

Keyboard Immortal

Chapter 19: The Young Woman in the Lake

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"The sect master and my thirteenth brother will surely avenge me!" Plum Blossom Twelve knew there was no escape from Zu An's vile trickery.

Zu An took out a notebook from his bag and scribbled down the names of the Plum Blossom sect master and Plum Blossom Thirteen. "I'll have to settle my grudge with them eventually," Zu An replied. The Plum Blossom Sect was his only lead in his hunt for whoever was masterminding these attempts on his life.

It wasn't long before Plum Blossom Twelve was completely surrounded by Assrip Wolves. He had time for one last retort before he was torn to shreds.

"You won't... won't die a... good death...!"

You have successfully trolled Plum Blossom Twelve for 999 Rage points!

Plum Blossom Twelve probably never expected that he would utter the same exact words that Brother Tan had two hours ago.

"Who was the one who said that only the weak hurl insults?" Zu An sighed deeply to himself. He glanced down at the bloody scene below and shivered. He was not one for gore. He turned and departed swiftly.

So far, he had only acquired one of the ten goubaos needed.

How was he going to gather the other nine?

Brute force would be a terrible idea. Plum Blossom Twelve had taken them head on, but had only managed to kill six of them before dying. Zu An knew that there was no way a beginner cultivator like himself could match up.

He had also assessed that the leader of the Assrip Wolves was likely at the third rank. Zu An was no match for it one-on-one, let alone in a battle where he was outnumbered.

He still possessed the Poisonous Prick and the Poison Bottle, and he might have given it a go against any other type of wild beast. But watching Plum Blossom Twelve get absolutely wrecked by these Assrip Wolves had him frightened.

I should try drawing the lottery. Maybe I can get something useful in order to deal with those Assrip Wolves.

Zu An brought out the Keyboard, and was astonished to see a whopping 7220 Rage points at his disposal. The greatest contributor was undoubtedly Plum Blossom Twelve.

Zu An felt sorry that the assassin was already dead. He would have loved to continue squeezing out more Rage points from him.

If Plum Blossom Twelve had known that that was the only motivation Zu An had had for saving him, he would probably have died of anger right away.

Zu An trembled in anticipation as he pulled up the lottery interface. He hit the 'Enter' key. The flashing light marker came to rest on the 'Space' key.

Thanks for playing!

Zu An's face darkened. He was just about to try again when a sudden thought came to him. Wait a moment, did I forget one of the key steps?

Ah! I didn't wash my face!

Zu An paused his lottery-drawing and retraced the route he had taken earlier. He remembered passing by a stream on his way to the valley.

While there was no statistical evidence to back up his superstition that washing his face could increase his chances of striking the lottery, the ritual itself felt reassuring to him.

He knelt by the stream and washed his face thoroughly. He scrubbed his hands too for good measure, then turned his attention back to the lottery.

He hit the 'Enter' key again, and the light marker flickered across the keyboard, stopping on the '0' key. A crimson pill floated out—another Marrow Cleansing Pill!

Zu An felt his heart leap in excitement. See? I knew washing my face helped!

Not wanting to waste this sudden inflow of luck, he quickly tried the lottery once more, and won yet another Marrow Cleansing Pill. His smile grew wide—he could barely contain his happiness!

Thanks for playing... Thanks for playing...

Success! Yet another Marrow Cleansing Pill!

After his fourth Marrow Cleansing Pill, Zu An's smile began to fade. He wondered if these were the only prizes he would ever win.

Thanks for playing... Thanks for playing...

Another dozen tries led to more Marrow Cleansing Pills, and nothing else.

A voice notification came from the Keyboard just as Zu An was about to lose it.

“In view that the user has obtained sufficient Marrow Cleansing Pills to raise your cultivating talent to the maximum level, Marrow Cleansing Pills will no longer appear in the list of rewards. The Shop function is now open. The user may purchase more Marrow Cleansing Pills in the Shop.

“A new reward has been assigned to the ‘0’ key. Please look forward to it.”

Zu An’s face clouded over. Why can’t you just tell me what the new reward is instead of telling me to look forward to it? Look forward to it, my ass!

With his internal rant out of the way, Zu An began exploring the new ‘Shop’ function. A merchant icon was now visible on the screen. Clicking on it, he saw only one item for sale—Marrow Cleansing Pills!

What shocked him even more was that a single pill cost 10,000 Rage points!

This isn’t right! Zu An recalled the last few times he had played the lottery. Even though there were times that his luck was poor, he still managed to get something decent roughly once every ten tries. That made the item in the shop ten times more expensive than the ones from the lottery!

This is a scam!

He tried to recall his experiences with other similar in-game shops. All of them had sold items at a premium price, and bought them back at much lower prices. Perhaps this shop functioned in the same way—that would explain why the Marrow Cleansing Pills it sold were so expensive.

I won’t need it anyway.

The Keyboard had notified him that he had already acquired sufficient Marrow Cleansing Pills to raise his talent to the maximum level. Purchasing more from the shop would be a waste of hard-earned Rage points.

He decided to save the 3000 Rage points he had left, and consume the Marrow Cleansing Pills he had on hand. That would give him time to put his mind at ease. Besides, his luck might just increase alongside his talent for cultivation.

He knew from previous experience that consuming the Marrow Cleansing Pill would force out the impurities in his body, coating him in a layer of dirty gunge. Since he was

currently out in the wilderness with no spare clothes on hand, he chose to disrobe before swallowing a Marrow Cleansing Pill.

He made sure to fully assimilate the medicinal energy of the first pill before consuming the second one. As a keyboard warrior, he knew the importance of caution. His body was terribly weak. Consuming all the Marrow Cleansing Pills at once might cause a huge surge of medicinal energy that could blow it to pieces. That would be a ridiculous way to go!

Zu An felt his body growing gradually warmer, and impurities began seeping out from his pores at a visible rate. He jumped into the water to wash away the disgusting black goo before it could accumulate.

After consuming the last Marrow Cleansing Pill, he realized that he had underestimated the medicinal energy they contained. While it had been comfortable at the start, the heat inside his body steadily intensified, and he felt as if his cells were being broken down and reconstructed. His bones, muscles, and skin felt like they were going to burst apart.

“Shit!” Zu An felt his fear rising. The pain sharpened suddenly, and he blacked out.

Zu An awoke slowly. He was still in the water, but he was now lying on a huge boulder near the riverbank. The surroundings were foreign to him—he must have been out a long time, and had drifted a significant distance downstream.

“It’s fortunate that I wasn’t eaten by piranhas while I was knocked out,” Zu An muttered, inspecting his body. He was relieved to find his limbs and other major parts of him still properly attached.

The intense pain from earlier had vanished without a trace, replaced by lightness and vigor. He could clearly sense a difference in his body, although the exact changes eluded him.

He took a deep breath. The air smelled exceptionally sweet.

“Hm? The third rune formation has been filled up too?”

The third rune formation was fully filled with golden specks. Strictly speaking, he had only just reached the third step of the second rank, since the formation had only been partially filled before.

Looks like talent really makes a huge difference. Now, just breathing can cause the golden specks inside the formations to slowly accumulate.

Zu An was curious to know just what his current talent was. He had been a lower Ding previously, equivalent to a D-. If each Marrow Cleansing Pill increased his talent by a

single rank, five of the pills would have caused him to gain five ranks—from D- to D, to D+, C-, C, and finally, C+.

No, that's not right. The Keyboard told me that I had enough pills to reach the maximum level of talent, so each Marrow Cleansing Pill should increase my rank by a larger margin. Shouldn't my talent currently be A+ or S?

Or could there be a S+ above S?

I wonder what the highest level of talent in this world is. That's something for me to figure out.

Zu An looked around and saw that things were very different. He could see the tree leaves rustling in the wind, a butterfly fluttering its wings, an ant moving its feelers, a beautiful woman slowly raising her head out of the water, the fish in the water chasing prawns...

Wait, what was that?

Zu An turned around quickly and saw a young woman several meters away. She had yet to notice his presence, probably because he had been lying unconscious, and had been blocked by the large boulder.

The young woman stood upright, revealing her slender and delicate shoulders, as well as the fair, smooth skin covering her chest. She was humming a leisurely tune as beautiful as an oriole's song.

Water trickled down her arms and towards her chest as she lifted them overhead. With his enhanced vision, Zu An could pick out the water droplets hanging on her eyelashes. They made her eyes even more alluring.

"Gulu~"

Zu An swallowed. Could it be that the increase in his talent extended to his luck with girls too?

"Who's there?"

The young woman, suddenly alarmed, turned toward the noise.

Sensing danger, Zu An subconsciously hid behind the boulder. Being caught like this in his previous life would have led to a lecture, nothing more. However, this was the world of cultivation! No ordinary human would bathe in the wilderness like this!

Zu An's cultivation was still scraping the bottom of the barrel, and there was a good chance this woman was far stronger than him.

If she were vicious and unforgiving, it was likely Zu An would suffer the same fate as Plum Blossom Twelve.

“Miss, would you believe me if I said that I was just passing by?” Zu An knew it was too late for him to lay low. The best strategy would be to quickly clarify the situation for what it was—a mere coincidence.

“W—who are you?” The young woman sounded flustered.

Hm? This lady seems to be on the shy side.

Zu An replied, “I came to gather medicine, but I was set upon by wild beasts and fell into the river. I lost consciousness along the way, and before I knew it, I found myself here.”

“Medicine? What kind of medicine were you gathering?” The young woman’s voice came from the other side of the boulder. Clearly, she was using it to conceal her body as well.

Zu An was taken somewhat aback. Aren’t you focusing on the wrong thing here? Is the medicine I’m gathering the most important thing here?

Nevertheless, Zu An replied politely, “I’m gathering goubaos.” This was the only medicine that he knew from his limited time in this world.

“The wild beasts who chased you were Assrip Wolves?” the young woman asked softly.

“Yes, that’s right,” Zu An replied. He was surprised by how knowledgeable this woman was despite her young age.

“The Wolf Valley is indeed not too far away from here. Since you dared to gather goubaos, you must be quite a powerful cultivator.” the young woman said.

Zu An replied with a sheepish smile, “You can say so, I guess.” While anyone he met could be a wolf clothed in sheepskin, he himself was a sheep clothed in wolfskin. He had no choice but to pretend, if he wanted to stay alive.

“Oh...” the young woman trailed off into silence. She was quiet for a long while before finally speaking up again. “I’m going to get dressed now. Can you... close your eyes?”