

Whether it was the Chu family members or the elders of the Chu Sect, everyone's last memory of Chu Yuan was the fact that he was a general in his final days, a warrior who had been conquered by time.

Back then, it was without a shadow of a doubt that Chu Yuan was at death's door. The wrinkles etched in his face showed the years he had lived.

There was a world of difference between the frail man before and the Chu Yuan that stood before them now. Although his hair was still a chalky white, he looked like he had been rejuvenated, as if he had aged backward by twenty years.

It was hard to believe that the old man was approaching his hundredth birthday, which was precisely why no one could tell that he was Chu Yuan when he first appeared.

However, Ye Fan could recognize that face anywhere.

Thirteen years of torture and suffering could be boiled down to this one person.

Had it not been for him, Ye Fan and his mother would not have been cast out of the Chu family and lived those years in torment and humiliation.

The memory of the night they had been chased out of the Chu family was ingrained in Ye Fan's mind.

His biological father had remained silent for the entire process, kneeling subserviently at the side.

The rest of the Chu family had simply sat by and watched the whole ordeal, their contemptuous whispers screeching to Ye Fan's ears.

As for Chu Yuan, he had sat regally on his throne, where he could look down upon them.

Finally, with a heartless bellow, Ye Fan and his mother were banished from Mount Chumen.

There were some people who would haunt Ye Fan for life, and Chu Yuan was one of them.

Ye Fan had sensed the familiar aura Chu Yuan emanated the moment he exited the forbidden grounds.

Perhaps time could change one's appearance, but the soul was unalterable.

At present, the Chu family members had prostrated themselves on the ground in front of the forbidden grounds as they cried for help.

Chu Yuan slowly scanned his surroundings, taking in the dilapidated building and the littered compound. The Chu residence was not the lavish, pristine manor it once was.

Everywhere Chu Yuan turned, signs of desolation and devastation greeted him. The lawn was splattered with blood, and even the stone door to the forbidden grounds had been shattered to pieces.

The Chu residence did not look like it housed the most prominent family in the nation. Instead, it resembled the ruins of an annihilated tribe.

“What happened? What caused the downfall of the Chu family? Where’s Chu Zhenghong? Bring him to me! I left the Chu clan under his care, and this is what he does? If I hadn’t returned in time, the Chu family lineage would have ended in his hands!” Chu Yuan berated, livid. Although he was enigmatic and serene in nature, he lost his composure after seeing the disastrous state of the Chu family.

His orotund voice reverberated through the area like the rumble of thunder and shook Mount Chumen.

Chu Zhengliang was still on his knees, too scared to utter a word.

The Chu family elders were in the same servile position, their throats constricted in fear.

They were afraid that Chu Yuan would decapitate them all in anger.

“Speak!” Chu Yuan ordered.

Terrified, Chu Zhengliang and the rest still could not force the words out of their mouths. At this moment, a voice traveled from the front, devoid of emotion.

“There’s no need to ask them. This is all my doing. I was the one who ravaged the Chu residence and destroyed the forbidden grounds with a single blow. I am also the person who wants to eliminate the whole Chu clan!” A slender youth slowly emerged from the shadows as his clear voice cut through the still air.

Gaius and the others tensed instantly.

*The Dragon Master sure is admirable! He's unperturbed even though he's going against Chu Yuan, who was previously at the top of the Sky Ranking!*

"He's got guts."

"He probably doesn't even know what fear is."

Aaron's heart quivered after hearing Ye Fan's brazen words. His scalp prickled with trepidation.

Ye Fan had chosen those words specifically to provoke Chu Yuan, and it worked like a dream.

Chu Yuan's gaze fell upon Ye Fan for the first time since his arrival.

"You? Aren't you the one who received a blow from me? You must be quite good since you're still alive. With your ability, I wouldn't be surprised if you're deemed a Supreme martial artist in the current martial arts world. Although your capability is insignificant in my eyes, I am taken aback by how young you are," Chu Yuan remarked.

He continued, "You're not in your thirties yet, are you? Based on your olive skin and dark eyes, I'd assume you're from East Aploth. Tell me, who is your mentor? Where is he from, and who did he learn from? I am truly interested to know who else besides the Chu Sect is capable of cultivating a martial arts genius."

Although they had only fought briefly, Chu Yuan was astounded by Ye Fan.

What shocked Chu Yuan was not Ye Fan's martial prowess, but rather his young age and potential.

Chu Yuan was unafraid of any power on the face of this earth, as it was bound to be second to him.

However, the potential that the youth had demonstrated made him wary.

After hearing Chu Yuan's question, Ye Fan snickered.

"Who I learned my skills from? Sure, I'll tell you! What harm will it do? I, Chu Tianfan, have acquired all my knowledge of martial arts from Chu Yunyang, the progenitor of the Chu family!"

Chu Yuan was thunderstruck.

Despite the years of experience that had molded him into an inscrutable person, Chu Yuan's expression shifted when he heard Ye Fan's reply.

"Shut up! An ignorant child like you does not deserve to say the name of the Chu family's progenitor! How dare you say that you're Yunyang's disciple? The audacity! If you have the gall to taint the name of the Chu family ancestry, I will murder your whole family, massacre your clan, and slaughter all the generations that carry your blood!"

Chu Yuan was uncharacteristically furious. It felt like his religion had been blasphemed against and trampled underfoot.

After all, the Chu Yunyang whom Ye Fan had mentioned was the progenitor of the Chu family.

All the glory and prestige of the Chu family were attributable to Chu Yunyang.

He was the author of the chant “Invoke the Celestial Cloud,” which was the foundation of the Chu family's phenomenal powers that had been passed down for generations.

Chu Yunyang's munificence had nurtured dozens of generations. Even to this day, the results of his good work seeped into the Chu family members' lives.

Hence, Chu Yuan could not accept the fact that an outsider had claimed that the revered progenitor of the Chu family was his mentor.

Ye Fan's blatant claims brought dishonor to the Chu family, thus prompting Chu Yuan to declare that he would obliterate the offender's entire clan.

Ye Fan's grin grew broader when he heard Chu Yuan's vow. “Well then, be my guest. I would be thrilled if you followed through with your promise. In fact, it would be even better if you could exhume the corpses of all my ancestors and throw their remains into the sea,” Ye Fan said with a sardonic chuckle.

Ye Fan's response puzzled Chu Yuan.

*Does this boy have a few screws loose? It's my first-time hearing of a person who would beg me to dig up their ancestors' graves!*

Just as Chu Yuan was trying to grasp the situation, Chu Zhengliang timidly stuttered, “Dad, h-he's the illegitimate child of Zhenghong—the one



that you banished from the family. So, his ancestors are also our ancestors..." He trailed off, his tone bitter.

Chu Yuan was stunned.

"What did you say? You're telling me that he's the bastard child? The product of Zhenghong's affair with that pathetic village woman? How is that possible? The son of a village girl should have an inferior bloodline. It's impossible for him to possess such talent in martial arts!"

Chu Yuan was appalled to discover that the gifted young man before him was the disgrace of their family.

A myriad of emotions churned within him.



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Chu Yuan remembered well that embarrassing family fiasco from all those years ago.

In his lifetime, he had raised two sons, namely Chu Zhenghong and Chu Zhengliang.

Between them, Chu Zhengliang was the first to make a name for himself. Not only was he the most favored one in the hearts of the family elders, but he was also considered a role model for his contemporaries within his extended family for his generation.

Chu Zhenghong, though, was quite the polar opposite. Prodigious as he may be in the martial arts, he had been a rebel since young and a profligate ne'er doer who chose to squander his gifts in deference to indulgences in women and earthly pleasures.

In spite of that, it was the eldest son, Chu Zhenghong, who Chu Yuan nonetheless thought more highly of and pinned his own hopes upon.

Back in the day, Chu Yuan opined that he ought to leave his older boy to it for a few years under the assumption that the latter would eventually grow bored of that lifestyle. Once his son was ready to rein himself in, he would then have him summoned home to rededicate himself to his martial arts practice in preparation for his role in the continuance of their family's legacy.

What Chu Yuan had not counted on was for Chu Zhenghong to bring home a woman from the countryside when it was all said and done.

Not only that, he had even conceived a child with



that socially inferior person!

To make matters worse, he had also requested for Chu Yuan to accept that country girl into the family, as well as to formally recognize Chu Tianfan as the eldest grandchild of the Chu family.

There was never going to be any question that Chu Yuan was livid when he learned about all this.

The notion of the future mistress of the house of Chu, the most wealthy and illustrious of all the prominent families, being a woman of common birth, was unpalatable to him.

What he found to be even more unacceptable, was the prospect of eventually ceding leadership of the family to an illegitimate child from a less than stellar lineage.

Of course, Chu Yuan was not ready to be too overt with his own opposition and tolerated putting up the mother and son pair of Ye Fan at the Chu residence in exchange for Chu Zhenghong's commitment to his training.

At the same time, Chu Yuan went on to facilitate meetings to acquaint Chu Zhenghong with various royal princesses, wealthy heiresses, and progenies of martial families.

In consideration of his own son's philandering ways, he refused to believe that any of these beauties from affluent backgrounds could be outshone by some random country girl and that none of them would be able to capture his son's heart.

Chu Yuan was adamant that the candidate for his daughter-in-law must be from a privileged background, or at least, that was what his best-laid plans back then were.

As for Ye Fan's mother, he would allow her to stick around as his son's lover. Chu Tianfan, by extension, would remain an illegitimate child, not to be accorded any formal status.

On his part, Chu Yuan, too, spared no effort at all in a bid to sway Chu Zhenghong's mind.

He had even invited the eldest daughter of the Tang family, one of the three families under the wing of the Chu Sect, over to the Chu residence so that she may train and spend time alongside Chu Zhenghong. The former so happened to be Tang Yun's older sister as well.

But even that proved futile.

Chu Zhenghong showed no interest whatsoever, no matter what manner of beauty was paraded before him. It was as though he was completely besotted with Ye Fan and his mother.

Conversely, it was Tang Yun's sister, Tang Rui, who fell hopelessly in love with Chu Zhenghong.

Her sincere affections, nevertheless, were to go unrequited.

Chu Zhenghong rejected her by asserting. "I can only treat you like a sister."

He also told Tang Rui that he was a married man with a wife and son whom he loved dearly.

The prodigal son of days past had already found a home for his heart, and this once flighty Casanova had since handed the reins of his tethers to a woman named Ye Ximei.

That same day, the hair of the young lady of the Tang family turned white overnight, and she subsequently vanished without a trace.

Not only had all of Chu Yuan's schemes fallen flat, but he had also inadvertently caused tremendous harm to the eldest girl of the Tang family.

This incident almost resulted in a falling out between the Tang and Chu family. With all the strongest fighting hands from the Tang family in tow, the patriarch of the Tang family laid siege to the Chu residence and demanded accountability from the Chus.

It was also as a consequence of this same incident that the Chu Sect fell into disarray, and saddled them with unresolved issues that bode ill for their future.

As powerful as Chu Yuan was, he held a guilty conscience as he knew he had erred. While he placated the Tang family, he also directed his resources toward locating Tang Rui. In addition, he also took on Tang Rui's younger sister, Tang Yun, as his disciple as an extended olive branch and instructed her in all the secrets he knew about the martial ways.

Afterward, Chu Yuan also made Tang Yun the head of the Chu Sect, perhaps as a means to make up for the grief he had brought upon her older sister.

After all, he was the one who withheld the fact of Chu Zhenghong's marital status and created the opportunity for the two of them to get close. That made him wholly responsible for the tragedy that was wrought upon her.

It was only after everything that transpired that Chu Yuan realized the depth of his own wretched son's obsession with that mother and son pair.

Henceforth, Chu Yuan decided to pull the plug before everything was to become cast in stone and went on to have Chu Tianfan and his mother driven away from the Chu family.

At the same time, he also instructed the Demonic Duo in the presence of Chu Zhenghong. "Should Chu Zhenghong were to ever come into contact with this mother and son pair, you are both free to claim both their lives at your own discretion and without fear of repercussions!"

Chu Yuan's explicit orders irrevocably banished any lingering hopes Chu Zhenghong might have harbored. For one who was born and raised within the Chu family, he naturally understood how terrifying the Demonic Duo was.

Unless he was able to defeat both of these elderly gentlemen himself, whatever attempts of his to reach out to Ye Fan and his mother would be tantamount to their death sentence.

That ultimately brought an end to that fiasco.

Thereafter, Chu Yuan was able to retreat to the residence's forbidden grounds free of worry, as he was confident that the Chu family would never

again hear from this illegitimate child.

After all, the barriers between the two sides had only grown ever since Chu Tianfan and his mother had been driven out.

One was noble and dignified like the clouds in the sky, while the other, wretched and lowly like the dirt upon the earth!

Never in his wildest dreams could Chu Yuan had expected to run into Chu Tianfan, this same illegitimate country child, once more on the very day he left his retreat!

Thirty years had passed, yet that fiasco from all that time ago continued.

“I should have gotten rid of you the day I first laid eyes upon you two. Had I not been so softhearted, that silly girl Rui would not have met with such a tragic end. The Tang family and Chu family would not have fostered such enmity, and neither would the Chu Sect have fallen into disarray. My son Zhenghong might have already have secured an alliance with the Tang family by marriage and stood at the pinnacle of power, and the Chu family would not have arrived at this extent of ruin by your hands!”

The sight of Chu Tianfan brought back all these memories of regret that only fueled his simmering resentment.

Of course, he had no remorse about casting Chu Tianfan and his mother out.

What he lamented was not having them killed off



sooner because had he done so the day Chu Zhenghong brought them in, complications would not have ensued. Neither would this woe had blighted the Chu family ten odd years later.

“Haha—! You're right, Chu Yuan. Not killing my mother and myself back then is the worst mistake in your life! But not to worry. As a gesture of my gratitude, I promise to leave the bodies of your family members intact.”

Years later, there remained no semblance of familial love in the reunion between this grandfather and grandson pair. All they had for each other, was the blood of enmity.

How this scene played out left observers like Sword Saint and the other outsiders gasping in astoundment.

*What manner of hatred and division must exist between this two that they have to see the other dead?*

The expressionless Chu Yuan could only shake his head in disapproval of Chu Tianfan's words. “Before my reemergence from my retreat, perhaps Zhengliang and the others might have been fearful of your threats. But now, don't you find those utterances of yours a little too haughty to be mentioned in my presence? As opposed to considering whether to allow for the Chu family's bodies to remain intact, perhaps you ought to worry about whether you yourself would be able to walk away from this alive.”

Amidst his evenness of tone, none were able to discern his emotional state. But it is precisely this



staidness that harbored that encompassing dominance and authority in the others' ears.

Gaius and the rest were doubtlessly a bundle of nerves inside.

Owen and a few others were no longer able to contain themselves. They finally went up and whispered words of caution into Ye Fan's ears. "I sense something amiss, Dragon Master."

"Chu Yuan's still alive."

"I think we really ought to pull back."

"We should reconsider taking on this old fogey,"

"We cannot afford to be rash!"



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