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Tension filled the air upon Luo Qi's furious roar.

Liu Zong and Liu Heng's hearts skipped a beat. They were worried that the sects might attack them the next moment. That would be the end of them!

Jiang Ning seemed unfazed as he burst out into laughter.

"Why should I do something like that? In fact, why would I make a trip here just to make fun of you? To give you a chance to kill me?" He said boldly as he leveled a look at Luo Qi. "Since everyone here managed to become the heads of your respective sects, I suppose this part doesn't have a problem."

He pointed at his head with his finger.

A dark look appeared on Luo Qi's face instantly.

"You could start thinking about your sect's future or worry about your disciples' lives, or you could raise your voice and make a scene." Jiang Ning's words seemed to be a deliberate provocation that was aimed at Luo Qi. He wasn't pulling any punches at all. "Don't tell me you're just a figurehead?"

"What did you just say?" Luo Qi was livid. He flushed with fury as he pointed angrily at Jiang Ning. "Are you tired of living?"

The madder he got, the calmer Jiang Ning became.

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Everyone could see the stark difference between them and the difference in composure placed Luo Qi in an immediate disadvantage.

It took Luo Qi a moment to realize what was going on. He flushed red, scoffed and sat down.

“Are you trying to provoke me?”

Jiang Ning smiled wordlessly.

He turned away, his eyes sweeping across the crowd before pausing on Mr Lang, who was seated in a corner and had not said a single word the entire time.

He looked like any other ordinary man, with features so unmemorable that you would be hard pressed to remember his face even if you tried your best.

You wouldn't recognize him in a crowd.

Mr Lang looked up then. As their eyes met, he smiled faintly and greeted Jiang Ning with a nod.

Jiang Ning nodded as well. They were like old friends who had not seen each other for years.

“I have no reason to play you for fools. I just want the fighting to stop. More people are going to die if the fighting continues. I don't think anyone wants that, do they?” said Jiang Ning. “I can solve the problem of the gray fog. Even if I can't, Qingshan Sect will also end up getting destroyed by it too, right?”

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Everyone frowned and fell into contemplation.

Jiang Ning was right. Everything boiled down to the gray fog. It would be ideal if they could find a way to deal with that problem.

The world beyond the mountain had its appeal, but accompanying its temptation was the unknown and what one feared what one did not know.

Qingshan Sect existed for the purposes of preventing anyone from leaving the mountain. There must be a reason for that. Perhaps the world outside was too dangerous. Perhaps they shouldn't leave in the first place.

There were no idiots in their midst. These were hardened men who had faced the trials and tribulations of life. They were all sensible men.

“How can we believe you?” Li Xuan leveled a frosty glare at Jiang Ning. “You killed our elder and now you're asking us to trust you?”

He wasn't going to forget that and pretend that nothing had happened simply because of some sweet promise that Jiang Ning had uttered.

“You should thank me for going easy on your men. You might have lost a few more elders otherwise,” Jiang Ning said assertively as he looked Li Xuan in the eye. “In fact, you might not survive if the fight continued.”

Such brazen confidence!

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Liu Zong and Liu Heng were stupefied.

They couldn't believe that Jiang Ning would dare utter words like this at such a moment.

Such audacity...such forcefulness!

Li Xuan trembled with fury at Jiang Ning's words but he had no words to refute the man. He knew very well that if Jiang Ning had not gone easy on them, Li Guang would have died as well.


Li Guang, who was seated in a corner, flushed slightly and curled his fingers into fists silently.

Jiang Ning had indeed gone easy on him. He would have died otherwise.


"You..."

Li Xuan trembled with rage. One of his own had been killed. Why should he thank Jiang Ning for it?

What kind of logic was that?

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Li Xuan mouth opened and started moving his lips silently, but he didn't utter a single word.

The other sect leaders eyed Jiang Ning curiously. They hadn't expected the young man to have such a fiery temper and to be so brazen. His caustic words had left Luo Qi and Li Xuan utterly speechless.

"What's your decision?" Jiang Ning leaned against his chair and eyed the crowd. "Are you going to continue fighting? Or cease the fight, come together and find a way to solve the root of your problems? Make a choice. Honestly, I'm prepared to fight if you want a fight. Even if you do manage to keep me here today, that will simply result in our mutual destruction."

Jiang Ning smiled and shrugged.

"What have you done?"

Alarm colored everyone's faces.

"There's gunpowder all over the place. If I don't return, you'll hear explosions going off. The kind that goes off with a loud boom. It's going to be really exciting."

Everyone clenched their jaw in fury when they heard that. They had wondered why Jiang Ning had dared to enter their grounds.

The scoundrel had everything planned right from the start.

"Jiang Ning, do you really have a way to deal with

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the gray fog?” Ting Chan only cared about what Jiang Ning had said about the gray fog. He stared Jiang Ning right in the eye and said seriously, “You must know that the fog has eliminated a few sects. These sects have vanished completely. We couldn’t even find their remains.”

A hint of fear and helplessness appeared on everyone’s faces.

“I do.” Jiang Ning nodded in earnest. “Please believe me. I have a way to deal with it. I’m not going to survive if I don’t.”

Ting Chan nodded and placed his palms together. “I believe you. Buddha Sect will withdraw from the fight.”

Upon saying that, he turned towards the rest. “How about the rest of you?”

“I’ll fight you to the death if you can’t solve the problem of the gray fog,” Geng Jianba, the chief of Bajian Sect thundered. “Our sect will withdraw from the fight too.”

“Let’s cease the fight for the time being since we have many sects who wish to withdraw from it. But if we find out that you lied to us, we’ll destroy Qingshan Sect even if it means our own destruction,” bellowed Yun Zhongxian, the chief of Longkongshan Sect.

Having heard the rest voice their decision to withdraw from the fight, Wu Liang gestured and said simply, “We’ll withdraw.”

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Luo Qi was the last chief whose sect was still in the fight.

The other sects had decided on a ceasefire. They were going to see how Jiang Ning was going to resolve the problem of the gray fog. It would be great news for all if he could solve the problem.

If he couldn't, the ceasefire would have given them enough time to recuperate and restore their strength. Then, they would be able to fell Qingshan Sect easily with a single swoop.

“Humph!”

What else could Luo Qi say?

He caught Mr Lang's nod of approval and thus did not voice his disapproval. “We'll all stop fighting then and let Qingshan Sect deal with the gray fog. But I swear, Jiang Ning, I'll kill you with my own hands if you fail to deliver on your promise.”

Jiang Ning did not take Luo Qi's threat to heart as he rose to his feet.

It didn't matter who wanted to kill him. They could just come at him and try. Words meant nothing.

“Give me two months.”

Having said that, Jiang Ning turned and left with Liu Zong and Liu Heng. One couldn't help but admire his composure.

He had brought two men to the base of the six major sects to negotiate a ceasefire, and he had

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succeeded, then left calmly. His daring move was sufficient to inspire respect.

There were differing expressions on everyone's faces as they watched Jiang Ning leave. The gentle smile on Mr Lang's face never wavered though. It was a smile that was akin to a refreshing spring breeze.

It seemed as if nothing could affect his mood.

Jiang Ning left the base of the six major sects with Liu Zong and Liu Heng. The brothers were drenched in cold sweat, their bodies taut with tension as fear and anxiety continued to wreck their minds.

They would have died if the negotiation had fallen through.

"Brother Jiang, is this what you call a negotiation?" Liu Zong blurted out.

He could tell that Luo Qi and the others had been rendered utterly speechless by Jiang Ning's words. Jiang Ning had hardly sounded like he was negotiating with them. He had sounded more like he was informing them of his plans.

"That's right. That's what I call a negotiation," said Jiang Ning coolly.



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