

Keyboard Immortal

Chapter 9 – Wife's Best Friend

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Without hesitation Zu An swallowed the pill, and immediately a cool sensation spread from his mouth, surging into his head, his limbs, and seeping into his bones.

Black droplets began to ooze from his skin, and it continued to do so for a full hour before the process ended. Zu An finally opened his eyes. He felt lighter, and his senses sharper than ever.

The chronic aches and pains he suffered from previously were gone. His body buzzed with energy, and his hands and feet, which usually felt cold, were warm and full of vitality.

“So this thing really works?” Zu An was delighted. He did not know the extent to which his innate talent had improved, but the physical transformations were self-evident.

I wish I'd started off with this thing. Despite his lower Ding classification, he had still been able to fill up nearly three of his formations by suffering seven strikes of the Wailing Whip. What if I'd taken this Marrow Cleansing Pill first? I probably would've filled up five, right?

A lower Ding class, if translated to modern-Earth standards, was equivalent to a D-. It really did suck.

The black goop was still all over him. He gave it a whiff, and his face scrunched right up. What a stench! He raced off to take a bath.

After he was done washing up, he returned to his bed and prepared to turn in for the night. He only had 44 Rage points left, so he set his mind to hatch a new scheme to farm some Rage points off his 'ATM'. He would need those points to get more precious items.

He continued to assimilate the memories of his body's previous owner. The patriarch of the Chu clan held the title of duke within the empire, and Brightmoon City was his fiefdom. The Chu clan had a total of three children – the eldest son was called Youzhao, the eldest daughter was Chuyan, and the second daughter was Huanzhao.

The previous owner of this body was an orphaned commoner who had been raised by his aunt and uncle. He was known throughout the region as a good-for-nothing. Aside from being handsome, he had no redeeming qualities.

Zu An still couldn't wrap his head around why such a powerful clan would draft such a useless son-in-law into the family. It's a ploy. There has to be some sort of scheme behind this.

Despite his misgivings, he now held the Keyboard Warrior System as his trump card. With it, his future seemed brighter, and there was less to fear. Comforted by these thoughts, he drifted off into a peaceful slumber.

Early the next morning, while he was still half-asleep, a loud ruckus erupted in his room. "Hurry up and rise! The Master and Madam are waiting for you in the ancestral hall!"

"Shut up... lemme sleep a bit more..." Zu An replied groggily. He was completely exhausted last night and had gone to bed very late. He turned over, intending to go back to sleep.

Frigid water suddenly drenched him. With a squawk, he jolted upright, all his drowsiness gone.

He saw several servants glowering at him. Next to them was a young man who was holding a copper basin in his hands and sniggering at him.

"Did you throw the water at me?" Zu An glared at the young man, more memories coming to the surface. He was called Diao Yang and was a junior squad leader in the estate. He had given Zu An plenty of trouble in the past.

"So what if I did? Are you really starting to consider yourself one of the masters here? I have no idea what the young miss saw in you," said Diao Yang sharply.

Zu An saw through the young man right away. Given how beautiful Chu Chuyan was, there were bound to be many who desired her, like toads lusting for a swan. Diao Yang was most likely one of them. Although the difference in status between them guaranteed that he would never have a chance, that didn't mean he could easily countenance another toad getting her.

Wait wait wait! I'm not a toad, he is the toad here! His whole family are toads!

Zu An's mocking look enraged the squad leader further. "Why are you staring at me? You wanna hit me? Go ahead and try then!" He jutted his face towards Zu An. This useless son-in-law is even weaker than a woman. I could beat him up with both hands and one leg tied behind my back. The previous owner of this body was cowardly and submissive by nature, and had been frequently assaulted by Diao Yang. These encounters had emboldened the junior squad leader.

Unfortunately, he had miscalculated. This was no longer the same Zu An as before! Diao Yang glimpsed a black blur lash out and hit him right on the nose, and blood spurted out everywhere.

Zu An retracted his arm, then shook his head. "Man, what's going on with this world? Why does everyone keep asking me to hit them?"

"I'll kill you, you bastard!" Diao Yang's mind went completely blank. He never would've imagined that this useless coward whom he looked down upon would actually dare to kill him. Blinded by rage, he drew his saber to strike, only to hesitate in the next moment. Wait a second, how did he suddenly become so strong?

You have successfully trolled Diao Yang for 537 Rage points!

A deep voice boomed from behind him, "What's going on in here?"

An enormous mountain of a man walked into the room. Immediately, the others bowed respectfully and called out, "Greetings, Captain!"

Zu An recognized the captain of the guards for the Chu clan, Yue Shan. Diao Yang hurried over to him and complained, "Captain, we came over to escort him to the ancestral hall, but not only did he refuse to get up, he even used his status as son-in-law to beat us up! Look at me! He broke my nose!"

Zu An marveled at his performance. He's pretty good at putting on a show, and I'm impressed by his ability to twist the truth.

Yue Shan frowned. He glanced at Diao Yang's bleeding nose, then took in Zu An - still dripping water - and the copper basin on the ground. These clues led him in to what had just transpired.

"Everyone is waiting in the ancestral hall, while all of you are here causing a ruckus! Go to the ancestral hall now! Everything else can wait." Yue Shan snorted. He simply couldn't give a damn about such petty matters.

Knowing Diao Yang's character, he was fairly certain the man had deserved the punch. But of course, he didn't see the need to speak out on Zu An's behalf. The cowardly son-in-law was beneath him, and there was no point in offending one of his colleagues for his sake.

Zu An collapsed with a groan. "Argh! I'm badly hurt. I can't get out of bed."

"You are hurt?" Yue Shan walked over to take a look. When he saw the lashes on Zu An's body, he could not hide his astonishment.

Zu An congratulated himself on his own cleverness in going to bed in his bloody clothes. "Yes... Last night, Second Miss came to see me and then whipped me repeatedly with her Wailing Whip."

Startled whispers broke out among the other onlookers. Clearly, quite a few of them had tasted the deadly agony inflicted by Chu Huanzhao's whip.

Only Diao Yang was unconvinced. "Nonsense! You had strength aplenty when you socked me in the face. There's no way you are hurt."

Yue Shan cut him off. "Everyone in the ancestral hall is getting impatient. Let's waste no more time. The truth about what happened will be revealed soon enough. Pick him up and carry him to the ancestral hall."

He instructed the servants to find a stretcher before sending Diao Yang off to see the physician. Unexpectedly, the junior squad leader refused adamantly. He applied a bandage to his nose while insisting that he would go with them.

When Yue Shan's back was turned, Diao Yang whispered into Zu An's ears, "Don't get smug, brat. Soon, you won't be a member of the Chu clan. Then, I'll teach you what the words 'a fate worse than death' means."

Zu An was puzzled. Why did this fellow seem so certain about this? Was it because he had crawled into Chu Huanzhao's bed on his wedding night? But judging from Chu Chuyan's reaction, the Chu clan didn't seem bothered by it... and besides, I've already 'suffered' her retaliation.

Ruminating on his suspicions, he let himself be carted into the ancestral hall. The hall was huge, with an enormous plaque at the very end of it that read 'Hall of Admiration'. Each word was carved deeply and firmly, and it radiated solemn majesty.

Flanking this plaque were a pair of enormous portraits. There were poems and couplets calligraphed at the side of each painting. Judging from their attire, these two had to be important ancestors of the Chu clan. Beneath each portrait were placed incense, name tablets, and various sacrificial devotions.

Two seats were arranged in front of the incense, and they were occupied by a middle-aged man and woman. The man was bearded, but his face shone like jade. He was the perfect image of a handsome, gentle scholar.

The noblewoman had arching eyebrows, eyes that shimmered like an autumn's lake, and her hair done up in a bun, fastened with a golden headdress shaped like a peacock. The peacock's plumes flared outwards, framing her perfect hairdo. This was a woman of luxury and poise.

Zu An knew that these two had to be the current leaders of the Chu clan, Patriarch Chu Zhongtian and his wife, Qin Wanru. When her gaze fell on him, he instinctively shrank in awe and dread. Clearly, the previous owner of this body was so utterly terrified of her that even now, some residual fear remained.

He noticed many men in the hall were focused on neither Chu Zhongtian nor Qin Wanru. He traced their furtive glances, and it brought his line of sight toward a young woman dressed in a red blouse and a black skirt, seated next to Chu Chuyan. This woman was the perfect personification of charm itself. The skin covering her oval face looked as soft as butter, and her almond-shaped eyes could hold any soul captive. Every inch of her oozed a sensual allure that filled any man who set eyes on her with the most inappropriate of thoughts.

Oh my! She's ginormous! Zu An's gaze fixed upon her chest. No wonder everyone is staring at her!

The woman seemed to feel his gaze on her, but instead of anger, a hint of a smile touched her lips. This smile was so captivating, just a glimpse of it could soften any heart.

His memories named her as Pei Mianman, and she was a dear friend of Chu Chuyan. She was the young miss of the famous Pei clan of the Imperial City. She had recently come to take in the sights of Brightmoon City and had grown quite close to Chu Chuyan.

There were others situated in the hall as well, but he couldn't recognise all of them. Some had grim looks on their faces, while others seemed to be gleefully anticipating his demise.

Madam Qin noticed the amount of attention Pei Mianman was receiving, and displeasure flashed across her face. She let out a gentle cough, which seemed to startle Chu Zhongtian as well. He immediately began his interrogation, "Zu An, do you know why you have been brought here?"

"Of course. It's because I climbed into my sister-in-law's bed on my wedding night," Zu An replied.

"Pfffffft!" A wave of suppressed laughter swept through the hall. Pei Mianman covered her mouth, her face reddening slightly. She hadn't expected there to be such a shameless person in the world.

Everyone else stared at Zu An fiercely. Not only had he done something completely shameless, he was shaming them all before the Pei clan. What a wretch he was!

Before Patriarch Chu could speak, Madam Qin smashed her teacup to the ground in fury. "Miscreant! Are you proud of yourself for having done something so vile?" She was fiercely devoted to her two daughters. Yet, an offender who had taken advantage of one of her daughters dared to speak of his crime so nonchalantly!

You have successfully trolled Qin Wanru for 254 Rage points!

Silence reigned in the ancestral hall. Everyone in the Chu clan knew that while their patriarch was amiable and kind, their matriarch's temper was terrifying.