

M. Slaying 21

Chapter 21: A Brawl

As Song Qingyi passed by the main gate of the academy, she faintly heard a commotion outside.

The elegant female instructor gracefully walked out and saw a group of students gathered not far from the gate, their attention fixed on something. There were unmistakable sounds of fists and kicks, along with the anguished cries echoing from the center of the crowd.

Song Qingyi quickly tensed up, and she swiftly moved toward the source of the disturbance. She pushed her way through the students while asking, "Who's fighting? What's happening here?"

The crowd was tightly packed, so she painstakingly made her way through, inch by inch.

"Ms. Song!" the students on the fringes of the gathering called out when they noticed Song Qingyi.

They quickly made a way for her and answered respectfully, "It's Yan Xiaohu and a new student we don't know."

"Yan Xiaohu..." Song Qingyi muttered his name and immediately called out, "Yan Xiaohu, stop this immediately! You shouldn't bully or beat up your classmates!"

Despite her warning, the fighting and the agonizing cries from within did not stop; in fact, the noises intensified as she drew closer.

As Song Qingyi listened to the sounds of thuds and smacks, she frowned and raised her voice, "This is your final warning! Yan Xiaohu, if you don't stop, I will have the headmaster expel you!"

The moment she shouted, the students in the crowd recognized her voice and quickly made way for her to reach the center of the commotion.

And there, in the midst of the chaotic scene, Song Qingyi saw Yan Xiaohu, his face smeared with blood, sprawled on the ground in a pitiful state. He could only open one of his eyes, and it was filled with a painful mixture of blood and tears.

He mumbled feebly, "Ms. Song, I've already stopped long ago! I didn't dare to fight back at all! I've been beaten up like this, and you still want to expel me..."

Song Qingyi was taken aback, her bewilderment plain on her face. "Eh?"

In her memory, Yan Xiaohu had been the tyrant of South Mountain Academy, a perpetual tormentor of his classmates. When she first heard about a brawl involving him, she naturally assumed he was the aggressor.

However, Yan Xiaohu is a martial cultivator and always has two thugs following him around. Who could have inflicted such severe injuries on him?

Hold on...

Are those two thugs the two burly individuals kneeling at the side, their hands over their ears in apparent submission?

Where's the person who beat up Yan Xiaohu?

Song Qingyi pondered the situation and quickly scanned the surrounding crowd, confirming that everyone present was a student. There was no sign of any other individuals involved in the incident.

Song Qingyi then issued a stern command, "Who was the one involved in the fight? Step forward!"

Despite her demand, no one in the crowd dared to come forward.

But all the onlookers collectively took a step back, leaving only two individuals standing where they were. Their behavior drew her immediate attention.

One of them was a young and handsome boy with a warm smile, clearly a new student who had just arrived that day. His name was Chu Liang. The other person was his book boy, sporting thick eyebrows and big eyes, who stood beside him.

Both Chu Liang and his book boy appeared to be pretending to be mere onlookers in the crowd.

Song Qingyi's brow furrowed as she fixed her gaze on Chu Liang. "You two did this?"

"Haa..." Chu Liang sighed as he shook his head.

He didn't expect the students of the South Mountain Academy to be so coordinated.

He quickly lowered his head, offering an apology, "I'm sorry, Ms. Song. I just arrived today, and Yan Xiaohu demanded ten taels of silver from me as protection money. I had no choice but to refuse, which led to this confrontation, violating the academy's rules. Please punish me."

Song Qingyi fell into a moment of contemplative silence.

She found herself at a loss for words, unable to scold them as she had initially intended.

After a brief moment of silence, she said softly, "No matter what, resorting to violence is unacceptable..."

Chu Liang added earnestly, "My initial intention was to settle the matter by paying the money. However, it was my book boy who, consumed by anger, lost control and got into a fight with the other three. Rest assured, I will take strict disciplinary action upon our return."

With this, Chu Liang shot a meaningful glance at Lin Bei.

Lin Bei, quick on the uptake, let out a convincing cry of pain, "Owh! Young Master, his face hit my hand so hard... My hand seriously feels broken. I need immediate medical attention!"

"Is it that bad?" Chu Liang appeared visibly concerned and turned to Song Qingyi, stating, "Ms. Song, I must seek medical treatment for my book boy right away. If we delay..."

"Very well. Both of you should seek medical attention," Song Qingyi conceded, her exasperation evident. She cast a final glance at Chu Liang before addressing Yan Xiaohu and his companions, who were sprawled on the ground. "I'll have the headmaster address all of this when you are back to school tomorrow."

Without further ado, Chu Liang, accompanied by his "injured" book boy Lin Bei, and the two thugs supporting the battered Yan Xiaohu, set off toward the medical facility.

However, the two thugs of the Black Tiger Gang, supporting Yan Xiaohu, had barely walked far when they heard a shout from behind.

The two turned around to find the same troublemakers from earlier! They didn't dare to advance any further as they promptly dropped Yan Xiaohu to the ground and knelt down, clutching their ears.

"No need to be so nervous," Chu Liang said, smiling as he looked at them. "I wanted to say that even though you are at fault for what happened today, we are not unreasonable people."

Saying this, he extended his hand toward Lin Bei and asked, "Give me a sword coin."

Lin Bei couldn't understand what was happening but he took out a sword coin from his pocket and handed it over to Chu Liang.

Chu Liang handed the sword coin to one of the thugs and instructed, "Take this and give it to your gang leader. Tell him it's for his son's medical fees. Make sure you deliver it personally to your gang leader."

"Understood," the two thugs nodded vigorously and hastily made their escape.

"Hey! You've left your young master on the ground," Lin Bei called out.

"Thank you, thank you," the two thugs quickly returned to pick up the battered Yan Xiaohu and then departed once more.

As they watched the thugs recede into the distance, Lin Bei inquired, "Why did you give them a sword coin?"

"To prevent any potential future trouble," Chu Liang explained. "If we beat up the young one, the old one might come after us. By giving Yan Xiaohu's father the coin, he should be less inclined to cause problems for us."

"Then why did you have to give them my sword coin?" Lin Bei asked.

"I need my money for other uses." Chu Liang answered in a serious tone.

Lin Bei: "?"

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It was night time.

Chu Liang sought out Li Jue in his room, the latter lost in contemplation about something.

According to the information Chu Liang had gathered earlier today, Li Jue had once been a diligent student, but lately, something had changed, leaving him in a despondent state.

When Li Jue saw him enter the room, he snapped out of his thoughts and inquired, "What's going on?"

Chu Liang placed five taels of silver on the table and said, "This is the money I managed to recover from Yan Xiaohu today. You won't have to pay him today... and you probably won't have to pay him anymore."

Li Jue remained silent for a moment and then said, "I saw you teaching him a lesson today... Thank you."

"Those on the path of cultivation should act with righteousness; it's our duty," Chu Liang replied with a smile.

"Erm..."

Li Jue seemed to have thought about something as he drifted back into his thoughts.

Suddenly, Chu Liang asked, "Why did you say he won't live long?"

"Huh?" Li Jue was taken aback by the question, his gaze shifting, but he didn't respond.

"Is it because of Situ Yan?" Chu Liang pressed further.

Li Jue shook his head. "I don't know..."

Chu Liang continued, "Do you know about this because you know that they used to bully Situ Yan?"

Li Jue seemed somewhat agitated as he stared at Chu Liang. "Please, don't ask any further."

"Your father paid a substantial price to have us protect you and invested a lot in Mount Shu Sect. The longer we stay here, the higher the cost. It would be in your best interest to resolve this matter sooner rather than later," Chu Liang spoke calmly yet persuasively. "Let me ask you directly. Is the vengeful spirit Situ Yan?"

"..." Li Jue furrowed his brows, deeply lost in thought, before finally lifting his head. "Yes, it should be her."

"Then, are you terrified... because you've bullied her?" Chu Liang continued.

"I haven't!" Li Jue shook his head firmly. "I never have."

"So, who are those bullies?" Chu Liang inquired.

Li Jue clutched his head as if there were many things he didn't want to mention. However, he eventually responded, "Zhang Cong, Wu Shao'an, Yan Xiaohu, Chen Da... It's them. They were the ones who often bullied Situ Yan..."