

Rise 45

Chapter 45: You've Passed this Level.

Zhu Ping'an didn't take the chubby boy's reminder to heart, thinking it was just a small squabble between children. But unexpectedly, something did happen.

After school, Zhu Ping'an and Zhu Pingjun were walking home together with their schoolbags. Zhu Pingjun, sniffing, was complaining to Zhu Ping'an about how bad the teacher was, how he got hit on the hand, had to stand as punishment, and other such grievances. In Zhu Pingjun's narrative, the teacher was like an evil villain, and Zhu Pingjun was a poor little angel enduring all the mistreatment.

Not long after they crossed the bridge and walked onto the path towards the village, which was surrounded by fields, they encountered five mischievous kids suddenly rushing out from the bushes, led by Wei Chen, the boy who had tried to cut in line for the toilet earlier.

It was obvious they were seeking revenge.

Wei Chen, leading the five kids, surrounded Zhu Ping'an and Zhu Pingjun. With an angry expression, Wei Chen said, "You both better behave. Let us teach Zhu Ping'an a lesson, and it'll be over. Zhu Pingjun, if you stand quietly to the side, we won't touch you. Otherwise, you'll get punished too."

"Hmph, if you want to hit my brother, you'll have to get through me first," Zhu Pingjun snorted coldly, wiping his nose with his hand. He struck a bit of a Bruce Lee-like pose, and to be honest, he did exude some momentum.

Zhu Ping'an was suddenly moved. Damn, who would have thought that usually unreliable, lazy, and messy Zhu Pingjun, who liked to take advantage at home and sniffled all the time, would actually stand up for him now.

With a roar, Zhu Pingjun picked up a large clod of dirt from the ground, smashed it with a punch, and then dramatically blew the dirt off his hands.

The stance left the other kids stunned.

But that was just a warm-up. After smashing the dirt clod, Zhu Pingjun let out another yell, rushed to a small tree, and kicked it hard, making it sway back and forth.

Then he found a stick on the ground, making strange noises as he swung it around wildly in what appeared to be a chaotic martial arts routine. He even slammed the stick onto the ground a few times, making loud cracking noises.

After putting on this whole display, Zhu Pingjun, panting heavily, threw the stick aside, sat down on the side of the road, spread his hands, and with tears welling up in his eyes, choked out, "Damn it, I'm out of strength. I guess you've passed my level."

"I guess you've passed my level, passed my level..." The words echoed with his earlier statement of "if you want to hit my brother, you'll have to get through me first," forming a vivid contrast.

Damn, still as unreliable as ever... Zhu Ping'an complained silently.

"At least you're smart," Wei Chen sneered, stepping around Zhu Pingjun and leading the five kids to surround Zhu Ping'an alone.

"Cough, cough, let's talk this out," Zhu Ping'an said, looking at the five older kids approaching with ill intentions. He sized up his small body, realizing that not only could he not take on all five, he couldn't even beat any one of them. He had no choice but to stall.

Wei Chen sneered disdainfully, "Now you want to talk? Back when we were at the toilet, why didn't you let me go first? You even dared to say 'how can you know my poop isn't urgent?' Should we beat him up or not, guys?"

The four troublemakers around Wei Chen were screaming, "He should be beaten up! He should be beaten until he cries for his mother!"

Zhu Ping'an was speechless. "I'm saying this because your attitude is so arrogant and you pulled me! You're turning it around on me. Fine, fine, fine, if you don't like me saying you're not my shit, I'll change what I said."

"Then I'll change it; you are my shit, is that okay?" Zhu Ping'an said lightly. He just couldn't stand Wei Chen's arrogance. It didn't matter if he got beaten up by a few troublemakers; how serious could it be? If it were a few big men, he'd admit defeat, because a wise man doesn't seek immediate gain. But against a few kids, there was no need to back down.

Wei Chen, who was feeling quite smug, felt as uncomfortable as if he had swallowed a fly. Everyone had always catered to him since he was young; no one had dared to go against him like this.

"You really can talk a lot!" Wei Chen said with a dark face, furious. He rolled up his sleeves, saying, "I'll make you cry for your mother later; let's see if you can still talk then!"

"Hmph, a gentleman talks rather than fights." Zhu Ping'an crossed his arms and disdainfully provoked him, "I'm a gentleman, so of course I can talk. Unlike some petty people who only know how to fight."

Zhu Ping'an wanted to shift this unfair physical confrontation into a verbal duel, something he excelled at. If it came to fighting, he wouldn't even be enough to take on one of them; but in a verbal battle, he believed that even if they brought five more, they wouldn't be his match.

The kids couldn't handle such provocation. They were at that age where they thought they were the most impressive people under heaven, just beginning to develop their sense of honor. Everyone thought of themselves as gentlemen. As for petty people—forget it; that was an insult, and they certainly weren't that.

"Who are you calling a petty person? I'm a gentleman too! We're all gentlemen!" Wei Chen said loudly, his face flushed. The four troublemakers behind him echoed that they were gentlemen as well.

"A gentleman must be able to speak." Zhu Ping'an said lightly.

"We can all speak!" the five kids shouted excitedly, beating their chests, their faces red and necks thick.

"Okay then, I'll say a sentence, and if you can repeat it, then you can say you can speak and that you're gentlemen. If you beat me up, I'll admit defeat. Otherwise, you can beat me, but that just means you admit you're petty." Zhu Ping'an continued to provoke them.

"It's just you saying a sentence for us to repeat. Who can't do that? Hurry up and say it; we're eager to beat you up!" Wei Chen showed no hesitation in revealing his intentions, urging Zhu Ping'an to say it quickly.

"Exactly! This silly kid is asking for a beating! Our teacher taught us a sentence, and we can say it without looking at the book!"

The troublemakers looked at Zhu Ping'an, full of self-satisfaction.

"Blackening, gray-fertilizing, the gray fertilizer can volatilize; gray will transform, black gray can play out, and the black gray fertilizer can perform."

Zhu Ping'an started by saying the most popular tongue twister that no one expected, articulating clearly and speaking smoothly.

Wei Chen and the few troublemakers were stunned for two seconds, then they said with immense regret:

"Next time, just wait!"

Then, the troublemakers angrily rolled away.

Sigh, they really mean what they say. These troublemakers are somewhat adorably innocent. No wonder people say every child is an angel that fell from the sky, even if they are troublemakers.

Zhu Ping'an watched the kids leave with angry words, feeling in his heart that children are still innocent. Even if they aim for revenge, they are adorably sincere about it and follow through. In this regard, he believes most adults cannot compare to children. Even the bad kids are usually more genuine than most adults, because when people grow up, they learn to go back on their word.