

Immortal 371

Chapter 371: Kids Do Some Stupid Shit

He saw a petite figure fall backwards. Reacting quickly, Zu An reached out and grabbed hold of her. His fingers wrapped around a hand that was cool to the touch, and felt extremely comfortable to hold.

Perhaps because he had run all the way here, he had begun to feel really warm.

That was why this hand felt extremely good. He didn't ever want to let go.

He noticed who he was holding on to, and immediately became excited. "Xiaoxi, thank goodness I ran into you. I need..."

Ji Xiaoxi's face went red before he had even finished his sentence. She struggled free of his hand and took to her heels.

Zu An finally remembered that she had been angry over the incident with the 'Eighteen Spring Winds', but he hadn't expected her to hold a grudge for this long.

"Xiaoxi, I really have something I need your help with!" Zu An said anxiously. Qin Wanru had almost lost consciousness. She was completely limp in his arms.

"I'm not helping you!" Ji Xiaoxi glanced at the woman in his arms. She couldn't see who it was, since Qin Wanru's face was buried in his chest.

This guy actually ran over to me while holding another woman in his arms!

You have successfully trolled Ji Xiaoxi for 33... 33... 33...

Zu An was stupefied when he saw the Rage points. This girl was usually pretty good-natured. He hadn't expected her to behave in this manner at all!

"Xiaoxi, the incident with the 'Eighteen Spring Winds' really was my fault. You can curse and beat me up all you want later, but I really need you to help me save someone today!" Zu An was really panicking now.

Ji Xiaoxi's face went red. If it had just been about her accidentally testing the 'Eighteen Spring Winds', she wouldn't have been so angry. The main thing eating away at her was the fact that she'd had to strip and soak in a tub, after which Zu An had seen her, and even touched her! The misunderstanding with Chu Huan Zhao afterwards only compounded matters further.

She had always been incredibly pure. When had she ever experienced something like that before? That was why she had harbored this grudge all the while, and her feelings were always complicated whenever she saw Zu An.

She wanted to refuse him, but the kind, gentle side of her noticed that something was wrong with the woman in his arms. She was just about to say something when a furious bellow echoed around the courtyard. "'Eighteen Spring Winds'? How dare you bully my daughter?!"

You have successfully trolled Ji Dengtu for 678 Rage points!

Ji Dengtu came roaring out. He looked like he was about to tear Zu An to shreds.

Zu An jumped back in fright. Before he had a chance to explain himself, Ji Xiaoxi panicked and said, "Dad, it's not what you think!"

"How could it not be what I'm thinking? I just heard you guys say 'Eighteen Spring Winds'. How dare this brat use such a vicious drug on you!? I am going to skin him alive!" Ji Dengtu was clearly an overprotective father who doted endlessly on his daughter.

Yet, despite all his efforts, this pearl that he had carefully nurtured all these years had been fed to a pig! This drug needed eighteen rounds in order to dispel its effects! He was about to explode from anger.

You have successfully trolled Ji Dengtu for 999... 999... 999...

Ji Xiaoxi's small face was entirely red. She wanted to explain matters, yet she had no clue where or how to start.

Sensing Ji Dengtu's anger skyrocketing, Zu An knew that he was about to be ripped apart if he didn't fix the situation right away. He blurted out, "Divine Physician Ji, you've misunderstood! We weren't talking about Xiaoxi! It's Madam Chu who has been afflicted with the 'Eighteen Spring Winds'!"

He turned Qin Wanru over while saying this. She was currently unconscious, and her skin had gone completely red. Her temperature was alarmingly high, and he could even feel the heat through her clothes.

He didn't know if it was because of the medicine's effects, but her entire body was giving off a rich fragrance. It smelled similar to a rose, but there was something different to it.

"Wanru?" When he saw the stunning woman in Zu An's arms, Ji Dengtu's eyes instantly lit up. "No problem, I will cure her!"

He immediately reached out his hands to take Qin Wanru.

Zu An hurriedly took a step back. He looked at Ji Dengtu defensively. "I fear that I cannot trouble Divine Physician Ji with this matter. After all, men and women are slightly different. I'll need Xiaoxi's help for this."

Are you kidding me? Do you think I don't know what sort of person you are?

This dude asked me for Qin Wanru's undergarments! Why would I ever hand Qin Wanru to such a vulgar person? That's like sending a sheep straight into a wolf's den!

Ji Dengtu was all smiles. "That won't do, that won't do. Xiaoxi doesn't know how to cure something like that. I have to be the one to do it."

Zu An sneered. Nonsense! Even I can perform the method you're thinking of. Why would I bother coming all the way here if that were the case?

The two of them glowered at each other, neither side willing to back down.

Ji Xiaoxi couldn't keep watching this. She walked over and said, "I'll give it a try."

She was naturally kindhearted. When she learned what kind of poison Qin Wanru had been afflicted with, she immediately sympathized with her, since she'd also experienced the same thing herself.

Zu An finally relaxed when he learned that she was the one who would be administering the treatment. He was about to hand Qin Wanru over when he was reminded of her delicate figure. He decided to help her bring Qin Wanru inside, afraid that she wouldn't be able to bear her weight.

As he walked, Zu An said, "She's been seriously injured as well. She might lose her life at any time."

Ji Dengtu had lost his frivolous smile. He walked over with a frown. After taking a look at the wound on her back, he said, "Heart-smashing Fist? Hong Zhong rebelled? This is truly unexpected."

Zu An was surprised. This fellow seems to know the Chu clan pretty well!

Ji Dengtu took out a pill and fed it to Qin Wanru. "This medicine can temporarily protect the arteries around her heart. We'll detoxify her first and then treat her injuries. Administering any other medicines will only worsen her condition. We need to move quickly."

Zu An was given a shock when he saw just how serious his expression was. "Is it really that bad?"

"It's worse than you've imagined." Ji Dengtu's face was completely overcast. He said to Ji Xiaoxi, "Xiaoxi, the poison she suffers from isn't 'Eighteen Spring Winds', but rather 'Bull's Cream'. Use the detoxifying method I've taught you before. Use a Heart-calming Pill with Imperial Bamboo Herb, Rootless Water..."

"Okay, okay. You men need to get lost!" Ji Xiaoxi placed a hand on their backs and gave them each a shove, chasing them out before slamming the door shut.

Ji Dengtu had turned around and was just about to say something. The door almost smashed into his nose. He immediately became upset. "Why are you being so defensive? Isn't there a saying that a maiden will always act like a princess that clings to her father? My daughter isn't like this at all!"

Zu An gave him a strange look. Does this guy really have no self-awareness?

Despite this, he couldn't help but feel a sense of admiration. He had wanted to warn Ji Xiaoxi that Qin Wanru hadn't been afflicted with the 'Eighteen Spring Winds', but Ji Dengtu had seen through it right away. He truly deserved his reputation as a divine physician after all.

"Tell me what happened in the Chu clan." Ji Dengtu pulled him to the side and sat down along the stairs outside.

Zu An told him about everything that had happened.

"Chu Zhongtian, you spineless good-for-nothing!" Ji Dengtu said angrily. "You can't take care of your businesses outside, and you can't even protect your wife inside. Wanru really was blind for choosing you back then."

"You had some kind of relationship with Madam back then?" Zu An probed.

Ji Dengtu said smugly, "The two of us were obviously an ideal match! But that Chu Zhongtian used his status as a duke to rob me. The Qin clan also had their own interests in mind. That's why we lovebirds were ripped apart, with no say in the matter at all."

Zu An stared blankly at him.

Bro, are you listening to yourself right now? You're crazy.

Qin Wanru always had a look of disdain on her face whenever she mentioned him. He never saw a trace of affection from her when she met Ji Dengtu!

This dude was probably just a resentful simp whose goddess had been stolen by Chu Zhongtian.

"Speaking of which, that Chu Tiesheng looks so stupid and cowardly. I didn't expect him to have such skills." Ji Dengtu sounded impressed.

Zu An was curious. "Skills? Are you talking about his takeover of Chu Estate?"

"You call that a skill?" Ji Dengtu looked at him as though he were some sort of idiot. "I'm obviously talking about the fact that he got his hands on 'Bull's Cream'! All the years I've spent on this earth, and I only stumbled upon a tiny amount of it when I was a kid. I ended up using it for research! Sigh... Kids really do some stupid shit... Later on, I couldn't find any more no matter how hard I tried! Heh, I didn't expect Chu's Second Master to have some. I'll have to steal the rest of it from him when I get a chance."

Chapter 372: Too Late

Zu An was speechless. This was a glorious divine physician, and yet he was vulgar to the point where, if he wasn't looking for adult-themed books, he was hunting for aphrodisiacs instead. Even he felt embarrassed for him!

"Damned brat! What kind of expression is that?" Ji Dengtu gave him a threatening look when he noticed his expression.

However, a wise man chooses his battles. Zu An immediately smiled and said, "My respect for Elder Ji gushes forth like the relentless tides of the river! It is as vast as the Brightmoon River itself, inexhaustible and unending..."

Ji Dengtu stroked his chin in satisfaction. "Not bad, kid, not bad. You have prospects. You are worthy of my good opinion of you."

Zu An sneered inside, but he still asked, "By the way, since you are friends with Madam, could you help her get rid of those traitors Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng? You can even grab the rest of Chu Tiesheng's 'Bull's Cream' along the way."

"You fool!" Ji Dengtu cried with disdain. "How dumb do you think I am? It's my fervent hope that these two guys mess up the Chu clan! It would be better if even Chu Zhongtian were finished as well. Wanru would have no one else to rely on, and it would be easier to take advantage... Ahem, ahem! It would be easier for me to take care of her."

Zu An had nothing to say to that.

Bro, you are making so much sense, even I can't argue with your logic.

Ji Dengtu smacked his forehead. "What was I just talking about? Right, 'Bull's Cream'! It's hard to get your hands on that, but what's harder to obtain is the 'Eighteen Spring Winds'. Now that's some mysterious and precious stuff. There's still an antidote for 'Bulls Cream', but once you are poisoned by the 'Eighteen Spring Winds', there's really no other way to get rid of it unless a man and a woman go at it eighteen times.

"There's still a way to cleanse yourself if you've only ingested a small amount. I've taught Xiaoxi how to deal with it, but I hope she never encounters it. There's no easy way out if you've been poisoned by the 'Eighteen Spring Winds'." Ji Dengtu looked worried.

Zu An had a strange look on his face. No wonder Ji Xiaoxi had managed to detoxify herself! It turns out her father had already taught her how.

Ji Dengtu really was amazing. He was even able to cleanse such a poison! However, his perverted look still remained in Zu An's mind... He clearly was the prime example of talent unrestrained by morality.

"If you ever hear anything about this drug, let me know. I'm willing to spend a lot of money to purchase it," said Ji Dengtu, even though he didn't really have much hope that Zu An would have something like this. He wasn't really counting on Zu An to ever get his hands on it. It was merely an offhand comment.

Zu An had a strange expression on his face. He did indeed have that stuff on him. However, for the sake of world peace and the chastity of all the women in Brightmoon City, he absolutely could not let it fall into that man's hands.

He was also quite surprised that Ji Xiaoxi hadn't mentioned the incident involving the 'Eighteen Spring Winds' to her father. I guess that girl is just too shy to talk about such a thing with her father.

He immediately felt his body stiffen when he recalled Ji Xiaoxi's delicate and lovely appearance.

He shook his head. Why was he like this today? He immediately collected his thoughts and continued chatting with Ji Dengtu. Time passed by without them noticing.

There came a sudden creaking. The door opened, and Ji Xiaoxi walked out.

Zu An immediately stood up and grabbed Ji Xiaoxi's hand. "Xiaoxi, how is she?"

"Damn brat, how dare you touch my daughter in front of me?!" Ji Dengtu was furious. He snatched Zu An's arm and twisted it.

Just as he was about to exert some more force, he heard Ji Xiaoxi cry out in alarm. "Wait!"

Ji Dengtu's face went rigid. His daughter had actually stopped him!

Did this brat secretly get close to Xiaoxi behind my back?!

You have successfully trolled Ji Dengtu for 1024 Rage points!

Zu An found it strange that Ji Dengtu had gotten so angry. However Ji Xiaoxi's small hand really was comfortable. He really wanted to pull her into his embrace and ravage her...

Huh? Why would I think something like that?

My thoughts had been all over the place when I was carrying Qin Wanru as well! I'm not usually like this...

Ji Xiaoxi spoke into his thoughts. "You've been poisoned as well."

"By what?" Zu An was stunned. He didn't immediately realize what had happened.

Ji Xiaoxi's face was a bit red. "Of course it's... it's the same poison that Madam Chu was afflicted with."

Zu An was completely bewildered.

Ji Dengtu gave Zu An a strange look as well. "What the heck happened between the two of you? Why would you be affected by the same drug?"

Zu An said, "There's no way, right? How could that be possible?"

Ji Xiaoxi shook her head. "There's no mistaking it. I helped to detoxify Madam Chu, so I am familiar with the characteristics of this drug."

Ji Dengtu pulled his wrist over to feel his pulse. His expression also grew strange. "It's true. You're affected by this 'Bull's Cream' too. There's some dried blood on your face. Qin Wanru's blood probably splattered out and seeped in through your skin and the corners of your mouth. That's how you became poisoned as well."

Ji Dengtu deserved his title as a divine physician after all. He had quickly identified the source of the problem.

Zu An was stunned. "What can a man do if he is poisoned, then?"

"Tough luck." Ji Dengtu laughed, rather amused at Zu An's predicament.

Zu An stared at him, speechless.

Since the divine physician was of no help, he grabbed Ji Xiaoxi's hand instead. "Xiaoxi, can you help to detoxify me?"

I'll use your daughter to help me get rid of it then.

"What?!" Ji Xiaoxi was stunned. Her mind went blank, and she was momentarily unable to react.

Zu An couldn't tear his gaze away from her lovable appearance. He began to find her more and more cute.

"Damned brat!" Ji Dengtu roared. He immediately separated the two of them, and shoved a pill into Zu An's mouth.

You have successfully trolled Ji Dengtu for 666 Rage points!

Zu An coughed violently and clutched his throat. "What did you make me eat?"

Ji Dengtu snorted. "I gave you a Heart-calming Pill. You were only indirectly poisoned, after all, so you don't have too much of the drug in your system. You'll be fine after taking that pill."

Sure enough, a cool and refreshing feeling began to spread within him. The restlessness that he felt gradually subsided.

"What a convenient pill. I'll need some more of them." Zu An didn't know why either, but this sort of thing always seemed to happen around him. If he had some of these pills, he wouldn't need to run all the way to the Ji Estate every time.

Ji Dengtu refused him straightaway. "I'm not giving you any!"

"I'll pay you for them." Zu An's face darkened. This dude is not only vulgar, but he's greedy as hell too. Hm? Why do I feel like our personalities are similar?

"This stuff is not for sale! They're for my Xiaoxi to protect herself." Ji Dengtu said with an angry huff.

This guy is really a slave to his daughter! But I guess that would count as one of his few good points.

Ji Xiaoxi grew anxious. "Stop arguing already, you two! The most important thing to do is to save Madam Chu right now. Even though we've cleansed her body of the poison, her life force is incredibly weak. She might die at any time!"

Zu An panicked. However, Ji Dengtu was quicker. He rushed into the room and measured Qin Wanru's pulse. Then, he reached his hand towards Zu An. "Soul Return Pill! I won't make it in time if I start concocting one now!"

Zu An remembered that he'd bought a bunch of medicines from this place before. The most precious of them all was the Soul Return Pill. It was said that this pill could drag whoever ingested it back from the brink of death, as long as a single breath still remained within them.

He didn't dare hesitate. He took one out and fed it to Qin Wanru. "If one isn't enough, should I give her another one?"

Ji Dengtu stopped him. "One is enough. The medicinal effects are extremely strong. Giving her more would backfire and have the opposite effect." After saying this, he gathered his concentration and began to treat her using acupuncture.

Zu An didn't dare disturb the treatment process. He watched nervously from the side.

Ji Xiaoxi stepped in to assist her father.

Visible drops of sweat formed on Ji Dengtu's forehead. This treatment was clearly extremely taxing.

The treatment progressed in the time it took for a stick of incense to burn away. Suddenly, Ji Dengtu's complexion changed drastically. "This is bad. If she had only suffered the blow from the Heart-smashing Fist, I could surely bring her back. However, her blood flow was accelerated by the 'Bull's Cream', which amplified the extent of her injuries. It might already be too late."

Zu An felt blood rush to his head. "Aren't you a bloody divine physician? Why can't you save her? You were just bragging about how that return-soul-whatever pill could bring someone back from the brink of

death, as long as they had a single breath left in them! Madam Chu still has so many breaths left in her! Are you toying with me?!”

Chapter 373: Pursuit

Ji Dengtu's expression grew awkward. This turn of events had clearly made him feel ashamed as well. “I told you before that the Soul Return Pill is useful in most situations. However, there are some situations where it’s useless. This is clearly one of those few situations where it doesn’t work.”

Zu An couldn’t believe what he was hearing.

Damn you! Give me back my money!

He was well and truly pissed off. “Return me my money then! You scammed me out of so much money over such an unreliable item!”

Ji Dengtu jumped backwards. He said defensively, “I will never refund you the money! Absolutely not!”

Zu An grabbed his collar and roared, “Then save Madam Chu’s goddamned life!”

“Do you think I don’t want to?!” Ji Dengtu pushed him away. He walked over to the side and sat down, lighting a cigarette. The smoke drifted upward, obscuring his face.

Zu An wanted to say something else, but Ji Xiaoxi grabbed him. “Ah Zu, don’t disturb my father anymore. He is blaming himself for this too. He’s definitely trying to think of a way to save her right now.”

“Xiaoxi, do you think your father will be able to think of something?” Zu An asked impatiently.

Ji Xiaoxi shook her head and said quietly, “It’ll be hard. Considering how poorly Madam Chu is faring right now, the fact that she is still alive is already a miracle.”

Zu An despaired when he heard this.

He walked inside. Qin Wanru was lying peacefully on the bed.

Her eyes were closed. And her cheeks still held a tinge of redness, left over from the drug’s effects. Her figure was still as stunning as before, but her complexion was still pale because of her injuries.

Zu An was distraught. If something happened to Qin Wanru, what was he supposed to tell Chuyan? What was he supposed to tell Huanzhao?

Even if it hadn’t been for the sake of those two, his opinion of Qin Wanru had changed after being around her these past few days. He had come to realize that she wasn’t at all what he’d thought her to be.

After fighting side-by-side these few times, camaraderie had already been established between them. That was why he wasn’t willing to see her die, no matter what.

Ji Dengtu suddenly got up. “I’m going for a walk,” he said, his voice heavy.

He walked straight out without waiting for their reply. He didn't even bother to look back.

Zu An was upset. "How can your dad still be in the mood to go for a walk at this time?"

"My father only goes out for a walk when he is extremely distressed," Ji Xiaoxi explained. "He likes to walk around Hidden Dragon Mountain, outside the city. It's more peaceful there, and the air is cleaner. Going for a walk often helps calm him down."

Zu An recalled that Hidden Dragon Mountain was home to all manner of vicious beasts. It was a place that most people would never dream of going into. However, this guy treated the place like some sort of garden!

Ji Xiaoxi's eyes suddenly reddened. "Before today, he would only go for a walk on the anniversary of my mother's death."

Zu An was stunned. "Your mother has already passed on? I've never heard you mention that before."

Ji Xiaoxi said, "My mother had a difficult time giving birth to me, and then she..."

"Sorry. I shouldn't have brought this up." Zu An was surprised. Wasn't Ji Dengtu a divine physician? Why would his wife pass away from a difficult birth? However, he didn't want to pry further, since this was clearly a distressing topic for Ji Xiaoxi.

"It's fine. I'm used to it." Even though Ji Xiaoxi said this, her expression was still extremely bleak.

Zu An spread his arms. "Your mom is already gone, and now my wife's mom is going to pass away soon. We are truly bound together by a common suffering. Why don't we hug to comfort each other?"

Ji Xiaoxi laughed. "You're really something, you know that? You still behave so indecently, even in this sort of situation."

Zu An laughed. "You clearly have a misunderstanding about me! When have I ever been indecent?"

Ji Xiaoxi wasn't upset at all, but giggled instead. "Thank you."

"What are you thanking me for?" Zu An said.

Ji Xiaoxi said with a gentle voice, "I know you said that to make me feel better. I know that you're feeling broken-hearted right now as well, yet you're comforting me instead."

Zu An sighed. "Xiaoxi, not only are you cute and lovely, you're also truly kind and considerate. Your future husband is truly blessed."

Ji Xiaoxi blushed instantly. "I'm not marrying anyone!"

She ran over to Qin Wanru's side to tend to her after she said this. Even though there was nothing she could do to treat her, she could help to ease some of her current pain, and monitor her condition. If her condition worsened suddenly, she could promptly administer some medicine to keep her alive until her father returned.

Zu An didn't dare place his hopes in Ji Dengtu. After all, Ji Xiaoxi had already said that there wasn't much hope. He needed to find another way to save her on his own.

However, even the glorious Divine Physician Ji couldn't do anything. What could he possibly do?

Right at this time, a loud knocking came from outside.

Thud thud thud!

Thud thud thud thud!

Knocking wasn't the right word—it was more like a heavy pounding on the door.

“Open up!”

Ji Xiaoxi jumped in fright. She ran out and asked, “Who is it? It's already so late. Please wait until morning if you need treatment.”

“No one is looking for treatment! We're looking for someone!” A rude voice came from outside.

Ji Xiaoxi looked through a small gap between the doors, and her small face turned pale. She ran back to inform Zu An. “Ah Zu, there are people outside. I think they're from the Chu clan, and they're here to capture you!”

Zu An's expression grew worried. He ran up to the door to sneak a peek as well.

Rows of guardsmen stood outside, and the one in the lead was none other than Chu Tiesheng. The dark circles around his eyes had become even darker, and his expression was truly ugly. Seeing his prey slip through his fingers had clearly infuriated him. He'd yearned for this goddess day and night, and yet he'd lost his opportunity forever! His mood was absolutely terrible.

Hong Zhong wasn't far away. His hair was neatly combed, as usual. However, if one looked carefully, it wouldn't be hard to notice that his hand was shaking a little. This was not out of fear, but rather a sign of nervousness and guilt.

How had they managed to track them to this place so quickly?!

It didn't take long for Zu An to arrive at the answer.

Qin Wanru had been drugged and injured, so she definitely needed treatment. His close relationship with Xiaoxi was no secret, so it wasn't too far-fetched for them to suspect him of coming here for help. This was clearly why they had immediately led their men here.

Hong Zhong had probably come personally because of his misgivings towards Ji Dengtu.

Hong Zhong was the number two expert after Chu Zhongtian in the Chu Estate. Of course, now that Chu Chuyan's cultivation had soared, she might be able to challenge him for this position.

“You should expose the schemes of those two in front of everyone,” Ji Xiaoxi suggested. “There are so many guards outside. There's no way all of them can be their accomplices, right?”

Zu An shook his head. “Xiaoxi, you are too innocent. You don't know how evil these people are. If they dare to bring these people to hunt me down, they surely have complete confidence that they can control these men. Besides, Madam Chu is unconscious right now. Without her testimony, I fear that these two won't admit to anything, no matter what I say.”

“Then what do we do? You should take Madam Chu with you and find a place to hide!” Ji Xiaoxi said urgently.

Zu An nodded. He ran over and picked Qin Wanru up. However, he immediately ran into a problem. “Where do I even hide?”

Ji Xiaoxi was at a loss as well. However, the pounding outside was getting louder and louder, and it sounded like the people outside might just barge in at any time. She didn’t have much time to think. She pointed and said, “Hide in my bed!”

Zu An was stunned. He didn’t know why she would suggest this, but the situation was clearly dire. His feet subconsciously took him in that direction.

He carried Qin Wanru into the room. With a loud crash, the door outside the courtyard was smashed in.

“What are all of you doing? Why has no one come to the door even after we knocked for so long?!” One of the guards gave Ji Xiaoxi a ferocious glare.

Ji Xiaoxi subconsciously took a step back in fear. However, Zu An and Madam Chu needed her protection right now. She stepped forward again and stuck out her chest. “How can you call that knocking? I thought you all were bandits trying to rob us in the middle of the night!”

Even though she tried to sound as fierce as possible, her lovely appearance and delicate voice lacked even a hint of intimidation.

Just then, Chu Tiesheng stepped forward. “Miss Ji, please excuse our behavior. We are currently searching for a traitorous brute from our Chu clan.”

Chapter 374: A Potential Cure

Ji Xiaoxi was angered by the way they described Zu An. However, this wasn’t the time to let her emotions affect her decisions. She didn’t berate them, but said instead, “If you’re looking for a traitor from your Chu clan, what are you doing here in our Ji Estate?”

Chu Tiesheng felt his breath catch in his throat. He was momentarily at a loss for words.

This little girl made perfect sense! There was no way for him to argue against this logic at all!

However, he managed a massive business, and was used to dealing with all sorts of old foxes. He quickly adapted to the situation. “There is something you might not be aware of. The traitor from our clan is Zu An. He was so despicable that he even drugged Madam Chu. Thankfully, someone noticed his actions. He fled in panic, but he suffered terrible injuries in the process.

“We suspect that he might have come here looking for you, since the two of you are fellow students.”

Zu An was completely stupefied. He was quite curious as to what reason these people were going to use to arrest him, but the last thing he expected was such venomous slander.

After all, news of sex scandals spread quickly. The entire city will soon be aware of this matter. As news traveled and the truth grew increasingly distorted, things might begin to sound even worse.

Once that happened, even if Qin Wanru recovered and told everyone the truth, some might still suspect her for shielding her ‘adulterer’. They would have successfully killed two birds with one stone! This truly was a vicious ploy!

Ji Xiaoxi was amazed at how Chu Tiesheng had distorted the truth. They were clearly the ones who had done that to Qin Wanru, yet they somehow managed to shift all of the blame onto Zu An. “He didn’t come here. You guys can search elsewhere.”

After she said this, she moved to close the door.

Chu Tiesheng grabbed the door. Ji Xiaoxi’s expression grew cold. “What are you trying to do?”

Chu Tiesheng hesitated a little. He suspected that Zu An was inside, but he didn’t want to offend Ji Xiaoxi too badly either.

Everyone in Brightmoon City knew that Ji Xiaoxi was Ji Dengtu’s precious daughter. No one in this world of fighting and violence wanted to offend this great doctor. After all, no one knew if they might need his services one day.

Moreover, rumor had it that Divine Physician Ji possessed a profound level of cultivation himself.

As he was weighing his options, Hong Zhong spoke up. “Miss Ji, why hasn’t your father come out yet?”

Ji Xiaoxi replied, “My father’s gone for a walk outside the city, but he’ll be back soon.”

Zu An was hiding in Ji Xiaoxi’s room. He had focused his sense of hearing, and was listening to everything that was happening outside. When he heard Ji Xiaoxi’s admission, he didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Could this girl please not be so honest all the time? You could have said that your dad is refining a pill, or drinking, or even reading some porno... why did you have to tell them the truth?

Sure enough, Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng both sighed with relief when they heard that Ji Dengtu wasn’t in the city.

Everyone knew that Ji Dengtu would go on trips to pick herbs from time to time. These trips would often last a week to a month.

Chu Tiesheng laughed and said, “Miss Ji, I know that you are kindhearted, and that you usually get along with Zu An. However, you absolutely must not let him deceive you. You have no idea how vile he can be.”

“Enough!” All color drained from Ji Xiaoxi’s face. “I can decide for myself how to feel about those around me. I don’t need others to instruct me.”

Hearing this, Chu Tiesheng grew more and more certain that Zu An was hiding inside. He looked at the guards around him.

Those men returned his look, then began to march inside.

Ji Xiaoxi’s figure was small and delicate—how could she stop these fearsome guards? She was quickly overwhelmed.

Ji Xiaoxi was anxious, and more than a little furious. "What are you doing?! You guys woke me up when I was sleeping, and now you're barging into someone else's property! When did Brightmoon City become such a lawless place? My father won't let any of you go!"

When they heard her whip out her father's name to threaten them, they grew apprehensive. After all, not only was Ji Dengtu good at treating illnesses, he was well-versed in the use of poisons as well.

Even Chu Tiesheng grew wary.

Hong Zhong snorted. Chu Tiesheng was always overly cautious, and didn't have the guts to take care of anything important. He decided to take the lead. "Miss Ji is still naïve, and easily fooled by others. Not only did Zu An assault Madam Chu, he killed many of our servants as well! His actions were truly vicious and treacherous. Miss Ji is all alone right now. If that fellow is lurking around here, you might be in terrible danger. There's no guarantee that he won't suddenly attack you as well.

"I believe that Divine Physician Ji will surely approve of our search, in order to ensure your safety."

Chu Tiesheng was impressed. This old fox really was cunning. Now, even if Ji Dengtu found out about this, he could have no complaints. He might even thank them!

Ji Xiaoxi panicked. "I was lying in my bed just now, and no one came to harm me. Instead, it was you guys who came to cause trouble!"

Hong Zhong smiled. "It seems like lying is not one of your strengths, miss Ji. Your clothes are all neat and tidy, and your hair isn't messy at all. You don't look like someone who has just gotten out of bed. However, your words have made me think of something. Perhaps someone is hiding right inside your room. It's only natural for us to look out for the safety of Divine Physician Ji's esteemed daughter."

After saying this, he flicked his gaze in the direction of her room. The guards who were accompanying him ran towards her room.

These were guards of a large clan, so they were familiar with the common layout of a residence. They immediately recognized which rooms belonged to the master of the house, and which belonged to the young lady.

Ji Xiaoxi leapt towards the entrance. She spread her arms like a protective hen. "This is my room! You can enter over my dead body!"

She secretly checked her stock of poisons while saying this, and began to devise a plan to use them to deal with all of these people.

As she was doing this, Hong Zhong flicked his finger. A strand of air struck her body. Ji Xiaoxi's body trembled, and she realized that she couldn't move anymore.

After he had done this, Hong Zhong spoke. "Lady Ji's reactions are unnatural. I believe that you have been threatened by this fugitive, and cannot speak the truth. This gives us even more reason to help you out."

The others with him were fully convinced by this. They walked forward to push open the door.

Tears were about to come out of Ji Xiaoxi's eyes. However, there was nothing else she could do right now.

Inside the room, Zu An was like a leopard, ready to pounce.

He was prepared to jump out and fight them all to the death.

Suddenly, miserable screams came from outside. One after another, vague figures flew into the air.

A tall and slender figure appeared before the entrance, her hair casually fastened with a hairpin. Her neck was long and fair, which lent her a noble and elegant air.

However, her most eye-catching feature were her bewitchingly long legs, clad in black stockings, beautiful and well-proportioned. The stockings shone with an enchanting luster.

However, no one dared to ogle them right now. Even though they were beautiful, they were also extremely deadly.

Those guards behind her had been easily sent into the air by these legs.

The guardsmen of the Chu clan were all elite soldiers, and the ones who had been called up for this operation were the best of the best. However, none of them could contend with the ferocity of this pair of legs.

"Little Aunt!" Ji Xiaoxi was immediately overjoyed when she saw her.

Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong felt the blood drain from their faces. "Principal... Principal Jiang."

Jiang Luofu instantly undid the seals on Ji Xiaoxi's acupoints. She coldly swept her eyes over the trespassers. "What gave all of you the courage to bully my Xiaoxi?!"

Chu Tiesheng frantically launched into an explanation. "We were chasing after Zu An..."

He gave a rough retelling of what Hong Zhong had said earlier.

Jiang Luofu cut him off impatiently. "When did the Ji clan ever ask you to interfere in its affairs? I don't care about what's going on inside your Chu clan, but I won't tolerate your outrageous behavior inside the Ji Estate! Get lost!"

A powerful aura rippled out from her as soon as she finished speaking.

All of those from the Chu clan beat a hasty retreat. Even Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng couldn't withstand the pressure, and backed out of the courtyard in alarm.

Jiang Luofu snorted. With a wave of her sleeve, the main entrance slammed shut.

She pushed open the inner door and walked inside without a second glance outside.

Zu An clasped his fist. "Thank you, principal."

Jiang Luofu frowned. "Why are you in Xiaoxi's bed? Are you trying to start a scandal? Get off of it right this instant!"

Zu An laughed awkwardly. He jumped down in a hurry. Ji Xiaoxi's face was as red as an apple.

Jiang Luofu took a seat and examined Qin Wanru's condition. Zu An quickly repeated Ji Dengtu's diagnosis.

After a tiny hesitation, Jiang Luofu said, "I actually know of another way."

Chapter 375: A Win-Win Situation

Zu An was overjoyed. He grabbed her arm and asked, "What is it?"

Ji Xiaoxi was also curious. After all, her aunt didn't possess much medical knowledge, and neither she nor her father could do anything about Qin Wanru's condition. What kind of method would she propose?

Jiang Luofu gave Zu An's hand a cold look.

Zu An let go of her guiltily. "Sorry, sorry. I was just anxious."

Jiang Luofu continued, "Unfortunately, it's no use even if I describe this method to you."

"How could it be of no use? Please, tell us. Perhaps we can think of a solution if we work together!" Ji Xiaoxi cried in panic. She had always been extremely interested in medicine, so she was eager to learn any new treatment methods. She was also naturally kindhearted, and was desperately hoping for Qin Wanru's recovery.

Jiang Luofu hesitated, but in the end she still said, "I read an ancient record that stated that those with transcendent aptitude who have also cultivated the 'Primordial Origin Sutra' have the ability to revive others."

"Transcendent aptitude?" Ji Xiaoxi was stunned. There had never been anyone with transcendent aptitude in hundreds of years. It was so rare that everyone had begun to believe that transcendent aptitude was just a legend.

This 'Primordial Origin Sutra' was even more unheard of. No wonder her aunt felt that it would be pointless for her to say anything.

Jiang Luofu gave Zu An a long look. She knew that Zu An possessed transcendent aptitude, but she had never even heard of this 'Primordial Origin Sutra' before. That was why this information was useless.

Only Zu An wore a strange expression. He had transcendent blood essence, and he had cultivated in the Primordial Origin Sutra as well. He even knew the treatment method.

But how would he be able to save her?!

The method he'd used to save Chu Chuyan... How could he use it on Qin Wanru as well?!

Even though this world was more liberal than the ancient China of his previous world, there was still a limit as to what would be accepted.

They were treading the line of morality right now. Regardless of whichever world and whichever Age it was, such actions were a huge taboo.

He might regret this for the rest of his life.

Zu An was overwhelmed by internal conflict. He would be a monster if he didn't save someone even though he had the means to do so! However, if he did save her, he would be worse than a monster!

If Qin Wanru had been any other woman, Zu An would've charged straight in, duty-bound. Qin Wanru was the only one he couldn't do this with.

"There's no need for all of you to worry about me anymore. I already know that I am doomed." Qin Wanru's weak voice pierced the silence. She struggled to a seated position. Zu An quickly moved over to support her.

Qin Wanru gave him a grateful look. Gathering her strength, she said, "I don't have many regrets, but I am worried about Huanzhao, since she is still in Chu Estate, and my Zhongtian is also locked up. Ah Zu, can you promise me..."

An incredible pain pierced Zu An's heart. He immediately cut her off. "It's not time for last words yet."

He immediately turned around and said to Jiang Luofu and Ji Xiaoxi, "I have some things I need to say to her privately. Can you guys give us a bit of time alone?" The two women would obviously never refuse him in this sort of situation. They nodded and left the room.

Zu An suddenly called out to Jiang Luofu. "Principal, please don't listen in on our conversation."

Her cultivation was just too high-level. She could easily listen in on what they were going to discuss inside the room.

Jiang Luofu pressed her lips together briefly.

"Don't worry. I have no interest in your conversation."

You have successfully trolled Jiang Luofu for 111 Rage points!

Qin Wanru looked at Zu An in confusion. "What did you want to say to me?"

Zu An quickly closed the door, then moved closer to Qin Wanru's ear.

Discomforted by his proximity to her, Qin Wanru subconsciously moved away.

Zu An quickly said, "I'm going to tell you something extremely important. No one else can know about this."

Qin Wanru stopped moving when she heard this. However, her eyes still shone with bewilderment.

After a slight hesitation, he said, "Did you hear Principal Jiang explaining the possible treatment method?"

Qin Wanru nodded. "Doesn't it require someone with transcendent aptitude and the 'Primordial Origin Sutra', though? These are both things only found in legends, so there's no need to waste time thinking about them."

"Actually..." Zu An paused for a moment. "I possess both these things."

“What!?” Qin Wanru couldn't have been more shocked. She didn't even know what the ‘Primordial Origin Sutra’ was, so she wasn't too surprised by that. However, her knowledge about transcendent aptitude couldn't be any clearer!

That was something straight out of legend! Chu Chuyan's aptitude had already gotten her publicly acknowledged as a genius. With her aptitude, she had been able to reach such great heights of cultivation at such a young age, which earned endless praise from all who saw her.

She couldn't fathom the possibility of someone with an ever higher level of aptitude.

“Don't worry about anything else right now,” Zu An said hurriedly. “Even though I have a way to save you, the method is extremely shameful. You have to be the one to choose whether or not you wish to be treated.”

Qin Wanru was confused. “Of course I want you to save me! Why wouldn't I want that?”

The betrayals of both Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong had ignited a huge flame inside of her. Once she recovered, it would be time to get her revenge.

If she died, it would only make it easier for the seat of power in the Chu clan to shift. Huanzhao would most likely meet a miserable end, and her own husband would definitely be beyond saving.

Before now, she had thought that she was dead for sure. She'd even begun to utter her last words earlier on. How could she give up now, when there was hope?

Seeing his uncertain expression, Qin Wanru said, “Don't worry, I'll cooperate with you no matter how harsh or painful it might be. I'll be satisfied even if you could only keep me alive long enough to see the Chu clan stabilize again.”

The conflict within Zu An was clearly evident. “Madam, I urge you not to agree too quickly. Please let me explain what the treatment requires first.”

He gave a quick explanation of how the Primordial Origin Sutra and transcendent blood essence was used in treatment. He even told her about his experience with Chu Chuyan in the dungeon.

Qin Wanru was confused at first, which slowly gave way to shock. By the end of his explanation, her face had gone completely red. “Enough. You don't need to say any more. I absolutely will not agree to this method.”

When she thought of her and Zu An...

She shivered. Being saved in that way would be a fate worse than death!

Zu An smiled bitterly. “I told you it would turn out like this. This method is just too shameful, isn't it?”

Her reaction had been completely expected.

He sighed. It seems like we can only accept fate.

Qin Wanru finally understood why his expression had been so conflicted all this time. She didn't think that he was deliberately deceiving her, because her daughter also told her a little bit about what had happened in the dungeon.

However, there was no way she could agree to such a means of treatment. How would the two of them even be able to look at each other afterwards? How could she face Chuyan? How could she face Chu Zhongtian? How could she face the whole world?

Suddenly, a thought crossed her mind. She remembered the drug Chu Tiesheng had mentioned while he was threatening to humiliate her. That drug could make her forget everything within a few hours. If the two of them found an empty room, and both of them took this drug, neither of them would remember it afterwards. Wouldn't that be a win-win situation...?

Her heart began to pound as soon as this thought entered her mind. She immediately strangled the thought. Had she gone mad? How could she have actually considered such a thing?!

She quickly gathered her thoughts and said to Zu An, "Ah Zu, I didn't expect you to actually have transcendent aptitude, let alone such a miraculous technique! It seems like I've really underestimated you. You aren't a useless person at all. That is why, after I die, you have to promise me that you will protect Huanzhao, and save your father-in-law. Zhongtian has always treated you well, so you cannot let him down."

When he heard her stress the words 'father-in-law', he knew that she was secretly warning him. He sighed and said, "Don't worry, Madam. I would've done all of those things, even if you hadn't told me to."

A calm smile finally appeared on Qin Wanru's face. "It seems I don't have anything else to worry about, then..."

Her voice became softer and softer. And her hand also gradually slid away. Zu An immediately panicked. "Xiaoxi, Xiaoxi! Come quickly! Help!"

Jiang Luofu and Ji Xiaoxi rushed in when they heard the panic in his voice. Seeing Qin Wanru's condition, Ji Xiaoxi quickly gave her a pill, and began to treat her with acupuncture.

Jiang Luofu couldn't stop herself from giving Zu An a look. "Did you say something to provoke her? There's no reason for her condition to suddenly deteriorate so quickly."

Zu An didn't argue with her. He only sat down by the side of the bed, and began racking his brains for any other ways to save Qin Wanru.

He rejected one idea after another. He suddenly remembered something. Since none of the methods in this world would work, he would use his Keyboard instead!

If I can pick up something good...

Wait! I don't even need anything new! That item would be more than enough!

Chapter 376: An Embarrassing Misunderstanding

Zu An jumped up suddenly and ran outside.

Jiang Luofu was stunned. "What in the world are you doing?"

Zu An waved a hand to stop her from following. "Don't come over here! I need to be alone right now!"

Zu An almost seemed to have gone crazy. Jiang Luofu wondered if she'd perhaps spoken a little too harshly earlier.

A twinge of remorse tugged at her heart.

Zu An ran into the courtyard and scooped out a bucket of water. He found a washbowl and washed his face ten times.

He offered up fervent and unceasing prayers to all the gods he knew. Finally, It was time to pull the lottery.

He had a total of 51,915 Rage points right now. That gave him 519 chances.

Suddenly, there was a flash of golden light from the Keyboard System:

The total number of Rage points accumulated has reached the required threshold. Award system upgraded! 100 draws of the lottery can now be combined together in one multi-draw. If you have over 100 chances, each draw will be a multi-draw, and you will receive all prizes instantly. If you have less than 100 chances, then each draw will still be a single draw.

Please note: The type of draw does not affect the overall drop rate.

...

Zu An read the notice carefully and managed to get a rough idea of what was going on. This upgrade only helped him save a little time. Playing the lottery one draw at a time was quite the hassle, especially when he had accumulated a large number of Rage points. The more points he collected, the more times he would have to draw. At some point, it might take forever!

This multi-draw function was a good thing as long as it didn't affect the drop rate!

Nervously, he began to draw the lottery. With the first attempt, he discovered that his Rage points balance immediately dropped by 10,000 points.

A large chunk of information started scrolling up the screen. His eyelids twitched. There were way too many 'Thanks for playing!' messages for his liking.

He drew a total of nine Ki Fruits from this multi-draw. It seemed his luck wasn't anything special this time around.

He pressed the key to draw again. Light flickered across the keyboard, and he was faced with another wall of scrolling text. This time, his haul was sixteen Ki Fruits. This was a much better rate than the first time.

However, he didn't feel all that happy. These weren't what he needed right now.

He pressed the key to draw again. Another 10,000 points vanished. He gained another twelve Ki Fruits.

Zu An began to panic. At his current level, every single formation of his needed a crazy amount of Ki Fruits to fill. A dozen more or a dozen fewer Ki Fruits made no difference.

He was trying to save someone! He needed to get that item!

He was just about to do his fourth multi-draw when a thought struck him. He ran off to wash his face again, and then concentrated on the draw.

This time, he got eleven Ki Fruits and a red bottle!

Hell yes!

Zu An screamed in excitement. Washing your face bloody works! I actually got it!

This red bottle was obviously 'Faith in Brother Spring'!

This was the same as a recovery potion in a video game! No matter how bad your condition was, all you had to do was take one potion and you were good to go again!

He wasn't in the mood to continue drawing. He ran straight back inside.

Ji Xiaoxi was currently examining Qin Wanru's injuries. When she saw Zu An suddenly barge in, she hurriedly covered up Qin Wanru's body with her clothes again. "Big brother Zu, why didn't you announce that you were coming in first?" she complained.

He noticed that she'd addressed him in her usual manner. Clearly, she'd gotten over her grudge against him, and had forgiven him. He became even happier. "Hahaha! I've found a way to cure Madam Chu!"

"What?!" Ji Xiaoxi had only just managed to bring Qin Wanru back from the gates of hell, and it had been a supremely difficult feat. Strictly speaking, she hadn't brought her all the way back. Qin Wanru was still lingering at the border to the afterlife.

How could Ji Xiaoxi not be shocked by Zu An's sudden declaration that he had a way to save Qin Wanru?

Jiang Luofu was also mystified. She had been watching as Zu An ran around the courtyard, washing his face furiously. It seemed as though he had gone crazy. She never expected that he would suddenly run back in and declare that he'd found a solution.

Zu An couldn't be bothered to explain. He ran over and supported Qin Wanru to a more upright position. Strangely, as he placed his hand on her back, it came into contact with something soft and warm. He was surprised. Apparently, Ji Xiaoxi hadn't had time to dress her again properly after treating her.

"You...!" Ji Xiaoxi stomped her feet in anger. She was clearly annoyed.

Jiang Luofu also stared at him strangely. "Damned brat, are you doing this on purpose? Go outside and wait until we can dress her properly."

Zu An shook his head. "No! There isn't a second to waste."

Qin Wanru's life was hanging by a thread. If they failed to save her because they were just a little too late, the regret he would feel might be enough to kill him.

He took out the bottle of 'Faith in Brother Spring' and administered it to Qin Wanru.

Her complexion improved visibly as the liquid entered her body.

A while later, Qin Wanru slowly opened her eyes. Her heart was free of the piercing pain that she'd been feeling all this while. She was taken aback. "Am I dead?"

Zu An laughed out loud. "Of course not! I saved you!"

"You saved me?" Qin Wanru was momentarily stunned. Then, she remembered the treatment that he had described to her earlier. When she saw that her clothes were half-undone, rage and humiliation flared up within her. "You bastard!"

With a swing of her hand, she slapped him in the face.

Pah!

You have successfully trolled Qin Wanru for 1024 Rage points!

Zu An had been completely immersed in the joy of saving her. The last thing he'd expected was for her to suddenly strike him in the face! This sudden slap left him in a daze.

Ji Xiaoxi and Jiang Luofu were similarly stunned.

They had no idea why Qin Wanru would hit Zu An. Shouldn't she be happy that she'd been saved?

Qin Wanru's entire body was shaking. She pushed Zu An aside. "Your actions have let down Chuyan and Huanzhao. You've let down Zhong..."

Midway through her sentence, she suddenly noticed Jiang Luofu and Ji Xiaoxi beside her, stupefied expressions on their faces. She stopped talking at once.

Since the scandal had already happened, the first priority was to prevent news of it from spreading to others. That would help the Chu clan avoid any further shame.

Zu An was just about to explain himself when Jiang Luofu spoke up. "Madam Chu might still be a little muddle-headed from her injuries, considering how severe they were. She seems a little too agitated right now. It might be better if you waited outside."

In a daze, Zu An allowed himself to be ushered outside. The cold wind blowing across the barren courtyard helped to bring him back to his senses.

What in the world did I do to deserve this?

He had done everything he could, and yet this was how he was repaid.

Ji Xiaoxi found a fresh set of clothes for Qin Wanru to change into. Jiang Luofu couldn't contain her curiosity any further. "Madam Chu, Zu An saved your life just now. Why did you hit him?"

"I..." Qin Wanru's face turned red. Her thoughts were all over the place. He did... that... to me! How can I just accept it meekly?

Her first instinct had been to kill him, but he had saved her, after all.

A deluge of thoughts flooded her mind, but none of them were coherent.

She had no idea how she was going to face Zu An again. Or Chuyan, or her husband...

Jiang Luofu and Ji Xiaoxi were right next to her, so they probably knew about what had happened as well.

Just end me already...

As her mind continued to roil with unease, Ji Xiaoxi suddenly said, "I wonder where big brother Zu found that miraculous bottle of medicine. It really can bring someone back from the dead."

Qin Wanru stiffened. She turned and saw Ji Xiaoxi pick up a translucent crystalline bottle. Even Jiang Luofu moved closer to her to examine it.

Qin Wanru was in complete disbelief. "He... he used that to treat me?"

"How else could he have treated you?" Ji Xiaoxi's eyes sparkled as she looked at her. She didn't know why she would ask such an obvious question.

Qin Wanru stared back at her, speechless.

Ahhh! What an embarrassment!

More than an hour passed, and still Qin Wanru didn't dare to raise her head to look at Zu An. What a terrible embarrassment! She'd actually suffered such a horrible misunderstanding!

Zu An also understood what had happened. This woman had probably made a wrong assumption earlier. He thanked his lucky stars. At least she didn't kill me outright.

However, he was still surprised that Qin Wanru hadn't completely recovered. He suspected that it was because her cultivation was at the sixth rank. That 'Faith in Brother Spring' had an 'S' tagged to it, which probably meant it was a small bottle. It seemed like this medicine couldn't completely heal anyone above the fifth rank.

Even so, that bottle had been enough to bring Qin Wanru out of the danger zone. Ji Xiaoxi's had enough medical skill to complete the remaining treatment.

Ji Xiaoxi gave her a final checkup and said, "I'll prescribe you some medicine, Madam Chu. Please, get some rest. You should be able to make a full recovery in half a month."

Qin Wanru shook her head. "I don't have that much time. I need to return to the Chu Estate and suppress this rebellion."

In half a month, the dust would have already settled. By then, it would be too late.

Chapter 377: Specter's Hand

"I cannot allow that. There's now way Madam can fight in your current condition." Ji Xiaoxi showed a rare serious expression. "Big brother Zu fought so hard to bring you back from the brink. You'll be wasting all of his efforts if you act recklessly and worsen your own injuries."

“Ah Zu...” Qin Wanru’s face turned red. She still couldn’t shake the fact that she’d misunderstood so badly. Even worse, despite her misunderstanding, she somehow didn’t get as angry as she’d thought she would. Just thinking about it made her heart pound fiercely.

Before, she would scream her head off at him even if he hadn’t done anything. Yet now, she didn’t even dare to look at him.

At this moment, Ji Dengtu finally returned, his figure swaying left and right. He held a bunch of herbs in his hand. He looked absolutely miserable, and he was muttering constantly. “Should I add this herb or the other one? But then again, I don’t have confidence in either of these working...”

He suddenly noticed that Qin Wanru was sitting up in her bed. Her complexion was rosy, and she looked nothing like how she had looked when he first left. He stared at her stupidly. “You... why are you...”

Before Qin Wanru could reply, Ji Xiaoxi waved the bottle in her hands. She held it up as if she was presenting a treasure, showering Zu An with praise. “Dad, big brother Zu saved her! Madam’s life was hanging by a thread just now, but big brother Zu brought back this miraculous medicine! He pulled Madam out of her critical condition!”

Ji Dengtu was speechless for a long time. He rushed over to check Qin Wanru’s pulse, and then a look of disbelief appeared on his face. “She really is out of danger.”

Even though Qin Wanru was still heavily injured, in her current state, even Xiaoxi could nurse her back to full health.

He turned around to look at Zu An. “Brat, where did you get this stuff from?”

Zu An blinked. “I found it in the secret dungeon.”

He didn’t know how else to explain ‘Faith in Brother Spring’. This was the most plausible excuse.

“Something this miraculous was found in the dungeon? It almost makes me want to go in and have a look around myself.” Ji Dengtu sounded incredibly envious.

Jiang Luofu spoke up. “You cannot enter our secret dungeon. You’re not a member of the academy.”

Ji Dengtu snorted. “Who wants to go into your stinky dungeon? I’ll just find another one!”

With a huff, both of them turned their heads in opposite directions.

Zu An had a strange look on his face. He remembered Ji Xiaoxi mentioning that there was some friction between Jiang Luofu and Ji Dengtu, and it all stemmed from her older sister. Clearly, this seemed to be the case.

Qin Wanru spoke into the silence. “I cannot remain here. I cannot let the Chu clan be taken over by scoundrels. Even if I cannot use my cultivation, I can at least reveal the truth to everyone.

“Ah Zu, bring me back at once!”

Her firm attitude clearly brooked no argument. Zu An said gravely, “Even if there is a need to return, we aren’t so pressed for time. Let’s have Divine Physician Ji and Xiaoxi stabilize you first. We can head back after that.”

Qin Wanru nodded. "All right."

The moment her agreement left her mouth, she was stunned. Wasn't he supposed to be the one listening to her? When did they swap roles?

Together, Ji Dengtu and Ji Xiaoxi examined her again. They treated her further with a mixture of herbs and acupuncture. Ji Dengtu even infused some ki into her to help her recover.

Zu An dragged Jiang Luofu out to the courtyard. "Gorgeous principal, can I ask you for a favor?"

"Nope." Jiang Luofu shook her head right away.

Zu An was stupefied. "But I didn't even say anything yet..."

Jiang Luofu walked to the gates and looked off into the distance. Her long legs, paired with her high heels, gave her figure an incredible grace. "I know that you want me to help you suppress the rebellion in the Chu clan. However, even though it looks like a rebellion by Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong on the surface, it's actually a struggle between various stronger powers. If my suspicions are correct, Sang Hong is backing them, and backing Sang Hong is the emperor himself.

"The academy has always maintained a neutral stance. We do not participate in the political struggles of any great power. I cannot allow this rule to be broken, not while the academy is under my management."

Zu An opened his mouth. He had so many things he wanted to say, but he realized that none of it would make much of a difference. He dismissed the idea of trying to persuade her further. "Forget it, then. I won't force your hand."

Jiang Luofu hesitated a little, but still said, "The Chu clan is destined to fall. I advise you not to get too deeply involved. If things go really badly, you still have a place in the academy. Sang Hong won't be able to harm you there, even if he decides to go all out."

Zu An smiled. "Thank you for your kindness, gorgeous principal. Unfortunately, I'm already too deeply involved."

When he thought about Chu Chuyan, Chu Huanzhao, and even Qin Wanru... From a certain perspective, he was already tied to the Chu clan.

Seeing that he'd already made up his mind, Jiang Luofu didn't try to persuade him further. She returned inside to help Ji Dengtu treat Qin Wanru. Even though she didn't have much medical knowledge, she had a lot of ki that she could offer.

Zu An used this chance to use up the rest of his chances on the lottery.

Surprisingly, the fifth multi-draw gave him ten Ki Fruits and another bottle of 'Faith in Brother Spring'.

His luck was pretty damn good today.

The final nineteen single draws got him another bottle of 'Faith in Brother Spring.'

His good luck left him baffled.

Who said that washing my face first doesn't work?!

In the end, he had drawn 47 Ki Fruits and 3 bottles of 'Faith in Brother Spring'. His luck was absolutely phenomenal!

Ki Fruits weren't that fantastic, but 3 bottles of 'Faith in Brother Spring' was exceptional! He'd used one bottle to revive Qin Wanru, and these other two bottles represented two extra lives!

He swallowed the 47 Ki Fruits, but they really didn't do much for his first formation. He remembered that filling this first formation would require 4181 Ki Fruits. There weren't enough zeros behind the number 47 to even make a dent in this.

Zu An began questioning life itself. It was a ridiculous amount of effort just to clear one step of the fourth rank! He'd need even crazier amounts in the future. How in the world was he going to make any progress then?

By the time he reined in his despairing thoughts, Qin Wanru's treatment had been completed. From Ji Dengtu's final assessment of her, her condition wouldn't worsen as long as she didn't do any fighting.

"Ah Zu, bring me back to the estate," Qin Wanru ordered again.

Zu An acknowledged her request. He walked over to pick her up, and then he bid everyone else goodbye.

The two of them rushed towards the Chu Estate. Perhaps because of the previous misunderstanding, Qin Wanru's heart was pounding. She clearly had to get this off her chest. "Sorry about the misunderstanding earlier."

Zu An smiled. "It's no big deal. Madam was extremely lenient. You didn't use much strength at all."

Qin Wanru panicked. "Don't misunderstand, I really was angry back then! I wasn't trying to be lenient, I was just too weak."

"I know, I know." Zu An said.

Qin Wanru turned her head away. "By the way, where did you get that medicine from?"

Zu An sensed an opportunity to be mischievous. He smiled and said, "What medicine? That was just an excuse I gave Ji Xiaoxi and Jiang Luofu."

Qin Wanru was stunned speechless.

Her fragile heart began to beat crazily. Even her voice began to tremble. "Then... How did you save me?"

"What do you think?" Zu An laughed, but didn't elaborate.

Qin Wanru felt her brain explode. She was completely dumbstruck.

Zu An could feel her body getting warmer. She began to struggle. "Put me down! Put me down right now!"

She suddenly stopped talking. They had run into some Chu Estate guards.

Zu An tensed. He was just about to make his move when he heard an excited voice cry out. “Young master, Madam!”

“Huh? It’s you guys?” Zu An already recognized Jiao Shanhe, Feng Daniu, and Zhou Lujun. “Are you guys here to capture me?”

They waved their hands. “No way! We came looking for the young master and Madam. We wanted to offer our help.”

“Chu Tiesheng has rebelled. Unfortunately, there were too few of us, and we couldn’t do much at all.”

“Not forgetting Hong Zhong as well! They told everyone that the young master forced himself onto Madam, and they even hinted that Madam and the young master had already...”

The three guards trailed off, stunned. The two of them seemed so close to each other, and Madam’s face was entirely red. Were the rumors true?

Zu An coughed and quickly explained, “Madam was injured by those two bastards. She cannot move freely right now, and we needed to return to the Chu Estate as quickly as possible. That’s why I’m carrying her like this.”

The three of them nodded their heads fiercely, as though they understood completely.

Jiao Shanhe seemed to suddenly remember something. “Madam,” he said hurriedly, “I advise you not to return right away. Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng’s trusted aides are spread out all over the Chu Estate. They were given orders to kill on sight. The two of you won’t even get the chance to return and expose the truth.”

Zu An was stunned. What were they to do?

Qin Wanru was quick to give orders. “Jiao Shanhe, you’ve always been fleet-footed as a scout. Make haste to the nearby commandery and call Yue Shan back.

“Feng Daniu, Zhou Lujun, the two of you are to head back to the Chu Estate and contact those who are still loyal to me. Persuade those who are on the fence to join us. Then, wait for an opportunity.”

“Madam, Butler Hong has the Chu Estate under a strict lockdown,” Zhou Lujun replied. “We cannot go back at all.”

Zu An offered a change of plan. “How about this? The two of you stay here and take care of Madam. I’ll go back to contact those people.”

Qin Wanru was aware of his cultivation, and she was confident in his ability to sneak in. As such, she also agreed with this proposal.

She led everyone to one of Chu Estate’s secret safehouses, then said to Zu An, “Ah Zu, I have something to say to you.”

Feng Daniu and Zhou Lujun tactfully went outside.

“What is it, Madam?” Zu An asked.

Qin Wanru's expression flickered a few times. A long moment passed before she said with a sigh, "Since it's already been done, it's pointless for me to say anything else. You absolutely cannot tell anyone else about what happened. If not, the two of us, as well as the entire Chu clan, will be finished.

"Also, you should completely forget about what happened as well. You are not allowed to mention it to anyone. Nothing has changed between the two of us! Do you understand?"

Her voice became strangely stern towards the end.

Zu An was stunned. He hadn't expected his joke to be taken so seriously.

Qin Wanru waved her hand just as he was about to explain himself. "Just go. I don't want to talk right now."

She then closed her eyes as if she were going to sleep.

Whatever. Zu An smiled bitterly. Making contact with the people within the Chu Estate was the most important thing right now. He'd find a way to explain things properly once everything was settled.

"Rest well, Madam!"

Zu An disappeared into the darkness. The defenses around the Chu Estate were indeed tight, but Grandgale granted him instantaneous movement. Together with the Mirror Mirage, sneaking around wasn't an issue at all.

He decided to pay Chu Huanzhao a visit first. That little girl was probably frightened out of her mind.

Just then, a weight landed on his shoulder, unbalancing him. It was a hand that was weighing it down. He was absolutely horrified.

Chapter 378: One Finger to Seal the Universe

Zu An attacked instinctively, but a strange force was transmitted through his shoulder, and most of his body instantly went numb. He couldn't muster any strength.

He was horrified. This person had managed to sneak up behind him silently and restrain him immediately. This level of cultivation was far above his.

"You're finally back, Ah Zu." Old Mi's gloomy voice came from behind him.

Zu An sighed in relief. "So it was you, Elder. You scared the crap out of me."

Old Mi let go of his shoulder. He coughed twice before asking, "Why is it just you? Where is Madam Chu? How are her injuries?"

Zu An immediately fawned over him. "Senior is truly an all-knowing seer! You even know that Madam Chu was seriously injured."

Old Mi snorted. "I was there. How else could the two of you get away?"

Zu An remembered the large tree that had fallen to cover their escape. "Thank you, Elder," he said gratefully.

"You still haven't answered my question." Old Mi's eyes glimmered. He was clearly thinking about something.

Zu An was reluctant to answer. However, after some thought, he figured that Old Mi probably didn't want anything to happen to Qin Wanru either, especially since he'd saved both of them. As such, he replied, "It was scary, but there was no real danger. Madam Chu's life is not threatened, but she still hasn't made a full recovery. That is why we didn't come back together."

Old Mi nodded. "Not bad, not bad. It looks like Ji Dengtu has some skills."

Zu An smiled but didn't explain. He didn't want to reveal too much to Old Mi.

"What do you all plan to do now?" Old Mi asked.

"We plan to contact those who are still loyal to Qin Wanru inside the Chu Estate, and recall Yue Shan..." Zu An gave a rough outline of Qin Wanru's plans.

"That'll take too long." Old Mi shook his head. "Yue Shan is too far away. It'll take way too long for him to come back. He has always been rather uptight as well. I doubt he will be able to defeat Hong Zhong."

Zu An found it strange that this old man was discussing these things with him. "Then what do you suggest, Elder?"

Old Mi seemed reluctant to share his thoughts, but in the end, he said, "There's no need for such hassle. I'll help you deal with Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng. If you want to defeat an army, take down their leader. If we get rid of the two of them, everything else can be resolved easily."

Zu An was shocked and overjoyed. "If Elder is willing to help us, that's even better!"

He didn't dare suggest this course of action because Old Mi had always remained low-profile. He never involved himself openly. Zu An hadn't expected him to be the one to suggest this.

He said as much to Old Mi.

Old Mi chuckled. "That was before. But soon, I won't have to worry about that anymore.

"Of course, you are not to expose my existence to anyone. Just pretend that you did all of this yourself."

Zu An was stunned. "Elder, if I do that, I'll be stealing your thunder! That would be..."

Old Mi gave him a meaningful look. "We don't need to make a distinction between what's yours and what's mine. It's all the same."

Zu An flashed him a smile, but his mind remained full of doubt. This guy keeps talking like this. What the heck does that even mean?

Old Mi led the two of them towards the study. Previously, Chu Zhongtian had been the only one allowed to use this study.

Now that Chu Tiesheng had taken over, he was itching to get his hands on everything Chu Zhongtian had. His many years of suppressed resentment were instantly swept away.

Sitting in the seat previously reserved for Chu Zhongtian alone, Chu Tiesheng felt more refreshed than he had ever felt in his entire life.

However, his one regret was that he still didn't have Chu Zhongtian's woman.

Hong Zhong spared a look for this petty man, his brow furrowing in disdain.

As if sensing his contempt, Chu Tiesheng forced himself to focus on more important matters. He straightened and said, "Based on what we know, Zu An and Qin Wanru are most likely hiding in the Ji clan residence. However, there is no way for us to seize them while they remain under Jiang Luofu's protection. What do we do?"

Hong Zhong sat down and picked up a teacup. "Don't worry. Qin Wanru was afflicted by 'Bull's Cream', and even suffered a blow from my Heart-smashing Fist. She is already beyond saving. If Divine Physician Ji had been around, his skills might have been enough to make me doubt her demise, but we've already confirmed that he wasn't in. How could that kid Ji Xiaoxi save her all by herself?"

Chu Tiesheng was annoyed. When Chu Zhongtian had sat in this same seat, Hong Zhong had always stood respectfully to one side, receiving orders silently. Why wasn't this butler treating him as the new clan master at all?

"What if Zu An starts spreading the news about what happened today and stirs up suspicion?" Chu Tiesheng sighed in pity. It really was such a huge waste for Qin Wanru to die just like that! It was all because his lust for her had muddled his thinking, and she had managed to escape.

Hong Zhong gave a dismissive sniff. "That's of no concern. We've already begun to circulate slanderous rumors about him, so even if he tries to say anything against us, everyone will only believe that he's trying to get revenge. Besides, even if someone harbored suspicions, that's all they will have. There's no way they can obtain concrete proof. If you hold onto your position as clan master, and with my support, everyone will choose to trust you."

Pah! Pah! Pah!

Slow clapping came from outside before Chu Tiesheng had a chance to reply. He saw Zu An walking over, giving them a round of applause.

"What a great plan! It turns out our butler Hong, who everyone praises for being upstanding and honest, is capable of such vicious scheming!"

"Zu An!"

The two of them were shocked when they saw him walk in. They shot to their feet immediately.

"How did you get in here?!" Chu Tiesheng looked outside. The ones guarding the study were all trusted aides. How did this kid manage to sneak in here?

Hong Zhong cursed his men for being idiots. If Zu An was inside, that meant that the guards outside had already been dealt with.

Then again, even though he'd witnessed Zu An's skills not long ago, he'd only gotten the impression that the kid was fast. That alone wouldn't have been enough to deal with all of those guards outside without making any noise.

"I walked in, obviously. I'm the young master of the Chu clan. Do I need your permission to come home?" Zu An said calmly.

"Young master? Hah! A sparrow flies up a single branch, and he suddenly thinks he's a phoenix? You're nothing without Chu Chuyan! Who actually thinks of you as the young master of the Chu clan?" Chu Tiesheng sneered.

Hong Zhong frowned and said, "Stop wasting time. Capture him first."

Chu Tiesheng's breath caught. How dare you order me around?! Who is the clan master here?!

However, Hong Zhong seemed to have no intention of stepping forward. In the end, he had no choice but to grit his teeth and do as the man said. Damn it, why does his cultivation have to be higher than mine?

Zu An didn't move at all as Chu Tiesheng rushed at him. He only looked at him with a sneer.

Seeing Zu An standing there calmly with his strange grin, Chu Tiesheng felt the hairs on the back of his neck begin to rise. However, he possessed six levels of cultivation, and Hong Zhong was close by to lend a hand as well. How much could this kid do?

Just as his palm was about to strike Zu An, a finger suddenly appeared behind him.

That finger was old and shriveled, looking for all the world like a rotten tree branch. It seemed as if it would snap from a single touch.

"Pull back!" Hong Zhong cried out in alarm.

Chu Tiesheng felt his fine hairs stand on end. Unfortunately, there was no time for him to react. The finger had already struck him squarely between his brows.

His entire body went rigid. His face still retained its previous expression, but his eyes had gone completely vacant. His body fell heavily to the ground.

Hong Zhong was about to rush over and help him, but he froze at once when he saw that Chu Tiesheng had been killed instantly.

His cultivation was higher than Chu Tiesheng's, but it was not high enough that he could instantly kill him. This old man's cultivation was clearly far higher than his.

Not only that, he also couldn't understand how that single finger had been able to strike Chu Tiesheng down. It seemed an incomparably profound skill. If he'd been in Chu Tiesheng's place, he would probably have been unable to dodge either.

"Old... Old Mi?" Hong Zhong had already recognized who the attacker was. As butler, he was naturally familiar with everyone in the estate, no matter their station. This old man, who always seemed like he would be blown over by a gust of wind... wasn't he just the gardener?

Chapter 379: The Dust Settles

Old Mi smiled. However, his face was horribly wrinkled, like the dried skin of an orange, and this smile only made him look extremely terrifying. “Butler Hong’s memory is quite excellent. You even remember an insignificant nobody like me.”

Zu An looked at Chu Tiesheng—lying dead on the floor—and swallowed. He had witnessed Chu Tiesheng’s cultivation before, and knew that he himself was no match for him.

Yet a sixth-ranked expert like him had been killed by a single thrust of a finger.

If he ever got Old Mi’s bad side, would he die from just a single glance?

Hong Zhong’s entire body grew tense as he stared at the elder in front of him. “It seems that even the Brightmoon Duke has overlooked you. To think that such a terrifying expert was hidden in the estate...”

Midway through his sentence, he moved.

He was clearly trying to distract Old Mi by talking to him, then launch a surprise attack when the old man least expected it.

After all, an older man like Hong Zhong would surely be more cunning than others.

“Be careful!” Zu An gave a panicked shout, but Old Mi stood his ground without moving.

That shriveled body suddenly grew in stature.

That’s so freaking badass!

When can I be like that?

Hong Zhong hesitated when he saw that Old Mi wasn’t moving. However, after some consideration, he decided to forge ahead. This old man was going to pay miserably for his overconfidence, no matter how much higher his cultivation was.

As someone who has reached the seventh rank, he used to be considered a genius himself. He didn’t lack in cultivation or aptitude. He made a snap decision to risk it all here and try to seriously injure his opponent.

“Heart-smashing Fist!”

With a roar, a layer of light covered his fist. Instead of the projection that he’d sent against Qin Wanru, his fist increased in size this time. All of his cultivation, all of his strength, was concentrated in this one punch. He didn’t hold back at all.

Zu An instinctively took a few steps back. The aura surging within that fist was too much for him to handle, even though he was standing off to the side. His legs seemed to be made of jelly, and even breathing was difficult. He didn’t know how Old Mi could withstand something like this.

Hong Zhong’s fist surged forward with overwhelming momentum, threatening to crash down on Old Mi’s hunched-over figure. It looked as though he was going to be smashed to pieces in a moment.

However, the howling wind that had been whipped up by this attack died down suddenly.

Old Mi casually raised his left hand and grabbed hold of Hong Zhong's fist.

Hong Zhong's fist, which had grown to the size of a large boulder, instantly returned to its normal size. He tried to pull his fist back, but his arm didn't move at all.

His face was almost entirely red, and his meticulously-combed hair had also become a little messy; he was in quite a sorry state.

"Your cultivation is already quite excellent, compared to the rest of Brightmoon City. A pity it's not even worth mentioning when compared to the rest of the world." Old Mi's hand snapped upwards as soon as he finished speaking.

A crisp crack rang out, and Hong Zhong's wrist snapped. His fist was twisted at an odd angle.

Zu An gasped. That looks like it hurts a lot...

Hong Zhong screamed miserably. Old Mi frowned. He reached out a finger and tapped his forehead. Hong Zhong's screaming came to an abrupt halt. The light in his eyes faded, and then he fell powerlessly to the ground.

Old Mi wiped his hands and gave Zu An a nonchalant look. "It's done. The rest is up to you."

Zu An felt as if he was dreaming. After all, both he and Qin Wanru had been so helpless previously. They hadn't been able to figure out a way to deal with this situation, no matter how they racked their brains.

And yet, Old Mi had just paid these two conspirators a casual visit and poked them to death with his fingers.

Something that had seemed so difficult to them had thus been dealt with so easily.

He was always aware that this was a world of cultivation, where strength reigned supreme, but he had still come from a civilized world. The true nature of this world hadn't quite sunk in yet.

Only now, to his immense shock, did he truly understand that this really was a world where strength signified everything.

Old Mi quickly assumed his usual totter, and disappeared into the darkness of night.

Zu An finally snapped out of his daze. The estate's guards had been alerted to the commotion, and were on their way.

Zu An decided to bring the corpses of Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng along with him. When he was confronted by the blades of the guardsmen, he said in a serious voice, "Chu Tiesheng colluded with Hong Zhong and started a rebellion. They harbored despicable intentions towards Madam and treated her poorly. Thus, they have been executed for their crimes. I'm willing to believe that the rest of you were all deceived and coerced by these two perpetrators. I am now acting under Madam's orders. Lower your weapons at once, and we'll pretend that nothing happened."

"Brother-in-law! Brother-in-law!" A petite young woman wept as she ran over to him, straight into his arms.

Chu Huanzhao had originally been confined to her room. However, the commotion in the study had attracted most of the guards, including those who had been guarding her room. After all, their futures depended on the continued safety of Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong.

Upon seeing this, Chu Huanzhao wanted to use the opportunity to slip away, but she heard Zu An's voice just as she was about to leave. After everything that happened tonight, she was absolutely terrified, yet she had continued to pretend that she was strong. However, now that she saw Zu An, she could hold herself back no longer.

The surrounding guards all looked at each other in dismay. Most of them were still loyal to the main branch, but they had only been following orders, since no one from the main branch was around. Now, Zu An had appeared, and the second miss was here as well. The closeness with which she treated Zu An clearly showed them that the recent rumors surrounding him were false. Therefore, they subconsciously trusted Zu An's words.

The other guards who were trusted aides Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong had been bribed by them for many years. Even though they had willingly rebelled, they immediately lost their confidence when they saw that Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong were dead.

The strength of Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong—especially Hong Zhong—was widely known. If Zu An had managed to defeat these two, what could any of them do against him?

Besides, Zu An had already said that he wouldn't pursue any further action, now that the ringleaders were dead.

Thus, all the guards began to throw down their weapons one after another.

All it took was for one person to start, and the rest followed suit.

In the end, even the loyal aides of Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong acknowledged their fate and threw their weapons down in surrender.

Zu An exhaled in relief when he saw this. It would have been tricky if these individuals had resisted to the end.

After all, he wasn't the one who killed Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng. He didn't have the strength to defeat all of them.

He ordered these guards to return to their previous posts.

He remembered that during the Three Kingdoms period, Wang Yun had set a honey trap for Dong Zhuo, killed him, and defeated the Western Liang Army. Left in a tight spot, the Western Liang Army rebelled, and caused the collapse of the Eastern Han Dynasty.

Therefore, he didn't single out those who had willingly worked for Chu Tiesheng or Hong Zhong.

However, he still had to do what he had to do. The members of Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng's family had to be rounded up for Qin Wanru to deal with later.

He was worried that he wouldn't have enough manpower to do so. Letting these guards go with their crimes unpunished gave him many willing hands.

After all, they were all in a hurry to erase their crimes and prove their loyalty. In a matter of moments, the members of the second branch had all been captured.

Surprisingly, Chu Hongcai had already been locked up by Chu Tiesheng's men prior to this. Zu An learned from others that he had always been opposed to Chu Tiesheng's rebellion, which was why he had been locked up, following a quarrel between father and son.

In the end, however, Chu Tiesheng was still his father. After finding out that Zu An had killed him, he still charged at Zu An, red-eyed and screaming for revenge.

Despite the stacks of 999 Rage points pouring in, Zu An couldn't find it within him to feel happy.

There was no way Chu Hongcai could live under the same sky as his father's killer. His reaction was completely expected.

Killing Chu Hongcai to eliminate any future worries was the most sensible choice, but they had shared a decent relationship in the past, and could even have been considered friends. Furthermore, Chu Hongcai's integrity was admirable, given that he'd publicly opposed Chu Tiesheng's rebellion. Zu An just couldn't find it within him to make the call. In the end, he merely ordered some men to watch over him.

There was no one else on Hong Zhong's side apart from his son, Hong Xingying. However, Hong Xingying seemed to have received news ahead of time. By the time Zu An's men reached his residence, he was already nowhere to be seen.

Chapter 380: Extreme Joy Turns to Sorrow

Zu An didn't bother trying to track down Hong Xingying. Instead, he dispatched some men to escort Qin Wanru back to the estate.

While waiting for her arrival, Zu An was reminded of something. He searched Chu Tiesheng's body and found two bottles. There was a white bottle with the words 'Bull's Cream' on a red label. That should be the drug that Qin Wanru had been poisoned with, the drug that even Ji Dengtu longed for.

Hmph, I'm confiscating this! I can't let that Ji Dengtu get his hands on it. Who knows how many innocent maidens will be harmed if he did?

The second was a green bottle with the words 'Worries-Be-Gone' on the label.

"Worries-Be-Gone?" Zu An was stunned. What's this? The name seems rather poetic, but I don't know what kind of effects it has.

I should find a chance to test this out later.

Ji Dengtu's ferocious appearance appeared in his head. If Ji Dengtu ever found out just how much he'd tormented his precious daughter, he would be a dead man.

He shivered and quickly rid himself of this thought. He put it inside the Brilliant Glass Bead for future research.

...

Meanwhile, in the safehouse, Qin Wanru's first reaction upon seeing the Chu Estate's guards was to hide. After all, she was still worried about Zu An, since he'd been gone for so long.

The messenger pledged his loyalty again and again. She also remembered that this man had always been trustworthy, which was why she skeptically returned to the Chu Estate in the end.

When the people in the Chu Estate saw Qin Wanru, the final boulder was lifted off their shoulders.

After all, Zu An's words were only one side of the story. Even though he was the young master of the Chu clan, the ones who were truly in charge were Master, Madam, and First Miss.

Qin Wanru immediately got to work sorting out various matters. When she finally had some free time, she pulled Zu An to the side and gave him a puzzled look. "Just how did you do it?"

"Do what?" Zu An said with a smile.

"I'm obviously talking about Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng!" Qin Wanru was completely bewildered.

"One was at the seventh rank, and the other at the sixth rank. You should not have been able to defeat them! Not only that, they were surrounded by guards as well. How did you kill them?"

"Actually... I'm a powerful expert!" Zu An declared proudly.

Like hell Qin Wanru would believe that! She'd seen Zu An fight before. Even though his cultivation was indeed quite excellent, it was far from the level required.

However, with Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng's corpses before her, she had no choice but to believe it.

She recalled again how Chu Chuyan had emphasized to her to trust Zu An, and she sighed inwardly. Clearly, Chuyan's insight far outstripped her own.

Something else immediately came to mind, and her expression grew exceedingly strange.

How was she supposed to face her daughter now?

Just then, Chu Yuepo ran over with a smile, his attitude one of deep concern. "I'm so glad you're okay, sister-in-law! I was so worried about you!"

Qin Wanru collected her messy thoughts. "Hmph! You must be quite disappointed to see me return! I don't recall you doing anything during the chaos."

The third branch hadn't done a thing during Chu Tiesheng's rebellion. They merely pretended not to notice anything amiss.

Chu Yuepo smiled bitterly. "Sister-in-law, everything happened so quickly, there was no time for us to react! You were already gone by the time we tried to look for you. Chu Tiesheng and Hong Zhong were also too powerful to contend with. My entire family would've been slaughtered if I'd spoken a single word in protest!

"There really wasn't much I could do in that situation! I could only pretend to go along with them, while keeping some forces in reserve. I was going to welcome big brother and sister-in-law back at a suitable time."

Qin Wanru knew that he was putting on an act. "And when was this suitable time going to be?" she sneered.

Chu Yuepo smiled apologetically. "As an example, I sent my men to assist Ah Zu. If not for that, he wouldn't have dealt with Hong Zhong and Chu Tiesheng's remaining forces so quickly."

Qin Wanru knew that he was the type who would adapt to any given situation. At the very least, he hadn't conspired with Chu Tiesheng straight up. That was why she decided not to be too hard on him. She let him go with some light criticism.

After dealing with this, she went looking for Chu Huanzhao. These past few days would surely have been frightening for her.

When she found Chu Huanzhao, the girl was cuddled up in Zu An's embrace, fast asleep. Tears were still hanging off the corners of her eyes.

"Shh..." Zu An immediately gestured for her to keep quiet when he saw Qin Wanru come in. Clearly, he didn't want her to wake Huanzhao.

Qin Wanru frowned, then caught sight of Huanzhao's arms wrapped around Zu An's neck. She could only sigh. You're a fiend!

A while later, Zu An carried Chu Huanzhao to her bed. After tucking her in, he said, "Madam, Huanzhao has been constantly worried about us these past few days, and hasn't gotten much sleep. It was only a while ago that I managed to calm her down."

Qin Wanru smiled faintly. "This child is normally so wild and mischievous. Who knew she still cared so much about her parents? It seems the love and affection we've shown her hasn't been for naught."

Her expression suddenly stiffened. "What kind of thoughts do you have towards Huanzhao?"

Zu An was stunned. "Thoughts? I don't have any. I just treat her as an adorable little sister and a good friend."

"That's good, then." Qin Wanru's expression eased up. "However, you had better watch yourself around her. Even though she's still young, she will reach a marriageable age soon. If she's always seen clinging to you, her reputation will suffer. If that happens, there might not be any clans willing to take her in."

Zu An laughed out loud. "Who wouldn't want someone as cute as Huanzhao? If no one will take her, then I will!"

Qin Wanru's face immediately turned red. She grabbed a backscratcher and began to hit him.

"You scoundrel! You did have bad thoughts after all!"

You have successfully trolled Qin Wanru for 233... 233... 233...

Zu An dodged her blows and pleaded, "Madam, spare me! It was just a joke, just a joke..."

Old Mi was hiding in the shadows. He smiled thoughtfully when he saw this scene.

Not bad. This kid has more skills than I thought.

He had planned to slowly establish himself in the clan once he'd possessed Zu An. He never expected Zu An to gain the acknowledgement of the Chu clan all on his own. He had even made such significant contributions to the clan this time around. His status in the Chu clan would only keep rising.

Even more surprisingly, Zu An had not only obtained the favor of the first miss, he was extremely close to the second miss as well. Once he'd taken over Zu An's body, he only needed to use a few tricks, and the second miss would be in the bag as well.

Even Madam Chu seemed to be acting rather strangely around him of late.

He'd lived for so many years. Even though his body was deficient, his knowledge was vast. His theoretical knowledge far surpassed anyone else.

With the right tricks and the right opportunity, taking Madam Chu to bed would still be possible.

At worst, he'd just use the 'Worries-Be-Gone'. He knew perfectly well what that bottle of medicine in Zu An's possession did.

Perhaps because he had been lacking for so long, Old Mi's desire for such things was much greater than anyone else's.

When someone had lived for as long as him, a mature woman like Qin Wanru was much more appealing.

Zu An is just too young, after all. This kid is still trying to choose between them! A real man would obviously take them all!

He had already gathered everything he needed. He was going to carry out the possession ceremony in a few days. He was going to be reborn!

When he thought about how all of the Chu clan's wealth and all of these ravishing beauties were going to be his, a burning desire flashed in Old Mi's eyes.

He sneered. This kid is still deliberately hiding it from me, but I've already sensed the aura of my own treasures!

He'd been afraid that his body wouldn't be whole after he possessed Zu An's, but now, this final worry had been put to rest as well.

This rotten kid dares to try to deceive me! You deserve to have your body possessed.

"Hahaha!" Old Mi couldn't hide his joy when he returned to his room. He looked up to the heavens and laughed heartily.

A cough came from outside his window. "What made you so happy all of a sudden?"