

Bigoted 531

Chapter 531: Discovered the secret of the Crimson Sand Organization

"Is its nose that sensitive?" Ye Xing glanced at Boss in Qin Shu's arms, a little incredulous.

Qin Shu looked down at Boss in her arms. At first, she was also in disbelief, but that was the truth. Boss's nose was very sensitive, and it even could also understand human language.

Boss raised his head to look at Qin Shu. Perhaps it felt that his performance today was exceptionally good, its dark green eyes flashed with a hint of pride.

Qin Shu raised her hand to rub Boss's head. It was extremely good to touch its hair, as smooth as silk.

She retracted her gaze and looked outside the car. There were fewer cars on this road, and the car in front could still see the taillights.

Ye Xing had been driving seriously the whole time. Her gaze was fixed on the car in front in case he lost track of it.

When Ye Xing went to learn how to drive yesterday, she realized that she knew how to drive. Her skills were not bad.

"Is that car following us? I've seen that car before." Instant Noodles looked in the rearview mirror and saw that the car had been following him rapidly ever since he had driven over from the hotel.

The origin of the nickname Instant Noodles, was because he has yellow curly hair, just like instant noodles.

Ming Yan looked back at the distance of the sports car, frowned, "Get rid of it."

"No problem." Instant Noodles a step on the accelerator, speed up a few points.

"Today's mission failed. Do you want to continue tomorrow? It was worth five million dollars." Instant Noodles said with the feel of pity.

The failure of the mission is a blow to Ming Yan, "Go back to say, I felt something strange tonight."

They've already failed once, plus this time it's twice, and the Death Note's reputation was about to be destroyed.

Ming Yan looked at the car behind him again. "That car is gone."

"Isn't it following us?" Instant Noodles glanced at the rearview mirror. The car was indeed disappeared.

The car drove to a fork in the road, and Qin Shu let Ye Xing take a turn. She had walked this road with Boss Last Night, and it was in the same direction as the end of the road.

Ye Xing could not help but ask, "What exactly do you want to do by following them?"

"To save people," Qin Shu answered concisely.

Hearing that, Ye Xing stopped asking.

After driving for ten minutes, they arrived at an intersection.

“Go to the right,” Qin Shu reminded. Boss, who was in her arms, held the car window with his two forelimbs and looked to the right.

Ye Xing turned the steering wheel and chased after him to the right.

After driving for nearly an hour, they had arrived at the suburbs.

The suburbs were not as lively as the city, and the road was relatively quiet.

Two hundred meters away was a villa with all kinds of trees planted around it.

Qin Shu said, “Stop.”

Ye Xing heard this and parked the car by the side of the road.

“I will go take a look with Boss.”

Qin Shu carried Boss and prepared to go down. Ye Xing was a little worried, “I’ll go with you.”

Qin Shu turned to look at Ye Xing. “You don’t need to. Boss and I will go take a look first.”

She opened the car door with Boss in her arms and got out. Then, she closed the car door and walked towards the villa.

When they reached the woods near the villa, Qin Shu stopped and looked at the villa in front of her. Although she could only see the side of the villa, she could see that its area was very large. There were two-meter-high courtyard walls around it.

The lights in several rooms in the villa were on.

Qin Shu lowered her eyes and rubbed Boss’s hairy head. “Let’s go to find Gu Yan.”

Boss raised his head and looked at Qin Shu. In the night, its pair of dark green eyes were brighter than it was in the day.

Qin Shu put Boss on the ground and started to take off her clothes. She took off her high-end clothes and hung them on a shorter tree.

She was wearing leather clothes underneath. It was more convenient for her to climb or fight.

After taking off her clothes, she lowered her eyes and bent down to pick up Boss. “Let’s go. I hope we can successfully save Gu Yan.”

Qin Shu carried Boss to the wall of the courtyard and looked up. With the light from the villa, she saw a few sunset flowers on the top of the wall.

How rich were they? They could even plant sunset flowers.

What even surprised her was that the weather was so cold, but the sunset flowers could even survive.

She did not have the extra time to think about why there were sunset flowers in winter. She quickly climbed up the wall and jumped down.

After she jumped down, she realized that this was a greenhouse. The lights in the greenhouse were on, and through the glass, she could clearly see that there were many varieties of flowers and plants planted inside.

Qin Shu was not in the mood to admire the flowers. She looked around and realized that this was the backyard of the villa. Not far away, there was an outdoor swimming pool. Because it was winter, it was very quiet.

She looked at the villa. It was a little difficult to sneak in.

It was possible to climb up from the outside.

She carried Boss and stepped on the lawn. She walked all the way to the corner and raised her head. There were three rooms on the second floor with lights on, and one room on the third floor with lights on.

The rooms on this side all had balconies.

Qin Shu put Boss on the backpack on her back and waited for it to hold on firmly before she began to climb.

It was easy to climb up to the second floor. In just a few seconds, she went up to the balcony on the second floor.

When she landed, she did not make any sound.

“How long has it been? He still doesn’t want to detoxify?”

“I’ve checked his pulse, but he doesn’t prescribe any medicine.”

“Then cripple one of his hands. Let’s see if he still wants to detoxify the poison.”

“By the way, have you completed your mission?”

“No, it’s been disrupted.”

Qin Shu had just steadied herself when she heard these words. She couldn’t help but frown. The head of the Crimson Sand Organization was also here?

She held her breath and moved closer to the curtain. Through the gap, she looked inside and saw a man lying on the sofa and another man standing in front of the sofa. She didn’t recognize either of them.

She retracted her gaze and looked up. There was a light on the third floor. Could it be that the head of the Crimson Sand Organization lived in that room?

If she didn’t come to save people tonight, she would definitely go up and settle the score with that person.

She decided to forget about it now.

It was only eleven o’clock at night. There were still many people in the villa who hadn’t slept yet. Qin Shu didn’t dare to act rashly. She climbed up another floor and reached the balcony on the third floor.

There was no one in this room, and she did not dare to go in either. She was afraid that she would be discovered if she suddenly came in.

Then, she waited for everyone in the villa to fall asleep before she went in to look for Gu Yan.

She waited until two o'clock before all the lights in the villa were extinguished.

Qin Shu had been holed up on the balcony, and Boss was in her arms. She felt that it was about time, so she took out a dagger, pried open the window, and walked in.

She didn't even dare to turn on the lights in the room. She walked to the door in the dark, opened the door, and poked her head out to look outside. There was a small light on the corridor outside, and the light was not very strong.

It was also very quiet outside, which meant that they were all asleep.

Qin Shu put Boss on the ground, patted its head, and said in a low voice, "Looking for Gu Yan."

Boss turned around to look at Qin Shu, then retracted his gaze and looked outside. It then walked out, along the corridor to the right, and started jogging with its four limbs and short legs.

Qin Shu followed behind Boss quietly.

Boss had just run for a while, and it suddenly stopped at the door of a room.

Chapter 532: The Man in the Room, Bo Ye, was Dressed as a Woman

Qin Shu also stopped. She looked at the door of the room where it had stopped. The door was tightly shut.

Could Gu Yan be in here?

Qin Shu reached out her hand and grabbed the doorknob. She gently twisted it and pushed open a crack. It was pitch black inside.

She stuck her head in and could smell a fragrant smell.

The moment the door opened, Boss slipped in.

Could Gu Yan really be in this room? Could he be found so easily?

Qin Shu walked in slowly with doubt. She did not dare to turn on the lights. She was afraid that it was not Gu Yan.

The room was pitch black. She could only roughly see a bed and other simple furnishings placed against the wall.

In the room, she could only see Boss's dark green eyes, emitting a terrifying light.

Qin Shu slowly approached the bed.

At this moment, in the darkness of the night, there was a sudden cough. "Ahem, ahem, who is it?"

The voice was hoarse and weak, and it was very light. There was also a thick nasal sound, as if his nose was stuffed.

It was a man's voice, but it was not Gu Yan's voice.

Qin Shu stopped in her tracks. She had indeed found the wrong person. Why would Boss come here?

She turned around and was about to escape when she remembered that he would call for help. She stopped in her tracks and decided to take two quick steps. She realized that the person on the bed had already sat up and reached out to the headboard. She did not know whether to turn on the lights or press the alarm.

Those houses with strong security would usually have automatic alarms and manual alarms. Their purpose was the same, to inform the people in the villa.

Qin Shu did not have time to think carefully. She jumped onto the bed and grabbed the other party's arm. She pressed him on her back and pressed the man on the bed.

She then realized that the man on the bed was a little thin, but he was very tall. He was subdued by her with one move. Could it be that he didn't know martial arts?

When Qin Shu acted, Boss also jumped onto the bed. His dark green eyes stared at the man on the bed and meowed, "Meow!"

The man coughed twice. "Cough cough..." he seemed to be in pain.

"Don't scream. I won't kill you." Qin Shu felt that this sentence was nonsense.

It would be strange if he didn't scream.

In the pitch-black room, nothing could be seen. Only the eyes of the cat in front of him could see very clearly. Its dark green eyes emitted two rays of light. The man held back his cough and asked, "Who are you?"

"The more you know, the faster you will die." Qin Shu's voice was very cold. She turned around and used one of her hands to search around. She found a tie and a wet towel on the bedside table. She directly took the tie and tied up the person on the bed.

After tying the tie, she threw him on the bed.

Then she picked up the wet towel for some unknown purpose and stuffed it into the man's mouth.

After doing all this, Qin Shu let out a sigh of relief.

"Let's go."

She waved at Boss.

Boss glanced at the person on the bed, then looked at Qin Shu, and then jumped down from the bed.

Qin Shu walked to the door and opened it. The light from outside came in, elongating her figure.

The man on the bed lay prone on the bed and looked in the direction of the door. He saw a guy and a cat walking out just like that. The door closed with a soft sound.

The room fell into darkness once again.

The man on the bed struggled to sit up. He coughed twice and struggled for a while before sitting up.

Then he tried to untie the tie on his wrist, but it was too tight and it was difficult to move his palm.

...

Qin Shu followed Boss from the third floor to the second floor and walked around the first floor for a while.

Suddenly, she heard footsteps coming from her back. She frowned and bent down to pick up Boss. She pushed open the door to the next room and hid inside. She closed the door and leaned against the wall. When her back touched the switch, the room instantly lit up.

Qin Shu was shocked. When she saw the furnishings in the room, she was stunned.

There was no bed in this room, nor was there any extra furnishings. It was very empty.

Only the specimens of all kinds of flowers were hung on the wall. From Afar, they looked like paintings.

Every flower was made into specimens when it was in full bloom.

Even the sunset flower on the wall was made into specimens.

Did the killers here like flowers so much?

It was a little unbelievable.

Outside the door, the sound of footsteps gradually faded away. Qin Shu let out a sigh of relief.

She opened the door and meowed outside. No one pushed the door open and walked out.

"Boss, keep looking," Qin Shu whispered in Boss's ear and then put it on the ground.

Boss continued to sniff for people.

She walked all the way to the stairs and was about to go downstairs, but Boss suddenly ran back.

Qin Shu frowned and could only follow Boss back, all the way up to the third floor.

In the end, she returned to the door of the previous room.

Qin Shu was stunned. She looked down at Boss, didn't understand what it meant.

She heard footsteps coming from downstairs. She picked up Boss, pushed open the door in front of her, walked in, and then closed the door.

She glanced at the bed and found that the man had already sat up. She did not need to guess to know that he was looking in this direction.

Was he guessing why she came back?

Qin Shu's attention was focused on the footsteps outside the door and didn't pay attention to the person on the bed.

After a while, a light and hoarse voice came from behind her. "Are you here to save someone?"

...

At Imperial University

Because the next day was a weekend, the four people in the apartment played till late at night.

Bo Ye looked at the time and said in a cold voice, "You continue playing?"

Jiang Yu was very excited. "Yes. I don't have to go to class tomorrow anyway."

"I don't mind," Fu Tingyan said calmly.

Ye Xue said softly, "I don't mind either."

Bo Ye didn't say anything else when he heard that. He didn't mind either.

Jiang Yu seemed to have suddenly thought of something and suggested, "How about we play Truth or Dare?"

Bo Ye: "..."

"It's all outdated," Fu Tingyan said.

"It doesn't matter."

Jiang Yu stood up and walked to the cabinet at the side. He opened the drawer on the right, took out the dice from inside, and sat back down on the sofa.

"Let's play dice. The one with the most points asks the one with the least points. Okay?"

Jiang Yu glanced at the three people in the front and asked for their opinions.

Seeing that they didn't say anything, Jiang Yu took it as their agreement.

"We have to tell the truth. Lying is meaningless."

After Jiang Yu said that, he rolled the first dice, two points.

Next was ye Xue, five points.

Fu Tingyan, six points.

Looking at this number of points, he was quite satisfied. He looked up at Bo Ye and threw the two dice to him. "It's your turn."

Bo Ye took the dice with a cold expression. When the dice were rolled, everyone watched.

"One point." Jiang Yu gloated at Bo Ye. "Is it truth or Dare?"

Bo Ye looked at the little dot on the die, and his brows unconsciously furrowed. "Truth."

Just as he finished speaking, he changed his mind at the last minute. “Dare.”

It was the first time she saw Bo Ye so agitated. Fu Tingyan sized him up, and his gaze swept over him. The first time he saw him, he was very thin and his frame was as slender as a girl’s.

He curled the corners of his mouth. “Wear women’s clothing.”

Chapter 533: won’t Teach You Fu Tingyan’s Wicked Taste

Was Fu Tingyan really so vile that he would force Bo Ye to wear women’s clothes?

“I haven’t seen a man in women’s clothes before but I don’t think Bo Ye would look too bad in them. He’s neither tall nor especially broad at the shoulders, after all. Whose clothes should he wear?” Jiang Yu said as he sized up Bo Ye.

“My clothes are too small for him. However, Qin Shu’s might fit.” Ye Xue could tell from a glance that Bo Ye was around the same height as Qin Shu.

Bo Ye grimaced as he listened to their nefarious plan. “I’m not wearing a woman’s clothes. Think of something else.”

Fu Tingyan smiled deviously. The more Bo Ye refused, the more he wanted to see him dressed as a woman.

“It really isn’t that big of a deal. No one but us three will ever know.” Jiang Yu offered.

Bo Ye pursed his lips in consternation.

“I’ll go and pick out something from Qin Shu’s room.”

Fu Tingyan spared Bo Ye a brief, contemplative look before bouncing up the stairs to Qin Shu’s room on the second floor.

Ye Xue noticed that Bo Ye wasn’t very willing to dress up as a woman. “Bo Ye, there’s no need to force yourself. If you do not want to wear it, then don’t. Just tell Fu Tingyan that you’ll do something else instead.”

Bo Ye’s lips formed a thin line, “It’s fine.”

For all he knew, Fu Tingyan’s subsequent request could be even more outrageous – better the known devil than the unknown.

Fu Tingyan entered Qin Shu’s room with ease and turned to the closet where she kept her clothes. Her closet was filled to the brim with clothes of all sorts of shapes and colours. Yet, it was a black dress that caught his eye.

Bo Ye was about the same height as Qin Shu. Even if he was a little taller, it was not by much. Tracing the outline of Bo Ye’s figure as it appeared in his mind’s eye, Fu Tingyan thought the dress he had selected would fit him nicely.

The black dress it was, then.

Satisfied, Fu Tingyan made his way back downstairs and draped the dress over the sofa beside Bo Ye, a cheeky grin tugging at his lips. "This is it. Try it on!"

"Wow. It does look good. Bo Ye, quickly try it on." It was Jiang Yu's first time seeing a man trying on a dress and his eyes shone with curiosity.

Ye Xue looked at the black dress and remembered Qin Shu wearing it while playing the piano. It lent her an air of elegance befitting a noble.

No wonder it was said that girls who played the piano did not have bad temperaments.

No. Qin Shu was stunning regardless of what she did. It was almost a matter of fact for her.

Bo Ye eyed the black dress on the sofa coldly. Picking it up, he hastened to the bathroom and locked the door behind him.

Fu Tingyan stared at the closed door excitedly. He could not wait to see how Bo Ye looked in a dress.

Bo Ye slipped on the dress and peered at his reflection in the mirror. The person in the mirror pursed his lips tightly. His skin was as pale as ivory and as smooth as jade. Not a single blemish marred his form.

He had seen Qin Shu wear it before. It certainly was very beautiful. Simple but elegant.

Bo Ye retracted his gaze, stopping at the door. His hand settled on the doorknob without turning it. He stayed that way for some time, hesitating.

In the living room...

Jiang Yu looked at Ye Xue beside him. He reached out and wrapped his arm around her waist. He frowned. "Little Xue, have you lost weight?"

Ye Xue blushed and looked down at herself. She looked at Jiang Yu's arm around her waist, causing her blush to deepen. "No, I haven't. I weighed myself yesterday. I'm 92 pounds at the moment – 2 pounds heavier than I was previously."

"Then why does it feel like you've lost weight?" Jiang Yu tightened his arms around her waist questioningly.

Ye Xue burned with embarrassment and tried freeing herself. "Jiang Yu, stop fooling around," she whispered.

"Are you blushing again?" he teased. Jiang Yu knew Ye Xue was blushing from the way she had lowered her head.

It was his daily dose of teasing. He rather liked seeing her blush.

Fu Tingyan stared at the bathroom. Bo Ye had been in there for a while now. Why was he taking so long? Was it so hard for him to slip on a dress? Maybe he was not sure how to wear it...

Then again, the dress he had picked was not overly complicated. There was no reason for him to have trouble wearing it.

He smirked. Bo Ye must have been too embarrassed to step out of the bathroom.

Strolling to the door, he knocked. “Do you need any help putting on that dress? I could help you...”

Before he could finish his sentence, the bathroom door swung open.

Fu Tingyan paused, stunned by the person standing at the gaping door.

This black dress was just right for Bo Ye. His slender form matched Qin Shu’s figure perfectly.

The only difference being the air around him.

Bo Ye had a cold personality and in the dress he wore, he gave people the impression of an aloof beauty.

Bo Ye’s features were delicate – very different from an ordinary man’s. His oval-shaped face and soft lines made him more beautiful than handsome.

Paired with his slight frame and narrow shoulders, it was easy to mistake him for a woman.

Fu Tingyan sighed wistfully. If only he had persuaded Bo Ye to put on a wig, then he really would look no different from the average woman.

Fu Tingyan appraised Bo Ye with keen eyes. The way he was being examined so thoroughly left Bo Ye feeling uncomfortable. His whole body tensed like a tightly wound spring.

If not for Fu Tingyan’s bad taste, Bo Ye would not be caught dead in a dress.

“You look good in it.”

Bo Ye looked up at the man who was half a head taller than he was. “What do you mean?”

“I mean exactly what I said.” Fu Tingyan chuckled. “You exude an undeniably feminine flavour in that dress.”

Bo Ye: “...”

Seeing that he was silent, Fu Tingyan asked, “Didn’t you look in the mirror at all?”

Fu Tingyan dragged him by the arm into the bathroom and made him pose in front of a mirror. Bo Ye hadn’t even had the chance to protest.

The mirror reflected two individuals, one tall and one short.

Fu Tingyan regarded Bo Ye’s reflection in the mirror with a grin on his face. “Look at yourself. You look fine in that dress. Even if you wore it out of the apartment, no one would bat an eye.”

“...” Bo Ye took in his reflection. Though his expression was still cold, a hint of discomfort shone through his frigid facade.

Bo Ye brushed off his discomfort as being the result of Fu Tingyan’s eyes roaming over him.

“If I had known how good you would look in a dress, I would have prepared a wig.” Fu Tingyan looked at the person in the mirror and murmured thoughtfully.

“...” Bo Ye glanced at Fu Tingyan. His handsome features that screamed of righteousness was a sham. It was vastly different from the thoughts floating in his head.

It was at this time that the lovely young couple on the sofa noticed the commotion. Curious, they strolled over for a better look.

Ye Xue caught sight of Bo Ye's figure, surprise flashing in her eyes. She could not help but blurt out her thoughts as they formed in her head.

"Bo Ye, y-you look amazing! You'd look even better in flowery lace."

Bo Ye turned to look at Ye Xue. Despite being happy for the praise, he did not show it.

Ye Xue suddenly recalled that Bo Ye's reluctance. Wouldn't a man be unhappy if he were to be praised for looking good in a dress?

"Bo Ye, if you walk out like this, I guarantee that heads will turn. No one would ever think you were a man." Jiang Yu said seriously as if he was afraid that Bo Ye would not believe him.

Chapter 534: Wearing Women's Clothing for a Group Photo. Should We Kill Him to Silence Him?

Bo Ye: "..."

"It may be Bo Ye's first time wearing a dress but it is also our first time seeing a man in one. How about taking a commemorative photo together?" Jiang Yu suggested eagerly.

Bo Ye rejected Jiang Yu's proposal in a heartbeat. "No. You've all had your fun. I'm changing back into my clothes."

Fu Tingyan grabbed his arm, stopping him before he could hurry off to change into his own clothes. "I think it's a good idea. Jiang Yu, if you would do the honour."

"Fu Tingyan, that's enough!" shouted Bo Ye, a biting chill lacing his voice.

"Are you angry?" Fu Tingyan still had a smile on his face. "The four of us can be considered good friends. Let's take a group photo – for memory's sake."

Bo Ye stopped struggling.

Fu Tingyan reached out, patting Bo Ye's short hair amiably. "It's a pity that we don't have any wigs."

"..."

"That's it! I'm changing out of this dress. We can take a group photo after I've put on my own clothes again."

Unbeknownst to the struggling duo, Jiang Yu already had his phone out and was aiming its camera towards them. Angling the phone with one hand while the other twined around Ye Xue's slim waist, Jiang Yu snapped a selfie of the four of them together.

It happened to capture the moment when Fu Tingyan was patting Bo Ye's hair.

"Would you like to see how it looks?" Jiang Yu lowered his outstretched arm for them to view the photo he had taken.

Ye Xue looked at the photo. She was in Jiang Yu's arms. "Jiang Yu, send this photo to me."

This was their first photo together. They had to preserve by any means necessary.

“I’ll send it to you later.”

Fu Tingyan let go of Bo Ye and took a step forward. He leaned over Jiang Yu’s shoulder, peering at the screen of his phone and saw the photo of the four of them together.

He stared at the photo with a stunned look on his face.

Bo Ye’s head barely reached his lips. It almost looked like he was being held in his arms. The slight tilting of Bo Ye’s head as Fu Tingyan patted his head lent the photo an air of intimacy.

The photo was a frozen memory of that one moment in time.

Nothing had seemed strange while patting Bo Ye’s short hair. It felt natural.

Yet, why did the photo evoke such a weird feeling in him?

“Bo Ye, have a look.” Jiang Yu handed the phone to Bo Ye.

Bo Ye held his clothes in his hands and was about to head upstairs to change his clothes. When he saw the phone being offered to him, he hesitated. In the end, he decided to have a look at the photo.

His gaze landed on the image of him and Fu Tingyan. It was strange... for the lack of a better word. It looked as if he was being held in Fu Tingyan’s arms.

“This photo is not bad, right? I’ll go and get it developed tomorrow. One for each of you.” Jiang Yu felt that he had done a pretty good job taking the photo. “It feels like a photo of two couples.”

As soon as those words left his lips, Jiang Yu found himself in the crosshairs of two glares.

“...”

“I didn’t say that you are a couple. I simply meant that the two of you looked like one in the photo. If you don’t believe me, you should see for yourself.” Jiang Yu grumbled.

Fu Tingyan had already seen it. Jiang Yu’s words merely served to identify where the strange feeling originated. The photo really was quite misleading. It did not help that Bo Ye was wearing a dress and just so happened to be leaning into his arms.

“Let him change in peace.” Fu Tingyan frowned, taking the lead as he walked away.

“Xiao Xue, let’s go out too.” Jiang Yu tugged at Ye Xue’s wrist.

Ye Xue followed him obediently.

Alone, Bo Ye closed the bathroom door and changed.

Once he was changed, he stepped out of the bathroom with Qin Shu’s black dress in hand and returned to the living room. There, he draped the dress over the sofa.

“Let’s continue our game. I think Xiao Qi would look good in a woman’s clothes too. After all, he’s rather pretty.” Jiang Yu eyed Fu Tingyan dreamily, imagining him wearing women’s clothes.

Fu Tingyan stepped on Jiang Yu's foot. "Get lost."

"It's not like you've never worn them before! I remember Auntie used to fill your closet with dozens of dresses when we were young," Jiang Yu harrumphed.

Fu Tingyan shuddered at the memory. It was all his mother's fault. She had wanted a daughter after having had his elder brother.

Therefore, when she was pregnant, she did not ask Uncle Wen to check if it was a boy or a girl. Instead, she bought many dresses that girls wore, ranging from one to five years old.

Many of them were gifts from relatives and friends.

In the end, when she gave birth, she found out that the baby she birthed was a boy. Thus, his formative years were spent being raised as a girl.

She raised him that way till he was five. No matter how she tried coaxing him into a skirt, he refused.

Fu Tingyan's face darkened. "Please shut up before I make you."

Bo Ye glanced at Fu Tingyan. He did not expect to hear such a story. Looking at Jiang Yu with intense eyes, he asked, "Do you have any photos?"

"Yes, Auntie took plenty of photos for her future daughter-in-law to see."

Jiang Yu had heard this interesting piece while listening in on a conversation between Auntie and his father.

Bo Ye replied thoughtfully, "Oh."

Fu Tingyan glared at Jiang Yu coldly. How could he sell him out like that?

Jiang Yu felt a chill down his spine. "Haha... I-I've said too much, it seems."

Fu Tingyan's frigid smile gave the Antarctic a run for its money. "I seem to recall someone bawling his eyes out when we were young just because he did not have a skirt of his own..."

That was when Jiang Yu was three years old. He cried and begged for a skirt of his own.

"Xiao Qi, what nonsense are you spouting?" Jiang Yu shot Fu Tingyan a frantic look.

"Spouting nonsense?" Fu Tingyan's grin exposed his pearly white teeth. "You cried until your eyes were red and snot dribbled from your nose. You were so adamant that my mother had no choice but to buy you a skirt of your own to wear. There's even a photo we took for posterity's sake."

Ye Xue's curiosity was piqued when she heard that. She directed her big black pearl-like eyes at Jiang Yu hopefully. She really wanted to see that photo.

Noticing the look in Ye Xue's eyes, Jiang Yu stubbornly refused to acknowledge the matter. "Don't listen to his nonsense. How could I have cried and worn a skirt? It's ridiculous!"

The more Jiang Yu denied, the more Ye Xue was certain that the photo Fu Tingyan spoke off was real.

"Jiang Y..." she whined.

"I'm not playing anymore. Let's go upstairs." Jiang Yu pulled Ye Xue by her wrist and glowered at Fu Tingyan who had the nerve to betray his friend. Truly heartless, he was!

Fu Tingyan smiled. Wasn't it he who betrayed him first?

Jiang Yu dragged Ye Xue upstairs with a dark face.

Ye Xue sent Jiang Yu a pleading look. "Photos..."

Jiang Yu tilted his head to look at Ye Xue. She ogled him with the curious eyes of a child. The innocent curiosity that shone in her eyes only served to darken his face further. "You really want to see those photos, huh?"

Ye Xue nodded enthusiastically. "Yes."

"I won't let you see them unless..."

"Unless what?"

Jiang Yu glanced at Ye Xue's innocent form and sighed. He shook his head, deciding against mentioning his thoughts. He simply pulled her along and continued up the stairs.

"Unless what? Tell me." Ye Xue pressed on.

Jiang Yu did not respond. Instead, he gently pushed her into his room.

"Jiang Yu, what's going on?" Jiang Yu followed her in and closed the door behind them. Ye Xue could not help but feel a little nervous.

"I just thought we could sleep together." Jiang Yu sidled closer to her. "Don't tell me you were thinking about something else?"

Ye Xue blushed. She hadn't been thinking of anything else...

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Fu Tingyan and Bo Ye were the only ones left in the living room. They looked at each other and did not say anything. For the first time, they went to bed with a tacit understanding between them. Neither of them mentioned the photos of them in women's clothing.

...

:30 in the morning...

Qin Shu listened as the footsteps outside petered into the distance. It was at this moment that she heard the person on the bed speak. He must have torn off the towel around his mouth.

Didn't he realize she was trying to save him?

Chapter 535: the Conditions for Saving Gu Yan,

Qin Shu turned to look in the direction of the bed. She wanted to ascertain the other party's identity. He didn't seem to know any martial arts and it would be bad if she injured the wrong person.

She didn't answer. Instead, she asked, "Who are you?"

"It doesn't matter who I am. You are here to save Gu Yan, aren't you?"

The man's voice was the same as before. It was hoarse and weak, with a slightly nasal undertone. Despite how it sounded, she did not find it annoying. Perhaps the reason she had yet to lay a hand on him was that he was insufficiently annoying for her to do so.

No assassin was that weak.

"So what if I am?"

"I can help you." The man lying in bed offered just as she voiced her retort.

Qin Shu rejected him without a second thought. "I don't need your help. I can find him myself."

She was not about to trust a stranger. Let alone one who made her such dubious offers. People like him were either traitors or thieves – neither of which carried any appeal to her.

In any case, the man was likely to demand some sort of exchange for his assistance.

"Don't be in such a hurry to refuse me. You know better than anyone what kind of place this is. Finding Gu Yan and bringing him away safely are two different things. It is a feat you're not likely to accomplish easily."

"Cough, cough..."

The man spoke slowly, coughing every now and then. His breaths came in laboured gasps which sounded more genuine than forced.

Qin Shu frowned. "Why should I believe you?"

"It's 3:30 in the morning. You can go out and look for him again. If you can't find him, you can always come back and seek my help."

The man spoke with such confidence that it worried Qin Shu. It was at this moment whereby an extremely important question came to her.

From the way he spoke so freely, it was apparent that he had broken free from the restraints binding him. Yet he just sat where he was, unmoving.

"Since you have freed yourself from those restraints, why haven't you informed anyone?"

"I don't want to." The man replied simply.

Doubt flashed in Qin Shu's eyes. What a strange man, he was. It made her curious. Who was he?

She stretched her hand to the side of the door and tried to turn on the lights. She patted the wall in search of the light switch but came up short.

Usually, the light switch was set by the door so anyone could turn it on the moment they entered a room.

There wasn't one in the room they were in.

“Are you looking for the light switch?”

“Yes.”

“You want to know who I am, don’t you?”

“I’m curious, that’s all.” Qin Shu answered honestly.

“Aren’t you in a hurry to find Gu Yan?”

The man’s question startled her out of her curious fixation. Qin Shu could not help but feel that the man lying in bed was really strange. As much as she wanted to sate her curiosity, what the man had said was true. She did not have time to spare on idle inquiries. She had to find Gu Yan as soon as possible.

“I’m heading out.”

She looked at President Ba. In the gloomy darkness, President Ba’s eyes shone like two evergreen gems. “Let’s go.”

President Ba glanced at the person on the bed and followed Qin Shu out.

The door opened into a brightly lit hallway. The dim room was illuminated for a split second before falling into shadow once more.

The man on the bed lifted the blanket and got off the bed. Even though it was dark, it did not impede him. He shuffled to an adjacent room, flicking on the lights just as he shut the door behind him.

Qin Shu followed President Ba around the second floor again. After a short while, President Ba led her to the first floor.

She didn’t dare open the door rashly for fear of alerting any assassins who lurked in the shadows. Those on the first floor definitely weren’t as easy to talk to – unlike those on the third.

She searched the length and breadth of the first floor but did not find anything.

President Ba paused every few steps, stopping when he smelt something familiar.

Like a hound having caught the scent of a trail, President Ba dashed down the stairs and into the darkness below.

Qin Shu paused, staring at the steps that led to the basement.

Was Gu Yan being held in the basement?

She hurriedly walked down the steps. There were ten floors in total, and after a turn in the middle, she reached the bottom.

A lonely bulb lit the bottom of the stairs, revealing a thick and heavy door. She knew the door was heavy because it was unlike the previous doors she had seen. It was probably crafted out of a different material from the rest. The door was even secured using a biometric lock.

She walked to the door and looked at the biometric lock in front of her. How was she going to unlock this door?

She didn't know whose fingerprint was needed to open it.

If she opened it by force, everyone in the villa would know.

Leaving quietly would be impossible, then.

She was almost certain that Gu Yan was locked inside.

President Ba looked up at Qin Shu quizzically.

Qin Shu stared at the biometric lock in front of her and frowned. No wonder that man had been so confident earlier. It also explained the absence of any guards stationed outside. Security was so tight that there was no need for guards. Opening the door without the proper key would be extraordinarily difficult.

Did she really have to go back to that man for help?

Qin Shu bent down to pick up President Ba. After thinking for a while, she climbed back up the stairs from whence she came. If memory served, she would need to return to the third floor if she sought his help. It did not take her long to retrace her steps.

Grasping the doorknob with one hand, she pushed the door open. The door swung shut behind her.

She had only taken two steps when she heard the man's hoarse voice. "He's here," he murmured.

Qin Shu remained silent. The man was seated on the sofa. Some ways away from the sofa was a wall lamp. The light emanating from it was dim and it was not bright enough to reveal the man in his entirety. The only things she could make out was his height and what he was wearing. He was dressed in a set of pyjamas.

She could not see his face clearly.

She knew that he was a tall man but not how tall he really was. From her best estimate, he looked like he was at least 1.85 metres tall.

The man looked in her direction and asked, "Do you need my help?"

"What do you want?" Qin Shu thought it best to hear what he wanted before committing to a decision.

She didn't believe that the man would help her for no reason.

"Of course, of course. I just have a small request," the man said.

"What request?"

"It's very simple, really. Stay here with me for three days. After three days, you can take Gu Yan and leave."

No sooner had the man finished speaking than she swore, "You want me to stay with you for three days? In your dreams!"

What a joke.

What did he take her for, a fool?

The man's hoarse laugh echoed in the room, "Whatever it is your thinking, you're mistaken."

The man started coughing just as he finished speaking.

Qin Shu frowned when she heard the man laugh. "What else could you be insinuating?"

"I just want to spend three days with you. As for the reason, well, I have no particular reason." The man explained

Qin Shu was a little embarrassed when she heard the man's straightforward explanation but she quickly hid it. "Why should I believe you? What if they do not release Gu Yan in three days?"

The man stared at Qin Shu for a while and said slowly, "Everyone here listens to me. There's no need for concern."

Caught flat-footed by the revelation, Qin Shu's eyes widened comically in disbelief. When her mind managed to process the information, she asked, "Are you the head of the Crimson Sand Organization? Its leader?"

"Yes," the man answered.

Qin Shu looked down at President Ba in her arms and muttered an endless string of complaints in her heart. Why did President Ba lead her to this room?

President Ba looked up at Qin Shu with an innocent look in his eyes.

Then she stared at the man on the sofa. The man clearly knew why she was here, yet it did not seem like he had any intention to stop her. Instead, he allowed her, an outsider, to roam freely through his halls. It was so surreal that it felt too far-fetched.

There was another possibility. He could be lying. After all, no one could verify his words.

Hesitantly, she asked, "Then... How are you so weak? Why would those assassins listen to you? You didn't cow them into obedience with virtue alone now, did you?"

Chapter 536: "Because I Like Him, I Killed Him while I was Sleeping."

The man covered his mouth with one hand as if he was trying to hide a smile. Upon closer inspection, he really was smiling! "If I said I gave you that win, would you believe me?" he laughed.

Qin Shu stared blankly at him as he laughed. Why did he enjoy laughing so much?

The Crimson Sand Organization was veiled in mystery. No one had ever seen its boss let alone discovered his identity.

It was hard to reconcile the image of the organization's mysterious leader with the man in front of her who so enjoyed laughing.

Did he really allow her to one-up him?

Did he tie himself up just so that she would be able to explore the villa freely?

It sounded ludicrous even in her own ears.

What about the towel stuffed in his mouth? Did he stuff it in himself?

Even if he had really handed the win to her, what was there to laugh about?

He was the masochist not her.

She thought for a while and could not help but ask, "Why did you give me free rein to explore the compound?"

"I liked the way you acted – bossy," he smirked.

"..."

Qin Shu folded her arms over her chest, rubbing the goosebumps showing through her skin.

"So... Do you agree to my conditions?" he asked pleasantly.

"Are you being serious? If you are, then I'll agree to your request and stay here for three days. In exchange, you must let me leave with Gu Yan unscathed."

The man's reply was firm, "Of course."

"Very well. I accept your conditions."

She was standing in the lion's den. It was too great of a risk for her to pursue a reckless course of action.

Her best bet was to accept the man's request and leave with Gu Yan after three days. Three days was not long in the grand scheme of things. It could be said that she would have turned a profit just by fulfilling the man's request.

Having received her agreement, the man said, "It's already 4:30 in the morning. You should rest."

Where is my room? Where should I go to get some rest."

The man pointed at the big bed across from him. "Right here."

Qin Shu glared at him. "Didn't you say..."

A faint smile curled his lips. "I'll sleep on the sofa."

Stunned, Qin Shu stared long and hard at the sofa that he was sitting on. Though the sofa was bigger than the average one around, it was by no means as comfortable as a proper bed.

"Do you want to take a shower? A bathroom is attached to this room and there are a few sets of pyjamas or evening gowns for you to choose from. Suddenly, the man stood up and walked to the wardrobe. He opened the wardrobe to show her the vast collection of clothes stored within.

Qin Shu looked at the wardrobe. In the dim light of the room, she could not see the clothes clearly.

With clean clothes available, Qin Shu decided to take a shower before going to bed.

She settled President Ba on a pillow by the side of the bed where she was to sleep. President Ba snuggled into the gratefully and was soon sound asleep.

She walked to the wardrobe, picking out something that would fit her. She chose the clothes based on how they felt to her touch. Once she was satisfied with her choice, she withdrew the clothes from the wardrobe and stepped into the bathroom.

The bathroom door swung shut behind her. Pressing the switch beside the door, the bathroom burst into light. She was not sure what she would have done if the bathroom did not have any lights.

The bathroom and the bedroom shared a similar design. Surprisingly, the bathroom was bigger than she had expected.

A semi-circular tub filled much of the room, making it suitable for a bath.

Qin Shu quickly succumbed to the temptation that was a hot bath. Stripping out of her clothes, she hopped into the shower and scrubbed herself down with soap before luxuriating in the warm waters of the bath.

Once she had soaked thoroughly soaked herself, she dried her hair and used a fresh towel to wipe the droplets of water still clinging to her skin. The whole process took some time but she completed it, eventually. Pulling on the nightgown she had chosen, she turned her sights to the vanity top.

Two sets of toothbrushes, cups and toothpaste greeted her. There were also two towels on the shelf next to the sink. A hairdryer was tucked into a conspicuous cabinet at one side.

When did he prepare all this?

Could it be that he had predicted her return?

It was truly puzzling... Qin Shu picked up the hairdryer and blew her hair dry, lost in a myriad of thoughts flitting through her mind.

She returned the hairdryer to the cabinet she had found in it once her hair was suitably dried.

Qin Shu picked up the electric toothbrush with one hand and the toothpaste with the other. She looked at the brand and took a whiff. It was a familiar smell. Offhandedly, she realized it was one of her favourites.

Her eyes clouded over in doubt. How was he so informed of her preferences?

She brushed her teeth and washed her face, looking at her reflection in the mirror when she was done. She could not believe the things she had learnt that night – chief of those being the certain someone lounging on the sofa outside.

She turned off the lights and stepped out of the bathroom.

Still seated on the sofa was the man, the supposed head of the Crimson Sand Organization, shrouded in the shadows of the room. He looked like he had been waiting for her.

The man heard the door open, glancing in her direction. "Are you hungry? I'll get someone to prepare some food if you are."

Qin Shu rejected him without a second thought. "There's no need."

The man had been considerate in every way possible. It almost felt like she was living in a dream. Not all dreams are sweet, however, and she knew this for a fact. It was best if she erred on the side of caution.

Seeing that she was not interested in a meal, the man continued, "You may treat this place as your home over the next three days. You don't need to restrain yourself. You must be hungry with how busy you've been all day. Eat your fill and go rest."

Though she was startled by his sudden proclamation, Qin Shu still refused. "There's really no need."

What if she was drugged?

The man did not press the issue. "Then sleep."

The man laid down on the sofa as soon as he finished speaking. It was not long before he was sound asleep. He seemed quite tired.

With his head positioned next to the light, Qin Shu was finally able to see a small part of his face. Covering his eyes was a thick layer of gauze and it stretched over the greater part of his face. His black hair fell limply against the side of the sofa.

Was he blind?

No wonder there were not any lights in the ceiling – he had no need for them.

She took off her shoes and slumped into bed with her eyes closed.

Despite how tired she was, sleep eluded her. Stuck in a strange villa with a strange man sleeping in the same room, it made it rather difficult for her to fall asleep.

Her mind was in a constant state of heightened tension. Her nerves were so tense that she jolted to one side every time a shadow flickered in the room.

Helplessly, Qin Shu closed her eyes and waited.

In the quiet room, time passed slowly. The erratic beat of her heart was her only companion while President Ba slept. The fact that he was sleeping so peacefully irked her.

Turning her attention to the man sleeping on the sofa, she strained her ears. With her current skill, she could hear his light breathing. It was evident that he was asleep.

He was the one who commanded his subordinates to smear poison on the knife, and he was also the one who ordered his subordinates to take her hostage.

A chilly light danced in her eyes at the thought of the things he had done.

Could there be some deeper purpose for him wanting to hold her captive?

Qin Shu pondered for a long time but could not figure out what the man's objective was. If she struck now, she was confident that she could kill him.

Slipping her hands into her pocket, she withdrew a dagger and slid off the bed quietly. She didn't even put on her shoes. She walked barefoot to the sofa and stopped.

The wall lamp illuminated the figure of the man sleeping on the sofa. His breaths were slow and steady. He knew that he was sharing a room with her and yet he had not taken any precautions against her. Lying there, the way he was, he was a sitting duck.

Is he big-hearted or does he think that I wouldn't do anything to him after I learnt his true identity?

She lowered herself into a crouch, fixing her gaze on the man reclining on the sofa. She gripped the dagger in her hand tightly and shifted her eyes to the man's fair neck. The dagger in her hand approached him slowly.

As long as it penetrated his neck, he would be dead with a single slash.

Vengeance was within her grasp.

Faced with this defenceless man, her grip around the dagger tightened coiling in preparation for her strike.

Chapter 537: Qin Shu Provoked and Was Protected by the Man

"If I said I was letting you have your way, would you believe me?"

The man's words suddenly rang in her ears.

He had been caught off guard when she first entered but that did not explain his lack of resistance while she tied him up.

The dagger in her hand did not fall.

She gritted her teeth. Why couldn't she do it?

He was clearly the enemy. Why couldn't she plunge the dagger in his throat and be done with it?

As if struck by an epiphany, she realized why she couldn't do it.

His subordinates would discover his death sooner rather than later, by which time, escape would be virtually impossible, let alone escaping with Gu Yan in tow.

Qin Shu stared at the man wrapped in gauze. She had no choice but to let him go free for the moment. If an opportunity arose in the future, she would not hesitate a second time. She would not show mercy. Death would come on swift wings.

She put away the dagger and returned to bed. She lay down, pulled up the blanket, and covered herself with it. She closed her eyes and attempted to drift off to sleep.

Her sleep was short-lived, reminded as she was of Ye Xing who was waiting for her beyond the villa's walls. It was a disaster in the making. If Ye Xing barged in without so much as a 'by-your-leave', the man would take her hostage and use her as a bargaining chip.

Qin Shu pulled out her phone and sent a message to Ye Xing, assuring her that all was well.

Two hundred meters away from the villa, a sports car was parked by the roadside.

Ye Xing was anxious. Every now and then, she would check her phone and curse at the sight of the blank screen that greeted her. Qin Shu and President Ba had been gone for some time now and worry gnawed at her nerves.

Just as she was about to step out of the car, she received a message. In a smooth practised motion, she pulled her phone out of her pocket and opened the message. It was from Qin Shu.

[Qin Shu: I'm not in danger. Head back without me. Pick me up at the intersection of the villa in three days.]

Ye Xing read the message and did a double-take, doubt flashing in her eyes. Why was not she returning with her?

Why did she have to wait for three days before picking her up?

No one answered her questions.

She spent some time thinking of a suitable response, driving back to the hotel after crafting her reply.

The room was silent.

The man on the sofa was still sleeping soundly.

Qin Shu closed her eyes. Although she was a little tired, she could not fall asleep.

She wondered how the next three days were going to pan out.

Morning, the next day...

Qin Shu spent the wee hours of the morning awake in bed. Sleep eluded her. How could she sleep in an unfamiliar environment and with a man whose dubious intentions were all but clear?

Hearing movement on the sofa, she opened her eyes and looked in the man's direction.

Although the sky was bright, the curtains blocked much of it leaving the room in dim darkness.

Nonetheless, she could still see the slender figure of the man walking into the bathroom. The fact that he could not see did not hinder him in the least.

By this time, President Ba had also awoken. He blinked his forest-green eyes and arched his back into a crescent stretch. It seemed like he had slept well.

Despite not having slept long, President Ba woke to good spirits. It made her green with envy.

"Meow" President Ba greeted Qin Shu happily.

Qin Shu shot him a stink eyed look.

President Ba shrunk in on himself, his eyes flickering in a way that seemed to express how wronged he felt.

She lowered her voice and said, "Don't give me that look. Who was it who brought me to this room, hmm?"

“Meow” President Ba called out ingratiatingly.

Qin Shu flicked President Ba’s forehead.

President Ba used the force of her flick to flip over and roll down the other side of the bed, landing paws first on the ground.

Amused by President Ba’s antics, Qin Shu felt her mood improve – if just a little. She mimicked her cat and got out of bed except without his dramatic flourish. Two dark circles ringed her eyes, making her look like a panda. Padding her way to the wardrobe, she opened it and gasped.

With the faint light of day trickling through the wall of curtains, she found herself mesmerized by the clothes she could see.

The wardrobe was full of women’s clothes. Moreover, they were clothes that were trending this season. From the condition they were in, they had to be brand new!

Could it be his girlfriend’s clothes?

What if the women walked in and saw them together? Wouldn’t she think Qin Shu was trying to seduce her man?

Qin Shu did not care. If in a jealous fit, the woman decided to take it out on the man, she would simply sit by the side and watch the show.

She sifted through the clothes with a critical eye, looking for something she would like to wear.

Soon, she found a set of casual home-style clothes that she liked. When she turned around, she saw the man whose head was wrapped in gauze walking out of the bathroom. He had already changed into casual clothes for home use.

The man walked with an even gait, stopping in front of her. “Go and wash up. In the meantime, I’ll have someone prepare breakfast.”

The man walked out the door as soon as he was done speaking.

Qin Shu tilted her head and looked at the man’s back as he left. It was remarkable how well he moved despite being blind. She could not help but wonder if he had trained to do so since young. Conversely, he would be able to accomplish the same feat if he had already reached the summit of some martial art.

Either way, it should not have mattered to her at all. He wasn’t a good person.

Qin Shu shook her head and strode into the bathroom. There, she changed her clothes, brushed her teeth and washed her face.

President Ba had already slipped out of the room by the time she had finished washing up. His ability to adapt was even greater than hers.

She shook her head helplessly and walked out of the room.

Having walked back and forth twice the previous night, Qin Shu was quite familiar with her surroundings and knew exactly where the dining hall was.

As she walked, she sized up the villa. Last night, she had not been able to appreciate its decor or layout properly in the gloom of night. Now that it was day, she could see the villa's opulent halls in all its stunning beauty.

The villa itself was definitely worth a fortune with it being so large. The decorations served as icing on the cake, transforming and emphasizing its extravagance. Many of the materials used in the villa's construction and decor were precious. Few would have been able to afford or make use of such an eclectic mix of materials.

The Crimson Sand Organization certainly was not short on money.

Contracting them even once was enough to bankrupt the poorest of millionaires.

Just as she reached the stairs, Qin Shu heard the voice of a man calling her.

"Who are you? How did you get in?"

She turned around and saw a handsome man walking towards her from the side. He had silver hair and a pair of long, narrow eyes. His tall figure was draped in an air of viciousness.

She had seen this man the previous night. Gu Yan had crippled one of his hands before he could purge the toxins ravaging it.

Qin Shu raised her eyebrows. "Who I am has nothing to do with you. As for how I got in, I don't feel like telling you."

Qin Shu ignored the man and walked downstairs.

"Do you think this is your home?" The silver-haired man shouted angrily and attacked whilst her back was turned towards him.

Qin Shu dodged to the side, holding the bannister with one hand. Leveraging her weight against it, she lashed out at the silver-haired man with a powerful kick that sent him flying. He crashed into the wall behind him, reeling from the incredible strength packed into the blow.

It was then that the silver-haired man realized she was not just some frail woman to be manhandled. A moment of carelessness had left him open to her vicious counter.

Just as he was about to continue his assault, a hoarse voice rang from somewhere below.

"Yin Xie, stop."

The fist that the silver-haired man had just swung was accompanied by a strong wind. He had forcefully pulled his fist back upon hearing his master's instructions – the force of which caused his arm to quiver painfully.

Qin Shu had put all her weight into that previous kick. She was quite happy to see how effective it had been, judging from the way Yin Xie's arm was still shaking.

Satisfied that she had paid him back in kind, Qin Shu turned her attention towards the foot of the stairs.

Yin Xie could not understand why his master was protecting this woman. She was obviously an intruder whose very presence in the villa was a provocation against the Crimson Sand Organization.

He too looked down in search of an answer.

By then, Qin Shu had already made her way to the dining table. She sat in the seat furthest away from the man. She stared at the sumptuous breakfast laid out on the table and then at the man sitting on the opposite end from her. His eyes were still covered in gauze as he helped himself to the food with a pair of chopsticks.

The air around him screamed elegance and nobility.

He was no different from a normal young master.

Chapter 538: was Despised and Gu Yan Checked His Pulse

The man inclined his head questioningly. "Why are you staring at me instead of eating?"

"Who would want to stare at you? I'm just wondering what's wrong with your eyes.

Qin Shu looked down at her breakfast. It was a bountiful spread featuring all her favourite dishes.

She did not expect the man to have the same taste in food as she did.

Lifting her chopsticks, Qin Shu helped herself to a dumpling from the plate closest to her and ate it. The dumpling tasted quite good.

The man held a pair of chopsticks in his hand and said with nonchalance, "I sustained this injury when I was young. Consequently, I have had to apply medicine to it every month since."

Qin Shu stopped chewing and looked up at the man opposite her.

The man continued, "You must be wondering how I'm able to walk so freely with my eyes covered?"

Qin Shu frowned having had her intentions read so easily. Nonetheless, curiosity got the better of her. "En."

"I'm just used to it," he shrugged.

It sounded a little sad to Qin Shu's ears.

Yin Xie walked to the dining table and sat down on an empty chair. He glanced at the woman seated beside him. "Master, who is she?"

"A guest," the man answered succinctly.

"A guest?" A trace of doubt flashed across Yin Xie's eyes. Why was not he informed that they were receiving a guest?

Qin Shu ignored Yin Xie's provocative eye and continued eating as if he did not exist.

Yin Xie tilted his head and asked, "Master, when did she arrive? Why didn't I hear about it?"

“She arrived last night. You didn’t see her come in, that’s all.” The man answered, pausing for but a moment before resuming his meal; an elegant air of genteel nobility surrounding him.

Last night?

Yin Xie’s eyes were filled with doubt. How did the woman next to him escape his notice the previous night?

Qin Shu savoured the delicious food happily. While doing so, her mind wandered idly. It settled on the man opposite her. He was more than a little strange.

Yin Xie eyed Qin Shu covertly. He would not deny the obvious. The woman seated beside him was a ravishing beauty. Yet, beneath her mesmerizing exterior was a sharp undercurrent of hostility that did not escape his trained instincts as an assassin.

The woman probably had some ulterior motive in mind.

Qin Shu devoured the dumplings with gusto. As she did so, she regarded Yin Xie coolly. He had not concealed his murderous intent well and it showed in the way he snuck surreptitious glares in her direction. Unperturbed, she enjoyed her meal as if she could not feel his eyes on her.

Abruptly, the man laid down his chopsticks and ordered, “Yin Xie, go and weed the withered grass around the greenhouse.”

“Didn’t a servant weed it yesterday?” Yin Xie responded with a confused look.

The man raised a brow. “I know. I want you to weed it again.”

The man spoke in a quiet monotone. When Yin Xie heard it, he knew he had displeased his master.

“I’ll go now.”

Yin Xie sent Qin Shu a sharp look before he got up and left. To be dismissed by his master in such an embarrassing manner...

Naturally, Yin Xie was unwilling to weed the back garden where the greenhouse stood.

Qin Shu watched Yin Xie’s departure expressionlessly. Once he was out of sight, she turned her attention to the man opposite her.

Having eaten her fill, she set down her chopsticks and wiped her mouth with a paper napkin.

The man mirrored her actions and asked, “Are you full?”

“Yes, I am.” Qin Shu nodded.

The man put down his napkin and said, “Let’s go sunbathing together.”

“Yes,” Qin Shu replied. She stood up, waiting for the man to stand up. She followed the man to the living room.

The man walked with a measured gait with an uncharacteristic steadiness to his steps. It was impossible to tell that he was walking blindfolded from his footfalls alone.

The living room was brightly lit with light streaming in from the verandah. A glass window blocked the cold wind while a retractable sunshade hung above. Two beach chairs made of solid wood sat in the shade. Between the two chairs was a tea set.

The man strolled to a beach chair and sat down. He leaned against the backrest, allowing only the lower half of his body to tan in the sun.

Qin Shu took the vacant chair beside him, following his example. The gentle warmth of the sun was a balm against her skin. It was neither too hot nor too cold. It was just right.

She could not help but wonder what the man was up to.

Were his intentions as benign as enjoying a meal and sunbathing with her?

Angling her head in his direction, Qin Shu recalled the events that had transpired the previous night and mulled over the mistakes she had made – the most obvious being her failure to wear a wig or using a voice changer to mask her identity.

The man had actually known that she was a woman even before she picked out clothes to wear from the wardrobe.

She had neglected this tidbit in favour of the man's strange behaviour.

It was only after the fact that she realized her oversight.

"How did you know I was a woman? I thought I had masked my identity well enough by speaking hoarsely..."

"A woman's hand is different from a man's hand." The man murmured.

She had only touched him once the previous night when she tied him up. How could he tell from such a short encounter?

"There were many other details you neglected which led me to my conclusion."

"What details?" Qin Shu asked, a curious lilt colouring her voice.

"You possess a very special aura."

"..."

Qin Shu stared at the man with her eyes drawn into slits. Was he really the head of the Crimson Sand Organization?

Eating, sunbathing and sleeping?

He was very different from what she had imagined...

The man interrupted her thoughts with a question. "Am I so very different from how you imagined me to be?"

He even knew what she was thinking!

Seeing little merit in denying him, she affirmed. "You are a little different from how I'd imagined you to be."

"What kind of person did you expect me to be?" The man asked faintly.

"Ruthless, cold-hearted, unscrupulous, despicable and shameless!" Qin Shu spoke her mind without scruples.

"I see." The man chuckled. "Then what about now?"

"You're not a good person." Qin Shu pronounced.

The man smiled but remained silent thereafter.

A heavy silence ensued.

Qin Shu peered at the man reclining in his chair. With his eyes covered in gauze, she could not tell whether he was awake or asleep.

Not having slept the whole night, Qin Shu soon felt drowsy basking in the warm morning light. It was not long before she was sound asleep. Her breathing lightened and the worry etched on her face smoothed. Her cheeks took on a rosy hue in the tepid light of morning, framing her delicate features in a motley of pinks and reds.

The man turned over to look at her. From the sound of her breathing, he knew that she had fallen asleep. She had not slept the whole night so it was not strange that she was so tired.

Just then, Yin Shi walked over and was about to speak.

The man raised his hand to stop him.

Yin Shi nodded in understanding and refrained from speaking. He stole a glance at the person in the other chair. Seeing a woman sleeping in the other chair, he was taken aback.

When did she arrive?

No wonder his master would not let him speak. It turned out that he did not want to wake her up.

The man got up slowly and padded into the living room.

Yin Shi followed his master in.

Once inside, Yin Shi said, "Master, I'll get Gu Yan to check your pulse."

The man returned to the third floor without saying so much as a word. It was his way of showing tacit acquiescence.

Yin Shi bowed and headed towards the basement. When he reached the door, he pressed his hand on the screen and the door swung open automatically.

Chapter 539: the Results of the Pulse Examination. He Knew Things He Did Not Know

The basement was actually a separate room. A large bed leaned against the wall where a small window allowed light to filter in.

As the window was situated overhead and out of his reach, Gu Yan was not able to see much of the outside world.

A desk sat opposite his bed. Beside it was a bookshelf packed with books on medicine. Yin Shi had prepared those books for him to read saying that his master hoped he would pass the time fruitfully.

He spent most of his time at that desk, reading the books he was given. It was the only thing he could do, after all. This was how he whiled away half a month of his time.

Gu Yan enjoyed many things. He enjoyed the quiet of his pharmacy. He also enjoyed studying medicine and pharmacology.

What he did not like, however, was being confined.

A token of conciliation – if there really was any – was that this time, he was being treated better than the last. At the very least, he was not being beaten up, starved or threatened.

He had been missing for so many days. His father was probably dying from anxiety. He would bet Fu Tingyu felt the same.

It was Fu Tingyu and his friends who had saved him previously. Would they come for him again?

If he had known he would be kidnapped so often, he would have spent some time learning martial arts. Then he would have had the ability to protect himself.

The sound of the door opening resembled a computer being turned on.

Hearing that particular sound, Gu Yan looked in the direction of the door. It was Yin Shi who entered. Gu Yan had met him a few times before and recognized him immediately.

“It is in your best interests to check my master’s pulse and prepare a suitable cure for him. That way, you’ll be allowed to go free.” Yin Shi was afraid Gu Yan would get up to mischief again and warned him sternly.

Gu Yan eyed Yin Shi warily without saying a word.

“Let’s go. Our patience is limited,” Yin Shi said.

Gu Yan let out an inaudible sigh. He put down the book in his hand and followed Yin Shi out.

Yin Shi escorted Gu Yan to the third floor.

Though he had been led to the third floor on several occasions, it was only his second time being ushered there without a blindfold on.

He felt helpless. It was his first time treating someone he had no intentions of treating.

When they reached the man’s room, Yin Shi pushed the door open and brought Gu Yan in.

Sitting on the sofa was the man he was obliged to treat. The man was nursing his forehead with one hand. He looked pale and sickly.

When Gu Yan first saw the man on the sofa, he thought there had to be some kind of mistake. There was no way the leader of an organization of assassins would look so gentle and refined. The image of the man he had crafted in his mind was that of a ferocious, cold-blooded murderer – not some young master.

Gu Yan noted the way the man's eyes were covered in gauze and recognized some of the herbs the man had applied via smell.

"Master, he's here," Yin Shi said.

The man raised his head when he heard Yin Shi's voice. His matted hair, draped over his forehead, parted with his minute gesture.

"Take my master's pulse." Yin Shi demanded.

Gu Yan examined the man with a critical eye, slowly making his way over to him. He was not in a hurry to take the man's pulse. "Bring a chair over."

Yin Shi brought a chair over at Gu Yan's request. As long as Gu Yan cured his master, what was acquiescing to a small demand of his?

A short while later, a small leather stool was brought over and placed behind Gu Yan.

Satisfied, Gu Yan sat on the stool, beckoning the man for his hand. "Give me your hand."

The man extended his hand for Gu Yan to take his pulse. He folded his long sleeves, revealing his fair arms.

Gu Yan put two fingers on the man's wrist.

Yin Shi stood at the side with a nervous expression on his face. Silently, he observed Gu Yan's actions, not wanting to disturb him whilst he was taking his master's pulse.

After a while, Gu Yan withdrew his hand.

The man followed suit, resting his hand on his lap.

"How's his condition?" Yin Shi hurriedly asked.

Gu Yan glanced at Yin Shi but did not offer him a response. Instead, he looked at the man in front of him. His prognosis had not changed, though his condition seemed to have improved – even if only a little.

"You're in a good mood today, aren't you?" He asked.

The man smiled gently. "Yes." He did not deny it.

Gu Yan nodded. "It's good that you are in a pleasant mood. Although it won't rid you of the poison in your system, a positive outlook on life is still beneficial. Your situation might improve given enough time."

The man listened to Gu Yan's words and expressed his agreement. He had not coughed as much today as he did on some others. It was enough that he had not vomited blood today.

“You have been poisoned for so long that the toxin has had the opportunity to seep into your organs. Hence, your vomiting of blood. An ordinary person would have already died by now.” Gu Yan declared.

This was the first time Gu Yan had spoken of the poison in the man’s body. It made people shudder in abject fear of the toxin’s strength.

The man paused. He knew his body very well. Gu Yan’s words merely confirmed his own thoughts regarding his condition.

Yin Shi paled in fright, his voice trembling with anxiety. “There must be something you can prescribe to cure my master!”

The reason why Yin Shi was so certain of Gu Yan’s capability was that he was the one who cured Fu Tingyu of his poisoning.

Fu Tingyu martial prowess had revealed his body’s return to its prime.

They had invited many famous doctors in the hopes of curing their master’s condition but to no avail. Gu Yan was their only hope. If they weren’t so desperate, they would not have captured Gu Yan in the first place.

Gu Yan tilted his head and sent Yin Shi a questioning look. “Why should I treat him?”

Although Gu Yan was as gentle as jade and as refined as a gentleman, he still had his own principles he abided by.

He had not forgotten that the Crimson Sand Organization was responsible for poisoning Fu Tingyu.

Enraged, Yin Shi bellowed, “Your life is in our hands. Don’t think for a second that we won’t kill you if needs be.”

“Then why are you still keeping me alive?” Gu Yan laughed.

“... you...” Yin Shi was so angry that the veins on his forehead rippled and bulged like snakes.

Gu Yan refused to let up, teasing, “Am I wrong?”

Suddenly, the man spoke, “How long do you think I’ll be able to live if you don’t provide me with an antidote?”

Gu Yan answered without hesitation, “You won’t live more than a year.”

Yin Shi glanced at his master nervously. He never imagined how tight on time his master was. It was then that he decided he would use any means necessary to ensure Gu Yan concocted an antidote for his master.

“Very well. State your conditions.” The man said.

“I have money and power. If you threaten my life, my father will not let you go.” Gu Yan had never used his background as leverage before. This was his first time doing so.

“Your father?” The man thought about it for a moment and asked, “Is your father Wen Shangyue?”

Stunned, Gu Yan retorted harshly, "It has nothing to with you."

"Your skill in medicine must have been a result of Wen Shangyue's teaching. It seems like you've managed to inherit some of his skills in the field of medicine." The man paused, organizing his thoughts. "I wonder why your surname is Gu and not Wen..."

Gu Yan was left speechless. No one had ever asked him this question so openly before. It was a wonder he never thought to question it himself.

Why was his surname Gu and not Wen?

Despite being blind, the man could sense Gu Yan's inner turmoil. Perhaps, he did not possess an answer to his question either.

...

Qin Shu woke and blinked her sleep laden eyes. "How could I have fallen asleep?" she wondered.

Turning to the side, she realized that the man had disappeared.

Chapter 540: Bet that She Wouldn't be Able to Do it. You know Her, Right

She felt much better having had a nap.

She walked towards the living room in search of her host.

Meanwhile, in the back garden where the greenhouse was located...

"How on earth am I supposed to weed the garden when there aren't any weeds left?"

Yin Xie fished out a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, withdrawing a stick and lighting it. He surveyed the garden expressionlessly. Not a single blade of withered grass was left. What was he supposed to weed?

Ming Yan walked over. "Yin Xie, what are you doing here?"

"Master asked me to weed the garden." Yin Xie exhaled a thick cloud of nicotine-infused smoke.

"He ordered you to weed the garden?" Ming Yan eyed the garden with an incredulous look. "Perhaps he meant for you to mow the lawn?"

"What lawn are you talking about? He ordered me to pull out the weeds in the garden!" Yin Xie chewed the cigarette in his mouth as he leaned against a pane of glass separating the greenhouse from the garden.

Ming Yan could not help but laugh. "Did you make master angry?"

"Master got angry with me over a woman. I just wanted to know where she came from..." Yin Xie recalled the woman's kick that he had received. Even now, his arm still throbbed painfully.

"A woman? Is there really a woman here? Why haven't I seen her yet?" Ming Yan mumbled uncertainly.

"She should be with her master. I suspect she has some ulterior motive woman in getting close to him." Yin Xie sighed.

It was Ming Yan's first time hearing his master lose his cool over a woman, so he wanted to see what was so special about her. "I'll go and take a look."

Ming Yan marched towards the living room with purposeful strides.

Yin Xie returned to his self-appointed task of staring at the garden in search of weeds. While doing so, he took a deep puff of his cigarette.

...

Qin Shu walked into the living room but didn't see the man. Maybe he had returned to his room?

"Who are you?"

Ming Yan walked into the living room and saw a woman climbing up the stairs. She was probably the woman Yin Xie had mentioned earlier.

She paused mid-step when she heard someone calling out to her. Without meaning to, he turned around and saw a man heading in her direction. It was the man she had seen the previous night. He was the man who assassinated Luo Junsheng.

Ming Yan caught sight of Qin Shu's appearance when she looked back. Her delicate features paired with her limpid eyes stole his breath. She was a heaven-defying beauty.

Qin Shu took the opportunity to size up Ming Yan. Ming Yan ranked third on the list of most dangerous assassins. He had a one hundred per cent mission success rate – not having failed a single mission assigned to him before. In some circles, he was known by the monicker: "Death Note".

Why hadn't she recalled this piece of information sooner?

Shaking his head, Ming Yan came to his senses and marched up to the woman standing on the stairs. He asked again, "Who are you?"

Qin Shu arched a delicate brow and asked, "Who am I? I don't see how it concerns you."

Ming Yan frowned at Qin Shu's clear provocation. No wonder Yin Xie had been so angry.

"Don't think for a second that I don't know what you're scheming. You must have some ulterior motive cosying up to our master. Regardless of your motives or designs, if you hurt him in any way, I'll be the first to string you up and make you wish you were dead."

Ming Yan's eyes were cold and ruthless. There was a hard finality to his voice that bespoke the truth of his words.

"Are you done?" Qin Shu stared at him calmly as if she were looking at an ant.

Ming Yan was rendered speechless by Qin Shu's haughty retort. Her reaction had exceeded his expectations in the way he thought she would react. His words sloughed off her like water off a duck's back. She was the very picture of a calm and composed woman who knew her own worth. It was not a reaction he had been expecting. He thought that the woman in front of him would be frightened by his aggressive display, but apparently not.

Nonetheless, Ming Yan was not the third most dangerous assassin alive without reason. He quickly realized where her confidence stemmed from. If she thought she had the master's support, then there was nothing she needed to fear from his subordinates.

"Just because you have master's support, it does not mean you're invulnerable." Ming Yan hissed.

Indifferent, Qin Shu responded with a lazy toss of her hair. "Move aside if you're done talking. I still have things to take care of upstairs."

Ming Yan blinked at her with a dazed look in his eyes. It felt like he was punching cotton with the way his words failed to elicit a reaction he could predict.

Qin Shu no longer looked at him. She simply pushed him aside, brushing him off like he was a lowly peon. With even steps, she continued up the stairs unhurried.

Ming Yan glared at the woman's back with a frown. Who was she?

Qin Shu walked straight up to the third floor and arrived outside the door to the man's room. The door was open.

"Master, we have ways to persuade Gu Yan to cure you. Please leave it to us."

Just as she was about to enter the room, she heard someone inside talking about Gu Yan.

"Master, I don't believe that he's not afraid of death at all. If he refuses to cure you, I'll break his arms one at a time before..."

"Enough."

Though the man spoke softly, his voice seemed to carry an unshakable compulsion demanding obedience.

"B-but Master, if he does not cure you, you'll be dead before the year is up..."

Yin Shi's voice trembled with agitation. It was clear that he was deathly afraid for his master's wellbeing.

Qin Shu stood at the door, eavesdropping on the conversation. She could not believe her ears. Was the man really going to die so soon?

Gu Yan had been held captive for more than half a month. Yet, in all that time, he had not managed to persuade Gu Yan to concoct an antidote for him?

Despite not having been cured, he was still willing to let her leave with him in three days... Wouldn't that mean he was going to die?

Was this some sort of set-up?

"Get out."

There was a moment of silence.

"Understood, master."

Yin Shi walked out of the room and saw Qin Shu standing by the door. He did not stop to speak with her. He didn't even know her name.

He would ask him again some other time. He had to think of a way to convince Gu Yan to treat his master.

Qin Shu stood by the door for a long time before she walked in.

When she entered, she saw the man sitting on the sofa with one hand on his forehead. He seemed to be in extreme discomfort.

She walked up to the man and stood in front of him. Staring down at him, she only wanted to confirm one thing. "Were you lying when you said you would allow me to leave with Gu Yan after three days?"

The man raised his head as if he sensing her gaze. "Are you afraid that I won't keep my word?" he asked.

"Gu Yan's life is in your hands. If you don't keep your word and decide against allowing me to leave with Gu Yan, wouldn't I have spent three days here in vain?" Qin Shu asked quietly.

The man smiled. "Your worries are unfounded. If I go back on my word, you are free to kill me – just like how you wanted to do so last night."

"You could have easily taken my life. No matter how fast my reactions might have been, it still wouldn't have been faster than that dagger you had poised against my throat."

Startled, it took Qin Shu a while to compose herself. How did he know she had made an attempt against his life last night?

He even knew the distance between the dagger and his neck!

What she could not understand was his lack of reaction the previous night. He had not reacted at all despite having a knife against his throat. He had slept like someone in a deep sleep and she was sure he had let his guard down.

"Were you so certain that I would not kill you? Is that why you did not react at all?" Qin Shu asked.

The man shook his head. "I didn't know. I gambled with my life and won."

A faint smile tugged at his lips.

Qin Shu was flabbergasted by his flippant disregard for his own life. How could he gamble it so carelessly?

Was he crazy or did he not possess a shred of self-worth?

He was not a cat with nine lives. How could he do something so foolish?

"Then you should know that if you had lost that bet, your life would have been forfeit."

If she had not stayed her hand, he would have undoubtedly died.

The man did not think much of it. "Mm. It wouldn't be called gambling if there weren't any stakes, right?"

Qin Shu finally understood one thing. Gamblers were all crazy.

The man continued, "I will keep my promise, of that you need not doubt."

Qin Shu did not relax even though she had secured his promise. She could not relax – not until she left with Gu Yan safely.

Suddenly, a thought popped into her mind. "Do you know me?"