

Keyboard Immortal

Keyboard Immortal #Chapter 11: Surrounded By Danger - Read Keyboard Immortal Chapter 11: Surrounded By Danger Online

Chapter 11: Surrounded By Danger

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If the mastermind of this plot was Chu Chuyan herself, he would have no choice but to embarrass himself by revealing his 'shortcomings' to clear his name. Fortunately, this wasn't necessary. Yet.

Zu An gathered his thoughts, then said to Springflower, "You came at just the right time. This silver should cover your relocation expenses. The last woman I took home was sent to the military camp, but she cannot endure much more. You'll be replacing her there."

"Relocation expenses?" Springflower finally smelled something fishy. "Wait a second. Why is she in a military camp?"

"You didn't know?" Zu An looked mildly bemused. "My wife is perfect in almost every respect. Her only failing is that she dotes on me too much and gets a tiny bit jealous. The last time I brought home a woman like you, she made up a story to get her sent to our military camp to service our soldiers. My goodness. She gets to be a blushing bride multiple times a day. I feel bad for her."

You have successfully trolled Chu Chuyan for 433 Rage points!

Chu Chuyan had never imagined he would paint such a portrait of her. Seeing the weird looks she was getting from the assembled members, the urge to kill Zu An welled up in her for the first time. However, the events of the past two days had simply been too strange, and he did fulfill all of her criteria. Finding another groom would expose the clan to scandal all over again.

With all this in mind, she forced herself to sit in stony silence.

"Military camp?!" Springflower was horrified. Working girls had their own hierarchy. The classiest ones were the 'queens of flowers'. Below them were the ordinary courtesans, and then came those who worked in brothels, like herself. On the bottom rung were those that serviced the army, and most were sent there as punishment for some infraction.

Soldiers were thirsty, yet had incredible endurance. Not many women could endure such abuse—few lasted more than six months. Springflower's face turned ghostly white as she recalled the stories she'd heard from her coworkers about these camps.

Zu An nodded and went on. "Don't worry, though. These are members of our private army. They'll take good care of you! They've been looking forward to someone fresh."

Qin Wanru could no longer contain her rage. "Miscreant! The Chu clan..."

She was about to say that the Chu clan and its army never took part in such shameful deeds, but Springflower had already lost her mind. She let out a shrill scream and yelled, "I don't want to go to an army camp! Everything I said was a lie! I don't even know this man!"

She grabbed onto Diao Yang—who had been standing nearby—and shook him forcefully. "Diao Yang, the situation is completely different from what you said it would be! Say something! I don't want to go to an army camp!"

Diao Yang's turned pale, and he shoved her aside. "Don't try to slander me, you crazy bitch! The Chu clan's forces have strict moral standards! How could we possibly—"

He was cut off abruptly as a tremendous burst of power gripped him, preventing him from uttering another word.

Chu Zhongtian's face was as placid as water. He looked at Springflower. "This man asked you to come here and say what you just said?"

Springflower nodded frantically, like a chicken pecking at rice. "He found me and gave me twenty silvers, and said that I'd earn even more after the deed was done. This is a duke's estate, full of nobles. I was sure I'd earn enough for a lifetime if I helped out. That's why I snuck in! Please forgive me, my lord!"

Only then did Chu Zhongtian release his energy grip on Diao Yang. "Do you have anything to say?"

Diao Yang's face was ashen. He fell to his knees. "Please forgive me, Master! I was instructed to do this."

"Instructed by who?" Chu Zhongtian barked.

"I... I don't know." Diao Yang swallowed hard, then hurried on, "That person spoke to me from the other side of a wall. He bribed me to do it! I've always hated the fact that our young miss ended up marrying someone so useless, so like a fool I agreed. Please show me mercy on account of my many years of service, Master!"

Hearing this, Snow finally relaxed the tight grip she had on her ponytail.

Chu Zhongtian snorted, then waved for him to be removed. He glared at everyone present with a face like thunder. "It seems clear that Zu An was maligned. Considering that he has already been punished, this matter is settled. No one is to speak of it in the future. Any objections?"

Chu Tiesheng gently fanned himself, while Chu Yuepo continued to toy with his compass. Neither spoke. Given that they had yet to discover the mastermind behind all this, neither was willing to make a move that would invite scrutiny.

Zu An let out a long sigh of relief. Finally, it's over. However, it seemed his mother-in-law was unwilling to let him off just yet. "Are we going to spare him, just like this?"

"Of course not." Chu Zhongtian smiled ingratiatingly at her. "Zu An has gotten himself involved in all manner of unsightly affairs. To ensure he doesn't cause trouble in the future, he will be sent to the Brightmoon Academy to cultiv-..." He wanted to say 'cultivate', but changed his words as he remembered how poor Zu An's physique was. "Ahem, to become a man of learning. That way, at least he'll be able to assist the clan as an accountant or something."

"Brightmoon Academy?" Zu An was taken aback. But, considering that Chu Zhongtian was the duke of Brightmoon City, the Brightmoon Academy was most likely affiliated to their clan.

His attention shifted to the Rage points he had accumulated. This little episode had generated another 1646 Rage points. Time to play the lottery again!

He was carried back to his room. Just as he was about to draw his prizes, a red blur burst in.

Recognizing the Second Miss of the Chu clan, Zu An grew wary. "Why are you here?" Did she figure out that my wounds were feigned?

Chu Huanzhao hopped onto a nearby table and sat down, her slender little legs dangling in midair. "I came here to apologize to you."

"Apologize?" Zu An was at a loss for words.

Chu Huanzhao looked uncomfortable. "Per our wager, I agreed to forget about what happened that night. But, I wasn't able to protect you today. You even ended up being punished for it."

Zu An was amused. This little girl has an honest side to her. He was anxious to play the lottery, and was not interested in wasting time with her. He casually waved a hand. "Oh, whatever. You're a kid. It's only normal that you don't have much say in the family."

You have successfully trolled Chu Huanzhao for 66 Rage points!

Zu An blinked. Only then did he realize Chu Huanzhao's face had turned ugly. She snorted and hopped off the table. As she left, she said, "In the future, I'll protect you when you are at the academy. If anyone tries to bully you, just tell them you are under my care!"

Zu An rolled his eyes behind her back. You're just a little slip of a girl, but you act like you are the lady boss or something. He was the son-in-law of the estate. After what happened today, no one in the family would dare to bully him, at least for a while.

He put all that out of his mind. He looked around to make sure no one else was coming, then hopped out of bed. He washed his hands and face solemnly, then pulled out a joss stick. He lit it and chanted a prayer. "Buddha, Brahma, Jehovah, Allah... any gods that exist, please protect me and grant me a good item."

Factoring in the 66 Rage points he had just earned from Chu Huanzhao, he now had a total of 1712 Rage points. He summoned the Keyboard, selected the 'Lottery' function, then carefully pressed 'Enter'. The light marker appeared and flashed across the numbers on the keyboard.

Thanks for playing!

Thanks for playing!

Thanks for playing!

... Oh come ON! Zu An was irate. Do I have the worst luck in the world, or are the drop rates really that low?

It wasn't until his thirteenth attempt that the light marker finally escaped the clutches of the 'Space' key and landed on the '8' key instead. He looked up excitedly. This was a new key. He wondered what it would grant!

A small bottle materialized, filled with a green crystalline liquid. Its description appeared below.

Poison Bottle: This is a thrown weapon. It causes everyone within a small area to feel numb and powerless. It ignores all defenses for targets below the fifth rank.

Zu An was ecstatic. In any game and any world, skills and techniques that bypassed defenses were always overpowered as hell. His one regret was that it only worked against targets below the fifth rank. Then again, he probably wouldn't run into bosses above the fourth rank for some time, right?

Aww, hell, I hope I haven't jinxed myself.

Now he had yet another trump card up his sleeve. Zu An happily stored the little green bottle into his item bar. Its color was slightly unlucky, but that was a minor gripe. He used up his four remaining attempts but came away empty-handed. This thing has a really crappy drop rate.

Despite it all, Zu An was pleased that he was able to earn Rage points so easily. The only drawback was that earning points made everyone hate him. This is a cultivator world. I hope I don't end up getting picked off by some random boss. Mm. I need to pick my targets carefully in the future!

Man, I really wish I was like one of those endgame MC's who could wipe out entire worlds with a single thought. I guess all I can do for now is keep a low profile and slowly grind my way up.

Suddenly, new messages began to pop up.

You have successfully trolled Qin Wanru for 2 Rage points!

... 2 Rage points! ... 2 Rage points! ... 2...2... 2... 2... 2...

Zu An blinked at the sudden series of messages. What's going on with that mother-in-law of mine? How did I piss her off this time?!

Qin Wanru paced angrily around the private quarters she shared with her husband. "That bastard really pisses me off! My poor, sweet Yan'er. Her future marital prospects have been dashed by that fellow's hands."

Chu Zhongtian poured a cup of tea and hastened to present it to his wife. "This was Chuyan's personal decision."

Qin Wanru swallowed the tea in one gulp, her anger undiminished. "It was all for the sake of your Chu clan!"

Chu Zhongtian smiled awkwardly and changed the subject. "Honestly, I'm more concerned about who exactly is secretly targeting Zu An."

Qin Wanru frowned, her anger overshadowed by the serious discussion at hand. She took a seat on a cushioned chair nearby. "Agreed. Before this, I didn't fully believe your suspicions, but the events in the ancestral hall this morning suggest that he is being secretly targeted."

Chu Zhongtian nodded. "And why would he, on his wedding night, suddenly run off into Huanzhao's bed? He can be a scoundrel at times, but I really don't think he's that bold."

Qin Wanru snorted. "He seemed quite bold this morning, didn't he?"

Chu Zhongtian went on. "Someone knocked Huanzhao out that night. That's the only explanation. She would never have let him get into her bed otherwise. You don't really think he's capable of that, do you?"

"Honestly, if he did have that level of talent, I wouldn't be half as mad as I am right now," Qin Wanru retorted. Clearly, she was exceedingly disgruntled by how useless her new son-in-law was.

Chu Zhongtian sighed. "There's something I haven't had a chance to tell you yet. That same night, our spirit creek was defiled."

"What?!" Qin Wanru shot up, thunderstruck. Ever since the Chu clan had been established, it had relied on two primary sources of revenue. The first was the salt trade, while the second was the arms trade. The Chu clan's dominance in the arms trade was due to the significantly higher quality of their weapons, compared to their competitors'. This was dependent on two things: their marvelous rune formations, and the spirit creek which was used to cleanse and temper weapons.

Every clan had their own rune formations, and some of them were on par with the Chu clan's. The spirit creek, however, was exclusive to the Chu clan. It was the critical component to the clan's success in the arms industry.

"You were so furious at what Zu An did that night that I was afraid to tell you." Chu Zhongtian kept a careful eye on her facial expressions as he continued. "Right now, I suspect that someone drugged him and put him into Huanzhao's bed on his wedding night. Using this distraction, they seized the chance to defile our spirit creek."

Qin Wanru was frantic. "Can the spirit creek be restored?"

Chu Zhongtian shook his head. "A small quantity of demonspit was poured into the spirit creek. It will remain defiled for at least twenty years. Thankfully, whoever did this did not have a large supply of it; perhaps, in a few decades, the spirit creek will manage to cleanse itself."

"Who knows if the Chu clan will even be around in a few decades!" Qin Wanru knew that demonspit was the vilest and most toxic substance in the world. If their spirit creek had been polluted by demonspit, there was nothing they could do right now to save it. "Who do you think carried this out? The Emperor's faction, or King Qi's faction?"