

Chapter 307: Grudge

Li Lang helplessly watched as the cultivators from a righteous sect executed the last of their captives. He shook his head at the wasted opportunity, but there wasn't much he could do. He was currently a guest in their territory, and there was a limit to what he could demand.

When in Rome, do as Romans do. The rules of other forces weren't something he could arbitrarily interfere with.

Mu Hanyue walked over once the executions were over. With a wave of her sleeve, the heads of the fallen vanished into her space ring. When she turned around, her face was filled with disgust at having to deal with the filth.

"Let's go. These demonic cultivators have wasted enough of our time."

The orthodox cultivators all nodded and began walking as if they had been waiting for far too long. Li Lang took a moment to give the headless remains one last look before following.

What a waste. I could've used them in my research on demonic techniques.

"Is there a problem?" The interim leader of the Radiant Wing Sect disciples called out upon noticing Li Lang wistfully sigh.

"Not exactly. I guess it's just been a long day."

"You can say that again. Come on, let's put this place behind us."

"Hmm, right."

The interrogation of the captured foes didn't last long, as they refused to say anything. It didn't take long for them to piece together the clues. Their ambushers weren't just some random force that appeared within the crypt at random. They were bona fide demonic deviators that preyed on orthodox cultivators on a regular basis. Their lack of ability for critical thinking was a dead giveaway.

Qi pilfering demonic techniques allowed them to absorb the cultivation of other humans, but afflicted their minds. Too much and they would become mindless animals, that only know how to react to sustenance, which in this case meant orthodox cultivators.

Li Lang had wanted to question their involvement with the Abductress, but they remained silent. Then, his allies executed them, no matter what he said. Apparently, it was one of their sect's rules to dispatch mindless deviators when given the opportunity, or they would incur heavy penalties otherwise.

As Li Lang walked to the exit, he had a chance to calm down from the bloodshed and think things through.

Well, it isn't likely the Abductress will work with these mindless deviators, anyway. The only thing this trip confirmed is that deviators do, in fact, search these sketchy places as hideouts. Too bad about this bunch, though. They probably got caught in the illusion until we conquered this place, setting them free.

I'll need to be more careful in any future explorations. The last thing I want is to inadvertently unleash some bigshot.

Perhaps the universe was taking pity on Li Lang's group for encountering all this trouble in such a short span of time, the group soon heard a waterfall nearby. Turning the corner, they found an exit identical to the one near where they woke up. A small cave entrance with a waterfall running behind it.

"It should definitely be our ticket out of here this time, right?" Jing Song muttered.

"Hey! Don't jinx it!"

The more eager individuals in the group threw Jing Song a look before jumping over to the other side. A moment later, a head popped back in.

"We're safe. Come on out!"

Excited murmurs quickly spread as the trapped cultivators finally found their way out. As they formed a neat line to exit in an orderly fashion, Li Lang stayed back and was conversing with the most powerful entity in the group—the Thousand Change Sea Breath.

"Tell him we've completed your task. It'll come with us to help find its main body, right?" Li Lang had Ruby act as the translator with the heavenly water.

It wobbled energetically as Ruby translated its words.

"It says it will comply, Master, but once it completes its promise, it'll return here."

"Sure, that's not a problem."

As if it understood his words, the heavenly water bounced into the air and rapidly shrank in size. It then burrowed its way into Li Lang's clothes, completely melding with him. No traces of it were left behind. Few would think such an existence was there if not told.

The moment the Radiant Wing disciples returned to their sect, they quickly scattered. Some went to take a well-deserved break, while others continued with their cultivation. Only Mu Hanyue had to go give a detailed report to the elders.

It could be said that everything returned to a state of peace if it wasn't for one particular problem child among the group. His fellow disciples all knew his personality well enough to know he wouldn't let any grievances go. However, they all chose to stay in their own lane.

Within one of the luxurious cultivation rooms within the main building of the Radiant Wing Sect, Jing Song passionately beseeched a couple in the room.

"Father, Mother, your child has been wronged! You must find justice for me!"

The couple said nothing and quietly sipped on their tea while continuing their game of weiqi. The man held the black stones while the woman held the white stones.

"Father, Mother, did you not hear me?" Jing Song whined as he pulled on the woman's sleeve.

"Be quiet, we're in the middle of a game," his mother sternly replied.

It silenced the misbehaving child in Jing Song right away, causing him to awkwardly stand there.

For some time, the only sound that rang out in the room was that of stones being placed on the wooden board. It was only when half the board was filled with stones that the woman spoke.

"Song Er, do you still remember how to play weiqi?"

"Umm, your son remembers the rules, but failed to study the game in detail."

"Then I recommend you take it up as a hobby. It'll do you good."

"I will, mother, but about that Li—"

"Song Er," the woman interrupted. "The most important thing in weiqi is to look at the bigger picture. Each move you make has to be ambitious. Making small moves to just secure what you already have is the most common beginner mistake. Remember, in weiqi, there could be multiple battlefields going on simultaneously. What happens on one battlefield could severely affect the other. You must always consider the bigger picture."

"That—Your son will endeavor to remember mother's wise words."

"Good. You may go. I'm sure you're tired after what you've gone through. You should go rest while you can."

Jing Song was about to blurt something out again, but a glare from his stoic father killed the words in his throat. With no other choice, Jing Song scuttled out of the room, only daring to vent his anger once his parents were out of sight.

As soon as the doors closed behind him, the couple smiled wryly at each other.

"It's rare for you to be so strict with your son. Tell me, what did you do with my wife?"

"Would you like me to start talking about all your most embarrassing moments, Jing Kan?" the woman replied with a mischievous grin.

"It's just a joke, my dear. But tell me, I thought you were one to indulge that son of ours before moving on to teaching him a lesson. What changed?"

"As parents, we always have our children's best interests in mind. Those past incidents were just minor incidents in the grand scheme of things. Internal disputes, at worst. A different approach needs to be taken when dealing with matters that could affect the entire sect."

"Yes, I agree. If only you took this approach earlier, I'm sure Song Er would've shaped up by now."

"Are you blaming me?" a cold voice leaked out, accompanied by a frosty glare.

"Of course not, of course not. I'll support whatever my wife thinks is best. I'll be sure Song Er forgets all about this experience of his and focuses on the future. Let bygones be bygones."

"When did I say that's what we should do?"

"Erm—"

"No need to placate me. I'm not angry at you."

"Then at what?"

"Li Lang."

"That Headmaster of the so-called Star Gem Academy? He's only a Foundation Establishment cultivator. There's no need to bother with such juniors."

"I know. That's why I haven't done anything. It's just that it infuriates me that this outsider dared to come onto our territory and ruin our son's chance at obtaining that heavenly water! Who does he think he is?"

"Bing Bing, my dear, it's not that big of a deal. The boy got a big head from all the attention he's been getting. It's not like he obtained the heavenly water, either. That thing isn't likely to take on another master. In fact, it's good that this Li Lang took the risk of confronting it instead of Song Er. Come now, let's talk about happier things."

The woman scoffed.

"Fine, but this matter isn't settled. Sooner or later, I'll settle the score with him."

"Yes, yes. We can give him some small trouble later. Preferably, after all this business with the Abductress has settled. Now, why don't we play another game?"

In the skies above Changjiao City, a lone Skyrunner appeared on the horizon.

A certain young man held the reins of the vehicle while a woman stood on the roof, carefully scanning their surroundings. As they were descending, the young man turned back to his companion.

“Jun Ziyang, we’re about to arrive. Will you be tagging along as I fetch my students? You can do your own thing too, you know.”

No reply came, as the woman remained expressionless, as if she hadn’t heard anything at all.

“Come on, you can’t stay mad forever. It was just a small incident that no one could predict. It all ended well in the end, right?”

Finally, the man’s words seemed to have some effect. Jun Ziyang’s eyes snapped to her charge.

“No one could predict that something would go wrong except your bodyguard, who warned you about this adventure of yours. What are you, twelve? You can’t resist going off on your own?”

Li Lang almost wanted to say how she agreed to his foray in the end, anyway, but he cleverly held his tongue before it was too late. He had had enough of feeling that prickly gaze for the rest of the trip and more. It was something he wouldn’t want the young children he would soon be taking in to experience, either.

“Yes, yes. It was a reckless decision, but I have my reasons. I have to find the Abductress, no matter what.”

Jun Ziyang looked contemplative for a moment before sighing. She jumped down from the roof and was about to say something when Li Lang suddenly let out a big sneeze. The worst part? It was aimed directly at her.

“Li Lang! Did your parents not teach you to sneeze away from people?! How in the world did someone so undisciplined manage to break through from the mortal realm? You’re even more unruly than the majority of the mortals I’ve seen!”

As much as he apologized, it was a futile effort. The best he could do for now was to nod along. His mind started to wander about the students he would soon be picking up.