

My System 40

Chapter 40: Yes, I wrote it!

“Another poem?”

“Are you churning out verses like these in batches? How come writing poetry seems even easier than breathing for you?”

“This is fake, right? Fake, right? Am I dreaming??”

“Hiss hiss hiss... I’m frantically sucking in cool air! I’m about to turn into a draught pipe!”

The audience was buzzing, and a cacophony began to rise.

Everyone looked up at the noble seat at the top of the pavilion, where the Princely Heir sat high above, expression tranquil, dressed in brocade finery, seemingly an Immortal descending to the mortal realm. In their eyes now, not a trace of doubt or disbelief remained.

Having presented two consecutive poems that astonished all, both deemed peerless works, what further proof was needed?

Such level of poetry—if you even wanted to buy it, there’s nowhere you could!

Who would sell it!

Who would dare to sell it!

A subtle shift began to emerge in everyone's mentality.

The noise gradually subsided, returning once again to silence.

In the midst of the quiet, someone suddenly spoke up.

"It's over, isn't it? The Princely Heir has already brought out two poems of such caliber; there shouldn't be any more, right??"

The person's voice was not loud, but inside the hushed Jade Pavilion, it was particularly clear.

"There should be no more..." someone said tentatively.

The discussion had barely started.

“Is that enough? If not, there’s more—my boss wrote plenty,” came a voice.

Qiao Songshan did not say much after hearing this, but spoke with a calm voice.

“Figures emerge beneath the moon, a thousand carriages by the gates.”

“Today, within the high walls, tears do not wet the skirt’s hem.”

The crowd was stunned, their eyes and mouths wide open.

Real or fake?

There’s more?

Before they could react, they heard Qiao Songshan recite again:

“West wind caresses the traveler’s sleeve, bright moon illuminates the fur coat.”

“Endless thoughts of mountain passes, floating, the boat departs.”

Their mouths slightly agape, eyes as round as saucers, the people looked as if they had turned to wood, frozen in place.

They had not yet absorbed the brilliance of the previous poem before another was thrown at them,

Sending their minds reeling.

As Qiao Songshan recited, he stroked his chin, murmuring to himself:

“No one’s talking, eh? Not satisfied? You all have quite high standards...”

“Moon rises above the eastern hills, clouds part, a vista of vast clarity.”

“Cold nights on the homeward path, in aging spring, the traveler’s sail is light.”

“Hmm, this seems not quite right; the poems my boss writes are too profound, I barely understand...”

“The Milky Way stretches above autumn waters, golden ripples soak the azure sky.”

“Where has the jade disc gone? The Immortal is in the clouds.”

“This should be about right.”

As Qiao Songshan murmured to himself, he cast out several more poems that left the crowd in awe, though it was unclear if it was because they were overwhelmed by the sheer volume of poetry they had received all at once.

Without anyone noticing when, the audience had become utterly silent again.

“Unfamiliar with the pathways of the mortal world, today I venture beneath the ground.”

“Mountains and rivers are as dreams, wind and moon innately serene.”

“This one’s passable, my boss truly writes well.”

Qiao Songshan read another poem, and found that the people below had turned to stone, giving no response at all.

A slight twist at the corner of his mouth, Qiao Songshan lost interest.

Qiao Songshan fell silent, and it took the audience a long time to regain their senses, breathing a sigh of relief.

No longer daring to make any more comments.

Many Academy students now only wished to kneel on the ground and beg Qiao Songshan to put away his Divine Power and to stop reciting the Princely Heir's poetry.

Otherwise, at this very moment, their willpower might shatter.

Having studied poetry for decades, desiring nothing more than to compose a fine poem in their lifetime, they might never achieve this wish before death.

But...

In less than the time it takes to brew a pot of tea, the Princely Heir wrote not one but five or six poems that astonished the world!

Were it not for Qiao Songshan, the buffoon, the Princely Heir probably wouldn't have showcased these poems at all!!

Among these were verses that even the Princely Heir was not entirely pleased with—works that were beyond their wildest expectations for a lifetime!!

This truly...

The gap was too vast!!

Where could one even begin to make sense of it??

Qiao Songshan's gaze swept over the crowd below. As his eyes passed over each person, they all shrank back, avoiding his gaze, hastily using the books in their hands to cover their faces.

No longer daring to meet Qiao Songshan's eyes.

They were shamefaced!

"Princely Heir, Miss Bai has been waiting inside for a long time, you can go right in. If Miss Bai chooses you to be the honored guest, please be gentle with her, as it will be her first experience,"

the Red-robed maid, Hong Zhu, quickly spoke up when she saw the Jade Pavilion was suddenly about to turn into Qiao Songshan's poetry contest, easing the awkwardness in the room.

The words of the Red-robed maid brought the topic back on track, and many people in the room breathed a sigh of relief.

All they wanted now was for the Princely Heir to hurry up and enjoy the pleasures of the dragon and the phoenix and to prevent Qiao Songshan from reciting any more poems.

Cheng Guang, who had been sitting quietly to the side with a calm expression, merely glanced at the graceful figure behind the screen in the central room. After watching for a long while, a barely visible smile appeared on the corner of his mouth.

“Alright,”

Cheng Guang whispered and then walked toward Bai Shuxuan’s room.

By this time, many people were already thinking of leaving.

Now, everyone was convinced that Bai Shuxuan would choose Cheng Guang as her honored guest.

After all, who could compete with him in terms of status, position, or talent?

Many no longer felt much regret.

The idea of Bai Shuxuan, a renowned Oiran known throughout the Capital city, being won over by the Princely Heir did not upset their sense of balance.

As Cheng Guang slowly made his way to the room where Bai Shuxuan was, Wen Qinghe, slightly bewildered in the crowd, seemed to finally come back to his senses as if he had just remembered something, and he quickly asked aloud:

“Princely Heir!”

Cheng Guang paused his steps, and his noble gaze fell upon Wen Qinghe.

“What is it?”

Under Cheng Guang’s watchful eye, Wen Qinghe felt immense pressure, beads of sweat the size of beans rolling down his forehead nonstop, but, still struggling against the pressure, he asked:

“Princely Heir, the first poem Watching Brightness, was it written by you? You said earlier it wasn’t, but I really can’t imagine who else present could have written it.”

Wen Qinghe was truly baffled!

His pride was completely trampled in front of Cheng Guang tonight.

He admitted defeat under Cheng Guang's pressure.

But he still couldn't understand one thing, and that was the first poem read by Hong Zhu earlier—Watching Brightness.

Who was the author?

If it was Cheng Guang, there would be no questions left.

But the Princely Heir didn't admit to writing it, and if it was someone else present...

Wouldn't that mean he couldn't even rank second in poetry among all those present?

Wen Qinghe nervously watched Cheng Guang's expression, awaiting his answer.

Hearing Wen Qinghe's question, others inside the Jade Pavilion also became curious, turning their gazes towards Cheng Guang.

Only to see Cheng Guang smile faintly and casually respond, "The poem you're talking about."

"It indeed wasn't written by me."

Cheng Guang did not directly state that the poem had been written by Bai Shuxuan.

Firstly, he had no evidence; who knew if the scroll brought by the Turtle Slave was written by Bai Shuxuan's personal maid or by herself.

Secondly, admitting to this did not benefit him at all; his main concern remained revenge against this devious woman.

Throwing dirt on Bai Shuxuan might be satisfying now, but it would greatly affect his plans.

And at that moment.

Qiao Songshan, who had been looking confused, suddenly felt uneasy when he heard Wen Qinghe bring up the poem presented earlier by the Turtle Slave.

Unable to discern good poetry from bad, he assumed the Watching Brightness poem mentioned by Wen Qinghe was terrible, since it was presented by the Turtle Slave, and thus couldn't be of any good quality.

To defend his leader, Qiao Songshan decided to take all the blame upon himself.

He slapped his chest, with a fierce voice, exclaiming, “What’s the fuss! Wen Qinghe, I wrote that damn poem!”

“Any objections!?”

“I wrote that crummy poem off the cuff; what’s it to you?”

He stood tall and proud as if the person who wrote that crummy poem was himself.

As his words fell, the room once again fell silent.

The crowd, looking at Qiao Songshan’s rugged face that was almost covered in muscles, couldn’t help the corners of their mouths from twitching slightly.

Several of the scholars burst into tears on the spot.

To think they were outdone not only by the handsome and refined Cheng Guang but now also by this giant oaf?

Wen Qinghe felt as if struck by lightning, standing there dumbfounded with a pale face, his body suddenly swayed, and he nearly collapsed to the ground.

His fellow Academy students quickly stepped forward to support him.

“Brother Wen, Brother Wen, don’t be agitated.”

“Are you alright?”

Fervent concerns reached the ears of Wen Qinghe, but at that moment, they brought little warmth, as he felt frigid all over.

Last year’s beating from the Princely Heir and Qiao Songshan hadn’t chilled his heart like this.

“I’m the third... haha... I’m the third...”

Wen Qinghe forced a bitter smile, looking up at the top of the pavilion where the figure, like an Immortal, stood apart from the world, his heart filled with bitterness.

It’s not daunting if someone’s status and position are higher than yours.

It's the fear that on top of having a higher status and position, they're also damn more talented than you, and even more hardworking.