

Rise 281

Chapter 281: Then Let's Break Off the Engagement

“Flowers bloom with dual faces; life teeters between Buddha and demon.”

Everyone at the gate of the examination compound felt this deeply. Though the young man and the beautiful lady had already left in their carriage, the crowd remained stunned by the overwhelming shock of the scene they had just witnessed.

What they had assumed to be a young man with poor hygiene, humble background, and perhaps incapable of even finding a wife, had—just as they were mocking him—suddenly transformed before their eyes. The very youth they had looked down upon turned out to be a true winner in life. Not only did he have a wife, but she was also an unrivaled beauty, a lady of breathtaking charm. Even the maid by her side was an extraordinary beauty. And as for his background—clearly not poor. Judging from the grand display as they departed, he was clearly from a powerful and noble family.

“What kind of person is this, pretending to be poor just to fool us!”

“He already has such a considerate, stunning wife, and still flirts with the maid!”

“Exactly, a heartless rich man!”

People pointed and whispered at the receding figure of Zhu Ping'an on the carriage, their criticism more venomous than before. In their words, Zhu Ping'an had become a noble scoundrel deliberately toying with the crowd, and they greatly disparaged his character.

This scoundrel of a young master, riding in the same carriage with both a stunning lady and a lovely maid—he must be embracing them left and right! Who knows what else he might be doing inside?

Ptui! Shameless scum!

The onlookers watched the departing carriage, their eyes burning with envy, jealousy, and hatred. If only they could live one day in that young man's shoes, they would die content.

But if they had known the truth, they would be disappointed. The scene inside the carriage was far from what they imagined—in fact, it was quite the opposite.

Just moments ago, in front of the crowd, everything had appeared perfect. The stunning lady was graceful and cultured, gentle and virtuous. Before getting into the carriage, she had even kindly taken out an embroidered handkerchief to wipe away the non-existent sweat from the young man's forehead. Every smile and gesture radiated kindness and gentleness.

However, once they boarded the carriage, everything changed.

The once kind and gentle, well-mannered lady who had used her embroidered handkerchief to wipe Zhu Ping'an's forehead now tossed the handkerchief disdainfully at the bun-faced little maid the moment she got in. Pinching her delicate nose with slender fingers, she rolled her black eyes and looked at Zhu Ping'an with utter disgust, pouting and scolding:

“Ugh! What a stench—so dirty! Zhu Ping’an, stay away from me!”

Li Shu looked at Zhu Ping’an with contempt, pointing haughtily to a corner of the carriage with her delicate finger, ordering him around as if she were royalty.

“Mm-hmm, Young Master really smells bad,” The bun-faced little maid, Hua’er, also pinched her nose with her chubby hand, her round face scrunched into a frown.

Zhu Ping’an ignored Li Shu’s commanding attitude and sat comfortably in the carriage. He stretched out his legs and yawned, then turned his gaze to the haughty Li Shu with a mischievous smile.

“Hey, what did you just call me?”

Li Shu, still bossy and proud, blushed at first but quickly returned to her arrogant demeanor. Looking down at Zhu Ping’an like a queen bestowing charity, she rolled her eyes and said:

“Even a dog should be judged by its owner. Don’t overthink it! I just couldn’t stand them.”

As expected, this girl was still the same—tsundere, arrogant, cunning, and sharp-tongued. She hadn't changed one bit!

Zhu Ping'an looked at the black-bellied girl, Li Shu, and shook his head slightly. Then he reached for the collar of his rabbit-fur coat as if preparing to loosen it.

"Zhu Ping'an, you pervert! What are you doing?! Don't think just because we're engaged, you can bully me like this!"

Li Shu was startled by Zhu Ping'an's movement, thinking he was about to do something indecent. She glared furiously at him, her cheeks flushed, and quickly covered her eyes with her hands. Gritting her teeth, she shouted angrily, baring her little canine teeth like she wanted to bite him.

On the other side, the bun-faced little maid also let out a surprised "ah" and turned her head away, covering her eyes with her chubby hands—though she peeked curiously at Zhu Ping'an through her fingers.

What the heck? Do I look like that kind of guy?!

Zhu Ping'an sighed inwardly, reached into his coat, and pulled out the engagement contract, holding it out to Li Shu.

“Hey, I’ve got something to show you.”

He handed her the engagement contract, speaking casually.

This girl had rushed all the way to the capital just to break off the engagement. He didn’t mind either—so be it. Everyone would be happy. Why not go through with it?

“Shameless! Who wants to look at that?!”

Li Shu puffed her cheeks, still covering her eyes, and shouted angrily at Zhu Ping’an. This bastard! How dare he tease her at a moment like this! She still thought he was trying to undress or something.

“What are you talking about? It’s the engagement contract,” Zhu Ping’an replied, looking speechless.

Li Shu gasped in surprise, lowered her hands, and opened her eyes. Seeing that it really was the engagement contract, her face flushed red—but she still acted proudly.

“Don’t think just because we’re engaged, you can act shamelessly!” Li Shu spoke while lifting her chin arrogantly.

“Shameless how?” Zhu Ping’an looked speechless and once again handed her the contract, looking like he was finally free. “Didn’t you come to the capital to break off the engagement? Here you go—I’d be glad to be rid of it.”

Li Shu’s expression turned dark at his words. Her delicate body trembled, lips clenched tightly, and she radiated cold air—as if the temperature in the carriage had dropped by ten degrees. Then she erupted, far more furious than before.

“Glad to be rid of it? Hmph! I’m even more glad! Who wants to be with a toad like you—a smelly toad! Even if every man in the world died, I wouldn’t want you!”

Zhu Ping’an stared blankly at the inexplicably furious Li Shu. Uh... Looks like she really didn’t want to be in this engagement, just like him. But if he was cooperating and handing it over, why was she still so mad?

“What are you looking at?!”

“Hmph! If your mother hadn’t run to my house crying and begging for the engagement—making a scene again and again—my father would never have agreed.”

“If my father hadn’t caved, who would’ve wanted to have this stupid paper relationship with a stinky toad like you?!”

Seeing Zhu Ping'an's confused expression, Li Shu realized she'd lost control of her emotions. But instead of calming down, she just glared harder, putting on an I'm-in-a-bad-mood-so-I-can-do-what-I-want face, and naturally let out another wave of complaints.

"Then Let's Break Off the Engagement!"

Zhu Ping'an's eyes flashed with irritation as he looked at Li Shu. This foul-mouthed girl had actually insulted his mother—he felt a strong urge to teach her a lesson. But considering the exams had just ended and he wanted to maintain good karma, he held back. He simply responded with a cold:

"Then Let's Break Off the Engagement."