

MO XIANG TONG XIU

Heaven Official's Blessing

TIAN GUAN CI FU

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Heaven Official's Blessings

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Prologue: Heaven Official's Blessing

AMONG ALL THE DEITIES of heaven, there was one famous laughingstock of the three realms.

Legend has it that eight hundred years ago, there was an ancient kingdom in the central plains called the Kingdom of Xianle.

The Kingdom of Xianle was a vast and bountiful land. There were four treasures within it: abundant and handsome beauties, vibrant music and marvelous literature, gold and gems, and their one infamous crown prince.

What would be the best way to describe this crown prince? Well, he was a unique man.

He was beloved by the king and the queen, and they doted upon him exorbitantly. They would often say with pride, “My son will become a great ruler in the future, and his good name will echo down through history!”

However, the crown prince was not interested in imperial power or wealth in the mortal world at all.

What he was interested in, in his own words, was:

“I want to save the common people!”

When he was young, the crown prince focused solely on his cultivation, and there were two short tales that were widely spread of his time on that path.

The first tale took place when he was seventeen years old.

That year, a grand Shangyuan Heavenly Ceremonial Procession took place in the Kingdom of Xianle.

Although the custom of conducting these divine ceremonies has been

out of fashion for centuries, it is still possible to deduce what a grand, jubilant occasion it must have been from remnants of ancient books and oral tradition.

The wondrous Shangyuan Festival, upon the Grand Avenue of Divine Might.

Seas of people gathered on either side of the grand street, with royals and nobles talking and laughing in merriment atop the high platforms. The glorious royal warriors bedecked in armor opened the paths, while maidens danced elegantly, their fair hands scattering flowers—and who could say whether the flowers or the maidens were more beautiful? From within the golden carriage came marvelous music that drifted across the entire imperial city. And at the rear of the procession was a grand stage pulled by sixteen white horses in golden bridles.

Upon this towering grand stage stood the God-Pleasing Warrior, the focus of everyone's attention.

At the Heavenly Ceremonial Procession, the God-Pleasing Warrior wore a golden mask. Dressed in glamorous attire and with a sacred sword in hand, he played the role of the subduer of evil, the number one martial god for the past thousand years: the Heavenly Emperor, Jun Wu.

It was the greatest of honors to be chosen for the role of the God-Pleasing Warrior, which was why the selection criteria were exceedingly strict. Thus, the one chosen that year was that crown prince. People across the kingdom believed that he would give the most thrilling performance as the God-Pleasing Warrior.

However, an accident happened that day.

During the third tour of the procession, it passed by a city wall that was hundreds of meters tall. At the time, the martial god upon the grand stage was just about to strike the demon down. It was the climax of the performance, with people on both sides of the street at the height of excitement. The top of the city wall swarmed with crowds clamoring to watch the show, pushing and shoving each other to get the best view.

At that moment, a small child fell from the edge of the wall.

The screams of the crowd reached to the heavens. Just when everyone thought this child would stain the Grand Avenue of Divine Might with blood, the crown prince looked up, leapt into flight, and caught the boy.

The people only saw a glimpse of a white silhouette that flew like a soaring bird before the crown prince landed with that small child in his arms. The golden mask fell, revealing the young, handsome face behind it.

In the next second, cheers erupted.

The people were thrilled and joyous, but the state preceptors of the royal cultivation hall were troubled.

They had never imagined such a huge mishap would occur.

This was ominous luck! The gravest of misfortunes!

Every trip the grand stage made around the imperial capital symbolized one year of peace and harmony within the kingdom. Now that it was cut short, did that not mean the invitation of disaster?!

The state preceptors were so distraught, they were losing hair as fast as the rain fell. After much contemplation, they called the crown prince over to speak to him. In the softest manner possible, they requested: “Your Highness, might you be willing to face the wall in reflection for a month? It does not really need to be a month, as long as the intention is there.”

The crown prince smiled. “No.”

This was what he said: “There is nothing wrong with saving people. Why would the heavens condemn me for doing the right thing?”

Uh...but what if the heavens do condemn you?

“Then it is the heavens who are wrong. Why would I apologize to those who are wrong?”

The state preceptors could not argue.

This crown prince was such a person.

He had never encountered anything he could not do, nor had he ever met anyone who did not love him. He was the justice of the Mortal Realm, the center of the world.

Although the state preceptors were frustrated—“What the heck do you know?!”—it was not their place to say much, and they did not dare say more on the subject either. His Highness would not have listened anyway.

The second tale takes place in the same year, when the crown prince was seventeen.

Legend has it that, south of the Yellow River, there was a bridge called Yinian.¹ Upon this bridge was a ghost that had been lingering for years.

This ghost was exceedingly fearsome: it was clad in broken armor, the flames of hell blazed beneath its feet, and its body was covered in blood and pierced by all manner of sharp weapons. Every step it took, it left behind a footprint of blood and fire. Every few years, it would suddenly appear at night and wander back and forth at the head of the bridge, blocking travelers to ask them three questions:

“What is this place?”

“Who am I?”

“What is to be done?”

The ghost would then devour whoever answered incorrectly. However, no one knew what the correct answers were. As the years went by, this ghost devoured countless travelers.

During his ascetic travel, the crown prince caught word of this. So he set out and found Yinian Bridge and stood guard there night after night. Until finally, one night, he met the haunting ghost.

When that ghost appeared, it was indeed as horrifying as the legends said. It asked the crown prince the first question, and he answered with a smile.

“This place is the human world.”

However, the ghost replied, *“This place is the abyss.”*

An auspicious start. The first answer was already incorrect.

Well, all three answers are going to be wrong anyway, the crown prince thought, so why should I wait till you’re done? And so he pulled out his weapon and lunged.

The fight was complete chaos. The crown prince was skilled in martial arts, but the ghost was terrifying and dauntless. Man and ghost fought so hard

that the sun and moon began to topple. In the end, the ghost was finally defeated.

After the ghost vanished, the crown prince planted a flowering tree at the head of the bridge. As he did so, a cultivator passed by and happened to see him sprinkle a handful of dirt to consecrate the grave and send the ghost off.

“What is this?” he asked.

And thus, the crown prince replied with his now-famous line: “Body in the abyss, heart in paradise.”

When the cultivator heard this, he gave a light smile. He then transformed into a divine warrior clad in white armor, with auspicious clouds beneath his feet. Then, he drew in the wind and rode off in holy light. Only then did the crown prince realize that he had just encountered the Heavenly Emperor, who had personally descended to the Mortal Realm to subdue evil.

The deities had already taken notice of this exceedingly outstanding God-Pleasing Warrior since his time in the Shangyuan Heavenly Ceremonial Procession. After the meeting at Yinian Bridge, they asked the Heavenly Emperor, “How does My Lord find this Royal Highness?”

The Emperor answered, “This child’s future is infinite.”

That night, a celestial phenomenon manifested in the skies above the palace, and storms raged.

Amidst the flashes of lightning and the roars of thunder, the crown prince ascended.

Whenever a mortal ascended, the Heavenly Realm always shook. When the crown prince ascended, the entire Heavenly Realm quaked outright with three times the normal tremors.

Achieving fruitful cultivation was always far too difficult. It required talent, training, and luck. It was often a long road of a hundred years for a god to be born.

It was not that there were no fortunate souls who became deities at a young age. However, the majority who tried exhausted their entire lives, trained for a hundred years, and still had no Heavenly Tribulations dawn upon them. Even if they did come to face a Heavenly Tribulation, should they

fail the trial, they would die—or be ruined, if they managed to survive. Those who made the attempt were as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, but most were simply ignorant mortals who would spend their entire lives as nothing more than ordinary, never finding their own paths.

Yet this Royal Highness was no doubt the darling of the heavens. Whatever he wanted, he received; whatever he wanted to do, he succeeded. He wanted to ascend and become a god, so at the age of seventeen, he did just that.

He had always led the hearts of the people, and the king and queen loved and missed him dearly. So to honor their son, the king ordered great temples and shrines to be built across the land and for statues of the crown prince to be erected and worshipped by all. The more believers that were amassed, the more temples were constructed. That meant the crown prince's life would be more prolonged, and his spiritual powers would grow more powerful. Thus, in a few short years, the Xianle Palace of the Crown Prince became incomparably glorious, and for a time, its prosperity and splendor reached its peak.

Until three years later, when Xianle fell into chaos.

The cause of the chaos was tyranny, with rebels rising in revolt. However, while the flames of war were set ablaze all over the mortal world, the deities of the Heavenly Realm could not easily intervene. Their concerns were ghosts, monsters, and demons that encroached on the borders, and whatever fell outside of those parameters had to be left to its own devices.

Think about it: conflicts were everywhere in the Mortal Realm, and everyone believed they were justified. So if any god were to stick a foot in... Today, you would back your former kingdom, tomorrow, another would avenge his descendants. Thus, would there not be gods who wanted to fight each other all the time, who would fall into a life of disgrace?

That was why the crown prince needed to keep his distance. But he did not care for that reasoning in the least.

He said to the Heavenly Emperor, "I will save the common people."

The Heavenly Emperor possessed a thousand years of divine power, but even he did not dare let those words hang off his lips. When he heard this, it was easy to imagine how he felt, yet he could not do anything to stop the

crown prince.

So he said, “You cannot save everyone.”

“I can,” the crown prince declared.

Thus, he descended to the Mortal Realm without looking back.

Naturally, the whole nation of Xianle rejoiced. However, ever since ancient times there had been one truth the people always spoke of in the human world: there would never be a good outcome when gods descended to the Mortal Realm without permission.

And so, not only were the flames of war not extinguished, they blazed even wilder.

It was not to say that the crown prince did not try, but it would have been better had he not intervened at all. The harder he worked, the more of a mess the war became: the people of Xianle were devastatingly battered and crushed, the wounded and casualties innumerable, and in the end, a plague swept through the entire imperial capital, and the rebel army broke through to the palace and ended the war.

If it was said that Xianle was originally hanging on by a thread, then the crown prince came and cut it directly.

After the kingdom fell, the people finally came to realize one thing: the crown prince they worshipped as a god was never as perfect or strong as they imagined.

To speak harshly, was he not just useless trash who could not do anything right?!

Without anywhere to vent the anguish and pain of losing their homes and families, the battered people furiously poured into the Palaces of the crown prince, toppled his divine statues, and burned down the divine temples.

Eight thousand temples burned for seven days and seven nights, burned until there was nothing left. From that moment on, the martial god who protected peace and safety vanished, and a God of Misfortune who brought disasters was born.

When the people call you a god, you are a god. If they call you crap, you are crap. You are whatever they say you are. It had always been thus.

The crown prince could absolutely not accept this reality, and he had an even harder time accepting the punishment he received for his transgressions: banishment.

His spiritual powers were sealed, and he was knocked back down to the Mortal Realm.

He'd grown up endlessly coddled and pampered. He had never tasted the suffering of the human world before, yet this punishment hurled him from the clouds down into the mud. And in this mud, for the first time, he understood the taste of hunger, poverty, and filth. This was also the first time that he did things he never thought he would do willingly: he stole, he robbed, he cursed loudly, and he gave up on himself. He lost all dignity, no self-esteem remained, and he was as unkempt as one could be. Even his most loyal servants could not accept this change in him and chose to leave.

“Body in the abyss, heart in paradise.” This phrase had been engraved on stone monuments and plaques everywhere in Xianle. If not for the war that had burned almost all of the kingdom to the ground, if the crown prince were to see the remnants of those words, he would probably be the first to rush to destroy what was left.

The person who had said those words had personally proven that when the body was in the abyss, the heart could not be in paradise.

He ascended to the heavens quickly, but his fall from grace was even faster. That awe-inspiring impression at the Grand Avenue of Divine Might, the evil he met at Yinian Bridge; it all seemed as if it were only yesterday, and the Heavenly Realm merely sighed for a while before letting go of what was past.

Until one day, many years later, a huge rumble thundered from the sky. This Royal Highness ascended for the second time.

Throughout history, heavenly officials who were banished either never regained their glory or fell into the Ghost Realm. It was rare to turn over a new leaf after banishment. This second ascension was truly grand and spectacular.

What was even more spectacular was that, after he ascended, he charged all the way into the Heavenly Realm and rampaged in full fury. Thus, he had only been ascended for the span of one incense time before he

was knocked back down again.

One incense time. It could be considered the swiftest and shortest ascension in history.

If the first ascension could be considered a beautiful tale, then the second ascension was a farce.

Having been banished twice, the Heavenly Realm looked upon this crown prince with full contempt. And in that contempt, there was caution. After all, he was already threatening and on edge after the first banishment; now that he had been banished twice, would he not go berserk and take his revenge on the world?

Yet who knew? After being banished this time, he did not go berserk and even adjusted earnestly to banished life. There were no issues at all, and the only problem was that...maybe he was taking things a little too seriously?

Sometimes he would busk at the end of the street, expertly playing any instrument and singing any songs, and even shattering boulders on his chest as part of his act. While there had long been word that this Royal Highness could sing and dance and was a master of many talents, it was unbelievable to witness all his talents in such a fashion, truly inspiring complicated feelings in anyone who saw. Sometimes, he would diligently and humbly collect scraps.

The deities were shocked to their cores.

It was unthinkable that things would reach this point, where now, if one was to say “the son you gave birth to is the crown prince of Xianle,” it would be a curse more malicious than “may you die without sons.”

He was once the noble and gracious crown prince, a heavenly official who was part of the divine ranks. But in truth, no one else had ever screwed up so badly. And so, this was the story of the man who was known as the laughingstock of the three realms.

After laughing, those who were more sentimental might also sigh. The darling of the heavens, who once stood at such a height, had truly and thoroughly vanished.

Divine statues collapsed, a native kingdom was destroyed, and not a single believer remained. Gradually, he was forgotten by the world. Thus, no

one knew where he had drifted afterward.

It was already a great shame to be banished once. No one would be able to get back up after being banished twice.

Many more years passed. Suddenly one day there was another huge rumble in the sky. The heavens fell and the earth cracked, the ground trembled and the mountains shook.

The lanterns of everlasting light shuddered, the firelights danced in fury, and all the heavenly officials inside their golden palaces jolted awake, every one of them running out to ask each other:

“Which new dignitary has ascended?”

“Such a grandiose entrance!”

Yet who knew? They had exclaimed in wonder the first second, but in the next, all the deities of heaven were thunderstruck.

Weren't you done?!

That infamous weirdo, the laughingstock of the three realms, the legendary Royal Highness the Crown Prince, he...he...he...he fucking ascended again!

Chapter 1: The Scrap Immortal, Third Time Entering the Heavenly Capital

“CONGRATULATIONS, Your Highness.”

Hearing this, Xie Lian looked up, and he smiled before saying anything. “Thank you. But can I ask what you’re congratulating me for?”

Ling Wen-zhenjun stood tall with her hands folded behind her back. “Congratulations, you have won first place on the chart of ‘Heavenly Official Most Hoped to be Banished Down to the Mortal Realm’ of this calendar cycle.”

“Well, no matter what, first place is first place,” Xie Lian said. “But since you’re congratulating me, is there anything that’s actually worth being happy about?”

“Yes,” Ling Wen replied. “First place on this chart receives one hundred merits.”

Xie Lian immediately said, “If there are any similar charts in the future, please absolutely call me up.”

“Do you know who second place is?” Ling Wen asked.

Xie Lian pondered for a moment, then replied, “That’s too hard to guess. After all, in terms of ability, I should be able to take the first three places myself.”

“Pretty much,” Ling Wen said. “There isn’t a second place. You’re so far ahead that you’ve left everyone in the dust.”

“That’s too great of an honor,” Xie Lian replied. “Then who was first place for the previous calendar cycle?”

“There is no previous winner,” Ling Wen said, “because this chart was first established today.”

“Huh?” Xie Lian was taken aback. “You don’t mean to say that this was a chart set up just for me?”