

# Finest Servant

## Chapter 16 The Birth of the Third Page Tabloid (Part One)

Miss Xiao was low-key, and Miss Xiao Er was too young, so it was only natural that Mrs. Xiao had to step forward and make an appearance. It was quite a feat for a woman of her station.

After hearing Mrs. Xiao's words, everyone lined up in an orderly fashion, even the shameless four brothers had restored their refined demeanor.

Realizing that there was nothing interesting going on today, Lin Wanrong took a glance at Mrs. Xiao and remembered her appearance before quietly slipping away.

Returning to the Dong family, he saw Mr. Dong Rende and his daughter carefully transcribing something.

Lin Wanrong took a quick look and saw that the writing was elegant and beautiful, making it clear that this was the gossip Mr. Dong Rende had gathered about Miss Xiao, dictated by him and recorded by Dong Qiaoqiao.

Dong Qiaoqiao's handwriting was really beautiful, Lin Wanrong nodded repeatedly after reading it a few times.

The father and daughter finally noticed Lin Wanrong standing next to them. Seeing that Lin Wanrong kept nodding, Dong Qiaoqiao couldn't help but blush, but also excited. It seemed that Lin Wanrong's appreciative expression had made her happy.

"Young, Young Master Lin, you're back," Dong Qiaoqiao's cute nose was covered in a thin layer of glistening sweat, making her even more beautiful, reminding Lin Wanrong of his sister who was still in college.

Lin Wanrong smiled and said, "Yes, I went out for a walk and did some market research."

They certainly hadn't heard of the term "market research," and Lin Wanrong was too lazy to explain it to them. He took the small booklet they were transcribing and said, "Let me take a look."

To his surprise, they had not only detailed the functional modules of the booklet, but also designed various layouts, laying the foundation for a magnificent hand-copied book. These talented individuals were wasting their skills by not working for the Sun Newspaper.

Seeing Lin Wanrong's surprised expression, Dong Qiaoqiao became anxious and said, "Young Master Lin, did I do something wrong? Oh dear, what should I do? I've ruined everything for you."

She was so nervous she was about to cry. It was understandable, as in this era, it was believed that a woman's virtue was in her talent. She had finally found an opportunity to showcase her abilities, only to mess it up. How could she not be nervous?

Lin Wanrong didn't have the heart to tease her anymore. He put on a smile and said, "Miss Qiaoqiao, you didn't do anything wrong, you did too well."

Dong Qiaoqiao was first surprised, then overjoyed. She eagerly asked, "Is that true, Young Master Lin?"

Lin Wanrong smiled and nodded. Dong Qiaoqiao was overjoyed and said, "I did it according to your instructions. Before you left, I had some questions that I didn't understand, but I didn't want to ask you, so I added my own understanding."

This girl was not only dexterous but also had ideas and was daring. She was quite a talented person, and the father and daughter were both good. Dong Rende, who had been listening to them talk, finally interjected, "Oh, as long as Young Master Lin is satisfied. Qiaoqiao and I have been worried that you would not like our rough hands and feet."

Seeing the pure and simple appearance of the father and daughter, Lin Wanrong couldn't help but sigh and said seriously, "Uncle Dong, Miss Qiaoqiao, I hope you remember that a person can have no power, no money, but you must have confidence. If you don't even respect yourself, then no one in this world will respect you. Your face is given by others, but your dignity is earned by yourself."

Dong Qiaoqiao's eyes showed a kind of admiration, and she nodded gently, "Young Master Lin, I understand."

Lin Wanrong looked at Dong Rende and said, "She understands, do you?"

Dong Rende laughed and said, "Our Qiaoqiao understands, so I understand. I listen to everything Qiaoqiao says."

Looking at the sincere father and daughter, Lin Wanrong suddenly thought of his parents who he would never see again, and his heart was sore. He quickly turned his head and continued to look at the booklet, "Have you all finished copying?"

Dong Qiaoqiao said, "We have all finished. Please take a look, Young Master."

Lin Wanrong picked up the booklet and casually smiled, "Qiaoqiao, not only are you good at needlework, but you are also a female scholar. I don't know who taught you all this."

Dong Qiaoqiao said, "It was Miss Luo who favored me and let me learn with her. Otherwise, how would I have had the chance?"

"Miss Luo?" That name sounded so familiar.

Seeing Lin Wanrong's furrowed brow, Dong Qiaoqiao was surprised, "Don't you know Miss Luo? She is the number one talented woman in Jinling."

The number one talented woman in Jinling? Lin Wanrong suddenly remembered the performance of Phoenix Seeks Phoenix that he witnessed with Hou Yuebai, the young master of the Hou family, on Xuanwu Lake that afternoon. Wasn't the target of that play this number one talented woman in Jinling, Miss Luo?

Seeing Dong Qiaoqiao's surprised expression, Lin Wanrong found it funny and said, "I have no interest in talented men and women."

"That's because you, Young Master, are a great talent," Dong Qiaoqiao laughed. "But you're not interested in talented women, are you? You should be interested in beautiful women. Miss Luo is the number one beauty in Jinling, you know."

She had become close with Lin Wanrong and now addressed him directly as "Young Master," even dropping the "Lin" from his name and speaking with greater warmth.

"I'm interested in beautiful women, especially someone like you," Lin Wanrong joked shamelessly now that they were on familiar terms.

Dong Qiaoqiao blushed deeply and could not speak.

Dong Rende coughed lightly a few times, causing Lin Wanrong to turn red with embarrassment. The old man had caught him in the act.

Lin Wanrong had a thick skin, however, and quickly regained his composure. "Miss Qiaoqiao, why did Miss Luo ask you to accompany her?" he asked nonchalantly.

After his earlier flirtations, Dong Qiaoqiao had become shy again. "The first time I went to make clothes for Miss Luo, she saw that we were about the same age and talked to me a little more. She's really a good person, but she doesn't seem to have many friends, so she asked me to come and keep her company. After spending time with her, she asked me to study with her and Master."

Lin Wanrong nodded. "Miss Luo really is a good person. I hope she finds the best husband in the world. Hmm, I suppose I'm a passable candidate for that title," he joked.

Dong Qiaoqiao laughed lightly. "You talk too much. If Miss Luo knew what you said, even if she has a good temper, she wouldn't let you off."

Although she thought this, she couldn't help feeling happy when she heard Lin Wanrong speak so freely and unconstrained. Dong Rende pretended not to hear anything. He was starting to worry that he had let a wolf into the house. Lin Wanrong's smooth tongue could easily deceive someone as innocent as Dong Qiaoqiao, and he might run off with her at any moment.

Lin Wanrong stopped talking to Dong Qiaoqiao and focused on reading the booklet. In addition to the two sections he had mentioned earlier, there were several other sections, such as "Miss Xiao talks about life," "Quotes from Miss Xiao," and "Miss Xiao's views on choosing a spouse." If illustrations were added, it would make for an excellent page three tabloid.

Lin Wanrong was especially interested in the last section, "Miss Xiao's views on choosing a spouse." This was definitely not Dong Rende's idea, but rather Dong Qiaoqiao's brilliant talent.

## Chapter 17 The Birth of the Third Page Tabloid (Part 2)

Lin Wanrong was overjoyed and wished he could hug Dong Qiaoqiao and give her a kiss. This girl was truly a gem. Choosing this father-daughter duo, his eye for talent was truly outstanding.

Although Dong Qiaoqiao did not understand what Lin Wanrong was thinking, she could tell from his excited expression that he was extremely satisfied.

Seeing the happy look on Dong Qiaoqiao's face, Lin Wanrong suddenly laughed and said, "Miss Qiaoqiao, aren't you good friends with Miss Xiao? Why are you helping us to deceive her?"

Dong Qiaoqiao knew that the contents of these sections were based on hearsay and speculation, and had no real basis. She smiled and said, "Young Master, as you said, we are in business and what matters is profit. The stories recorded in this booklet are just some small things that are heard on the streets, but we have organized them and added slightly exaggerated titles. It doesn't harm anyone, but benefits ourselves. In addition, I am not really acquainted with Miss Xiao, we have not even met each other."

This is really wonderful, Lin Wanrong sighed in his heart. What I am doing is just creating a third page of a tabloid, what does it matter if it is not entirely true? However, Dong Qiaoqiao's words made him feel strange. Wasn't this Miss Xiao going to make clothes? Why didn't she let the tailor take her measurements?

Dong Qiaoqiao saw through Lin Wanrong's doubts and smiled, "Miss Xiao is extremely busy, so every time I bring an old dress of hers to use as a sample."

To be able to create clothes that satisfied Miss Xiao using an old dress as a sample, Dong Qiaoqiao was indeed a skilled girl.

After so much talk, there was still one important thing missing for the birth of this third page tabloid.

Dong Qiaoqiao looked at the blank spaces left by Lin Wanrong, and asked curiously, "Young Master, what are these remaining spaces for?"

Lin Wanrong gave a mysterious smile and did not answer her question. Instead, he ordered her, "Qiaoqiao, do you have any charcoal?"

Dong Qiaoqiao obediently replied and went to the kitchen to find a burned wooden stick for Lin Wanrong. In this era, no one knew what a pencil was, let alone graphite, and Lin Wanrong couldn't use a brush, so he had to use charcoal instead.

Lin Wanrong had not drawn for four or five years, and his hand was very rusty. He began to practice on the ground in a haphazard manner.

Dong Qiaoqiao saw Lin Wanrong sketching quickly and suddenly a beautiful woman's face appeared on the ground. The woman looked alive, graceful, and beautiful, with extremely realistic features and expressions.

Both father and daughter had seen others use ink to paint before, but they had never seen someone sketch as fast as Lin Wanrong.

Lin Wanrong looked at the sketch and couldn't help but sigh. He hadn't drawn for years, and his hand was very rusty, but he used to be much better than this.

Lin Wanrong learned sketching in middle school. Later, in order to pursue his first girlfriend, he practiced for four years and drew enough sketches for her to fill two boxes. Unfortunately, after graduating from college, she went to the United States and Lin Wanrong had more opportunities to pursue other girls.

Lin Wanrong was lost in thought until Dong Qiaoqiao called him a few times before he snapped out of it and smiled, "Miss Qiaoqiao, what's up?"

Dong Qiaoqiao asked softly, "Young Master, what kind of painting is this? It looks so simple, but you drew it so beautifully."

Lin Wanrong was patient with the beautiful and gentle Dong Qiaoqiao and smiled, "This is called a sketch, it's a simple painting method from my hometown. I haven't drawn in many years, so my hand is rusty now."

Dong Qiaoqiao shook her head and said, "No, I think Young Master's strokes are simple but masterful, penetrating to the essence. What's more wonderful is that you can use

just a piece of discarded wood to create such a painting. One day, Young Master will surely become a master."

Although Lin Wanrong had a thick skin, he blushed a little when she praised him like that. He quickly shook his head and said with a smile, "Miss Qiaoqiao, if you keep saying things like that, I'll become arrogant."

Dong Qiaoqiao covered her lips and smiled. Her beautiful eyes turned into a seductive crescent moon as she softly asked, "But I wonder, where is Young Master's hometown?"

Lin Wanrong was momentarily stunned. His expression dimmed as he softly replied, "My hometown? It's very far, very far away."

Dong Qiaoqiao thought that Lin Wanrong didn't want to tell her, and a hint of melancholy crossed her face. She bit her red lips and watched Lin Wanrong paint, no longer speaking to him.

Dong Rende, who had been staring at the portrait, suddenly whispered, "This woman looks a lot like Madam Xiao, but--"

Lin Wanrong laughed and said, "Take another look. Is she really Madam Xiao?"

Dong Rende looked carefully for a moment before saying, "She seems to be a little younger and more beautiful than Madam Xiao. Could it be, could it be..." Father and daughter exchanged a glance, their faces filled with astonishment, then they turned to look at Lin Wanrong together. "It's Miss Xiao," they said.

Lin Wanrong smiled but said nothing. Dong Rende quickly asked, "Young Master Lin, have you met Miss Xiao before?"

Lin Wanrong shook his head and laughed, "If you haven't even seen her, how could I have? I just happened to have seen Madam Xiao earlier, and I drew this picture based on her appearance and my imagination. I think it should be somewhat similar."

At this point, the look of surprise and admiration on the faces of Dong's father and daughter left them with no further thoughts. After all, to paint the image of a woman in her twenties based on the appearance of a woman in her thirties, most painters would not have such skill. Now, in their eyes, Lin Wanrong seemed to be capable of anything.

Seeing their expressions, Lin Wanrong couldn't help but smile to himself. He deliberately made Miss Xiao in the painting resemble Madam Xiao to some extent, but even more young and beautiful. His goal was to make those literati believe that the woman in the painting was the Miss Xiao of their fantasies.

After practicing with the stick for a while and feeling proficient, Lin Wanrong asked Dong Qiaoqiao to fetch a small knife. He carefully carved the charcoal into the shape of a pencil, although his hands were covered in dust, it felt even more comfortable to use.

Dong Qiaoqiao's curiosity was aroused again. "Gongzi, is this a brush? Why is it so strange? What is it called?"

Lin Wanrong smiled and said, "I need something called a pencil to draw, but we don't have any here, so I had to carve the charcoal into that shape instead. When I finish drawing later, you must help me put it away. Who knows, maybe I'll need to use it again someday." Dong Qiaoqiao obediently nodded.

With this pencil in his hand, Lin Wanrong seemed to be back at the scene of drawing for his girlfriend by the Wuming Lake. His brushwork was divine, and in no time, a beautiful image of a woman with more delicate and natural expressions appeared on the paper. With his skilled tools and his mind in the right state, this painting was at least two levels above the invisible painting he had done before.

The woman in the painting had flowing skirt, like a fairy stepping on water, with a beautiful face, a slight smile on her lips, and a noble aura, as if she were standing in front of them in real life. However, her eyebrows were slightly furrowed at the center, as if there were some hidden worries. This was something Lin Wanrong had deliberately added based on Dong Rende's description of the recent situation of the Xiao family, in order to make it more realistic.

"Is this really Miss Xiao? She's so beautiful," Dong Qiaoqiao couldn't help but whisper beside Lin Wanrong, "If I had a painting like this, it would be great."

Lin Wanrong laughed and said, "Sure, no problem. I will personally sketch one for you someday."

## Chapter 18 Raising the Price (Part 1)

Dong Qiaoqiao spoke without thinking, but to her surprise, Lin Wanrong heard her and agreed. She felt shy but also a bit happy. After all, women loved beauty and being able to preserve their youth on canvas was their dream.

"Thank you, Young Master," Dong Qiaoqiao said shyly.

Lin Wanrong grinned and wiped his face with the back of his hand. He asked Dong Rende, "Uncle Dong, what do you think?"

Uncle Dong gave Lin Wanrong a thumbs-up. "I have nothing but admiration for you, Young Master."



Lin Wanrong confidently finished the remaining illustrations of the fake Xiao family daughter. Each portrait had a different expression, but all were beautiful and enchanting. He guaranteed that these talented scholars would be bewitched.

After he finished the last stroke, Lin Wanrong wiped his face again and stood up, smiling. "Done, let's call it a day."

Dong Qiaoqiao looked at the portraits of the same woman with different poses and expressions in the small booklet, feeling envious. She glanced at Lin Wanrong and suddenly covered her mouth, giggling.

"What's so funny?" Lin Wanrong was stunned by her laughter, but this girl looked pretty when she smiled.

Dong Qiaoqiao took out a handkerchief from her pocket, blushing, and looked at Lin Wanrong. She bit her lip and leaned in close to him, using the handkerchief with a faint scent to touch his face.

Lin Wanrong suddenly realized that he must have smudged his face with charcoal. That was the only reason she would do such a thing. However, her gesture startled him. In this era, men and women were strictly guarded against each other, even if Dong Qiaoqiao was born into an ordinary family. This action was too intimate, and even during Lin Wanrong's time, only couples would do this.

"Is she having impure thoughts about me? Damn, I'm in danger. I'm a born womanizer." Lin Wanrong shamelessly thought to himself. To be honest, he was not ready to start a romantic relationship at this time.

Lin Wanrong quickly stepped back, refusing her offer without thinking. He took the handkerchief naturally, smiling and saying, "I can do it myself."

Dong Qiaoqiao was taken aback and realized that she had acted inappropriately. She blushed and Lin Wanrong immediately smelled the handkerchief and said frivolously, "It smells good!"

Dong Qiaoqiao knew that he was trying to ease her embarrassment and smiled gratefully at him.

However, frivolousness was Lin Wanrong's nature, and he didn't need to pretend to be otherwise.

Dong Qiaoqiao's face was as red as rouge, and she nodded lightly without saying a word.

Lin Wanrong gestured at Old Dong, but he remained unmoved, lost in thought.



Lin Wanrong was somewhat annoyed, thinking to himself, "This little girl is ignorant. You're still so clueless at your age. If you provoke me, I'll eat your precious daughter, and you can't blame me."

This wasn't Lin Wanrong being melodramatic, he was actually quite unfamiliar with this world and wasn't mentally prepared for love. He would have to take it slow.

The father and daughter remained silent, like they were acting in a silent movie. Lin Wanrong wiped the dust off his face and prepared to return the handkerchief to Dong Qiaoqiao. However, it had been stained black by the dust and he felt somewhat embarrassed giving it back to her like that.

Dong Qiaoqiao smiled faintly and took the handkerchief from Lin Wanrong's hand, saying, "Young master, let me do the heavy lifting."

Seeing her natural demeanor, Lin Wanrong relaxed. He thought to himself, "Am I being too full of myself? Is it really that easy for a girl to fall for me? But as a handsome and talented young man, it's abnormal if girls don't throw themselves at me."

After finishing the sketch with the charcoal, Lin Wanrong had Dong Qiaoqiao use a brush to trace over the charcoal black lines to prevent them from being smudged.

It was a meticulous job, and even a slight mistake could ruin the entire painting.

Before Lin Wanrong could tell Dong Qiaoqiao that he was only a half-assed artist and couldn't use a brush, she had already started working. However, she was clever and obedient, and didn't ask why Lin Wanrong wasn't using the brush.

She carefully traced the lines, her face covered in sweat from nervousness, afraid she might accidentally ruin Lin Wanrong's original sketch.

Lin Wanrong felt a faint sense of gratitude towards the father and daughter's unconditional trust in him. He couldn't understand why those scammers who tricked old ladies into giving them money existed in his time. Were they raised eating shit?

Dong Qiaoqiao finally finished copying the entire picture. Her deft hands left Lin Wanrong speechless, and even the curves of her lines were identical to his own.

Shaking his head, Lin Wanrong exclaimed, "Qiaoqiao, you can't marry someone else as a wife. Otherwise, where will I find someone with such skilled hands like you?"

Once they became familiar with each other, Lin Wanrong stopped calling her "Miss" and directly called her Qiaoqiao. After all, she was just a young lady, there was no need to address her formally.

After Lin Wanrong finished speaking, he laughed arrogantly a few times. Dong Qiaoqiao's face turned red and she ran out, not understanding how the charming and talented Lin Wanrong suddenly became so vulgar.

"Hey hey, the little girl surprised me with a handkerchief, so I'll surprise you too. I'm shameless like that, what can you do about it?" Lin Wanrong laughed proudly.

By the time the manuscript was organized, it was already noon. Lin Wanrong handed it over to Old Dong and hurried to the printing house to make copies.

Knowing that the printing technology was outdated, Lin Wanrong was grateful that the booklet was not very long. With overtime work that afternoon and evening, he would be lucky to make 500 copies.

Old Dong had lived in the city for many years and had a quick mind and wide network. That was precisely why Lin Wanrong valued him.

Just as Old Dong was about to leave to make copies, Lin Wanrong suddenly remembered something and hastily stopped him. "Uncle Dong, you have to remind the printing house to keep this confidential. Especially this manuscript, it's extremely valuable. If it falls into the wrong hands, it's easy to counterfeit, so you must be careful. And make sure to return the manuscript promptly."

Lin Wanrong had already promised Old Dong a huge profit. In this era, there was no intellectual property protection, and if the work was plagiarized, he would truly lose everything. Even with intellectual property protection, piracy was rampant. So he had to remind Old Dong about the importance of confidentiality.

They had dinner at Old Dong's house. Lin Wanrong was a lonely man with only a cold stove to go back to, so he might as well chat with the father and daughter. Dong Qingshan had also returned, his face full of excitement. Apparently, he had seen some results.

Dong Qiaoqiao truly lived up to her name. Although it was a simple meal, it was incredibly delicious. Seeing Lin Wanrong almost swallow his tongue, Dong Qiaoqiao covered her mouth and laughed lightly. Her beautiful and simple appearance had a faint feeling of warmth.

After dinner, they went to the printing house. It was true that money could make the devil push the mill. With the promise of double the original price, more than 20 skilled workers worked overnight to produce 500 books. The boss guaranteed that they would finish before dawn.

The printing technology here was very ancient. They first transferred the original manuscript onto parchment paper, and then transferred the ink from the parchment

paper onto the paper. The effect was not as good, but the images and text were still clear.

It was truly the limit to produce 500 copies in an afternoon and night in such a manual workshop.

## Chapter 19 Raising the Price (2)

After a long and tiring day, Lin Wanrong went straight to bed when he got home. In this era, the sky was a brilliant blue, the water was a clear green, the air was fresh, and the vegetables were all free from toxins. In such a rare and pleasant environment, it was only natural that sleeping was comfortable.

As for the lustful thoughts that often accompany satiation, it wasn't that Lin Wanrong didn't have them, it was just that he hadn't decided who he wanted to share them with yet.

The next morning, Lin Wanrong woke up early and rushed to join the first wave of people on the street. He had two oil cakes and a bowl of freshly made tofu pudding for breakfast. Green food was truly the best. Feeling invigorated, he made his way confidently to Old Dong's house.

When he arrived, Old Dong was eating porridge and had only taken a bite of his freshly steamed white bun.

"Big Brother Lin, have you had breakfast yet? Try some of my freshly steamed white buns," Dong Qiaoqiao offered Lin Wanrong a bowl of porridge and handed him two of the biggest white buns.

Since learning that Lin Wanrong was an orphan and didn't seem like a gentleman at dinner the night before, Dong Qiaoqiao had directly downgraded him from 'Young Master' to 'Big Brother Lin.' She even warmly invited him to come eat all three meals at their house every day.

Lin Wanrong felt a bit embarrassed. How could he accept such a generous offer? He was a shy person and could only eat ten meals in five days.

Looking at the two white buns in front of him, he suddenly remembered a joke he had heard before.

A man in love had touched his girlfriend's breasts for the first time and exclaimed, "Wow, they feel like buns!"

The girl shyly replied, "No, they don't. How can they compare to buns?"

The man said, "I mean Wang Zai (a brand of mini buns) mini buns."

Unfortunately, if Lin Wanrong were to tell this joke to Old Dong and his daughter, he would probably be chased out with a broom.

The white buns aroused Lin Wanrong's appetite, and since he was naturally shameless, he yelled out, "Perfect timing, Qiaoqiao. I'm still hungry. Thank you!"

Old Dong's eyes were bloodshot, clearly indicating that he had stayed up all night. While Lin Wanrong slept soundly, he had disrespected the old man. Lin Wanrong felt a bit ashamed, but doing his job well was still his duty.

"Uncle Dong, how did the printing turn out?" Lin Wanrong asked quickly, seeing Old Dong only focused on eating porridge.

Old Dong wiped his mouth and pointed behind him. "Hey, there are 500 copies back there, all neatly stacked and still smelling of oil."

Lin Wanrong jumped up, half a white steamed bun swallowed into his stomach. He turned around and saw that indeed, 500 small booklets were neatly stacked, with the portrait of Miss Xiao clear and visible. This girl probably had never heard of the concept of portrait rights. I've made a fortune from this. Anyway, I'll soon be serving her, so I'll consider it compensation.

Looking at the 500 booklets, Lin Wanrong felt secretly pleased. As the owner of a third page tabloid, this feeling was really quite nice.

"Young Master Lin, how much should we price these booklets at?" Since learning of Lin Wanrong's identity as a half-hearted talent, Old Dong's respect for him had not changed one bit. However, when he called him Young Master, it didn't quite feel right anymore to Lin Wanrong.

"Five taels of silver each," Lin Wanrong said, caressing the booklet in his hand, unwilling to let it go, without even turning his head.

"Click." The half-steamed bun in Dong Uncle's mouth fell straight down.

Lin Wanrong turned around and saw the father and daughter still in disbelief. Feeling amused, he said, "What, don't you believe it?"

Dong Qiaoqiao hesitated for a moment and said, "Big Brother Lin, are you really selling them for five taels of silver each? Isn't that too expensive?" Five taels of silver was half a year's living expenses for an ordinary family, and this price was indeed not cheap. It was no wonder that the father and daughter were tongue-tied.

"Don't doubt it. Five taels of silver without bargaining. Do you know the phrase 'Rare goods can fetch a high price'?" Lin Wanrong smiled mysteriously and unabashedly said.

Although Lin Wanrong couldn't see his own expression now, he knew that his current look must be very much like that of a complete villain, and the most shameless kind at that. Shamelessness was his nature, and he didn't need to hide it.

"You have to grasp the psychology of those talents. The people who are willing to pay for these booklets don't care whether it's one tael or ten taels per booklet. What they want is information, first-hand information. To them, one or ten taels is no different. Their principle is not to seek the best, but to seek the most expensive. It's a wonderful psychology."

Lin Wanrong's words left Dong Qiaoqiao and her father stunned. Obviously, their understanding of human nature was not deep enough, and they still needed Lin Wanrong's continued guidance.

"Think about it, as long as one person buys it, who wants to fall behind others? Who doesn't want to get first-hand information about Miss Xiao? This is the bandwagon effect, just like dominoes. Once one falls, the rest will collapse." Lin Wanrong slipped and mentioned dominoes, quickly explaining, "In short, no one should have the mentality of letting others be more beautiful than themselves, which will cause our little booklet to sell well. You see, once it rises to the top, like a phoenix, what is this little money worth?"

Dong Qiaoqiao was quick-witted and immediately saw the problem: "But even if Miss Xiao chooses a husband, she can only choose one. And we have four or five hundred booklets."

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Only one person can become the top scorer in the imperial examinations, but aren't The Analects of Confucius, The Book of Songs, The Tao Te Ching, and The Mencius just as popular? Until the results come out, anything is possible."

Dong Qiaoqiao was obviously a kind-hearted girl who cared for Miss Xiao's well-being. "But I heard that talented scholars often come from poor families. They can't afford our little booklets. Wouldn't that delay Miss Xiao's beautiful marriage?"

Lin Wanrong was immediately dumbfounded. This girl really thought they were the most important people in Miss Xiao's life. If a booklet could affect Miss Xiao's marriage, then the Xiao family was just a bunch of fools.

Faced with Dong Qiaoqiao's eager gaze, Lin Wanrong reluctantly played the role of a teacher again. He coldly laughed, "If talented scholars from humble backgrounds come, they should be prepared. If they really have the ability, they should marry Miss Xiao based on their own merits. What does buying our little booklets have to do with it? If they want to climb the social ladder, I can only feel sorry for them. There is a cost to attaching themselves to the dragon and phoenix, and that is the price they must pay. So, they must consider carefully. I am not forcing them to buy; they have a guilty

conscience. Real talented scholars will never buy our books, but how many of these so-called noble and righteous scholars are there in the world? We are businessmen who value profit. We sell to whoever pays. As for the marriage matter, that is something Miss Xiao should consider. We cannot influence it."

Dong Qiaoqiao secretly nodded in agreement with Lin Wanrong's theory. Although she still had doubts about the high price he set, she had clearly begun to accept it.

## Chapter 20 Making Money

After getting ready and dressing up, Lin Wanrong and Old Dong each carried dozens of booklets and arrived at the examination site to observe the situation. Lin Wanrong gave his new strategy a fancy name: "Exploratory Marketing". Of course, he had to explain the concept of marketing to the eager-to-learn Qiaoqiao.

Today was the last day for the Xiao family's servants to register, and tomorrow would be the official start of the recruitment. Therefore, talented people from all over the place, regardless of their literacy, rushed over.

Not only were there locals from Jinling, but also talented people from Hangzhou, Suzhou, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, and other places who came one after another, surrounding the registration site inside and out, making it very crowded.

Just like yesterday, the servants and the talented people were divided into two teams and registered separately, with clear boundaries between them. The order was maintained, and there were no line cutters. Perhaps this was because everyone was a civilized person.

With so many talented people attracted to come, the charm of the Xiao family's young lady was extraordinary. However, what was even more attractive was the huge industry behind her.

The Xiao family must have noticed so many talented people coming, but they neither supported nor opposed it. It was unclear whether they wanted talented people or servants, or both.

But the more commotion they made, the more Lin Wanrong liked it. He was determined to take advantage of the chaos and make a fortune.

Lin Wanrong's target was these handsome and talented men. Seeing them dressed in bright clothes and looking like something out of a magazine, he felt that five taels of silver was too low a price.

As for the servants-to-be, brothers, it's not that I look down on you, but that's just the reality of society. If you want to date girls, you have to earn more money first.

Lin Wanrong spotted a fair-skinned handsome man and approached him, whispering softly, "Brother, do you want a good book?"

He took out the booklet from his arms and quickly flashed it in front of the man, letting him see the beautiful face of Miss Xiao on the cover, and then swiftly put it back into his arms.

Sure enough, the fair-skinned man's eyes lit up. He looked around cautiously before lowering his head and asking Lin Wanrong, "Brother, do you have a colored version?"

A colored version? Lin Wanrong was taken aback for a moment, then immediately understood that this guy thought he was selling playboy magazine..

Lin Wanrong was instantly furious. "Your grandma! I am handsome and charming like a jade tree in the wind, how could I possibly sell those things? Even though I have collected a fair share of stuff like flower boys and playboys, I wouldn't rely on selling those for a living. This pale-faced turtle has no eye for things, seems like he is not a good guy either."

But to be honest, what Lin Wanrong had in his hands right now was really similar to those illegal disc sellers at Zhongguancun computer market.

Lin Wanrong was feeling extremely depressed and only wanted to punch this pale-faced guy. However, he remembered that Old Dong was watching him from a distance, learning how to market. He had to make the first move, no matter what.

Lin Wanrong gritted his teeth and said, "Brother, we can talk about the things you mentioned later. Not only do I have color treasures passed down from the palace, but also precious imported collections from Japan. Father-daughter, mother-son, threesome, the poses, the expressions, tsk tsk, I guarantee you've never seen them before."

The pale-faced guy immediately blushed and rubbed his hands together. The light in his eyes showed that he was definitely a pervert.

"But, the most important thing now is, I want to recommend to you this rare book that has been passed down from the Xiao family's internal collection. Please take a look," Lin Wanrong took out the small booklet again. The portrait of Miss Xiao immediately caught the pervert's attention. "This is..." he exclaimed with excitement. He looked around and immediately shut his mouth, but the surprise in his eyes was obvious even to a blind person.

"Correct, this is Miss Xiao. One of my intermediate servants spent a lot of money to get this for me. Look," Lin Wanrong shook the cover, and the rustling sound caught the pervert's attention. He finally shifted his gaze from Miss Xiao to the words on the cover.



"The Secret History of Miss Xiao," five simple words, with two lines below: "Organized by the Xiao family's servant committee, printed by XX Printing House, top secret" in the upper right corner.

Seeing the light in the guy's eyes, Lin Wanrong knew he had a chance. He quickly struck while the iron was hot, "Look at this portrait, how delicate it is. I can tell you with great responsibility that this is the first time Miss Xiao's portrait has been released. You are the first person, besides me, to see this portrait. And the content inside is definitely genuine, no deception. We are destined to meet today, brother. I need money urgently, and I am willing to transfer this rare book to you at the lowest price."

The pervert hastily glanced at it, and seeing "Miss Xiao's View on Marriage" made his eyes shine even brighter. Lin Wanrong quickly closed the booklet before he could read more.

The pervert had no choice but to say, "What's your price?"

"Ten taels of silver, I can't sell it for a penny less," Lin Wanrong said. He knew he had hooked his fish, so he sat on the ground and doubled the price.

Without the expected shock, the man simply frowned and said, "It's a bit expensive. Can you lower the price?"

Lin Wanrong was overjoyed, it was indeed a rare treasure and he had the upper hand. He firmly shook his head and said, "Friend, this is a valuable item that has been passed down within the Xiao family. It's priceless. I paid a large sum of money to obtain it, and ten taels of silver is already the lowest price. As you know, once this item is sold to someone else, everyone will fight for it."

The man hesitated a bit, but Lin Wanrong acted helpless and turned to leave without saying anything.

"Friend, please wait a moment," Dong Qiaoqiao, disguised as a talented scholar, called out to Lin Wanrong. She stared at the small booklet in his hand with a gleam in her eye, clearly a person who knew the value of things.

The pale-faced scholar had no idea that this was a trap. When he saw someone else trying to snatch it from him, he panicked and hurriedly chased after Lin Wanrong, shouting, "I was here first, I was here first. Friend, I'll take that booklet. Here's ten taels of silver, please accept it."

Lin Wanrong and Dong Qiaoqiao exchanged a glance, both smiling. Lin Wanrong accepted the ten taels of silver and Dong Qiaoqiao secretly gave him a thumbs up.

Dong Qiaoqiao "regretfully" left, and a chubby scholar who had been watching Lin Wanrong and the pale-faced scholar for a long time hurriedly approached him. "Excuse me, friend, what was that valuable item you gave to Li just now?"

Lin Wanrong was puzzled and asked, "Who are you?"

The chubby scholar hastily said, "Li and I are classmates."

Lin Wanrong immediately understood. These two guys were classmates who had become competitors for Miss Xiao's favor. They wouldn't let the other one have an advantage.

Lin Wanrong repeated what he had said earlier, and the chubby scholar became interested. However, he was a tough bargainer and when Lin Wanrong offered ten taels of silver, he immediately slashed it to five.

Lin Wanrong didn't even bother negotiating with him and turned to leave. The guy hurriedly called out to him, "Friend--"

In the end, they settled on ten taels of silver.

Seeing that several other scholars had noticed the commotion, Lin Wanrong was secretly pleased. He wiped his sweat and said to Old Dong, "Damn, I underestimated the market's purchasing power. Old Dong, let's raise the price to ten taels of silver."