

M. Slaying 25

Chapter 25: Be Their Doormen

Knock, knock, knock.

Someone was knocking on the door again.

"Come in," Yan Xiaohu called out, sounding a little tense.

"Young Master Yan..." the manager of the parlor greeted. She walked into the room, with her hips swaying gracefully like a willow tree in the wind. "Goodness, our dear Rouyi sure is unlucky. It just so happened that an official requested to see her, so she just went in to meet him. Then you arrived right after. Unfortunately, we can't rush them... We are a business after all. We'll just have to trouble you to wait a little longer. Rouyi will be with you as soon as she's done over there."

As she spoke, the parlor manager walked toward Yan Xiaohu. However, it seemed that Yan Xiaohu had not heard a word she'd said. His eyes were fixed on her feet, watching her every step. He seemed afraid that she would get too close.

Just as the parlor manager was about to sit down beside him, Yan Xiaohu immediately scooted to the side, widening the distance between them.

He then pointed to a seat that had its back facing a folding screen and said, "You can sit there. Just don't get too close to me."

"All right, all right..." the parlor manager replied with a smile. "We've known each other for so many years, but you're still behaving like we're strangers. I can assure you, Miss Rouyi definitely has you on her mind. During the last two days that you didn't come to see her, she often talked about you to me in secret..."

Upon hearing that, Yan Xiaohu perked up and asked, "Rouyi talks about me?"

"Hmm?" the parlor manager murmured as she looked around. She voiced confusedly, "I called two girls to come and serve you earlier... Where have they gone? How unprofessional."

"You'll see them soon..." Yan Xiaohu murmured with an unconvinced tone.

"Huh?" the parlor manager uttered puzzledly.

Right then, she felt a sharp pain at the back of her head, and her vision went black.

The beautifully dressed woman went limp, collapsing to the floor.

Chu Liang put away the brick he had used to strike the parlor manager.

He shook his head and stated, "It's not her either."

Yan Xiaohu automatically got up to drag the parlor manager behind the folding screen. He was going to lay her down neatly beside the other two women.

While dragging the parlor manager over, Yan Xiaohu asked, "Brother Chu, why do I have to lure the Painted Skin Ghost here? Wouldn't it be fine if I went home right now and had my men protect me?"

"Sure. Everything will be fine as long as you never step outside your home ever again," Chu Liang said. "Thieves can rob homes for a thousand days, but it's impossible for people to constantly guard their homes against thieves for that long. If we don't capture the Painted Skin Ghost as soon as possible, you'll always be in danger. Are you okay with that?"

"In that case, forget it..." Yan Xiaohu relented.

Right then, the clamor of a fight rang out suddenly.

In what seemed like the blink of an eye, the door banged open, and two bodyguards tumbled into the room.

"Young Master! She insisted on coming in. We couldn't stop her!" one of the bodyguards cried out in anguish as he staggered to his feet.

Yan Xiaohu was about to get angry. However, when he raised his head to look at the person who had barged into the room, he stopped and stared blankly at her.

"Huh? Ms. Song?" Yan Xiaohu uttered.

Song Qingyi furrowed her eyebrows, somewhat angry. "Don't you realize how much danger you're in? Yet you're even fooling around in a place like this—"

She suddenly froze mid-speech.

That's because the moment she looked over at Yan Xiaohu, she saw that he was dragging away an unconscious woman. There were even two other women lying unconscious on the floor.

And standing beside Yan Xiaohu... was Chu Liang.

"What... atrocities are the two of you committing?!" she immediately questioned with a raised voice.

"It was Brother Chu who told me to do it!" Yan Xiaohu yelled, quickly letting go of the parlor manager.

Cool.

He sure is quick to pass the buck.

Chu Liang was silent for a moment.

Then he explained to Song Qingyi, "Similar to you, I thought that perhaps the Painted Skin Ghost might try to get close to Yan Xiaohu. So, I came here to protect him."

Song Qingyi glanced at the three unconscious women on the floor. Then she looked back at Chu Liang with the same expression as before; she still thought he was a pervert.

Chu Liang quickly explained, "I tested them to see if one of them was the Painted Skin Ghost. This is just a minor side effect."

"Forget it. Firstly, the two of you, get out!" Yan Xiaohu told his two bodyguards, chasing them out of the room. After that, he asked, "Ms. Song, why are you here?"

"I'm here to protect you too," Song Qingyi answered. She was still quite puzzled, so she questioned Chu Liang, "Is your way of testing if they are the Painted Skin Ghost... to beat them up and see if they fight back?"

"..." Chu Liang had a dispirited expression.

...

Knock, knock, knock.

"Come in," Yan Xiaohu called out, suddenly feeling nervous again.

"Young Master Yan..."

This time, a delicate and charming young woman in the prime of her youth walked into the room with a gentle demeanor. She wore a simple palace dress and had beautiful eyebrows and soft facial features that moved the hearts of those who looked at her.

"Rouyi, you're finally here," Yan Xiaohu said.

The moment he saw the woman, his eyes immediately locked on her. Most of the nervousness in his gaze was gone.

"I was delayed for quite long. I hope you're not angry with me..." Rouyi asked sweetly as she slowly walked over.

"How could I be? As soon as I saw you... my anger was gone," Yan Xiaohu said with a smile, scratching his head shyly.

"I knew it. You're the only one who truly loves me and treats me well. You're different from those jerks."

Rouyi pouted as she sat down in a seat that had its back to the room door.

"Um..." Yan Xiaohu murmured hesitantly, clenching his jaw. Nevertheless, he still ended up pointing at the seat that had its back to the folding screen. "Rouyi, sit over there."

"Huh?" Rouyi stared blankly at him for a moment. Then she chuckled. "Hehe, why are you acting so strangely today?"

"No, it's just that I want to look at your face from the front so I can see your beauty more clearly," Yan Xiaohu said.

"All right, all right," Rouyi reluctantly agreed. As she got up, she asked, "Today's not break day[1]. Why aren't you at the academy?"

"Just... didn't feel like it."

Yan Xiaohu obviously couldn't say that he had been beaten to a pulp at the academy and felt embarrassed to return.

...Especially since the perpetrator was currently standing behind the folding screen.

"You said that the new teacher at your academy, Ms. Song, is only half as beautiful as I am, and you even admitted to feeling very excited whenever you see her in class. Yet, you can't be bothered to go see her now?" Rouyi remarked. "Sure enough, men are always looking for someone new."

"No way..." Yan Xiaohu immediately sat up straight. "Rouyi, you mustn't speak such nonsense."

"All right, all right," Rouyi relented again. Then she noticed the injuries on Yan Xiaohu's face and gasped. "Young Master Yan, you're injured...? What happened, did you get into a fight with someone?"

"Um... more or less..." Yan Xiaohu stammered.

After all, it was difficult to distinguish between a fight and a beatdown.

"Seeing you like this really makes my heart ache! I've never seen you injured before," Rouyi expressed. She pouted and continued, "The person who hurt you is so vicious! I'll curse him for you —"

"No, no, no!" Yan Xiaohu said hurriedly. He truly wished he could just cover Rouyi's mouth with his hand. "Don't say all these things..."

"Hmph, I guess it's unnecessary anyway," Rouyi continued. "By now, the person who did this to you must be in a miserable state. Didn't you mention that before that your father issued a warning? That anyone who dares touch even a single hair of yours has to either kneel and apologize or kill their whole family. Otherwise, your father will never let them off. I'm terrified even just thinking about it..."

"There was no such thing..." Yan Xiaohu hurriedly waved his hand in denial. "All six generations of my family have been law-abiding citizens..."

"Huh?" Rouyi uttered, feeling dumbfounded.

Yan Xiaohu seemed to be getting impatient.

He got straight to the point and told Rouyi, "It might hurt a bit; just bear with it."

Rouyi blushed and coquettishly pretended to be angry.

"Annoying—"

Bang!

There was yet another indistinct cry.

The beauty had fainted.

Chu Liang and Song Qingyi, who had been hiding behind her, now reappeared. They stood side by side and looked at Yan Xiaohu silently with cold smiles.

Yan Xiaohu put on an innocent face in response.

At this awkward moment, the clamor of a fight once again rang out from outside the door...

Soon after, two skilled bodyguards tumbled in adeptly after having experienced it before. They got up and cried out in anguish, "Young Master, he insisted on barging in. We couldn't stop him!"

"Couldn't stop him, couldn't stop him..." Yan Xiaohu muttered right before he snapped. He berated them furiously, "You should just pack up your things and get the hell out of here. Don't bother working as bodyguards tomorrow. Go find a hotel and be their doormen. I guarantee their business will thrive!"