

Rise 122

Chapter 122: Gained Weight Again

What can be done in over two months?

One could finish reading a novel like Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils, review the Four Books and Five Classics three to five times, copy ten volumes of books, or even make a slightly slim Zhu Ping'an a little bit plumper. Of course, this was thanks to his mother, Chen, because anyone who eats chicken, duck, and fish in rotation would gain some weight. For Zhu Ping'an, a foodie, it was a bit of a struggle to handle, but it was a small, happy problem.

Master Sun returned more than a month after Zhu Ping'an came home. After returning, he called Zhu Ping'an over for special tutoring. Every morning, he personally taught Zhu Ping'an the Eight-legged Essays, Four Books, and Five Classics, teaching him for about a month. As the saying goes, "The teacher leads you to the door, but practice is up to you." Zhu Ping'an had lived two lives and was quite intelligent, so the month of learning had a significant impact on him.

"Eh, Zhu Ping'an, how do I feel like you've gained weight again?" This afternoon, Zhu Ping'an went to the Li family to return some books. Baozi, the maid, saw him from a distance and exclaimed in surprise.

How could that be? It had only been two days since they last saw each other, so how could the weight gain be so noticeable?

"It's true! Don't believe me? You can ask the young lady," Baozi, seeing that Zhu Ping'an clearly didn't believe her, pushed the young lady forward.

"Hmph, why does it matter to me whether he's fat or not!" The sly girl, Li Shu, arrogantly looked up at the sky, not even glancing at Zhu Ping'an.

"It's true, he has gained weight." Baozi said, puffing her cheeks. "Young lady, look."

After several requests from Baozi, the sly girl reluctantly glanced at Zhu Ping'an and then pursed her lips. "Oh, I guess a little," she said, and then suddenly smiled mischievously. "He looks more like a toad now, haha..."

Uh, could it be that the gradual increase in weight led to a significant change? It's possible. Otherwise, why did my mother laugh so proudly when she saw me this morning?

However, it's just a little bit of extra weight, barely noticeable.

It doesn't matter, as long as mother is happy.

"After returning the books today, I will set off for Yingtian tomorrow," Zhu Ping'an said, pulling out the two books he had borrowed last time from his bag while walking.

"Ah?" Baozi couldn't help but let out a surprised sound.

"What? You don't want to part with this toad? Should I show some mercy and sell you to him, to be his warm bed maid?" The sly girl narrowed her eyes and looked at Baozi.

Baozi immediately shook her head, like a rattling toy. "No, no, I still want to be the young lady's maid when she gets married."

Zhu Ping'an just smiled faintly and shook his head, walking past them toward the study.

"What's all that arrogance for? You're just a small student, not even sure if you can pass the scholar exams. Even if you are lucky enough to pass, do you really think you, a greedy eating toad, can pass the imperial exams to become a jinshi? Hmph, thinking too highly of yourself!"

The sly girl watched as Zhu Ping'an passed in front of her, shaking his head and not even looking at her, and couldn't help but feel a little upset. She had intentionally worn new clothes to try to dazzle this rude toad.

"I never said I would definitely pass the exams," Zhu Ping'an turned around and said calmly.

The sly girl was left speechless by his response.

And so, an unlucky maid ended up taking the blame for Zhu Ping'an's comment.

As soon as Zhu Ping'an entered the study, he heard the sly girl angrily scolding and a maid's voice trembling in response.

This is the Ming Dynasty.

After returning the books, Zhu Ping'an was about to leave when he was blocked in the study by the sly girl and her maid.

"Is there something?" Zhu Ping'an asked calmly.

"Of course there's something, you haven't told a story yet." Baozi, fully playing the role of the close maid, voiced the sly girl's thoughts.

"Tomorrow, I'll be leaving. I won't be able to finish the story," Zhu Ping'an said with a helpless shrug.

"If it's too long, you can tell a short one." Baozi didn't mind at all.

"A short one..." Zhu Ping'an touched his ear and softly muttered, then nodded. "Okay, I'll tell a short one."

So, peanuts, melon seeds, and small snacks were neatly arranged, and the maids and old nurses sat in rows, waiting for Zhu Ping'an to start speaking.

"Once upon a time, there was a local wealthy man who fell seriously ill and was close to death. The doctor called for his children and asked him, 'What is your last wish? Speak quickly, or you won't have the chance to anymore.'" Zhu Ping'an paused here and didn't continue.

"Hurry up and continue!" The maid, who had heard only the first two sentences, couldn't help but urge.

Zhu Ping'an glanced at everyone and asked, "Can you guess what the local wealthy man's last words were?"

"Of course, he must have called his children to his side to give them instructions for his funeral."

"Yes, yes, and he must have revealed where he hid his money so that they can find it later."

"Maybe the local wealthy man had an illegitimate child outside and told his children to take care of him... Or he might have asked for a pair of chopsticks, telling his children to break one. Then they'd all try to break another pair, and in the end, no one would be able to break them, and the local wealthy man would teach them about unity and not fighting amongst themselves."

The maids and old nurses all shared their guesses, and then they all turned their gazes toward Zhu Ping'an.

"The local wealthy man said, 'Can I get a different doctor to try again? I think I can still be saved,'" Zhu Ping'an said, even mimicking the tone of voice.

Laughter erupted in the study, and the sly young girl, after laughing, looked disdainfully at Zhu Ping'an. "How boring! Who would say such a thing? That's so ridiculous! You'll never pass the exam like that. You should stop wasting your parents' money."

What an unlikable girl!

"Well, let me tell you another story," Zhu Ping'an said with a calm expression, as if he hadn't heard the sly girl's mockery.

Of course, no one refused.

"A young man trekked through deep mountains, facing numerous dangers, and finally found a hermit monk living in the mountains. He eagerly asked, 'I'm ugly, what should I do?'

The monk, holding his prayer beads, smiled but didn't answer.

The young man looked at the monk, whose expression was calm and unruffled, and suddenly understood, nodding his head: 'Master, you mean I should keep my heart like still water and cultivate myself, right?'

The monk replied, 'Go away, if you're ugly, you should hurry up and hide in a deep mountain like I did. Don't talk nonsense. Don't you know you're ugly?'"

As soon as Zhu Ping'an finished speaking, the maids and old nurses burst into laughter. The contrast was just too funny—they had never heard anything like it before.

Only one person didn't laugh; in fact, she glared at Zhu Ping'an with a murderous look in her eyes. That person was the sly young girl. While others couldn't tell, she knew that Zhu Ping'an was mocking her—mocking her for being ugly and talking nonsense!

A blind, toad-like creature!

A white-eyed wolf!

The scheming young girl gave Zhu Ping'an a fierce glare, then angrily turned around and left.

"Ah... Miss, Miss... Wait for me!" The maid, Baozi, belatedly realized that the young lady had left and hurriedly lifted her skirts to chase after her.