

Finest 171

Chapter 171 A Taste of Your Flavor

Longhong Village was an extremely serene hamlet, with several dozen households scattered in different locations. The most secluded corner, nestled against the hill, was the home of Qin Xian'er - a small, quaint wooden house. The beams of the house were sturdy, and on the front of the roof, hung thin bamboo tubes of varying lengths. Small pieces of copper and iron clung to the bamboo, and when a breeze blew, they clanged against the tubes, creating a soft, melodic chime that was immensely pleasing to the ears.

Lin Wanrong was stunned, recognizing them as wind chimes. He marveled at the creativity and craftsmanship of the one who had made such delightful objects.

Next to the wooden house was a waving bamboo grove, the tall stalks leaning on one another and swaying gently in the wind, casting intriguing shadows. With the bamboo grove, the wind chimes, and the veil of misty rain, the house radiated an indescribable air of tranquility and elegance.

Initially, Lin Wanrong had assumed Xian'er came from a simple background. However, seeing this setup left him confused. The house, with its aesthetic simplicity and sophisticated ambiance, was definitely not the work of an ordinary individual.

Xian'er approached the wind chimes and gently stirred them, causing a series of crisp tones to ring out. She turned to Lin Wanrong and asked softly, "Young Master, these are called wind chimes. Do you find them pleasing?"

Lin Wanrong gave a thumbs-up and replied, "Not only is the chime pleasing, but even the name is incredibly beautiful. Did you make these wind chimes?"

Qin Xian'er nodded, "Yes, my mother taught me when I was a child. She said the wind has a voice. I didn't believe her, so she made me a wind chime to prove it. It turns out the wind really does have a voice."

As she spoke, tears began to fall from her eyes, a sight of sorrow Lin Wanrong had never seen before. He realized that this girl had kept a lot to herself. He felt a pang of sympathy as he knew her well. They often exchanged poems and songs, always laughing and enjoying each other's company, yet he had never seen her this sad. He knew little about her background despite all the time they had

spent together. As guilt welled up within him, he took her hand firmly and said, "Xian'er, don't dwell on the unhappy past. Your mother would have wanted to see you smiling. Don't let her down."

Wiping away her tears, Qin Xian'er managed to smile, "You're absolutely right, Young Master. I've let myself get carried away, and I've embarrassed myself in front of you."

Seeing her delicate, pitiful figure, Lin Wanrong's heart stirred again. His fleeting sense of guilt had vanished. He gently caressed her hand and chuckled, "Xian'er, do we still need to talk about these things? Let's hurry into the bedroom... I mean, into the house."

Hearing this, Qin Xian'er's cheeks flushed. She wondered what this man spent his days thinking about. She wanted to have a serious conversation, but could never find the right moment.

Qin Xian'er opened the door to reveal a neatly arranged interior, simple yet elegant. A few bamboo tables and chairs were set up immaculately, clean and dust-free. In the center of the room hung a portrait of a woman, whose age was hard to discern. Her eyebrows were like distant mountains, her eyes like spring water. She exuded an air of serene elegance, bearing a striking resemblance to Qin Xian'er herself.

"Is this your mother?" Lin Wanrong asked.

Qin Xian'er gazed at the figure in the painting in a trance before nodding, "Yes, it is."

Since this was his mother-in-law, Lin Wanrong made a respectful bow to the painting. Turning to Xian'er, he chuckled, "Xian'er, you're just as beautiful as your mother." With one phrase, he complimented both women, a flattering remark that went unnoticed. Overjoyed, Xian'er's face flushed as she gently rebuked, "Young Master, don't tease me."

Qin Xian'er brought out a set of men's clothing for Lin Wanrong to change into. The scholar's gown was in stark contrast to his wild and arrogant demeanor. He looked out of place, like a bear in a suit, feeling incredibly awkward once he put it on.

"I guess I wasn't born to be a scholar," Lin Wanrong sighed, troubled.

Qin Xian'er looked at him, a hint of surprise in her eyes, before chuckling, "Young Master, you look even more charming in this gown than those scholars."

"I thought so too," Lin Wanrong grinned shamelessly.

"Young Master, I'm not just praising you," Qin Xian'er sighed, "I've met countless people in Miaoyu Pavilion. I've seen many sons of nobles, and while some had extraordinary temperaments, none possessed your charisma."

"What charisma, just say I'm thick-skinned," Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Xian'er, whose clothes are these? Are they made especially for me?"

Qin Xian'er gave him a glance and laughed, "These are my (maternal) grandfather's clothes. He once served as a Deputy Minister of the War Department. After retiring, he lived here. These are his clothes."

"So Xian'er comes from a noble family," Lin Wanrong said in surprise, explaining why Xian'er and her mother were both so educated. However, with such a grandfather, Xian'er shouldn't have ended up in the White Lotus cult. Something must have happened, perhaps related to her father whom she never mentioned?

In the backyard of the wooden house was a small pavilion. Feeling refreshed after changing his clothes, Lin Wanrong stood in the pavilion, gazing at the distant misty rain, blurred landscapes, feeling extremely relaxed.

My grandfather-in-law sure knew how to pick a place. The lush mountains and green water are indeed a great place to live. No wonder Xian'er and her mother both have such good temperament, like fairies. If I ever get tired of working, I'll buy a plot of land here, build some wooden houses, construct a few swimming pools, chat with Qingxuan, Qiaoqiao, Second Miss, and Xian'er, and look at the scenery. If I get tired, I can sleep under the sky and on the ground, and enjoy the pleasures of making babies. Wouldn't that be beautiful?

Standing behind him was Qin Xian'er, fresh from grooming herself, dressed in an elegant white gown. Her long hair naturally fell, her cheeks flushed, her face as beautiful as a peach blossom.

The beauty of the mountain, the beauty of the water, and the beauty of the woman. With such a beautiful setting, it would be a shame not to do something even more beautiful. Lin Wanrong felt a tickle in his heart. Grinning, he teased, "Xian'er, why didn't you invite me when you were changing clothes?"

Qin Xian'er was taken aback, asking, "Why would I need to call for you?"

With a solemn face, Lin Wanrong replied, "To protect you, of course! Otherwise, some miscreants might peep at you, and I would be at a huge disadvantage."

A blush rose in Qin Xian'er's cheeks, her head dropping shyly. She thought to herself, He dares to speak of miscreants, when he himself is the biggest one.

Lin Wanrong noticed a delicate little teapot and four porcelain cups on the bamboo table in front of Qin Xian'er, with a pot of boiling water placed beside them.

Seeing him stare, Qin Xian'er couldn't help but smile. "If you visit Longhong Village without tasting its Longhong well water and Longjing tea, wouldn't that be a wasted trip?" she asked.

"Longhong well? Longjing?" Lin Wanrong sprang to his feet. "This is Longjing Village?"

Qin Xian'er nodded. "This is Longhong Village, named after a pond at the front of the village, which looks like a dragon's well. Outsiders call it Longjing Village."

"Oh my! So this is Longjing Village. I'm in a land of fortune and didn't even realize," Lin Wanrong exclaimed. Even though he was ignorant about the tea culture, he had certainly heard of West Lake Longjing.

So, this was the birthplace of West Lake Longjing. Lin Wanrong marveled, "Longjing Village is indeed serene and beautiful. Xian'er, you are so beautiful, you must be a fairy from these tea gardens."

Qin Xian'er chuckled, her slender fingers pouring hot water into the teapot, warming it before discarding the water. She then took freshly picked Longjing tea leaves, dropped them into the pot, and poured hot water over them from a height. A delicate fragrance began to permeate the yard.

Lin Wanrong had no clue about tea, but the smell of Longjing tea ignited his curiosity. Mother's, the genuine West Lake Longjing tea! I've got to try it, he thought.

Qin Xian'er poured the tea from the teacup, filling it to about seventy percent full. The Longjing tea buds looked like little green bullets, appearing very even and balanced in the cup. It was indeed a high-quality tea.

Lin Wanrong didn't understand the subtleties of it all. Seeing Xian'er's fair hands, cherry lips, and petite nose, the dimples in her cheeks appearing with her smiles, he was utterly taken in. He grinned at her lecherously as she served the tea.

Qin Xian'er held the cup and presented it to Lin Wanrong, saying softly, "Please taste the tea, Young Master."

He knew that good tea required appreciation, but how to do it was a complete mystery to him. With a spirit of fearless ignorance, he grinned and said, "Xian'er, I won't lie to you. If you tell me to drink tea, I can, but to taste it, that's a bit difficult for me. Could you teach me?"

Qin Xian'er laughed, saying, "The method to taste tea is simple. Sip it slowly, swish it around in your mouth before swallowing. As you sip, shrink your oral cavity, and as the tea settles below your tongue, it'll produce saliva, and you will feel like you're standing near a spring. This is called 'whistling spring' in tea tasting."

"Whistling Spring? What a creative name. I like it." Lin Wanrong chuckled heartily.

Qin Xian'er held the cup in both hands, sipped a bit of the tea, demonstrating the process for Lin Wanrong.

Lin Wanrong admitted, "Xian'er, for an expert like you, this method of tasting tea is naturally easy, but for me, it's too difficult. I have an idea, however, that might greatly simplify the process."

"How would you simplify it?" Qin Xian'er asked, intrigued.

Lin Wanrong laughed wickedly, "It's quite simple. It's called, you taste, I sample."

"You taste, I sample?" Qin Xian'er frowned, puzzled. Before she could reply, she felt a tightness as he pulled her into his arms. A hot, large mouth covered her petite cherry lips.

Her body went limp, and a mischievous voice echoed in her ears, "This is called, you taste, I sample."

Chapter 172 Heart's Secrets

Qin Xian'er had already wholeheartedly given herself to him, with no defenses up. Even though she was an excellent martial artist, her unguarded state allowed him to catch her off guard.

The waves of masculine scent that wafted from his body left Xian'er feeble and breathless, her delicate body trembling slightly. Her eyes brimmed with unshed tears, and her soft, supple lips were claimed without resistance.

Her lips were as sweet and tender as freshly peeled lychees, exuding a faint fragrance of Longjing tea, irresistibly sweet. As it was her first encounter of this kind, she was unbearably shy, not daring to meet his gaze, merely nestled timidly in his arms, allowing him to explore her soft lips.

Seeing Xian'er's charming compliance, Lin Wanrong was overjoyed. The robe she had recently changed into was loose, inadvertently making things easier for him. He was itching with anticipation; his hand slipped under her robe, gently caressing the enigmatic smoothness of her skin.

At his touch, Xian'er's body trembled lightly, her face flushed as if on fire, her ears burning. She dared not lift her head and had no choice but to let him have his way.

Lin Wanrong moved his hands slowly, exploring from her shoulder down her back to her waist. Xian'er's skin, as smooth as water, was irresistible to him.

"Ah" A soft moan escaped from Qin Xian'er as Lin Wanrong's burning hands slowly moved to her chest, gently caressing her. Though she was the belle of Miaoyu Pavilion, she maintained her purity. If she hadn't fallen deeply for him, she would never have allowed him such liberty.

The sight of her reaction spurred on Lin Wanrong's lust. Xian'er's skin was unrivaled, her breasts full and firm. The touch was as smooth as milk, the two rosy spots on her chest were extraordinarily tender and enticing.

Swallowing hard, Lin Wanrong thought remorselessly, Even if I were offered kingdoms, I wouldn't exchange them for a treasure like Xian'er.

"Young Master, no" Qin Xian'er breathed, her voice frail. Even she found her reaction strange. Was that really her voice? How embarrassing.

In Lin Wanrong's understanding, when a woman said no, she meant yes. He chuckled, pressing his thumbs against the pink buds on her chest. Qin Xian'er whimpered, her voice a mixture of pain and complaint but filled with infinite desire. Her longing surged like a tidal wave.

"Young Master" Qin Xian'er's lips parted slightly, her breath as hot as fire, her cheeks flushed, her eyes moist, as if about to weep. Panting, she said, "Young Master, please listen to Xian'er."

At this point, what else was there to say? If there was something to discuss, they could talk tomorrow morning. Ignoring her, Lin Wanrong was about to proceed when he felt her body shake violently. Looking up in surprise, he saw Qin Xian'er's face pale, staring blankly at him. Tears welled up in her eyes and spilled over in the next instant.

Damn, what happened? Who dared to hurt Xian'er? Lin Wanrong hastily withdrew his hands, pulled her into his embrace, and said, "Xian'er, my precious sweetheart, don't look so upset. Who bullied you? I'll make them pay."

Upon hearing his words, Qin Xian'er cried even more pitifully, her voice choking, "Does Xian'er seem like such a loose woman in your eyes?"

'Good heavens, you're not a loose woman, but I'm sure I am an indiscriminate man.' Seeing Xian'er crying incessantly, Lin Wanrong hastily comforted her, "Xian'er, don't cry. In my eyes, you are the most innocent and beautiful woman in this world." Having said this, he secretly added two words in his mind: one of. 'Mercy of Buddha', he thought, trying to appease her. 'Qingxuan, Qiaoqiao, Second Miss, and all the other wives who I have yet to meet, please don't blame me.'

Wiping her tears, Xian'er replied, "Xian'er has you in her heart, thinking of you, loving you, and letting you be frivolous with my body. But this matter of casual intercourse is not what Xian'er wishes for. Please listen to my words." The implication was, she was willing for him to be flirtatious, but he could not break the last line of defense, else it would be considered an inappropriate act.

Lin Wanrong was sweating profusely. He held certain reservations towards premarital intimacy - against others, not himself. But did he truly need to marry Xian'er before they could become intimate? He hadn't found Qingxuan yet. Besides, if he were to marry, it would be like serving one

dish for everyone. How could he choose only one? This Xian'er appeared gentle and submissive, but in fact, she was very assertive, principled, and had a strong personality. She was hard to coax, impossible to deceive, and truly a headache.

Seeing his troubled expression, Qin Xian'er shyly asked, "Do you remember what Xian'er told you when we last parted in Jinling?"

Upon pondering, Lin Wanrong remembered her saying something about killing Qingxuan. At first, he thought it was an offhand remark, but considering her intent to kill Eldest Miss today and her previous threats towards the other ladies, her words didn't seem to be a joke.

Cold sweat covered Lin Wanrong as he realized his error. Overcome with desire, he had overlooked a serious issue. This Qin Xian'er was a ticking time bomb, set to explode at any moment. However, her figure was truly attractive, and he couldn't help but admire it. His cold sweat and drool mixed as they trickled down his face.

"Xian'er said, once I've killed that Xiao Qingxuan, I would devote everything to you." Qin Xian'er sighed deeply. "However, seeing you today brought me such joy, I almost lost control. It's not entirely your fault."

'Well, there is some element of your seduction involved,' Lin Wanrong shamelessly defended himself in his mind.

"Truth be told, if you truly desired me just now, Xian'er wouldn't have held a grudge. I would have been overjoyed." Qin Xian'er suddenly said shyly.

"Overjoyed?" Lin Wanrong was puzzled. "You were crying so profusely earlier. How could I see any joy? What was supposed to be a mutual act of love nearly turned into something coercive. I couldn't feel any joy."

Seeing his dejected look, she knew he didn't believe her. Her feelings for Lin Wanrong were genuine, and seeing him in such a state made her heart ache. She unexpectedly took the initiative to hold his hand and said, "Don't disbelieve, Young Master. Once Xian'er has told you her feelings, you will understand."

Lin Wanrong suddenly laughed, saying, "Actually, Xian'er, I was just testing your limits earlier. You know I'm a decent man. How could I do such a morally reprehensible thing?"

Qin Xian'er almost spat out blood, feeling both shy and angry. You rascal, you do wrong and yet speak so righteously. If that's your version of morality, then my White Lotus Sect must be the saviour of the masses, she thought to herself. She shot Lin Wanrong a reproachful look and murmured, "You've taken advantage of me completely, you're absolutely awful."

Seeing her stop crying, Lin Wanrong prayed for Buddha's protection, glad she had finally stopped. He successfully shifted the topic again. "Xian'er, what did you want to tell me earlier?" Lin Wanrong asked.

"Young Master, I said earlier that I want to kill Xiao Qingxuan--"

"Stop, stop, not that one--" Lin Wanrong hastily interrupted her, saying with frustration, "Xian'er, let's not talk about murder anymore."

Qin Xian'er bit her lip, her eyes filling with unshed tears. "I understand, you don't value me. I'm the demoness of the White Lotus Sect, a ruthless killer. How can I compare with Xiao Qingxuan, such a noble and pure lady?"

Lin Wanrong felt helpless at her words. "Xian'er, where is this coming from? I may not have many virtues, but my love for all is something I take pride in. I feel the same way about you and Qingxuan."

Qin Xian'er said, "Young Master, although I am a demoness, I have clear likes and dislikes. I hate Xiao Qingxuan, and I openly want to kill her. I love you, and I'm willing to give my life for you, wishing to grow old together with you. Where have I gone wrong in doing so?"

Lin Wanrong was at a loss. Qin Xian'er was gentle, but she also had a stubborn temper and would easily resort to killing. Yet she was also clear about love and hatred. He didn't know how to describe her.

"Can't you get along well with Qingxuan? You two are both skilled in martial arts. You should have a lot in common and could certainly be good sisters," Lin Wanrong suggested.

Being a man with multiple wives was not easy. Besides being a good husband, he also had to play the role of a political officer, doing timely ideological work for his wives, otherwise, there would be chaos.

"Why should I be sisters with her?" Qin Xian'er snorted. "I'm more likely to kill her."

Lin Wanrong didn't know what to say. Seeing his helpless look, Qin Xian'er sighed softly and said, "As I said before, if you had wanted me just now, I would have been more than happy. Whether you believe it or not, every word I said was true."

Lin Wanrong was puzzled by her words, but as he listened to Qin Xian'er continue, he began to understand. "Xian'er once told you that she only has a mother, not a father. Do you remember, Young Master?"

Lin Wanrong remembered well. Seeing Qin Xian'er's sad look, he knew there must be a story there. He quickly interrupted her, saying, "Xian'er, don't say anymore. I believe you."

Qin Xian'er became visibly agitated, a tear falling down her cheek. Gratefully, she glanced at him and said, "Young Master, you are so kind to me." Sometimes, Qin Xian'er was astute and hard to coax, but Lin Wanrong's casual remark moved her to tears. It indeed held true, as the old saying goes, that a woman's heart was as unpredictable as a needle at the bottom of the sea.

"Given your kindness towards me, Young Master, it would be wrong for me to keep secrets from you," Qin Xian'er said, her face firm with resolve. "You already know my (maternal) grandfather's identity. After resigning from his official position, he chose to live a simple life in Longhong Village, content despite its hardships. My mother, from an early age, was recognized near and far as a gifted lady. Unfortunately, she had a tragic fate and was given in marriage to a man in the capital who was no better than a brute. This man had many wives who constantly conspired and competed against each other. My mother, indifferent by nature and unwilling to engage in such conflicts, frequently fell victim to their schemes. The man treated her with complete disregard. Thankfully, her life gained some solace when she gave birth to me. The brute, having few children, showed me great affection. I initially thought him to be the best father in the world. But when I was eight, my mother and I happened to be in the garden when the man's enemy came seeking revenge. To protect himself, he... he..."

Qin Xian'er shuddered violently, choking on her words. Sensing the impending tragedy in her story, Lin Wanrong hurriedly patted her shoulder and said, "Xian'er, darling, don't be scared, we don't have to continue."

"He used my mother as a human shield, letting her take a fatal blow meant for him. I... I lost my mother forever... Oh, my poor mother..." Qin Xian'er fell into his arms, sobbing uncontrollably, her grief so intense it seemed to rob her of breath.

The news was indeed shocking. A couple, who should have been inseparable, resulting in such a brutal act for the sake of self-preservation. Xian'er's father was truly the most heartless man in the world.

The poor girl! Lin Wanrong gently patted her shoulder and sighed. He was beginning to understand Xian'er's feelings. To think she had suffered so much! Imagine an eight-year-old girl not only seeing her mother endure countless cruelties but also witnessing her own father using her mother as a shield to save himself. The blow was indeed merciless.

"Xian'er, it's all in the past now, don't be afraid. I promise to take good care of you," Lin Wanrong said softly.

"Young Master..." Overcome with emotion, Qin Xian'er clung to him, sobbing in his arms, as if seeking a reliable pillar of support.

Lin Wanrong held her tight in his arms. Considering what she had gone through, her previous actions became understandable.

After what felt like an eternity, Xian'er's emotions finally began to stabilize. A flush appeared on her face. She glanced at Lin Wanrong, a mix of happiness and shyness flashing across her face, before she quickly buried her head back into his chest.

"Xian'er, how did you end up with the White Lotus Sect?" Lin Wanrong asked softly.

Qin Xian'er hummed in affirmation, saying, "By chance, my master was in the capital on business that year. Seeing my pitiful state, she took me in as her disciple and brought me back to the sect. From then on, I became the little demoness of the White Lotus Sect. Young Master, do you detest demonesses?"

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "I don't know about other demonesses, but I quite adore this little demoness, Xian'er."

A glimmer of joy flickered in Qin Xian'er's heart as she sighed, "I never wanted to be a demoness. But my master, who raised me from a young age, has been overwhelmingly kind to me. Whatever she asks me to do, I must accomplish it, even at the cost of my life."

"I understand that," said Lin Wanrong, "You should follow your own path. Do you remember what I once told you? If it's for your loved ones, what does it matter if the world stands against you?"

"Young Master, I've held on to every word you've said," Qin Xian'er murmured, resting her head on his chest. Her small chest was pink, her face still wet from her tears, yet her shyness was overwhelmingly endearing, causing Lin Wanrong to feel an itch in his heart. He cursed inwardly, contemplating the harshness of fate. Xian'er was so well-behaved and had suffered so much. It made him feel reluctant to push her too far.

Chapter 173 To Proceed or Not? A Dilemma!

"Ever since my mother's tragic death, I've harbored deep resentment for those who betray love and trust. I once made a vow that whoever I would find as my husband could only love me and me alone. I yearned for his undivided attention, a devotion that would last a lifetime, never to abandon me." Qin Xian'er glanced at him, her words coming out softly.

So that was it. This young maiden was undoubtedly marked by the horrific events she'd witnessed as a child. That was why she bore such resentment towards others, anyone remotely connected with Lin Wanrong was a target of her ire. Her actions might have been domineering, but they were also profoundly passionate.

"When I met you, it felt like past life's grievances found me. Life is short, true friends are hard to find, and it's even harder to meet someone to love passionately. Xian'er's encounter with you is a tremendous destiny. Although I'm just a woman, I know that although marriage is arranged by heaven, everything is subject to human efforts. That's why I cast aside my shame and decided to stay by your side, hoping you won't despise Xian'er's simplicity." Qin Xian'er blushed as she spoke with utter shyness.

Listening to a girl confess her feelings was quite a unique experience, particularly when it was a stunning beauty like Qin Xian'er. This greatly satisfied Lin Wanrong's vanity.

He gently caressed Xian'er's hand and said, "Xian'er, let's be together henceforth, sticking by each other's side, never to leave or forsake each other, how does that sound?"

A blush tinged Qin Xian'er's cheeks as she whispered, "Your wish is my wish as well."

Her charming shyness and exquisite appeal ignited a fire within Lin Wanrong. He scoffed at any thought of propriety, thinking to himself, 'I shall make my move first and figure out the rest later, what of it?'

His hands gently started exploring her body, edging into her delicate clothing. Xian'er, having shared her deepest feelings, began to open her heart. Seeing him behave thus, she sighed inwardly, thinking, 'Oh well, since I've promised him my life and to never leave him, giving myself to him now wouldn't make any difference.'

With this thought, she ceased to resist him. As his gentle caresses swept over her, her body responded like it was ablaze, soft and warm. Her mouth slightly open, exhaling a sweet fragrance, she whispered, "Please treat Xian'er with kindness"

Hearing her faint words, a thrill of joy surged in Lin Wanrong's heart. 'So, she's given her tacit consent. Pre-marital relations, such a noble and glorious pursuit! I must persevere.'

While his mind raced with these thoughts, his hands didn't pause. Gently, he caressed her firm and smooth skin, his movements slow and deliberate.

Xian'er, her heart open, passionately embraced him, pressing her voluptuous chest into his arms, her face flushed with vibrant color. She exhaled soft, fragrant sighs, lowered her head and whispered shyly, "Not here, please"

The flames of desire soared within Lin Wanrong. Suddenly, he scooped her into his arms and hurried back into the room, laying her on the neatly made wooden bed.

Her heart pounded wildly, her eyes tightly shut, too shy to look at him. Lin Wanrong, an expert at undressing, quickly removed Xian'er's generous robe. Just one glimpse was enough to make his nose bleed.

Xian'er's beautiful hair was strewn across the bed, her eyes tightly shut, long lashes trembling slightly. She did not dare to open her eyes. Her exquisite nose and cherry lips breathed heavily, gasping incessantly, which was utterly enticing. Her neck was pale and slender, her skin as clear and radiant as snow. Both of her exposed arms were frost-fair and as smooth as lotus roots. She was tightly clad in a scarlet undergarment, enveloping her curvaceous figure. Her bosom heaved tumultuously due to her shyness, creating an undulating and rolling landscape. Even the two points of bright red seemed ready to burst forth. Her long, jade-like legs were smooth and tightly clasped together, adding to her overwhelming allure. Xian'er's body was tender yet full, flawless from head to toe, like a divine gift from heaven, perfect in every measure.

Lin Wanrong struggled to swallow his saliva. His hands began to tremble slightly as he slowly untied Xian'er's scarlet undergarment. Her two mounds, like rabbits released from their cage, surged forth, their rosy tips glistening as if they had been washed in water, shining with tempting radiance.

Xian'er let out a startled yelp. Her heart beat more violently, making her plump breasts tremble. The two crimson points vibrated like alluring little cherries. Xian'er's slender legs clenched tightly together, yet the hints of hidden paradise were still visible.

Lin Wanrong's body was burning. Damn it, Xian'er was born so beautiful, isn't she trying to take my life?

"Young Master" Xian'er's beautiful eyes were tightly shut, her earlobes flushing red. Her face was as colorful as the freshly gathered rosy clouds, enhancing her snow-white skin and cherry lips, rendering her beyond description. Feeling his hot gaze roaming all over her body, Xian'er was overwhelmed with shyness, quickly closing her legs, her delicate hands instinctively covering her chest. She was torn between wanting to refuse and her shy acceptance, making her even more enchanting.

With a few tugs, Lin Wanrong shed his own clothes, holding Xian'er's delicate body tightly against his chest. The soft touch from her tender points was enchanting. He pulled her body close to his, a wave of hot breath washed over her, and Xian'er's body started to tremble violently.

Lin Wanrong's hands lightly slid down her waist, slowly reaching her inner thigh. The curve was exquisite, smooth and protruding. As soon as he touched her, Xian'er let out a low cry:

"Don't" Her eyes were hazy, looking at Lin Wanrong, she said, "Young Master, will you always only love Xian'er?"

Damn it, she is asking this even now? Her jealousy is too profound. Heh heh, after experiencing how impressive I am, let's see how you can still be jealous. Lin Wanrong did not answer her question, but instead, his hands slipped to cover her soft breasts. At the two bright red points, he pressed lightly, tweaking and kneading gently.

Xian'er's passion burned fiercely, yet she held onto the last shred of her lucidity. "Young Master, answer Xian'er quickly. Xian'er doesn't want to hurt Young Master."

Hurt me? If I don't take you now, that's what would really hurt me. Lin Wanrong, while gently pinching the two red tips, smiled and thought

Xian'er's ample bosom heaved rapidly, her soft voice saying, "Young Master, my master was a Miao woman. Ever since experiencing the change of my parents, I've come to despise heartless and unrighteous people. All I desired was a devoted husband, so I asked my master to plant the Lovebug inside me."

The Lovebug? What was the Lovebug? Nothing compared to the reality of Xian'er's ample bosom and curvy hips. Lin Wanrong thought dismissively, his hands moving eagerly, eliciting soft gasps from Xian'er.

"The Lovebug is a symbol of mutual affection between a man and a woman. After sharing a bed with me, you'll have my Lovebug inside you. From then on, we'll live or die together, depend on each other, never to part," Xian'er said hurriedly. She felt his considerable heat pressing against her lower abdomen, her breathing becoming rapid. "However, if you sleep with another woman, the Lovebug will transfer to her. Her life and death would then be in my hands."

"What?" Lin Wanrong was about to surge forward, his little brother standing tall, when he heard this. Even though the scenery was tempting, he couldn't advance a single step.

Damn it, what's going on? At this critical moment, this happens. I might become impotent. Lin Wanrong broke out in a cold sweat and quickly checked a certain place. Seeing that it was still sturdy, he sighed in relief. It was good to be a "stand-up" man.

Xian'er felt his fiery manhood pressing firmly against her private area. Her heart felt like it was about to jump out. The gentle friction made her whole body weak and heated, a secret spring flowing within her. Her body seemed to lose all strength, like a cocoon being unwound.

"What is this Lovebug? Xian'er, explain clearly," Lin Wanrong dared not make any reckless movements, holding her body tightly, he asked urgently.

Xian'er replied softly, "Miao women are passionate, skilled in using bugs. In order to find a devoted husband, I asked my master to plant the Lovebug inside me when I was young. If I have performed the marital rites with you, and the Lovebug has entered your body. You are the bug's host, and my life is in your hands."

Sweat! What kind of bug is this, hidden inside one's belly? Can't it be expelled by taking some medicine? Damn it, do I have to have an abortion? Is there any justice in the world?

However, Xian'er was willing to put her own life and death in Lin Wanrong's hands. This level of devotion, it was hard not to be moved.

"The so-called Lovebug is a sign of lifelong devotion. If you perform the marital rites with another woman, the bug will transfer to her, and the one in me will become the bug's host. That woman's life and death would then be in my hands."

Hearing these clear words, Lin Wanrong felt cold sweat trickling down his forehead.

Oh heavens, earth, are you playing with me? I'm fully undressed, about to begin the final act, and now there's this Lovebug? Is it because my prowess is too strong that you're deliberately messing with me? Xian'er's master, teaching all kinds of things, why bugs? Xian'er was so young, didn't know anything, and just said something casually, and you took it seriously? Damn, either you're morally corrupt, or you're a pervert.

To thrust or not? Lin Wanrong was completely dumbfounded. He was now faced with a choice between a single tree and an entire forest. People always said that you shouldn't sacrifice a forest for one tree, but this tree, Qin Xian'er, was different. Her figure was truly exquisite, and he would fight to the death rather than abandon her. One tree, two trees, an entire forest he wanted them all.

After pondering for a while, he asked, clutching at a strand of hope, "Xian'er, is there a way to get rid of this Lovebug?" Qin Xian'er shook her head with a slight smile.

Lin Wanrong sighed, realizing why Xian'er had said that if he made love to her, she would be too delighted to care about anything else. It was true. If he indulged in her once, his other women Qingxuan, Qiaoqiao, and Yushuang would have to remain celibate, their lives in Xian'er's hands even if he risked his life to indulge with them again. Damn it, did they expect him to live like this?

Seeing his troubled face, Qin Xian'er couldn't help but burst into tears. "My love for you, Young Master, is as constant as the sun and the moon in the sky, and it would persist even if mountains crumbled and rivers dried up," she sobbed. "My purity will always belong to you, Young Master."

You have put me in a real fix, Xian'er, thought Lin Wanrong. He couldn't devour her or scold her; this was indeed a tricky situation. After pondering for a while, he decided it would be best to consult

someone about this. Qingxuan was as skilled as Xian'er in martial arts, and she would surely have a solution. Maybe they could get rid of the bug with some medicine.

He marveled at the twist of his fate; he was flirting with the idea of using a potion to rid himself of this predicament. Surely, he thought, this was an unprecedented predicament.

Lin Wanrong developed a newfound understanding of Qin Xian'er. This woman, she truly had an extreme personality. Her hatred was fiery, her love was fervent. With a sigh, he looked at Qin Xian'er, who was anxiously watching him, and said with an awkward smile, "Xian'er, don't worry. I will find a solution to this problem."

Qin Xian'er lowered her head, asking softly, "Young Master, are you angry with Xian'er?"

"Angry, of course I am," Lin Wanrong replied loudly. Seeing her terrified eyes, he laughed and said, "I'm angry because my Xian'er is so beautiful and adorable, she makes my head spin. I can't even think straight, and though I want to spank her little bottom, I just can't bring myself to do it."

"Young Master" Qin Xian'er was bashfully charming, but she could feel his large, warm hand caressing her backside. He indeed wasn't willing to spank her, but he was more than willing to touch.

"Xian'er, I want you to know that I'm a very decent man," Lin Wanrong said seriously, "I'm not the kind of person who only seeks physical pleasure. What I value more is a spiritual connection what we commonly refer to as mutual understanding." He lied, hands gently exploring Xian'er's body, with his hot arousal pressing firmly between her thighs, more fervent than before.

As Lin Wanrong talked nonsense, Qin Xian'er was too shy to speak, only managing a slight hum, letting him have his way with her.

"To prove that I'm a man of high moral character," Lin Wanrong said with a slight smile, "I have decided that tonight, we'll sleep together naked. To further test my self-control, I have a small request for you, Xian'er."

"What request?" Xian'er asked, nestled tightly in his arms, her voice laden with bashfulness. At this moment, their naked bodies were entwined, feeling the heat emanating from him, especially the fiery dragon beneath, growing increasingly larger and only a hair's breadth away from penetrating her.

"I want you to do your best to tease me, as proof of my noble character," Lin Wanrong chuckled lasciviously. If he couldn't have her, he should at least reap some interest, or else, wasn't the disrobing for naught? He had never been one for futile efforts.

"Young Master" Xian'er whimpered, hiding herself in his chest, her face burning hot, and she didn't dare to lift her head for a long time.

Lin Wanrong waited for a while but found no response. After frantically exploring her body, he sighed internally. This girl would need further training.

Just as he was thinking this, he felt a small, warm hand, trembling ever so slightly, slowly reaching towards the heat below his waist. The extreme pleasure made Lin Wanrong feel both joy and sorrow. Liuxia Hui, he thought, I am on par with you this time. [Note: Liuxia Hui is known in Chinese history as a man of great restraint, particularly with regard to sexual temptation.]

Chapter 174 Melancholy

Embracing a naked beauty in his arms, yet only allowed to look and not taste, was indeed a form of excruciating torment for a man. Holding the soft, delicate body of Qin Xian'er, Lin Wanrong was overwhelmed with a sense of helplessness. Thinking about the Lovebug in her body, aside from taking small liberties, he could only resign himself to being a good man.

For the sake of future happiness, I accept it, Lin Wanrong thought indignantly, idly giving a gentle pinch on Xian'er's jade breast. A soft moan escaped from the sleeping Qin Xian'er, extremely tantalizing.

By the time he awoke, there was a fine drizzle outside the window, lending an even greater atmosphere than yesterday. But Qin Xian'er was nowhere to be found by his side. The room still held her lingering fragrance, and a note lay gently pressed against the pillow. The ink was not yet dry, inscribed with several graceful small characters: "Urgently summoned by the sect, I must depart first. This house belongs to you and is also my home. Day and night, I think of you, your heart is my heart."

Lin Wanrong sighed, Qingxuan had left, and now Xian'er was gone too. The same haste, the same absence of trace. He stood in the courtyard pavilion, looking at the note, sighing silently. On the elegant paper, there were a few new, dried tear stains. Thinking of Xian'er's exquisite face, her

tearful appearance, the soft whispers beside the pillow from last night, it was like this misty rain, dreamlike, a surreal illusion.

"Gone, gone, all gone," even the usually cheerful Lin Wanrong could only muster a bitter smile in the face of such a scene. Luckily, he still had Qiaoqiao and Yushuang by his side, which gave him a slight comfort.

In just over a month, the New Year would pass, and then he would head north, determined to find that girl Qingxuan, find a way to rid Xian'er's body of the Lovebug, marry the four girls, then build a house by West Lake, to enjoy his later years. That was his life goal.

Despite his unique experiences, he never thought about saving the nation or the people. I'm just an ordinary guy, those lofty, intangible things have nothing to do with me. Ideal? Ideals are worthless. If you can live a stable life, you should be thankful.

Leaving Longhong Village, his mood remained low. He followed the path from yesterday, returning to the West Lake. Even though it was a misty drizzle, there were still boats coming and going on the lake. Most were official boats, with people diving underwater from time to time, seemingly looking for something.

These must have been sent by Xu Wei, huh? They have been searching for a whole day and night, and they haven't stopped, Lin Wanrong thought with a smile. This old Xu, he treats me well, I'm a little touched.

"Is that Young Master Lin ahead?" a voice came. A group of soldiers searching by the lake saw him, and the one leading them was the guard who had been looking for a boat for Xu Wei yesterday. Despite changing his clothes, Lin Wanrong was recognized by him instantly.

"It is indeed Lin San," Lin Wanrong responded with a fist and palm salute. "Are you looking for me, brother? You have worked hard. I am really sorry."

"Is it really Young Master Lin?" the guard said joyfully, "Someone, go and inform the boss, we found Young Master Lin."

Lin Wanrong nodded slightly and asked, "I appreciate your hard work, brother. May I ask your name?"

The guard chuckled, "You're too polite, Young Master. I'm just a simple man, my surname is Gao and my given name is Qiu."

Gao Qiu? Lin Wanrong paused for a moment, then said, "There's a man named Gao Shou who works under our Jiangsu Governor Luo. Your names are quite similar, I wonder if there's any relation?"

Gao Qiu laughed, "He's my elder brother." Gao Qiu, Gao Shou. Goodness, their father was quite creative, monopolizing all the benefits in the world. (TL: Qiu in Gao Qiu means Chief or Chieftain)

"Did you also work in the palace, brother?" Lin Wanrong asked.

Gao Qiu nodded, "I did serve in the palace. Later, I was commanded by the Emperor to protect Mr. Xu, and have been doing so for quite a few years now." It seemed that just like Luo Min, Xu Wei was also a trusted aide of the current Emperor, otherwise, the Emperor wouldn't have sent so many palace guards to accompany him.

Seeing so many people searching for him, Lin Wanrong sighed, "Because of me, so many brothers have been troubled. I'm really sorry."

"You shouldn't say that, Young Master," Gao Qiu said, "You knew you weren't strong enough, yet you bravely fought the White Lotus bandits. We really admire you."

God, what a way to slap me in the face, Lin Wanrong thought, chuckling to himself.

In the meantime, a group of people was hurrying over. Leading them was Xu Wei. From a distance, Lin Wanrong saluted, "Mr. Xu, did you sleep well last night?"

Arriving at his side and seeing him safe and sound, Xu Wei finally breathed a sigh of relief. "Little brother Lin, you've really worried us sick."

Lin Wanrong laughed, "Really? You and Miss Su were finally reunited after a long separation. Last night was the perfect opportunity for you two to enjoy each other's company. How could you possibly have insomnia?"

Xu Wei, a man in his fifties or sixties, blushed when teased by this young man in his twenties. But he was not an ordinary person. Even though he had only met Lin Wanrong a few times, he liked him very much. He bowed deeply to Lin Wanrong, "I am grateful for your help, Little brother Lin."

"Where did I help?" Lin Wanrong asked in surprise.

"There are two ways you helped. Publicly, you helped me capture the White Lotus and bravely fought the bandits. You are truly a model of courage. Privately, you helped me fulfill a long-cherished wish. My reunion with Qinglian is all thanks to you. In both public and private matters, you deserve my gratitude," Xu Wei stated seriously.

"Haha, never mind, never mind. I just couldn't stand the arrogance of the White Lotus cult, that's why I wanted to help. I didn't expect the bandits to be so weak. They fell into the water, and what's worse, they caught me off guard and pulled me down too," Lin Wanrong shamelessly bragged.

"Indeed, it's exactly as you said." Xu Wei stroked his beard and laughed lightly. This Lin Wanrong was not only more knowledgeable than him, but his thick skin was also quite rare. "But I wonder, how did you manage to escape?"

Xu Wei's eyes flickered, naturally doubtful of Lin Wanrong's words. He laughed and asked, "Little brother Lin, you possess good skills. But, tell me, was the bandit who escaped male or female?"

"This... I didn't touch," Lin Wanrong answered without blinking.

Xu Wei laughed heartily, "Losing one doesn't matter. Their leader has fallen into our hands, the lesser minions can't cause any trouble." While they were speaking, someone came to report, "Minister Xu, Miss Xiao has returned to Jinling."

"When did she leave?" Xu Wei asked in surprise.

"I've just returned from conveying your order, sir. I informed Miss Xiao that Young Master Lin has safely returned, and upon hearing this, she said she was setting off for Jinling immediately."

"Miss Xiao left?" Xu Wei said, puzzled, "Last night, Miss Xiao was so anxious that she and Qinglian stayed on the ship overnight without sleep, asking me to inform her as soon as there was news of Young Master Lin. Now that Young Master Lin is back, why did she leave without even seeing him?"

Damn, this lady is indeed heartless. Yesterday she was all smiles. I return, and she doesn't even greet me before running off. Once we get back to Jinling, I'll settle the score with you. We haven't even split the silver we've made these days.

"Did Miss Xiao say anything about what I should do?" Lin Wanrong asked.

"Miss Xiao said that after Young Master Lin has settled the affairs here, he should return to Jinling at his own convenience."

Settle the affairs? I'm just a mere servant in the Xiao family, what affairs could I possibly handle? You obviously don't want to see me and are using such poor excuses.

Xu Wei looked at him meaningfully and said, "Little brother Lin, forgive my bluntness, but with your talents and knowledge, it is indeed a waste for you to be a small servant in the Xiao family. If you don't mind, I can make some recommendations for you. With your talents, you are sure to achieve great things, your future is bound to be bright."

"A bright future?" Lin Wanrong said with a faint smile, "And what would that future be?"

Xu Wei said, "To serve in the court, to serve the country, to benefit the people."

Lin Wanrong sighed, "Mr. Xu, was this your dream when you were young?"

Xu Wei paused. Lin Wanrong's question was loaded, implying that this was only his youthful aspiration. Indeed, at Xu Wei's age, having seen so much darkness and having used so many tactics, his youthful passion had long faded, and where could he find traces of that ideal?

Ideal? What was the use of an ideal? If one asked the old farmers who work in the fields, their biggest ideal was to have food and clothing. Serving the country and benefiting the people? Such slogans sounded great, but corruption and exploiting the people were the reality for these educated men. If there were one day when there were no officials in this world, then that would be true peace.

Lin Wanrong took a deep breath and said, "Mr. Xu, I am just an ordinary man. I have not studied the sage's books, nor have I thought about saving the country or the people. As long as no one bullies me, I simply wish to live a peaceful and stable life. That's my ideal. It's just like being a servant in

the Xiao family. The Madam and the young ladies of the Xiao family treat me fairly well. Being with them is fulfilling and stress-free, much more relaxed and comfortable than being an official. People, after all, shouldn't have too many aspirations. Living each day peacefully and steadily is a grace from the heavens."

Upon hearing Lin Wanrong's words, Xu Wei couldn't help but sigh. The younger man had outrightly rejected a chance that countless people dreamt of. Lin Wanrong was truly a character, full of unexpectedness, embodying a sense of grandeur in his actions.

To live each day peacefully and steadily? Perhaps, that was nothing more than a luxury. Lin Wanrong sighed inwardly, a sense of melancholy washing over his features.

Chapter 175 Picking on the Weak

"By the way, Mr. Xu, what do you plan to do with those rebels from the White Lotus cult?" Lin Wanrong suddenly asked with keen interest.

"Question the bandit leaders, show them no mercy." Xu Wei responded concisely.

"I do know who leads them, a man named Lu Zhongping, right? I was a 'guest' of the White Lotus cult in the past, and I have deep feelings toward him," Lin Wanrong laughed. After all, how could there not be deep affection between a grandfather and grandson?

"You recognize this Lu Zhongping?" Xu Wei asked, "He indeed leads this time, but he is definitely not the one behind the scenes."

Xu Wei's words carried profound implications, to which Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Mr. Xu, you probably already have some deductions in your mind, why bother wasting energy inquiring?"

"To catch a couple in adultery, to seize a thief and his booty, one must have clear evidence to convince others, and silence those puppet masters behind the scenes." There was a glint in Xu Wei's eyes, his words laced with deeper meaning.

"Regrettably, I left in such a hurry this time, bringing only skilled bodyguards with me. They're not experts in interrogation, and this Lu Zhongping is indeed quite stubborn, yielding little useful information." Xu Wei seemed to be talking to himself.

Damn, isn't this an obvious invitation? Knowing I have a vendetta against the White Lotus Sect, he knew I'd be interested. This old Xu is really thoughtful. I haven't personally done any interrogation before, but haven't I seen a pig run even though I've never eaten pig's feet? Waterboarding, torture chairs, just a few measures should make the grandson talk.

I've never interrogated anyone before, but I came today for that turtle Lu Zhongping. I specialize in beating the fallen.

Hearing about such a good opportunity, Lin Wanrong's previously gloomy mood evaporated, Damn, being a cop, missing such an entertaining job would be foolish.

"Well, Mr. Xu, I would like to observe" Lin Wanrong began, feigning shyness. Xu Wei looked at him and burst into laughter.

The place where Lu Zhongping was locked up was a dimly lit room. He was shackled, looking pale and extremely haggard.

When Lin Wanrong and Gao Qiu walked in, Lu Zhongping lifted his head from the torture rack and shot a look of fury at Lin Wanrong, "Lin San, what are you here for?"

Damn, still so arrogant after being captured? Do you think this is your kitchen? Lin Wanrong laughed, "I came to visit family."

"Visit who?" Lu Zhongping retorted angrily.

"Visit my grandson." Lin Wanrong grinned.

Lu Zhongping's face twitched, and he yelled, "Lin San, you and I are irreconcilable!"

Damn you, you abducted me to the White Lotus cult. If it weren't for Xian'er rescuing me, I would have died at your hands and that turtle Tao Dongcheng's. When have I ever reconciled with you?

Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, turning to Gao Qiu, "Brother Gao, I heard this kid is a martial arts master, right?"

Gao Qiu nodded, and Lin Wanrong laughed, "A martial arts master, such a terrifying title. What's the way to break this martial arts master's skills?"

"Pierce the Dantian, lock the shoulder blades." Gao Qiu responded succinctly.

[TL: Dantian traditionally located in the lower abdomen, about two inches below the navel and inwards towards the spine]

"Hmm, sounds quite interesting. Brother Gao, please try each method a hundred times." Lin Wanrong said leisurely.

Lu Zhongping jumped in shock, exclaiming, "Lin San, you dare?"

Gao Qiu was also taken aback. This Young Master Lin was ruthless. Even one trial of each method would leave Lu Zhongpin crippled. Yet he demanded a hundred times as if he were slicing vegetables.

"What the hell would I not dare to do?" Lin Wanrong slammed his fist on the table and roared, "Have you ever seen me afraid to do anything? I'm not even afraid of your master, so why should I fear you, grandson?"

Lu Zhongping's face turned pale. Lin San was even more arrogant this time than when captured that day. Today, with the roles reversed, why wouldn't he be arrogant? Lu Zhongping wasn't afraid of the many skilled warriors by Xu Wei's side, but facing Lin San, who carried an evil aura, it was hard not to fear.

"You, you dare? Lin San, if you have guts, fight me one-on-one" Seeing Gao Qiu gradually closing in, Lu Zhongping began to shout in a trembling voice. He wasn't afraid of physical torment, but losing his martial arts was worse than death.

"One-on-one, is it?" Lin Wanrong chuckled, turning to Gao Qiu, "Brother Gao, bring in ten highly skilled fighters."

Soon, Gao Qiu brought in ten men, each with a gleam in their eyes, clearly no ordinary people.

Standing before the ten men, Lin Wanrong pointed at Lu Zhongping, "Don't say I didn't give you a chance. Do you choose a group fight or one-on-one?"

Lu Zhongping didn't understand his meaning, "What is a group fight, and what is one-on-one?"

"A group fight is when all of us beat you up." Lin Wanrong chuckled.

"Then one-on-one? I choose one-on-one."

"One-on-one? That's when you fight all of us."

Lu Zhongping roared, "Lin San, you are utterly shameless."

Lin Wanrong gave him a swift kick, "I've never claimed to be noble. You chose this path. Gentlemen, let's all join in. Wherever a man is most vulnerable, aim there!" With that, he landed another solid kick in Lu Zhongping's groin. Lu Zhongping let out a scream that could be heard ten miles away.

Lin Wanrong was in a bad mood that day. After the kicks, he felt an immense satisfaction seeping through every pore of his body.

Even Gao Qiu thought that this Young Master Lin was truly shameless. Lu Zhongping was tied up, and even a maiden could beat him, yet this Young Master Lin showed no mercy. Upon learning that Lin Wanrong had once been captured by the White Lotus cult, he understood Young Master Lin must have suffered greatly back then, he thought, unaware that Lin Wanrong had been living comfortably.

After this series of shouting, beating, and scaring, Lu Zhongping turned pale and dared not speak. Gao Qiu asked, "Lu Zhongping, will you confess or not?"

Lin Wanrong grinned, "Brother Gao, let's not ask if he'll confess. I still have many interesting things to do."

Gao Qiu, truly admiring this Young Master Lin, played along, "What else haven't you done?"

"I heard of a particular method of skinning, quite intriguing, I wonder if Brother Gao has heard of it?" Lin Wanrong asked.

"What sort of skinning method?" Gao Qiu asked curiously.

"Well," Lin Wanrong started, "you chop off a person's limbs, make him a meat pole, and bury him upright in the sand under the scorching sun. Then, you cut a large hole in his scalp, sprinkle some flower nectar, honey, pepper powder, salt, star anise, and countless flies, butterflies, mosquitoes, and bugs will crawl on him. He will itch all over, his scalp numb, struggling only makes it itch more, the itch causing him to struggle more. In the end, unable to bear it, with a 'pop', the person springs out from the scalp slit, leaving the skin behind. It's a fun method that I've yet to try. If Brother Gao ever feels interested, we could give it a go."

"Is there really such a method? We must try it." Gao Qiu laughed but glanced at Lu Zhongping seemingly unintentionally.

Lu Zhongping felt a tingling in his scalp, angry at himself for not thinking of these methods when he had captured Lin San. He cursed Tao Dongcheng, that dog-headed strategist, for his pacification strategy which landed him in this mess. He knew Lin Wanrong was trying to scare him, but who knew if someone would really give it a try. He wasn't afraid of death, but such a brutal way of dying filled him with extreme fear.

"Actually, that's not the most interesting part." Lin Wanrong laughed, "Brother Gao, I heard there's a drug called aphrodisiac in the Jianghu, the one that can make women...excited after consumption."

At the mention of the aphrodisiac, Lu Zhongping shuddered, thinking of how he ignited the spring fragrance of the young lady that day. Indeed, it was retribution in this life.

Gao Qiu said, "Well, there is. The most effective and famous ones include 'My Love Hammer', 'Erotic Joy Powder', 'Guanyin Undressing', 'Buddha's Large Stick'"

"Guanyin Undressing, Buddha's Large Stick? Damn, I've never heard of these two. Truly, lewdness knows no bounds." Lin Wanrong laughed, "Brother Gao, what would a man do if he took this aphrodisiac?"

"Of course, he would seek a woman for intercourse."

"And what if a male dog took an aphrodisiac?"

"Of course, it would look for a female dog to mate."

"And what if a man who took an aphrodisiac and a male dog who took an aphrodisiac were put in the same room? What would happen?" Lin Wanrong asked, seemingly lost in thought.

Gao Qiu got goosebumps. Even this kind of thing could be thought of. In terms of wickedness, if Young Master Lin admitted to being second, no one in the world would dare to admit being first. Lu Zhongping trembled with shock, his body shaking like chaff.

"Ah, it would be best to put this room on the main street, so that more people can witness this astonishing scene. I'm really looking forward to it," Lin Wanrong mused to himself.

Lu Zhongping's face turned purple, he stammered, "I, I confess"

"Should have said it sooner, damn it." Lin Wanrong kicked Lu Zhongping and snapped, "Made me disgust myself for so long."

Lin Wanrong strode out, feeling exhilarated. Damn, it was satisfying to be a policeman. The frustration of the day had been thoroughly dispelled. As for Lu Zhongping, he was a bit miserable, and Lin Wanrong wondered if he would have nightmares that night.

Xu Wei was standing at the door, smiling at him. "Little brother Lin, your knowledge spans the ancient and the contemporary. I am truly in awe. If you were to enter the court, with your eloquence, wit, and tactics, even becoming a king or prime minister wouldn't be impossible."

Flatter away, Lin Wanrong laughed, "A little trickery, I can manage. But when it comes to grand conspiracies, I'm no match for you, Mr. Xu."

Having become acquainted with Lin Wanrong, Xu Wei was unbothered and laughed heartily, "Little brother Lin, are you sure you won't reconsider?"

Lin Wanrong shook his head, "Mr. Xu, let's not discuss this anymore, I prefer a simpler life."

Xu Wei knew that he couldn't persuade him and could only sigh. "In my younger years, I was not as enlightened as you are now. I was rash and sought false reputation, which wasted many years of my life. At the age of sixty, when I finally woke up, I found myself already at such an age, still entangled in worldly affairs, unable to extricate myself. Who will pity me for the lost youth, for the fallen leaves in the twilight dream of a fisherman and a woodcutter. My life has been in a muddle, a complete muddle."

As Xu Wei continued, he grew increasingly melancholic. Lin Wanrong thought to himself, Who isn't living their whole life before understanding this? You're doing pretty well; some people don't understand this truth even until death.

"Different people have different aspirations. Little brother Lin, you prefer a tranquil life, I won't force you. But if you ever come to the capital, please come to my house for a drink. It would give me and my wife a chance to express our gratitude."

Lin Wanrong laughed, "Of course. I told Miss Su yesterday that she would thank me in the future, didn't that prediction come true today?" Xu Wei stroked his beard and smiled, feeling very gratified.

Suddenly, Lin Wanrong remembered something. He turned to Xu Wei and said, "Mr. Xu, you have a wide network in the capital. Have you ever met a woman in her twenties, beautiful, extraordinary, probably from a prominent family, whose maiden name is Xiao Qingxuan?"

"Xiao Qingxuan?" Xu Wei frowned in thought, "Which family's young lady is she? I've never heard of her. What's your relationship with her?"

Lin Wanrong answered seriously, "She's my wife."

"You're married?" Xu Wei was surprised, then laughed, "With your talents, Miss Xiao must be endowed with both beauty and virtue. But since you're already married, why don't you know about your own wife's background?"

Damn it, do you think I want it this way? I'm also confused now, Lin Wanrong shook his head helplessly. He gave a detailed description of Xiao Qingxuan's appearance, but Xu Wei still didn't know: "There are many distinguished families in the capital, and countless young ladies from each. There are indeed quite a few surnamed Xiao, but I don't know which one you're looking for?"

Lin Wanrong removed the jade pendant that Xiao Qingxuan had left him from his neck and handed it to Xu Wei, "Mr. Xu, have you ever seen this?"

Having seen much of the world, Xu Wei was astounded by the jade's crystal clarity and radiant color, exclaiming, "This is Hetian jade! Where did you get such a treasure, Little brother Lin?"

Lin Wanrong replied, "It was left to me by Qingxuan."

"This is the finest Hetian jade, a rarity in the world. Even in the palace, it is difficult to see such a treasure. Little brother Lin, your wife must certainly be from a wealthy and noble family," Xu Wei sighed.

Seeing that even Xu Wei couldn't ascertain Xiao Qingxuan's origin and identity, Lin Wanrong felt somewhat disappointed. However, being naturally cheerful, he laughed and said, "In that case, I will go to the capital myself after the New Year to find my wife."

Xu Wei nodded, "Little brother Lin, with your talents, you will surely stand out in the capital. There are many old scholars there who write a few poems, draw a few paintings, and think highly of themselves. With your wit and talent, you can challenge them and show these old folks what a young genius looks like. There will be quite a show then. It's been many years since the capital had such excitement. I'm really looking forward to your arrival."

Lin Wanrong broke out in a sweat upon hearing this. Wasn't this old man Xu Wei also an accomplished poet and painter, and also one of these so-called old scholars? Having spent more time with Xu Wei, Lin Wanrong found the old man quite interesting. He was ruthless when it came to power struggles but affable when discussing poetry. In the end, it seemed politics had stripped away his scholar's gentleness, resulting in this contradictory character.

After parting ways with Xu Wei, Lin Wanrong didn't know where to go. The Eldest Miss Xiao had run off and left him alone. He wondered what was wrong with her; her temperament was getting stranger.

After walking a few steps, he noticed a familiar carriage stopped ahead. Si De, Xiao Feng, Xiao Cui, and others were all standing by the carriage. When they saw him, they all cheered happily, "Brother San, we've been waiting for you! Hurry, we're heading back to Jinling."