



With his head bowed, Shen Fei stood in front of the condominium while speaking softly to the three elderly men in a fearful and respectful manner.

The leader of the trio was a petite, elderly man with a bald spot at the top of his head, grayed sideburns, and a cane in one hand.

At first sight, Shen Fei found it hard to believe he was looking at the famous Li Er from Yunzhou, the man who had followed Ye Fan to battles all over the world.

Never did he expect the vigorous and strong warrior to age so much in two years.

The two men behind Li Er seemed to be in a better condition than their leader.

However, they had also aged a lot compared to their glorious days.

Shen Fei still remembered things clearly. It was almost three years since Ye Fan had fallen.

His death had shaved a decade off Li Er and the other two men's lives.

After confirming Qiu Mucheng actually lived there, Li Er straightened his collar and walked in with his cane.





Shen Fei wanted to go up and support him, but the old man pushed him away.

"I'll go in on my own." Li Er was meeting an old acquaintance, so he did not want Qiu Mucheng to see how weak he was.

A man who cannot walk on his own is basically crippled.

Being a prideful man, he did not want his old friend to see him in his fragile state.

Following Li Er's lead, Chen Ao waved his hand. "Nan, you can stop holding me already. I can enter on my own."

Chen Ao, who had been retired for many years, pushed away his daughter's hand and walked into the building with Li Er.

Among the three of them, Lei San was the only one who was healthier.

As the famous trio of Jiangdong, Lei San was the healthiest, while Li Er was the weakest.

However, over the past few years, Lei San had been seeking comfort in alcohol. No matter how healthy he was, such terrible habits naturally worsened his condition. He was not as healthy as before, and his body had long gone out of shape.





His face was unshaven, and he had lost his domineering image as the king of Jingzhou back then.

Meanwhile, the three elderly men walked up to the condominium with Shen Fei and Chen Nan's company.

"That's strange. Why is there no one in there? She should've been done with work at this time."

No one opened the door after knocking on it for some time.

"Could you have gotten it wrong?" Chen Nan asked.

"No way. I've been here a few times," Shen Fei said resolutely.

Just as he was panicking, a gleeful laughter traveled from the stairs.

To his surprise, he saw a mature-looking woman entering the building with a child, happily chatting away.

"Mommy, I want to have pork ribs tonight," Fan Junior said.

"Okay. I'll make the arrangements." Qiu Mucheng was thrilled because her son was



praised in school.

Thus, she decided to reward the child that night.

Nevertheless, the moment she stepped out of the elevator, she noticed a few elderly men standing in front of her house, blocking her path at the same time.

She frowned and pulled Fan Junior behind her before saying coldly, "Excuse me. Please make way for us to go through."

Even though she sounded polite, there was no response.

The elderly men remained standing there without moving.

They merely stared at her with their hazy eyes.

The woman before them was once incredibly magnificent and respectable.

Qiu Mucheng could not help but put up her guard as she faced their fearless gaze.

Her frown deepened, and Fan Junior cowered behind her.

"I don't know what you guys are up to, but I'd like to remind you that this entire condominium





has a security system, and they work closely with the police. If you don't want to be sued, leave right now." Her tone became firmer.

In the past, Qiu Mucheng would have frozen with fear at the sight of so many strangers at her door.

Having gone through so much, she had become mentally stronger and confident.

She had no fear, even if she faced gangsters alone.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

As soon as Qiu Mucheng finished speaking, three thuds rang in the air.

To her surprise, the three elderly men, who made her put up her guard, went on their knees in unison.

"Mrs. Chu, I, the useless Li Er, am here to see you. I failed to protect Mr. Chu because of my uselessness. Please punish me, Mrs. Chu!" Li Er kowtowed as he knelt.

Before he knew it, tears were streaming down his face.

"Please... Punish us, Mrs. Chu!" Chen Ao and Lei San followed suit, making loud thumps.





Fan Junior was so shocked that blood drained from his face.

At that moment, Qiu Mucheng was dumbfounded.

She stared at the three men before her, unable to say anything for a long time.

"Y-You're Mr. Li?" A wave of emotions suddenly assaulted her as she stared at them in disbelief.

Just like how Shen Fei first saw Li Er and the others, Qiu Mucheng, too, could not the grey-haired man in front of her was the renowned Li Er of Yunzhou.

It has only been two to three years. How could such an amazing person change so drastically?

However, after recovering from the shock, Qiu Mucheng quickly suppressed her emotions and memories that resurfaced.

Looking at the kneeling men, she said heartlessly, "I'm sorry. You've got the wrong person. I'm not the Mrs. Chu you guys are talking about. I don't know any of you. Please leave."

After saying all that, she brought her son along as she passed by them, wanting to open her



house door.

Despite her hostility, the men continued kneeling as Li Er sobbed pitifully, "You have the right to not acknowledge us, but we will never forget you. I know you hate us and will not forgive us. We haven't been able to forgive ourselves either for the past few years. We didn't even have the guts to come to visit you. It's been two years. I've combed the entire Jiangnan and Jiangbei. I've gone to countless places to search for Mr. Chu. I wanted to bring him back alive to see you. I'm just too powerless. I've done everything, yet I can't even locate him. It's all our fault. It's our fault for being Mr. Chu's burden back then. He wouldn't have been driven to the point of despair if he wasn't protecting us. If it's possible, I would gladly die in his place." Li Er knelt on the ground with tears streaming down his cheeks.

His heart ached terribly at the memory of the past.

Lei San and Chen Ao, too, were filled with sorrow. It was as if their hearts had shattered into pieces like a piece of glass all over again.

However, Qiu Mucheng was not interested to hear their explanation.

She covered her ears as she walked toward her house, looking as if she had lost her mind. With





a bang, she shut the door, locking Chen Ao and the others outside.

"Get lost! All of you! The Mrs. Chen you're looking for isn't here. She's dead." Qiu Mucheng shouted in the house with tears welling in her eyes.

Without realizing it, tears started streaming down her cheeks, too.

Why? Why can't I escape from him? Why would someone always bring up those painful memories whenever I've managed to calm myself down?

Li Er and the others did not leave. Instead, they continued to kneel at her door.

Shen Fei and Chen Nan could not help but sigh at the sight. They felt terrible.

When Ye Fan was still around, they had lived a glorious and happy life.

After he was gone, all their happiness disappeared as well.

Qiu Mucheng was not the only person feeling that way.

Li Er, Lei San, Chen Ao, Chen Nan, and even the heartless rich heir, Shen Fei, had constantly



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Chapter 1999

blamed themselves for the past few years. They, too, had gone through a rough period of guilt and sadness.



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"Mr. Li, please get up. If you continue kneeling, your body won't be able to take it."

Li Er and the others had been kneeling the entire night outside of the condominium.

When midnight came, Li Er's body finally could not take it anymore. After a series of violent coughs, he spat out a mouthful of blood.

If it were not for Shen Fei and the others who held Li Er up in time, the latter would have passed out onto the ground.

"No! I will never stand up as long as Mrs. Chu doesn't forgive me. I'll never get up, even if I die on my knees. Mr. Chu had to endure such a painful death just to save us back then. This is nothing compared to his suffering." Li Er gritted his teeth and got to his knees again.

Chen Nan and Shen Fei wanted to cry as they watched the scene before them.

Even so, Chen Nan did not feel as miserable as Shen Fei since she was not too close to Li Er.

Shen Fei, however, grew up under the old man's care.

Both he and his father had been working under Li Er for quite some time. Thus, he knew how much the elderly man before him feared death.





Nonetheless, the man who feared death was willing to die kneeling to beg for a woman's forgiveness.

Shen Fei and the others knew Li Er did that only because of guilt.

For the past few years, remorse had been tormenting the three elderly men.

Perhaps, to them, it would be a form of release if they died kneeling before Ye Fan's wife.

"Dad, I'm begging you. Please stand up. You've just had surgery. Your body can't handle it," Chen Nan implored her father.

Right after Li Er vomited blood, Chen Ao could not endure it anymore and collapsed to the ground.

He awakened after Chen Nan gave him some water.

Without taking any time to rest, Chen Ao dragged his weary body to the door and kneeled in front of it.

No matter how hard his daughter cried or how dizzy he felt, Chen Ao did not budge.

"Don't bother about me, Nan. This is what I owe Mr. Chu. When I was at my weakest, it was Mr.





Chu who helped me through the hardship.
When I was being foolish, he was so generous to spare my life and let me make a comeback in Jiangbei. The fall of Mr. Chu happened because he wanted to protect me and his millions of subordinates. Now that he is dead, his widow is the last trace of him being in this world. Hence, we're willing to die to atone for our sins." Chen Ao's tone was firm.

Though Lei San said, he, too, had a defiant look in his eyes.

Chen Nan and Shen Fei were stunned.

In the past, Shen Fei's concept of loyalty was friends chilling together at roadside stalls, having drinks, and eating barbequed food, while lending a helping hand in fights.

At that moment, Li Er gave Shen Fei a valuable and shocking lesson of loyalty.

Even if someone died many years ago, true friendship would never end.

Li Er neglected his business in Jiangdong and traveled all over Jiangnan and Jiangbei for almost three years in search of the possibility of Ye Fan's survival.

Chen Ao was so crestfallen that he abandoned his comfortable life in Jiangbei. He retired and





waited for his death to arrive.

Similarly, Lei San was so depressed that he drank his sorrows away every day.

Ye Fan's death caused the renowned trio of Jiangdong to despair.

Sometimes, Shen Fei dared not imagine how important Ye Fan was to Li Er and the others. After all, their master's death left the famous and influential trio so devastated.

Shen Fei would never understand it.

The friendship of the trio with Ye Fan was built by going through countless turmoil and lifeand-death situations.

A man only got to know his companion in a long journey and a little inn.

Especially Li Er, who had followed Ye Fan ever since the latter became his live-in son-in-law.

He watched how his good-for-nothing master transformed into the Unrivalled Grandmaster and ranked first in the Sky Ranking.

No one dared to mess with Ye Fan when he ruled Jiangdong.

He was renowned all over Japan, worshipped





by many powerful people, and even defeated Chu Sect, which was shocking news to the world.

In the past, Li Er strongly believed he could continue living those glory days by just following Ye Fan.

Alas, his master encountered the biggest fall of his life.

The battle at Eastsea not only ruined Qiu Mucheng's happiness but also crushed the hopes of Li Er and the others.

A person without hope was a living corpse, just like Li Er and the others. It had only been two to three years, yet every day felt like a year for them.

Lei San could not sleep at night because he kept seeing Ye Fan lying in a pool of blood under the moonlight whenever he shut his eyes.

Thus, he could only numb himself using alcohol to gain temporary calmness.

For the past three years, the three elderly men did not receive any salvation from their misery. Instead, the guilt in their hearts consumed them.

Chen Nan could not bear seeing her father and





the others kneeling with their lives on the line.

With tears streaming down her face, she banged on the door.

"Qiu Mucheng, you coward! How long are you going to hide? One must bear the weight of their crown. You're his wife, and you should endure whatever you deserve. If you can't, why didn't you divorce Ye Fan when he was alive? You enjoyed all the glory and fame. Now that he's dead, you've become a deserter. You no longer care about what happens in Jiangdong and even disassociate yourself from Mr. Li and the others although they're here in person. You enjoyed the glory but avoided the pain. Don't you think you're very selfish? You're not worthy of being Ye Fan's wife. You're not worthy, Qiu Mucheng! You're just a selfish coward!" Chen Nan scolded furiously outside.

Hearing that, Li Er and the others immediately lectured her and warned her to not be disrespectful toward Qiu Mucheng.

However, Chen Nan ignored them.

She just had to say it out loud. She wanted to vent the emotions that had welled up in her over the years. "Qiu Mucheng, I know you hate Ye Fan. You hate him for not caring about the family, for only knowing how to seek revenge without considering the after-effects. You must







think that the downfall of the Chu Sect, the destruction of Mufan Group created by you and Ye Fan in the past, the businesses in Jiangdong falling into other people's hands, the death of your husband, and even you becoming a widow are caused by Ye Fan alone. You blame him for being rash and disregarding the consequences. But can you really blame everything on Ye Fan alone? Do you really think eliminating the sect was all because of his obsession to seek revenge? Did you know that Chu Sect is currently wreaking havoc around the world, taking over many countries? Countless grandmasters and supremes died in battles and dozens of countries' martial arts world has been wiped out. If Ye Fan hadn't gone against them and delayed their attack, do you think you could lead such a peaceful life for the past three years?"

After a brief pause, she continued, "Please appreciate the people around you now. Qiu Mucheng, Ye Fan didn't do all that for himself; he did it for you. It wasn't for the entire country, but it was for this family. Otherwise, the Chu Sect would've still invaded China even if he didn't stop them. Do you seriously think they would let him go if he didn't mess with them? Do you think they would let Jiangdong go? Besides, Ye Fan had deployed a massive formation in Jiangdong before going off to face Chu Sect. The focal point was on Mount Yunding Villa — the very villa you lived in. Don't



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Chapter 2000

you see it? He did that to ensure your safety after his death. How dare you accuse him of not caring for the family, or yourself? Don't you know he would die for you?"



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"Do you know why Ye Fan almost died in Japan back then? It's because he went to get the Yasakani jade so he could create this protection for you. Your husband has been protecting you when he's alive and even in death! If it wasn't love, then what? Qiu Mucheng, what else do you want him to do?" Chen Nan scolded the widow as her face was wet with tears.

She felt bad for Ye Fan.

He was a great man who sacrificed for Qiu Mucheng and his family. In fact, he had been secretly doing all that.

Qiu Mucheng, Ye Ximei, and all his family members knew nothing about it.

He was a foolish man who never told anyone about the hardship and dangers he faced.

Instead, he did his best and provided for the people around him.

Sadly, all his efforts only fruited him a family that fell apart after his death.

He had sacrificed his life to protect Qiu Mucheng, but she hated him. Even worse, she was not even willing to admit that she was his wife.



Perhaps Ye Fan had not been a good husband and a father.

Nonetheless, Chen Nan did not think Qiu Mucheng had done an excellent job, either.

When Ye Fan was busy battling with his life on the line, the woman did nothing to help him out.

Not once did she help him eliminate his enemies or solve his problems.

She even secretly hoped for his business to fail. And now, she complained that he only cared about revenge instead of his family.

Chen Nan felt it was not worth it.

If Ye Fan married Xu Lei instead of Qiu Mucheng, things would've been better. Xu Lei could've helped him to protect Yanjing, eliminate the Chu Sect's affiliated families, and weakened their finances.

In fact, Chen Nan believed she would be a better wife compared to Qiu Mucheng.

Though she could do nothing to help, she would give Ye Fan all her support and understanding.

When he was not at home, she would manage everything at home well and take good care of





his mother. She would also arrange his clothes well and help him give flower baskets to his friends and family at major events.

When he was home, she would prepare a table full of delicious food. Moreover, she would also boil hot water for them to soak their legs. Before they slept, she would give him a massage to relieve his tired and injured body.

Although Chen Nan could not help on the frontline of the battle, she would manage everything behind the scenes so that Ye Fan had fewer concerns on his mind.

Even if he had fallen, she would not dwell in sorrow and step out from behind the scenes without hesitation. She would take up the responsibility of the Queen of Jiangdong to stabilize the situation and protect everything her man had fought for while she awaited his return.

Chen Nan could not help but question what Qiu Mucheng had done for Ye Fan.

Not only is she a bad cook, but she also has deserted her husband after tragedy struck him. And now, she dares to complain about him!

Naturally, Chen Nan felt that Ye Fan's efforts had gone to waste.



After her outrage, she felt exhausted.

She did not have the energy to carry on with her words. Hence, she leaned against the wall and wept.

She missed Ye Fan.

She missed the man, who had a smile as warm as the sun.

When he was around, Chen Nan did not appreciate his presence.

Now that he was gone, she finally understood what devastation felt like.

Jiangdong, Li Er, and even her own father were crushed.

They once lived a prosperous and glorious life. At that moment, all that was left was a mess.

If only Ye Fan was still alive. If he's still alive, I bet the sun will be warm and the evening breeze will be gentle. My dad and the others won't be this haggard. They won't be kneeling here and crying, either. Perhaps the world will be much more peaceful, too. The Chu Sect wouldn't have started a war, and China's martial arts world wouldn't have the power to destroy the world. On top of that, the martial arts world from other countries wouldn't have entered a



state of emergency alert.

Everything was in disarray.

Ever since Ye Fan's death, Chen Nan's life and the world around her were in a mess.

Creak!

Just as she was sobbing miserably, the apartment door suddenly opened.

"Come in." Qiu Mucheng's face was slightly pale, and her eyes were swollen and red.

She, too, could not sleep the entire night.

Truth was, she had been hiding behind the door, gritting her teeth so that she would not cry.
Unfortunately, she could not control herself, and she had been sobbing the entire night.

Seeing that Qiu Mucheng was finally willing to meet them, Li Er and the others broke into tears. Immediately, the three elderly men were helped into the house, but they still did not dare to sit.

Rather, they went on their knees again.

Their failure to bring Ye Fan back to Jiangdong safely was a lifetime's regret they had toward Qiu Mucheng.





"It's not your fault. Mr. Li, Mr. Lei, and Mr. Chen. Please get up. I'm just a commoner who doesn't have many abilities, experience, or an impressive background. If it weren't for Ye Fan, I'm afraid I might not even be qualified to speak to Mr. Li. All of you are my elders. I'm already shocked by your visit. I don't deserve to have all three of you kneeling before me." Qiu Mucheng quickly stepped forward to help them up. In the end, she knelt before them.

Perhaps, she had thought things through, or it was Chen Nan's words that brought her back to her senses.

Her current self no longer denied the past, nor did she refuse to talk about it.

Qiu Mucheng poured several glasses of water and handed them to Li Er and the others. "It's almost been three years; the dust had settled. All three of you should start a new life. Don't dwell too much on the past. I don't blame any of you, and I believe Ye Fan won't blame you, too. Rather, I'm sure he'll be mad to find out about you three wasting your lives away. Especially Mr. Li. You've really aged a lot. I could barely recognize you. Though Ye Fan isn't around, Yunzhou still needs you. Ziyang and the others need you, too. Please take better care of your health."

Her voice quivered slightly.





Many memories started to resurface in her mind when she saw Li Er, her old friend.

The reason people always cried whenever they reunited with their old acquaintances was because of their recollection of the past.

After all, Li Er had gone through many ups and downs with Ye Fan and Qiu Mucheng.

Every time she saw him, she could not help but recall her blissful life with Ye Fan back in Yunzhou.

"And you, Mr. Chen. You've aged a lot, too. Nan is not married yet. You've got to take good care of yourself. I bet she's still hoping you can take care of her child in the future." Qiu Mucheng wiped the tears from the corner of her eyes and forced a smile.

Finally, she turned her attention on Lei San. "Mr. Lei, Ye Fan grew up in Jingzhou. It's also his mother's hometown. I'm just a woman whose words have no power. I'm unable to help Ye Fan watch over his hometown. So, I'm afraid I'll have to rely on you. You must not fall ill. If you collapse, then no one will be able to protect his birthplace."

Qiu Mucheng comforted all three of them, hoping to relieve them of their guilt and let them pull themself together.





It was all she could do at that moment.

Her words caused Li Er and the others to burst into tears again.

After enduring many years of torment, they finally found solace in the words of Ye Fan's wife.

After spending some time catching up, Li Er choked, "Mrs. Chu, please come back with us to Jiangdong. Let's go back to Mount Yunding Villa. You were Mr. Chu's biggest concern. Now that he's gone, we've got to protect you on his behalf. Before he left, he instructed us to take you to Mount Yunding to hide from the world in case he couldn't return. He has built the most formidable formation to keep you safe."

"That's right, Mrs. Chu. Please come back with us. The Chu Sect has started a mutiny, and China's martial arts world is preparing for war. They're urgently summoning all martial artists to return to the country to serve the king and protect Mount Yan. War is at our doorstep and Jiangbei is no longer a safe place. Only Mount Yunding in Yunzhou can keep you safe now," Chen Ao chimed in as well.





Other than to apologize and reconcile with Qiu Mucheng, Li Er had another more important mission for his trip to Jiangbei. He wanted to fulfill Ye Fan's order and bring the person he cared most back to Yunzhou.

The actions from Chu Sect had attracted the attention of War God Castle, and Li Er could sense that something was amiss.

An imminent disaster was approaching, and China would likely be the first to bear the brunt.

"Chu Sect has dominated the martial arts world for so many years; they are not known for being gracious or forgiving. Mr. Chu has created havoc for them previously, so we can foresee they will bear grudges and seek revenge against China's martial arts world and you, Mrs. Chu.

"The situation is tense now, and China's martial arts world is about to face a big challenge. I beg you to go back with us to Yunzhou, Mrs. Chu. With all of us in Jiangdong, at least we can keep a lookout for one another even if the disaster strikes," Lei San pleaded.

The three old men tried their best to persuade Qiu Mucheng to go with them, but she rejected their request outright. It was something the trio did not expect.





"You have to come with us, Mrs. Chu. Please reconsider your decision, not only for yourself but also for Mr. Chu. You are the one he missed most in this world. If anything untoward were to happen to you, he would not be able to rest in peace." Li Er implored her to change her mind.

Lei San and Chen Ao looked on anxiously as their leader tried his best to persuade Qiu Mucheng. Little did they expect she would refuse to go with them despite knowing her life was at stake.

They wondered if she was still mad at Ye Fan and had not forgiven him.

"Why don't you come with us, Ms. Qiu? Do it for Ye Fan. You are his wife, and this kid is his only flesh and blood. Can you really bear to see his only son perish here?" Tearfully, Chen Nan stepped in to help persuade her as well.

Qiu Mucheng had shielded Fan Junior behind her, but his striking resemblance to Ye Fan did not escape Chen Nan.

The little boy had his father's nose and eyes.

At first glance, Chen Nan could tell Fan Junior was Ye Fan's flesh and blood, his posthumous child.

She was actually a little envious of Qiu



Mucheng for bearing the man a son. It was something she had dreamt of doing herself. Alas, she knew it would remain a pipe dream for her.

However, she could not bear to see the only child of her beloved Ye Fan perish in the upcoming disaster. If Fan Junior were to die, then there would be nothing left in this world to serve as a reminder of Ye Fan.

"I-Is this really Mr. Chu's son?" After hearing what Chen Nan said, Li Er and Lei San were elated and started to take note of the little boy.

Never in their wildest dreams had the three men expected there would be a living heir for their master. They took a closer look at the boy, and judging by his looks and age, they were convinced Chen Nan was right.

Qiu Mucheng's silence meant they were right.

Li Er, Lei San, and Chen Ao broke into tears of joy as they gathered around Fan Junior.

"Hahaha, Mr. Chu has a descendent!"

"Mr. Chu has a son and Jiangdong has an heir!"

They were overjoyed that Ye Fan had someone to continue his lineage.





The trio thought he had not fathered any sons, so after his death, they felt a deep sense of loss. They gloomily thought that was the end of his legacy.

When they discovered the existence of Fan Junior, they could look to the future with hope again.

The little kid would be the Prince of Jiangdong and its future king! Jiangdong finally had someone to lead them into the future.

The three men had always felt they had let their master down. From then on, they pinned their hope on Fan Junior and were determined to make up for their regrets toward Ye Fan by helping to raise his son.

With that, they were even more committed to bringing the mother and son back to Jiangdong.

Unfortunately, Qiu Mucheng had already made up her mind.

"Mr. Li, I know you want to do what is best for me, but I really have no wish to return to that place. I am too ashamed to face the elders in Jiangdong." She shook her head despondently in confession. She appeared dejected and down.





"But ... "

The elderly men were not about to give up, but before they could reason further with her, Qiu Mucheng gave them a sad smile and cut them off, "Speak no more. I have already decided. However, I will let you bring Fan Junior back to Jiangdong. You are right that he is Ye Fan's only heir, and I cannot allow him to be harmed because of my willful and selfish decision."

Her demeanor was calm and casual, but she was obviously putting up a brave front.

In the three years after Ye Fan left, the kid was the only reason she was able to stay alive. He was her everything!

No one could imagine how much it would take for a mother to give up her child, who meant the world to her, to someone else. It was an excruciatingly painful decision for Qiu Mucheng.

"I am not leaving. I am not going anywhere without you, Mommy! Boohoohoo..." Fan Junior seemed to understand he was about to part from his mother, and he started wailing, holding on tightly to her hand, afraid to let go.

Qiu Mucheng pulled him into her embrace and consoled him. "Don't cry, Fan Junior. You are his son and you cannot be a disgrace to him. When





your dad was your age, he was already a strong boy, so you must be strong like him too! Grow up to be a star, just like your dad! Remember not to marry a selfish woman like me when you grow up though."

Qiu Mucheng might smile as she spoke to her son, but there was no hiding her sorrow as tears flowed uncontrollably down her cheeks.

Despite her strong desire to keep her beloved son with her, she made the difficult decision to do what was best for him instead.

"Boohoohoo... I don't want to part from you, Mommy!" Fan Junior was still wailing as Qiu Mucheng pushed him away from her arms.

Then she made him kneel in front of Li Er, Lei San and Chen Ao.

"No, no! This won't do, Mrs. Chu!" They did not think it was appropriate for Ye Fan's son, the Prince of Jiangdong, to pay them such great respect, and quickly went on their knees while urging her to stop it.

Qiu Mucheng ignored their pleas as she turned solemnly to Fan Junior.

"From this moment, these three men will be your godfathers as well as your teachers. They will mentor you until you reach adulthood. Until





then, you have to consult them for advice before making any decision. Do not do anything without their consent! You are to show them respect and absolute obedience. Do you hear me?" she instructed her son seriously.

Fan Junior had never seen that stern and solemn side of his mother, so even though he was still sobbing sadly, he compliantly nodded his head.

After that, Qiu Mucheng entrusted the child to the three men and said, "Mr. Li, Mr. Lei, and Mr. Chen, you are the ones Ye Fan trusted most when he was alive. I am inexperienced and incapable of giving Fan Junior the necessary guidance and training to become a great man like his father. I can only put him in your care. Please do not over-indulge him. Guide him as if he is your own son, and discipline him accordingly. Spare the rod and spoil the child. If he does anything wrong, give him his due punishment."

The trio were in tears, touched by the confidence she had in them.





"I, Li Er, will not disappoint you and Mr. Chu. I promise to do my best to protect your son and bring him up. I swear on my life that I will do my utmost to shield him from any harm!" Li Er prostrated himself in front of Qiu Mucheng.

Lei San followed suit and swore, "I will do the same!"

Chen Ao, his reddened eyes still brimming with tears, similarly promised he would lay down his life for the task.

After that, all of them sat down and had a long talk.

"Won't you reconsider your decision and head back to Yunzhou with us, Mrs. Chu? In comparison, you will be safer going there with us than staying in Jiangbei. We are really worried Chu Sect will come after you." Before they take their leave, the three men made one last attempt to persuade Qiu Mucheng to change her mind.

She gave them a small smile and stood her ground.

"Don't worry, Mr. Li. I am merely a small fry, a commoner who has no influence nor power. Chu Sect, being one of the superpowers in the world, will not waste their time and energy coming after an insignificant person like me.





Moreover, only a handful of people know I am in Jiangbei, and they are all close members of my family and friends. So even if Chu Sect wants to come after me, it will not be easy for them to find me." Again, she turned them down.

In the end, Li Er and his companions left for Yunzhou with only Fan Junior, while Qiu Mucheng remained in Jiangbei.

"Mommy, I will come back and visit you often..." Fan Junior promised, then gave his mother three respectful bows before getting into the car to head to Jiangdong with Li Er.

It was a common parting scene, with promises and hopes of meeting again. However, sometimes that could be the last goodbye.

As time flew by, memories would fade and promises would be forgotten. All things had to come to an end.

On the way to Jiangdong, the luxurious car sped on the expressway at full speed in the dark.

Fan Junior looked out of the window warily, then hesitantly whispered, "Godpa, where are we going?"

"We are going home," Li Er replied.





"But I just left home!" The little fella was puzzled.

Li Er shook his head. "That is not your home! Jiangdong is your real home, the home that your daddy built for you."

"Daddy? What is his name?" The little boy repeated that unfamiliar word. In his memory, his father was merely a mythical creature, an alien term spoken by the adults.

"His name is Chu Tianfan. Remember that, my boy. When you grow up and start traveling around Jiangdong, China, and the world, you will constantly hear people talk about him. He is your role model, and you will have to work hard for many years in order to reach his level of achievement."

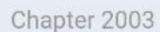
"However, we believe someday you will attain greater heights than him. You must do that, as you have to finish your dad's unfinished work. Only you can do that!" Li Er replied firmly, with a determined look in his eyes.

As he spoke, the old man's mind flashed back to that bloody evening, and those cold, evil faces.

Chu Sect, you caused Mr. Chu's death, but thankfully he left us his heir. Your glorious days will not last. Just wait and see. It may take ten







years or even twenty years, but someday, his son will lead Dragon God Hall down the same path and fulfill his dad's dreams. Everyone in Jiangdong will be behind him!

Li Er clenched his fist so tightly that his nails dug into his flesh. His intense hatred for Chu Sect burned as he recalled the death of Ye Fan. He was determined to protect Ye Fan's son, come what may.

The boy was their last hope, the last spark that could set the world ablaze, just like what Ye Fan had envisioned in his Operation Ablaze.

By the lakeside of Westlake at Livingsfill, the beautiful scenery was the inspiration for many romance and legends. Its last legend was also about to unfold.

After Fan Junior left, Qiu Mucheng lost the will to survive. She stopped going to work and did not bother to cook or take interest in her normal activities.

She mindlessly roamed the street, her eyes dulled and her pretty face showing only sorrow and gloom.

The reason she refused to go back to Jiangdong was that she felt guilty. She could not face the elders in there, especially Ye Fan's parents.





She had never shared with the three men about what happened between Ye Fan and her during her chat with them earlier. She only updated them on what happened after his departure.

She did not breathe a word to them about her relationship with Ye Fan and the issues they faced in their marriage.

As the years passed by, she was getting disillusioned about their life together. She even suspected that Ye Fan had never loved her. Otherwise, he would not have left for Chu Sect so decisively. He did not discuss it with her beforehand and did not even bid her goodbye before traveling by himself to Mount Chumen. He knew fully well that it was a trip filled with danger and risk, and that he might not make it back alive. Yet he left without a word.

She was disappointed with him and felt he did not value her or their relationship.

It was only after speaking to the three men and Chen Nan that she realized how wrong she was.

Without ever expecting any credits, her foolish husband had quietly done so much for her.

Just like what Chen Nan had said, he was her protector while he was alive, and continued to be her guardian angel even after death. What





more could a wife ask for in a man?

She deserved to be called a selfish woman because she had never tried to understand her man nor give him any support in his career. After his death, she immediately left Jiangdong with no thoughts of staying on to guard his establishment and take care of his family, especially his mother.

She was neither a good wife nor a good daughter-in-law. She felt like a total failure. Ye Fan was constantly worried for her, but she had misunderstood him for so many years and bore grudges against him.

"I am sorry, Ye Fan..." Qiu Mucheng, dressed in white, stood by Westlake and sobbed.

The fiery red sun was a stark contrast against the calm waters. It was another evening and another sunset. She wondered if the scene was the same on that fateful day when Ye Fan died.

She looked up and looked straight at the setting sun. At that moment, the past flashed before her eyes.

She recalled how Ye Fan gave her a firm commitment at their cousin's engagement party, promising that he would not let her suffer any grievances.





She also remembered the time when she had knelt in front of the Shen residence in the rain, begging for forgiveness from Young Master Shen. Ye Fan went over furiously and chided her for her stupidity.

All their times together played back in her mind like a slideshow and reminded her they had stuck together for richer and for poor, and through good and bad times. They had their fair share of laughter together but were also there to console each other during times of sorrow.

Alas, all the good and tough times were in the past, and her man was no longer there with her. She couldn't help but sob at that thought.

Lost in her memories and staring blankly into the distance, she murmured, "I miss you, Ye Fan..."

With that, she slowly closed her eyes and took a step forward, into the Westlake.

Whoosh...

Suddenly, a gust of wind came up...





Ripples radiated across the calm Westlake and back. Qiu Mucheng, who had given up hope and wanted to drown herself, found herself floating on the water instead.

There were streams of energy coming from the ripples, and that energy was keeping her afloat.

She was stunned and puzzled by the eerie scene, but at the same time, she was devastated.

"Why? Why won't you let me go to Ye Fan? Why do you let me live on in suffering in this world?" Qiu Mucheng started wailing.

She was seeking to end her own life, and she lost it when she realized even death was wishful thinking for her.

"If you do not even fear death, then why do you fear sufferings?" A deep voice asked as Qiu Mucheng was crying her eyes out.

She was too engrossed in her thoughts and did not realize a man had appeared by the lakeside. He was dressed in a long gray coat, was wellbuilt, and had a stern look. He looked like a middle-aged man who had been through a lot in life.

Watching her as she cried, he suddenly waved his arm, and an unbelievable phenomenon





happened. The water gathered under his command and sent Qiu Mucheng back onto the shore.

Stunned beyond words, the latter stared raptly at the man. She was usually a cautious lady who kept a wary eye on strangers. For reasons unknown to her, she had a sense of familiarity with that man. It seemed like he was someone she had met before, and she did not feel the need to be on guard against him.

"Who... who are you? Have we met before?" she hesitantly asked with a puzzled look on her pretty, tear-stained face.

The man laughed out loud. "You may not know me, but I know you. You are Qiu Mucheng, right?"

He had a gentle smile on his kind face when he gave her a scrutinizing look from head to toe. Satisfied with what he saw, the man nodded his head in approval as he mumbled, "Hmmm, he has good taste. Very pretty indeed! He did not disappoint me."

Qiu Mucheng frowned and instantly became wary. "What do you want?"

The man chuckled again. "Why? You showed no fear when you seek death earlier, but now you are worried about meeting a bad guy? If I kill





you, wouldn't I be doing you a favor? You were courting death anyway, so I save you some trouble."

Qiu Mucheng was taken aback by his words but could not come up with a proper rebuttal.

"Hmm... Why do young people like you resort to suicide so casually? That jerk did it, and you did it. When can I stop worrying about you youngsters?" The man let out an exasperated sigh.

Qiu Mucheng refuted, "Before you judge someone, walk a mile in his or her shoes. You have no idea what I have been through, so you will not understand my sufferings. You have no right to be judgmental. If you have no other business here, please leave. What I do is none of your concern."

With that, she turned around and ignored the strange man.

However, he had no intention of leaving. He shook his head and laughed. "Sufferings? What do you know about suffering at this young age? The worst you have faced are merely relationship problems; that is nothing."

He smilingly made light of her problems, as if the sufferings she had been through were merely minor irritants in life.





Qiu Mucheng chose to ignore him. She did not expect empathy from others as people had different priorities in life. What might seem like the end of the world to someone could be a non-issue for another person.

"What is most heartbreaking in a relationship is being parted forever by death. What if I tell you the person you cared about is still alive?" the man continued.

That successfully stopped Qiu Mucheng in her track. She immediately turned around and stared at the man in astonishment. Little did she expect he knew what her problem was.

"What did you say? Who is still alive?" She had to confirm what she had just heard.

"Who else can I be talking about? Of course it is your man, Ye Fan!"

Boom!

The man's reply was like a bombshell, leaving her in bewilderment.

Shocked by his words, she started trembling uncontrollably. "W-Who are you? How did you know about Ye Fan?"

"You don't have to know who I am. You only have to know that I am here to present you with



an opportunity to choose. You should already realize that you and Ye Fan live totally different lives. The world is his stage, and his life involves constant battles. On the other hand, you have a simple life like most commoners. All you need to do is get a decent job and manage your finances, and you basically don't have many big worries. At this rate, even if Ye Fan is still alive, the two of you will drift further apart. Your relationship will not last for long," he said.

Qiu Mucheng's eyes dimmed, and she bowed dejectedly upon hearing his blunt but honest assessment.

She couldn't agree more with him. Ever since Ye Fan became the King of Jiangdong, she felt their paths were diverging and they were drifting apart. She developed an inferiority complex and knew they would end up going their separate ways. Even if they were together physically, they did not have many common interests or connections.

"If you wish to continue living a simple life, then forget what I said and pretend you never met me today. However, if you desire to pursue a different path and catch up with Ye Fan, then come with me. Please be assured I mean you no harm. If I have bad intentions, I can easily harm you anytime. I would not have spent so much time analyzing the situation with you."





gazing intently at her as he spoke.

After that, he waited for her to make her decision in silence.

Qiu Mucheng fell into deep thoughts. After a long while, she looked up and said, "I just want to know if Ye Fan is really still alive."

The man nodded. "Of course, you silly girl. Don't you remember when they conducted his burial, his body was not in the coffin?"

"Then why did he not come for me?" she asked, her eyes reddened with sadness.

"Come for you? Why would he do that? You cannot even take care of yourself, so what can you do for him? If he came looking for you, he might do you more harm. Don't you realize that fool has always done his best to protect you and shield you from harm? To him, you are a delicate flower that needs to be kept in a safe greenhouse. The problems he must deal with and overcome are beyond you. He does not want to get you involved and to be honest, you can't handle that as well."

Although the man's words were harsh, he was right, and Qiu Mucheng could not refute him. Deep in her heart, she knew she was not capable and constantly needed help and protection from others.





"All right! I will go with you!" She clenched her fists. There was a look of determination and pride in her eyes.

The man nodded approvingly at her decision. "Okay. Let's go back and get the little fella."

"Little fella?" Qiu Mucheng was confused.

"The little fella of yours and Ye Fan! Are you thinking of leaving him behind and letting him become an orphan? We can't depend on his father to bring him up, so I have to take over that responsibility." The man finally revealed his true intention.

The main purpose of his trip to Jiangbei was to get Qiu Mufan. He knew descendants of the Chu family would be genetically blessed with immense potential. In order for Fan Junior to realize his full potential, he would need to be given the proper training and guidance as soon as possible.

As for the grooming he had promised Qiu Mucheng earlier, it was just a complimentary offer that he could easily make.

"It is too late. I have sent him away," she replied.

"W-What? You sent my grand... I mean the little fella away! Who took him?" The man's eyes widened in shock.





"I can't tell you who took him. I entrusted him to people Ye Fan trusted, so you don't have to worry about him. If you are eyeing my son, then you can forget it." Compared to the mysterious man, Qiu Mucheng trusted Li Er, Lei San, and Chen Ao more.

She agreed to go with him as she had nothing more to lose. However, she would never let that child go with a stranger.

Although he was not her own flesh and blood, their bond was strong after those few years together. The love she had for him was no different from any other mother had for her child.

She barely knew that mysterious man who had appeared out of nowhere. Although she did not mind taking the risk to go with him in the hope that she could grow to be a better partner for Ye Fan, she would never allow Qiu Mufan to do the same.

That man nearly fainted from shock when he heard the bad news, upset that he would not get to see his own grandchild.

"Forget it. It is not meant to be. The little fella will be fine there. After all, his dad is there and it is always good for a son to grow up with his own dad." Although he was disappointed, the man did not kick up a big fuss over missing out





on getting the boy. He decided to leave with only Qiu Mucheng.

Before they left, he made her take a good look around the place.

"Take one last look at this place as a commoner. When you come back again, you will be a different person and will see things differently!" he said. He knew that as people grew, their perspectives changed. He was positive her worldview would be very different in the future.

"How committed are you to your decision? There are always two sides to a coin. An opportunity comes with its fair share of hardship. It takes lots of hard work to turn a piece of metal into a sword. Similarly, a plant must endure the harsh winter before it can spring into life again in spring. I am about to take you to the top but let me forewarn you that the journey there will be tough and painful. You can still back out of it now if you wish to." The man counseled her like a fatherly figure.

After that, as before, he stood with his hands behind his back and gazed at her intently as he waited for her reply patiently.

That time, it did not take long for Qiu Mucheng to reply. "I am ready!" she said without a hint of hesitation.





With that, she went with the man, leaving Westlake, leaving Livingsfill, and leaving Jiangbei behind.

When she turned around to take a last look at that familiar place, all she could see in her mind was her man.

Wait and see, Ye Fan. I will impress you when I come back! I will stand taller than you and have greater achievements than you. I will make sure I am always above you and will always be your boss!

Qiu Mucheng left without giving notice to anyone, so no one knew what had happened to her.

Of course, Ye Fan, who was far away in India, knew nothing about what had happened in Jiangbei.

After he ended his solitary training, Noa made him go to the mall with her to buy some clothes for Geetha.

That was but an excuse to get him to the mall. Whenever they passed a shop selling men's clothing, she would force him to go in and try on the clothes.

"That is favoritism, Noa! You said you wanted to get me nice clothes, but all you do is look at





clothes for Sir!" Geetha scoffed and expressed his displeasure.

Noa gave him a loving rub on his head and consoled him. She promised to get clothes for him after they were done with Ye Fan's shopping.

Ye Fan gratefully accepted her kind arrangement. During the long period of solitary training, his grooming took a back seat, and he knew he looked disheveled and sloppy. It was about time for him to change into some new clothes.

"Oh my! You are good-looking!" Noa was stunned by the transformation a set of nice clothes did to Ye Fan. Once again, she became a little fangirl and started staring at him dreamily.

She had known him for quite a while, but during all that time, Ye Fan had always been casual in his dressing and grooming. He cared more for comfort and opted for the most basic and minimal.

He impressed people with his skills and abilities, and people did not take note of other things about him.

After a makeover by Noa, his stunning good looks was revealed.





"I am doomed..." Noa's face turned red with embarrassment upon realizing she was drooling over him. She quickly covered her face with her palm and turned away, knowing she was falling for him.

Ye Fan was puzzled by her reaction. He scratched his head in confusion. "What a strange woman."

Going on a shopping trip with a woman was a tiring affair for guys. After a few hours, Geetha was exhausted and could not walk anymore. At the end of the day, Ye Fan had to give him a piggyback ride home.

"Hmph! You said we are going shopping for my clothes. In the end, you bought so many for Sir but only one for me! I am not going to go out with you in the future!" Geetha pouted, looking terribly upset at his meager reward after a long tiring evening.

Noa and Ye Fan laughed, tickled by his adorable childish reaction.

Ye Fan stayed for dinner after sending the boy home.

After dinner, Noa said, "I have prepared a room for you, Ye Fan. It is just next to mine, so you can always come to me if you need anything." Her pretty face was turning red from shyness

as she said that.

"Thank you, Noa, but I shall not bother you. I am heading back to Elysian Hall to visit Junie." Ye Fan gave her a sweet smile and replied.

"Oh? You are not staying for the night?" She sounded disappointed.

He shook his head. "No. I am running short of time. I have to leave after settling some matters."

"But... an extra night won't make much of a difference, right?" Noa looked ravishing that evening because she had made special efforts to dress up and put on some makeup after dinner.

She wore her favorite three-leaf clover earrings. The matching necklace complemented her fair smooth complexion.

The white silk dress that she was wearing showed off her long legs and slender figure, enhancing her beauty.

Her style of dressing was simple, but she had in fact invested a lot of effort to put forth her best face. Alas, all that was wasted on the clueless Ye Fan.

Blind to the pleading look in her eyes, he held

his ground and insisted on leaving.

"Ye Fan, you dumbhead! How annoying!" She could not help but grumble in anger as she watched him leave. She looked adorable even when she was angry, but Ye Fan would never notice that.

He did not know how she felt about him, and he had no wish to spend time on such matters. His mind was set on his mission. He needed to settle the outstanding matters in India quickly as he couldn't wait to begin the final stage of Operation Ablaze.

Over at Elysian Hall, all the members were gathered for a special occasion.

"Ms. Junie, you have broken the law, so you ought to kneel before the altar and receive your punishment!"

"Please kneel to accept your punishment!"

The hall was brightly lit, and all the members had gathered there. The elders were all present, and so were the juniors.

Their eyes were on the person in front of them. That was Junie, the Elysian Master.

She had a tough time after taking up the appointment. The elders did not give her full

Chapter 2005

respect and would only selectively execute those orders that were to their advantage.

Moreover, they kept a close eye on her with the discipline master constantly breathing down her neck. He constantly cited antiquated laws to stop her from doing what she wanted.

He strictly enforced the rules laid down by their forefathers decades ago and meted out punishment accordingly when anyone broke the law.

Those elders caught Junie making a mistake and insisted on her being punished.

Junie was prepared to accept the punishment, knowing she had breached the regulations. However, she could not understand their insistence on making it a public display of disciplinary action.

Exasperated, she turned pleadingly to a few of the elders and asked, "I was thinking..., can't we do this in private? After all, I am the head of Elysian Hall. The juniors will lose respect for me if they see me being punished. How do you expect me to command their loyalty and make them work for us?"

"No! Rules apply equally to everyone! Even the grandmaster will have to abide by the rules! These are regulations set by our ancestors and



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Chapter 2005

ancient masters. No one shall disrespect them. So please kneel and accept your punishment, Ms. Junie." The discipline master rejected her outright.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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As the Elysian Master of Punishment came forward, his whole body exuded a terrifying aura.

"No one is above the law! Even the king of a nation is subjected to the same laws as a commoner!"

"You should be punished since you broke the law. There's no bargaining your way out of it."

"Otherwise, who will heed your orders in the future?"

The rest of the Elysian Masters agreed and showed their support for the Master of Punishment. They wanted Junie to plead guilty.

As they made their so-called requests, these elders exuded overwhelming pressure over her.

Their combined aura hit Junie like a tidal wave.

It looked like they were all forcing her to accept the punishment that could lead to her death.

She was weak in terms of cultivation and became a member of the Dragon God Hall solely because of her medical skills.

Gasping for breath, her face paled from facing the coercion of several Grandmasters.

There's no other choice. I don't have any other way to change their mind since they choose to forget about our past camaraderie.

"All right. I'll kneel!"

Junie gritted her teeth and finally gave in.

I'm all alone. None of the elders are on my side even though I'm an Elysian Master and head of the sect. I can't contend against them.

She turned around and faced the wall of memorial tablets belonging to the sect's ancestors and ancient masters.

The Master of Punishment took his position behind her with a rod in his hand.

According to the sect's law, an Elysian Master would have to kneel in front of the memorial tablets as penance while enduring the pelting on the back.

Just when Junie was about to go on her knees, a chilling voice halted her from outside the Elysian Hall.

"I want to know which bas***d dares to make my Junie kneel."

He was challenging every member present.

Chapter 2006

The surroundings fell into a dead silence the minute he spoke.

"Who is it? Who dares to barge into our sacred site? Guards, get the intruder!"

The stupefied members snapped out of their daze at the sudden order.

Anger stirred within the elder who had instructed the guards to capture the intruder.

However, a mighty blast of Qi hit the guards the second they stepped foot outside the hall. The impact threw them off their feet.

"T-This..."

"What's going on?"

"What happened?"

Everyone was horrified because they didn't even catch a glimpse of the man.

The intruder hasn't even reached the hall, so how did he hurl the guards off their feet?

Amidst their surprise and panic, a gust of wind had gained momentum.

A lean figure had appeared out of nowhere from among the curtain of flying rocks and

sands.

The man's stance resembled a spear pointing at the sky.

His handsome face was devoid of emotion despite looking like a commoner from afar.

Yet, everyone in the hall knew better. A turbulent force was surging beneath the man's calm demeanor.

"It's you!"

"C-Chu Tianfan!"

Ye Fan's show of power had destroyed the arrogance of the sect's awe-inspiring elders.

The aura that the grandmasters used to pressure Junie immediately dissipated as their insolent faces froze when they realized the intruder was Ye Fan.

Fear began to sprout within the elders' bellies and slithered up their spines, choking them with a sense of dread.

If the elders were experiencing such discomfort, one could imagine the suffering of those rookies inexperienced in the martial arts world.

Chapter 2006

The unfledged disciples fell on their knees as an excruciating pressure crushed them. It etched lines of pain across their faces as they tried to oppose the immense weight.

The sight was like a scene where the citizens welcomed their emperor.

"Ye Fan!"

Among the crowd, only Junie was smiling.

She had thrown all the laws and whatnots of the sect out of the window the second she saw him.

She dashed toward Ye Fan like a crazed fangirl, disregarding her image as the head of the sect and leapt into his embrace.

Resigned, Ye Fan caught her with open arms.

He had wanted to act cool with his hands behind his back like those heroes from the movies.

Junie's excitement exaggerated her movement. She wrapped her legs tightly around Ye Fan's waist, and her arms circled his neck.

Their posture was too intimate to be seen in public.

The members of Elysian Hall were stunned and enraged by the sight.

Is that the same goddess of our dreams? The dignified Elysian Master? The unreachable idol whom we could only admire from afar? She's burrowing herself into a man's embrace like a child.

They were furious at their own incompetence that they couldn't have Junie leap into their embrace as she did with Ye Fan.

However, anger stirred within the elders for another reason.

"This is a sin!"

"She's committing a sin!"

"She will be a disgrace to the Elysian Faction sooner or later."

The elderly men were too embarrassed to look at the duo.

"Ms. Junie, please exercise some self-respect!"

"Don't forget that you're the Elysian Master and not those wild girls outside!" The Master of Punishment couldn't bear to look any longer.

Despite how much the men complained and

admonished, their crude comments fell on deaf ears.

"It has only been six months since we last met. Do you have to be this excited? All right, get down now."

Ye Fan felt tortured from holding such a beauty in his embrace.

Regardless of his torment, he still peeked. "Not bad. They grew bigger."

Junie got off Ye Fan and stuck her chest with pride. "Of course! I won't lose to anyone else."

Maybe Huangniu's words from earlier had dealt a blow to her ego.

She was unwilling to admit defeat toward Duanmu Wan'er in certain areas.

"This is a sin."

Junie's frivolous action fanned the flames of fury within the elders.

No, we have to stop her! We can't let her continue with this farce or she might have a baby with Ye Fan on the spot. Members of the Elysian Hall practice freeing themselves from any desires. The requirement for an Elysian Master is stricter. They must live a life of

chastity, especially one like Junie. If she has a baby with a random man, it will ruin the reputation of the Elysian Hall.

"Ms. Junie, the ancestors and ancient masters of our sect is right in front of you."

"Are you planning to disobey them and your late master down?"

"Please come forward to accept your punishment according to our laws."

The elders began to use her predecessor to threaten her.

Even though Junie was a free spirit, she was still compelled to obey the wishes of her late master because she owed him her gratitude.

It was a cheap but effective move to get her to behave.

After she got off Ye Fan, Junie sighed. "I'll talk to you later after my punishment."

Despite her dislike of those old codgers, she knew she had broken the sect's law.

To be fair, they were just doing their job by enforcing the law.

However, Ye Fan stopped her.

"Chu Tianfan, this is an internal affair. It has nothing to do with you."

"You have to be reasonable no matter how domineering you are."

"Ms. Junie is willing to accept her punishment. Who are you to stop her?" The elders began to reprimand Ye Fan when he stopped Junie.

They were cautious and didn't have a good impression of him.

Now that Ye Fan was getting involved with their sect's internal affairs, they were more averse toward him.

"Who said I don't have the right? Junie is a member of the Dragon God Hall, and I'm its Hall Master. In other words, she belongs to me. Who can or dares to punish her but me?" he scoffed.

"You!"

Ye Fan's defiance had aggravated their anger.

They wanted nothing more than to summon a lightning bolt to strike the barbaric man.

However, the elders weren't dumb. They knew they couldn't defeat him in combat, so they decided to ignore him.

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Chapter 2006

"Ms. Junie, the late master's memorial tablet is sitting up there. Do you truly plan to disappoint his high hopes for you? Please, come and receive your punishment on your own accord."

The Elysian Master of Punishment looked at Junie.

All eyes were on her as they awaited her decision.

She let out another sigh.

"It's fine, Ye Fan. It was my fault and I'm accountable for my mistake. They're just upholding the law for the sect's benefit. I'll just go over there and kowtow a few times. It's just a formality. I won't get hurt."

Junie assured Ye Fan before she went to accept her punishment.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Junie did not want to burn bridges since she knew Ye Fan had her best interests at heart.

However, the elders were not in the wrong either because they simply wanted to defend the sect.

In the end, Junie convinced herself that she was the one to be blamed, and naturally, she would have to pay for her mistake.

At the urging of the elders, she eventually knelt before the ancestors' and ancient masters' memorial tablets.

"Get me the rod!" roared the Master of Punishment before somebody hurriedly handed him a rod made with special materials.

Then, he lifted the instrument and was ready to swing it at Junie's back in front of everyone in the hall.

"That's going to hurt," commented someone in the crowd.

Junie's face immediately turned into a grimace when she heard the Master of Punishment inhale deeply.

Since she spent most of her time studying medicine, Junie did not care much about her cultivation.

Chapter 2007

Hence, she feared she would feel the full extent of the pain her punisher was going to dish out with the rod.

With gritted teeth and eyes shut tight, she braced herself for the imminent burning sensation.

Thud!

Unexpectedly, the woman did not feel anything at all.

The sound coming from behind sounded like the rod had hit something hard.

"Huh? What's going on?" When Junie turned around to see what had happened, the rod was already on the floor. As for the Master of Punishment, he grunted before staggering a few steps back.

"Ye-Ye Fan?" Junie was shocked, for she never thought Ye Fan would defend her. Not only did the man disarm the Master of Punishment, but he also drove the elder back.

Sensing that the man had made a mistake, Junie quickly dissuaded him from interfering. "Ye Fan, I'm fine. You don't have to worry about me. This is just a formality. I—"

"You shut up!" rebuked Ye Fan suddenly.

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Chapter 2007

"Formality? The guy's about to swing that specialized rod with his Qi, and you call that formality? He's basically trying to spit on your name and injure your body too! If I hadn't stepped in, that rod would've split your skin open!"

Since Ye Fan rarely lashed out at Junie like that, she was stunned after listening to him.

Just when she was about to say something in response, the latter cut her off again.

"You're to shut up, remember? From this moment on, I'll be the one who does the talking while you stay behind me and be silent. Another word from you, and I'll toss you out of here!" Ye Fan scolded Junie like he would a subordinate.

In all the years they had known each other, he seldom talked to her so sternly.

Even to Gaius and the others, Ye Fan hardly ever spoke in that tone.

Since he had nothing but love for her, Junie never even knew the man was capable of raising his voice at her.

Naturally, she was mortified to witness his fury first-hand.

After getting rebuked, Junie dared not to make

Chapter 2007

a sound because she was too terrified to even lift her head to look at Ye Fan.

"What do you think you're doing, Chu Tianfan?"

"Do you think you have the right to meddle in our internal affairs?"

"You insolent brute!"

"Ms. Junie violated the rules and so deserved to be punished. Even she, herself, thinks so."

"Who are you to step in?"

"Don't think we're afraid of you just because you're powerful."

"Cross us again, and we'll come down on you with everything we've got, including our lives!"

The elders were offended when they saw how the intruder had rudely interrupted Junie's punishment. What Ye Fan did was unreasonable and disrespectful! What right does an outsider like him have to interfere in our matters? Besides, Junie was ready to accept her punishment. Who is he to deny her that?

In response to the elders' scolding, Ye Fan simply sneered, "What a joke! Junie is a member of the Dragon God Hall, and I'm the

Chapter 2007

Hall Master. That means she belongs to me! And you think you lot have the right to punish my people?"

"But she's the head of Elysian Hall, so she's bound by our rules!" shouted an Elysian Hall member.

"F*ck your rules? I, Chu Tianfan, am the ruler!
Only I can punish my people; nobody else! Even
if Junie wants to kneel to you, she can't do so
without my permission. And if anybody's got a
problem with that, they can take it up with me,"
Ye Fan declared arrogantly with a fierce glare.

With that, he released an aura so intense that the ground shook, forcing the elders to take several steps back.

Nobody had expected the sudden turn of events to occur.

All those who were observant enough could tell that punishing Junie was no longer possible as long as Ye Fan was present.

However, the elders would not stand for it. Not only are we forced to let Ye Fan get away scotfree, but we also have to give Junie up too?

No matter what, they refused to let Ye Fan have it his way, so they turned to glare at Junie. "Is this part of your plan all along, Ms. Junie?"

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"As the head of Elysian Hall, not only did you violate our rules, but now you're also working with an outsider to defy your own people and disrespect your elders?"

"How would the late Elysian Masters think of you if they knew how rebellious you are?"

"What you're doing brings nothing but shame to our sect!"

"Have you no shame, Ms. Junie?"

"Hmph!"

"I hope you know what you're doing because we have nothing else to say to you."

Furious, the elders scolded Junie one after another. She is siding with an outsider instead of her elders and working with him to bully and humiliate us. If word of this ever gets out, our entire sect will become a laughingstock!

After venting their anger, they turned around and were ready to leave.

"Hold up! Did I say you could leave?" questioned Ye Fan coldly, stopping the elders dead in their tracks.

"Ye Fan, what do you say we just let this go?" Worried that the situation would get out of

Chapter 2007

hand, Junie tried to stop the man once again. The elders may not be very likable, but they don't harbor ill intentions. Besides, we're all in the same sect. I'd rather not see anybody get hurt.

"What did I say just now? Did I permit you to speak?" asked Ye Fan rhetorically, forcing Junie to pipe down and retreat behind the man with her head lowered.

"What more do you want, Chu Tianfan? Do you intend to kill us, your close confidante's elders?" inquired the elders impatiently after turning back around to face the Dragon God Hall Master.

As if they were confident that Ye Fan would not dare do anything reckless to them, the elders showed no sign of fear in their tone of voice.

That was because they were not only Junie's allies but also the elders of Elysian Hall. Ye Fan wouldn't dare try anything as long as Junie's one of us.

However, the elders had overestimated the importance of their position.

Just because Ye Fan cared about Junie did not mean he felt the same way about Elysian Hall.

In response to their arrogant words, Ye Fan

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Chapter 2007

simply ordered, "Kneel before me now!"

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The man's roar was so commanding that the elders were instantly forced to get on their knees; no one was excepted.



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"Chu Tianfan, how dare you..."

"You're getting out of line!"

The elders all let out a low growl of anger at Ye Fan, furious that Ye Fan made them do something so humiliating. We've never even knelt before Ms. Junie, and now we have to do it to him?

To them, there was nothing more shameful than getting on their knees for an outsider.

"I'm getting out of line? What about you? How dare you lay a finger on Junie!" retorted Ye Fan without a second thought.

"That's nonsense! Ms. Junie is only getting punished because she violated our rules. We have every reason to give our Master her due."

"Not only did you step out of line when you interrupted us, but now you wish to twist the truth as well?"

"If word of your actions ever gets out, the world will know how arrogant and unreasonable you are! I think they'd agree with us that we're the ones getting bullied."

Even though the elders were forced into a position of humility, they remained defiant.

Chapter 2008

"What a joke! Do you think this is me bullying you? Why would I do that when I can kill you all without breaking a sweat? The only reason you're still alive is that I'm determined to unmask you hypocrites!

"You gather in large numbers to deliberately put Junie in a difficult position so that you can punish and humiliate her in front of all your sect members. You said that you were only doing this because she violated your rules, but I know you only wanted to undermine her just so you could take full control of Elysian Hall. You're all just a bunch of scheming old snakes who claimed to be upholding your rules. Do you think you can fool me with your false sense of justice? You people have no shame!" explained Ye Fan while staring coldly at the elders.

He gave the elders no quarter and outright exposed them, shining a light on the truth.

Since the previous head of Elysian Hall had appointed Junie, her position was basically indisputable.

However, none of the elders liked the idea of a weak woman leading the sect, so they had been plotting on manipulating her as their puppet.

Junie's mistake was minor and only warranted punishment in private, but the elders

Chapter 2008

deliberately made a big deal out of it by gathering everyone in the sect to observe the thrashing.

Their only intention was to undermine Junie and make themselves look good by pretending to be strict but fair.

If the elders managed to pull off the punishment in front of all the sect members, it would not be long before they got what they wanted.

Nobody had any idea that the elders were such a devious lot, except for Ye Fan. Having dealt with all kinds of people for the past decade, the man had learned to tell if others had ulterior motives.

After being exposed like that, the hypocritical elders immediately fell dead silent.

Feeling the weight of their guilt, the elders kept their heads and dared not to utter another word.

"Did you really think that Junie was all alone, and she had nobody to protect her? Then let me remind you that she still has the entire Dragon God Hall and me backing her. You will all pay for trying to take advantage of somebody who belongs with me!" Ye Fan's roar was so fierce that it immediately turned everyone's face pale

as a sheet.

Petrified, the elders widened their eyes at Ye Fan in shock, for none of them thought that the man would be reckless enough to kill them. How can he be so unsparing! After all, we're like brothers to Junie. "Junie, please! You have to save us!"

At that moment, Ye Fan had already summoned his infinite energy and condensed it into several Qi blades.

The aura emanating from the man was so intense and fearsome that none even dared to take him on.

Hence, the elders had no choice but to put their hope on the woman hiding behind Ye Fan.

"Junie, we're like family, are we not? Are you really going to just let him kill us? If we die, Elysian Hall will be doomed!"

"It wasn't personal. We were just trying to do what was best for the sect. Please! For the sake of ancestors, save us!"

The elders were so terrified that they almost peed their pants, for they knew the man ranked number one on the Sky Ranking was ready to unleash his wrath.

(i) X

Chapter 2008

Ye Fan could kill a Supreme whenever he wanted to, much less the elders, whose strongest was merely a Grandmaster.

If any of them decided to take Ye Fan head-on, they would be obliterated.

Seeing how pitiable the elders were, Junie eventually caved and so stepped forward to pull at Ye Fan's shirt.

Some could communicate without saying a word. All they needed to do was take one look, and they would know exactly what the other person was thinking.

That was the case between Ye Fan and Junie. The man only had to take one look at Junie before he let out a sigh.

"They're nobody. Why does it matter if they live or not?"

To Ye Fan, the elders were less than insects.

Except for the fine woman before him, Ye Fan never cared about anyone in Elysian Hall.

"Ye Fan, please just give them another chance. They only did what they did because they had the sect's best interests at heart." Junie knew the elders did not mean to harm her and that they were just unhappy to have a young woman

Chapter 2008

like her lead the sect.

"Gosh, what am I going to do with you? Fine. I'll listen to you and spare these dogs their lives." Finally, Ye Fan was persuaded to spare the men.

He continued, "But let me make myself clear.
I'm only letting you live because of Junie. If I
ever find out that you're getting any ideas again,
nobody will be able to stop me from wiping you
all from the face of the earth! Do you
understand?" His threat caused the elders to
shake in their boots.

Relieved that Ye Fan had changed his mind about killing them, the elders immediately promised that they would not bully Junie ever again.

"Well? What are you lot still standing there for?"

With a wave of his arm, Ye Fan sent a burst of Qi in the elders' way and swept them off their feet.

Still, they dared not to say anything to offend the man. Instead, they hurriedly got back on their feet and took off, especially the Master of Punishment and his fellow elders.

What was supposed to be an empowering moment for them ended up being a humiliating

Chapter 2008

one.

"This is a miscalculation on our part. Who would've thought that Junie would be someone so important to Chu Tianfan!"

The elders never expected Ye Fan to care about Junie so much since he, ranked number one on the Sky Ranking, could have had anyone he wanted. Doesn't he have a thing going on with the Moon God, so why would he care about Junie? There are many women out there who are way more desirable than her.

At first, the elders thought Junie was nothing but a side chick to Ye Fan, but they were proven wrong in the end. There's definitely something going on between Chu Tianfan and Junie, something we don't know about.

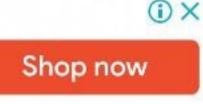
"Can't you be a little bit more considerate? How am I supposed to react when you put me in such an awkward position?" After seeing how Ye Fan chased away her sect members like dogs, Junie furrowed her eyebrows tightly.

To her, it felt like the man thought of Elysian Hall as nothing more than a horde of lowlifes that he could do whatever he wanted.

"They're just a bunch of snakes. What? Do you expect me to treat them like royalties? I can tell you that there's not a lot in this world who can



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Chapter 2008

claim to have topped me," stated Ye Fan with a smirk. The truth was he despised everyone in Elysian Hall except for Junie.

"What about me then? Do you think I can be on top of you?" Junie gazed at Ye Fan with her gorgeous pair of eyes and flirted with the man.

She had facial features so exquisite that they could put the moon and stars to shame.



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