

M. Slaying 72

Chapter 72: Liu Xiaoyu'er

"Young heroes, did you enjoy the banquet?"

"Absolutely! Especially the white meat dish! It was a true delight in terms of color, aroma, and flavor. I dare say it's the best dish I've ever tasted."

"Haha, that white meat is indeed a renowned specialty of our Li Family Estate."

After the warm reception, Manager Cui led Chu Liang and Lin Bei on a leisurely tour of the Li Family Estate. The surroundings were picturesque, adorned with elegant gardens, pavilions, and towers nestled among rocks and trees.

Turning to Chu Liang, Lin Bei whispered, "If you ever decide to leave the Mount Shu Sect, establishing an estate like this would be awesome. Living carefree and unrestrained."

Chu Liang smiled, replying, "I hope to remain on our mountain forever."

"That sounds dreadfully dull," Lin Bei retorted. "If my cultivation hits a dead end, I'll descend the mountain and open a brothel. Not for business, mind you, but just for my own amusement."

Chu Liang, puzzled and somewhat disdainful, asked, "How is that any different from having multiple wives?"

Lin Bei confidently explained, "There's a significant distinction between doing something with your own wives and doing something with someone else's wives!"

"Huh?" Chu Liang couldn't believe what he had just heard.

Their casual banter unintentionally touched upon a more serious matter.

In each generation, the Mount Shu Sect would have at least a few hundred disciples, with a maximum exceeding a thousand. Aside from the thirty-six peak masters and some core disciples, the remaining ones would ultimately leave Mount Shu after years of cultivation and progress.

Cultivation resembled a slow and challenging expedition. While the Mount Shu Sect only admitted individuals with exceptional talent, there was an inherent limit to an individual's capabilities. Some might reach the Spiritual Awareness Realm but never progress beyond the Human Gate stage. Others might stop at the Golden Core Realm, and some might give up at the Realm of the Five Elements.

Upon reaching the culmination of their cultivation, individuals would often opt for a new life—a concept Chu Liang interpreted as graduation.

Those with lower cultivation levels might engage in small businesses or become attendants for prestigious families, leveraging the Mount Shu Sect's reputation for a comfortable life. Those with higher cultivation levels might establish their own sects and develop small factions.

The Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten gave rise to countless small sects back in the day. Cultivators in the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten, as well as those that used to be part of one of those sects, were considered practitioners of conventional paths. Those outside this circle were deemed unconventional.

However, Chu Liang currently preferred not to leave the Mount Shu Sect. He wanted to break through to the Dao Attainment Realm and become a confident Eminent One. He aimed to achieve freedom from cultivation. In that state, he could compete for the position of peak master at Mount Shu, mentor a couple of talented disciples, and lead a peaceful life without excessive toil.

As Manager Cui led them through a corridor on a higher level, they happened to observe a group of young women gathered in a courtyard below, seemingly participating in some form of selection or competition.

A couple of judges stood at the front while the young women took turns presenting dances. Most of them possessed graceful figures and light movements, pleasing to the eye.

Lin Bei couldn't help but laugh as he commented on the spectacle. "It's livelier down the mountain. When would you ever witness such a scene on Mount Shu?"

"What are they doing?" asked Chu Liang.

"Oh," Manager Cui uttered before he started explaining. "This is an audition for Miss Xue's dance partners. When the musicians play different compositions, there will be singers or dancers boosting the atmosphere on the stage. We must prepare for this. Since the Li Family Estate usually doesn't have these, we have to do an impromptu audition."

"No wonder there are so many pretty girls. Not everyone can have the chance to dance for Miss Xue. All the dancers in the city must be present now," Lin Bei said. His eyes lit up, and he remarked, "That girl looks so beautiful."

Even without Lin Bei pointing it out, Chu Liang noticed the young lady who had just stepped on stage.

At this moment, the previous dancer had been berated by several judges, and she left abruptly while wiping tears off her face. Just as she exited, a splash of bright colors caught their attention.

The young girl was dressed in a flowing and colorful dress, looking exceptionally vibrant. Her skin was as white as sheep-fat jade. Her lightly tied hair was slightly disheveled, and with delicate eyebrows and big eyes, every blink of her eyes exuded a sense of innocence. Her gaze seemed somewhat hazy, yet her demeanor exuded an irresistible charm.

The evening had approached and the surroundings had darkened, but her presence seemed to have made the sunlight brighter.

"My name is Liu Xiaoyu'er..."

The timidity in her voice conveyed a sense of vulnerability and evoked a sense of compassion.

The main judge, a woman in her forties or fifties, held authority as a dance master in South Gate City. Having previously studied at South Melody Conservatory, her demeanor appeared stern and strict.

However, upon seeing Liu Xiaoyu'er, she instinctively softened her tone. "Little one, what dance can you show us today?"

"I... I don't really know how to dance," Liu Xiaoyu'er admitted while blinking with her big eyes.

"It's okay. Just perform the dance steps you've learned," the judge said gently.

Liu Xiaoyu'er nodded gently. "Okay..."

With a graceful intertwining of her fingers, she reversed her hands, swayed her hips left and right, and twisted with each movement.

Then, she stood still in place.

"Alright. Since you're done warming up, start dancing," another judge encouraged.

Liu Xiaoyu'er was momentarily stunned, pausing before explaining, "That was the end of my dance."

"..."

Silence filled the courtyard.

The main dance judge remained quiet for a while before finally speaking, "Little girl, although I really like you, we are, after all, selecting a dance companion... Your performance just doesn't meet the criteria."

Liu Xiaoyu'er pouted, on the verge of tears. "What should I do then..."

"Dance skills aren't something you can master overnight. But your voice sounds really nice. Have you ever considered auditioning as a singer?" suggested the main dance judge, catching everyone off guard.

Liu Xiaoyu'er nodded gently as she responded, "That works too!"

The other judge, responsible for singing evaluation, then instructed, "Come. Learn to sing this line with me."

The judge then started singing, "Candlelight flickers, its flames piercing through the delicate curtain, a gentle chill settling in the aftermath of the rain."

"Um..." The girl listened once and then opened her mouth to sing, "Candlelight... flickers, its flames piercing through... the delicate curtain, a gentle chill settling... in th-"

The singing judge immediately interrupted her. "Stop!"

"Uh..." the girl stammered, not daring to finish singing the line.

"Sorry..." The singing judge quickly apologized. "I couldn't help it when you were singing every word out of tune."

"It's okay, even if you held back, I couldn't have," the main dance judge sighed. "Little girl, this place is truly not suitable for you. Hurry back and find something else to do."

"Huh?" Liu Xiaoyu'er immediately covered her mouth again. "Can't you give me a chance to stay? I can learn..."

The main dance judge turned away, calling out with a regretful expression, "Guards, escort her out."

The girl cried while being gently guided out by several guards.

As Lin Bei observed this scene, he couldn't help but sigh.

"What a pity!" He shook his head. "If she could sing or dance like a normal person, she probably would have had a chance to be selected."

Drawing on his years of experience in the world of entertainment, Manager Cui offered a precise judgment. "Indeed, if this girl could perform on stage, the audience would love her."

Chu Liang, while the two were engrossed in the talent show, looked up at the sky and whispered, "Am I the only one concerned about when the monsters will show up?"