

Immortal 321

Chapter 321: Blessed Witness

The two of them were roused from their slumber. "What should we do?" Zu An asked quietly.

"What else can we do? Hurry up and leave through the window!" Chu Chuyan was so anxious that she was about to cry. She helped him hunt for his clothes while pushing him towards the window, at the same time saying to her mother, "Please wait a while, mom!"

"There's honestly no need for all of this," Zu An protested. "It's not as if we aren't husband and wife. Why do we always have to act as though we're in an affair?"

"No!" Chu Chuyan straight up refused. Their relationship was developing too quickly. Discreetly allowing him into her residence was already her limit. How could she possibly reveal to the world that they were sleeping together?

Zu An was speechless. However, he knew just how shy she was regarding this matter, and he didn't want to make things difficult for her.

Besides, it suddenly struck him that, once the truth of their relationship was exposed, Old Mi would surely find out that he had recovered. That old man was sure to become suspicious of him once that happened.

He didn't know just what Old Mi's ultimate objective was. Something really bad might happen if Old Mi learned the truth. Therefore, he agreed to keep the extent of his relationship with Chu Chuyan a secret for now.

He quickly put on his clothes and jumped out the window.

Only then did Chu Chuyan open the door. "Mom, why are you here so early in the morning?"

"I was worried about your condition, and I couldn't sleep well last night, so I decided to pay you a visit." Qin Wanru let her gaze linger on her daughter, her heart welling up with feelings of fondness. She was so good and obedient, her cultivation was at a high level, and she had a beautiful appearance... she was truly the perfect daughter.

"I'm fine..." Chu Chuyan said, her face slightly red.

Qin Wanru followed her inside. Suddenly, she sniffed the air. "Hm? What is that smell..."

"It's nothing...!" Chu Chuyan was distressed. There was indeed a smell lingering in the air after the intimate night she'd shared with Zu An.

Qin Wanru was startled by the extent of her daughter's alarm. As an experienced woman, how could she be blind to what was going on? "Zu An came to treat your injuries again last night?"

"Yeah..." Chu Chuyan replied, hanging her head in shame. She didn't know what to say at all.

Qin Wanru sighed. "I don't even know what to say to you. This truly is an ill-fated relationship!" How could an outstanding daughter like hers be defiled by this sort of ruffian? As a mother, she couldn't help but feel distressed.

At the same time, however, she found the entire situation strange. Her daughter was usually arrogant and proud. So many outstanding young men had crossed her path over the years, yet she didn't fancy a single one of them. Why did she end up liking this Zu fellow? Just which aspect of him was outstanding...?

Her face went rigid. There seemed to be something not quite right about this train of thought. That scene suddenly appeared in her mind.

Her face twisted in discomfort, and she quickly changed the topic. "Chuyan, I wanted to discuss the matter of the advance salt permits with you..."

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Zu An returned to his room to get some sleep. He didn't know how long it had been before he heard Chu Huanzhao's voice beside his ear.

"Brother-in-law, you lazy pig! Get up already! You're going to be late for school!"

Zu An shivered and woke up with a start when he heard that he was going to be late for school. Just how many years of nightmares had this phrase caused him in his previous life?

However, he quickly snapped out of his reverie. I've already freaking transmigrated! Why would I care about school anymore?

I'm even a teacher now! Why should I be scared of the school?

With that, he lay back down on his bed.

Seeing that he was about to fall asleep again, Chu Huanzhao said angrily, "Stinky brother-in-law, get up!"

"Ahh! Stop bothering me! Let me sleep a while longer..." Zu An waved her off.

He had been active the whole night, and before that, he and Zheng Dan had enjoyed themselves every day for half a month. Thank goodness he had the Primordial Origin Sutra. He would have long since shriveled up and died otherwise.

Even so, he was completely exhausted.

Sigh, it would be great if I knew some sort of double-cultivation technique. Zu An thought of that Song fellow from one of the novels in his previous life, who grew braver the more he fought, and his heart was filled with jealous hate.

"Are you really going to keep sleeping? We really are going to be late!" Chu Huanzhao was annoyed. She reached out a hand to grab his blankets. "I'm going to pull off your blankets!"

Zu An kept his eyes closed. "Take them off then, I'm not wearing any clothes," he muttered to himself.

Chu Huanzhao immediately froze, and a hint of redness spread across her small face. "You... you rascal!"

Zu An laughed, "I'm the one sleeping in bed and under the covers, while you're the one who wants to pull them off. How am I the rascal?"

"I..." Chu Huanzhao was at a loss for words. However, she was dumb either and responded quickly, "Nonsense! You clearly had clothes on when you sat up just now!"

Being pestered like this chased away the last of Zu An's sleepiness. He couldn't resist poking fun at her when he saw how angry she was. "I am wearing clothes on top, but I don't have any pants on."

Chu Huanzhao was left speechless.

Not only did she recall what had happened the day before, the scene had even appeared in her dreams.

Smoke seemed to rise from the top of her head when she thought of this.

"What's wrong?" Zu An was also slightly surprised by her sudden change in behavior.

"You big pervert!" Chu Huanzhao yelled at him, then quickly ran away.

Zu An laughed when he saw how panic-stricken she was. Messing with this little girl was still pretty fun.

After this exchange, Zu An unwillingly got out of bed.

After all, not showing up at the academy was negligence on his part, both as a teacher and as a student. Without a great person like Jiang Luofu backing him, anyone else might have already been kicked out.

That was why he had to go to the academy. Besides, didn't that Old Mi want him to steal something from the Wei clan? He'd use this chance to talk to Wei Suo to tease out an opportunity.

Chu Huanzhao didn't say a single word to him on their way to the academy. Zu An tried to chat with her several times, but she immediately ran away as soon as he approached her.

Zu An was left stupefied. Did I really piss off this lass?

When they reached the academy, Chu Huanzhao headed straight for her own classroom.

Zu An was a bit dejected. Even he thought of himself as contemptible.

When others treat you well, you keep provoking them; yet when they start to ignore you, you start to miss them.

Isn't this the definition of contemptible?!

He had no idea that Chu Huanzhao ignored him not because she was angry, but rather, because that scene from the night before was the only thing she could think of. She couldn't get it out of her head at all! How could she dare to even look at him?

Zu An headed straight for the principal's office first, wanting to give Jiang Luofu a full report. She was his backing in the academy, after all.

He rapped on the door, but there was no response to his knocking. He noticed that the door wasn't completely shut.

He pushed the door open and went in. Just as he was about to call out to Jiang Luofu, the scene confronting him almost made blood shoot out of his nose.

Jiang Luofu wasn't the only one in the office. Shang Liuyu was here as well! These two gorgeous beauties had their legs on the table, and they seemed to be comparing something.

One had on extremely thin black stockings, while another had transparent gray stockings. He felt beyond blessed that he could witness such a sight.

He heard Jiang Luofu say to Shang Liuyu proudly, "Little Yuyu, didn't I tell you that these stockings suited your style?"

Shang Liuyu laughed, and was just about to reply when she raised her head and saw Zu An. Her smile froze instantly.

Chapter 322: Can't Wash Away This Sin

She took her legs off the table right away and awkwardly sorted out her clothes. Her face, usually graced with a calm and carefree expression, now had a never-before-seen trace of redness.

It's all Jiang Luofu's fault! Why did she have to call me over for no reason to try out some stockings?

Noticing her strange behavior, Jiang Luofu turned around and glared at Zu An. "Don't you know how to knock?"

She was clearly unfazed by the sudden intrusion. Her beautiful legs were still resting on the table, and she made no move to hide anything at all.

Zu An wore an expression of wounded innocence. "I knocked, but no one responded! I only walked in because I saw that the door wasn't completely closed."

Jiang Luofu snorted. "Brat, don't walk into places you shouldn't enter in the future. You might just end up losing your life."

Zu An was completely speechless. Were you two really up to something that shameless? Why are you making this sound so serious?

"All right, speak. Where have you been these past few days? Shang Liuyu reported that you told them you'd be right back, yet there was no further news from you at all! She was so worried that she went straight to the Chu clan to warn them." Jiang Luofu gave him an ambiguous smile.

Zu An was stunned. He subconsciously gave Shang Liuyu a look.

Shang Liuyu's face became slightly redder. "Don't listen to her nonsense. Actually, Principal Jiang was quite worried about you as well. She mobilized all of the experts in the academy to look for you, but no one found anything."

Jiang Luofu twirled the brush in her hands. "Since the agreement between the two of us has already been fulfilled, why would I care if he lives or dies? It does seem strange to me, though. How could so many people go out looking for you but turn up nothing? Just where did you end up going?"

Zu An told her everything he prepared beforehand.

When she heard that there was a dragon in Hidden Dragon Mountain, Jiang Luofu suddenly stood up. After obtaining the general location of the dragon from Zu An, she vanished without a trace.

Jiang Luofu's perfume still lingered in the air. Zu An was stupefied. "What is going on?"

"Principal Jiang has always been fond of cultivation," Shang Liuyu explained. "She is interested in the powerful beings of all different races, and her greatest regret is that she has never seen a true dragon before. How could she sit still after hearing that there is a dragon in hiding?"

Zu An nodded in understanding. A pity that there was no way she would ever find that dragon!

Shang Liuyu looked at him with her beautiful eyes. "Even though you played it down, it must have been an extremely dangerous encounter."

Zu An was stunned. "Why would you say that?"

Shang Liuyu chuckled. "The item I gave you has already been broken. It seems like you suffered a blow that would have been strong enough to kill you."

"I guess I can't hide it from you..." Zu An said with a sigh. "I owe you for saving my life. I really don't know how to repay this debt."

"I never expected any repayment from you to begin with. Besides, we're friends." Shang Liuyu carried a type of special bearing when she spoke. Her words felt like a cool breeze, like a wave gently pattering over a sandy shore.

"How can I just accept that?" Zu An said seriously, "How can I not repay a life saving debt? But I don't think big sis will like anything ordinary. I guess I can only give you the one thing most precious to me."

Shang Liuyu blinked at him, uncomprehending.

Even though she didn't really want him to reply, she was still curious as to what exactly his precious item was.

Zu An ignored her look and continued, "Since we are already so close, could I ask if you have any more of those pendant things? Pass me another ten or so of them, please."

"Do you think they grow like vegetables?" Shang Liuyu finally couldn't stand him anymore, and disappeared with the wind.

You have successfully trolled Shang Liuyu for 22 Rage points!

I'm really getting bolder and bolder, aren't I? But then, it's rare to see Shang Liuyu angry.

With the two women having departed, he was the only one left in the office.

He was just about to look around to see what the gorgeous principal looked at in private, what she was interested in and what she played with.

However, after her previous warning, he decided not to mess around in this office. She held a high position, and surely had many important things to take care of. If he saw something he shouldn't have seen, it would spell trouble.

Most importantly, he didn't want to damage their friendship. He still had to cling firmly to this gorgeous principal's thighs, and so he had to think about the bigger picture.

Just as he was about to leave, his eyes suddenly narrowed. There were some stockings left behind on the couch that the two women had been sitting.

These were probably the stockings the two women had been trying on.

Zu An had been thinking of a way to get into the Wei clan. Surely this would be something that Wei Suo can only dream of laying his hands on!

After all, not even Old Mi was willing to sneak into the Wei clan estate. He didn't know why exactly, but he guessed that it was probably because there was someone inside the Wei estate that he felt apprehensive about.

This meant that he had to give up on the idea of sneaking in himself. If not even Old Mi could do it, he probably shouldn't overestimate his own abilities.

The one advantage he had was his relationship with Wei Suo. He could enter the estate openly, if the right opportunity presented itself.

Even so, he needed a good reason to visit. If not, he'd easily draw suspicion upon himself.

Zu An stared at the stockings for a long time, but finally gave up on this thought in the end. He didn't want to be hounded to death by two women just because of Old Mi's task.

Suddenly, Shang Liuyu came running back. Zu An was stunned. "Huh? Why did you come back?"

"I forgot something." Shang Liuyu rushed right past him, her face red. He had never seen her move so quickly before.

"I've found what I was looking for, so I'll take my leave first. Remember to close the door behind you." Shang Liuyu vanished almost before the words had finished tumbling out of her mouth.

Zu An only witnessed a blur in front of his eyes. In that moment, the stockings he had been staring at had disappeared completely.

That was too close! Zu An rejoiced in his decision. If he'd lost control and picked them up just now, there was no way he would be able to wash his hands clean of his crimes!

At the same time, a doubt surfaced in his mind. Why did everyone in the city say that Shang Liuyu was poor at cultivation? Everyone said that she was only at the fourth rank. But the speed she revealed earlier on was definitely not of the fourth rank!

From the office, Zu An headed straight to the Yellow class classroom. It has been so long since he returned to class that his relationship with Wei Suo seemed to have grown distant.

However, the admiration in Wei Suo's eyes immediately told him that he had thought too much.

The two of them casually chatted for a while, and the slight awkwardness quickly disappeared. They seemed as close as they had been when they just enrolled into the school.

The two of them chatted with their arms around each others' shoulders. Suddenly, Wang Yuanlong appeared. "Ah Zu, I've made a reservation for the top floor of the Four Way Restaurant. I'd firstly like to thank you for saving my life, and secondly, to celebrate your safe return. Please honor me with your presence."

Zu An seemed slightly troubled. "I just said I would eat with Wei Suo, though."

Wang Yuanlong smiled. "It's no trouble at all if brother Wei comes along too. Miss Xie, Lady Qiu, and others are attending. All of them have only agreed to come because of Ah Zu. We don't usually have the ability to invite these guests, so brother Wei must not miss out on such a great opportunity."

Wei Suo immediately agreed. "That sounds awesome! There's no way I'll miss out on something like that!"

Zu An obviously had no objections either. Wang Yuanlong finally left, a satisfied smile on his face.

Wei Suo sighed in admiration. "Boss is the best. You can even get Wang Yuanlong to reserve the top floor of the Four Way Restaurant for you!"

Zu An was stunned. "Is there something special about this?"

Wei Suo was just about to explain when a voice called to him from outside the classroom. "Ah Zu..."

When he saw the cute and lovely young lady by the entrance, Zu An ran over at once. "Xiaoxi!"

He was actually looking for her. He needed her to help him take a look at the medicine he'd found next to Chen Xuan.

Chapter 323: Kill That Dog Zu

Ji Xiaoxi beamed when she saw him come out. "Big brother Zu, I'm happy to see that you are okay."

Zu An felt his heart soften. "I heard that you came every day to check if I'd come back yet. I've made you worry."

"No way..." Ji Xiaoxi's chubby cheeks became a bit rosy. "I didn't come every day..."

Zu An laughed and said, "I will always remember how much Xiaoxi cares about me. Oh, before I forget, I have something for you."

He brought out a fine handkerchief from his inner pocket. "This is for you. I ruined your handkerchief last time we found ourselves in the Wolf Valley, and I almost forgot about it afterwards. I finally found a chance to get you one. Take a look and see if you like it. If you don't, I'll get you another one."

"That's okay, this one is pretty." Ji Xiaoxi moved her fingers through the exquisite handkerchief, admiring its quality. "Huh? There are golden threads embroidered in this handkerchief. This surely is extremely expensive!"

"It's not expensive at all! This big bro is rich!" Zu An thumped his chest. "Only such a handkerchief is worthy of you."

Ji Xiaoxi blushed. "Thank you big brother!" she said sweetly.

"By the way, can you take a look at this bottle of medicine for me? I have no idea what it is used for." Zu An handed her the bottle that Chen Xuan had carried on him.

When she heard the word medicine, Ji Xiaoxi's sweet face suddenly grew slightly more serious. "Okay, I'll look at it."

She opened the bottle and looked inside. She brought her nose closer to it and gave it a whiff, using her spare hand to fan the fumes towards herself.

"Why does it smell sweet?" Ji Xiaoxi was rather puzzled. "This medicine doesn't seem to be some sort of poison, but neither is it a medicine used for healing either. Big brother Zu, do you mind if I remove some of it to test?"

"Of course not," Zu An said with a smile. This thing was completely useless to him if he had no idea what it was used for.

Ji Xiaoxi placed a drop of the liquid on her hand, and then she licked it with her tongue.

Zu An jumped in fright. "Be careful! You'll poison yourself!"

He didn't mind her testing it, but why did she use her tongue?

What if something happened?

Ji Xiaoxi smiled sweetly. "Don't worry big brother Zu, I know what I am doing. I've been around all sorts of poisons ever since I was little, and dad has made me eat a lot of medicines. Even though I'm not immune to every poison, most poisons are ineffective on me."

Zu An finally let go of the breath he was holding. Even though Ji Dengtu wasn't all that reliable when it came to certain other things, he really cared a lot about his daughter and had nurtured her since she was little. No poisons that Chen Xuan had carried on him could do much to her.

"Have you figured out what kind of poison this is?" Zu An asked in curiosity.

Ji Xiaoxi shook her head. There was a puzzled expression on her face. "I don't think it has any poisonous effects. Instead, it seems like some sort of supplement. However, it seems to be quite different from a regular supplement... How about this? Since class is about to start, I'll take this back with me first. I'll tell you once I figure out what this medicine does. You don't mind, do you?"

Zu An laughed. "Of course not. Who else would I trust in this world if I didn't trust Xiaoxi?"

Ji Xiaoxi's face became red. Do you trust me more than your wife? However, with most of her mind focused on medicine, she quickly left while immersed in her own thoughts.

Zu An returned to the classroom. Wei Suo had a look of adoration on his face. "Boss really is boss! You've already bagged that incredibly charming Qiu Honglei, and now even the pure and lovely Ji Xiaoxi is all over you! You've totally scored a multi-kill!"

Dark lines appeared on Zu An's face. "What nonsense are you spouting? We are only friends."

He knew just how much of a helicopter dad Ji Dengtu was, and he really didn't want any weird rumors to reach his ears. That guy might skin me alive if he finds out I mistreated Ji Xiaoxi!

"Boy and girl friends, I get it." Wei Suo gave him a knowing look of a seasoned pervert.

Zu An refused to continue bickering with him over Ji Xiaoxi. He changed his tone and said, "By the way, what's so special about that Four Way Restaurant?"

"The Four Way Restaurant is managed by the Wang clan, Wei Suo explained. "It's so named because they welcome guests from anywhere and everywhere. It is Brightmoon City's most luxurious restaurant! That isn't all, either. The top floor of the Four Way Restaurant isn't some place you can go to just because you have money.

"The Four Way Restaurant only allows the most outstanding figures to dine there. For example, cultivation geniuses, gifted scholars...

"Only those with the highest qualifications are allowed on the top floor. In all the years since the Four Way Restaurant was opened, fewer than three people have been granted that right. That is why being received as the guest of honor on the top floor is truly a glorious achievement.

"That is also why someone like me usually has no right to head up there at all. I am merely basking in your glory."

Zu An chuckled. "Wang Clan seems to possess pretty good marketing skills. But isn't this going a little too far just to chase after fame? I refuse to believe that they can stop Brightmoon Duke or the City Lord from heading up to the top floor if they want to."

Wei Suo replied, "The Wang clan isn't stupid either. They've clearly made a way out for themselves. People like Brightmoon Duke and City Lord Xie are all extremely outstanding in the royal court and powerful cultivators in their own right, so they naturally satisfy the conditions."

"So that's how it is." Zu An's curiosity was yet to be sated. "I can understand letting in famous people such as these. However, what if some genuinely talented guests who aren't that well known try to get in? How would the restaurant judge if they have the qualifications?"

"That's a simple matter. Those people can just demonstrate their skills on the spot! Cultivators can display their cultivation, musicians their music, and scholars can flaunt their poetry and literature knowledge. I've heard that there are some great talents who live in the restaurant. If an individual can match one of these talents, then they'll obviously have the right to head upstairs..."

Zu An had a strange look on his face. "So it's just a matching game then? That's an old routine."

"Boss, could it be that you're good at that too?" Wei Suo looked at him with eyes of worship.

Zu An replied indifferently, "If there are eight words, then I understand seven."

Wei Suo shot him a big thumbs-up. "Awesome! Boss already understands seven-eighths! As expected of the boss!"

Zu An was speechless for a moment.

Hello? I'm basically saying that there's a single word I don't get—meaning I don't understand a single word! This kid's head is really only filled with stockings.[1]

The two of them chatted for a long time. Suddenly, Wei Suo nudged Zu An with a wink.

Zu An turned around and saw Ji Xiaoxi waving at him, her face extremely red.

Aren't classes about to start? Why did she run back over here?

Zu An noticed that Bai Susu, who was conducting the next lesson, had already walked in. However, Ji Xiaoxi looked extremely anxious, so he decided to rush out to check up on her.

Zu An patted Bai Susu's shoulder on the way out. "Old Bai, I have some things to take care of first. Teach them well."

Bai Susu stared blankly at him, speechless. You're a student too! Can you not speak to me like a colleague while you're in class?

However, he was naturally even-tempered, and was on good terms with Zu An as well, so he gave Zu An no trouble. He even warned him with a smile, "Don't bully Xiaoxi now."

Someone as lovely as Ji Xiaoxi had clearly gained the favor of even these academy teachers.

Heckles sounded from around the classroom. Zu An snickered and said, "Xiaoxi is so cute, it's almost a waste if I don't tease her a bit."

Bai Susu's mouth fell open. So did Wei Suo's. The rest of the Yellow class students were also momentarily speechless.

"I cannot stand him anymore! Get over here so I can beat the crap out of you!"

"Face reality man. That guy even beat Shi Kun. What can you do to him?"

"Dammit all! I'm even more angry now!"

"Kill that dog Zu!"

...

Zu An wasn't upset by the sudden ruckus. Instead, he was overjoyed.

These students are still just as cute, even after all this time. They really outdid themselves in their quest to give him Rage points.

Ji Xiaoxi also overheard their discussions, and her face became even redder. She hurriedly indicated for him to step away from the classroom window, and led him to a more private location.

"What happened, Xiaoxi?" Zu An was curious. Wasn't her face just a little too red?

"Hurry up and bring me to your room!" Ji Xiaoxi was already on the verge of tears.

Chapter 324: A Hellish Battlefield

Ji Xiaoxi grabbed his hand and ran towards his staff residence.

Zu An was stunned. He would've definitely headed in that direction if it was Zheng Dan who had come looking for him.

But surely Ji Xiaoxi wouldn't be having such thoughts—that was completely against her nature!

"Xiaoxi, what's wrong? Why is your hand so hot?" Her hand had felt soft and tender to Zu An at first, but he soon realized that something wasn't right. Her body temperature was way too high.

"Let's head to your room first." Ji Xiaoxi pursed her lips and continued forward.

Suddenly, her entire body convulsed, and she was forced to a stop. Her legs clamped together, and she seemed unable or unwilling to move again.

"I'll carry you there." Zu An noted her conflicted expression, and surmised that she probably just needed to use the restroom. She was an incredibly introverted person, after all, and there were many things that she didn't feel comfortable saying out loud.

He looked around to make sure there was no one around him, and then he walked over to pick her up.

Ji Xiaoxi's was light enough to be easily carried. She felt incredibly soft in his arms.

"Don't touch me..." Ji Xiaoxi cried out in alarm. Unfortunately, Zu An had lifted her up in his arms before she could finish her sentence.

"What's wrong?" He felt the young lady's entire body quiver strangely. Zu An really was quite puzzled.

"It's nothing. Can you bring me to your room?" Ji Xiaoxi buried her face in his chest, hiding her expression from him.

A sudden thought flashed across Zu An's mind. Her expression and reactions seemed somewhat familiar! Both Snow and Zheng Dan had displayed similar reactions before.

Could it be... an aphrodisiac? Zu An rejected this thought as soon as it entered his mind. After all, Ji Xiaoxi had grown up under Ji Dengtu's tutelage. Who would possess the skills necessary to poison her?

They soon arrived at his staff residence. Zu An wondered just how he was going to help her without hurting her ego. After all, with how things were headed, she might...

Ji Xiaoxi spoke into his thoughts. "Big brother Zu, can you prepare a tub of water for me? I need the water to be completely cold."

The academy had many rune masters who did research into how to improve the quality of everyday life. The staff residences were the first to benefit from any breakthroughs. Each residence had their own bathroom, with hot water available at any time. The amenities were similar to a guest house in his previous world.

"Bath?" Zu An's expression grew bizarre. He had the urge to google what it meant for a woman to take the initiative to go to a man's house to take a bath.

Did she really come here to seduce me?

He quickly caught himself. Ji Xiaoxi was definitely not that sort of person, and her requests were a little strange. "Can't I even use a little bit of hot water?"

"I don't have time to explain." Ji Xiaoxi struggled free from his embrace and ran towards the bathroom. She proceeded to pour cold water into the bathtub on her own.

She often played at her little aunt Luofu's house, so she was quite familiar with the layout of the staff residences.

She wouldn't have run over to him if her little aunt had been around.

"What exactly happened to you..." Zu An tried to ask, but she pushed him out of the bathroom. He heard the sounds of clothing being removed, and the sound of someone entering the water.

Hearing those sounds, Zu An quickly asked, "Xiaoxi, you didn't fall down, did you?"

There was no response at first. Zu An had almost reached the limit of his patience when Ji Xiaoxi's weak voice finally came back. "No."

"Just call me if you need anything!" Zu An hollered loudly. She really was acting strange today, which worried him. He didn't dare stray too far away, so he decided to grab a chair and sit down by the door..

A while later, he heard Ji Xiaoxi's weak voice again. "Big brother Zu, are you still there?"

"I'm right here!" Zu An replied, but his heart skipped a beat. Her voice suddenly seemed cuter than usual.

There was a moment of silence. "Big brother Zu, can you come in?" he finally heard her say.

Zu An was thoroughly confused.

What the heck?

"I don't think that's a good idea." He looked all around him in panic, afraid that Ji Dengtu could be hiding in some corner.

"I have something... I need your help with." He could sense her embarrassment and distress through the wall.

"I'm coming in then! You better not scream, or else someone might just think that I'm up to something," Zu An said as he pushed the door open.

Ji Xiaoxi's entire body was immersed in the tub, her back leaning against the edge of the tub. Only her neck and part of her shoulders were exposed. She looked like a lotus flower that just broke through the surface, or a chick that had just pecked its way through its egg. She seemed almost as clear and as fragile as a crystal, as if a single touch would break her.

"Okay. Big brother Zu, can you stand over there?" Ji Xiaoxi said weakly.

Zu An stared blankly. Only then did he remember that the entire tub was full of cold water. If he got any closer, he would be able to see everything.

“All right, I won’t move.” Zu An raised his hands up. “By the way, what happened to you? Why are you all red?”

He also realized that there was definitely something wrong.

“Throw me the medicinal herbs in my pouch first.” Ji Xiaoxi looked towards the clothes scattered on the ground. She had clearly been in a rush to strip off her clothes.

Zu An had a strange look on his face. He picked up her clothes, which were still warm. They smelled of medicine, mixed in with the scent of a young lady.

Ji Xiaoxi’s face grew even redder when she saw the clothes she had just worn in the hands of a man. She quickly told him where to find the various herbs she had brought.

Following her instructions, Zu An tossed the medicinal herbs into the tub.

After a while, Ji Xiaoxi’s expression finally eased a little. “Thank you. I was afflicted by a dirty... aphrodisiac.”

Zu An was furious. “Which bastard poisoned you? I am going to beat the hell out of him!”

Ji Xiaoxi looked at him with a strange expression.

Zu An blinked at her. It took him a long while to finally get what she meant. “It was me? No way!”

Ji Xiaoxi pursed her lips. “It was that bottle of liquid you just gave me. The effects are really strange... they seem similar to those of the legendary ‘Eighteen Spring Winds’.”

“Eighteen Spring Winds!” An exaggerated expression immediately appeared on Zu An’s face. No wonder Chen Xuan stored it so carefully! If it had been me, I would have guarded it carefully as well!

Ji Xiaoxi was stunned by his tone. “Huh? Does big brother Zu also know about this medicine?”

“I’ve heard of it before.” Zu An laughed awkwardly. He had not just heard about it, he had personally experienced its effects!

As he said this, his expression grew strange. When Zheng Dan had been poisoned, he had given his all to eliminate the poison from her body. However, Ji Xiaoxi was the one who had now been poisoned...

Damn it! The gorgeous principal and Ji Dengtu will both kill me!

Screw it, I don’t care about that right now. I can’t just watch someone die, right?

If I don’t jump into hell, who will?!

He was just about to walk towards the tub when something struck him. “You only tasted such a small amount of it. Are the effects that potent?” he asked.

Ji Xiaoxi had thought that it could have been poison, so she hadn’t ingested much of it at all. She had a naturally strong resistance to poisons as well, so why was her condition so serious?

Is she doing this to test me?

Ji Xiaoxi's voice colored with embarrassment. "I couldn't figure out what it was at first, so I tried it a few more times."

This was the first time Zu An had entrusted her with something, and it was something she specialized in. She would have been ashamed if she couldn't figure out just what kind of medicine this was. That was why she had gone all out this time.

Besides, she was confident that no poison could harm her. Who would have expected Zu An to give her an aphrodisiac?

Her expression became a bit strange. "Big brother Zu, did you give me such a drug on purpose..."

Zu An immediately grew hurt. "Do you really think big brother Zu is someone who is so shameful and despicable?"

Ji Xiaoxi acknowledged his point. "I didn't think so either."

If she had, she wouldn't have taken the initiative to allow him in.

"So? Did you neutralize the effects?" Zu An asked in a hurry.

Ji Xiaoxi closed her eyes and carefully examined her condition. She shook her head. "Not quite. The temperature of the water isn't low enough. It would be great if first miss Chu was here. She could help me turn the water into ice."

"I can help with that too," said Zu An.

Hearing Zu An declare that he could turn water into ice as well, Ji Xiaoxi hesitated slightly before saying, "Please turn the water in this tub into ice water, then."

She knew that this wasn't something appropriate, but she really needed to suppress the medicinal effects right now. If she made a mistake and allowed the medicine to permeate her body, the consequences would be even more unbearable.

Zu An nodded. "I'll close my eyes." He walked up to the tub and reached his hand into the water.

His skill with the Snowflake Sword had yet to reach the level where he could create ice from a distance.

Who would have thought that what he sensed with his palm was not the chill of the water, but something smooth and gentle instead?

"Big brother Zu, please... please move your hand a little to the side." Ji Xiaoxi's voice was extremely soft.

"Sorry, sorry. It was an accident." Zu An was embarrassed. He really wasn't doing this on purpose! If he really wanted to take advantage of someone, he would have done so openly. Why would he resort to tricks like this?

Ji Xiaoxi grunted in acknowledgment, but said nothing further.

Zu An focused his mind and began to channel his ki. The water in the bathtub grew cold.

As this was happening, Chu Huanzhao was skipping and hopping her way over to the staff residences, fiddling with the key she had taken from Zu An previously. Stinky brother-in-law, it's all your fault that I couldn't sleep well last night! I'm going to catch up on some beauty sleep now.

She had found her current lesson extremely boring, and so she decided to just run off. To her knowledge, Zu An should be in class right now, so no one would know if she took a nap here.

Chapter 325: Would You Even Believe Me?

Zu An was completely focused on sending his ki into the tub. He paid no attention to what was happening around him.

Ji Xiaoxi's small face was as red as an apple. She didn't know if this was due to the effects of the drug, or her own embarrassment.

Even though his eyes were shut, she had never been so close to a man before.

She felt as if the slightest movement of that hand would be enough for it to come into contact with her.

Ji Xiaoxi brought up something else to hide her embarrassment. "Big brother Zu, is this first miss Chu's Snowflake Sword?"

Zu An grunted in agreement. "Yeah."

"Wow, first miss Chu has even taught you the skill she uses to guard her own clan. The two of you really are close," Ji Xiaoxi said, her expression complicated.

"Our relationship is all right, I guess." Zu An laughed loudly. "But I'm not the best student, or else I would've been able to make ice for you from all the way over there."

Ji Xiaoxi didn't know what else to say. This room became quiet.

As the smell of the young lady spread through the air, even Zu An felt like the atmosphere had grown slightly awkward. "Do you feel better?" he asked quickly.

Ji Xiaoxi nodded. "I'm almost recovered. The effects of the drug will go away soon if the water is kept at this temperature."

Zu An said in admiration, "Xiaoxi, you really are awesome. I thought that the only way to get rid of the poison's effects... was to perform the deed eighteen times. But you managed to neutralize its effects so easily."

Ji Xiaoxi's face became red. "It wasn't that easy. I have a certain level of resistance to different types of poisons because of my special constitution. I didn't ingest too much of the drug, yet I had to take a Heart-calming Pill, and I had to infuse this cold water with many other medicines and soak in it just to barely neutralize the medicine's effects... Big brother Zu, why do you have such a drug with you?"

Zu An was slightly embarrassed. "It was something I acquired from a defeated enemy. I would've just thrown it away if I'd known what it was."

He began to despise himself as he spoke these words. Find me a man in this world who wouldn't want this sort of drug!

It's good to hang on to it even if one doesn't use it.

Zu An suddenly thought of something. "That's right, did you throw that bottle away?"

Ji Xiaoxi shook her head. "I didn't. Even though it's a vile drug, it is still big brother Zu's, so I can't just throw it away... let me take it out for you."

She was just about to get up when her entire face grew red. She stopped and said, "Big brother Zu, you absolutely must not open your eyes."

"Understood," Zu An nodded. However, the image of her current appearance couldn't help but appear in his mind.

Ji Xiaoxi stretched her hand out of the tub, reaching for the pile of clothes that were nearby.

However, she was a petite little girl, and she was just unable to reach them.

She stood on her tiptoes so that she could lean further out.

If she had just stepped out of the tub, she would've easily reached her clothes. However, she was still a shy young girl, and found it too embarrassing to do such a thing in front of a man, even if his eyes were closed.

At that moment, she suddenly slipped. She lost her center of gravity and fell out of the tub entirely.

"Ah!" Ji Xiaoxi instinctively cried out.

Zu An jumped in fright. He subconsciously reached out a hand to support her.

Oh shit... His hand landed on something soft and warm. Zu An knew that he was touching parts of her that he definitely shouldn't be touching. He could already imagine the scene of Ji Dengtu chasing after him murderously.

Ji Xiaoxi was also stunned. In a daze, her eyes met his, and her mind went completely blank.

From the side came an exaggerated scream. The two of them raised their heads and saw Chu Huanzhao standing by the bathroom entrance. Her entire body was trembling, and she was pointing an angry finger at them. "You two... what are you doing?!"

Zu An swallowed with difficulty. "Would you believe me if I said that I was just trying to support her?"

"What do you think?!" Chu Huanzhao's eyes seemed to be shooting out goutts of flame.

Damned brother-in-law! Stinky brother-in-law! Is this how you repay the Chu clan? After this, how dare you face my big sister, or even me?!

You have successfully trolled Chu Huanzhao for 233...233... 233...

Ji Xiaoxi finally recovered from her daze. However, she didn't have much experience with such situations, and all she could do was try not to faint from embarrassment.

Zu An quickly brought a set of clothes and draped them over her. "Xiaoxi, stay here and put on some clothes. We'll wait for you outside."

"Thank you..." Ji Xiaoxi was extremely grateful for his consideration, but a thought hit her soon after, leaving her stunned. She was clearly the one who had been groped by him. What was she doing, thanking him?

Zu An gave an embarrassed laugh. He hurriedly left the bathroom, pushing Chu Huanzhao out and closing the bathroom door along the way.

"What are you doing here, Huanzhao?" Zu An asked.

Chu Huanzhao sneered incessantly. "I wouldn't have stumbled upon such an exciting scene if I hadn't come here! This Ji Xiaoxi always seems all prim and proper—I didn't expect her to be a vixen who seduces men!"

She raised her voice on purpose, as if she wanted the person in the bathroom to hear her.

You have successfully trolled Chu Huanzhao for 66... 66... 66...

Zu An frowned. "Huanzhao, you are being too rude."

Chu Huanzhao sneered. "She clearly knows that you have a wife, but she still seduced you! If she isn't scared of being disrespectful, why should I be?"

You have successfully trolled Chu Huanzhao for 99... 99... 99...

Rage points kept flowing in through his System, yet Zu An felt no joy.

"Come on, it's really not what you're thinking. I asked miss Ji to help me look into some medicine, and she was accidentally poisoned. She needed to soak in ice water to get rid of the poison's effects..." Zu An quickly explained.

Chu Huanzhao still didn't believe him. "What kind of poison needs you to strip completely? An aphrodisiac?"

Zu An's breath caught. You hit the nail on the head.

However, knowing Ji Xiaoxi's good reputation, he was embarrassed to admit this. "It's really not at all what you're thinking! Even if you don't trust miss Ji, you have to trust my character!"

Chu Huanzhao blinked. Her anger subsided a bit.

You have successfully trolled Ji Xiaoxi for 22... 22... 22...

She clearly heard what he said.

But Chu Huanzhao wasn't so easily fooled. "Isn't her little aunt the principal? Why didn't she go to her then? Why did she have to take a bath with a man like you?"

Zu An forced a bitter smile and continued with his explanation. "Principal Jiang had something she had to take care of..."

By this time, Ji Xiaoxi had already dressed herself. She quickly exited the bathroom and said quietly, "I'm going home first."

She rushed off without even waiting to hear their reply.

Zu An sighed. What in the world was this? He didn't do anything wrong, yet there was such a huge disaster.

Chu Huanzhao was less than impressed by his sigh. "What, are you upset that I ruined your happy time?"

"I just hate how such a misunderstanding leaves everyone embarrassed. On top of that, she was offended for no reason..." Zu An exhausted a great deal of energy, and just barely convinced Chu Huanzhao that Ji Xiaoxi had really come here to detoxify herself.

A flash of horror struck Chu Huanzhao. "Oh no... what if Principal Jiang secretly makes things difficult for you because of this? Divine Physician Ji cares a lot about her daughter too. What if he comes after you?"

"Miss, isn't it a bit too late to be worrying about this now?" Zu An said dejectedly.

"How about I go and apologize to her right now?" Chu Huanzhao regretted her excessive display earlier, especially now that she knew Ji Xiaoxi had only ended up like that because she had been helping her brother-in-law look into a poison.

"Forget it. I'll find another chance to explain things to her." Zu An was worried that something else might go wrong if these two girls met again.

"I won't tell big sis about today's matter then. But if there is a next time..." Chu Huanzhao snorted, and then she bared her adorable fangs.

"There definitely won't be a next time." Zu An would definitely get the academy to change his locks.

Chu Huanzhao clearly wasn't in the mood to sleep after what had just happened. However, she still searched around his residence first.

Only when she didn't find any suspicious traces of women living here did she finally leave in satisfaction.

Zu An mopped away his sweat. Suddenly, letting his harem argue amongst themselves to earn him Rage points didn't seem like his brightest idea.

Only when he returned to the classroom and saw the envious eyes of his fellow students did his mood improve slightly.

The day's lessons passed by quickly. When he finally walked out of the main gates of the academy, Wang Yuanlong's carriage was already waiting there.

As Zu An and Wei Suo got into the carriage, they suddenly noticed another Wang clan carriage waiting beside theirs.

Zu An was curious. Were they waiting for others from the academy?

Soon afterwards, two beautiful figures walked out from the academy.

One of them was refined and elegant, exuding a hint of tenderness and charm. Who else could this be but Zheng Dan?

Zheng Dan nodded slightly in his direction when she noticed his gaze. "Greetings, fellow student Zu."

"Hello miss Zheng," Zu An replied in embarrassment.

This woman, really... it was all 'husband' and 'daddy' before, yet now she's acting like a completely different person!

However, he had to give her credit for how well she played her part.

"Are you going to the Four Way Restaurant too?" Zu An asked curiously. He noticed that she was walking towards Wang clan's carriage.

"Of course. I'm not the only one, big sister Xie is coming as well." Zheng Dan giggled as she nudged Xie Daoyun, who was next to her.

Chapter 326: An Unkind Guest

Zu An had already recognized the woman beside Zheng Dan a while ago. She had an oval face with beautiful brows, and wore a long golden skirt. An air of gracefulness drifted around her, and an elegant smile hung from the corners of her lips. This was an aura that she had cultivated from a very early age.

Together with those enchanting eyes that seemed to speak to one's heart, her entire being exuded beauty, elegance and a gentle nobility.

With the dignified and gorgeous Zheng Dan next to her, this really was a magnificent sight.

She had been sizing Zu An up curiously. At Zheng Dan's unexpected nudge, she almost fell into Zu An's arms.

She gave Zheng Dan an upset look, then introduced herself to Zu An. "Greetings, fellow student Zu. This is our first meeting. I am Xie Daoyun. I hope you can provide me some guidance in the future."

Zu An had to give her some credit. She still exuded a sense of confidence even in this sudden and embarrassing situation, lending her a natural air of generosity and poise.

"Young miss Xie must be joking. This surely isn't our first meeting." Zu An favored her with a half-smile.

Xie Daoyun's heart leapt into her throat. He must've found out that she had witnessed him in the Immortal Abode. However, she reined in her panic and quickly said, "Indeed, I was able to witness student Zu's bravery during the Clans Tournament, and we have seen each other in the academy."

Seeing her quick reaction, Zu An chose not to expose her. "I have heard about miss Xie's great reputation as well, and I have been enamored for a long time. Now that I've met you in person, I realize that your true self is very different from what the rumors say."

Xie Daoyun's expression slipped. No matter how much self-restraint she had, being ridiculed like this to her face was hard for her to bear.

Before she could react furiously, Zu An had already continued. "Those rumors do not go far enough in describing miss Xie's beauty and temperament. I regret not being able to see your beautiful face sooner."

Wei Suo's eyes went round. Boss really is the boss! His skill at courting ladies is too high-level!

He couldn't help but fall into self-reflection. I can talk to the boss just fine, yet why do I freeze up like this when it really counts?

Zheng Dan couldn't resist giving Zu An a look. This guy really was full of tricks when it came to chasing after women!

Xie Daoyun blushed. It was not everyday that she met someone who would dare say something like this to her. She appreciated the novelty. "Student Zu is too polite with your praise..."

Zheng Dan reached out to Xie Daoyun's hand. "Let's continue our discussion in the Four Way Restaurant. I fear that the young master might have grown anxious while waiting for us," she said.

Xie Daoyun had no objections. She nodded towards Zu An, then followed Zheng Dan into the carriage.

Zu An gave instructions to Cheng Shouping and the Chu clan guards waiting by the academy's gates. "Tell the Second Young Miss that I won't be joining them for dinner. You can escort her back without me."

He had to find a way to get into the Wei clan afterwards, which was difficult enough without having to drag an entourage around with him.

Cheng Shouping's expression immediately grew bitter. He had wanted to tag along to broaden his horizons, but not only was he not allowed to accompany the young master, he even had to face the little tyrant that was the second miss. My life is truly full of suffering...

Jiao Shan and the other guards had no objections to this. Chen Xuan was already dead, and the danger to Zu An had been dealt with. Besides, even the City Lord's precious daughter was accompanying him. This group clearly didn't need their protection at all.

The two carriages soon arrived at the Four Way Restaurant. Zu An got off the carriage and had a look. The restaurant was a luxurious and elegant building, several stories tall. It almost gave off the same air as the Immortal Abode, although the color palette was more classical and muted.

Wang Yuanlong was already waiting by the entrance. When he saw them, he quickly rushed over to greet them. "Brother Zu, brother Wei, miss Xie, miss Zheng..."

After exchanging greetings, Wang Yuanlong stepped to the side. "Everyone, please enter. Miss Zheng, Commander Sang is already inside."

Zheng Dan smiled. "Thank you, young master Wang."

Zu An felt a twinge of discomfort, but he knew that he was being unreasonable. It was just his masculine desire to dominate acting up.

Wang Yuanlong offered an explanation to Zu An. "The River Patrol Army aided in my rescue as well, so I invited them over. I hope brother Zu doesn't mind."

Zu An laughed. "I'm not that petty."

Their party headed up the stairs. The number of guests decreased the further up they went. It was clear that the higher up they were, the higher the status of the guests.

When they reached the top of the stairs, a group of people were already there. These people were obviously individuals who were curious about the top floor, yet were not allowed up there. Loitering about outside was the best they could do.

"It's young master Wang!"

"It's truly a group of extraordinary people after all!"

"Isn't that miss Xie, the City Lord clan's esteemed daughter? She is so beautiful and talented! We really are blessed today."

"That's miss Zheng next to her! They are both so pretty! Even though I cannot go upstairs today, just laying eyes on them has already made this trip worthwhile."

...

The tall and handsome Sang Qian had already come down to greet his fiancée. After exchanging pleasantries with the others, he looked at Zheng Dan with a gentle expression. "Dan'er, you're here."

Zheng Dan shot Zu An a secret look, then said coldly, "Commander Sang, even though we are engaged, we are yet to be married. I must ask you not to address me so intimately in public."

Sang Qian's face froze. He hadn't expected her to shame him like this in front of everyone.

However, he didn't mind it too much. She was probably still upset over the Whale Island affair.

He was also quite fond of the steely side of her, because it made her seem even more like a wise and virtuous woman.

These thoughts comforted him, and he smiled and said, "Miss Zheng is right."

Zu An curled his lips. This guy knows how to simp.

However, this was the man who had massacred every living being on Whale Island, so he didn't dare look down on him.

Just as their party was about to head upstairs, one of the bystanders spoke up loudly. "Do they allow anyone upstairs now?"

Everyone stopped. A man stared at them with sharp eyes full of provocation.

Wang Yuanlong's face grew ugly. He was acting as host in his own clan's restaurant, yet such an annoying fellow had dared to show up. "They are guests that I have invited myself. How can you say that they aren't allowed to enter the top floor?"

The sharp-eyed man replied, “Young master Wang is the young master of the Four Way Restaurant, so of course you have this authority. However, I fear that the reputation of the Four Way Restaurant will surely plummet after this.

“Everyone knows that the top floor of Four Way Restaurant is a place that only the most outstanding people can dine in. Miss Xie is a publicly acknowledged genius. Miss Zheng is also a genius in the Sky class, while Commander Sang has a high cultivation and holds a high official position at such a young age. I do not have the slightest complaint if any of them went up to the top floor. However, what right does that fellow over there have to dine at the highest floor? Is it merely because he is the drafted son-in-law of the Chu clan?”

The bystanders roared in laughter at those last words. Clearly, many of them were dissatisfied as well.

“Even with all our achievements, we aren’t allowed up there. What right does he have?!”

“Exactly! I think your Four Way Restaurant should just drop the pretense and just say straight up that all those with money and authority are allowed upstairs.”

...

Wang Yuanlong’s face fell. He was truly in a tight spot. Should he let Zu An go upstairs or not? If he did, he would be ruining the many years of effort that the Four Way Restaurant had put into building up their prestige.

However, refusing him entry would be turning away a guest he had personally invited. That would utterly humiliate Zu An.

Zu An’s eyes narrowed. How was this guy able to pick him out of the crowd so easily?

This guy doesn’t seem like a normal diner at all. Did someone deliberately send him to mock me?

His eyes swept over the people around him. Sang Qian had a strange smile on his face. He recalled how this man had deliberately come down to greet them, and he suddenly realized what was going on.

In his mind, he had believed that Sang Qian had come down to receive Zheng Dan. It turns out that he had come for me!

But why?

Does he know what I did to his fiancée?

The sharp-eyed man said with a sneer, “So? Do you have nothing to say for yourself?”

Chapter 327: Touch Less

Everyone’s attention was focused on Zu An as the sharp-eyed person spoke. Clearly, he seemed like a joke in their eyes.

This guy, despite his ignorance and incompetence, had ended up married to Brightmoon City’s most ravishing beauty, and there were even ambiguous rumors floating around concerning the Immortal

Abode's Qiu Honglei. What the heck were the other men supposed to even do? They couldn't stand looking at this guy.

Xie Daoyun gave Zu An a worried look. She knew that these scholars were all extremely proud individuals. Things were definitely going to become tricky for Zu An.

Despite this, she was curious as to how the man who could write such a stirring song would deal with a situation like this.

Wang Yuanlong was growing incredibly anxious. If he got involved, then he would surely tarnish the repudiation of the Four Way Restaurant. However, if he didn't, he would surely offend Zu An, and perhaps even the Chu clan which stood behind him.

Helpless to do anything himself, he gestured to his subordinates to find a way to usher these men out.

Just as they were about to step forward, Sang Qian took a step forward and blocked them off.

Zheng Dan spared him a glance, but there was a playful smile on her lips. She had clearly sensed what was going on as well, but she wasn't worried at all. This guy is blessed with a cunning evil. How could he possibly take this lying down?

Sure enough, Zu An's loud laughter rang out. "May I ask what this gifted scholar's esteemed name is?"

There was no panic in his voice at all.

The sharp-eyed man fanned himself gently. "Of course. This one is Starfire City's Xu Qinsong."

He had a cocky look on his face as he spoke, as if his name held a certain prestige.

The rest of the gathered crowd began to mutter amongst themselves once he announced his name.

Zu An picked at his ears. "I've never heard of you before. Are you famous?"

Xu Qinsong's breath caught.

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 233 Rage points!

Xie Daoyun said quietly to him, "This Xu Qinsong is a gifted scholar from the neighboring Starfire City. You need to be careful."

Xu Qinsong smiled and clasped his fist in her direction. "Miss Xie praises me too highly. I've heard that Miss Xie is Brightmoon City's most talented individual, and I am a long-time admirer of you. I've always wanted a chance to exchange some poetry with you."

"Young master Xu is being too serious." Xie Daoyun nodded in his direction. Her etiquette was impeccable, but there wasn't a single flicker in her gaze.

Xu Qinsong's face went rigid when he saw how disinterested she was. He immediately realized that she was numbered among Zu An's companions, and therefore she wasn't willing to pay him much attention. He gave Zu An another glare.

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 334 Rage points!

Bro, why are you getting angry at me if your crush doesn't like you? "All right, all right. Didn't you start all of this because you wanted to challenge me? So? What do you want to challenge me to? Do you want to compete fairly or unfairly?"

What kind of joke is this? I've experienced nine years of compulsory education, and run the gauntlet of those innumerable online trolls. Do you think I'll lose to some stupid native from this world?

Xie Daoyun was surprised that Zu An hadn't backed down in the slightest. It was already too late to stop this.

She wondered why this guy was so impetuous. This situation could've been avoided if he'd just backed down. Don't tell me Zu An actually has something up his sleeve?

Meanwhile, Xu Qinsong was overjoyed. He had made the trip to Brightmoon City precisely to gain recognition. Zu An would be the perfect stepping stone.

He was worried that this fellow wouldn't dare to challenge him, but he had jumped into the pit all on his own! He quickly said, "It's quite simple. I'll name a few phrases. If you can match them with a phrase of your own to make a couplet, then I'll deem you worthy of heading upstairs." [1]

Zu An snorted. "Who do you think you are? Do you think that this restaurant needs your approval? The only reason I agreed to your competition is because you seem to be itching to get your face smacked. You seem so desperate, I'm beginning to feel sorry if I don't help you out."

Of course, Zu An was doing this mainly because he didn't want to give up any opportunity to earn Rage points.

The crowd was stupefied. Wasn't this guy going a bit too far?

Even Xie Daoyun frowned. After all, even she had caught wind of Xu Qinsong's talents, and she wasn't confident that she could defeat him herself. Where did this guy get his confidence from?

Despite his formidable musical prowess, it had nothing to do with literary talent!

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 666 Rage points!

Xu Qinsong had never seen such an arrogant person before. He tamped down on his rage and said, "In that case, then please accept my challenge.

"The general shoots at a tiger. The bow is strong, but the stone is tougher."

There were quite a few proud scholars here. All of them began to ponder over these words. Even Xie Daoyun's brow furrowed.

Even though this seemed like a simple association test, it touched upon a classical story.

There was once a general who saw a tiger in the distance, so he fired at it with his bow in a panic. When the arrow landed, he discovered that there was no tiger at all—it was just a rock shaped like a tiger. However, this arrow still penetrated into the stone, and so the people of the world all praised the strength of his arm.

Because of this, matching it really was quite difficult.

Only Zu An turned up his nose in disdain. He had expected the scholars of this world to have some skills. Was this all they could offer?

As such, he randomly replied, "The courtesan drinks herself drunk. Even though her body lies still, no one touches her hand."

Xie Daoyun repeated these words silently. She found that the matching really was meticulously done. But the meaning of this phrase was a bit too...

Zheng Dan laughed behind pursed lips. This fella really did have some strange talents.

Xu Qinsong was quivering violently as he pointed at Zu An, his face completely red. "You... are insulting common decency!"

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 145 Rage points!

Zu An laughed. "Insulting common decency? These are clearly words of advice. Aren't you the one with the dirty mind?"

Xu Qinsong snorted angrily, "I'll count you as matching it well this time. Listen up, here's the next one. I refuse to believe that you'll get lucky and match it again."

"If I match it then I match it. What do you mean, you'll count it as a match? If you have any more to offer, then come at me. Then again, with your level of skill, I really doubt it'll be anything special," Zu An said disdainfully.

Viciousness flashed across Xu Qinsong's eyes. "Here's the next phrase: Filial piety is the first among virtues; remember to visit home often'!"

The spectators became quiet when they heard this. They looked back and forth between the two competitors.

They all knew that Zu An had been orphaned at a young age, and the uncle that had raised him had passed on as well. What family did he have left?

As for the Chu clan, he was but a drafted son-in-law. Judging by the values of this world, no one would consider this clan his family at all.

He didn't even have a family to go back to. Who was he supposed to visit?

Xie Daoyun frowned. "Young master Xu, you're crossing the line."

Xu Qinsong smiled. "I do not understand what miss Xie is saying. Is there anything wrong with my phrase? This is something everyone should acknowledge, right? Perhaps this is already too much for him?"

Xie Daoyun opened her mouth to retort, but closed it again without saying anything. If she spoke up for Zu An right now, she would have fallen for his trap and brought shame to Zu An.

She gave Zu An a worried look, but she didn't see anything awful or angry in his expression.

Zu An looked at Xu Qinsong. "Bro, your eye bags are quite large."

“What does that have to do with you?” Xu Qinsong snorted. “Scholars like myself who have dedicated ourselves to our studies often do not have time for much rest. It’s common for us to have eye bags.”

“Is that so? Then according to your words, those who don’t have dark circles around their eyes don’t study hard? Miss Xie here is considered the most talented in Brightmoon City, but she doesn’t have any eye bags.” Zu An pointed at Xie Daoyun, who was standing beside him.

Xie Daoyun blushed. Why are you involving me?

Everyone looked at Xie Daoyun’s beautiful complexion. All of them sighed with praise. At the same time, they directed angry looks at Xu Qinsong.

Xu Qinsong waved his hand vigorously. “That’s not what I am trying to say. Our constitutions are probably different, that’s all.”

Zu An had anticipated his answer. He pointed at everyone around him. “Look, how many others here have dark circles? Do none of them work as hard as you?”

Xu Qinsong now knew what it meant to be the target of everyone’s anger. He immediately panicked. “Why are you resorting to malicious attacks? That’s not what I meant at all!”

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 444 Rage points!

“Ah, I understand now.” Zu An laughed. “It seems like you probably spend too much time indulging in debauchery. That’s why your body is so weak.”

“How dare you slander me!” Xu Qinsong was furious. However, he did his best to keep his wits about him. “If you can’t match my phrase, then admit that you can’t match it. Why do you have to ramble on about all this nonsense?”

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 666 Rage points!

“Who said that I can’t match it?” Zu An smiled mysteriously, “The phrase you gave me is ‘Filial piety is the first among virtues; remember to visit home often’. Considering your current situation, let me gift you another association: ‘Excessive lust is the root of all evil; less touching of women is advised’.”

A stunned silence momentarily descended on the room, before the entire room erupted with uncontrolled laughter.

Even Xie Daoyun’s face became completely red. This guy was really ingenious, always managing to link whatever he said back to this same topic.

Xu Qinsong’s face became entirely red. “You, you, you... you are insulting common decency! Truly insulting common decency!”

You have successfully trolled Xu Qinsong for 999 Rage points!

Unfortunately, his anger was completely smothered by the ruckus that had now engulfed the room.

Sang Qian cursed when he saw this scene. “Trash!”

Xu Qinsong was in a state of complete provocation. He said loudly, "I still have more phrases, still have..."

With his talents, it was easy for him to come up with more literary phrases. However, the two previous phrases had been defeated by the word 'touch', which made him begin to doubt his very life. He really didn't know what phrase he could use to redeem himself.

Zu An laughed as he saw him stammer and stutter about. "All right, you were the one who posed the questions, and I've already responded. It's now my turn to pose one."

Chapter 328: Strutting Like a Rooster

Xu Qinsong calmed down when he heard Zu An's statement. "Go ahead!"

He was already panicking, but figured that he should be all right playing defense. He could still redeem the situation as long as he matched two of them in a row.

How could a drafted son-in-law possibly have any scholarly knowledge? I refuse to believe that he has any tricks!

Zu An gave Sang Qian a look. You were the one who started this, so don't blame me for what's about to happen.

He looked straight at Zheng Dan and said, "One day, one dawn[1], one morning, one drought, one sunrise!"[2]

Xu Qinsong sighed in relief. A drafted son-in-law can only be a drafted son-in-law in the end; one such as you can only come up with such an easy phrase. 'One day, one dawn, one morning...'

He was just thinking to himself how he was going to deal with it when he heard Sang Qian erupt in rage. "What are you looking at Miss Zheng for?!"

You have successfully trolled Sang Qian for 666 Rage points!

Xu Qinsong was shocked. If the young miss' given name was Dan, then wouldn't this word association of his have other meanings?

He broke out into cold sweat. He actually felt helpless before this opponent who was supposed to be easy to deal with.

Zu An only shrugged his shoulders at Sang Qian's angry roar. "Miss Zheng is so beautiful. Isn't it normal that I desire to look at her? Commander Sang cannot steal our right to admire a beauty just because the two of you are engaged, can he?"

"The meaning of your phrase is clearly... clearly..." Sang Qian was furious, but how could he actually say such a thing out loud?

You have successfully trolled Sang Qian for 250 Rage points!

Even Xie Daoyun gave Zu An a look of rebuke. Wasn't he going too far, involving Zheng Dan like this?

“Hey, I’m just posing a phrase to be matched! I’m not targeting anyone! Even Miss Zheng doesn’t mind. What are the rest of you hollering for?” Zu An snorted.

Sang Qian walked over to Zheng Dan’s side. “Don’t be afraid. As long as you give me the word, I’m going to discipline this damn brat even if I have to offend the Chu clan today!” he said quietly.

Unexpectedly, Zheng Dan blushed and shook her head. “Student Zu’s literary pairing skills are so exquisite!” she sighed. “Even I cannot help but admire his ability.”

She might be the only one here who understood the meaning hidden behind this phrase. Wasn’t he referring to what had gone on between the two of them in that cave for half a month?

Her entire body heated up when she thought of this, and a wave of weakness flooded her body.

While everyone else was taking offence at his suggestive words, Zheng Dan not only felt no anger, but instead grew even more stimulated.

Sang Qian was completely stupefied when he looked at her. In that instant, his fiancée seemed faintly unfamiliar to him. However, after giving it some thought, he agreed with how she was dealing with this situation. If she acknowledged his insinuations, she would only be jumping straight into his trap. The damage to her reputation would be much greater at that point!

Having reasoned it out for himself, he allowed himself to relax.

Zu An noticed the expression in Zheng Dan’s bright and beautiful eyes. His heart skipped a beat. Perhaps he should assign her some missions in the future...

As the host of the gathering, Wang Yuanlong finally spoke up. “Since young master Xu has failed to match the phrase after so long, we shall be heading upstairs first. Of course, if young master Xu thinks of a matching phrase, you can come straight upstairs. I will take care of all of the costs.”

Zu An felt a great admiration for Wang Yuanlong. He was indeed worthy of being the heir of a great clan! His words left no room for questioning, and he had even saved Xu Qinsong a great deal of humiliation.

From the back of the room, Wei Suo excitedly applauded Zu An. “Boss, you really are incredible! You are a master at everything! I prostrate myself in admiration for you!”

Zu An laughed and said, “You flatter me!”

Xu Qinsong’s brows climbed upwards. Every single flattering word felt like a slap that struck him in the face. He hurriedly said, “It’s one thing for Zu An to be allowed upstairs, but why is this guy allowed to go as well?”

He had already noticed how close Wei Suo was to Zu An, and surmised that the two of them should be friends.

Since he couldn’t deal with Zu An, for better or for worse, he had to bring down this friend of his to reclaim some dignity.

As he pointed at Wei Suo, everyone’s eyes fell on him.

Wei Suo's mind went blank. I'm done for! I don't have the skills to rival my boss! I'll really be a laughingstock if I get kicked out of the Four Way Restaurant today!

He really wanted to slap his own mouth. Why couldn't he have kept a lower profile? Why did he have to jump out like that and piss others off?

Xie Daoyun's beautiful brows knit together, but she refrained from saying anything. She wasn't close to Wei Suo. If it wasn't for Zu An, she might have never even appeared in the same place as him.

Wang Yuanlong didn't say anything either. He hadn't planned to invite Wei Suo today. He had only been invited at Zu An's request.

There wasn't really a need to stick his neck out for someone like Wei Suo.

Even though the Wei clan had a relative who served as an official in the capital, he was only an official in the imperial court. He might not even come to Brightmoon City once a year. The Wang clan and the Wei clan didn't share much of a relationship.

Wei Suo clearly understood this as well. He didn't want to trouble Zu An, or make a joke of himself. As such, he said to Zu An, "Boss, in that case, I'll head home first."

Seeing the forced smile on his friend's face, Zu An frowned. He pulled him back. "You're my friend. How can I let you go like this?"

He took a step forward and addressed the crowd. "If I recall correctly, the top talents in any field are welcome on the top floor. Am I correct?"

Wang Yuanlong nodded. "This is indeed the case."

Zu An continued to ask, "Are there specific provisions that set out which fields are allowed?"

Wang Yuanlong said, "No, not at all. Usually, however..."

Before he could even finish his sentence, Zu An roared with laughter. "In that case, my friend obviously has the right to head upstairs!"

Everyone was stunned when they heard this. There didn't seem to be anything special about this pervy-looking fellow at all!

Even Zheng Dan and Xie Daoyun looked at Wei Suo curiously.

Wei Suo was stunned. Do I really have some amazing talent even I am not aware of?

Xu Qinsong snorted. "Your word isn't enough. What sort of skill does this brother have? Please tell us, so all of us can judge for ourselves."

"Tell me, what color stockings does Principal Jiang love wearing the most?"

Wei Suo's eyes lit up. "Both black stockings and nude stockings appear most often, at about the same frequency. But I like the black ones more," he replied instantly without thinking.

Everyone was stunned. How could such a ridiculous thing count?

Zu An probed further, "How long are Principal Jiang's legs?"

All the men present suddenly grew interested. The fact that Principal Jiang liked black stockings wasn't a secret, but the length of Principal Jiang's legs was something unknown to them.

Wei Suo blurted out, "Three feet and seven inches, I guarantee that the margin of error is less than an inch!"[3]

Everyone was convinced. This guy really was a talent!

The crowd turned their attention to Xie Daoyun and Zheng Dan. All of them had curious expressions in their eyes.

Zu An went with the flow and asked, "What about that miss Xie's chest size..."

Xie Daoyun covered his mouth to stop him from finishing his sentence. "Enough, enough, I can guarantee that he is a genius in this field. He definitely has the qualifications to head upstairs. What do you say, young master Wang?"

Xie Daoyun's entire face was red. She didn't want her measurements to become public knowledge! Just what kind of friends did Zu An have at his side?

Now that the City Lord's daughter had spoken, Wang Yuanlong naturally took advantage of the situation. "Of course, of course! Everyone, this way!"

No one else tried to stop them.

Wei Suo strutted forward and ascended the stairs, his head held high and chest puffed out like a proud rooster.

He had always had an inferiority complex since birth, and this novel feeling was truly refreshing.

All this was given to him by his boss! His eyes even became slightly moist when he thought of this.

...

The top floor was decorated in a very extravagant manner, but it wasn't the least bit tacky, like the homes and properties of the nouveau riche. The Wang clan had clearly invested a lot of their time in designing this place.

The party took their seats one after another. Soon afterwards, Qiu Honglei arrived as well.

Given their close relationship, Zu An tried to speak with her, since it had been a while since they had last chatted. Unexpectedly, she alienated him, treating him the same way she treated the rest of the other guests.

Zu An grew crestfallen. What the heck was this girl playing at? Was she deliberately playing hard to get?

Zheng Dan grew slightly jealous when she saw Zu An approach Qiu Honglei. After all, Qiu Honglei was just too beautiful. As a woman, she sensed a powerful aura of danger surrounding her.

However, when she saw how his approach was rebuffed, the corners of her lips curled upwards. Serves you right!

Sang Qian felt a sense of inner relief at Qiu Honglei's arrival. "Lady Qiu has arrived slightly later than the rest of us. I fear that you've missed brother Zu's incredible display of literary talents. He really made a tenacious effort to fight off a great talent from Starfire City!"

Zu An was confused. This guy clearly hates me, so why did he suddenly speak on my behalf? Something is wrong!

"Oh? Something like that actually happened?" Qiu Honglei was somewhat surprised. Could it be that Ah Zu was talented in the literary arts as well? "It truly is a pity that Honglei wasn't able to witness that."

"It's easy enough for you to catch a glimpse of his talents. Why don't we have Zu An display his skills again? I believe brother Zu won't disappoint such a gorgeous beauty, isn't that right?" A malicious intent burned in Sang Qian's eyes as he looked at Zu An.

Chapter 329: Even a Toad Lusts After the Flesh of a Swan

Zu An's eyes narrowed. So, this guy said all that just to make a fool out of me.

Then again, who do you think this Ah Zu is? Bring it all on! Do you think I'm scared?

"I am someone who loves to show off before great beauties. Why would I refuse?" Zu An said, smiling and nodding towards Qiu Honglei, Xie Daoyun, and Zheng Dan.

Wang Yuanlong had a strange expression on his face. What the heck is this guy doing? Others would always be particularly attentive to one particular beauty. Why would he fawn over three girls at once? And yet, this doesn't seem strange at all! Just how does he accomplish this?

Sang Qian grew even more depressed. He couldn't help but feel slightly jealous whenever Zu An looked at his fiancée, even though the rascal wasn't really going any further.

You have successfully trolled Sang Qian for 233 Rage points!

Only then did Zu An look at him. "How does Commander Sang wish for me to display my talent? Perhaps the two of us can play the game of matching phrases?"

Sang Qian immediately waved his hand and said, "There is no need for that. If we are talking about literary skills, we have to include poetry. Let's have brother Zu awe us with a verse or two."

Are you kidding me? Even Starfire City's great genius Xu Qinsong lost to you. Why would I be dumb enough to match phrases with you?

Xu Qinsong had challenged Zu An just to make him look bad, yet he'd ended up inviting trouble upon himself.

"Poetry?" Zu An had a strange expression on his face. "Are you sure you want to compete with me in poetry?"

Are you trolling me? I have all the poetry of ancient China to draw upon, and the works of the great poets of countless other generations in reserve. If you really want to compete with me in poetry...

All the other transmigrators in their own stories plagiarize great literary works to claw their way to the top. Who would've thought that it would be my turn today!

Xie Daoyun grew excited when she heard this. "May I ask what the theme is?"

Sang Qian spoke. "Knowing brother Zu's literary talents, any normal subject matter wouldn't trouble him in the slightest. It's better if I choose something more unfamiliar to allow his skills to fully shine. How about we use 'toad' as the theme?"

When he said these words, all the guests on the top floor fell silent. Even though he had spoken in a dignified manner, everyone could see that he was targeting Zu An.

Not only was he mocking the match between Zu An and first miss Chu as a match between a toad and a swan, he was also mocking Zu An's eager attentions towards the three beauties present as nothing more than a toad lusting after treasures beyond his reach.

Qiu Honglei frowned. "Isn't this topic somewhat inappropriate? What sort of good poetry can be created from such a theme? How about we switch to a different theme?"

Zu An considered Qiu Honglei for a moment. On the surface, this woman seems to be treating me coldly, but it still seems like she cares about me after all. I guess I'll forgive you for what you did just now.

Xie Daoyun also replied, "Indeed, I've never heard of a theme like this, nor are there any well-known poems about this. I approve of a change in the theme."

On Zheng Dan smiled without saying anything. Her status made it so that she couldn't reject her fiancée to help Zu An. However, she secretly desired to see Zu An mess up in front of the other girls. She didn't want him playing around with so many other women.

Wang Yuanlong spoke up to dissuade Sang Qian as well, a feeling of regret beginning to grow in his heart. If he had known about the nature of the relationship between these two, he would never have invited the both of them together. Wasn't he just asking for trouble?

Unexpectedly, Zu An waved his hand casually and said, "It's fine. Honestly, I feel like 'toad' is a very good theme. A toad who doesn't lust after a swan is a poor toad."

Xie Daoyun let out a laugh, but she immediately covered her mouth. She clearly felt that she was being disrespectful.

Qiu Honglei's eyes also glistened with mirth. This man was different from the one she'd met before. He really was interesting.

Zheng Dan's head was full of images from her shared history with him. This swan has already been defiled by a toad too many times.

When he saw the three great beauties tittering with laughter at Zu An's teasing, his expression instantly became awful.

Zu An then continued, "I already have a verse in mind."

"You thought of one already?"

All present were startled. How could even a theme like ‘toad’ be used to create poetry?

Moreover, the theme had only just been mentioned! Even if it were a common theme, there was no way he could have been so well-prepared.

Even Xie Daoyun grew curious. She wanted to hear just what sort of poetry could be written from a theme like this.

Sang Qian jumped in fright. However, he figured that there was no way a poem created that quickly could be of a decent standard. As such, he said with a laugh, “Brother Zu is indeed formidable. I am all ears.”

Zu An took up a position next to the window and looked out towards the distant lotus pond. “Like a tiger it sits by the pond, under the tree’s shade it gathers its spirit.”

The image of a toad appeared in the minds of all those who heard these words. Even Sang Qian had to admit that this fellow indeed had some talent.

Only Xie Daoyun frowned slightly. The first line was still okay, but the second seemed much less effective. Coming up with a poem like this in such a hurry was acceptable, but having heard the awe-inspiring tune of his at the Immortal Abode, her expectations were sky high.

Zu An continued on, “If spring comes and I do not speak, which bug would dare to make a sound?”[1]

A hush fell across the entire room as his voice faded out.

While rhetoric and literary styles were important in the creation of poems, what was even more important was the boldness of spirit that they contained.

Although this poem was stylistically very ordinary, the imposing and noble spirit it contained made it truly outstanding.

Xie Daoyun had originally been a little disappointed, but her eyes lit up when she heard the last two lines of his poem. She let them linger on her lips. The expression she wore now as she looked at Zu An was entirely different from before.

This man doesn’t seem at all like the sloppy and negligent fellow everyone has imagined him to be!

Qiu Honglei’s eyes also shone with brilliance. When she first realized that his relationship with Chu Chuyan was much better than what everyone else had imagined, she had developed reservations about whether or not to continue with her original plan. After all, her plan rested on the premise that he was being treated unfavorably by the Chu clan.

However, it was clear to her now that she should emulate the other party’s boldness. At worst, she would just have to fight with Chu Chuyan over her man. She didn’t believe that she surrendered any advantage in terms of looks, while her skills at seducing men were far greater. The conflicting thoughts that had haunted her all this while finally settled down. She looked at Zu An, her eyes tinged with a hint of warmth and gentleness.

Only Zheng Dan was upset. Hmph! This guy is showing off in front of other girls again.

She was immediately frightened by her own thoughts. She didn't have anything to do with this man anyway. Why was she getting jealous?

When she thought of her engagement with Sang Qian, her expression grew complicated, and clouded over with sadness.

"Brother Zu is indeed a great genius!" Wang Yuanlong smiled and led the room in a round of applause. Wei Suo looked like he had just woken up from a dream. He clapped until his hands turned red.

Sang Qian's face was overcast. When he saw the expressions in those beauties' eyes, his mood soured even further.

He'd planned to make this Zu An look bad, yet his actions had only elevated his status.

You have successfully trolled Sang Qian for 233 Rage points!

Zu An looked at him with a smile. "Brother Sang, shall we choose another theme?"

"There's no need. Everyone has already fully witnessed brother Zu's literary talents." Sang Qian forced a smile. After everything he'd experienced, he was now convinced that this guy might really have some talent. How could he possibly dare to give him any more chances to show off?

Realizing that Zu An had spoken to him precisely to elicit such a reaction from him, he grew even more upset.

You have successfully trolled Sang Qian for 44... 44... 44...

After that, Qiu Honglei performed a song for the guests, and the atmosphere in the hall grew to a climax.

Following her song, Wang Yuanlong thanked everyone for their help in his rescue, which heralded the start of the party.

Zu An shared a toast with Wang Yuanlong while persuading Wei Suo to keep drinking.

Wei Suo had embraced his moment to shine earlier, and he was extremely excited. He didn't refuse anything.

Xie Daoyun didn't touch a drop of alcohol. She whispered to Zheng Dan, and discussed some musical matters with Qiu Honglei while glancing at Zu An now and then.

The sky was already getting dark. Xie Daoyun got up to bid everyone goodbye. She didn't wish to return home too late, as that would ruin her reputation as a lady from a prestigious house.

Zheng Dan also got up to take her leave. She noticed that Zu An had drunk quite a bit. She was worried that he might get too drunk and do something reckless to her. That would surely spell disaster.

Even though she didn't mind him doing that to her in private, she still had to maintain her image, and she had her status and responsibilities to keep in mind.

Not long afterwards, Qiu Honglei also bid everyone farewell. She still had many things to tell Zu An, but with so many others present, it wasn't the right time.

With all the ravishing beauties gone, Sang Qian naturally lost interest as well. Everything he drank tasted awful because he was drinking with Zu An. He, too, left soon after.

Zu An and Wei Suo drank another round. Zu An's body had been reforged through the Primordial Origin Sutra—how could Wei Suo's be comparable? Wei Suo quickly passed his limit.

Wang Yuanlong offered to have some men take him home. Zu An refused. Since bringing Wei Suo along had been his idea, he said it was his duty to see him home.

Wang Yuanlong didn't pressure him, but still offered several men to escort them.

Zu An brought Wei Suo back to the Wei clan's entrance. Hearing the news, Wei Hongde came out to receive his younger brother.

A sudden thought struck Zu An. He pressed a certain acupoint on Wei Suo's body, and sent a small sliver of ki into him. Wei Suo felt his stomach heave, and vomit poured out of his mouth.

Zu An, who was standing right next to him, couldn't avoid the resulting disaster. His clothes were covered in vomit.

When he saw this, Wei Hongde apologized profusely. Zu An requested for a set of clothes to change into, since he didn't want to return home with his clothes covered in vomit.

Wei Hongde hesitated a little, but finally agreed.

Having successfully entered the Wei Estate, which was shrouded in shadow, the corners of Zu An's lips curved upwards slightly.

Chapter 330: Exposed

However, when he smelled the stench covering his body, his expression grew ugly.

Damn it, I'm really suffering because of this stupid Old Mi's task.

Wei Hongde had a servant escort Wei Suo in first. Then, he said to Zu An, "Thank you brother Zu for bringing my younger brother back. I've already had someone prepare a guest room for you with a tub of hot water. Once brother Zu takes a bath and has a change of clothes, you're most welcome to stay the night if you wish."

Zu An nodded and said, "Thank you, brother Wei. I've had a little too much to drink today. If I go back like this, my wife will definitely kill me. I'll gratefully accept your hospitality."

Wei Hongde's breath caught. He had made the offer just to be polite, and hadn't expected him to actually stay the night.

However, since the offer had already been made, he couldn't just change his mind and refuse him. "Brother Zu is too polite. However, it's quite hard for me to imagine Chu First Miss being that aggressive."

Zu An chuckled. "She's only a goddess in front of others. She is the same as other women in private."

Wei Hongde was incredibly jealous when she heard this. "Brother Zu is truly blessed."

If I had a wife like Chu First Miss, I would be by her side every moment I can! Why would I ever sleep outside?

Those who are well-fed truly fail to comprehend the sufferings of the starving!

You have trolled Wei Hongde for 99 Rage points!

"Haha, you're flattering me. Honestly, a wife like her comes with its own set of troubles," said Zu An with a sigh.

"What sort of troubles?" Even though Wei Hongde didn't have much of a personal friendship with Zu An, as a man, there was no way he would miss out on a chance to hear the secrets of a goddess.

Zu An sighed. "My wife is too pretty! I always end up incurring the jealousy of other men! Do you know the extent to which people would go just to curse me over this?"

Wei Hongde was speechless.

Why do I feel like this guy is indirectly scolding me?!

You have successfully trolled Wei Hongde for 66... 66... 66...

Unknowingly, the two of them found themselves by the guest room. Wei Hongde smiled and said, "All right, we've arrived at your room. If you require anything, you can just order any of the servants to bring it to you. I shall take my leave and allow brother Zu to rest undisturbed."

"Thank you for your trouble." Zu An clasped his fist.

Wei Hongde turned around to leave. After he had taken a few steps, a sudden thought came to him. He stopped and turned around. "By the way, there is something else I almost forgot to tell brother Zu. If brother Zu wishes to go for a walk, feel free to walk around the estate." He pointed. "However, that area is the place where one of the clan's elders rests. He enjoys peace and quiet, and he doesn't like to be disturbed, so..."

Zu An smiled widely. "Don't worry, I won't go that way," he reassured Wei Hongde.

He was just wondering how he was going to navigate such a large estate. How considerate of you to tell me exactly where I should go.

As for the supposed presence of the clan elder, he didn't pay it much attention. This was probably just some pretext to prevent him from going there.

"Thank you for your understanding." Wei Hongde smiled and took his leave.

Zu An entered his room. A servant had already brought over clothes and other necessities. A large tub of hot water was placed at the center.

"I like taking long baths, so please do not disturb me." Zu An took care to instruct the servants, to prevent them from discovering his later activities.

"Understood!" Those servants put down the things they were carrying and left.

Zu An curled his lips. Isn't this Wei clan too stingy? They didn't even send over a single maid! Are they scared that I'll do something to their girls or something?

Naturally, these were just jokes. He hadn't forgotten his true purpose in coming today. After locking the door, he went to the tub, stripped down, and brought out the stealthy outfit that he had prepared beforehand.

Appropriately dressed, he leaped silently out through the window and snuck into the inner section of the Wei Estate.

For some reason, there weren't many lights in the Wei Estate. The grounds were much dimmer than the Chu Estate.

Of course, this made it more convenient for him to execute his task.

He silently headed in the direction that Wei Hongde had warned him not to go.

Perhaps because he was already inside the Wei clan estate and had gotten past the tightest defensive line, he didn't encounter many guards along the way.

He easily made his way past the few guards he encountered.

Employing the Mirror Mirage skill to mask his aura made it extremely hard for others to detect him unless they were looking right at him. This really was a powerful weapon of concealment!

When he arrived at that courtyard, Zu An snuck into a room and began to search.

Unfortunately, he didn't find a case like the one Old Mi had shown him. How could it be that easy to find a single item in such a large place?

Zu An gave up after searching for a while. Brute force wasn't his style at all.

It's a pity that I have no idea what's inside that case. I don't even have a single clue, so how the heck do I go about finding it? Zu An felt a headache coming on.

He got up and walked over to the window. When he looked out, he discovered that there was a single room that was still lit.

After some hesitation, he decided to head over for a look. Perhaps he could find some clues there.

Besides, he could still conceal himself with Mirror Mirage. As long as he was careful, there wouldn't be much danger.

He made his way cautiously to the room. When he reached it, he could vaguely make out some conversation. Alarmed, he immediately squatted down by the wall. He had seen too many dramas where an intruder's shadow was glimpsed through the window. He didn't want to make such a brainless mistake.

"Adoptive father, what troubles your respective self to personally make a trip here?"

This voice didn't belong to either of the Wei brothers. It was a middle-aged voice, most likely the Wei clan's master.

"We received an important piece of news earlier regarding an old friend who has been missing for a long time. The emperor has sent me to look into this matter."

This voice was dark and gloomy, and sounded extremely unpleasant to the ear.

Zu An frowned. Why did this voice bear a passing similarity to Old Mi's?

"I see. I wonder what sort of issue can alarm even the emperor?"

"Hmph. Don't ask questions that you shouldn't ask."

"Of course, of course. Adoptive father's criticism is perfectly warranted. This adopted son misspoke. However, I am still quite familiar with Brightmoon City. Is there anything I can help you with?"

"Not right now. If I need your assistance, I will let you know. Heh, that old friend is incredibly cunning. If we end up scaring him away too early, it'll be quite difficult for us to find him again."

"As expected, adoptive father is both wise and brilliant..."

Zu An's brows were knit together tightly as he eavesdropped on this conversation from outside. This adoptive father seemed like a court eunuch from the imperial palace.

How could he possibly know that this man was a court eunuch, you may ask? It was clearly because there were just too many examples in television dramas to draw from. The tone and color of that voice was exactly the same as what he was used to.

Wait, Old Mi's style of speaking is also quite similar...

Who is this mysterious court eunuch after? He seems to be acting on an imperial order too.

He suddenly broke out in cold sweat. The Chu clan was standing up to the emperor. However, after giving it more thought, he dismissed the idea that this eunuch had come for Chu Zhongtian. After all, he had called the target an old friend. Chu Zhongtian didn't seem like the type to have such people as friends.

Was he here for Old Mi, then?

This possibility seemed more likely the more he thought about it. There was too much mystery surrounding Old Mi after all, and his cultivation was also extremely high.

All of a sudden, a cold voice boomed from inside the house. "Who's there?!"

Zu An turned pale with fright. He'd been exposed! He prepared to use Grandgale to teleport away. If these people were really looking for Old Mi, there was no way he would be able to fight them.

Right then, he heard a strange sound coming from the roof above him. A black-clad individual took off in a different direction with even greater speed than him.