

A Snake 261

Chapter 261: The Lin Family Owes Me a Wife

"What problem could there be? It just wants to follow you." Zhang Shuying tugged on the rope, pulling the wooden bucket up from the well with considerable efficiency.

I stroked my chin, trying to understand the connection, "Wants to follow me . . . and then spins silk into a cocoon?"

"After breaking out of the cocoon, it will evolve and become stronger, and its dependency on me won't be as strong." Zhang Shuying efficiently drew another bucket of water.

I was impressively confused, "It never did this before?"

"Not a chance; it used to be a lazy slob, never striving for better," Zhang Shuying said with disdain. "Meeting you made it responsible and ambitious, not bad."

I couldn't believe his attitude, "Your Life-bound Gu doesn't follow you but wants to follow me, and you think that's not bad??"

"When a child grows up, they don't always listen to their mother; what can I do?" Zhang Shuying glanced at me, carried two buckets of water into the kitchen, and poured them into the water tank.

I was embarrassed, "So, you're saying it's all my fault, I shouldn't have taken the initiative to get close to Xiao Yuanyuan."

"It has nothing to do with you; its nature . . . is not that easy to get along with. If you saw its true side, you'd probably be scared to death."

Zhang Shuying leaned against the water tank, pulled out a cigarette, and started smoking leisurely, "Gu insects are bloodthirsty and vicious; they're bugs not bound by human morals. Even I don't understand what it says; you're the only one who can talk to it. Do you know . . . what happened when I tamed it?"

"You were nearly tormented to death?" I guessed.

Zhang Shuying smiled wryly and looked at me approvingly, "Not bad logic. I was shitting bricks for almost a month, almost ascended to heaven, and it wasn't until the twenty-ninth day that I recovered. This damn bug's previous owner told me if it had been one more day, I was a goner."

"Uh . . . I didn't expect Xiao Yuanyuan to be so cute yet have a rebellious and untamable wild side." I chuckled dryly, feeling a mysterious warmth in my heart.

I like Xiao Yuanyuan even more now, don't !!!

Zhang Shuying squinted his eyes, "Heh, that's interesting. After hearing about its true nature, you weren't scared to death."

"If it had been before, I probably really would have been scared to death, but then I went through some things . . ."

I didn't expect to end up chatting with Zhang Shuying and then opening up, unintentionally speaking some heartfelt words, "My perspective has changed, no matter how Xiao Yuanyuan is with others, or what its nature is, it has never hurt me and has been so kind and reliant on me . . . I shouldn't dislike it, fear it, or even reject it because of that . . ."

Suddenly realizing I had said too much to Zhang Shuying, I quickly changed the subject and told him I needed to start preparing breakfast.

There was some flour left in the kitchen; the quality was such that if not eaten soon, it would spoil.

I planned to use baking soda to turn this flour into fried dough sticks and cakes.

In the cakes, I added a lot of minced vegetables and some chopped ham.

The texture should be quite nice when eaten.

Suddenly, Zhang Shuying leaned forward, gazing intensely at me, "Spiritual Eye Sister, in your eyes, am I even worse than a bug? You treat a bug better than you treat me."

"Do I even need to say it? You've held me captive, locked me up, won't let me go home, won't let me reunite with my boyfriend; how can I show you a good face?" I watched Zhang Shuying leaning against the stove, almost knocking Xiao Yuanyuan into the frying pan. I quickly saved it and cradled it in my hands.

On Zhang Shuying's handsome face, which was universally striking from every angle, dark clouds formed, "Stop using Yun Hao as your shield. I don't see you really liking him, at least there isn't a trace of love in the way you look at him. This guy is even a second-hand good who has been with Immortal Liu; he's worthless."

"What about you? Are you not second-hand goods?" I originally wanted to bite back, but after saying it, I wanted to slap myself.

I shouldn't respond to anything he says; whether Zhang Shuying is second-hand goods or not is none of my business. The only one I want to be with in this lifetime is Yu Longting . . .

I won't have thoughts for anyone besides Yu Longting.

Zhang Shuying cupped my chin, his pair of enchanting peach-blossom eyes inscrutable, "I'm very clean, and I can assure you that in this life, you will be the only one for me. Kick Yun Hao to the curb and be with me instead; it just so happens . . . the Lin Family . . . owes me a wife, why not you? Lin Huan would probably die of happiness knowing . . ."

Chapter 262 This Guy Can Control Snakes

"No, how many times do I have to tell you, Yun Hao isn't my partner."

I stepped back from Zhang Shuying and kept my distance, feeling deeply that Zhang Shuying couldn't understand human speech, "If you annoy me again, I will drug the food and poison you all."

Zhang Shuying had a look of disbelief, "You've already told me, how can you still poison us?"

"Anyway, if you're that idle, go grind the beans I soaked last night." I was cooking porridge in a clay pot and had also soaked some beans the night before.

This way, I could grind them into soy milk in the morning, adding some pickled radishes and boiled eggs.

It would make breakfast more fulfilling with more options available.

Zhang Shuying went to grind the beans, wearing a simple gray Taoist robe.

For convenience, he had tucked half of his sleeves into his belt, which gave him a look reminiscent of how Tibetans dressed.

As the soybeans were ground, a clean fragrance of cracked beans filled the kitchen.

I carried the cooked porridge to the sect's dining hall, ready to fetch a large basin of fried dough twists I had prepared.

Suddenly, a light shout from the Bearded Man echoed, "Who are you to dare trespass into the Gu Sect? Do you know who our Sect Master is?"

"This man looks familiar. I seem to have seen him somewhere before," Uncle Zhong remarked thoughtfully.

The Bearded Man cried out in pain, "Who cares who he is, just come and help me, this guy can control snakes."

"Are you the Snake Immortal? The helper called by Yun Hao?" Uncle Zhong asked while lending a hand.

I followed the sound and took a few steps, then saw a graceful and handsome figure in white.

My heart contracted sharply, and tears welled up as I rushed towards him, "Yu Longting, you finally came. I thought I was trapped here for a lifetime."

"Did they mistreat you?" Yu Longting held a three-foot green peak sword, his dark pupils filled with a terrifying fierceness.

This was the first time I saw him with a sword, appearing before me.

Uncle Zhong and the Bearded Man were entwined by snakes hissing venomously, suffering from various degrees of sword wounds on their bodies.

I excitedly flung myself into Yu Longting's arms and held him tightly, "I wasn't mistreated; the people of the Gu Sect aren't bad to me."

A metallic clang sounded.

The noise of metal hitting the ground resonated.

Yu Longting's long sword fell to the ground, and his hand caressed the hair at the back of my head, "Not mistreated, yet you react so strongly? Missed me that much?"

"It's mainly because I got a bit scared being in an unfamiliar place." I nearly cried on the spot. Yun Hao had said he'd invade the sect within three days to take me away.

Unexpectedly, Yu Longting came the next day and was able to rescue me with a mere gesture.

Uncle Zhong exclaimed, "I remember now, this man is... he is Snake Lord!"

"So it's that good-for-nothing snake demon, the one who Yu Rongling always rants about as his brother, Yu Longting?" the Bearded Man asked.

Uncle Zhong solemnly nodded, "Even if a hundred of us came, we couldn't defeat the Snake Lord."

The Bearded Man was concerned about something else, "Miss Su Wan's baby, isn't it the Snake Lord's? Is it Third Master's heartbreak?"

Uncle Zhong fell silent, his expression growing more solemn.

"Rubbish heartbreak. I have nothing with your Third Master Zhang!" I jumped in frustration when I heard the Bearded Man's misleading words, then urgently looked towards Yu Longting, "My relationship with Zhang Shuying is just that of a hostage and a kidnapper; don't let that dark-faced uncle blabber nonsense."

"I'm only thirty-one, not an old uncle! At most, I'm like an older brother," the Bearded Man retorted.

"Don't talk, you'll only make things worse, let the snake bite you!"

I was really irritated and snapped angrily, then cautiously looked at Yu Longting, "You shouldn't stay silent, it makes me very nervous."

Chapter 263: Intelligence, Really Too Worrisome

"Su Wan, are you sent by a monkey?" Yu Longting's narrow phoenix eyes narrowed dangerously.

I couldn't quite grasp his attitude, but I was still afraid he'd misunderstand, "What... what do you mean?"

"How much of a heavyweight do you think Zhang Shuying is to make you give up on me and fall for him?" Yu Longting had barely finished speaking when a gentle kiss landed on the corner of my lips, "You actually think I'd misunderstand, that intelligence of yours is truly worrisome."

I was almost in a daze, "Uh..."

I just felt the sun rising higher in front of me, particularly bright and dazzling.

This guy really has thick skin, kissing me regardless of the occasion... ah...

"Come home with me." Yu Longting took my hand and brazenly led me away.

I was still in a daze from the kiss, and after a few steps, I remembered the main point, "No, no, no, we can't leave yet."

"What's the matter? Do you want your husband to fetch Zhang Shuying and give him a beating to vent your anger? That's not out of the question..." Yu Longting stopped in his tracks upon hearing my words.

Seeing that he was about to send a Spirit Talisman flying from his sleeve to find someone, I pressed down his hand, "It's not about hitting someone; my phone, my ID card are all with Zhang Shuying!! And also, this is most important, I haven't had breakfast yet, which I made myself."

The breakfast I had painstakingly made, yet not a single bite was eaten.

I always felt somewhat dissatisfied in my heart.

"What? They forced you to cook for them? To serve them?" Yu Longting's eyebrows furrowed fiercely, his palm attracting something.

The hilt of the three-foot green peak sword on the ground was sucked into his palm, and he looked set to start a massacre with his drawn sword.

I hurriedly held him back, "No, no, it's not like that, I wanted to cook myself, really!"

"Good that it's not, is my woman someone they can enslave? Which part of the Gu Sect usually eats in?" Yu Longting asked with malevolence.

I seized the chance to suggest, "Why don't you release Uncle Zhong and Big Beard, and we can all eat together?"

"Su Wan... I really... am at my wit's end with you..." Yu Longting looked at me helplessly, shaking his sleeves—the snakes wrapped around the Bearded Man and Uncle Zhong slithered back into his cuffs.

The only problem was that they had pretty severe sword injuries; I doubted they had the strength to eat breakfast, probably needing to treat their wounds first.

As I was thinking this, Yu Longting tossed a Blood Splendor Robe their way, "Just one; take turns wearing it."

This Blood Splendor Robe wasn't the one meant for Yu Longting.

It was another one that was made back then to save Wei Yao's mother.

Yu Longting explained to me, "I brought it with me when I came over, worrying there might be accidents."

"So you have two?" I understood at once.

Yu Longting raised an eyebrow, "The one I'm wearing, of course, I can't give to them."

While we were talking, Uncle Zhong and the Bearded Man started fighting!

They were fighting over the Blood Splendor Robe!!

I was completely stunned.

Just then, Zhang Shuying, with a poker face, passed by with a large bowl of freshly cooked soy milk, "Keep fighting, let outsiders laugh at you."

Uncle Zhong: "..."

Bearded Man: "..."

Had Zhang Shuying been grinding soybeans and cooking soy milk in the kitchen when Yu Longting and Uncle Zhong were fighting?

This guy was impressively calm, wasn't he?

Was it because he knew he stood no chance against Yu Longting, so he didn't want to resist pointlessly?

Zhang Shuying returned to that wandering-soul state from before.

It seemed as if he hadn't seen Yu Longting who had broken his Formation and intruded on his sect grounds.

Turning away, he brought the soy milk into the dining hall.

"Let's go, let's eat," Yu Longting said softly to me.

I nodded and followed Yu Longting into the dining hall.

Zhang Shuying went out again and brought in a pot of well-cooked porridge and dried radishes.

Chapter 264: Three Days Later, Breaking Out of the Cocoon

By this time, Uncle Zhong and Bearded Man entered with their heads fully bandaged.

Uncle Zhong, being older, had a stronger combat power.

The Blood Splendor Robe was temporarily placed on Uncle Zhong, while Bearded Man watched as blood flowed like a river from his wound...

Bearded Man cleared his throat, "Snake Lord, you've abducted the person, and now you're staying for a meal, isn't that a bit excessive?"

"Yes, in our host's home, it seems we didn't invite you... to eat... together..." Uncle Zhong's voice trembled slightly as he spoke softly.

These two, who were fierce and terrifying during the commotion,

were now issuing a guest expulsion order with submissive caution.

"Did I say I allowed Yu Longting to take the person away?" Zhang Shuying asked, face dark, voice menacing.

Bearded Man sulked, "Even if we don't permit it, it's useless."

Uncle Zhong pragmatically said, "We can't beat him."

"What would you like to eat?" Yu Longting, completely ignoring them, acted as if he were at his own home and asked me.

All these delicious foods, except for the soy milk, which Zhang Shuying ground, were made by me.

Why can't I eat them!!

In my heart, I felt even more justified than Yu Longting,

"Soy milk, I want the salty kind."

In fact, I'm fine with either sweet or salty.

But since I got pregnant, I've had strong cravings; not only do I want salty, but I also crave spicy.

Yu Longting knows my eating preferences well; he added fried dough sticks and a bit of salt to the soy milk, along with a spoonful of spicy radish.

Seeing him busy with my stuff, I said, "You eat too, don't just fuss over me."

"I'll just have some porridge, the fried cakes you made look quite tasty," Yu Longting said with a gentle smile.

I didn't say anything, but deep down, I was really looking forward to him eating more fried cakes.

I didn't expect Yu Longting to eat them when I made them, but I knew they must taste good.

Having the food I made eaten by Yu Longting gave me an extreme sense of achievement.

"Taoist Zhang, remember to return Su Wan's identity card and mobile phone," Yu Longting said while eating porridge, in an indifferent tone.

Zhang Shuying glanced at Yu Longting and finally spoke to him, "After the meal, I'll go get them for you."

"Much appreciated," Yu Longting responded politely.

The meal ended without incident, and Yu Longting stared at my left shoulder, "That leaf on your shoulder..."

"Oh, this? I almost forgot to tell you, this is Xiao Yuanyuan, I was too busy working and couldn't spare a hand, so I used double-sided tape to stick it on my shoulder."

I turned my head to look at Xiao Yuanyuan, my gaze inevitably softening.

Yu Longting inspected the cocooned Xiao Yuanyuan, "Is this... the Golden Silkworm Gu?"

"Yes, it is Zhang Shuying's life-bound gu," I said with a bit of reluctance but still carefully removed it, "Good thing you reminded me, I almost forgot to give it back to Zhang Shuying."

"It is indeed rare to see the Golden Silkworm Gu form a cocoon," Yu Longting remarked with curiosity.

Zhang Shuying interjected gravely, "As the saying goes, children grow beyond their mother's grasp; the Golden Silkworm Gu wanted to get closer to Su Wan, so it spontaneously formed a cocoon."

Hearing Zhang Shuying call me by my name, and not Spiritual Eye Sister...

I still found it quite amazing.

The title of Snake Lord truly is terrifying; not only my brother Yu Rongling, who has this impressive social prowess, is obedient to him, but even someone with a defiant nature like Zhang Shuying is now behaving properly.

"Can it really do that?"

Yu Longting laughed, "I've heard that the Golden Silkworm Gu, cannot be away from its owner's body for more than four hours. After emerging from the cocoon, it should be able to move about more freely."

"Then... how long until Xiao Yuanyuan hatches?" Something felt odd to me when I heard this.

Yu Longting stroked the top of my head, "It's its first cocooning, so it will be quick, around three days."

"Xiao Yuanyuan will be upset if it doesn't see me when it hatches," I said, looking at the golden cocoon of the Golden Silkworm Gu with some reluctance.

Chapter 265: She is my wife

Zhang Shuying smiled bitterly, hanging his head, "Su Wan, if you don't mind, just take it with you! After all, it likes to follow you."

"Are you kidding me? That's half your life!" My hair nearly stood on end.

The Golden Silkworm Gu could not stray too far from Zhang Shuying, and Zhang Shuying couldn't bear to part with the Golden Silkworm Gu either.

If they were separated for too long, his body would suffer greatly.

Zhang Shuying, solemn-faced, said, "I'm not joking. If the bug stays with you, I might get hurt, but a little rest and recuperation should do the trick... Anyway, I'm just idling around in the mountains..."

"So by your logic, you want to use healing as a way to pass the time? I think you're just bored out of your mind, sick from doing nothing!" I glared fiercely at Zhang Shuying, then explained to him sensibly, "In life, as mountains and rivers are destined to meet, next time we encounter each other, Xiao Yuanyuan will still see me, and I'll meet Xiao Yuanyuan again."

The Bearded Man seemed surprised, "If we meet again in the future, will you still pay attention to us?"

He had finally taken his turn to wear the Blood Splendor Robe from Uncle Zhong, and the bleeding from his wounds had stopped.

"Why wouldn't I care? Didn't we clear up the previous misunderstanding?" I asked, puzzled by the Bearded Man's question.

The Bearded Man, touched and reluctant to part, said, "Miss Su Wan, your fried dough cakes are so delicious, we probably won't get to eat them again in our lifetimes once you leave."

"How about it, Miss Su Wan, why don't you stay a few more days?" Uncle Zhong suggested.

The Bearded Man's eyes shone brightly, "That would be great, Miss Su Wan. Before you came, we ate pigswill every day!"

"Do you think my wife is just a... cook? Try and tempt her again." Yu Longting slowly let out an air of deadly seriousness.

The Bearded Man and Uncle Zhong both flinched, not daring to utter another word.

After finishing breakfast.

Su Wan and Yu Longting followed Zhang Shuying to retrieve her ID and phone from the small courtyard.

They saw Zhang Shuying open the drawer in the room she had slept in and took out all of her things.

Not just her phone and ID, but also her sachet, handkerchief, cloth puppet, strips of cloth...

It didn't seem like much before.

But now, it seemed like she always carried as much as a Hundred Treasures Bag.

"Uh, Zhang Shuying, you kept my things in such an obvious place?" I asked, a bit astonished.

Wasn't he afraid I would find them?

Zhang Shuying glanced at me and said, "With your intelligence, you wouldn't have found them anyway, so it makes no difference where I put them."

"What makes you say that?" I challenged, not convinced.

Zhang Shuying laughed, "So did you find them?"

Me: "..."

I was outsmarted by my own stupidity once again.

Why does everyone keep picking on my intelligence?

I said nothing further.

Silently, I stuffed all these odds and ends into the Taoist robe.

The robe was supposed to be returned to Zhang Shuying, but obviously, I couldn't just take it off—I couldn't very well walk out wearing a cheongsam.

The slits in the cheongsam were too high, and it was very form-fitting and sexy.

Walking down the street in this rustic place, I'd be mistaken for a madwoman.

Yu Longting couldn't bear to watch me cram everything into my robe and voluntarily took some of the items to lighten my load.

Zhang Shuying escorted us down the mountain and asked Yu Longting one final question before parting, "Snake Lord, is Su Wan really your woman?"

"Why do you ask?" Yu Longting responded.

Zhang Shuying said, "Nothing, I just thought so. Yun Hao is simply not worthy of her! Nor worthy to have her bear a Snake Baby! If it's you, I would wholeheartedly accept."

"Su Wan is my wife," Yu Longting pronounced each word distinctly.

Zhang Shuying merely smiled faintly, standing inside the mountain gate, saying nothing more.

Su Wan and Yu Longting had just stepped outside the mountain's boundary.

They came face to face with Yun Hao, who had a slight chill in his gaze, "Snake Lord, so you've come in person after all."

Chapter 266: Grown Taller

"I'm worried about Wanwan, after all, she is my wife. The role of the hero saving the beauty is more appropriately performed by me." Yu Longting flicked his long finger, sending out a light-yellow glowing sphere.

Yun Hao caught it with a frown, "North Sea Snake Dragon Inner Pill."

"I'm giving it to you. You've just been reincarnated; your strength is not very stable. Use this to consolidate it," Yu Longting said nonchalantly.

Again, a Snake Dragon Inner Pill.

How many Snake Dragons had he actually hunted down last time he went to the North Sea?

Yun Hao pursed his lips, slightly nodding his head.

At the moment, with his lips pursed and a serious expression, he especially resembled a primary school student who couldn't solve a problem.

I suddenly noticed something different about Yun Hao's height, "Yun Hao, have you grown taller since yesterday?"

"Good eye," Yun Hao said with a hint of appreciation in his cool eyes.

Only then did I realize something, "Your growth... could it be that you've aged..."

Not only had Yun Hao grown a bit in height, but his youthful face also seemed to have matured slightly.

"For Yun Hao, one day is equivalent to a hundred years. He has just recovered three hundred years," Yu Longting explained with a smile, then looked at Yun Hao with a mocking tone, "Yun Hao, you should find a place to enter seclusion and restore your cultivation. It's not good for your image to always appear as a child."

"Image means nothing to me. I am off to the Wang Family to find the Ancestral Fox Remnant Soul." Yun Hao's figure flashed, stepping into the vast expanse of mountains and vanishing from sight.

Yu Longting lowered his gaze, his fingers resting on my abdomen as if sensing something, "With the Zhang Family and Lin Family affairs at hand, and the Wang Family being notoriously cunning and sly, it's probably not going to be easy to find."

"If it can't be found immediately, then we'll search slowly. I'm just afraid we might provoke some untouchable characters again."

Considering what I'm currently going through, I'm not too optimistic about the continued search for the Ancestral Fox Remnant Soul.

Yu Longting's palm infused a soft and cold force into my abdomen, teasing me, "What are you thinking about? There's only one Zhang Shuying in this world. Do you think everyone is like him, a once-in-a-lifetime genius? Aside from your husband, the number of people who can restrict Yun Hao is quite few."

"I'm just a bit worried. Have you cured Dumpling?" I remember the night when Dumpling pushed Zhang Shuying over, standing up for me; the feeling of heaviness in my lower abdomen suddenly disappeared.

Yu Longting and I walked together on a mountain path, "The little guy is quite capable. Zhang Shuying has Protective True Qi; when Dumpling ran to harm Shuying, he was naturally repelled by that True Qi. Lucky for him, his heart meridian wasn't damaged; otherwise, he would already be gone..."

"Dumpling is too willful; it's quite worrying," I thought for a while and discussed with Yu Longting, "How about we find an opportunity to teach Dumpling a lesson together?"

"Why bother teaching him? So many men, so much responsibility," Yu Longting's parenting beliefs were completely opposite to mine.

He only cared that his son be a responsible person, completely disregarding how dangerous impulsiveness can be.

I straightened my expression and discussed the matter seriously with him.

I felt that the child was so young, we should teach Dumpling more about protecting himself.

Ultimately, after my relentless efforts, Yu Longting was persuaded.

We decided that once Little Dumpling healed and woke up, we would jointly provide him with an education filled with love.

Ancient Water Village lay on the must-pass route to town.

As soon as we entered the village, I smelled a trace of blood, "Strange, this area is all farmland, and I didn't see anyone slaughtering livestock. Why is there a smell of blood?"

"Look, there," Yu Longting, with his sharp observational skills, directed his gaze toward the fields.

In the green wheat fields, there was a bloody skeleton of an ox, judging by its shape. It still had ropes around it and was attached to farming tools, as if it had been diligently plowing the field just a second before.

Chapter 267: Rivals All Around

"What gnawed it down to this? There are no signs of resistance from this cow." I glanced at the flies buzzing around the skeletal remains, inexplicably chilled.

Yu Longting brought me to the skeleton, smeared his fingertip in the not-yet-dry blood, "The blood is still warm, it was gnawed on not long ago, it looks like... the work of Gu Insects..."

"Gu Insects?" I knew little about Gu Insects, my only impression being of Xiao Yuanyuan.

Yu Longting sniffed the blood on his fingertip, "Gu Insects can rapidly lay eggs and hatch, consuming a cow weighing five to six hundred pounds in about tens of seconds."

"Does this mean someone in Ancient Water Village is raising gu?" I was struck with horror, feeling utterly terrified.

Raising gu wasn't scary, but releasing them to harm livestock was.

And to gnaw it down to such a state.

This was extremely venomous and brutal.

Yu Longting pulled out a pack of tissues from his pocket and handed them to me, "Why wouldn't you suspect Zhang Shuying? Doesn't he have a Golden Silkworm Gu? That's the King of Ten Thousand Gus, a unique Emperor Gu in the world, a cow wouldn't even suffice to fill the gaps in its teeth."

"Xiao Yuanyuan is that powerful? Even a Gu King..." I tacitly took the tissue to wipe the blood from Yu Longting's fingers, catching his disdainful look, I realized my tendency to shield Xiao Yuanyuan, blushing, I said, "Didn't you say Xiao Yuanyuan would take three days to wake up? I ruled it out because of that."

"Never thought the Golden Silkworm Gu might have awakened early?" Yu Longting asked in return.

I was unsure but still reluctant to believe, "Even if Xiao Yuanyuan woke up early, Zhang Shuying wouldn't allow it to do such a thing."

It might not be righteous to gnaw someone else's plow ox, but since no human lives were harmed, it seemed somewhat excusable...

Yu Longting, noticing my biased protection towards Xiao Yuanyuan, chuckled lowly and corrected my nearly skewed morals,

"Wife, what kind of people do you think belong to the Gu Sect? When I woke up and found out from Beichen that you were kidnapped by the murderous Taoist Zhang, I was frantic, yet you, silly girl, felt nothing."

"Well... hasn't it turned out that although they're not good people, they were alright towards me?" I blinked, defending myself.

I had actually been extremely distressed when I fell into Zhang Shuying's hands, even preparing for the worst.

But now that we had turned our quarrels into good terms, naturally, I would not bring up that mindset to Yu Longting, stirring up unnecessary conflicts.

Yu Longting nodded meaningfully, "Yes, Wanwan, you're truly incredible, even managing to make friends with someone as crazily righteous and evil as Zhang Shuying, damn, what should I do..."

"What should you do?" Isn't that a good thing?

I didn't understand the meaning behind his last grumbled curse and asked, puzzled.

Yu Longting's eyes dangerously studied me as if wanting to peel my flesh from my bones like the cow nearby, "My dear wife, you've managed to turn a kidnapper into a rival in love for me... With rivals around me, danger lurks everywhere... what am I to do?"

"Is that so? I think there are quite a few who like you too... ow... what's that... what's grabbing my foot..."

Yu Longting and I tacitly agreed not to meddle in Zhang Shuying's business anymore, and we were walking on the small road next to the wheat field when suddenly my ankle felt cold, grabbed by something hard.

The ground beneath was dense green wheat, which was impossible to see through with the naked eye.

I skeptically parted the green wheat stalks, cold sweat soaking me entirely, and my pupils dilated in shock, "A child... it's... it's a child's... Yu Longting... I... am... caught..." by it!

In that moment, I nearly lost all ability to speak, the thing grasping my ankle was a small skeletal hand, frightening me out of my wits.

Chapter 268 Tree Infant

"Don't look, it will upset you."

As it grew dark in front of my eyes, Yu Longting's palm was pressed against them, his icy tone flowing past my ear.

I have an intensely maternal protective urge towards children, and I felt almost insane as I clutched tightly at the fabric around Yu Longting's waist, "How could this happen? I don't believe Zhang Shuying would do such a thing; he has a defiant nature and would never harm ordinary people..."

"I know, honey, stay calm. I don't think it was Zhang Shuying either. With your husband by your side, you're not alone—trust my abilities." Yu Longting hooked his arm around my waist, steadying my center of gravity, soothing my nearly hysterical emotions.

At that moment, I deeply realized how important it was to have Yu Longting by my side.

With him, I was no longer alone as when I was abducted.

No longer fighting battles alone.

I struggled to contain myself, "He... he just died, didn't he?"

Although I had only glanced briefly.

What I saw was just an outline.

But it was evident that the corpse was very much in the state of a cow's bones.

"He was wearing slippers; maybe he lived nearby," Yu Longting said solemnly, "Of course, this is the countryside, and it's not uncommon to see people barefoot; this isn't an accurate assumption."

"You... do you mean to check this child's home?" I couldn't quite grasp Yu Longting's intentions, unsure of his purpose.

But Yu Longting's mind was extremely meticulous, clear-headed and wise.

I could trust him completely to make the right decisions.

"Keep your eyes closed, wait until we are away from this area, then you can open them."

Yu Longting advised before bending down to keep my ankles and wrists separated, "Check the nearby farmhouses too, there might be clues."

"Mhm," I fully agreed with Yu Longting's words.

Right now, other than these two skeletons, we had no clues about the incident, and could only wait to conduct a systematic investigation for any leads.

After Yu Longting got up, I quickly followed him out of the wheat field.

We stepped out of the wheat field.

I opened my eyes, scanning our surroundings.

The nearest structure to the wheat field was a small hut about fifty meters away.

The door was broken and wobbly, barely hanging on.

It seemed like it had been forcefully opened from the inside.

"Anyone home?" I stepped forward to knock on the door, knocking for a long time with no response.

At first, I thought there was no one inside, but then a faint voice drifted from behind the damaged door.

At first, I couldn't make out a word, but I perked up my ears and realized someone was calling for help, "Save... me..."

Yu Longting and I exchanged a glance and burst in simultaneously.

The farmhouse was a typically common structure, with two rooms, a living room, and a kitchen.

The faint voice came from the kitchen, where a middle-aged woman with a headscarf lay on the ground surrounded by patches of blood, "Save me..."

"Sister, what..." I knelt halfway down, helping the woman up, "What happened...?"

The woman's face was almost unrecognizable, her eyeballs gone, as if mauled by a wild animal, a complete bloody mess.

I was somewhat frightened, almost dizzy, but quickly calmed down, "What happened to you? Who did this? Are there others in your family?"

Yu Longting's judgement was indeed accurate, given that something had happened in the wheat field.

The nearby farmhouse could also be involved, possibly even the source...

"My... son... husband..." The middle-aged woman's mouth was almost gone, blood dripping from her hair, it was a miracle she could still speak, "It was... the tree... tree..."

"Tree what...? A tree demon?"

I didn't know what tree she was referring to, but on the woman's face, I saw a root of a blood-red tree, wondering if it could be a tree demon or something...

Just then, a familiar voice came from behind, "She's talking about the Tree Infant, huh? Is this fate? Su Wan, you and Snake Lord are also involved in this?"

Chapter 269: All Kinds of People

"Tree Infant? Isn't that a demon from Hell in European mythology?" I turned around, and Zhang Shuying stood not far away.

Next to Zhang Shuying, there was a man in a white tank top who worked in the fields.

The farmer's white tank top was all bloody and muddy, his dark skin covered in muscles, yet he was missing an arm.

Before Zhang Shuying could speak, the farmer beside him cursed angrily, "I told that Melon Lady not to keep that monster, but she insisted on keeping it! She even used the family savings to buy formula and wheat paste to feed it, raising it as her own child. Now look what has happened..."

Listening to the farmer's crimson eyes and his desperate cursing.

I was completely shocked. I couldn't imagine it at all!!

This family actually kept a... monster at home...

Weren't they afraid?

Indeed, this world is full of all sorts of people.

"Cough, cough, cough... It's just because I didn't feed it enough, that's why it suddenly acted this way... It's my fault..." the middle-aged woman on the ground suddenly spoke at length, making excuses for the Tree Infant.

Then she spat out blood, convulsed a few times on the ground, and lay still.

I didn't know what exactly was going on and wanted to check if she was breathing.

Yu Longting grabbed my wrist, "There's no saving her, she's gone. Don't look at her, okay?"

"Oh... oh..." I obediently looked away.

Yu Longting knew me too well, aware that I'm especially queasy about those bloody and horrific scenes.

"She's dead!! Woman, in the end, you've harmed others and yourself!" the farmer cried out in both anger and sorrow.

Seeing the dead woman's husband, his chest heaving dramatically with emotion, it seemed he couldn't clearly express what exactly had happened.

So, I asked Zhang Shuying.

Zhang Shuying briefly explained.

The farmer's wife, while tending the field, had found an infant that looked like a tree root in the wheat field.

Moved by maternal instincts, she took it home to raise, though they were poor farmers.

Yet, the woman even dipped into their savings to buy a lot of formula to feed it.

Her husband was against this, but could not overcome his wife's persistence.

The monster today, triggered by who knows what, suddenly started attacking people, and the farmer had his arm bitten off and escaped to seek help.

Zhang Shuying, in a lazy tone, made the process sound very succinct, described it in just a few words, then sighed, "This thing probably came with someone's luggage from abroad. For thousands of years, I've never seen anything like it recorded in any ancient text."

I listened, bewildered, with involuntary images of gore flashing in my mind, desperately trying to banish these horrible thoughts, then asked Zhang Shuying, "So... are you going to deal with this?"

"How can I not deal with it? I've been running the sect here for over three years; Ancient Water Village always comes to me when there's trouble. If we don't find that Tree Infant, more people will die."

Zhang Shuying withdrew the Money Sword and used the end of it to scratch his back, "Snake Lord, since you're here, and with your wife, why don't you both lend a hand?"

"I don't want to help." Yu Longting clearly didn't want to get involved with anything related to Zhang Shuying, just when I thought he was going to take me away, I saw a wicked smile curl on Yu Longting's lips, "But that thing scared my wife, and I need to kill it to avenge her. If you want to help me, you can."

"How is that different?" I couldn't understand; wasn't it all about us working together to deal with that cruel Tree Infant?

Zhang Shuying clicked his tongue and walked outside the farmhouse, "Of course, it's different. If it weren't for Snake Lord bringing this up, anyone else daring to compete with me for the lead, I'd kill him!"

I remained silent; oh, the deadly competitiveness of men!

"Eh? Miss Su Wan, why are you... here?" Bearded Man saw me and looked surprised.

Uncle Zhong saw me and was calm, "Probably also noticed something odd about the village and came along with Snake Lord to investigate."

Chapter 270: Broke as a Bell Jingles

I nodded to Bearded Man and Uncle Zhong, "Yeah, I didn't expect such a coincidence to meet you guys again."

"This monster is too bloody and brutal, not suitable for a lady like you to handle," Bearded Man scratched his head, showing his tender regard for women.

Uncle Zhong revealed a hopeless expression, "With the Snake Lord's protection, Su Wan, is it even your concern?"

"There's something off about you, Uncle Zhong," Bearded Man remarked as if he had noticed something.

Uncle Zhong frowned, "What's off?"

"Your behavior is way too reminiscent of a brain-dead fan of the Snake Lord! Boosting others' morale while undermining our own prestige~"

"You're the brain-dead fan."

"Third Master, we've caught a traitor!"

...

Bearded Man and Uncle Zhong bickered with each other on the side.

Yu Longting and Zhang Shuying discussed strategies in earnest.

Zhang Shuying sat on a stone mill, his extremely handsome face showing seriousness, "The Tree Infant's appetite is already whetted, I fear it's going to start a slaughter."

"However, it doesn't carry Demon Qi on its body, so we can't use the typical Geomancy to find it," Yu Longting said, his face as noble as jade, his aura clear and transcendent.

Next to Zhang Shuying, the Taoist, it was he who appeared more like a Banished Immortal with a celestial demeanor, while Zhang Shuying seemed like the alluring demon stirring trouble among mortals.

Zhang Shuying leaned slightly towards Yu Longting, curling up the corner of his lips, "My meaning is a comprehensive search, house by house."

"The people here are fierce by nature. What happens if we go to investigate in others' houses and get chased out with big sticks?" Yu Longting said worriedly.

Zhang Shuying's eyes narrowed, "Damn, Third Master, I'll take you at your word, you're the Snake Lord for heaven's sake. Afraid of ordinary people and their sticks?"

"That's not right; if regular people want to hit me, am I supposed to fight back?" Yu Longting looked down, straightening his clothes nonchalantly, "Your method's too risky; it'll lead to my wife and me getting beaten and cursed. We're going to need compensation for our emotional distress."

"You can't be serious, you've seen how poor our Gu Sect is, we're down to nothing but bare walls, and you still want to fleece me? Be a person, no, be a decent snake!! You're infuriating!!"

Zhang Shuying was so angry that his nose seemed to twist; he stomped up onto the stone mill, hands on hips, and ranted furiously.

The bickering Uncle Zhong and Bearded Man lifted their heads and were suddenly stunned.

They had not expected the two lords to bicker and quarrel like children playing house.

Yu Longting, sprayed in the face with insults, remained unruffled, calmly saying, "I don't want your money; I just want you to work for me, to help me with one thing."

"Not wanting money from our Gu Sect, that's more like it, I'd rather sell my labor than spend a dime," Zhang Shuying displayed his penny-pinching nature to the fullest, then seemed to reconsider, "Wait, I was almost fooled by you. It's clearly me who's helping you, avenging your wife. Shouldn't you be paying me?"

"Right, you help me and give me compensation. If you don't like it, forget it," Yu Longting said, spreading his hands.

Zhang Shuying cracked a cold smile, "Yes, fair is fair!! I, Zhang Shuying, never suffer a loss. When Yun Hao wanted something from me, I beat him half to death. But you, Yu Longting, have nerve! I'll take the loss this time... Taoist Master eats it~"

This??

He had been so fierce just moments before, and now he was admitting defeat?

You have to admit, all that bluster was just... bluster.

"So... it's settled then. I'll take care of the east side, you handle the west side," Yu Longting said with a smile.

"It must be done before sunset; you snakes are truly cunning! Sinister, crafty, low, and shameless~!"

Zhang Shuying hopped down from the stone mill and walked away grumbling with his men.

I wholeheartedly agreed with Zhang Shuying's words on the side, but naturally, I didn't have the guts to say it out loud. Instead, I looked at Yu Longting, trying to please, "Can I say something? Yu Longting?"