

The First Order

Chapter 32: Dreams are always the opposite of reality

Perhaps the band was in a pathetic state, as it took them longer to reorganize. They did not come out til several days later.

According to what they had said, the band and the private army would have to make a trip to the Jing Mountains no matter what. It was only a matter of when they would get there.

What was there in the Jing Mountains? Ren Xiaosu always felt that these people's desire to get to the Jing Mountains was far greater than responding to the invitation to perform at Stronghold 112.

The Jing Mountains spanned a vast area. Up until now, no one had really explored the hinterlands of the mountain range, so what kind of information did the stronghold's overseers receive?

In the morning, Yan Liuyuan went to school happily with his new schoolbag that was recently sewn up by Xiaoyu.

When he arrived at school, he realized that something was off. Why were all of his classmates staring at him as soon as he entered the room?

Yan Liuyuan ignored them as he took his seat. However, all of the students crowded around him. A strapping girl, Li Youqian, who was the daughter of Old Li from the grocery store, said to Yan Liuyuan, "Liuyuan, can you go back and tell your brother to stop making the class stay late?"

"That's right." Wang Fugui's idiot son also complained, "By making the class stay late every day, none of us have time to play anymore."

Yan Liuyuan was stuck between a rock and a hard place. He said helplessly, "If what I say is useful, he would've already stopped making the class stay late."

Everyone was unhappy to hear him say that. Li Youqian sneered, "It's not like Mr. Zhang is paying your brother. I heard that your family doesn't lack money these days, so why is he so serious with the teaching? What, does he intend to take over at the school already? He's just a substitute teacher, but that doesn't mean he can tell us what to do—ow!"

Li Youqian let out a cry of pain.

Yan Liuyuan got up and kicked Li Youqian in the hip. No one had expected Yan Liuyuan to get angry. They heard Yan Liuyuan sneer, "What my brother taught you is knowledge that can help save your life out there in the wilderness. If you don't appreciate it, that's fine. But why are you making things up about him behind his back? If anyone mentions this again, don't blame me for being harsh on you."

Yan Liuyuan turned 14 years old this year, but Li Youqian was already 16 years old. Although they were about the same height, Li Youqian was much stronger than Yan Liuyuan.

Back when Wang Fugui tried to introduce Li Youqian to Ren Xiaosu, Yan Liuyuan had mentioned that she was a strapping girl. He was not lying at that time.

But when the other students saw Yan Liuyuan in this moment, it was as though they were watching a miniature version of Ren Xiaosu. The ferocity that exploded from both of them was exactly the same.

Even though Yan Liuyuan often spoke harshly to people, his appearance was much milder and gentler than Ren Xiaosu's. But why did the mention of Ren Xiaosu make him react so strongly?

Only now did they realize that there was a wild side to Yan Liuyuan.

Li Youqian had wanted to get up to return the blow. But when she saw Yan Liuyuan's expression, she reluctantly dropped the idea. "I didn't make anything up about him. I was just telling the truth."

Yan Liuyuan felt trapped. He was obviously the last person who wanted Ren Xiaosu to make the class stay late!

The schoolteacher, Mr. Zhang, came in from outside with his hands behind his back. "Why are all of you crowding around each other? Get back to your seats and prepare for class."

All the students hurried back to their seats. Although Mr. Zhang looked quite kind and amiable after school, he was sterner than anyone else during lessons.

Wang Fugui's idiot son, Wang Dalong, sat down beside Yan Liuyuan. He was Yan Liuyuan's deskmate.

Wang Dalong stole a glance at Yan Liuyuan. When he saw Yan Liuyuan still sulking, he tried to change the subject to resolve the awkwardness. "I had a dream yesterday that my father found me a stepmother. She mistreated me badly."

Yan Liuyuan glanced at him. "It's alright. Dreams are always the opposite of reality."

Wang Dalong beamed with joy at the words. "True that."

Yan Liuyuan thought for a moment before saying, "I think he might have found you a stepfather instead."

Wang Dalong was confused.

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That evening, Ren Xiaosu and the others were having dinner. After dinner, he was planning to catch up on the lessons that Yan Liuyuan and his classmates had gone through at the school today. But at this moment, he saw an angry Wang Fugui leading a crying Wang Dalong into the clinic. "Ren Xiaosu, come out!"

Ren Xiaosu was stunned, holding a bowl of rice in his hand. "What's going on?"

"Ask Liuyuan what he said to my son. The moment he got home, he started crying nonstop." Wang Fugui got even angrier when he recounted what his son had told him while crying.

Ren Xiaosu looked at Yan Liuyuan. Yan Liuyuan, who was sitting obediently in his chair, said. "I told him that Old Wang might have found him a stepfather."

Ren Xiaosu was confused.

With a loud wail, Wang Dalong cried even harder.

Ren Xiaosu looked at Yan Liuyuan. "You're in the wrong this time, Liuyuan. How can you say something like that to someone?" He turned around and comforted Wang Dalong, "Don't worry, your father will find you a stepmother. It's impossible that he'll find a stepfather for you."

Wang Dalong was stunned. He didn't want a stepmother either! He continued crying!

This made Wang Fugui so angry that he cursed, "I really have you to thank for explaining it for me!"

"Gratitude received from Wang Fugui, +1!"

At this moment, Ren Xiaosu's eyes lit up. Although he felt that it was a strange way to gain a gratitude token, it was still a gratitude token!

For some reason, Ren Xiaosu felt that a magical door was slowly opening for him.

His gratitude tokens had accumulated to 11 just like that!

Wang Fugui suddenly seemed to remember something that caused his anger to subside. He cautioned Ren Xiaosu, "Our town's administrator, Chen Haidong, unintentionally let slip something yesterday. He said that something strange has been happening at the other strongholds and that the same thing also seems to be happening at Stronghold 113."

"What is it?" Ren Xiaosu asked in a serious tone.

"He didn't seem to know the details." Wang Fugui said, "I'll let you know if I have any news. Anyways, be extra careful. It's usually not good when there are strange occurrences happening these days."

After Wang Fugui left, Yan Liuyuan asked, "Why did Old Wang say that it's usually not good when there are strange occurrences happening these days?"

Ren Xiaosu gave it some thought and said, "Maybe it's because our definition of what is good is too limited. We only call things that are advantageous to us good."

"Are we wrong to think that?" Yan Liuyuan asked. To be honest, even though he went to school much more than Ren Xiaosu, he was not as hardworking as him.

Ren Xiaosu would always read the books that he borrowed from Mr. Zhang while Yan Liuyuan lazed around. Sometimes, Yan Liuyuan thought, 'Since Ren Xiaosu is already so capable, why would I need to work so hard?'

Ren Xiaosu looked at Yan Liuyuan and said, "Remember this: It's not wrong to think of it that way. Whatever is beneficial to us is good. There's nothing wrong with being selfish. But I want you to have a line you won't cross and to not be a doormat others walk over."