

Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 609: Long-Haired Master

Chapter 609: Long-Haired Master

Even without her warning, Zu An had already sensed the fatal threat of danger. All his fine hairs were standing on end.

He saw a streak of cold light flash towards him. He could almost see the reaper's scythe descending upon him, mere millimeters from his neck.

Terrified, he immediately used Grandgale to blink away. Only then did he realize that the streak of light was a small and exquisite sword.

A flying sword?

He had always been dazzled when he saw or read about sword cultivators fighting in movies and novels, but right now, he loathed these flying swords that he had never faced before, because it was out to kill him.

He intentionally chose not to blink backwards, but chose a direction perpendicular to the sword's path. He was afraid that the sword would merely continue its forward trajectory and hit him anyway. There was no way he could have known that the sword could turn in midair.

Damn it! Does it have some sort of homing system? Is it a damned missile? This is bullshit!

Without hesitation, he used his Sunflower Phantasm. On the brink of death, he split into four clones that took off in four different directions.

The flying sword somehow continued to pursue his true self, ignoring the three other clones.

Zu An could scarcely believe what he was seeing.

He quickly summoned Snow Phoenix to try and slow down the flying sword.

The instant Snow Phoenix was summoned, everything within several zhang turned into a frozen wonderland. The flying sword was instantly covered in a layer of frost.

However, it only seemed to halt for an instant before flying straight through the frozen domain and right towards him.

Zu An used Grandgale three times in succession. He was sweating buckets. Somehow, this flying sword was moving as quickly as his instantaneous movement skill. The flying sword would reach him nearly the instant he landed, forcing him to use Grandgale again.

He knew that there was no way he could use Grandgale endlessly. He had only been able to use it so often because he had absorbed Mosquito Daoist's cultivation, which greatly increased his strength.

Even after dodging a few times, though, the sword still continued to pursue him relentlessly.

His mind quickly sprung into action, seeking a solution. Even the guided missiles of his past had to rely on infrared or radar. What is this flying sword using to lock onto me?

Wait a minute. Guided missiles require data about their target in order to track it down, whether it be heat signatures or other information. Could I confuse this flying sword by changing my own data?

When it came to cultivators, what made each one stand out from the rest? Their auras, of course!

Once a cultivator reached a certain level of cultivation, they did not need to rely on their sight. They could tell who their opponent was purely through their aura. Everyone's aura was different. No matter how similar they were, there would still be minor differences. Of course, one could change one's aura through certain methods. For example, the tokens carried by the Embroidered Envoy could hide and change one's aura, so that no one would be able to tell their true identities.

He immediately used his Mirror Mirage skill, which Qiu Honglei had taught him. His aura completely vanished, turning himself into any ordinary mortal.

"Hm?"

A surprised exclamation came from somewhere in the air, seemingly belonging to a woman. With his life hanging by a thread, however, Zu An was in no mood to appreciate the beauty of this voice.

His entire body was plastered against a wall, his back covered in sweat. The flying sword had stabbed itself into the wall as well, missing his neck by an inch.

The entire imperial palace was fortified using formations, especially this eastern palace, which was a place of utmost importance. The formations were strong enough to absorb the full-powered strikes of high-level cultivators without suffering damage, by distributing the force throughout the entire palace.

Yet somehow, this sword had managed to penetrate straight through this fortified wall, all the way up to the hilt. It would have been horrific if this sword had made contact with his flesh.

This sequence of events happened almost within a blink of an eye.

Qiu Honglei did not even have time to plead for her master to show leniency.

Everyone in the eastern palace witnessed this scene. The assassins grew inspired, and their attacks became even more ferocious.

Those defending the crown prince cursed, mightily confused. Why hadn't His Majesty made an appearance, considering all the chaos that was going on? They saw no sign of Zhuxie Chixin either!

At this moment, Zu An saw a graceful figure dash towards the crown prince. Even though she wore a black veil, with her black hair flowing behind her like a waterfall, he could tell, even from behind her, that she was an exceptional beauty.

Was she the one that had attacked him earlier?

Zu An shivered. Hmph, I'll definitely return the favor one day.

A strange thought popped into his head when he noticed that her hair reached almost past her buttocks. Does she have to roll up her hair first every time she uses the bathroom?

The woman had already reached the crown prince. The crown princess' maid, Rong Mo, rushed forward to meet her, a thin needle in hand, leaving behind a strange afterimage.

The assassin stretched out a single finger, and Rong Mo was blown backwards like a bag of sand before anyone could tell what had happened. No one knew if she was still alive.

The crown princess' charming face lost its color. However, she still raised her sword to confront the woman in front of her.

From off to the side came a furious roar. "Scoundrel! You dare?!"

A figure flew forward like an artillery shell, interposing himself between the crown princess and her opponent and exchanging a blow with the latter.

The woman flipped through the air gracefully, landing on the branch of a willow tree nearby. These soft willow branches would have been set into violent motion by the slightest breeze, yet this woman stood on one of them as if it was level ground.

The figure who had rushed in staggered, his face unnaturally red. However, he quickly suppressed it.

Zu An finally got a good glimpse of him. It was a white haired elder with sharp brows and a straight back, with a hint of unruliness to his bearing. He had surely been wooed by countless women when he was younger.

Huh? Why does this elder seem slightly familiar?

The crown princess' greeting resolved his confusion. "Thank you, great Minister of War, for your assistance."

Zu An was immediately enlightened. This was Shi Kun's father, one of the Great Zhou Dynasty's Eight Dukes and Minister of War, Shi Miao! He was a master rank expert!

The father and son were both rather sinister.

His son had just lost his life because of the crown princess, and yet, Shi Miao was here, saving her life. Did he truly not feel anything?

Shi Miao was disgusted by this situation. He felt so awful that he wanted to throw up blood.

He had only just heard that something had happened to his son, and rushed to the palace for more information, only to learn that Shi Kun had died due to massive blood loss.

He consulted the hospital's personnel about the details, and found out that his son had been playing with knives behind a door when the crown princess slammed it open, causing one of the blades to embed itself in his crotch.

He had flown into an absolute rage. If it had been anyone else, he would have beaten them to death in order to avenge his son. However, there was nothing he could do when it came to the crown princess.

He was a man of high status, and the Shi clan was an outstanding clan, so there was no way he would submit to this humiliation. He had decided to storm the eastern palace and demand an explanation. At the very least, he wanted them to hand over Zu An, who had been competing with his son.

He never expected that he would run straight into an attack on the eastern palace.

He stepped in instinctively to stop the assassin, but regretted his decision almost immediately. What the hell is wrong with me? Couldn't I have stepped in a second later, and let this assassin take care of the crown prince and princess first? I just had to come in and save the one who killed my son! His inner turmoil really made him want to vomit blood.

"You are too kind, crown princess. This subject is merely doing his duty," Shi Miao said expressionlessly. He turned towards the woman standing on the willow branch. "All masters are renowned figures. May I ask who you are? Do you know that publicly attacking the crown prince is an offense punishable by the eradication of your clan up to the ninth generation?"

Even though he looked calm on the surface, his thoughts were a mess. The previous exchange showed that he was at a massive disadvantage. This person's cultivation was above his own. Furthermore, this person was a woman. Who exactly is she?

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Chapter 610: The Only One Who Knows

“The ascent of a stupid crown prince to the throne will only bring disaster to the land. For the sake of the common people, every capable man and woman should offer up their strength for this cause,” said the woman standing on the willow branch. Her voice was enthralling. It was clear and melodious, yet carried undercurrents of maturity.

Zu An found her voice very pleasant. Unfortunately, he had almost been killed by this very woman.

Shi Miao froze. “You’re part of King Qi’s faction?”

The first half of her statement was often repeated by those from King Qi’s faction, and those from that faction often held the second half of it to be true, although they never truly said it aloud, fearing the emperor’s wrath.

The woman shook her head. “I do not follow King Qi. I am doing this for the good of the world.”

The more she carried on, the more Shi Miao suspected her of colluding with King Qi, despite her denial.

A wisp of uncertainty crept into his mind. Given his own status and position, he did not want to get caught up in the conflict between King Qi and the crown prince. He had assumed that this was a random group of assassins. He never expected to find himself trapped in this situation.

Zu An, on the other hand, had a strange expression on his face. Shi Miao believed that the woman was a follower of King Qi, but he knew that she wasn’t.

He had just seen Qiu Honglei, who was from the Devil Sect, and he had never heard of the Devil Sect throwing their chips in with King Qi.

She had mentioned her master earlier. Was this person her master?

That made much more sense. Only someone this exceptional could have such a stunning disciple.

Even though this woman was masked, her eyes were beautiful, like the moon in a starry sky. She was undoubtedly an exceptional woman.

So this is the Devil Sect's sect master. Why was she putting on the pretense of being in King Qi's faction, intentionally or otherwise?

Wait a minute!

A sudden revelation struck Zu An. He was no longer a novice in politics, but had his fair share of experience regarding treacherous schemes. He quickly deduced that the Devil Sect had used the Shadow Group to attack the empress in order to draw away the attention of the imperial palace guards.

They would then be free to send their own elites to assassinate the crown prince in the eastern palace, while pinning the blame squarely on King Qi. The emperor was sure to take his anger out on King Qi.

King Qi would be severely wronged, and would surely not resign himself to his fate, especially considering his own strength. With such an incident to serve as a flashpoint, the entire country would rise up in rebellion.

This would grant the Devil Sect their greatest opportunity.

Zu An swallowed. Qiu Honglei's master was truly remarkable. She had surely put a lot of thought into this plan. There was no way he would have deduced the truth if he hadn't recognized Qiu Honglei.

He realized that he was the only one who had deduced this, and decided that it would be best to leave as soon as possible, before the Devil Sect's sect master decided to silence him.

The one strange thing about this whole situation was... where the heck was the emperor?

Even though the Devil Sect had come up with an excellent plan, the emperor should have been strong enough to quell the chaos in an instant!

The woman spoke up again. "Lord Shi, this matter doesn't concern you. Please move aside."

Shi Miao gradually calmed himself. Since this assassin had recognized him, she was probably someone from the imperial court. "Now that I'm here, how can I stand aside and do nothing?"

Was she joking? All would have been well if he hadn't come along, but now that he had, there was no way he would stand idly by. That would be akin to announcing to the whole world that he was on King Qi's side. There was no way His Majesty would ever let him off the hook.

His regret grew stronger. He had assumed that these were a ragged band of assassins that could be easily dealt with, and that doing so would grant him great recognition. It was likely that the emperor would also generously compensate the Shi clan for Shi Kun's death as well. There was no way he could have anticipated such a serious situation to develop. He was worried about just keeping himself alive, let alone the crown prince.

The woman's voice grew cold. "Since Lord Shi insists on choosing the wrong path, I have no choice but to cross you."

By the time the words left her mouth, she had already appeared in front of Shi Miao. Her palm flashed forward, sending out a terrifying wave of force. It was clear that she planned to get rid of the crown prince behind him as quickly as possible as well.

Shi Miao's expression changed, and his guard went up immediately. A giant tornado took form in front of him, sending countless wind blades flying towards his opponent.

Zu An was completely bowled over. He had seen Shi Kun use something similar in the dungeon behind the academy, but Shi Kun's tornado was a mere loach compared to this massive dragon!

Not only that, Shi Miao's tornado had wind blades hidden within it, every single one of them boasting destructive power. A single hit would surely result in a fountain of blood.

Zu An was even more convinced that it was past time to leave. Now that the sect master of the Devil Sect's was here, Qiu Honglei's safety was guaranteed.

A huge boom echoed around the palace as the giant tornado crashed into the slim, fair palm standing in its way. Not only was her hand not diced up, the tornado was scattered instead.

The shockwaves made the entire eastern palace tremble, and the assassins and guards who had been locked in a fierce battle were thrown to the ground.

This was the power within just a single strike!

The woman smiled sweetly. “Your cultivation was slightly lower than mine to begin with, and now, you have to protect both the crown prince and princess. That makes you even less of a match for me.”

Shi Miao calmed the swirling blood and ki within his body as he replied, “The winner of our contest will be determined soon enough. Do you only fight with your mouth?”

The woman’s eyes turned cold. “You’re courting death!”

She attacked even more viciously, aiming straight at his vital spots.

Shi Miao was stunned. What did I say to make you this angry?

He had no time to answer his own question. All his focus was on defending himself.

Zu An was the only one who almost laughed out loud. She’s the sect master of the Devil Sect, and those she interacts with tiptoe around her. A girl using her mouth to fight? It was easy enough to associate that with something else. She probably thought that Shi Miao was mocking her, although he had no such intention.

Yes, keep fighting! Beat the shit out of Shi Miao for me! Zu An wanted to see the world in chaos. He was connected to Shi Kun’s death, after all. He was worried that, if the Shi clan could not hold the crown princess accountable, they would come after him instead. It was in his best interests if the most powerful member of the Shi clan was beaten down.

At that instant, a faint breeze brushed past him, carrying a sweet fragrance. The crown princess was beside him, carrying the crown prince and looking at him with her beautiful eyes. “Golden token lord, please keep us safe,” she pleaded with him.

Even though Shi Miao was formidable, they could clearly see that his entire body was trembling, and his robes were spotted with blood. He had clearly been wounded already.

The crown princess was an intelligent person, and she knew that she was in danger if she continued to stay behind Shi Miao. If he left a single opening for

his opponent, it was likely that they would all be dead. That drove her decision to flee. This removed the need for Shi Miao to defend them, which meant that he could fight with no distractions, and perhaps hold on a little longer. What they needed the most right now was time.

The area was crawling with assassins, which limited the safe places that she could flee to. It would have probably been best to join up with the crown prince's lesser tutor, since his cultivation was high, and he was loyal to the crown prince. Unfortunately, he was surrounded by powerful assassins, and bringing the crown prince to him would only cause him more trouble.

The only choice left to her was the golden-token envoy. He had demonstrated great strength earlier on. Even though he had been heavily outclassed by the woman's flying sword, it was expected, since that was a full-powered attack by a master rank cultivator. Just being able to evade it was already rather impressive.

The most powerful member of the assassins, that woman, was being held up by Shi Miao. The rest of the assassins should be no match for this golden-token envoy.

As she spoke, the crown princess felt her entire body go weak. She staggered, and couldn't help but fall into Zu An's arms.

Zu An was stunned speechless.

What the hell? I was just about to bail! Why the hell are you coming to me and pulling all the aggro with you?

Also, why the hell are you falling into my arms? Please conduct yourself in a more dignified manner.

He had just gone through the whole ridiculous situation with the empress, saving her while having her fall into his arms. Not only were his contributions not recognized, he had instead found himself in a mountain of trouble.

The crown prince's eyes lit up when he saw this. He spread his arms and leaped at Zu An. "I want a hug! I want a hug too!"

Zu An would have facepalmed if he could.

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