

## Rise 46

### Chapter 46: Purple Aura Soars to the Sky

As night fell, the entire Xiahe Village was immersed in sleep, and the Zhu family had also gone to bed. Only the oil lamp in the partition where Zhu Ping'an was staying remained lit, and his older brother, Zhu Pingchuan, had started to snore.

Under the oil lamp, Zhu Ping'an was copying the "Three Character Classic," a textbook borrowed from Zhu Pingjun, writing diligently. Buying a book was too expensive, so copying it saved money and allowed him to practice his calligraphy. The paper had been cut to textbook size by his mother, Chen, and sewn together with needle and thread. Zhu Ping'an began copying right after dinner and had finished by the time the moon was at its brightest. The version of the "Three Character Classic" he had was from the Southern Song Dynasty, only covering that period; the subsequent Ming and Qing sections were not included. Zhu Ping'an's calligraphy was not very good yet, but it was neat, at the beginner level, and still much better than that of the mischievous kids in the school.

Rome wasn't built in a day; he would slowly copy the "Thousand Character Classic" and "Hundred Family Surnames" tomorrow. After tidying up his desk and blowing out the oil lamp, Zhu Ping'an climbed into bed and gradually fell asleep, as the moonlight poured in through the window, filling the room with silver brightness.

The next morning, the sun rose as usual, and the hopes of Xiahe Village for rain were once again dashed, making the villagers' need for water even more urgent.

"You fool! You've already started your studies; why are you still herding cattle?" Chen scolded Zhu Ping'an at the door.

His first aunt and fourth aunt were secretly laughing in the yard at Zhu Ping'an's comment during breakfast about herding cattle while studying, turning it into a joke. They thought, "What a silly boy enjoying life! How can he possibly learn anything this way? He'll definitely struggle."

Zhu Ping'an led the old yellow ox, grinning at Chen's scolding.

Seeing his silly expression made the aunts laugh even harder, but they held back their laughter, knowing their grandfather was also present.

As Chen looked at Zhu Ping'an, who only knew how to grin foolishly, she poked his forehead with her finger in frustration.

Zhu Ping'an rubbed his forehead and said, feeling wronged, "Mom, that hurts! I can ride the old yellow ox to school; once I tie it to a tree when I get there, I won't have to worry about it."

The old yellow ox was a great means of transportation, akin to a modern-day chauffeur service. Plus, it would earn him his grandfather's praise, so why not?

Chen was both angry and amused by his response, so she poked his forehead again and said, somewhat irritably, "You're just being lazy!"

Zhu Ping'an touched his forehead, chuckling foolishly as he climbed onto the old yellow ox and walked with Zhu Pingjun toward the school.

"Jun ge, do you want to ride with me for a while?" Zhu Ping'an asked Zhu Pingjun from the back of the old yellow ox.

Zhu Pingjun shook his head vigorously, saying repeatedly, "No, my mom said I'm a scholar and shouldn't be herding cattle or working the fields."

Zhu Ping'an was speechless. So what if he was a scholar? Did that mean he couldn't work the fields or herd cattle? Our Ming Dynasty founding emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang, started as a cowherd. Throughout history, wise rulers have led by example, taking time to work the land and promote agricultural practices under the pretext of encouraging farming. Why did it seem to Zhu Ping'an's aunt that farming was a lowly occupation? If it weren't for his father and third uncle farming, how would the family afford to send him to school? They would have faced famine long ago.

The cowherd rides the yellow ox; this joy is not for outsiders to know.

Upon reaching the foot of the hill, Zhu Ping'an got off the old yellow ox, let Zhu Pingjun go ahead to the school, and looked for a patch of tender grass to tie the old yellow ox.

While Zhu Ping'an was tying up the old yellow ox, the scheming little girl rode in on her little red horse, clattering along. Behind her was the bun-headed maid, Hua'er, still puffing and panting while lifting her skirt, shouting for her young lady to slow down.

"Zhu Ping'an, haven't you learned your letters? Why are you still acting like a cowherd?" The scheming little girl controlled her little red horse and trotted up to Zhu Ping'an, asking curiously.

"Tending to the cows doesn't affect my studies," Zhu Ping'an replied blandly as he secured the old yellow ox and stood up.

Upon hearing this, the scheming little girl chuckled, "So you're still a cowherd, aren't you?"

"What's wrong with being a cowherd?" Zhu Ping'an retorted.

"Cowherds are no good. My father said that cowherds and farmers are all country bumpkins who will be poor their entire lives." The scheming little girl said disdainfully, "The cowherds at my home are all so poor."

Truly a foolish materialistic girl.

At this moment, Zhu Ping'an didn't want to deal with this materialistic little girl anymore. He merely glanced at her before turning around, slinging his backpack over his shoulder, and heading up the hillside to school with his black wooden board.

Seeing Zhu Ping'an ignoring her, the scheming little girl, Li Shu, pouted and muttered, "You, a cowherd, still want to bring glory to your ancestors."

"What's wrong with being a cowherd? How can a cowherd not bring glory to his ancestors...?"

Zhu Ping'an turned around, intending to teach this tactless materialistic little girl a lesson. However, just as he mentioned bringing glory to his ancestors, he was startled to see the phenomenon he had encountered twice before—fortune; he once again caught sight of fortune.

Moreover, the scene he saw left him dumbfounded, and after a long moment, he finally managed to say one word.

What the hell, this is not scientific!

In Zhu Ping'an's line of sight, that scheming, tactless, materialistic little girl had an aura of purple light soaring above her head...

Purple energy coming from the east, invaluable beyond words; it must be an illusion. Could it be that this scheming little girl could attain the title of noble? No way! Could she possibly become the consort of a future prince? Or marry into a noble family? But no matter how he looked at it, this scheming little girl was definitely someone with great fortune. But this was too unscientific; how could a scheming, materialistic, even malicious little girl possess great fortune? That was too unbelievable!

The bun-headed maid, Hua'er, had a pillar of white fortune above her head, forming a stark contrast with the purple aura of the scheming little girl.

Although the fortune only lasted for a few seconds, Zhu Ping'an stared dumbfounded at the scheming little girl for a long time...

"Hey, Zhu Ping'an, why do you keep staring at me!? Hmph, I'm pretty, but don't think you can reach for something unattainable. I'm going to marry the top scholar and become the wife of the top scholar!" The scheming little girl, seeing Zhu Ping'an staring at her intently, had a look of disdain in her big eyes, sarcastically taunting him with a mix of self-importance and sharp wit.

Uh, she's still that materialistic, proud, scheming, sharp-tongued little girl. Seriously, you're thinking too much. Even if you had this materialistic, scheming, sharp-tongued personality, I wouldn't want you. And you're only five years old; isn't that a bit too mature for your age? You constantly talk about marrying the top scholar without even blushing!

This is so unscientific. Zhu Ping'an shook his head, ignoring this materialistic scheming little girl, and turned back toward the school. Behind him, he could hear the scheming little girl throwing a tantrum and the bun-headed maid apologizing, "I'm sorry, young lady, I'm sorry, young lady."

Blaming the servants, he also discovered one of the scheming little girl's shortcomings. It's so unscientific; how could a little girl full of shortcomings have such soaring fortune?