

Rise 240

Chapter 240: Time Flies, How Can I Waste It

Mountains in front, mountains behind, snow falls at the foot of the mountain.

On the snow-covered mountain path, the bloodstains on the ground had already frozen into ice. Zhu Ping'an used all his strength to pull the spear that had pierced the wild wolf out. A deep pit appeared on the stone-paved, snow-covered mountain road.

"Brother Wang, your spear skills are impressive."

Zhu Ping'an handed the spear to Wang Xiao'er, who was standing nearby, and looked at the deep pit on the ground, sighing in admiration.

"Young Master, you're flattering me. Xiao'er only has brute strength, nothing more."

Wang Xiao'er took the spear, slightly twisted it with his hands, and shortened the long spear by retracting part of its shaft. The spear turned into a short spear, which he then slung over his back. If it weren't for the long spear on his back, no one would associate him with the extraordinary shot that had pierced the wild wolf just moments ago.

Whinny, whinny—while the two were talking, the sound of a loud and unpleasant horse's neigh echoed. Zhu Ping'an looked up and saw the dim-witted, foolish, Shamat black horse carrying a burly man trotting over with a bumpy gait.

This fool actually came back!

Zhu Ping'an really wanted to stew this foolish, Shamat black horse into horse meat soup! If it weren't for this dim-witted fool, how would he have ended up in such a situation?

"This must be your horse, right? Oh, I see, you ran into wolves. No wonder the horse bit my belt and dragged me here. I was chopping wood when it came to me—this is indeed a horse with spirit," the burly man said as he stretched out his hand and nimbly jumped down from the black horse, addressing Zhu Ping'an and Wang Xiao'er.

So this dim-witted, foolish, Shamat black horse actually knows how to call for help? Well, what good is that? If Brother Wang hadn't been here, the fool probably would have only managed to scrape a few pieces of his own limbs out of the wolf's mouth! But since this fool at least knew how to call for help, I'll give it another chance.

As for the big man saying the horse is "spirited"?

Forget it. This is clearly just a foolish, dim-witted horse. I'll have to train this dumb horse well in the future to prevent it from being so foolish.

"Yes, thank you, this brother, for coming to our aid," Zhu Ping'an cupped his hands in thanks.

"Why thank me? I didn't do much. It's freezing in this snowstorm. If you don't mind, you can come to my house and have some hot food," the burly man waved his hand nonchalantly, glancing at the snow on Zhu Ping'an and Wang Xiao'er's clothes before inviting them.

"Young Master, why don't you rest at this brother's house for a day first? I'll go home to report and ask for instructions, then I'll come back to accompany you to the capital for the imperial exam. On the way, I can also help you with some errands," Wang Xiao'er suggested, agreeing with the burly man's proposal. After all, Zhu Ping'an had just gone through the wolf incident and needed time to recover. His body also needed rest after the fall. Moreover, he also needed to return home to report to Little Li Shu, who was particularly concerned about Zhu Ping'an's reaction to the engagement. He would need to explain the wolf incident to Little Li Shu as well.

"No need, Brother Wang. I'm not made of paper or clay. As the saying goes, reading thousands of books is not as useful as traveling thousands of miles. This journey is just the right opportunity for me to reflect. And don't mention today's events to my family, especially my mother, so they won't worry," Zhu Ping'an shook his head, asking Wang Xiao'er not to tell his family about the wolf encounter, fearing his mother would be particularly concerned.

"This..." Wang Xiao'er hesitated.

"Please," Zhu Ping'an gently bowed and cupped his hands in a pleading gesture.

"Alright, Young Master, but you might as well rest at this brother's place for a few days before going for the exam. It won't be too late," Wang Xiao'er stepped aside, avoiding the direction of Zhu Ping'an's bow, and

again suggested that Zhu Ping'an rest for a few days with the burly man. Wang Xiao'er nodded in agreement with Zhu Ping'an's request, but he would only keep it from Zhu Ping'an's parents; as for Little Li Shu, he would report the truth.

"Time flies, how can I waste it?" Zhu Ping'an smiled faintly, casually brushing the snow off his clothes. He shook his head and then turned to the burly man, asking, "May I ask, brother, how far is it to the next part of this mountain path?"

"This is Yingchou Gorge. Just three more miles ahead is our Lao Ya Village, and after passing our village, another eight miles will bring you to Xiaoshi Town," the big man answered, pointing at the mountain road.

"Great, we can rest once we reach Xiaoshi Town," Zhu Ping'an said, cupping his hands in gratitude before getting back on his horse.

"Brother Wang, thank you for today. Ping'an will never forget your kindness. Please give my regards to Lord Li," Zhu Ping'an said, cupping his hands again and bidding farewell to Wang Xiao'er from horseback.

After saying his goodbyes to Wang Xiao'er, Zhu Ping'an turned to the other burly man standing nearby and said, "Thank you for your kindness, but Ping'an must press on. Hmm, you can leave the wolf to this brother here."

With that, Zhu Ping'an spurred his horse into the snowstorm and continued his journey.

Wang Xiao'er watched Zhu Ping'an disappear into the snowstorm with admiration. The son-in-law had just been close to death, but now, without a care, he was brushing off the snow and continuing his journey.

Such a person was certainly not ordinary.

The little miss indeed had a keen eye.

Wang Xiao'er couldn't help but feel a sense of awe.

As for the burly man, he was grinning with joy as he looked at the stiff wolf in the snow. If he sold it at the town, it would fetch quite a sum, and his family could finally have a meal.

"Uh, this wolf... you..." the burly man felt the need to ask again.

"Take it home. I have matters to attend to. Farewell," Wang Xiao'er shook his head and turned to leave.

The mountain path was left behind, with the burly man happily throwing the wolf over his shoulder, taking a shortcut through the small path and heading home.

While braving the snowstorm, Zhu Ping'an didn't forget to remind his black horse, "You're just a horse," drilling the concept into its thick head so it would stop thinking of itself as some mighty beast. At the very least, it shouldn't drag him down when it was on the path to destruction.

In just three miles, the mountain road ended. At the end of the road was a village, which seemed even more dilapidated than Xiahe Village. The village had only a few households, but at the end of the village, there were two split paths, and Zhu Ping'an wasn't sure which one to take. At the entrance of the village, a skinny, ragged child was squatting in the snow, eating snow, likely from hunger.

"Little one, can you tell me which direction Xiaoshi Town is?" Zhu Ping'an asked gently from his horse.

"That way," the child, still eating snow, lifted his head and pointed in a direction.

"Thank you, little one. Hmm, this is a token of my gratitude," Zhu Ping'an said as he dismounted and walked over to the child, handing him a small bag containing about two pounds of beef jerky.

The child stared at the tall horse beside Zhu Ping'an, unsure of what to do.

"Take it, this is from your brother as thanks for showing me the way. It's really tasty. Go home and let your mother heat it for you. Don't eat any more snow. Be careful or you'll upset your stomach and it'll hurt," Zhu Ping'an said with a smile, ruffling the child's hair. He then placed the bag in the child's hands, got back on his horse, and rode off along the path the child had pointed toward Xiaoshi Town.

