

My System 35

Chapter 35: Autumn fills the sky beautifully, everyone sees Watching Brightness

“Oh? Are you so certain?”

Cheng Guang looked at the Turtle Slave before him, a meaningful gleam passing through his eyes.

He really did come.

It seems Bai Shuxuan isn't the type to play the game of waiting for willing prey like Jiang Taigong fishing.

On the sly-faced Turtle Slave's visage, a smug smile appeared. He swallowed his dry saliva, forcing a stiff smile as he said:

“Words of the Princely Heir, how dare I deceive the Princely Heir.”

Cheng Guang's finger tapped lightly on the desktop, his gaze sweeping over the Turtle Slave without uttering a word.

Under the intense scrutiny of Cheng Guang's gaze, the Turtle Slave obviously felt tremendous pressure, sweat pouring down his body as his legs began to shake.

Facing such an unprecedentedly noble personage as the Princely Heir, someone insignificant like him typically wouldn't even qualify to stand before the Princely Heir. Now, being stared at so directly, fear quickly took hold of him.

The Turtle Slave's mouth twisted into a rigid smile: "Princely Heir, if you don't want this poem, then I will take my leave and not dare to disturb you."

Cheng Guang chuckled lightly, "Now that you're here, why leave? Show me the poem."

Relieved by his words, the Turtle Slave hurried forward, placing the black scroll on the table with due reverence.

"Princely Heir, you only need to transcribe the verses from this scroll onto fine paper and present them to Miss Bai for a review, and you will pass the examination," he said.

"Although this poem can help the Princely Heir pass the examination, whether or not you can become a guest of Miss Bai still depends on yourself," the Turtle Slave added.

Cheng Guang nodded noncommittally, not eager to open the scroll in his hand. He simply picked up the black scroll, weighed it in his hand, and then asked:

"How much are you asking for this scroll?"

The Turtle Slave, wiping sweat from his brow, forced a dry laugh.

“How could I dare to ask for the Princely Heir’s money? Being able to help the Princely Heir is already a fortune for a lowly one like me,” he said.

Hearing this, Cheng Guang waved his hand indifferently, “Alright, get lost.”

He had no intention of paying in the first place.

Taken aback, the Turtle Slave hadn’t expected the wealthy Princely Heir to truly have no intention of paying, but he didn’t dare to say more and quickly fled the place like escaping.

Qiao Songshan, who was nearby, had been paying attention to the scene all along, his eyes as wide as if he couldn’t believe what he saw.

“Boss, you actually believe what that Turtle Slave said? That it will assuredly help you pass Bai Shuxuan’s examination... Such an assertion seems overly confident.”

Cheng Guang smiled faintly, examining the scroll in hand, “There probably isn’t an issue with what this Turtle Slave has said; it might indeed be possible.”

With that, Cheng Guang passed the scroll to Qiao Songshan, “How about it, want to give it a try?”

Quickly, Qiao Songshan waved his hands and shook his head, “No, no, if this poem can really help you pass Bai Shuxuan’s examination, it’s naturally meant for your use, Boss.”

“I’m just worried about the quality of the poem. After all, what kind of good poem can come from the hands of a Turtle Slave? If it turns out to be unsatisfactory and fails to pass Miss Bai’s examination, that would disgrace you, Boss. I would definitely have to strangle that Turtle Slave.”

With a worried face, Qiao Songshan then urged Cheng Guang to open the scroll and take a look.

“Boss, hurry and unroll it, let me help you check it out.”

Cheng Guang replied with a helpless expression, “Do you even understand the quality of poems?”

Qiao Songshan was taken aback, his eyes bulging, and he was at a loss for a moment before scratching his head in embarrassment.

Seeing this, Cheng Guang couldn’t help but chuckle, unfurling the scroll and laying it flat on the table.

A four-line poem lay upon the paper, the handwriting elegant, the brushstrokes restrained but sharp.

Qiao Songshan leaned in to take a look.

“Autumn fills the sky, a scene most fine, all gaze toward Watching Brightness.”

“Clouds rise over a thousand gorges, white, dew washes a clear river’s light.”

Qiao Songshan murmured the poem in a low voice, still looking perplexed after reciting it. He recognized it as a poem, but whether it was good or bad, he honestly couldn’t tell.

“This poem, is it about the moon?”

“Why don’t I see the word ‘moon’ anywhere?”

Cheng Guang was unsurprised, examining the poem carefully before replying casually, “The theme may be the moon, but that doesn’t necessarily mean the word moon has to appear in the poem. This ‘Watching Brightness’, presumably refers to ‘Watching Brightness’.”

Realization dawned on Qiao Songshan, he brought his hands together as if to applaud, “I see.”

“Boss, you’re really clever.”

Cheng Guang paid no mind to Qiao Songshan's flattery, which wasn't worth much, and continued to scrutinize the poem.

It is often said that handwriting reflects the person; the writing and the stroke of this poem clearly were not the work of the Turtle Slave, but instead seemed like it was penned by a woman.

Was it written by Bai Shuxuan herself, or perhaps a Maiden by her side?

Either way, the poem undoubtedly originated from Bai Shuxuan.

Cheng Guang only glanced at the poem and felt that it was quite well written; although it didn't match the masterpieces within his own mind, it would be considered fine work in this world.

It seems that Bai Shuxuan really does have a flair for literature.

Cheng Guang thumbed through the scroll several times, copying the poem onto the rice paper. He hadn't used a brush very often, and the characters he wrote could only be described as "legible."

After copying the poem, he set down the brush, thought for a moment, and then started writing a few poems from his past life that came to mind.

Just then, a commotion could be heard from downstairs.

“Miss, I have finished writing!”

A man stood out, holding up his rice paper.

He was clad in a scholar’s robe, his features handsome. He beamed with confidence as if convinced of the exceptional quality of his poetry.

The Red-robed maid, upon hearing the noise, smiled and commanded a servant to bring up the rice paper. Once a servant handed it to her, she gracefully turned and walked towards the screen inside.

But after only a moment, she reappeared.

“Sir, your poem does not resonate with Miss Bai’s heart. Why not rest a bit and try writing another?”

The scholar’s face stiffened, he stood there dazed, wanting to say something, but his voice was drowned out by the crowd.

“Red-robed Maiden, I’ve finished writing too. Please take my poem to Miss Bai to see.”

"I've finished as well."

"My poem is truly brilliant. None of you can best me; Bai Shuxuan is destined to be mine."

"Let's not rush now; send my poem up first."

It was as if that scholar had set the precedent.

One after the other, numerous people stood up, indicating that they had also completed their poems.

For a moment, the Jade Pavilion was filled with a cacophony of voices.

Wen Qinghe downstairs had also put down his brush and, looking at the new poem he had penned, nodded with a smile, evidently pleased.

"Not bad, not bad at all. I dare say no one here can rival this poem of mine," Wen Qinghe muttered to himself.

The students beside him had also finished their poems, chatting briefly before summoning a servant to deliver their works to the Red-robed maid upstairs.

Those still engrossed in composing their poems grew increasingly anxious.

They knew that although Bai Shuxuan had not set a time limit for writing, once she chose the one she favored to be her invited guest, even if they came up with a better poem afterwards, it would be of little significance.

From his position in the reserved seating, Cheng Guang observed the activity below for a while, thinking it was a good opportunity to send his rice paper upstairs. He called over a servant from the reserved seating area to hand his work to the Red-robed Maid.

The servant respectfully accepted the rice paper and quickly handed it over to the Red-robed Maid.

When the Red-robed Maid saw where the rice paper had come from, she smiled softly and respectfully at Cheng Guang, then continued collecting the poems offered by others.

If only a few poems were being delivered, she could afford to make multiple trips to present the works to Bai Shuxuan for perusal. But with a sudden influx of poems, she decided to wait and collect a larger batch before sending them all in at once.

A short while later, when the stream of incoming poems slowed, she rose and walked towards the screen behind which Bai Shuxuan was located.

All eyes intently followed the Red-robed Maid, finally converging on the room where Bai Shuxuan stayed.

Those struggling to come up with a poem momentarily set down their ink brushes.

The batch of poems now being reviewed by Bai Shuxuan could be said to represent the highest level of poetry present at the event.

Many students from the Academy had sent in their poems.

Even with just this wave of submissions, the number of people likely to pass the test was not small.

With so many candidates passing the test, how could there not be someone who met Bai Shuxuan's expectations?

It seemed that Bai Shuxuan's chosen guest would be announced tonight.

The ones who hadn't completed their poems dropped their writing brushes dejectedly, feeling they had lost their chance.

But those who had finished and submitted their works along with the majority were wide-eyed, all eyes fixed on the central room, filled with anticipation.

In the crowd, Wen Qinghe stood with a folding fan in hand, his back straight, smiling faintly towards where Bai Shuxuan was.

He wasn't as anxious as the others; he seemed quite relaxed.

It was clear he felt certain that passing Bai Shuxuan's test was inevitable for him.

And once he passed her test, with his appearance, becoming Bai Shuxuan's chosen guest would surely be effortless, wouldn't it?

Wen Qinghe confidently believed that this was a done deal.

No matter how many lesser talents muddied the waters around him, he did not believe that Bai Shuxuan would miss out on a gem as radiant as him.