

## Finest 266

### Chapter 266 Persuasion

"Marriage?" Lin Wanrong exclaimed in surprise, "Madam, you jest. I am still young and it is not yet time to consider such matters. Perhaps we could discuss this in another decade or so."

Madam Xiao laughed at his blatant sarcasm, "Lin San, don't get irritated with me. Initially, I worried that Yushuang was too young to understand the matters of the heart. I feared she might be misled or fall into deception. That's why I spoke to you the way I did. But, in recent times, her feelings for you have not waned but intensified. During your absences, she missed you every day and prayed for your well-being. I've seen it with my own eyes, engraved it in my heart. She genuinely cares for you; it's not just a young girl's infatuation. And, seeing how capable you are, not only in helping our Xiao family out of our difficulties but also rapidly advancing under Mr. Xu, I find no reason to intervene between you and Yushuang. I am Yushuang's mother; naturally, I want to see her happily settled. Since she fancies you, I don't wish to create obstacles. So, why not lay it all out? What do you think?"

'The Madam is quite the tactician,' Lin Wanrong thought, laughing as he said, "Madam, is this proposal your idea or Second Miss Xiao's?"

Madam Xiao replied, "It's my idea, but I am sure that Yushuang would not oppose. I know my daughter's heart. She would leap with joy upon hearing this news."

Lin Wanrong shook his head, walked a few steps, and plucked a weed from the roadside, asking, "Madam, do you see what this is?"

Madam Xiao, puzzled, glanced at him and said, "This is a weed, Lin San. Why do you ask?"

Lin Wanrong replied, "A wilted weed cannot regain its vitality by merely watering it. When winter arrives, it chooses to decay, desiring a rest. Madam, you're intelligent, you surely understand my point, don't you?"

Madam Xiao thought deeply for a while before sighing, "Lin San, you're not a weed, you're a towering tree. Even in the harshest winter, as long as your roots are intact, you'll flourish again when spring arrives. I understand your meaning. You're tired, aren't you? You wish for a rest?"

Lin Wanrong just smiled, not uttering a word.

"Lin San," Madam Xiao said, "If you're tired, you can rest. However long you need. My only hope is that you don't abandon our Xiao family."

"Surely, you jest, Madam Xiao," Lin Wanrong chuckled, "The Xiao family is affluent and influential, it should be me begging you not to abandon me."

Madam Xiao gave him a playful glare, "One moment you speak so poignantly about the little weed, making one appreciate your candid personality. And the next moment, you're using sarcasm? I understand better than anyone that without your aid, the Xiao family would have been reduced to someone else's plaything, let alone flourishing. Lin San, to tell you the truth, my agreement to your relationship with Yushuang stems from my desire to keep you with the Xiao family forever."

‘So you finally speak the truth,’ Lin Wanrong glanced at Madam Xiao.

The Madam lightly lifted her long skirt and slowly took a couple of steps forward, gazing at the landscape in the distance with a soft sigh, "Lin San, as you see, over the past decade or so, my Xiao family lacked robust men, depending entirely on Yuruo and me for support. We're women, and even though we have achieved something, there are countless people waiting to laugh at us. Yuruo and I are both ambitious. We made a vow never to let anyone look down on the Xiao family, which is why she turned out to be stubborn and reluctant to yield. She started traveling with me across the south and north to learn about running a business at the age of thirteen. Her temperament is more resolute than gentle, cherishing her dignity and refusing to be looked down upon. That's why you might think she's too domineering, never admitting her mistakes. But I know my daughter, she's fragile inside and often suffers in silence. I hope you can understand her, bear with her, and help her when you can. The bitterness and hardships we've experienced, running this big household as a mother and two daughters under the mocking gaze of others, as a man, you won't understand."

A faint glimmer of tears emerged in the Madam's eyes, she softly spoke, "For over a decade, my Xiao family has endured ridicule and scorn, merely due to the absence of a male figure. To be honest, in my years of widowhood, I've seen countless people covet my wealth and beauty, bending over backward to please me. If I were so inclined, a single word from me would ensure no one dares to laugh at us again. But Guo Junyi, that's me, is not such a capricious woman. No matter how hard or exhausting the situation is for the Xiao family, I would not compromise my integrity for wealth and honor. Lin San, I'm not shy about sharing this with you. If you want to laugh, go ahead. I've grown used to people mocking me. I hardly care anymore."

Seeing the sorrowful expression on her face, two lines of tears flowing down, resembling pear blossoms in the rain, a picture of pitiful beauty, yet adding an additional touch of allure. Lin Wanrong thought to himself, 'How can I find it funny? Not bursting into sympathetic tears was already a testament to my resilience. You've targeted my tender heart perfectly.'

"To change the current state of my Xiao family, we need the support of a man. Not just any man, but one who is brave and resourceful, daring to shoulder the responsibility, willing to bear all hardships for a widow and her daughters. Who could this man be?" Madam Xiao glanced at him with a gentle smile. Her tear-stained cheeks bloomed like peach blossoms after rain, stunningly flawless.

"Well, I'm not exactly sure. Bravery, resourcefulness, and willingness to bear responsibility—don't most men in the world possess these qualities? Madam, you can just randomly pick one," Lin Wanrong cheekily suggested.

The Madam's beautiful eyes glared at him fiercely, "If all men in the world had such qualities, then everyone would have food when hungry, clothes when cold, no one would steal, and there would be no need to lock the doors at night. Talking to you, every word you utter is feigned confusion, which is extremely infuriating." The Madam humphed, turning her head away, ignoring him. Her full bosom heaved, resembling a young maiden in the throes of spring.

Lin Wanrong let out a couple of dry laughs, "Madam, you do know I'm a modest man. Are you suggesting that I should immediately admit that I possess these virtues as soon as you mention them? Please, is my modesty also a fault?"

The Madam slowly turned around, her gaze fluid, the corners of her eyes still moist. But a smile had already returned to her face, "Speaking of humility, there's no need to bring you into the conversation amongst all the people in the world. In fact, we of the Xiao family owe thanks to our little Yushuang. If it weren't for her unintentional recommendation of you, I can't imagine what state the Xiao family would be in now."

Thinking back to his first meeting with the Second Miss, the little girl unleashing her ferocious dog, Lin Wanrong couldn't help but chuckle, sighing, "Of all in the Xiao family, the Second Miss has the best judgment. Madam, no offense, but you and the Eldest Miss could learn a thing or two from her."

Madam Xiao covered her mouth with a delicate hand, giggling softly, "You, when we talk, your 'humility' indeed shines through." Her face was radiant with a joyous smile as she looked at Lin Wanrong, "Lin San, how old are you this year?"

"Sixteen, I just came of age, why do you ask?" Lin Wanrong said, feigning innocence.

The Madam chuckled, a teasing look in her eyes, "You jester. If you're sixteen, then I'm merely twenty."

Lin Wanrong's eyes widened, and he gave her a thorough look, swallowing hard before declaring loudly, "What? Madam, you're not twenty? My heavens, that's outrageous! You clearly look as young as the Eldest Miss."

The Madam sighed, gazing at him, "Your words, they could bewitch all the women in the world, and I wouldn't be surprised. But I find it strange, you look no older than in your twenties, yet speaking with you is more challenging than dealing with any old fox. I wonder where you learned such cunning. I heard that yesterday, you went through four challenges and took first place in the Jinling Poetry Competition. Even Governor's daughter Miss Luo gave you her mandarin duck handkerchief, wishing to be paired with you. Yet, you still act so unserious. For someone as talented as you but so unrestrained, I doubt there's a second man like that in the world."

"Madam—" Lin Wanrong moved closer to her and said earnestly, "Life would be devoid of meaning if it's too serious. Like you, remaining chaste for the late Mr. Xiao might seem serious, but it's the most joyless thing in life. You are a normal person and have the right to pursue your own happiness. To give up happiness for the sake of maintaining an utterly useless chastity, that is, in my opinion, too serious, so serious that it's unbearable."

"You, you—" Stunned by his shocking words, Madam Xiao looked horrified. Her ample bosom heaved in anger. She pointed at him with trembling fingers, "How could you say something like that?"

"Am I wrong?" Lin Wanrong spread his hands, feigning innocence. "Everyone has the right to pursue happiness. That's what I've always thought, and that's how I've always acted. Is that wrong? If pursuing happiness is a mistake, then I'd rather keep making that mistake."

Listening to his eccentric views, Madam Xiao shot him an angry look, swiftly boarded her palanquin, and barked, "Back to the mansion—"

As Lin Wanrong watched Madam Xiao's retreating figure, he shook his head helplessly. 'I didn't do anything, I merely engaged in an honest discussion about the definition of happiness with you. If you don't want happiness, that's fine, but is there any need to be so angry?'

Madam Xiao hadn't traveled far when a sudden realization struck her. Wasn't the purpose of her journey to persuade Lin San to return home? How was it that after exchanging only a few words with him, she had been the one to hastily retreat, unable to withstand his words? His influence was profound. After their brief conversation, she found herself questioning whether she had been persuading him, or he had been persuading her.

She laughed bitterly to herself, ordering the bearers to halt the palanquin. She lifted the curtain to gaze outside, only to see Lin San on a swift horse, traveling faster than her. In a matter of moments, all that remained was a blurry figure receding into the distance. Shortly thereafter, he disappeared from her sight...

## Chapter 267 Longing for You!

For several days, Lin Wanrong lived in leisure, undisturbed by any further events. As the end of the year neared, each joyous day passed by was one less in its stead. During the day, he played the nonchalant boss at the restaurant. Whenever Qiaoqiao was busy keeping the accounts, he would sneak over, cheekily teasing her till her face reddened and her breaths became hurried. At night, he stayed on the pleasure boat with his two wives, indulging in their shared affection—such was his carefree life. He had just married Qiaoqiao, and with the thought of leaving for the capital after the New Year, his love for her grew even deeper, cherishing and adoring her every day.

The second restaurant under the Food for Immortals chain was already open for business, and the third one was being decorated. Lin Wanrong, following Qingshan's suggestion, named the second one "Too Delicious". It was a very common name, but he knew well that common things often represented elegance. After all, he had many years of experience in marketing.

At the opening of "Too Delicious", Luo Min arrived in person. He even wrote a calligraphy piece on site, greatly honoring Lin Wanrong. Luo Min was still the governor of Jiangsu, but everyone in Jiangsu knew his prospects weren't promising.

The case involving Cheng De had far-reaching implications. Some time ago, Tao Yu, the weaver from Suzhou, was dismissed from his post for forming private alliances. Lin Wanrong felt a surge of satisfaction at the downfall of Tao Dongcheng, whom he had ruined. But thinking of Tao Wanying, a hint of regret inevitably arose in his heart. He assumed she must have been paired with Young Master Hou by now. He couldn't be bothered to meddle in that.

The incident of Cheng De's execution was causing a stir in the court. It was estimated that an imperial decree would be issued in a few days. Seeing Luo Min's high spirits and even his wrinkles less prominent, Lin Wanrong admired his carefree attitude.

"Little brother Lin, I hope my modest gift doesn't cause you trouble," said Luo Min, glancing at Lin Wanrong as his calligraphy was taken away to be mounted.

Lin Wanrong laughed heartily. "Governor Luo, you've said it yourself, fortune and disaster are determined by fate. We're all mortals, and we can't foresee everything." He lowered his voice and chuckled, "What you've done, people may not understand, but the one in the Golden Palace couldn't be clearer. Moreover, with the Number One Scholar Xu Wenchang mediating, this temporary setback could lead to a decade of prosperity. Governor Luo, I should be congratulating you."

Luo Min laughed heartily. "Your broad-mindedness is admirable, Little brother. You're indeed a man of fortune. If something unexpected happens to me, I hope you can look after my son and daughter."

Speaking of children, Lin Wanrong noticed that Luo Yuan was having a lively discussion with Qingshan, but he didn't see Luo Min's talented daughter. Recalling the conversation on the flower boat, he couldn't help but feel a headache. Did he really have to openly pursue Luo Ning? What about Qiaoqiao, Xian'er, and the Second Miss? He couldn't show favoritism!

Seeing him looking around, Luo Min chuckled, "Stop searching. This is a letter from Ning'er to you. I never thought I'd become a messenger for you youngsters in my old age. I seem to be regressing the older I get, haha!"

'His daughter delivering a love letter through him? I'd die before I'd dare. This talented Lady Luo is truly talented.' But it seemed that only with an open-minded father like Luo Min would she dare to do such a thing.

"How about it, you don't dare to open it in front of me? Well, that's fair enough. It's not my place as an elder to sneak a peek at you young folks' conversations," Luo Min said with a laugh, adopting a playful, irreverent demeanor.

"Ha, why wouldn't I?" Lin Wanrong said with a teasing grin, unfolding the letter. On it, a row of delicate, concise characters read:

Big brother, I miss you! Miss you!! Miss you!!!

‘This girl's got nerve.’ Lin Wanrong felt a warm glow in his heart. ‘She misses me but hides from me? Seems I'll have to make the first move this time.’ Seeing Luo Min's knowing smile, even the battle-hardened Lin Wanrong felt his cheeks warm. He rallied his righteousness, "Oh, Miss Luo sends her best wishes for a prosperous business and has included a red envelope with ten taels of silver as a token. She mentioned leaving it with you, Governor Luo. Did you bring it?"

Xian'er, standing by his side, shot the letter an extra glance upon learning it was from Luo Ning. Seeing her husband beating around the bush with Luo Min, she huffed internally.

Luo Min gave Lin Wanrong a thumbs-up, as if to say, "You've got guts!"

The Xiao family also sent a congratulatory gift, two strings of pearls and a thousand taels of silver - an incredibly lavish gift that no one else could match. The Xiao family didn't know Lin Wanrong owned these taverns; they only knew that Dong Qiaoqiao ran them and they assumed Lin Wanrong must be involved. Just based on that, they sent a grand gift. They truly were sincere. Lin Wanrong sighed, if he had known this would happen, why the trouble before?

First, he offended the Eldest Miss Xiao. On the day he sent off Xu Wei, Madam Xiao was furious. It seemed his relationship with the Xiao family was over. The real question was how to smuggle the Second Miss Xiao from her sister and mother.

The people the Xiao family sent with the gift were Si De and Xiao Feng. Seeing Lin Wanrong, they were overjoyed and rushed over, "Brother San, Brother San."

"How have you two been lately?" Lin Wanrong asked with a smile.

Both sighed in unison, "Brother San, when will you return to the Xiao residence?"

"What happened?" Lin Wanrong asked in surprise. "Is there trouble at home?" Logically speaking, with the White Lotus Sect destroyed, Cheng De executed, and Zhao Kangning fled back to the capital, the Xiao family's fortunes should be on the upswing.

"There's no big trouble, but things aren't right. Madam Xiao isn't managing things, and the Eldest Miss's temper has been particularly bad lately. She can't tolerate any mistakes. The Second Miss spends all her time in solitude and prayer. Brother San, we miss you." Si De said, his eyes reddening.

‘That Eldest Miss!’ Lin Wanrong seethed. ‘It’s easy to start a business, but hard to keep it. Do you plan to ruin all my businesses?’ He swallowed his anger. He was currently separated from the Xiao family, and didn’t want to deal with these matters.

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"Big Brother..." After their intimate moment, Qiaoqiao's face was flushed with a rosy glow, her eyes filled with satisfaction. She snuggled her delicate and beautiful body tightly against him, murmuring contentedly, "Qiaoqiao is the happiest person in the world."

Lin Wanrong gently caressed her smooth buttocks, squeezing her full breasts. Her jade-like breasts felt like a ball of smooth cream, making him hum in comfort. His mysterious tool inside his beloved wife swelled, and with a light spread of her small buttocks, he smirked, "Baby, let's do it again. Just now, we could have made two sons. Now, let's make four more. Tonight, I promise not to torture you, we'll only do it three times."

"Big brother." Qiaoqiao's face turned beet red, and she snuggled even closer into his arms. Despite being his wife for some time now, every time she heard his lewd words, she still felt as shy as a maiden. It was this maiden-like shyness that excited Lin Wanrong, and he felt that if he didn't love her properly every day, he would be letting himself down.

"Big brother, why didn't you sleep in the same room with Sister Xian'er? She made fun of me yesterday." Qiaoqiao whispered shyly. As soon as she finished speaking, she felt something inside her swell again, and her face turned even redder, her passion burning like fire.

"How did she make fun of you?" Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Didn't she just sneak in to peek while I was making love to my little darling? It's no big deal, you can watch her next time."

"Ah—" Qiaoqiao suddenly covered her cheeks, not daring to look at her husband, "Big brother, don't say it, I'm so embarrassed. How could Sister Xian'er be so naughty, not only peeking, but also squeezing into our bed, um, Big brother—"

Lin Wanrong leaned in to her ear, gently blowing a breath of air, "Little darling, don't be afraid. In the future, I will treat her the same way, so neither of you can make fun of each other. Darling, let's do it again."

Qiaoqiao shyly hummed in agreement, clinging tightly to her big brother, reaching out to touch his back, but unexpectedly touched a smooth, creamy hand. She screamed in surprise, only to hear a



woman's charming voice, "Sister Qiaoqiao, why were you speaking ill of me in front of our husband just now?"

"Sister Xian'er—" Qiaoqiao exclaimed in surprise, only to see Qin Xian'er's face flushed, her body completely bare, tightly hugging her husband's waist, her breasts rubbing gently against him.

"Husband, do you like it?" A hint of coquetry flashed in Qin Xian'er's eyes, hiding her inner sadness, she whispered, "This is what my Master taught me. She said, if I want you to love me, I must be willing to do anything for you."

'This Sister An is really something, how could she teach such—good techniques? One move is not enough, how dare she teach her disciple without seventy or eighty moves?' He gently patted Xian'er's back, "Little darling, I know your hardship. When I go to the capital, I will definitely help you break the love bug, and then we can be a real couple."

"Husband—" Qin Xian'er's cheek was pressed against his back, her voice soft and tearful, "With your words, Xian'er would be content even in death." She rubbed her cheek gently against her husband's back, her voice suddenly becoming coquettish, "Husband, then you should take good care of Qiaoqiao. Among all your beloveds, I like her the most. She and I are inseparable, you loving her is the same as loving me. Husband, I want to watch you two being intimate, my Master also taught me a lot of—"

This request was too difficult for him, Lin Wanrong was overjoyed, and the already infinitely shy Qiaoqiao was even more unbearable, she gasped, "Sister Xian'er, you, oh—"

"Little darling, this is what your Sister Xian'er forced me to do, I didn't want to, I'm a decent person, oh, Xian'er, is this move also taught by Sister An? Could she teach me next time—"

"Naughty big brother, naughty Sister Xian'er—" Knowing she couldn't escape, Qiaoqiao's eyes were seductive, she shyly offered her red lips...

Although it was the cold winter, the warmth was like a blooming lotus, the red waves were rolling under the covers, the three of them, husband and wives, were enjoying the ultimate pleasure together.

Chapter 268 Disappearance

Early in the morning, General Lin, buoyed by the spring breeze, woke up extremely early. His eyes were full of vigor, and his little brother, who had been busy all night, was still robust. Seeing his two wives curled up together under the brocade quilt, their exquisite figures fully exposed, he chuckled twice. He reached under the quilt and touched the women's chests, causing them to let out a soft moan. Only then did he step out of the cabin.

This pleasure boat was named "Happiness" by Lin Wanrong. It was Xian'er's dowry, and from now on, it would bear the Lin surname. He didn't feel the slightest bit like he was living off a woman.

A few days ago, he had instructed Qiaoqiao to choose a large mansion in Jinling City. It was the former residence of a retired elder, with small bridges over flowing water and courtyards with pavilions, quite tasteful. Lin Wanrong took his two wives to see it, and he was very satisfied with it in his heart, so he decided to buy it. After all, he was rich now, and he had to indulge in corruption when he should. Money should be spent, and after it's spent, more should be earned. This was Lin Wanrong's consistent belief. Although the New Year was just a few days away, and he would have to go to the capital after the New Year, Jinling was his first base and the place where he made his fortune. He had left too many memories here. If he didn't buy a big house, he would feel like he was letting himself down, and his wives too.

After deciding on this house, he heard from Luo Yuan's gossip that Luo Ning, the talented woman, had also secretly gone to see the house, with a smile on her face, seemingly very satisfied. Lin Wanrong was sweating profusely when he heard this. This little girl hadn't even married him yet, and she was already so concerned about their future living conditions. Wasn't she a bit too anxious?

However, he still preferred to stay on the boat. It was quiet here, with no one to disturb him. There were only three of them on the boat, and they could do whatever they wanted. When he thought about making love with his wives, the whole boat would shake. What a delightful thing that was, the glory of a man. Besides, it was quite comfortable to sunbathe naked. Unfortunately, although the two wives had agreed to sleep in the same bed with him, they would never do such a shocking thing.

"Life is so beautiful!" Lin Wanrong shouted at the lake. A thin layer of mist rose from the lake, carrying a bit of chill, obscuring the view in the distance. But he was bare-chested, feeling the chill of winter, and his heart was extremely comfortable.

Such peaceful days wouldn't last for many more days. He would soon be entering the capital. What would be waiting for him there? He didn't want to think about it, so he started exercising. He wasn't like Sister An who knew how to use sword techniques, so his exercise methods were inevitably a bit basic. Stretching his legs and bending his waist, he did the seventh set of radio calisthenics.

"Lin San, Lin San--" Just as he finished a set of exercises, he heard a faint call coming from the lake.

Did he hear wrong? Who would be calling him so early? He shook his head, his spirits high, and after finishing the radio calisthenics, he did eye exercises.

"Lin San, Lin San--" The voice became more and more urgent, mixed with a familiar woman's call. This time he was sure, he thought to himself, 'someone really is looking for me.'

The voice was getting closer, and Lin Wanrong looked intently, only to see a small boat rowing over the water. Madam Xiao, along with a few maids and servants, was hurrying over.

"Madam, are you calling me?" Lin Wanrong shouted loudly.

Upon hearing his voice, Madam Xiao quickly looked over. Seeing a man standing on the pleasure boat, who else could it be but Lin San? Her face instantly lit up with joy and surprise, and she said to the boatman, "Row faster, faster!"

As the small boat approached the painted boat, Lin Wanrong laughed and said, "Madam, why have you come here to find me?"

Madam Xiao wiped the sweat from her forehead and said anxiously, "It was really hard to find you, Lin San. Is Yushuang with you?"

'The Second Miss? I indeed wanted to steal her away, but before I could act, you've already come looking.' He shook his head and said, "No, I haven't seen the Second Miss these past few days. Madam, what happened to her?"

Madam Xiao sighed and said, "Yesterday, a few gossiping maids were talking about you in private. They said that Yuruo had a disagreement with you, and you were driven away by Yuruo. This was overheard by Yushuang. You know, she still doesn't know that you're back. We've been keeping this from her. Suddenly hearing this, she couldn't bear it. She looked for Yuruo, had a quarrel, and this morning, she left the mansion. We don't know where she went."

"Damn it!" Lin Wanrong snorted. Although the Second Miss was gentle towards him, she was also a woman with a temper. She was not someone who could be bullied. It was no surprise that she made a fuss this time when the Eldest Miss deceived her.

"Madam, didn't anyone see the Second Miss leave the mansion?" Lin Wanrong asked anxiously, jumping onto Madam Xiao's small boat.

"Can you please put your clothes on first!" Madam Xiao said, her face turning red. Seeing him bare-chested, exposing his sturdy muscles, Madam Xiao was a faithful woman. That day, when he unabashedly talked about pursuing happiness, she was ready to leave him. Today, he was again in such a disheveled state. He really was a lawless man. Madam Xiao gave a bitter smile. This Lin San, one could never reason with him. There was nothing he wouldn't dare to do.

Was it such a big deal to be shirtless? Lin Wanrong nodded helplessly.

Qin Xian'er and Qiaoqiao had already come out of the cabin when they heard someone shouting. Seeing their husband in a hurry to leave, Qin Xian'er jumped onto the small boat, draped a thick shirt over him, and gently tied it for him. She smiled sweetly and said, "Husband, you go. Come back soon."

This girl, ever since the three of them had a wild night, seemed to have mellowed a bit. Lin Wanrong was overjoyed in his heart. He hadn't expected that event to have such an effect. He would have to do it more often in the future. He whispered in Xian'er's ear, "Little darling, I'll be back soon. You and Qiaoqiao, wash up and wait for your husband to come back."

Qin Xian'er blushed and jumped onto the big boat with a shy smile. Madam Xiao saw their sweet affection and thought of her own daughter's situation. She sighed lightly and said, "When Yushuang left today, the gatekeeper thought she was going out to do something, so he didn't stop her. I thought she must have come to find you, but you're always on the move, and she doesn't know all these things. Where could she go to find you? This girl, she's so young and has never experienced any hardship. If she runs into a bad person, what will we do?"

As Madam Xiao spoke, she was already in tears. In the recent encounters with Madam Xiao, her tears had increased, and her formulaic smile had decreased significantly. Lin Wanrong comforted her, "Madam, don't panic. The Second Miss is smart and quick-witted. She's only been gone for a few hours, and there won't be any major problems. Once she learns that I'm in Jinling, she will definitely stay in the city to look for me. She won't leave Jinling."

Madam Xiao was worried and confused. After hearing his analysis, she felt that it made a lot of sense. It was rare for him to maintain such a clear mind in such an urgent situation. She had a higher opinion of him and said, "Lin San, your analysis is very accurate. I and Yuruo have split up. I came to find you, and Yuruo has taken some people to search everywhere."

As they spoke, the small boat had already reached the shore. Lin Wanrong was the first to jump up. Madam Xiao pulled her skirt and walked to the bow of the boat. Lin Wanrong extended his hand, grabbed her arm, and helped her onto the shore.

Madam Xiao's face turned red, and she was secretly annoyed. But seeing his clear eyes without a trace of lewdness, she held her tongue. Lin Wanrong calmly said, "Madam, have you sent people to all the places the Second Miss likes to go?"

Madam Xiao gave him a white look. Did he really need to tell her that? She nodded and said, "I've sent people to all the places she likes to go, but we've found nothing."

Lin Wanrong said, "In that case, let's split up and search here. No matter how big Jinling City is, even if I have to dig three feet into the ground, I will find Yushuang." He was so anxious at this moment that he didn't even call her the Second Miss. Madam Xiao heard this and felt that he was being sincere.

After parting ways with Madam Xiao, he carefully recalled the process of getting to know the Second Miss. Their love was confirmed in the Xiao mansion, and their lovey-dovey moments also mostly took place in the Xiao mansion. If there was a familiar place in the city for the two of them, it would only be the Qixia Temple. That day, when he and the Eldest Miss were captured by the White Lotus Sect, the Second Miss fasted and prayed for them all day, and that place had special significance.

Regardless of whether Madam Xiao had sent people to look for her, he went straight to Qixia Temple. It was still early, and there were not many worshippers in Qixia Temple. Only a few monks were sweeping the rustling fallen leaves, making it very quiet.

He asked a few monks if a beautiful female donor had come, and they all shook their heads. Only a young monk said that a beautiful female donor had gone in the direction of the Daxiong Treasure Hall.

Damn it, he was so young, and he already recognized a beautiful female donor. When he grew up, he would definitely be a flirtatious monk. Lin Wanrong was both grateful and contemptuous, and he hurried to the Daxiong Treasure Hall.

The Daxiong Treasure Hall had one main hall and two side halls. He went straight to the main hall, but it was empty. The Buddha statues were solemn. He paid his respects and searched from the front hall to the back hall. Not to mention female donors, he didn't even see a single mouse.

Just as he was getting frustrated, he heard a faint sound of footsteps coming from outside the front hall. The sound was delicate and urgent, as if a woman was approaching.

The woman entered the hall, carefully searched around, found nothing, and couldn't help but sigh. She knelt down on the cushion in front of the Buddha statue and said, "Merciful Guanyin Bodhisattva, I beg you to ensure my sister's safety. I am willing to exchange my life for her safety. As long as she can return safely, I will never think of that hateful man again, sob..."

"Eldest Miss..." Lin Wanrong, who was hiding in the back hall, was startled and whispered.

## Chapter 269 I Hate You

Several days had passed, and the Eldest Miss seemed to have lost some weight. There was a hint of sadness in her eyes, and a faint sorrow hung on her cheeks, which were as smooth as jade. Her full bosom, slender waist, and small perky buttocks were still as upright and firm as ever. She had lost some of her arrogance, but gained a touch of melancholy. Compared to her usual self, she had a different kind of charm.

The Eldest Miss had just finished praying to the Buddha. Her words were simple, just a few sentences, but they sounded unusual to Lin Wanrong. The "bad guy" she missed— in the Eldest Miss's mouth, who else could be this "bad guy" other than him, the notorious Lin San? Judging from her tone, it seemed that she had some feelings for him— his heart suddenly started to thump. It was unexpected, too unexpected, it could be deadly.

"Who's there?" The hall was empty, and although Lin Wanrong's voice was soft, it was exceptionally clear in the Eldest Miss's ears. She didn't expect someone to be in the back hall, and she was startled. She quickly stood up and shouted.

Lin Wanrong secretly cursed his luck. What he feared had come true. Wasn't this intentional harassment? He came out with an awkward smile and waved to Xiao Yuruo, "Hi, Eldest Miss, how are you? How is the Second Miss? How is the Madam? How is Fubo? How are the brothers in the mansion?"

"Is it you?" Seeing the person who came out from behind was the one she had been thinking about in front of the Buddha, Xiao Yuruo was both shocked and embarrassed. Thinking about the words she had just said might have fallen into his ears, the Eldest Miss felt like fainting, and her heart was indescribable.

"It's not me, it's the Buddha, the Buddha is speaking." Lin Wanrong laughed dryly and added, "Don't worry, Eldest Miss, I didn't hear anything."

"It's you, it's you, it's definitely you. You did it on purpose." The Eldest Miss felt miserable. Looking at this annoying person, she didn't know what she was feeling, it was a mix of emotions. Tears fell down her cheeks, and she sobbed, "You deliberately hid here to laugh at me!"

‘This girl is too stubborn. I haven't developed the habit of eavesdropping on others' secrets.’ Seeing the Eldest Miss crying miserably, Lin Wanrong didn't know what to say. If it was like before today when he didn't know anything, it would be fine. But he had heard some things he shouldn't have at an inappropriate time, and was discovered by the Eldest Miss. This was really difficult to handle. He wasn't prepared for this. He slowly walked over and said softly, "Don't cry, I really didn't do it on purpose. The Madam came to find me this morning, saying that the Second Miss was missing. I was anxious, so I came here to look. I didn't know that while I was searching inside, you were checking outside. It was just a coincidence, it's that simple. As for the words you said, I didn't hear a single one!"

"Did you really not hear anything?" The Eldest Miss snorted. Looking at him, tears rolled down her cheeks, even more severe than before. It seemed that if he really didn't hear anything, it would be even more upsetting.

"No, no, absolutely not." Lin Wanrong hurriedly said, "Even if I heard it, I would definitely forget it all. I guarantee it with my reputation."

Looking at this Lin San who was both familiar and strange, the Eldest Miss couldn't hold back anymore. She rushed forward, raised her little fist, and hit his chest while crying loudly, "I told you not to hear, told you not to hear, told you not to hear, you bad guy, you won't be satisfied until you bully me to death—"

‘Truly invincible. Whether I say I didn't hear you or I did, either way, it's wrong. I have to take your punches, do you think I have it easy?’

The Eldest Miss was crying like rain, and her little fist hitting him felt like tickling.

‘So this girl really likes me a bit!’ Lin Wanrong was a little stunned, not knowing whether to be happy or worried. Thinking back on his interactions with the Eldest Miss, there were indeed some indescribable feelings mixed in. But the first impression he left on the Eldest Miss was that he was despicable and shameless, and the first impression she left on him was that she was high and mighty and unrealistic. The two of them didn't see eye to eye, like feuding enemies, neither willing to admit

defeat. He never thought that the Eldest Miss would have feelings for him. If he hadn't accidentally overheard today, given the state between him and the Eldest Miss, he probably would never have thought about it in this direction. So, the first impression was really important.

He sighed lightly, feeling a sense of happy trouble. Seeing his strange expression, the Eldest Miss felt even more embarrassed and didn't know what to do.

After Lin Wanrong had figured all this out and thought back on the Eldest Miss's actions, he suddenly saw the light. It turned out that the girl's actions were not unreasonable, but rather too "reasonable".

He fully embodied the spirit of being loved for being cheap, and chuckled, "Miss, I really didn't hear it! Or, you can say it again, and I promise to remember every word."

The Eldest Miss's face turned red, and she quickly wiped away the tears from the corners of her eyes, and hummed, "You're dreaming, it's best if you didn't hear it, who would hope you heard it." Hearing his words seemed to have a hidden meaning, the Eldest Miss was extremely flustered, she didn't dare to look at him, her heart was pounding, and her face was burning.

Thinking of all the things between him and the Eldest Miss, Lin Wanrong sighed slightly, took her little hand and said, "Alright, stop making a fuss, there's enough chaos already, let's have a good talk first." Xiao Yuruo's little hand was warm and sweaty. Holding it in his hand was like a warm jade in warm water, incredibly soft and delicate.

Having her hand held by him, the Eldest Miss felt as if her heart was about to jump out, her body trembling slightly. She wanted to break free from him, but she couldn't muster the strength. It seemed as if she could hear her own heartbeat, her voice trembling slightly. She forced herself to suppress her shyness, tried to keep a straight face and said, "What—what are you going to say—you—you've never been so bad—"

Her heart was beating faster and faster, and she couldn't speak anymore. Her powdered face was flushed, and she felt like she was on fire, making her lose all her strength. After stuttering out a sentence, she didn't even know what she had said, and she didn't have any confidence at all. She quickly lowered her head, not daring to let him see her burning face.

"I'm not at home, don't be harsh on the people below. It's easy to start a business but hard to maintain it. You should treat them well, so they can work wholeheartedly for you. Don't lose your temper at random." Lin Wanrong said casually.



The Eldest Miss opened her mouth, wanting to refute, but seeing his serious face, she couldn't open her mouth. Her face was as red as if it was about to drip water, and she bit her red lips. She hummed softly through her nostrils, and then seemed to be dissatisfied and raised her head, "Where did I treat them badly? It's just that I've been irritable lately, so I've been a bit too harsh. I didn't do anything wrong, and these people ran to complain to you!"

Her eyebrows were like spring water, her eyes like condensed ink. As she spoke, her cheeks were flushed, her chest heaving, as bright as the peach blossoms in March. Her aggrieved expression didn't look like a powerful woman in the business world, but rather showed all the charm of a shy girl.

Lin Wanrong was stunned for a moment. If the Eldest Miss was always this soft and watery, what a beautiful sight it would be.

"What are you looking at!" Xiao Yuruo felt unbearably shy in her heart. She wanted to maintain her dignity, but she couldn't keep a straight face. Her little hand, which was held by him, was full of sweat due to nervousness. "I—I'm going to find Yushuang." The Eldest Miss's face was a bright red, and she quickly lowered her head, speaking in a voice as small as a mosquito's.

"Let's go together." Lin Wanrong said. Thinking of Yushuang, he also became anxious. If he couldn't find that girl here, could it be that something really happened to her?

Seeing the worried expression on Lin San's face, the Eldest Miss thought of her relationship with him, and then thought of her sister's relationship with him. She was in a dilemma and didn't know what to do.

"Who wants to go with you, you have no shame." Hearing him speak, the Eldest Miss's heart trembled slightly. A sweet feeling surged in her heart, and she said without thinking.

She used all her strength to pull her little hand out of his big palm. Her face was radiant, and she no longer had the courage to look at him. She said softly, "I'm going to find Yushuang, you—you don't follow me, I hate you—"

'If you hate me, you hate me. It would be strange if you don't.' Lin Wanrong looked at the Eldest Miss and chuckled.

The Eldest Miss felt as if he had seen through her heart, her heart trembled, and a bright pink color appeared on her face. Her delicate body twisted slightly, and she ran straight out of the main hall. Her steps were very hurried, as if staying here for a moment longer would add to the danger.

‘This Eldest Miss, she sure knows how to run.’ Lin Wanrong shook his head helplessly, watching the Eldest Miss's graceful figure, not knowing what to feel. Life is truly wonderful. Just yesterday, he was complaining about this Eldest Miss's temper, but today, he heard her true feelings. Although it didn't stun him, it did give him a sense of unreality.

"Miss, you're going the wrong way—" Seeing Xiao Yuruo rushing into the temple, clearly due to her emotional state, she hadn't discerned the direction properly. Lin Wanrong called out with a laugh.

"None of your business!" The Eldest Miss's face was flushed. She stopped and realized that she had indeed gone the wrong way in her haste. She stomped her foot in frustration, her face as red as the sunset, and turned to run out of the temple. When she got close to Lin Wanrong, she stole a glance at him, her face as bright as a peach blossom, and hummed, "You annoying person—"

She seemed to be both angry and resentful, her face flushed with a hint of embarrassment. Lin Wanrong was stunned, his heart stirred. When this Eldest Miss was enchanting, she was even more captivating than Sister An.

Seeing his gaze as bright as a torch, Xiao Yuruo didn't dare to stay any longer. She ran out without looking back, but her heart couldn't calm down.

Timing was everything. Seeing Xiao Yuruo leave the temple, Lin Wanrong smiled helplessly, turned around, and donated a silver ingot for incense. He bowed to the Buddha with unprecedented devotion, "Thank you all for your generous help. When I return from the capital, I will rebuild golden statues for you all."

He was worried about Xiao Yushuang, so he searched carefully within the Qixia Temple, asking everyone he met, but he still didn't see the Second Miss. The vague feelings with the Eldest Miss were originally quite pleasant, but without finding Yushuang, he couldn't feel happy.

When he left the temple, the Eldest Miss was nowhere to be seen. Thinking about her current state of mind, she must be in a mess, how could she calm down to look for Yushuang? It was indeed hard for her.

While thinking about going back to call a meeting with Qingshan and Luo Yuan, and mobilizing the brothers in Hung Hing to search everywhere in the city to find Yushuang, he had already come to the lake in front of the Qixia Temple. The last time he was kidnapped and returned, it was here that he was about to get intimate with the Second Miss when he was caught by the Eldest Miss. At that time, he hated the Eldest Miss so much that his teeth itched. Now thinking about it, there are quite a few things to ponder and remember here.

The lake was calm and clear. His gaze swept casually and saw a young master sitting by the lake, his back to him, his face unclear. He was not tall, dressed in a light blue robe, his shoulders thin and weak, his hair bun up, revealing a long white neck and small jade-like ears.

This figure looked familiar, which family's young master was so handsome? Lin Wanrong took a closer look and was overjoyed. He walked over quietly and said softly, "Female donor, this poor monk has brought you tea—"

"No, no, where did this monk come from, disturbing my little—" The young master's voice was clear, but he suddenly felt something was wrong. He quickly turned around and saw the face he had been longing for day and night. His eyes immediately filled with a thin layer of mist, "Lin San, is it really you—"

"Female donor, it's indeed this poor monk. Oh, female donor, you've hurt the old monk—"

The Second Miss suddenly threw herself into his arms, raised her little fist, and hit his chest hard, tears falling down her cheeks, "Annoying, annoying. You annoying bad guy, woo, I told you not to come find me, I'll kill you, and then die with you—"

He had just been beaten up in the temple by the Eldest Miss, and now he was being beaten up by the Second Miss. He could only laugh and cry: 'The fate between me and these two sisters is really a bit strange.'

Holding Yushuang tightly in his arms, this girl was crying her heart out. The tears soaked both of their clothes, but the Second Miss cried even harder, like a floodgate had been opened. She sobbed almost to the point of fainting.

'Why bother?' Lin Wanrong sighed in his heart, 'I brought this upon myself, poor Yushuang!' He gently patted Yushuang's back and said softly, "Second Miss, don't cry anymore, it makes me feel bad when you cry—"

The Second Miss sniffed and said, "I'm going to cry, I'm going to cry, it's going to kill you, you heartless person. You're having a good time outside, very satisfied, you don't remember me at all, even if I cry to death, you won't care."

"How could I not think of you? I think about you every day, at night, when I eat, when I sleep." Sweet words came naturally to him, he sighed slightly and said, "Ah, Second Miss, you don't know, this time I went out, it was a matter of life and death, I almost didn't survive to come back."

The Second Miss was indeed distracted by his words, and she was so scared that she didn't dare to cry anymore. She clung to him tightly and said, "Lin San, what happened to you? Has someone been bullying you? Tell me, I'll bring General Zhenyuan to deal with him. Let's see who dares to bully you."

Lin Wanrong didn't know whether to laugh or cry, but he was even more touched in his heart. He held her and said, "You don't need to worry, those who bullied me have already been dealt with by me. In the future, if anyone dares to bully you, just tell me. I have many people at my disposal now, and it's no problem to beat them to a pulp."

"You're bragging!" Hearing his relaxed tone, the Second Miss also broke into a smile. "When have you ever not bullied me? You should settle your own accounts."

Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, "How could I? I cherish you too much. How could I bear to bully the Second Miss?"

"You tell me, how long have you been back in Jinling, yet you never came to see me. I've been praying for you every day, staying in my room, and everyone in the mansion says I've changed." Xiao Yushuang's eyes were filled with tears, and she spoke in a wronged tone.

Thinking about it, a sixteen or seventeen-year-old girl, who used to be so lively and loved to play pranks, had become so sentimental after meeting him. He was indeed the root cause. Thinking about this, Lin Wanrong said seriously, "Yushuang, in the future, don't deliberately suppress yourself. Do whatever you want to do. I still like to see the carefree little girl you used to be."

Xiao Yushuang gave a shy smile and hummed, "As long as you don't bully me, I'll still be Yushuang. When have you ever not bullied me?" Seeing her teary eyes and smiling face, her age was indeed not big, but she was born with bright eyes and white teeth, extraordinarily beautiful, with an expression full of earnestness. She was completely different from the Eldest Miss, and Lin Wanrong felt a tickle in his heart. He chuckled, "Then I'll bully you for a lifetime, are you willing?"

Xiao Yushuang looked at him, her face full of surprise, and suddenly hugged his neck and said, "This is what you said, from now on we'll bully each other, and no one is allowed to leave the other." She stared blankly at him, then suddenly said, "Lin San, let's elope."

Lin Wanrong broke out in a cold sweat. This girl had come up with such a silly idea again. Was eloping fashionable? He laughed and said, "Eloping is a very tasteless act. We don't need to go that far yet, do we?" This was not a lie. Madam Xiao had already hinted at this, but because he was currently in a cold war with the Xiao family, he had postponed this matter.

"Who says we're not there yet?" The Second Miss pouted, "You've already quarreled with my sister like that. She won't even let you in the house, how could she allow our relationship?"

"Do you know about that? Ah, Second Miss, actually, things are not as complicated as you imagine."

The Second Miss hummed, "I heard from my sister that you brought two women back to Jinling. My sister was worried about me, so she kept you out of the house. Is that true?"

Regarding this matter, Lin Wanrong didn't intend to hide it from her. He nodded and said, "Yushuang, to be honest, I already have two intimate female friends in Jinling. I will never leave them, just as I will never leave you."

The Second Miss bit her lip and cried softly, "You heartless man, you're always affectionate everywhere. I've known for a long time, but I just can't help but like you. How can I stop you? I've given up my home for you. If you dare not want me, I'll die in front of you."

"Where, where. How could it be?" Lin Wanrong chuckled, holding the Second Miss in his arms and said, "By the way, how did you end up in this disguise and here? The Eldest Miss was just looking for you, did you see her?"

Yushuang bit him on the arm and hummed, "You're only asking now, I'm angry, I won't tell you."

"Then do you want me to marry you into my family?" Lin Wanrong chuckled.

The Second Miss's face flushed, and she lowered her head and said, "Now? I still want to go to the capital to study. Or, let's get married first—." She looked up and saw his teasing smile, and her face turned red. "You bad Lin San, you always bully me like this. I'll definitely bully you enough in the future."

After chatting with this innocent girl for a while, and letting go of his worries, Lin Wanrong was truly happy.

The Second Miss said, "Yesterday, I learned from the maids that you had returned. I was angry that my sister had been keeping it from me and had even turned you away from the door, so I went to argue with her. My sister seemed to be in a bad mood too. When I spoke to her, she also became somewhat agitated. I felt wronged at the time, so I thought to come find you."

As she spoke of the events of the previous night, a look of grievance crossed Yushuang's face. "It was late at night, and I didn't know where to find you, so I had to wait until dawn to leave the house. To avoid attracting attention, I changed into this disguise after leaving the house and searched for you everywhere. But you, you were nowhere to be found. I had nowhere to go, so I thought of this place. I thought to myself, I'll just wait here for you. If you don't come in three days, I'll wait three days. If you don't come in three years, I'll wait three years. If you, a heartless man, never think of me, then there's no point in me living. I might as well freeze to death here."

This girl had the same stubborn nature as her sister. Lin Wanrong laughed and was moved. He patted her little face twice and said, "What nonsense are you talking about freezing to death? You're still young, you haven't tasted happiness yet. In the future, you'll become the happiest woman in the world—"

‘—One of them!’ These two words were only thought in his heart, but he couldn't say them out loud.

The Second Miss twisted him hard around the waist and hummed, "You always know how to sweet-talk people. I'm sure those two sisters of mine were also deceived by you." She leaned her head on Lin San's chest, smiled sweetly, and said softly, "But at least you still have some conscience, knowing to come here to find me, and even recognizing me. I saw my sister when she came earlier, and I deliberately hid from her. She looked strange when she left, just like how I look when I miss you. I don't know what's wrong. I couldn't bear it at the time and almost called out to her, but then I thought about how she treated you, and I held back. Lin San, I know my sister treated you like that, and you must feel wronged and upset. But I'm not feeling well either. My sister is doing this for my sake. I apologize to you on her behalf. Can you forgive her, please?"

Forgive? The problem now was much more complicated than that! He chuckled, "I've always had a bad memory. I forget everything when I wake up from sleep. Don't you know that, Second Miss?"

"How would I know? I've never slept with you—uh, annoying!" The Second Miss fell for his trick, punched him, and acted coquettishly in his arms.

Thinking about it, both of his wives were already at home, and it was only a matter of time before this girl Yushuang would join them. It was necessary for the few of them to meet and hold a joint meeting. He fiddled with the girl's smooth and jade-like little ear, leaned into her ear and said, "Your two sisters are now in a very fun place. There's a big boat there, and only the few of us are on it. No one can see us, and we can do whatever we want. I and your two sisters do some very fun things every day. Do you want to go see? I'll take you there, okay?"

"Okay—no!" The little girl was initially tempted, but then seemed to remember something, her face turned red, and she quickly denied, "You haven't married me openly yet, why should I go to your place? Are you planning to do something bad again?"

Sweat, 'Do I look so much like a big bad wolf?' Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, gave a thumbs up and said, "Second Miss, you're really vigilant. We won't go today, we'll go in the future."

The Second Miss grabbed his hand and said, "You once told me to learn more skills to help my mother and sister. During the days you were away, I started studying hard. Not only did I learn poetry and conversation, but I also learned the methods of calculation. When I get to the capital, I will also ask for a famous teacher. I, Xiao Yushuang, don't believe that I can't do what others can do."

Her expression was resolute, and her eyes shone with determination. Looking at her, she somewhat resembled Madam Xiao, but one could also see the shadow of the Eldest Miss. Lin Wanrong sighed inwardly, 'This girl has grown up and has her own ideas. Hopefully, she can achieve what she wants when she gets to the capital.'

"Lin San, when I get to the capital, if I neglect you because I'm busy studying, you mustn't blame me, okay?" Xiao Yushuang leaned against him and said softly.

'This girl, she's actually giving me a preventive shot.' Lin Wanrong held her in his arms and laughed, "The more serious you are about your studies, the happier I will be. If you don't study hard, I will spank your little butt."

"Bad guy—" Yushuang's eyes misted over, remembering the past, she felt a hot sensation on her little buttocks, and quickly whimpered, snuggling shyly in his arms.

Holding the Second Miss, he suddenly thought of the various entanglements with the Eldest Miss in the temple today. A sense of romance rose in Lin Wanrong's heart. He had originally intended to steal just the Second Miss, but he had accidentally completed the task in excess. What should he do now? The Eldest Miss was a flower with thorns, and it hurt quite a bit to touch her.

After gently kneading the soft body in his arms for a while, he smiled at the corner of his mouth, his thoughts already flying somewhere else...

## Chapter 270 The Eldest Miss Loves to Blush

"Lin San, where are we headed?" the Second Miss asked curiously as she leaned against Lin Wanrong in the carriage.

"We're off to a nice place, one that you'll surely love," Lin Wanrong responded with a hearty laugh. "You snuck away today without informing the Madam and Eldest Miss. They must be terribly worried. Once we've finished at this place, I'll take you home, alright?"

The Second Miss gave a quiet nod, asking, "And what about you? Will you be going back?"

"I'll wander around outside for a few more days. I've been so tired recently, consider this a vacation. Once the New Year passes and we head for the capital, we'll journey together," answered Lin Wanrong. The nature of his relationship with the Eldest Miss was a mix of confusion and ambiguity, which made the decision of whether or not to return all the more difficult.

The Second Miss obediently responded, nestling herself in his arms, "I'll listen to you then. Once we've visited the place, you can take me home. But, you must visit me every day. I still have many questions to ask you. If you dare leave me again, I'll...I'll scold you every day until you come to see me—"

Lin Wanrong couldn't help but chuckle, her threat was rather 'terrifying.'

The Second Miss gave a snort, retrieving a cherished little note from her bosom. She glanced at it, her face a mix of joy and shyness. She raised her small face, shooting Lin Wanrong a glance that was partly angry, partly whimsical, and said in a low voice, "You rascal. After being away from



home for so long, you finally write a letter back, but it only has a few words, and you couldn't even be bothered to use a full sheet of paper. Infuriating."

Couldn't even be bothered to use a full sheet of paper? Am I that stingy? Lin Wanrong wondered. He took the note from her hand and read the calligraphic words: Second Miss, I miss you!

This note was written after he received a letter from the Eldest Miss upon arriving in Feng County. He had stayed up all night to write it, then had it specially delivered back by Xu Wei. He remembered it clearly, yet the letter was clearly three sentences long and mentioned three people. How come it was reduced to just one sentence when it reached the Second Miss?

"Second Miss, who gave you this note?" Lin Wanrong asked, puzzled.

"Of course it was my elder sister. She said you wrote me a letter, and my heart leaped with joy. But who knew that upon opening it, it only contained these few words. You heartless man," the Second Miss retorted, her face reddening. She snatched the note back and clutched it against her heart, nestling back into his arms and murmured, "Only a few words written, but it made someone dream about you. How annoying."

Then Lin Wanrong understood. The Eldest Miss must have thought the letter inappropriate and decided to cut the sheet into three strips, distributing one to each person. Even if the form of the paper was somewhat off, it was better than receiving nothing. 'Damn, why didn't I think of that? The Eldest Miss is too smart.' Lin Wanrong wished he could laugh out loud, the Eldest Miss was so thoughtful. But he couldn't help wondering where the strip meant for the Madam was. Could the Eldest Miss have kept it? That would be a real piece of evidence.

The carriage they had summoned had traveled only a short distance when Lin Wanrong lifted the curtain. His eyes fell unintentionally on a dilapidated hut at the foot of the hill by the Qixia Temple, where the fleeting figure of a woman in a blue cloth robe appeared and disappeared, seemingly a female ascetic.

She was quite busty! Lin Wanrong, gifted with excellent vision, could clearly discern her form after just a brief glance. His thoughts took a lascivious turn for a moment before he suddenly remembered something and urgently commanded, "Stop, stop the carriage—"

The Second Miss was surprised and asked, "What happened?"

Lin Wanrong said, "I am going to check on someone. Well, not someone's chest, I mean. Second Miss, could you please wait here for a moment? I'll be right back." Xiao Yushuang nodded in agreement.

Lin Wanrong stepped off the carriage and approached the hut. It was decrepit, with winds whistling through the cracks. A woman dressed in a green robe had her hair piled high into a bun and concealed it with a small Buddha hat. Indeed, she seemed like a solitary female ascetic.

As Lin Wanrong studied the woman's face, he was taken aback and gently said, "Miss Tao, is it really you?"

Upon seeing him, Miss Tao's eyes widened in surprise, and she dropped the scripture in her hand. Her face turned beet red as she hurried to her feet, exclaiming joyously, "Lin... Young Master Lin, is it you?"

Looking at the slightly emaciated woman in front of him, Lin Wanrong could hardly believe that he would encounter her here. Miss Tao's voluptuous figure was obscured by a large robe, concealing her attractive figure. Remembering this woman's previous feistiness, Lin Wanrong asked in confusion, "Miss Tao, how did you end up here? What are you doing?"

Tao Wanying softly responded, her voice steady, "I've been here for a few days now. I am currently practicing my faith."

"Practicing your faith?" This girl was in the prime of her youth, why would she want to become a nun? Had she quarreled with Young Master Hou? He quickly tried to dissuade her, "Miss Tao, you're at the flower of your age. Why are you thinking of renouncing the secular world? Did you have a dispute with Young Master Hou? Ah, quarrels are common among young people, but you must not do something in the heat of the moment that you might regret for life."

Tao Wanying shook her head and said, "Young Master Lin... Lin, please don't speak nonsense. I have nothing to do with Young Master Hou!"

"Nothing to do?" Lin Wanrong looked at her skeptically and chuckled, "Miss Tao, everyone knows about you and Young Master Hou. Now that Miss Luo has unequivocally rejected him, it's a great opportunity for you. You should be with him, that's the right thing to do. But why are you here alone, practicing Buddhism?"

"Nonsense," Tao Wanying's eyebrows rose in anger, a glint of fury flashed in her eyes, and the shadow of her old temper seemed to flicker, "I used to admire Young Master Hou, but it's far from what you think. After all that's happened, he and I have even less to do with each other. Please don't misunderstand."

Seeing the determination in Tao Wanying's words, and sensing she was not feigning, Lin Wanrong sighed in resignation, "Alright, alright, I won't say any more. Lest in your anger, you draw a blade and charge at me."

Upon hearing Lin Wanrong teasing her about the past, Tao Wanying's cheeks flushed. She said softly, "Lin San, what brings you here? As far as I recall, you are not particularly devout."

"I'm here on important business. But what about you, Miss Tao? What happened? Are you really planning on becoming a nun?"

Tao Wanying sighed lightly. "There have been many issues at home lately. My father lost his position, and my brother has changed for the worse. Our family has fallen from grace; we're not the prosperous family we once were. I realize this is due to my father and brother's wrongdoings. We are being punished by the gods. I am here to repay their debts. I had intended to ask the temple's master to ordain me, but they told me they do not accept female disciples at Qixia Temple. I pleaded to no avail and had no choice but to build this hut outside the temple. I hope to be a practitioner and redeem my father and brother's sins."

Lin Wanrong was indirectly involved in the troubles of her father and brother, but he did not feel any guilt compared to the evil they had done. He nodded, "Miss Tao, you indeed embody filial piety. However, considering your beautiful appearance and prosperous aura, I'm afraid your worldly entanglements are not yet settled. It's unlikely that you'll be able to become a nun."

Tao Wanying chuckled. "You're not a monk, yet you're interpreting my features? If I can't become a nun, it would be your curse. You won't get off easily."

Lin Wanrong had only interacted with her a few times and couldn't claim to know her well. Yet seeing this fiery young woman renounce the secular world to become a nun did not sit well with him. He exchanged a few words with her, but when he saw her wearing the wide Buddhist robe, he didn't know what else to say.

Tao Wanying spoke faintly, "By the way, I forgot to congratulate you on your victory at the poetry contest. Now you have everyone's admiration. You can have anything you want."

"That was all just for fun, it doesn't count. I'm naturally repulsed by the idea of becoming a scholar or a man of letters." Lin Wanrong laughed.

Tao Wanying looked at him, "Are you really going to marry Miss Luo Ning?"

"Well, I suppose so," Lin Wanrong chuckled. He hadn't seen Luo Ning in a while and thought he should find a way to visit her.

Tao Wanying nodded, "Then I wish you a happy marriage. It's remarkable that Luo Ning could captivate someone as carefree as you. The two of you are a perfect match, both talented and beautiful."

"Miss Tao, you don't have to flatter us. Living here in the temple is hard and lonely. Take some time to go out and explore. Your mood will naturally improve. I reckon that in a few days, you won't want to become a nun anymore."

Tao Wanying glared at him, "I won't let you disrupt my resolve. I won't listen to you."

Lin Wanrong laughed and started to walk away. Tao Wanying seemed a bit stunned, "Lin San, are you leaving?"

Her voice seemed somewhat wistful. Lin Wanrong sighed lightly. It was not surprising. She must have been living outside the temple for some time and had few people to talk to. It was harsh for a young woman to keep company with a dim lamp and a Buddha statue, renouncing the world.

"I'm not planning to become a monk, of course, I must go," Lin Wanrong turned to say, noting a shade of desolation in Tao Wanying's gaze. He hurriedly added with a grin, "But don't worry. I'll stay in Jinling for a few more days. If I have time, I will come to chat with you. I'll relay any news from Miss Luo and the others. I believe they'll come to visit you. Having a chat with them will surely lift your spirits."

Tao Wanying didn't respond, only offering a bitter smile.

Returning to the carriage, the Second Miss was leaning against the wall, dozing off. Lin Wanrong gently touched her nose and chuckled, "Wake up, little one."

As the Second Miss opened her eyes to see him, her face flushed slightly. Quickly wrapping her arms around his, she said with slight embarrassment, "I was up early today, didn't sleep well last night, and fell asleep while waiting. Have you finished meeting your friend?"

"I have." Compared to Tao Wanying, the Second Miss was indeed fortunate. Lin Wanrong pulled her into his embrace and softly said, "Keep sleeping, I'll watch over you."

The carriage entered the city, stopping in front of a grand mansion. As the Second Miss stepped out, she gazed at the large vermilion gate and asked curiously, "Lin San, whose house is this? It's even larger than ours!"

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "This is Lin's mansion. From now on, you are part of this household."

"Lin's mansion?" The Second Miss paused, then understanding dawned, and she exclaimed, "Lin San, are you serious?"

"Of course, this will be my home in Jinling from now on," Lin Wanrong said with a smile.

Giggling, the Second Miss darted into the mansion. It was beautifully constructed, expansive, with pavilions, bridges over flowing streams, far grander than the Xiao family residence.

Excited, she took Lin Wanrong's hand, her face flushing as she said, "Lin San, are you planning to marry me here?"

"Certainly," he replied, "This house is too big, it would be a waste not to bring a wife here. When the time comes, I'll even build you a dog park, where you can keep all sorts of dogs—wolves, mastiffs, heh—"

At his words, her face lit up. She nestled into his chest, smiling shyly, "Alright, once I've finished my education in the capital, I'll become your wife."

"Hahaha," Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, "It's not just you, there are a few more wives waiting! Good thing I bought a big enough house, marrying ten or eight wives would be a breeze."

He spent a delightful day with the Second Miss, flirting, taking minor advantages, utterly joyous. The Second Miss still had a bit of childish temperament, insisting on dividing the rooms. Lin Wanrong chuckled at this. Why divide the rooms? Wasn't it better to live together? Eat from the same pot, sleep in the same bed, that was true intimacy.

He spent a whole day with the Second Miss, making up for his negligence in the past days. Only when the night lamps were lit did he take the reluctant Second Miss back home.

Standing at the door of the Xiao Mansion after several days, he felt a bit unfamiliar. Gazing at the vermilion gate of the Xiao Mansion, Lin Wanrong shook his head helplessly. He had deceived the Second Miss, stolen the heart of the older sister. Was there a more impressive servant in the world than him? This Xiao family, was it destined to be mine?

Upon receiving the news from the servants, Madam Xiao hurriedly stepped outside. At first glance, she saw her daughter standing at the door and exclaimed in surprise, "Yushuang, you're finally back —"

With reddened eyes, the Second Miss threw herself into Madam Xiao's arms and cooed, "Mother, I just went out to play, don't worry."

"You naughty girl—" Madam Xiao affectionately patted her little bottom, mildly scolding, "You sneak out without notifying anyone at home, causing your sister and me to worry ourselves sick."

The Second Miss blushed, stuck out her tongue, and nestled into her mother's shoulder, making a face at Lin San.

Did Madam Xiao also enjoy patting Yushuang's little bottom? The touch was indeed pleasant. Lin Wanrong chuckled lewdly a couple of times, winked at the Second Miss, who, embarrassed, burrowed into her mother's arms and whimpered, "Mother, he's bullying me—"

"Lin San, come here!" Hearing her daughter's coquettish complaint, Madam Xiao couldn't help but smile. Seeing Lin San standing at the door in a daze, she called him over.

"What can I do for you, Madam?" Lin Wanrong walked over and asked.

Madam Xiao lovingly stroked her daughter's hair, her eyes filled with a gentle light. She nodded, "Lin San, I owe you a lot for Yushuang. She's young and her character is still forming. If anything

goes wrong, you'll have to bear with her. She's been taken care of by me and Yuruo since she was little. Now, all her thoughts are on you. I have no choice but to ask you to take good care of her."

Madam Xiao's words were so explicit that even the tough Lin Wanrong could only nod in agreement. The matter with the Second Miss was already settled, and Madam Xiao was still reminding him in front of her, leaving him no room to refuse. Lin Wanrong smiled bitterly in his heart. Madam Xiao was best at this kind of veiled manipulation. She was tying him firmly to the Xiao family.

The Second Miss also understood the meaning of her mother's words. Her heart pounded, but she dared not speak. She hid in her mother's arms, not even daring to lift her head.

"Yushuang—" With a cry of surprise, the Eldest Miss rushed out of the mansion, heading straight for the Second Miss, not caring that her pleated skirt was touching the ground.

"Sister—" The Second Miss also called out and threw herself into the Eldest Miss's arms.

Xiao Yuruo tightly hugged her sister, wiped away the tears from the corner of her eyes, and said, "Good sister, I was wrong yesterday. I shouldn't have blamed you like that. I apologize to you. Can you forgive me?"

Xiao Yushuang laughed, "Sister, I'm not blaming you. I just sneaked out to play today!"

The Eldest Miss hummed in response, saw Lin San standing there smiling at her, and her face immediately turned red. Her heart started to race, her body heating up. She took the Second Miss's hand and asked, "Yushuang, where were you today? How did you meet him—how did you meet Lin San?"

Xiao Yushuang shyly replied, "I met him at Qixia Temple. Sister, when you went to the temple this morning, I saw you too."

"What?" Xiao Yuruo was taken aback, her face turning red instantly. Her heart was about to jump out of her chest. If Yushuang was there too, then didn't she see everything that happened between her and Lin San?

"However, at that time, I wanted to see him, so I didn't dare to come out and talk to you. Sister, you won't blame me, will you?" The Second Miss's words eased the Eldest Miss's heart considerably.

She hurriedly said, "You silly girl, what are you talking about? You're my sister, no matter what you do, I won't blame you."

As she said this, she stole a glance at Lin San, only to see him smiling at her and her sister, his gaze intense. The Eldest Miss's heart pounded, and she quickly lowered her head, squeezing Yushuang's hand painfully.

Lin Wanrong looked at the two beautiful sisters in front of him, one innocent and pure, the other mature and shy. Although they were born of the same mother, they had completely different charms.

The Eldest Miss was blushing more and more. He was overjoyed, thinking that he was not wronged for being a servant in this house. He was involved with both the Eldest and the Second Miss, touching and teasing. Who could compare with him? He thanked old Wei, old Xu, old Luo, and the Madam—

In the midst of his pride, he saw the Second Miss beckoning to him, saying, "What are you looking at? Come here—"

Lin Wanrong walked over solemnly and asked, "Second Miss, what's the matter?"

Xiao Yushuang glanced at him shyly, then said to her mother and sister, "Mother, sister, from now on, we are a family. Can we all stop being strangers?"

The Madam looked at her daughter lovingly and laughed. "Good, good, of course. What Yushuang said is right."

The Second Miss hummed in agreement, her face flushed. She took Xiao Yuruo's hand and said, "Sister, he likes to make trouble. That day, he deliberately angered you. Don't take it to heart. From now on, let's all get along well. Don't let him provoke you anymore, okay?"

Xiao Yuruo didn't know what to say. She had been held by him that morning, and now seeing him made her heart beat uncontrollably. She couldn't understand her sister's words, didn't dare to agree, and didn't dare to disagree. She just stood there, head down, not speaking, a far cry from her usual strong and decisive self.

The Madam and Yushuang saw the Eldest Miss's current state and found it strange. Madam Xiao asked, "Yuruo, what's wrong with you? Are you uncomfortable?"



"Oh, I think the Eldest Miss might be so happy to see the Second Miss return that she's acting like this. Isn't that right, Eldest Miss?" Lin Wanrong "understandingly" made an excuse for the Eldest Miss.

The Eldest Miss looked at him with both embarrassment and annoyance, her face turning a shade of red. Seeing his bright eyes, she quickly turned her head and whispered, "Yes, sister, it's good that you're back. From now on, we'll be a family, live happily, and never part."

Xiao Yushuang softly agreed, whispering, "Sister, Lin San is also our family. He will never leave us either, okay?"

The Eldest Miss stole a glance at him and softly said, "If he wants to stay, he can stay. Who dares to drive him away?"

The Second Miss giggled and hooked her finger with her sister, saying, "Then it's settled. Lin San, you hook fingers with my sister too—"

"Okay!" Lin Wanrong agreed without hesitation, his face very serious.

"No—" The Eldest Miss's voice was as thin as a mosquito's, her face flushed like a peach blossom, her heart pounding like a drum. She turned to leave.

Yushuang was quick to react, pulling her back and laughing, "Sister, please forgive Lin San. Hook fingers with him!"

‘Yes, hook fingers, the more the better.’ Lin Wanrong was itching in his heart. The Eldest Miss was so shy that she didn't dare to lift her head. Under the half-pushing and half-pulling of the Second Miss, her finger touched Lin San's big hand.

The Eldest Miss quickly withdrew her finger, glared at him fiercely, her face burning. She took Yushuang's hand and said, "Sister, don't mind him, let's go in."

"It's strange, what's wrong with Yuruo today? Why is she blushing so much? Something's not right!" Madam Xiao looked at her two daughters' figures and said. Lin Wanrong chuckled, ‘Don't ask me, I don't know, I really don't know!’