

Finest 76

Chapter 76 This Beauty Loves Killing (Part 1)

Xiao Qingxuan held back her laughter and said, "You sure have a lot of bold ideas. I don't even have such martial arts skills as you do."

The faint moonlight spilled in. When Lin Wanrong saw Xiao Qingxuan's fair complexion and beautiful face, her eyebrows like spring mountains and eyes like autumn waters, she looked as if she had descended from the lunar palace. She was wearing a tight-fitting black suit at the moment, her chest not bound by cloth strips, creating a surging view. Lin Wanrong remembered the day he personally measured her world-class figure and couldn't help but swallow. This girl was a real top-notch beauty.

"What are you looking at?" Lin Wanrong thought that she wouldn't see him checking her out in the dark, so his gaze was somewhat unrestrained. Little did he know, Xiao Qingxuan could see clearly in the dark and caught his lewd gaze, causing her to feel both embarrassed and angry.

"I'm looking at you." Lin Wanrong said candidly. Since she wasn't going to kill him, and he didn't have any money for her to rob, at most she could only rob him of his dignity. What was there to be afraid of?

Xiao Qingxuan felt that in front of this scoundrel, despite her martial arts skills, she was completely useless. She didn't know what kind of magic he had cast on her.

"What are you here for today? Did you sneak in to watch me sleep?" Lin Wanrong said with a grin.

"My sword. Where's my sword?" Xiao Qingxuan gritted her teeth.

"Alright, alright, it was just a joke. Tell me, why are you looking for me?" This girl was always ready to draw her sword. Damn it, Lin thought, one day he would draw his "sword" against her, to "kill" her until she was completely flustered and calling for help.

Xiao Qingxuan, of course, didn't know about his vile thoughts. After pondering for a moment, she asked, "What did that Qin Xian'er say to you today?"

"How do you know about Qin Xian'er? Were you... following me?" Lin Wanrong asked, his eyes wide.

Xiao Qingxuan gave a disdainful laugh, "What do you think you have that's worth me following?"

Well, that was true, but it was quite a blow to his ego. Lin Wanrong said, "You're being rude to me, I refuse to answer."

Xiao Qingxuan didn't know whether to laugh or cry. This guy was completely unpredictable, one moment cunning like a fox, the next acting hurt like a child. He really was hard to deal with.

Little did she know that this was exactly the strength of Lin Wanrong's skill at flirting with girls. As he once told Luo Yuan, he wanted to stir up a woman's dominance, gentleness, and maternal instincts.

"I wasn't following you. It just so happened that I saw your impressive performance at Miaoyu Pavilion today. Speechless in the slanted evening sun of Qinhuai, every home by the water reflects the red makeup. Spring wind oblivious to the changing jade countenance, still the songs of joy circle the painted boats. Under the bright moon, hearts are breaking. I didn't expect you to have some skills." Xiao Qingxuan remembered the poem clearly.

Lin Wanrong laughed and recited, "Speechless in the slanted evening sun of Qinhuai, every home by the water reflects the red makeup. Spring wind oblivious to the changing jade countenance, still the songs of joy circle the painted boats. Who will lament the rise and fall!"

Xiao Qingxuan was taken aback. Just by changing several words, the mood of the poem had completely shifted from romance to the worries of a nation, giving it a completely different flavor.

"Who will lament the rise and fall, who will lament the rise and fall." Xiao Qingxuan recited twice, then said, "Lin Wanrong, with your kind of insight, there's still hope for our great Hua."

Here we go again, Lin Wanrong thought. He had already learned that this Xiao Qingxuan was a loyal royalist, and they had even argued about it before.

"It seems you really weren't following me." Lin Wanrong said, "Could you tell me, who exactly are you?"

Xiao Qingxuan counter-questioned, "Who do you think I am?"

Lin Wanrong sighed, "I never play this kind of word game, it gives me a headache!"

Xiao Qingxuan snorted, "Then you should stop asking. Who I am has nothing to do with you."

Indeed, he and she were people from two different worlds. Why asked these questions? What did it have to do with him? With this thought, Lin Wanrong fell silent, and so did she.

A man was lying on the bed, and a woman was standing in front of it. It was strange, and to say it was ambiguous would somewhat wrong Lin Wanrong. He had only interacted with Xiao Qingxuan twice, and both times under unfriendly circumstances. Aside from her murderous intent, the only things he remembered about her were her looks and figure.

Xiao Qingxuan also couldn't figure out the man before her. He was clearly full of talent, yet seemed to understand nothing. Sometimes he was domineering, sometimes weak, completely inscrutable. Although the two were in close proximity, they felt like they were isolated in two different worlds.

Xiao Qingxuan snapped out of her thoughts, I need to focus on important matters.

"Lin Wanrong, are you really unwilling to tell me what you and Qin Xian'er talked about?" she asked.

Lin Wanrong sighed helplessly, "What else could we talk about? You saw it too, I only pointed out some problems in her song, and she asked me to explain in detail."

"Just that simple?" Xiao Qingxuan questioned, "Didn't she talk to you about anything else? Like where she came from, what she intends to do here?"

"No." Lin Wanrong responded definitively, "Please, miss, I only met her tonight. What do you think she would talk to me about? Love and romance?"

Seeing Xiao Qingxuan lost in thought, Lin Wanrong smirked, "Ah, I understand, are you... jealous?"

"Jealous?" Xiao Qingxuan responded in confusion, "What would I be jealous of?"

"Seeing me getting too close with Qin Xian'er, naturally you would be jealous." Lin Wanrong said, feeling quite pleased with himself.

Xiao Qingxuan really wanted to laugh. This guy, not only was his skin incredibly thick, but his self-perception was far too high. She glanced at him and said, "What about you do you think is worth my jealousy?"

Ugh, there's that tone again. This Xiao Qingxuan seemed to always have a sense of superiority. Joking with her was not fun at all. Qin Xian'er was much better, charming to the bone.

"Lin Wanrong, you'd better not get too close to Qin Xian'er," Xiao Qingxuan suddenly said.

"What do you mean? Who I make friends with is none of your business," Lin Wanrong said, displeased.

"All I can tell you is that this Qin Xian'er is not simple. If you get involved with her, it will be difficult to extricate yourself," Xiao Qingxuan said, ignoring his tone.

"Do you like me?" Lin Wanrong asked, smiling.

"You, you... you rascal!" Xiao Qingxuan was so angry she was lost for words. "I will kill you."

"Again with that? Can't you come up with something more creative? I don't know how many times you've threatened to kill me tonight. Please, just actually do it for once," Lin Wanrong said.

Tears welled up in Xiao Qingxuan's eyes. She turned to leave without saying a word. Moonlight spilled onto her, and from her sleeve, a few drops of liquid seemed to fall.

Can it rain inside a house? Lin Wanrong wondered. Seeing her night clothes, he suddenly realized something. He quickly got out of bed and grabbed Xiao Qingxuan's arm, "Miss, uh, Miss Xiao, are you injured?"

Xiao Qingxuan stubbornly shrugged off his hand. "None of your business."

Used to her temper, Lin Wanrong let go of her hand. "I don't want to interfere. But let me tell you, if a wound is not treated promptly, it will fester and leave a large scar. For a man, it may not matter, but for a beautiful woman like you, it would be a disaster."

Sure enough, Xiao Qingxuan seemed moved. After hesitating for a while, she finally asked, "What do you mean by 'fester'?"

Sigh, it was really hard to explain to her. Lin Wanrong said, "In short, you should listen to me and treat your wound as soon as possible to avoid terrible complications."

Without waiting for her to respond, he found a lighter, and with a 'click', lit the oil lamp.

Xiao Qingxuan was apparently scared by his words. Women, especially beautiful women, care greatly about their looks and skin. When Lin Wanrong lit the oil lamp, for some reason, a faint blush appeared on her face.

Lin Wanrong turned around to see that even though Xiao Qingxuan was wearing a black martial arts outfit, she had resumed her feminine attire. Indeed, her face was beautiful, indescribably so. She looked like a cold fairy under the moonlight, but under the dim yellow oil lamp, she seemed somewhat enticing, although still aloof.

Lin Wanrong sighed. A woman as beautiful as this was truly a calamity.

Xiao Qingxuan had full confidence in her own appearance. Seeing him glance at her and then look away, she felt a bit strange. Could she not be as beautiful as that Qin Xian'er?

Lin Wanrong went over to her and saw that she had been stabbed in the arm. Although the wound wasn't deep, it was still bleeding profusely. This girl really played with her life. Lin Wanrong shook his head helplessly. He found the leftover 'Daughter's Red' wine from the day they ate dog meat and tore some clean cotton, soaking it in the wine.

Watching his actions, Xiao Qingxuan asked curiously, "What are you doing?"

"Alcohol cotton, disinfectant." Knowing that explaining would be futile, Lin Wanrong decided to use the simplest terms. Whether she understood or not wasn't his problem.

Seeing his attitude, Xiao Qingxuan knew he didn't want to explain to her, and she couldn't help but huff in annoyance.

After washing his hands, Lin Wanrong brought a basin of hot water to the table and said, "Alright, let's begin."

Seeing his professional demeanor, Xiao Qingxuan felt a bit more at ease, but she couldn't help but ask, "Will this... leave a scar?"

Lin Wanrong was almost certain that as long as he used the golden wound medicine left by Old Wei, her wound would definitely return to its former smoothness. However, women often became half-silly when it came to such issues. Despite his repeated reassurances, Xiao Qingxuan remained uneasy.

Impatient, Lin Wanrong tore open his own shirt and said, "See for yourself."

"Ah, what are you doing?" Xiao Qingxuan exclaimed. "If you dare take liberties with me, I'll kill you, you rascal!"

With a swish, a sword appeared from nowhere, its chill resting against his neck.

Chapter 77 This Beauty Loves Killing (Part 2)

God, save me, this girl wants to kill me again, Lin Wanrong lamented in his heart.

"Please, Miss, you're a martial arts master, and I can't even squash an ant. If anyone is guilty of misconduct, it's you towards me. If I dare to lay a hand on you, that would be like an old man hanging himself out of boredom," Lin Wanrong retorted irritably.

Xiao Qingxuan's face turned bright red. Realizing that he was right, she sheathed her sword, shot him a fierce glare, but stopped threatening to kill him.

"I wanted you to look at this. This is where you stabbed me last time. Look, is there any scar?" Lin Wanrong sighed.

So that's it! Xiao Qingxuan recalled that she had indeed stabbed him last time, and the blade was even poisoned. But looking at his shoulder, there were no signs of injury. She felt relieved and murmured apologetically, "I'm really sorry about last time. I tried to find you afterward, but even with the help of dozens of skilled divers, I couldn't locate you."

Lin San nodded without saying a word. He tore open her half-sleeved garment, revealing the wound that was slowly ceasing to bleed. He gently cleaned the wound with homemade alcohol-soaked cotton.

Xiao Qingxuan's body trembled slightly. Being touched by a stranger, even for medical purposes and through cotton, made her blush.

This girl has such great skin. I wonder if she soaks in hot springs every day, Lin San thought as he admired the jade-like skin on Xiao Qingxuan's arm, swallowing hard.

After cleaning the wound and applying a quality healing ointment, Lin Wanrong finally sighed and said, "It's done. As a doctor, I assure you, there won't be any scar. Your skin will remain as beautiful as jade."

Xiao Qingxuan shyly glanced at Lin Wanrong and said, "Thank you."

Lin Wanrong waved his hand generously and said, "No need to thank me. But be careful in the future. As a young lady, don't always think about fighting with others. If anything happened to your beautiful face, I would be devastated."

Xiao Qingxuan seemed to have gotten used to his nonsense. She just glared at him without saying anything.

Xiao Qingxuan had fought a battle tonight and was injured. She was already exhausted. In the quiet night, with just the two of them, Lin Wanrong was considerate and said, "I'll go to the next room. You can rest here."

Xiao Qingxuan tensed and said, "What are you doing? I'm leaving right away."

"Suit yourself. Anyway, I can't control a martial arts heroine like you." Lin Wanrong yawned and headed to the next room.

"You...you're not allowed to come in, or I..." Xiao Qingxuan seemed a bit softer.

"So you're going to kill me, huh? Sigh, I'm already used to being threatened by you," Lin Wanrong said helplessly. "Keep your sword by your pillow, and whenever any creature passes by you, no matter if it's a mosquito or a bug, draw your sword and eliminate it. You're a female heroine, so this should be easy for you."

Xiao Qingxuan found his words amusing and wanted to laugh, but she didn't want to lose face.

"By the way, I really have nothing to do with that Qin Xian'er. As a mere servant, how could I have any entanglements with her? You can rest assured," Lin Wanrong walked to the door and, for some unknown reason, suddenly blurted this out.

"What does that have to do with me!" Xiao Qingxuan snorted, her face turning slightly red.

That night, Lin Wanrong encountered Qin Xian'er, Xiao Yuruo, and Xiao Qingxuan, three different beauties, which left him dazzled and exhausted. He yawned and decided that no matter how beautiful they were, sleep was more important. That night, he slept soundly.

The next morning when he woke up, he suddenly thought of Xiao Qingxuan. He checked the room next to him and saw the neatly folded quilt but no sign of her. If it weren't for the lingering fragrance, Lin Wanrong would have thought it was all a dream.

Thinking about how he got to know Xiao Qingxuan through fighting, it was indeed strange. Lin Wanrong shook his head, saw that it was getting late, and decided not to think about it. As he was about to leave, he saw the long-absent Fubo walking in through the main gate, holding a large pot of plants.

"Lin San, come and help me," Fubo shouted.

Lin Wanrong took the potted plant from him and, coincidentally, recognized it as the strange plant he had encountered outside the city.

"Fubo, where did you find this?" Lin Wanrong was too lazy to investigate Fubo's tattling on him to Second Miss Xiao, and the familiar scent piqued his curiosity.

At first, he thought it was tobacco and was briefly excited, but after carefully recalling the tobacco he had seen before, it didn't seem to be the same, and tobacco had a choking and bitter taste, while this flower's leaves had a faint fragrance, albeit a bit pungent.

Fubo smiled and said, "I have never been interested in anything else in my life, just fond of flowers and plants, especially those I have never seen before. After you mentioned it to me the other day, I went to take a look on my way back from outside the city yesterday and transplanted a few of them back."

"So, Fubo, do you know what kind of plant this is?" Lin Wanrong asked.

Fubo shook his head, and with his years of knowledge, he surprisingly couldn't recognize what kind of plant it was. However, he liked the unknown, as it made researching more enjoyable.

The plant, which looked like both a flower and a grass, was lush green. Approaching it, one could still smell the pungent scent. Lin Wanrong slowly moved the potted plant that Fubo brought back to the garden and placed it next to the fiery red roses.

Lin Wanrong wasn't sure if it was an illusion, but as soon as he placed the plant next to the rose, the pungent smell seemed to decrease significantly. He sniffed carefully again and found it to be true. Not only that, but the original strong scent of roses had also faded, turning into a faint, delicate fragrance.

"What's going on?" Lin Wanrong was taken aback, and a thought struck him like lightning.

"Perfume?!" he shouted, jumping three feet into the air.

He finally remembered what this plant was. This tree-like plant was called Sanhuacao in his hometown, and it grew everywhere in the fields when he was a child. The first foreign investment project in his hometown was a French-owned perfume factory, which was established because the French saw the potential of Sanhuacao.

Back then, Lin Wanrong was young and didn't know the use of Sanhuacao. After the recent experiment, he realized that it was a perfume used for making fragrances. Sanhuacao could be

combined with different flowers and herbs to neutralize their scents, creating various perfume essences that could be combined with alcohol and water to make perfumes.

Lin Wanrong was no stranger to perfumes. He had given various perfumes to girls he pursued, such as Chanel, Guerlain, and Lancome, and had become quite familiar with them.

"Ah, this is a gold mine!" Lin Wanrong excitedly hugged Fubo, shouting, "Thank you, Fubo! We're going to be rich!"

Fubo, confused, said, "What fortune? We didn't find any gold."

Lin Wanrong couldn't explain in detail and simply smiled at Fubo.

After his excitement subsided, Lin Wanrong calmed down. Having the raw materials for fragrances was only the first step. Sanhuacao and flower dew could be combined in different ratios to create different perfumes, which required careful experimentation. Moreover, different people had different tastes, so he needed to think about that as well.

However, with this discovery, Lin Wanrong was extremely excited. He was confident that with enough experimentation, he could make perfumes. With these secret formulas, he would not only make a small fortune but a large one.

After being excited for a while, Lin Wanrong remembered that he still had to go to the study room. On his way, he overheard two maids talking, "Xiao Ju, did you know? I heard that the tea merchant Wang's house in the east of the city was robbed yesterday. They lost a lot of money and even had some people killed."

"Really? The Wang family that sells tea? I heard they are quite wealthy, almost as much as our Xiao family. How did they get robbed?"

"Yes, I heard the robbers were all very skilled, and the Wang family's guards were no match for them."

"I also heard that a wealthy family surnamed Liu in the north of the city was robbed earlier, right?"

"Yes, I heard it was the same situation"

Women were naturally drawn to gossip, but Lin Wanrong couldn't be bothered with them. He entered the study room, only to find the young master's seat empty and the teacher dozing off at the desk.

Lin Wanrong found it strange when suddenly someone tapped on his shoulder from behind, saying, "Lin San, you're quite early today."

Lin Wanrong turned around to see Xiao Yushuang, a pretty young girl with a bright smile, standing in front of him.

"You're up quite early too," Lin Wanrong said with a smile.

Xiao Yushuang secretly huffed in her heart, thinking that it was already late morning and this lazy guy had just arrived, making her wait for him for a long time. However, she was too embarrassed to say this and simply looked at Lin Wanrong, saying, "Lin San, tell me what you guys were up to last night. My cousin got so drunk that he hasn't woken up yet. Hmph, my mother will definitely scold him."

So, it turned out that her cousin was still hungover. Lin Wanrong had thought he was bold enough to skip class. However, now that the lady of the house knew about it, her cousin was in big trouble.

"Well, about last night, Eldest Miss knows about it. You can just ask her," Lin Wanrong replied, feeling embarrassed to admit that he had taken her cousin to a brothel. He suggested that she ask Xiao Yuruo instead.

"Hmph, even if you don't tell me, I know it wasn't anything good. Did you go to see that woman called Qin Xian'er?" Xiao Yushuang pouted.

Chapter 78 Second Miss Xiao's Request

Sweat poured down his brow as Lin Wanrong realized the young girl already knew everything. "Since you already know, why are you asking me?" he replied.

"Lin San, you're terrible! How could you go to such a place?" The young girl looked at him, condemning him seriously.

He found himself unable to answer. Should he tell her it was to fulfill certain physiological needs? That would be corrupting the child.

"Hehe, well, you know Miss Qin Xian'er invited us. She admired Young Master's talent, so I had no choice but to accompany him," he explained.

"Hmph, I heard about it from my sister, who told our mother. You might fool my sister, but not me. That Miss Qin is definitely not admiring my cousin, but you! Don't think I don't know," Xiao Yushuang said through gritted teeth, clearly annoyed.

Sighing, Lin Wanrong felt a touch of regret. The person who understood him best in the Xiao mansion was this young girl. Besides Guo Wuchang, the one he interacted with the most was Xiao Yushuang. Although she was sometimes quite unruly, she had changed a lot under his guidance and had at least stopped being so willful in front of him.

"Lin San, is that Qin Xian'er really that beautiful?" Xiao Yushuang couldn't help but ask when Lin Wanrong remained silent.

"She is indeed beautiful," Lin Wanrong replied, nodding honestly.

"Is she more beautiful than me?" Xiao Yushuang asked, puffing out her chest with pride.

Xiao Yushuang was indeed a very beautiful woman who could surpass Qin Xianer given time. However, she was still young and slightly naive. Considering Lin Wanrong's age and experience, she was still too young. She would need a few more years to grow.

"Am I not as good as her?" Xiao Yushuang asked anxiously, grabbing Lin Wanrong's arm.

"No, you're just younger now, so it's not a fair comparison. Give it a few years, and you'll certainly be more beautiful than her," Lin Wanrong reassured her.

A radiant smile blossomed on Xiao Yushuang's face. "Really?"

Seeing her adorable expression, Lin Wanrong felt a touch of joy and nodded, affirming, "Absolutely, certainly, and definitely."

Xiao Yushuang huffed, "I knew it. How could I be compared to a woman of the night?"

Lin Wanrong frowned, "Second Miss, everyone has their own experiences. Don't look down on others so easily. Even though Qin Xian'er has fallen into such a lifestyle, she's managed to maintain her purity. That alone makes her much stronger than most."

Xiao Yushuang, born into a wealthy family, had an inherent sense of superiority. Otherwise, she wouldn't tease the servants so much.

"I understand," Xiao Yushuang stuck out her tongue, "I'll listen to what you say."

"You listen to everything I say? Why?" Lin Wanrong asked curiously.

"Because you're kind to me," Xiao Yushuang replied matter-of-factly. "You're different from others. You don't just agree with me, you dare to contradict me, even hit me... over there" Her face flushed slightly as she continued, "You can compose poetry, paint, sing, and tell stories. I like that very much."

God, if a stand-up comedian comes along, she'd probably like him even more. Lin Wanrong couldn't help but give a bitter smile.

"Lin San, you promised to paint my portrait yesterday. When can we start?" Xiao Yushuang asked with interest.

"Well, I need to gather the materials first," Lin Wanrong replied. In reality, there wasn't much to prepare; he just needed to retrieve the makeshift pencil he had left with Qiaoqiao.

Xiao Yushuang didn't know how he painted and assumed, like most painters, he needed a pile of pigments, so she simply nodded in understanding.

"Lin San, you're so talented. I wonder if you can help my family," Xiao Yushuang suddenly sighed.

"Help? What kind of help? You must be joking, Second Miss. What can a humble servant like me do?" Lin Wanrong laughed.

"I don't know why, Lin San, but I feel like you're capable. You're full of ideas, quick-witted, and knowledgeable" Xiao Yushuang started.

"Alright, alright, you're going to make me blush," Lin Wanrong interrupted, laughing, "What's troubling our Second Miss so much?"

"I'm not entirely sure myself. I've only heard my mother and sister talking about it. But they always treat me like a child, unwilling to involve me. I've overheard a bit, something about a partnership with our Xiao family" Xiao Yushuang pouted, clearly dissatisfied with her mother and sister's disregard.

"A partnership?" Lin Wanrong was surprised. Did such a concept even exist in this era?

"Did you see that Young Master Tao last night? He proposed a partnership among three families, including ours and another family named He. I'm not too clear on the details; I only heard so much from my mother and sister."

Lin Wanrong's brow furrowed. He knew that the Xiao family's main business was selling cloth and silk. Although it was profitable, it was a common business that anyone with money could engage in, leading to fierce competition. The Xiao family used to lead this industry, but in recent years, more and more businesses had emerged. Even within Jinling City, several businesses were on par with the Xiao family. Business was getting tougher.

"What's the story with that Young Master Tao? And the He family?" Lin Wanrong asked, his brow furrowed. He had seen plenty of partnerships in his previous life. Strong alliances seizing the market together was a very beneficial business strategy. However, such partnerships also presented numerous issues, such as profit distribution and resource allocation. To put it bluntly, it was a double-edged sword. If done well, everyone could profit; if not, it became a game of acquisition.

"Young Master Tao's family is in the same business as ours. Over the past few years, their scale has constantly expanded, and now they've even surpassed our family. The He family is also only slightly smaller than ours. Our three families - Xiao, Tao, and He - are the biggest cloth dealers in Jinling City, if not in all of Jiangsu or even the entire country."

What was the deal with this Tao Dongcheng? He was so young, and in a few years, his business had grown larger than the Xiao family. Lin Wanrong was puzzled and asked, "This Young Master Tao, does his family have any significant background?"

Despite her youth, Xiao Yushuang was born into a noble family and understood many things. She nodded, "Young Master Tao's uncle is the current Vice Minister of Personnel. He was once a student of my grandfather. His father, on the other hand, is a silk manufacturer in Suzhou."

A silk manufacturer in Suzhou? No wonder, Lin Wanrong understood. With such power behind him, it would be strange if Tao Dongcheng's business hadn't taken off.

Jiangnan was the richest region in China, and there was a saying, "The prosperity of Jiangnan feeds the whole country." Besides agriculture, the most famous industries in Jiangnan were the Yangzhou salt trade, the Jinling tea trade, and the Suzhou silk industry. These were the most profitable businesses in Jiangnan. Young Master Tao's father controlled the Suzhou silk industry, which was the source of all cloth supply, it was no surprise that he could expand his business so rapidly.

Understanding these circumstances, Lin Wanrong grasped the meaning of Tao Dongcheng's words the previous night about becoming one entity soon. With the backing of the Suzhou silk industry, a partnership was inevitable.

As for the pros and cons of this, it wasn't appropriate for Lin Wanrong to explain to Xiao Yushuang. He said, "Let your elder sister and your mother worry about these things. It's no use worrying yourself."

"But I see mother and sister are both worried, and they seem undecided about whether or not to form a partnership," Xiao Yushuang frowned. "I am their family, of course I want to share their worries. But I can't help at all. Am I useless?"

Listening to this young girl share her concerns, Lin Wanrong felt touched and quickly comforted her with a smile, "Second Miss, I understand how you feel. But you're still young and not yet capable of helping them. What you should do now is make yourself happy, so they don't have to worry about you."

Xiao Yushuang gave a small nod and pouted, "But I'm not entirely useless. At the very least, I can introduce talent. Lin San, you're so capable, can't you help my mother and sister?"

Lin Wanrong gave a wry smile, "Second Miss, you're overestimating me. I'm just a servant. I can't have a say in such important matters."

Xiao Yushuang shook her head, "Lin San, in my eyes, you're the most capable person. Even my sister praised you last night."

"Your elder sister praised me?" Lin Wanrong was surprised. I'm lucky she didn't beat me to death.

Xiao Yushuang bashfully said, "Last night, my sister came to my room for a chat and saw that little booklet. She looked at the portrait you drew for her and was lost in thought for quite some time. She even said she had never seen such a drawing technique before and that you have the talent of a grandmaster."

"Really?" Lin Wanrong said, "Didn't you promise to keep it a secret?"

Xiao Yushuang quickly explained, "Don't worry, I remember everything you've told me. I just said that I found the booklet and didn't know who drew the pictures. Then my sister took the booklet away."

Seeing Xiao Yushuang looking guilty, Lin Wanrong knew it was difficult for her to lie to her sister. He didn't have the heart to blame her, "Don't worry, I'm not mad at you." He wondered what kind of ripples would arise now that the booklet had fallen into the Eldest Miss Xiao's hands.

"Lin San, will you help my sister? Please?" Xiao Yushuang grabbed Lin Wanrong's arm and pleaded with him in a soft voice.

She had said it so many times, Lin Wanrong could only reply helplessly, "Alright, I'll think about it. I'll tell you when I come up with a solution."

Xiao Yushuang's tears turned into laughter, "Lin San, I knew you were the best. Come to my room tonight!"

"What?" Lin Wanrong was shocked, almost dropping his jaw in surprise.

Chapter 79 A Beautiful Lady Gives Me a Knockout Drug (Part 1)

Good heavens, isn't this moving too quickly? thought Lin Wanrong. A servant stealing the heart of a young lady, not to mention she's underage? That's a bit thrilling.

"Oh, where is your mind wandering off to?" Second Miss Xiao also realized the implications of her words. Her cheeks turned crimson as she hurriedly explained, "I'm asking you to tell me a story. I've been having nightmares these past few days, dreaming of our Xiao family's downfall. I'm scared, Lin San. Will you come and tell me a story tonight?"

So that's what she meant, Lin Wanrong wiped off a bead of cold sweat, feeling ashamed for his inappropriate thoughts. Reluctantly, he nodded and agreed, "Alright."

He spent the day speaking with Xiao Yushuang, surprisingly without the interruption of Young Master Guo. In the afternoon, Lin Wanrong returned to his quarters early.

First, he collected several large clovers, grinding the stems and leaves to extract the pungent juice into a large jar. He then gathered handfuls of rose petals and, after great effort, managed to squeeze out some juice, treasuring it in another small cup.

In his past life, he had some knowledge about perfume-making, aware that creating a bottle of perfume required dozens, if not hundreds, of pounds of petals. There were many flowers in the courtyard, but it still wasn't enough. Fortunately, with the help of the housekeeper, getting more petals wasn't an issue.

To make the essence of perfume, the juice had to be extracted first. Solvent extraction would have been the best method, but given the primitive conditions of this world, pressing was the most practical option, even if it meant wasting some raw materials and incurring higher costs.

Both types of juice were roughly processed, with bits of fragments mixed in, quite crude. But this was just a preliminary experiment, so there was no need to get into the details.

After leaving the juices to settle for a while, Lin Wanrong returned to his room after dinner. Seeing that the juices had partially clarified, he eagerly poured some of the clover extract into a small bowl. The pungent smell was overpowering. The rose juice was too precious, so he only dipped a chopstick in it and stirred it into the clover extract.

The miracle happened when just a bit of rose juice touched the clover extract - the pungent smell significantly reduced. It hadn't completely disappeared, Lin Wanrong knew this was because there wasn't enough rose juice, so he reluctantly added more.

Indeed, with just a bit more rose juice, the effect was dramatic. Not only was the pungent smell gone, but a subtle fragrance of roses began to emerge.

Overjoyed, Lin Wanrong knew he was onto something. He added more rose juice to the experiment, and the faint scent turned into a rich aroma. The scent was strong but not cloying, a stark contrast to other typical perfumes.

His room was filled with a pleasant fragrance. Bathed in the aroma of rose dew, Lin Wanrong laughed heartily. "I'm going to be rich!"

"What are you doing?" A cold voice came from behind him.

Turning around, he saw Xiao Qingxuan's beautiful face. Goodness, this girl must have been a cat in her past life, walking without a sound?

Realizing that it was already dusk and that he had been engrossed in his experiment for over an hour, he had no idea how long she'd been there or what she'd seen. He asked, "What brings you here?"

Xiao Qingxuan said, "I come and go as I please, why should I ask you?"

"And how did you get in?"

"Just like I did last night, I climbed over the wall."

"Did you also climb the wall this morning when you left?"

"Why should I tell you that?"

Xiao Qingxuan seemed to have returned to her previous cold demeanor, with the little warmth from last night completely gone.

"Miss, even though you're of high standing, you should at least have some manners, right? You should knock before entering, understand?" Lin Wanrong said irritably.

This girl always entered mysteriously. If she appeared like a ghost as she did the previous night, even if he didn't have heart disease, he would be frightened to death by her. Moreover, he was in the middle of important work, which he couldn't afford to leak. It was a unique recipe, which couldn't be bought even with ten thousand taels of gold.

"Your door was open, so naturally I came in," Xiao Qingxuan stated confidently.

"Remember this, there won't be a next time, or else I may have to silence you," Lin Wanrong threatened menacingly.

However, Xiao Qingxuan chuckled and said, "Shouldn't I be the one saying that?"

With her skills, killing Lin Wanrong would have been easy as pie. Of course, except for the first time they met when things didn't go as planned, which made Xiao Qingxuan slightly flustered.

"Such a unique scent, it's somewhat like a floral fragrance, but not quite. What exactly is this?" Xiao Qingxuan asked with interest, looking at Lin Wanrong's experimental cup.

She came from a wealthy background and had used many high-quality cosmetics, but she had never smelled this scent before. It seemed to be specifically made for women, with a faint, captivating fragrance that was strong but not overwhelming, making it irresistible and even slightly addictive.

"What do you think of this scent?" Lin Wanrong asked with a mysterious smile. Since you've stumbled upon my experiment, let's make you my first test subject.

Biting her red lips, Xiao Qingxuan said, "It's very fragrant, very pure, very clean, I like it a lot. Of course, if it was a little lighter, I would like it even more."

Suddenly, Lin Wanrong remembered an article he had read before, called "Recognizing a Woman by Her Scent." The gist was that you could understand a woman's needs from the type of perfume she uses. Women who preferred light scents were more interested in emotional affection than physical, while those who liked strong scents were more sexually driven.

Judging by this, Xiao Qingxuan seemed to be a woman who valued emotional connections, Lin Wanrong thought with a smirk.

"You still haven't told me what this is. I saw you going back and forth earlier and didn't know what you were doing," Xiao Qingxuan said. From the way she spoke, it was clear that she had been there for a while, observing him.

"This... ah, I haven't thought of a name for it yet. Just think of it as the powder you women use. I'm still in the experimental stage now, but once I've perfected it, I'll definitely send you some," Lin Wanrong said generously.

Xiao Qingxuan smiled lightly without saying anything, but there was a hint of barely concealed delight in her eyes.

"By the way, why did you come looking for me? Did you miss me already?" Lin Wanrong joked, retaliating for her sudden appearances.

Xiao Qingxuan glared at him and said, "Every time I see you, you can't say something nice. If this is how you're going to be, I won't come again."

Lin Wanrong chuckled inwardly. Xiao Qingxuan seemed to realize there was something off in her words. Her face flushed in embarrassment as she thought, 'What's wrong with me? I lose all composure when I see him. It's all because this man is shameless, causing me to behave so uncharacteristically.'

Without dwelling on it, she pulled out a small booklet from her bosom and handed it to Lin Wanrong, saying, "This is for you."

"What is it?" Lin Wanrong took the booklet, which was still warm from Xiao Qingxuan's touch and had a faint fragrance.

"You asked me how I got in here, didn't you? If you learn what's in this booklet, you can move as freely as I do," Xiao Qingxuan said nonchalantly.

Lin Wanrong flipped through a few pages and found it to be a manual for martial arts, including some sword techniques. Despite the apparent age of the booklet, it was in pristine condition. It was undoubtedly a treasure that could fetch a lot of money if he sold it as an antique.

Being a typical shrewd businessman, Lin Wanrong's first thought was of the potential profit, despite the kindness shown by the beauty.

Seeing him staring at the booklet without speaking, Xiao Qingxuan asked, "What's wrong?"

Lin Wanrong sighed and handed the booklet back to her, saying, "Miss Xiao, thank you for your generosity. But I'm not young anymore, my bones are brittle, and my back is stiff. At this age, do you think there's hope for me to learn martial arts?"

Xiao Qingxuan knew his age was a limitation, and it would be impossible for him to start learning from scratch. The best she could hope for was that he'd learn some basic self-defense. The martial arts and sword techniques in the booklet were coveted treasures. She had gone to great lengths to acquire it for him, but he didn't even give it a second glance.

"You are too conspicuous and are bound to attract trouble. Some martial arts training could help you defend yourself when needed," Xiao Qingxuan advised.

Lin Wanrong shook his head and said, "Miss Xiao, I appreciate your kindness. We are from completely different worlds. You are a noble heroine, and I am a carefree servant. I have no interest in your world."

In fact, Xiao Qingxuan had a point. Lin Wanrong had long been considering this issue. The idea of establishing his own power had crossed his mind when he initially supported Dong Qingshan's gang. At this thought, he remembered the governor's son, Luo Yuan. If he could bring him into the gang, wouldn't that solve his problem of lack of support? Given the young man's restless nature, it might actually work.

Xiao Qingxuan reluctantly took back the booklet, feeling a mix of emotions. It was the first time she had given a gift to someone, especially to a man with whom she had an ambiguous relationship, only to have it refused. The thought was unbelievable.

"Lin San, do you really want to remain a servant in the Xiao family for the rest of your life? With your intelligence and courage, you shouldn't be content with mediocrity, should you?" Xiao Qingxuan asked after a long pause.

"Miss Xiao, don't you think it's quite difficult for a person to live a peaceful life for their entire existence?" Lin Wanrong replied with a serene expression.

Chapter 80 A Beautiful Lady Gives Me a Knockout Drug (Part 2)

Xiao Qingxuan pondered for a long time, finally sighed and said, "We may have had some misunderstandings, but you came to my aid yesterday. I am giving you these as a gesture of gratitude. I hope you don't misunderstand."

Misunderstand? I have no misunderstanding. But it seems like you, little lady, might have one. Lin Wanrong laughed heartily and said, "Don't worry, I'm a loyal, kind, handsome, dashing, and generous man. Helping you once is nothing. I can do it every day without a problem."

Hearing his nonsense, Xiao Qingxuan's heart skipped a beat. She hurriedly said, "You're never serious. I'll give you another thing that I think will be most useful to you."

"What is it?" Lin Wanrong asked, intrigued.

Without answering, Xiao Qingxuan pulled out a pile of medicine packs from her bosom: wound healing medicine, sobering pills, sunscreen, hand cream, and countless more.

She picked one out of the pile and said, "This one is for you."

"What is it, exactly?" Lin Wanrong asked, even more curious now.

Holding back her laughter, Xiao Qingxuan said, "A knockout drug."

Lin Wanrong broke into a cold sweat. Is this girl playing with me? Why does she give me a knockout drug? Am I supposed to use it for some nefarious deeds?

Seeing his stunned expression, Xiao Qingxuan revealed a smirk and said, "You're always full of bad ideas and tricks, often causing trouble. This knockout drug should come in handy."

Lin Wanrong forced a smile and said, "I'm not as bad as you make me out to be."

Xiao Qingxuan gave a triumphant smile and sighed helplessly, "You always draw attention to yourself, attracting jealousy. Be careful when you're out and about. Don't fall into someone else's trap. You don't know martial arts, so who will save you when the time comes?"

Her voice was gentle and soft, contrasting with her usual cold demeanor. Lin Wanrong put away the knockout drug and said, "Alright, I'll keep this. Didn't expect you to understand me so well."

Xiao Qingxuan was silent for a while, then gritted her teeth and said, "Take care of yourself, I'll be leaving first."

"Be careful when you climb over the wall. Don't fall," Lin Wanrong said.

Xiao Qingxuan shot him a glance, wishing she could impale him with her sword. How could she, with her superior skills, end up in such a situation? He couldn't say something nice as she was about to leave?

When she looked up and saw Lin Wanrong trying to suppress his laughter, she knew he was teasing her. Unexpectedly, a warm feeling rose in her heart, and her cheeks heated up. She quickly walked away.

"Will you come again tomorrow?" Lin Wanrong shamelessly asked.

Seeing her walking away as if she hadn't heard him, Lin Wanrong shook his head and thought to himself, 'This girl is still too shy.'

Just as he was thinking this, a soft sound carried over the wind: "Mmm."

By the time he looked up, Xiao Qingxuan had already disappeared.

A sense of melancholy rose in Lin Wanrong's heart. In this world, there were only two women he genuinely cared for. One was Dong Qiaoqiao. Qiaoqiao was gentle and kind, enjoyed listening to him speak, and viewed Lin Wanrong as the most important person in her life. He was quite fond of her, and he would never allow anyone to harm her. A woman like her was suitable to become his wife.

His relationship with Xiao Qingxuan was strange, however. It wasn't love, nor was it friendship. If he had to define it, it was more than friendship but less than love, a sort of camaraderie. Despite their limited interactions, which had all stemmed from conflict, he found himself developing this feeling towards her.

It seemed, he was indeed a master of ambiguity. Xiao Qingxuan had already vanished from sight, but Lin Wanrong was still indulging in his narcissistic thoughts.

Gathering his thoughts, he carefully compared the composition of the perfume again, trying hard to recall his limited knowledge about fragrances. Xiao Qingxuan's reaction earlier had given him sufficient confidence. If a lady of such high birth was fascinated by this scent, it would surely be a hit with others.

Lin Wanrong felt as if he was cuddling a gold mine in his sleep, and he was even more careful with this experiment. He noted down the effects of different combinations, reconsidered every step, and documented it all. Luckily, when he was a sales manager, he had developed his own method of recording to maintain secrecy, ensuring others couldn't understand it.

After tinkering for a while, he sealed the small cups with different mixtures. Making perfume required testing the scent at different times since the fragrance would change. This concept, known as scent testing, was something Lin Wanrong understood.

After busying himself for a while, he heard a maid outside calling his name. Seeing that it was getting late, he remembered that he had to go tell a story to Xiao Yushuang that night.

Sigh, with competence comes responsibility.

The Second Miss's private building was located in the middle of the Xiao Mansion. The area in front was where the Eldest Miss lived, and the back was where Madam Xiao resided. When Xiao Yushuang was younger, she lived with her older sister. However, once she turned sixteen and her hair was styled into a mature bun, signifying her transition into adulthood, she moved into the private building prepared specifically for her.

The small building was a perfect square, supported by four vermilion pillars on the corners, with flying dragon patterns on the yellow tiles of the eaves. Its exterior was very ordinary, except for the gold border around the plaque above the main entrance.

Upon entering the building, there was an extremely elegant small study with sandalwood incense wafting through. Past the study was a small reception room. Xiao Yushuang greeted Lin San with a radiant smile as he arrived, hurriedly running over to take his hand, "Lin San, you're here."

Lin Wanrong replied with a smile, "How dare I disobey the Second Miss's orders?"

A maid brought over a cup of clear tea, and Xiao Yushuang personally handed it to Lin Wanrong, saying, "Lin San, this is Rain Flower tea that just arrived yesterday. How does it taste?"

Lin Wanrong took a sip, and indeed, the fragrance was refreshing and lingered on his lips and teeth. Even for someone like him who didn't understand tea ceremony, he couldn't help but inwardly praise it as good tea.

Seeing him finish the tea in one gulp, Xiao Yushuang covered her mouth and laughed softly, "Who drinks tea like you? Why are you in such a rush? No one's competing with you." She then waved for the maid to bring another cup.

Lin Wanrong laughed, "With such good tea and the honor of it being served by the Second Miss herself, how could I be careless? Even if it were bitter, I'd still drink it all in one go."

"You are such a tease," Xiao Yushuang giggled, covering her mouth. "By the way, about the matter I mentioned to you today, do you have a solution?"

No one did a favor without a reason; either they have malicious intentions or they're out to steal. As expected, this young lady's hospitality had an ulterior motive. Lin Wanrong sighed, "Second Miss, even if I had some ideas in mind, it would be useless to tell you."

Xiao Yushuang understood his meaning. Although she was the Second Miss, she had never been involved in the Xiao family's affairs due to her young age. Consequently, her words carried little weight.

"Lin San, do you really have a solution?" Xiao Yushuang asked cautiously, her brows furrowed as if pondering something.

"I can't say I have a solution, but I do have some thoughts. Second Miss, I'm going to say something you might not like. If we go into partnership with others, the Xiao family will be left with no way out," Lin Wanrong stated definitively.

"Are you serious?" Xiao Yushuang asked, her voice trembling.

Lin Wanrong realized that his resolute tone had frightened this young girl. After all, she was still a little girl who hadn't been involved in business battles. So, he softened his tone, "Second Miss, I wouldn't lie to you. This partnership plan is a wolf in sheep's clothing and a hidden disaster. You must not underestimate it."

Xiao Yushuang didn't understand these matters, but she had a kind of blind trust in Lin San. She quickly grabbed his hand, saying anxiously, "Lin San, what should we do? I just heard my mother and sister speaking, and it seems they are wavering. They're almost persuaded by that Tao guy."

In the large Xiao family mansion, the fact that such a young girl trusted him completely moved Lin Wanrong. However, as a servant, he couldn't participate in the Xiao family's management, nor did he want to. Was he really expected to take on the role of the master?

Xiao Yushuang sighed, "Lin San, I'm really scared. What if our Xiao family is ruined? What will happen to my mother, my sister, and me? And what about you?"

This little girl was indeed endearing. Lin Wanrong quickly comforted her, "Don't worry, that's the worst-case scenario. Besides, with the intelligence of your sister and your mother, how could they not see it? Rest assured."

"I wish it's as you said," Xiao Yushuang said faintly.

Seeing that it was getting late, Lin Wanrong said, "Second Miss, it's getting late. You should rest. I'm going back now."

Xiao Yushuang quickly held onto him, "You haven't told me a story yet. I've been having nightmares these past few days, and I'm really scared. Lin San, can you tell me a story, please?"

The little girl looked so pitiful that Lin Wanrong felt a wave of sympathy. He agreed, "Alright, today I'll tell you the story of the 'The Legend of Condor Heroes'."

"Okay." The little girl laid her head on the table, propped up by her hands, and listened attentively as he told the story.

Having been a sales manager for a long time, Lin Wanrong was skilled at exaggerating stories. Even the smallest details were made grand, and the largest ones were blown out of proportion. The story he told was truly breathtaking, with each character leaving a deep impression.

"...and so Guo Jing and Huang Rong lived happily ever after on Peach Blossom Island." This story of 'The Legend of Condor Heroes' was really damn long. Despite Lin Wanrong's attempts to condense the content, he still spoke for more than an hour, consuming a full pot of Rain Flower tea. He decided to choose a shorter story next time, maybe one about a beggar.

Second Miss listened with interest for a long time. After he finished, she smiled and said, "Lin San, where did you hear this story? It felt like I was listening to a professional storyteller. It was so much fun. I really liked it. From now on, can you tell me a story before I go to sleep every night?"