me?!"

"You've decided?" A cold smile played on Lin Mu's lips. "Since you're so eager to die, I'll grant you your wish."

"Who lives and who dies remains to be seen!" Feng Yang sneered and turned to Manager Wu. "Manager Wu, go and have this card authenticated!"

At that moment, Feng Yang's face radiated confidence. He had just asked a friend, who had sent him a picture of a Supreme Emperor Card. It looked completely different from the one Lin Mu had produced.

The reason he was so sure was because an elder in that friend's family possessed one of these very cards! Therefore, Feng Yang was one hundred percent certain that Lin Mu's card was a fake!

"Manager Wu, hurry up," Feng Yang said impatiently. "I'd love to see if someone can remain so calm and composed after being exposed."

Manager Wu's back was drenched in cold sweat. Feng Yang was a friend who often brought business here; their relationship was decent, and he was a senior executive at Fang's Consortium. On the other hand, a man who could produce a Supreme Emperor Card like Lin Mu undoubtedly had a powerful background. He couldn't afford to offend either side. Manager Wu began to regret getting involved in this murky business.

"Manager Wu, go on," Feng Yang said, his confident smile returning as he gave the manager a slight nod.

Manager Wu's heart skipped a beat. Why does Feng Yang look so certain? Does he have proof? Was I really mistaken? The thought sent a jolt of fear through him. If the card is fake, I was almost fooled myself! At this realization, Manager Wu's expression hardened. "Alright, I'll go and verify it right now!"

The restaurant had a dedicated card machine that would settle the matter instantly.

"If you'll all excuse me for a moment, I'll be right back." Manager Wu offered his apologies, pushed open the door, and almost crashed into someone in the hallway.

He was about to lose his temper when he saw who it was and was so frightened he collapsed onto the floor.

"Greetings, Elder Zheng! Greetings, Young Master Zheng!"

The people Manager Wu had nearly run into were an old man and a young man. The elder was over sixty, dressed in a traditional Tang suit, and looked to be in poor health. This was the Family Head of the Zheng Family, one of Jiangling's preeminent families, who had already passed the family business to the younger generation. Still, no one dared to underestimate his influence. The young man supporting him was his grandson, Zheng Junyi, himself one of Jiangling's few outstanding young talents.

"Manager Wu, what's the rush?" Elder Zheng chuckled. "You look unwell. Could it be... Ah! A custom Supreme Emperor Card!"

As he spoke, Elder Zheng's eyes bulged, staring intently at the card in Manager Wu's hand, his face a mask of utter disbelief.

"Ah?" Manager Wu was stunned. He looked down at the card and stammered, "Isn't this just a Supreme Emperor Card?"

"Yes, I remember Grandpa has one too... but wait, the color seems wrong." Zheng Junyi took the card from Manager Wu's hand. "This card has nine dragon patterns on it! And it's purplish-gold. Grandfather, are you sure you're not mistaken?"

"Absolutely not!" Elder Zheng shook his head firmly. "Standard Supreme Emperor Cards are black and gold with an engraved snake pattern."

"Then what is a custom Supreme Emperor Card? Is it even more prestigious than a regular one?" Zheng Junyi asked.

"It's far beyond just being prestigious!" Elder Zheng's voice trembled with excitement. "A regular Supreme Emperor Card can be obtained by anyone with sufficient status. But a custom Supreme Emperor Card... as far as I know, only three exist in the entire world. And those three each have only a single dragon. This one has nine!" His excitement mounted as he demanded, "Manager Wu, where did you get this card?"

"From... a guest." Manager Wu's face was deathly pale. He felt things were spiraling far beyond his control.

"Quick, bring him to... no. Manager Wu, please, do me the honor of introducing me to this distinguished guest," Elder Zheng said eagerly. "A Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card! This is the first time in my entire life I have ever laid eyes on such a thing!"

"What?" Not just Manager Wu, but even Zheng Junyi was dumbfounded.

With Elder Zheng's status, he wants to personally pay a visit? Just how terrifying is the identity of the person who holds this Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card?

"Elder Zheng, are you certain you aren't mistaken?" Manager Wu asked, clinging to a final, desperate thread of hope.

"See for yourself!" Elder Zheng quickly pulled a card from his own pocket and handed it to the manager. "Look closely. Is the material of the two cards not the same? Aside from the color and the pattern, they are identical! Furthermore, the value of the material used to make this card is immeasurable!"

Manager Wu ran his thumb over Elder Zheng's card. The more he looked, the paler he became. He realized Elder Zheng wasn't lying. The two cards, apart from their color and pattern, were identical in every other way. They even had the same distinct warmth to the touch, a sensation impossible to replicate with ordinary materials.

Was I really wrong?

Noticing Manager Wu was dazed, Elder Zheng prompted him again. "Manager Wu? If you would please make the introduction, I would be very grateful."

A titan of Jiangling was thanking him, yet Manager Wu felt an icy chill spread through his body. He could only respond numbly, "Yes, of course."

Deep in his heart, he was certain of one thing. I'm dead. I'm completely and utterly dead.

Chapter 420: Doomed to Die within Three Days!

"Hmph. Lin Mu, if I were you, I would leave right now to avoid embarrassing yourself later." Feng Yang sneered, his eyes filled with mockery.

A Supreme Emperor Card? It's nothing but a forgery this guy cooked up! This time, I owe it all to Young Master Zheng. Otherwise, I would have been utterly humiliated. It's not just about the humiliation; I might never have the chance to see Qin Luoli again. Today, I must expose Lin Mu's true colors so Qin Luoli can see him for what he really is!

However, faced with Feng Yang's taunts, Lin Mu remained calm, completely unfazed.

Qin Luoli was the same. Her gaze toward Feng Yang no longer held a trace of their former closeness, as if she were regarding a stranger—placid and aloof.

This made Feng Yang even angrier. It has come to this, and you're still putting on an act, Qin Luoli? Don't tell me you really think Lin Mu can turn this around?

Just then, Manager Wu walked in, and Feng Yang's eyes immediately lit up.

"Manager Wu, you—"

Before he could finish, Feng Yang's expression erupted in ecstatic joy. He hurried over, exclaiming excitedly, "Young Master Zheng, what brings you here?"

Zheng Junyi scanned the room. Everyone present was young, especially Lu Jia, whose family was quite well-known in Jiangling. It wasn't until he saw Qin Luoli that Zheng Junyi's eyebrows raised slightly.

This woman seems unfamiliar, yet her aura is so transcendent and her beauty so absolute. A truly rare, nation-toppling beauty.

But Zheng Junyi wasn't here to admire beautiful women; he wanted to see for himself just who the owner of the Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card was. However, no one in the room matched the image in his mind.

So, Zheng Junyi looked at Feng Yang, a smirk playing on his lips. "Feng Yang, you really are a dark horse, aren't you?"

"Huh?" Feng Yang was puzzled.

Zheng Junyi winked. "When did you meet them? Why didn't you introduce me?"

"Introduce what?" Feng Yang said, not knowing whether to laugh or cry. "Young Master Zheng, I really don't understand what you're talking about."

Zheng Junyi spoke with a hint of displeasure. "Feng Yang, now you're not being a true friend. You know the holder of a Supreme Emperor Card, yet you tried to hide it from me?"

"Oh, that's what you're talking about," Feng Yang suddenly burst out laughing. "Heh, what Supreme Emperor Card? It's a total fake!"

"That's right, Young Master Zheng! If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have known it was a fake. I was almost fooled!"

Previously, Feng Yang had secretly sent a message to Zheng Junyi, asking for a picture of the Supreme Emperor Card, which was how he confirmed that Lin Mu's was a forgery. While it looked similar at a glance, the color and patterns were vastly different. Obviously, Lin Mu had concocted this charade just to make himself seem extraordinary. It was utterly absurd.

"Fake?" Zheng Junyi was shocked. "My grandfather personally said that the Supreme Emperor Card is the one and only Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card in existence, the hegemon among Supreme Emperor Cards!"

"What Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card? That's fake too! A hegemon?" Feng Yang laughed heartily, pointing at Lin Mu. "Young Master Zheng, does he look like someone who would possess such a card?"

Feng Yang smiled obsequiously. "Not everyone is like your grandfather, the venerable Elder Zheng."

Hearing this, Zheng Junyi turned his gaze toward Lin Mu for the first time. The man seemed ordinary at a glance, but upon closer inspection, Zheng Junyi noticed a strange veil around him that made him seem indistinct. And as if sensing the covert glance, the man turned his head slightly and nodded at him.

Zheng Junyi was inwardly shocked. This man. What a sharp gaze!

Initially, it seemed unremarkable, but the longer he looked, the more the man's eyes seemed like a vast, starry sea, capable of swallowing one's very soul.

"Hahaha, so the young brother here is the holder of the Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card!"

A hearty, aged laugh echoed as Elder Zheng walked into the private room. He clasped his hands in a gesture of respect toward Lin Mu and smiled. "This old one is Zheng Mingye. It is a pleasure to meet you, young brother."

"Zheng Mingye!" Lu Jia exclaimed softly, a look of shock on her face.

"Lu Jia, you know this old gentleman?" Wenwen asked, bewildered.

With shock still lingering on her face, Lu Jia replied with a bitter smile, "I've only heard of him. How could I possibly know such an esteemed figure?"

Wenwen was completely baffled. "An esteemed figure? Is he very powerful?"

Lu Jia whispered, "More than just powerful! Perhaps no one knows his real name, but I'm sure everyone in Jiangling has heard his nickname."

"What is it?"

"Zheng Mingwang!" Lu Jia said.

"He's Zheng Mingwang!" Wenwen could no longer restrain herself and gasped in shock. Realizing her outburst, she hurriedly covered her mouth.

Zheng Mingye nodded with a chuckle. "I didn't expect a young lady like you to know my title. That's right, I am Zheng Mingwang."

A faint, reserved pride appeared on Zheng Mingye's face. He was clearly extremely proud of this moniker.

If the Fang Family was the top magnate family of Jiangling, then Zheng Mingwang was a magnate family unto himself! A single man who could stand equal to an entire clan could be considered a titan among men, no matter where he was.

And Zheng Mingye was indeed such a person. He started in the antique business at the age of ten and, from nothing, became the wealthiest man in Jiangling in just twenty years. For that, he had earned another title: Jiangling's Richest Man! Furthermore, his antique business had since spread overseas, and his network of connections was vast.

The Zheng Family was only small in number because it had produced a single heir for three consecutive generations. Otherwise, the position of Jiangling's foremost magnate family would undoubtedly belong to them! Regardless, the Zheng Family was an entity in Jiangling that no one dared to provoke.

Lu Jia had never imagined that Zheng Mingwang himself would appear here. And he had addressed Lin Mu as "young brother."

This...

She wasn't the only one; even Zheng Junyi was slightly startled. In his memory, although his grandfather always appeared kind and affable, he was extremely proud to his core and showed no deference to anyone. Yet, he was addressing Lin Mu so politely, which astounded him.

"Elder Zheng, could there be some misunderstanding?" Feng Yang interjected. "What this guy took out is not a Supreme Emperor Card at all!"

"Of course, I know that!" Before Feng Yang's hope could rise, Zheng Mingye immediately declared, "Because that is a Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card!"

Hearing this term again, everyone was slightly taken aback.

"Old sir, isn't it a Supreme Emperor Card? How did it become a Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card?" Yang Zi couldn't help but ask.

Zheng Mingye scoffed, "A bunch of ignorant children, what do you know? Do you think this old man could be mistaken?"

Thinking of Zheng Mingwang's identity, a look of astonishment washed over their faces. Could it be that Lin Mu's card isn't just real, but is also the only Nine Dragons Supreme Emperor Card in existence?

"No!" Feng Yang's face suddenly turned deathly pale. He screeched hysterically, "It can't be real! You're lying! You're definitely lying!"

Feng Yang pointed at Zheng Mingye. "You must be trying to deceive me!"

"Impudent!" Zheng Mingye said coldly. "Are you questioning my judgment?"

As his words fell, a black mist erupted from his body. The wails of what seemed to be ten thousand ghosts echoed from within it, creating a terrifying sight. The black mist immediately swept toward Feng Yang.

"Ah!"

Feng Yang shrieked in terror as if he had seen a Ghost Charm. He collapsed to the ground, his face pale, frothing at the mouth, and convulsing uncontrollably. But the mist didn't disperse; it continued to surge toward the others, seemingly out of control.

Everyone was greatly alarmed and scrambled backward.

"Disperse!"

Suddenly, a voice like a mighty bell rang in everyone's ears. To their astonishment, the black mist instantly vanished, and the private room returned to normal. Apart from Feng Yang, who still lay twitching on the floor, everything was as it had been before.

"Tsk, tsk. To think that someone still practices such low-level sorcery. This has been a real eye-opener." Lin Mu looked at Zheng Mingye with a half-smile. "If you don't quickly dissipate all your cultivation and find a powerful Magic Artifact to suppress the resentful energy, you will undoubtedly die within three days!"