

Finest 51

Chapter 51 Visiting (Part 2)

It was quite a challenge for the bashful Dong Qiaoqiao to utter those words. If not for the many days apart and her longing, even with ten times the courage, she would never have dared to say them.

Having said that, Qiaoqiao blushed and didn't dare to look at Lin Wanrong anymore. She turned around and ran away quickly.

Lin Wanrong was taken aback for a moment before he burst into laughter, calling after Qiaoqiao's retreating figure, "Qiaoqiao, I miss you too."

Cough, cough. Two fake coughs came from behind. Lin Wanrong turned around to see Old Dong, his face darkened, standing behind him.

Caught in the act of teasing someone's daughter, Lin Wanrong's face turned red with embarrassment. He could only force a smile and say, "Uncle Dong, so you're here too. You must have had a hard time these days."

Dong Rende shook his head and said, "Young Master Lin, I'm actually fine. But it's Qiaoqiao who has been staying here day and night, worrying about everything, afraid of failing your trust. Sigh, I'm really worried about her."

Old Dong's words had a deeper meaning, which Lin Wanrong naturally understood. Thinking of Qiaoqiao's haggard face, he couldn't help but feel a pang of pain in his heart. While he had been enjoying himself in the Xiao residence, Qiaoqiao was suffering alone outside. He couldn't help but feel ashamed.

"Uncle, don't worry. I will never let Qiaoqiao be wronged," Lin Wanrong assured him.

Dong Qingshan and Li Beidou, carrying renovation materials, came up to them. Seeing Lin Wanrong dressed in a blue servant's robe and hat, they immediately ran over excitedly, "Boss, you're finally back. How does it feel to be a servant in the Xiao family?"

Lin Wanrong forced a bitter smile and shook his head, "It's hard to describe. If you're interested, you can try it yourself."

Li Beidou scratched his head awkwardly and said, "I'd like to, but the Xiao family wouldn't even consider me. Their standards are so high that only someone like you, Boss, could catch their eye."

Lin Wanrong laughed, "You flatterer."

Dong Qingshan looked around mysteriously and asked, "Boss, have you seen Miss Xiao yet? Tell us, is she really as beautiful as they say?"

Oh my, was Miss Xiao really that attractive? Not only did Qingshan, a mischievous young man, care about her, but even the little girl Qiaoqiao couldn't help but inquire.

Seeing Lin Wanrong's awkward expression, Li Beidou exclaimed, "No way, Boss, you haven't won Miss Xiao's heart yet?"

Li Beidou's naturally loud voice carried, and even Dong Qiaoqiao, who was quietly doing accounting, heard it.

She glanced at Lin Wanrong, her eyes dimming for a moment before she lowered her head again without saying a word.

"You're trying to get me killed, aren't you?" Lin Wanrong glanced at Qiaoqiao, and seeing her still focused on her accounts, seemingly not having heard him, he finally relaxed. He slapped Li Beidou on the head and said, "Watch your mouth."

"Hehe, sorry, sorry, I forgot Qiaoqiao was here too," Li Beidou laughed awkwardly.

Fearing that Li Beidou might say something shocking again, Lin Wanrong hurriedly asked, "Qingshan, how is Hung Hing doing lately?"

Lin Wanrong was concerned about two things: the restaurant and the organization he had personally established. Since he was now staying at the Xiao residence, he could only remotely manage these affairs.

"Big brother, as per your instructions, we have initially set up three branches. Beidou is in charge of one, I'm managing another, and the last one was chosen by our brothers through a vote," Dong Qingshan reported.

Democratic voting? Lin Wanrong smiled; this Qingshan was getting more and more clever, even thinking of such a perfect cover.

Li Beidou was Dong Qingshan's most trusted person, and there was no doubt about his reliability. As for the other democratically elected branch leader, he had also been personally promoted by Dong Qingshan, so there should be no issues with reliability.

"Each branch has expanded to about thirty or forty people, and we've quietly dealt with the original informants. Now, everyone is someone we know and trust. They were all organized based on those who fought against Li Ergou, so they should be reliable," Dong Qingshan continued.

The initial core members who participated in the elimination of Li Ergou were divided into the three branches. With them as the backbone, the branches were gradually expanded, adhering to the principle of quality over quantity. Therefore, although Hung Hing currently had only around a hundred members, their combat capability was solid.

Lin Wanrong nodded secretly; Dong Qingshan had done a good job, and he had matured quite a bit.

"What about the other bosses in the city? Have they reacted to our moves?" Lin Wanrong asked.

A hundred or so members were a force to be reckoned with in the southern part of the city, but in the grand scheme of Jinling City, they were still quite insignificant.

"Of course, they're wary of us, and they've even sent several undercover agents into our ranks. We're aware of this, so we're keeping them close for now. Our power is still insufficient, so we've been laying low lately, not causing any trouble on other people's turf. We've just been scraping by in the southern part of the city to sustain our brothers," Dong Qingshan added.

It was natural that Dong Qingshan's recent actions had drawn attention; there was nothing strange about that. The southern part of the city was relatively remote and poor in resources, which was why the rival factions allowed Dong Qingshan and Hung Hing to grow there.

"Boss, what's our next move?" Dong Qingshan looked to Lin Wanrong. The recent development of Hung Hing had been a headache for him, and with the boss absent, he didn't dare to make decisions on his own.

"Wait!" Lin Wanrong paced back and forth a few times before suddenly turning back to answer.

"Wait?" Dong Qingshan and Li Beidou looked at Lin Wanrong, not understanding his meaning.

"Qingshan, the southern part of the city is resource-poor, which is why the other bosses tolerate us doing whatever we want there, as it doesn't affect their interests. But if we were to expand towards the city center, it would touch their interests, and war would be inevitable. Our current strength is still far behind theirs, so we have to wait," Lin Wanrong said solemnly.

"So when do we wait until?" Li Beidou, being more impatient, hurriedly asked.

"We're just waiting for an opportunity, one that will allow us to soar to new heights," Lin Wanrong said with a smile.

"Qingshan, do you have any connections within the government?" Lin Wanrong suddenly changed the subject.

Dong Qingshan shook his head, "Big brother, you know that we're all about fighting and killing. It's already fortunate that the government doesn't come after us."

Lin Wanrong shook his head with a smile, "That kind of thinking won't do. We're running an organization, and we'll have to deal with the government sooner or later. Moreover, we might need their help to rise. Ah, opportunities, opportunities! Where are they?"

Dong Qingshan and Li Beidou exchanged glances, wondering if their boss had gone mad, thinking of relying on the government to run an underworld organization.

Lin Wanrong shook his head secretly; after all, Dong Qingshan and Li Beidou were young and inexperienced, so they wouldn't understand what he was saying. Since ancient times, collusion between officials and criminals has been the essence of underworld organizations.

Lin Wanrong stayed at Meiwei Restaurant until very late. Realizing it was getting late, he reluctantly bid farewell and left.

Dong Qiaoqiao walked him to the entrance of the Xiao family's residence and handed him a bamboo basket, saying, "Big Brother Lin, I made some of your favorite dishes and a few sets of clothes for you. Please take good care of yourself inside. Otherwise, we will all be worried about you."

In just a short afternoon, this girl had run home to specially prepare dishes for him. Lin Wanrong was deeply touched by her thoughtfulness. Looking at her, he gently said, "Qiaoqiao, thank you."

"Big Brother," Dong Qiaoqiao blushed, glanced around, and whispered, "Don't mention thanks anymore. I'm willing to do anything for you."

Lin Wanrong's heart filled with tenderness. He held her delicate hand and said, "I know, Qiaoqiao. You've been working hard while I was away. But don't worry, I'll be back to help you in a year."

Qiaoqiao shyly hummed in agreement, her hand holding his and a sweet smile on her face.

Seeing it was getting late, Lin Wanrong said, "Qiaoqiao, it's late. You should head back now."

"Qiaoqiao shook her head and said, "No, big brother, you go in first, I'll watch you from here." Seeing Qiaoqiao's affectionate appearance, Lin Wanrong was deeply moved and wanted to say something, but he didn't know how to speak. He was usually a smooth talker, but he was at a loss for words at this moment.

"All right, Qiaoqiao, I'll go in," Lin Wanrong said to Qiaoqiao. Qiaoqiao made a soft sound of agreement and watched as Lin Wanrong walked slowly into the Xiao mansion. Her eyes were filled with reluctance and she couldn't help but feel a twinge in her nose. Several teardrops fell from her eyes.

Lin Wanrong turned back and took a look at Qiaoqiao after stepping over the threshold. She was still standing there, looking helpless and delicate like a tender wife seeing off her husband on a journey. For some reason, Lin Wanrong felt a twinge in his nose. He knew that he would never forget this scene.

The mansion and the outside world were two completely different worlds. Outside the mansion, Lin Wanrong was the big brother of Dong Qingshan and the pillar of Dong Qiaoqiao, but inside the mansion, he was nothing more than a lowly servant. The contrast between these two worlds had left him stunned for a long time, but fortunately he was easy-going by nature and didn't have any lofty ideals. He was still able to live freely and comfortably in this small world within the mansion.

On this day, Lin Wanrong was "working hard" and putting flowers he had picked on a shy maid's head when he suddenly saw Chief Steward Wang walking towards him with a smile on his face. Since the day they first met and had a disagreement, Chief Steward Wang had not shown his face again. Lin Wanrong didn't know what was going on, but Chief Steward Wang was unexpectedly coming to the garden with a smile on his face.

The few maids who were playing with Lin Wanrong stopped their horseplay when they saw Chief Steward Wang. They didn't behave as brazenly as Lin Wanrong did and immediately fled.

"Lin San, have you been doing well lately?" Chief Steward Wang asked with a smile on his face.

"A smiling man is not a good man," Lin Wanrong thought of this classic saying, but he had someone backing him up, so he wasn't afraid of Chief Steward Wang. He smiled and said, "Hey, isn't this Chief Steward Wang? Why do you have the time to come to the garden today to enjoy the flowers? Oh, I know. It's because the chrysanthemums are blooming, and it's a good time to enjoy the autumn breeze and fragrance of the season. I never thought that a steward like you would also have such refined tastes."

Chief Steward Wang chuckled a few times and said, "The affairs in the mansion have been busy recently. How could I have the leisure to come here to appreciate flowers? I came here today to find you."

"To find me?" Lin Wanrong asked, puzzled.

"Yes, Lin San, I have good news to congratulate you on." Chief Steward Wang said with a grin.

"Congratulations? My birthday hasn't come yet. What could be so celebratory?"

"Of course, there is good news, and it's big news. Recently, one of the little servants who has been helping out in the study had a family tragedy, and his father passed away. The madam granted him a three-month leave to mourn, but the study is short-staffed. After thinking it over, I recommended you to the madam because you are clever and capable, and she also has a good impression of you. She agreed to have you transferred to the study to help out. Congratulations, this is a great opportunity!"

If it was in someone else's home, being transferred to the study to accompany the young master in his studies would be a fantastic opportunity, but the Xiao family had no male heirs, so the study was just a place for the young ladies to occasionally read books for fun. When the young ladies read books, it was just for show. Lin Wanrong would just be a helper in the study, and there would be no prospects for advancement.

"You old bastard, trying to trip me up. You must be unhappy seeing me here living my life to the fullest." Lin Wanrong saw through Chief Steward Wang's intentions and thought to himself. With a fake smile, he said, "This is truly a great opportunity."

Chief Steward Wang knew that Lin San was a smart person and had the backing of Uncle Fu. He didn't want to come and stir things up, but the master had given orders, so he had no choice but to come.

Lin Wanrong didn't care about Chief Steward Wang's difficulties. Seeing that his expression seemed genuine, he chuckled and said, "You know, Chief Steward Wang, Uncle Fu really needs me here. I'm afraid I won't be able to leave for a while. Could you please ask for his permission first?"

"I don't dare to bother Uncle Fu. Both sides have people I can't offend, so I just have to listen to whoever's word is more powerful," Chief Steward Wang, thought to himself, unable to voice his distress. He forced a smile and said, "No need, Uncle Fu has gone to Hangzhou for a plant transplant and won't be back for half a month. Anyway, I've already asked the madam, you can go directly."

So that's how it is. This kid has some nerve, taking advantage of Uncle Fu's absence to settle personal grudges. "Uncle Fu, what business do you have being away?" Lin Wanrong thought to himself, cursing Chief Steward Wang inside his mind. After a while, he begrudgingly thought, "Alright, Wang, since you've made the first move, don't blame me for making the next. Let's see if I can't ruin you."

"Oh, I see," Lin Wanrong said with a smile, "In that case, I'll go help in the study. After all, Wang, you know how high Uncle Fu's expectations are for me. Ah, I'm really afraid of messing up in the study and losing face for Uncle Fu."

"No, no, Lin San, I'm sure you'll do a great job. I believe in you," Chief Steward Wang wiped the cold sweat from his forehead, finally feeling relieved after Lin Wanrong agreed to help in the study.

With that settled, Lin Wanrong was one of Uncle Fu's close followers, so naturally, Chief Steward Wang didn't dare to make things too difficult for him. Wang arranged for him to work in the study, and he couldn't just casually send someone to the gardener's department. Lin Wanrong still lived in his quiet little courtyard, and no one could drive him away.

As for studying, Lin Wanrong had been reading for more than 20 years, and naturally had plenty of experience. However, that was mostly in subjects like math, physics, and chemistry. As for the humanities, other than being able to recite a few poems, he only wrote essays at the last minute during exams. After coming to this world, he spent some time reading the books left behind by Uncle Wei to understand the world, but most of the time, he read a booklet comparable to Dragon, Tiger, and Leopard. Now, he had to go to the study and face classical texts daily, which was like forcing a duck onto a perch; just thinking about it gave him a headache.

Chapter 53 Promotion (Part 2)

The next day, he dragged his feet until late morning before reluctantly heading to the study. He had been staying in the courtyard for a while now, so he knew where the study was located.

The Xiao family's study was situated right in the middle of the garden, the core area of the residence, far more prestigious than the secluded garden. As Lin Wanrong walked, he encountered many familiar faces, most of whom were maids.

"Brother San, I heard you've been transferred to the study"

"Brother San, I'll bring you some delicious food later"

"Brother San, do you have any free time tonight? There's a new troupe performing in the garden, and I got us two tickets. Let's go watch the opera"

"Brother San"

...

Chirping and laughter filled the air. Fortunately, Lin Wanrong was already used to these sounds, so he casually chatted as he made his way to the study.

Inside, a thin, elderly teacher held a book, stroking his chin's few white whiskers while pacing back and forth, reciting, "The lovebirds sing, on the islet in the river. A fair maiden, a good match for a gentleman"

A plump young man lay asleep on a table. The teacher looked at him several times, shaking his head helplessly with a bitter smile, clearly at a loss.

Hmm, the Xiao family didn't have a young master, did they? Where did this chubby young man come from? Was he Madam Xiao's illegitimate son?

Amazed, Lin Wanrong quickly stopped a passing maid: "Greetings, miss. I'm Lin San, and I'd like to ask you a few questions."

"You're Lin San?" The maid's eyes lit up, and she replied joyfully, "Feel free to ask anything, brother. I'm at your service."

Lin Wanrong shivered. It seemed that all the young ladies in the Xiao residence had a tendency to be flirtatious. He pretended not to hear her words and continued, "I've just been transferred to help in the study, so I'm not familiar with everything here. Could you tell me who are the young master and misses in the study?"

The maid stared at Lin Wanrong, covering her mouth as she laughed, "You've come to the right person with your question. As for the study, there aren't many people here. The eldest miss stopped coming to the study years ago. With her level of knowledge, she could easily teach these teachers a thing or two. The second miss is still young and comes here frequently under the orders of the madam, but she seems to have gone out recently. As for this cousin, he's here every day, and the teacher was probably hired for him."

Although the maid's words were discreet, Lin Wanrong's cleverness was not for show. In just a few sentences, he gathered several pieces of information: the eldest miss was learned and talented and wouldn't need any teachers; the second miss was naughty and mischievous but had to come under the madam's orders; as for the cousin inside, he seemed to be a fool who couldn't learn anything, so the teacher was specifically hired for him.

When talking about the cousin, disdain filled the maid's eyes. It was clear that the cousin's performance was extremely poor. Lin Wanrong secretly lamented that following such a cousin, who was looked down upon even by the maids, would make it difficult for him to hold his head high in the Xiao residence.

Lin Wanrong then learned about the cousin's background from the maid. The cousin's surname was Guo, his given name Wuchang. He was the nephew of Madam Xiao from her maternal family. His father (Madam Xiao's brother) was a county magistrate in a region in Yangzhou. In order to discipline his son, he sent him to the Xiao mansion, hoping that he would receive a good cultural education. Of course, whether there were any other motives was unknown.

Unfortunately, this cousin had no interest in poetry or literature and spent his days sleeping during the teacher's lessons. Both Madam Xiao and his uncle were at a loss for what to do with him.

This cousin really didn't care for learning, and while Lin Wanrong lamented this fact, he was also secretly relieved. Although the young man was not very promising, having to serve a studious young master who spent all day in the classroom listening to the teacher's lectures would be a nightmare for Lin Wanrong. On the other hand, following such a wayward young master, indulging in deception, eating, drinking, and having fun seemed not too bad.

With his spirits lifted, Lin Wanrong reluctantly said goodbye to the maid and stealthily entered the study. The teacher glanced at him with curiosity.

Smiling, Lin Wanrong bowed to the teacher and said, "Greetings, sir. My name is Lin San, and I've recently been assigned to help in the study. I was just outside listening to your lecture, and I must say, your extensive knowledge and mastery of both ancient and current subjects are truly impressive. I am in awe."

Flattery will get you everywhere, and the teacher was quite pleased to see this newcomer being so respectful. With a smile, he nodded and replied, "Oh, you're too kind. You're giving me far too much credit."

Lin Wanrong knew how to make a good impression, and the teacher appreciated his complimentary words. It seemed that Lin Wanrong was off to a decent start in the study, despite the cousin's lack of interest in learning.

The young master rolled over in his seat, drooling all over the table. He yawned, opened his eyes and said, "Who's making all this noise? Can't a person get some sleep?"

Mr. Xi, the teacher, looked embarrassed, wondering why the young master wasn't showing him any respect.

Lin Wanrong quickly said, "Young master, you're awake?"

The young master glanced at him indifferently and asked, "Who are you?"

"Young master, my name is Lin San, and I've just been assigned to the study. From now on, I'll be serving you."

"Oh? You're Lin San? Not bad; you seem quite clever." The young master carefully looked at him, somewhat surprised. Other servants called him 'Young Master Guo', but Lin San, meeting him for the first time, addressed him simply as 'young master'. This small difference indicated that the other servants didn't truly consider him their young master since he was just a relative of the Xiao family. Lin San, a lower-class servant, seemed to know his place and made the young master feel comfortable with his title.

Moreover, the young master had heard that Lin San was quite popular among the Xiao family's servants. He was handsome and charming, with a knack for winning women's hearts. The young master hoped that having Lin San by his side would help him win the affections of his two cousins, increasing his chances of success with them.

"Young master, young master," Lin Wanrong noticed that the young master was staring at him with a pleased smile on his face, as if recalling some good memories. Feeling slightly uneasy, he hurriedly called out to the young master.

"Oh, right. Lin San, you'll be following me from now on," the young master announced loudly.

"Yes, young master," Lin Wanrong replied respectfully.

Seeing that the master and servant had acquainted themselves, Mr. Xi said, "Young Master Guo, let's continue with our lessons."

Young Master Guo, already in a bad mood from being disturbed during his pleasant dream, couldn't help but yawn upon hearing Mr. Xi's suggestion. He gave a faint, disinterested hum through his nose. Mr. Xi, having received payment from the Xiao family, turned a blind eye to his disinterest, knowing that he already had the money.

Lin Wanrong, of course, had no interest in listening to lectures either. He figured that with the young master already in such a sorry state, it would be better to go along with his wishes and earn his favor, making life under him much easier.

"Young master, the weather is so pleasant today. Why don't we accompany the teacher and go outside to find some inspiration for poetry?" Lin Wanrong suggested enticingly.

Chapter 54 Second Miss Xiao (Part 1)

Young Master Guo looked at Lin Wanrong appreciatively, not expecting Lin San to be so well-behaved. He was indeed as famous as he was reputed to be, and it was right to have him follow along.

"Very good, very good. The weather is clear and the autumn breeze is gentle today. I, as a student, think it's the perfect time for an autumn outing. What do you think, sir?" Young Master Guo asked respectfully.

Though his words were polite, the implication was clear: "I want to go out and have fun, and you better not follow me." Lin Wanrong couldn't help but chuckle at this.

"Well, um..." the tutor hesitated, breaking into a cold sweat. He knew what kind of person Young Master Guo was and wouldn't dare to let him go out without a good reason. He quickly said, "Young Master Guo, I heard that Second Miss Xiao has just returned. She might be coming over soon."

Upon hearing the name of Second Miss Xiao, Young Master Guo's expression changed immediately: "Really? My cousin is coming soon. In that case, I'll stay here and study some poetry and books, and then have a good exchange with her later."

Exchange? Lin Wanrong smirked. With your level of skill, even our family's servants are better than you. Who are you going to exchange ideas with?

The tutor breathed a sigh of relief, having finally settled Young Master Guo down. He quickly added, "Second Miss Xiao went to Suzhou for some business a few days ago and only returned last night. I just heard this news myself."

Lin Wanrong had been in the mansion for a while now, and most of the conversations he overheard among the servants and maids were about how capable and wise Miss Xiao the First was. Very few mentioned Second Miss Xiao, and he wondered why.

"By the way, sir, will my cousin bring General Wei Wu with her again?" Young Master Guo touched his buttocks nervously. Last time he tried to sneak a peek at Second Miss Xiao bathing, but he was bitten by General Wei Wu before he even got close to the building.

General Wei Wu? Second Miss Xiao? Lin Wanrong's face turned pale upon hearing this. If he remembered correctly, the vicious dog he had killed that day was called General Wei Wu. So, that dog belonged to Second Miss Xiao. By extension, it was also Second Miss Xiao who had set the dog on him that day. No wonder the maids ran away so quickly they were afraid of Second Miss Xiao.

"What did I do to offend her? She used such a vicious method," Lin Wanrong thought angrily, but he also felt a bit scared. He wasn't afraid of Second Miss Xiao herself, but rather the possibility that she might bring another wolf dog named General Zhen Yuan or something similar. If that happened, there would be nowhere to run today.

As they say, speak of the devil and he shall appear. Just as Lin Wanrong was thinking about this, he heard a somewhat familiar voice from outside: "Cousin Guo, what new poems have you learned today?"

Lin Wanrong would never forget this voice, as it belonged to the girl who had sicced the dog on him that day and had even kicked him a few times.

"Cousin, you're here!" Young Master Guo hurriedly greeted her.

A girl around sixteen or seventeen years old walked in, with rosy lips and white teeth, bright eyes, and a kind demeanor. She was quite a beauty.

Lin Wanrong glanced at her and his heart skipped a beat. He had seen this girl before she was the one who had bought the last copy of the third edition of the newspaper that day. No wonder she had asked him if he had seen Miss Xiao; she had had plans all along. It was also no wonder that she

looked somewhat familiar she was, in fact, Lady Xiao's daughter, and it was only natural that they would look alike.

Second Miss Xiao entered the room and looked at Lin Wanrong without any surprise, as if she had expected him to be there. A smug smile flashed across her face as she said to Young Master Guo, "Cousin Guo, are you satisfied with the servant I found for you today?"

Lin Wanrong's heart skipped a beat again, realizing that it was Second Miss Xiao who had orchestrated his assignment to this study. The housekeeper Wang was merely an accomplice. Considering the few times he had fallen into her hands, he felt a bit uneasy. However, seeing that there was no vicious dog accompanying Second Miss Xiao, he felt relieved. He could handle a girl, but not a vicious dog.

"Of course, anything prepared by my cousin, I will surely like," Young Master Guo flattered. To him, Lin San was just a clever servant, not even worth as much as an object.

Seeing that Lin Wanrong remained silent, Second Miss Xiao knew that she had intimidated him and felt quite pleased with herself. She said to Young Master Guo, "Cousin Guo, I'm glad you're satisfied. I need this servant to do something for me today, so I won't disturb your studies any longer."

Young Master Guo hurriedly said, "Cousin, don't leave! I wrote a poem specially for you today: 'The affectionate ospreys by the river's edge, the beautiful and gentle lady, a gentleman's perfect match.' Cousin, what do you think of my poem?"

Both the tutor and Lin Wanrong were dumbfounded. To be so shameless, Young Master Guo was truly unparalleled.

Second Miss Xiao giggled and said, "Cousin Guo, you've recited this poem over twenty times already. Could you please come up with something new next time?"

Without lingering any longer, Second Miss Xiao looked at Lin Wanrong with a half-smile and said, "You, servant, come with me."

From the moment he saw Second Miss Xiao, Lin Wanrong knew that today's situation wouldn't end well. He should never have sold that booklet to this girl, and he definitely shouldn't have come to the Xiao Mansion to become a useless servant. Now that he was in her hands, he found himself at a complete disadvantage.

However, Lin Wanrong wasn't one to be afraid. Seeing Second Miss Xiao smiling sweetly at him, he scoffed inwardly. With the wind at his back and the war drums sounding, he was Lin San, and he feared no one.

The two left without a word, Second Miss Xiao leading the way and Lin Wanrong following behind. Second Miss Xiao was not yet seventeen, still young by Lin Wanrong's standards. In his hometown, girls her age would be in junior high school, preparing for university. How was it that in this world, girls her age were so willful and capricious? Lin Wanrong couldn't understand it.

The maids and servants they encountered along the way changed their expressions as soon as they saw Second Miss Xiao, avoiding her at all costs. It seemed that Second Miss Xiao's infamy had spread far and wide, and this wasn't a recent development.

When they reached a room, Second Miss Xiao glanced at Lin Wanrong and said, "You, servant, come inside with me." A smug smile flashed across her face, and her eyes held a cunning glint as she pushed the door open and entered first.

Lin Wanrong hesitated for a moment. Second Miss Xiao was no saint, and her intentions for bringing him into this room today were surely sinister. Thinking of sinister plots, he recalled the vicious dog he had killed. This girl was vengeful, and there must be some trap inside.

"What's the matter, too scared to come in? When you were punching and kicking the other day, you seemed quite bold. Why is it that you have no courage now?" Second Miss Xiao couldn't help but mock him when she saw the indecision on his face.

Lin Wanrong wasn't afraid of this girl; it was the vicious dog he feared. He pricked up his ears and listened carefully, but the room was silent, with no sound of barking. Still uneasy, he listened more closely but found no sign of movement, which reassured him somewhat. He didn't say anything, just gave Second Miss Xiao a cold laugh before confidently entering the room.

Chapter 55 Second Miss Xiao (Part 2)

Upon entering, they found an extremely spacious room, empty except for a small door. There was nothing else inside.

Second Miss Xiao had already walked to the small door inside the room. Seeing him boldly follow her in, she turned her head and smiled, "What, you're not afraid I'll sic another dog on you?"

Lin Wanrong looked around cautiously, not noticing anything out of the ordinary, and felt relieved. He sneered, "You've seen my skills, haven't you? I can handle not only fierce dogs, but also any kind of villain."

Second Miss Xiao's face changed, "You insolent servant, how dare you address me so casually? I am your master. Show me some respect. If it weren't for me, a servant like you wouldn't even be able to enter the Xiao family's main gate."

Lin Wanrong suddenly realized that his smooth entry into the Xiao family wasn't thanks to Old Wei, but rather to the young lady standing before him. No wonder he was able to enter even though he was late. This girl must have harbored resentment towards him for some time, going through so much trouble and even sacrificing a fierce dog just to teach him a lesson.

"So, you've been plotting against me for a while. What did I do to offend Second Miss Xiao that you would go to such lengths to deal with me?" asked Lin Wanrong.

"You're saying you didn't offend me?" Second Miss Xiao raised her eyebrows, "That day, you paraded around with my sister's portrait, shouting and selling it while uttering such frivolous words. Do you think the Xiao family is so easily bullied?"

"What a joke! What makes you think the person in that painting is your sister? Only a few people in Jinling City have seen your sister's face. Who could paint such a lifelike portrait? I didn't accuse you of framing me, but now you're interrogating me." Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, his words righteous and stern, with no hint of falsehood. The painting had been made using Lady Xiao as a model, and had nothing to do with Miss Xiao Da. If there was any connection, it was only because the mother and daughter looked so alike.

"You cunning Lin San!" The young girl's face turned red with anger, clearly at a loss for words against this lowly servant, "Today, I'm going to teach you a lesson, or else you'll think the Xiao family is easy to bully."

"Servant?" Hearing her repeatedly call him a servant, Lin Wanrong was quite unhappy. He sneered, "Second Miss Xiao, I think you're mistaken. I'm just a contract employee of the Xiao family, not a servant. The contract even has your name, Miss Xiao Yushuang, on it. If I'm displeased with you, I can leave at any time. If you want to find a servant, there are plenty in the Xiao residence. I'm afraid I won't be able to accompany you."

After finishing his words, Lin Wanrong turned to leave. Wasn't avoiding a haughty and domineering young girl like this the best option?

He forcefully pulled the door several times, but it didn't budge. Lin Wanrong thought he wasn't using enough strength, so he tried harder, but it still wouldn't move. He then realized that Second Miss Xiao must have done something to the door.

Second Miss Xiao, Xiao Yushuang, laughed, "What, are you scared now? Without my permission, no one can leave through this door today." It turned out that there was a mechanism in the room. After Xiao Yushuang entered, she activated it, trapping Lin Wanrong inside.

It seemed this girl had been plotting for a while. However, at this point, only he and Xiao Yushuang were in the room. He had enough confidence in dealing with her, so naturally, he had nothing to fear. He smiled and said, "Whether I can leave or not doesn't really matter. With you, Second Miss Xiao, here, what do I have to be afraid of? You should be the one worried. I'm not a good person, and I have a particular preference for beautiful girls. You're alone in a room with me, so you better be careful."

Xiao Yushuang was still young and didn't fully understand relationships between men and women, but girls of this era generally matured early. She only wanted to take revenge on Lin Wanrong but forgot that by doing so, they would end up alone together, which would greatly damage her reputation as a young girl.

Her face flushed red, and she angrily gritted her teeth, "You scoundrel, I... I... I won't let you off."

Lin Wanrong looked at the girl's furious expression, finding it rather amusing. He said to Xiao Yushuang, "Second Miss Xiao, don't flatter yourself too much. Although I like beautiful women, I'm not desperate. As for you, even if someone offered me a few taels of silver, I wouldn't want an unripe fruit like you."

"Youshameless" Xiao Yushuang yelled, simultaneously opening the small door behind her. Two dim green lights shot out from the room.

Wolf-dog! Lin Wanrong's heart skipped a beat.

This creature was even larger than the Mighty General that was killed that day, and the fierce light in its eyes made Lin Wanrong's hair stand on end. The wolf-dog's mouth was wrapped in red cloth,

which is why Lin Wanrong hadn't heard it barking. It turned out that Xiao Yushuang had prepared it all beforehand. She had been scheming just to deal with him.

Seeing Lin Wanrong's pale face, Xiao Yushuang proudly laughed, "How about that? You didn't expect this, did you? Hehe, this is a wolf-dog I specially brought back from Suzhou. It's called General Zhenyuan and was a partner to the Mighty General. It's here to deal with you. You not only killed my Mighty General but also ate its meat. I don't think General Zhenyuan will let you off easily today."

How could this girl know that I ate dog meat? Lin Wanrong thought for a moment and realized that it must have been Uncle Fu who had informed her. No wonder he hadn't seen him in days; he must have been feeling guilty. He remembered Uncle Fu's frightened expression those days; he clearly knew how formidable Second Miss Xiao was, so he had confessed voluntarily. No wonder it took the girl several days to seek revenge; she had gone to Suzhou for reinforcements.

General Zhenyuan stared at Lin Wanrong intently, seemingly understanding that the man before him was the enemy responsible for taking the life of its "dog wife." Its eyes flashed with green light, and it gently licked its crimson tongue, its sharp canine teeth interlocking and emitting a cold white glow.

Damn, I was too careless. I didn't expect this girl to be so resourceful and play this hand. Lin Wanrong broke out in a cold sweat, looking at the delicate young girl and the nearly mad vicious dog, not knowing what to do.

Seeing Lin Wanrong's pale face, Xiao Yushuang knew her cunning plan had worked. She was delighted to see the fear on the face of this wicked servant: "How about it, you scoundrel? Are you scared now? Don't blame me for not giving you a way out. Just tell me who drew that painting, and then give yourself one hundred slaps for insulting me earlier, and I'll spare you."

This room was specifically designed by Second Miss Xiao to discipline disobedient servants and maids. Once she spoke up, the servants would naturally fall silent. No one dared to defy Second Miss Xiao. Whether it was one hundred slaps or even a thousand, they would have to endure it. Her method of disciplining the servants had always worked. Today, facing the detestable Lin San, how could she vent her anger without a harsh punishment?

However, Lin Wanrong was extremely stubborn. If it was only about revealing who painted the picture, it wouldn't be a problem to tell her. But to slap himself in the face, Lin Wanrong hadn't stooped to that level yet, especially when facing such a willful young girl. The softer he acted, the

more aggressive she would become. Lin Wanrong casually glanced at the young girl and snorted, "Ridiculous! I'm not afraid of you, girl. Just use whatever tricks you have."

Seeing that the wicked servant was still so arrogant, Second Miss Xiao clenched her teeth in anger. She slowly untied the cloth wrapped around the dog's mouth, fiercely glanced at Lin Wanrong, and said, "You better not regret this. General Zhenyuan, attack!"