

Mythical 83

Chapter 83: The Girls at Home

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Chen Xi had no intention of going to the talent recruitment platform. He planned to skip work as soon as he left the government office. He had already prepared an excuse in case Man Chong, who could return at any time, caught him for dereliction of duty. His reason was perfectly legitimate: as the county governor, he needed to understand the situation of his territory to avoid being misled by others.

When he got home, he found Fan Jian reading. She had read many of the family heirloom-level long essays, each worth a thousand gold, and according to Chen Xi's instructions, she only needed to understand the general idea.

"Jian'er, want to go out?" Chen Xi pushed the door open and saw Fan Jian quickly hiding something under the blanket.

"Ouch!" Fan Jian, hiding something, seemed to have accidentally touched something sharp, and she winced in pain.

"Embroidery?" Chen Xi asked curiously.

"You're not allowed to look," Fan Jian replied, her childish temper flaring up.

"Not doing well with the embroidery? Let me see your hand." Chen Xi teased her.

Chen Xi realized that Fan Jian had probably pricked her finger with a needle.

When he took her left hand, he saw her slender fingers with several small pricks, likely from previous embroidery attempts. He thought something was missing from her hand.

"Let's go. I'll take you and Lan'er out to buy some cosmetics and powder. You can't stay cooped up at home all the time," Chen Xi said, pulling Fan Jian up. He casually threw the needles and threads into a nearby bamboo basket.

"Are we going out?" Fan Jian had become accustomed to staying at home and didn't have much desire to go out. However, as Chen Xi's wife, she didn't want to refuse his invitation. After a moment of thought, she nodded, "Let me change my clothes."

"Alright, hurry up. I'll go tell Lan'er," Chen Xi said as he left the room.

Chen Xi then went to the backyard to inform Chen Lan. After being expelled from the Chen family, he had lifted Chen Lan's status as a servant, making her a free person. Despite this, she still lived with him and took care of him, something Fan Jian didn't mind.

Chen Lan continued to do her previous tasks, not as a performer, but more like a personal attendant. The household chores, such as serving tea and washing clothes, were now handled by newly bought servants. Chen Xi didn't need much care, so Chen Lan's role was similar to Fan Jian's.

When Chen Xi entered Chen Lan's room, she was lounging on the bed, reading.

"Ah!" Chen Lan exclaimed, startled by Chen Xi's sudden entrance. She quickly sat up.

"Why so surprised? Get up, lazy girl. I'm taking you and Jian'er out to buy some cosmetics and powder. It's been a while since I've properly explored Fenggao," Chen Xi said, watching as Chen Lan hastily threw her book to the ground.

This would likely horrify book lovers, but Chen Xi didn't mind. His mindset hadn't changed yet.

"Master..." Chen Lan whispered, kneeling on the bed.

"What is it?" Chen Xi asked, indifferent to the formal address. He rather liked being called "Master," even though Chen Lan was no longer his servant. She occasionally performed for him, dancing under the dim lights, which he found amusing. As for Fan Jian, he had seen her dance only once when she was

drunk, and it had been quite impressive. She, however, forbade Chen Xi from mentioning it, blushing furiously whenever he brought it up.

"If Madam is going, I shouldn't go," Chen Lan said quietly, fiddling with the bedclothes, clearly wanting to go.

"Don't worry. Jian'er is easygoing. As long as you don't bully her, she won't mind," Chen Xi reassured her, knowing Fan Jian's personality well.

Fan Jian was obedient and would do whatever Chen Xi asked. She rarely left her room, which made her a bit naive. Chen Xi found her endearing and wasn't worried about her causing trouble for Chen Lan. Given their history, Chen Lan had been with Chen Xi through thick and thin, and he felt she deserved to stay.

After some thought, Chen Lan nodded in agreement and asked Chen Xi to leave the room so she could change.

"Hurry up," Chen Xi urged as he sat at the stone table outside. He found it amusing how long it took women to change clothes, unlike his own quick routine.

As he waited, Fan Jian and Chen Lan walked through the moon gate.

Fan Jian wore a plain white dress with a married woman's hair ornament and a gold hairpin. Her fair face showed a slight blush.

Chen Xi stared at her lips, puzzled. He didn't recall there being any lip rouge for sale.

"Why are you staring at me, Husband? Are you tired of waiting?" Fan Jian asked curiously.

"Just curious. Let's go, I'll take you two shopping. I've barely explored Fenggao myself," Chen Xi said, shaking his head. He decided to ask about her lips later.

Fan Jian took his arm and leaned in close, walking half a step behind him, while Chen Lan followed, looking at Fan Jian with a hint of envy. She knew she could do the same, and Chen Xi wouldn't mind, but she felt embarrassed with Fan Jian present.

As they walked, Chen Xi felt a surge of pride. The streets were paved with bluestone, and shops lined both sides, a stark contrast to the rundown state of a few months ago. The dirty alleys were now clean, thanks to Chen Xi's strict regulations. There were no longer any open sewers, and animals that soiled the streets had to be cleaned up by their owners.

Chen Xi knew that disease prevention was crucial, as there were no effective treatments for epidemics. Keeping the city clean was a matter of life and death.

Taking a few steps in one direction, Chen Xi paused and turned to Fan Jian, "Do you know where we can buy cosmetics and powder?"

"No idea. Didn't you oversee the city's construction? Don't you know?" Fan Jian shook her head and looked at him curiously. "Maybe Lan'er knows. I've never left the house since we arrived."

Their puzzled looks made Chen Lan feel uncomfortable. "I haven't been out either," she mumbled.

The three of them, all homebodies, stood at their gate, sighing in unison. Chen Xi laughed.

"Alright, this shows we need some signposts. I'll have them made and maybe even make some money from it. Let's ask for directions," Chen Xi said, realizing none of them knew the way. They were all homebodies.

Chen Xi, as the head of the household, couldn't let the two women handle this. As he asked for directions, they wandered the streets, and Chen Xi noticed several issues.

Smiling, Chen Xi put a bracelet on Fan Jian. For Fan Jian and Chen Lan, who didn't lack anything, shopping was more about the experience. If they lingered on an item for more than five seconds, Chen Xi would buy it without giving them time to reconsider. This way, they quickly reached the end of the street, both women satisfied with their purchases.