

Chapter 34: The misfortune of others

“Don’t mind me saying this, Old Wang, but why are you always thinking about finding another wife?” Ren Xiaosu could not understand. “There’s no shortage of women in our town, right? I’m sure many of them wouldn’t mind being with you as long as you can ensure they won’t go hungry.”

Such matters were a common sight to Ren Xiaosu. Even men were like this, much less women. In the past, several women threw themselves at Ren Xiaosu just so they could survive in these harsh times. Some men did so as well, which made Yan Liuyuan want to gag when he learned about it. This was why Yan Liuyuan was so wary of Xiaoyu at the beginning.

Sometimes, reality was stranger than the fiction found at Mr. Zhang’s school.

Wang Fugui shook his greasy, medium-length hair and said proudly, “Would I want those immoral women? With my status, I should at least be looking for a proper lady to marry, right?”

“Yes, yes, you’re the esquire of our town.” Ren Xiaosu gave him a backhanded compliment.

At this moment, two women walked past the clinic. Wang Fugui’s eyes lit up. “What do you think of those two?”

Ren Xiaosu examined them. “One of them looks really good, but her figure is a little lacking. The other one isn’t that pretty, but she has a good figure. So then if may I ask, what do those two girls have anything to do with you?”

These words made Wang Fugui choke with anger. He was so furious that he turned around and got ready to head back to his grocery store to attend to his customers. However, a surprising turn of events happened!

They saw the stronghold’s portcullis being raised slowly. The sound of steel, wood, and rope rubbing against each other left people cringing. The dense, thick portcullis was being raised bit by bit. The weight of it left people short of breath.

Chen Haidong came out of the stronghold with a group of soldiers. This time, the officer leading the private troops was not Wang Congyang, whom Ren Xiaosu had dealt with before. It was a fresh face that had never been seen in town before.

Where was Wang Congyang? Did he get punished by Boss Luo?

“What are they going to do now?” Ren Xiaosu wondered.

“I don’t know.” Wang Fugui had a blank look on his face. He brushed off Ren Xiaosu and headed towards Chen Haidong. Due to the distance, Ren Xiaosu could not hear what they were talking about.

Then they saw the private troops of Stronghold 113 running towards town. After a while, they returned holding a man captive. That man screamed hysterically, “Why are you arresting me? Let go of me!”

Ren Xiaosu watched silently. The man, who got arrested turned out to be Zhang Baogen, the person who came to look for him last night.

When Wang Fugui saw the private troops arresting people like that, he quickly stopped them. “My dear officers, what is going on here? Although this guy might be a little mischievous, he didn’t commit any major crimes, right?”

“Get lost.” The private army’s officer sneered.

Facing the dark and unfeeling firearms, Wang Fugui could only back off. Otherwise, they might just shoot at him!

Wang Fugui spoke to the town administrator, Chen Haidong, again for a long time. In the end, Zhang Baogen was still brought into the stronghold.

The screeching sound rang out again as the dense and heavy portcullis separated the two worlds once again.

Ren Xiaosu went up to Wang Fugui and asked, “What’s the situation?”

He had to clear it up because he knew that Zhang Baogen must have been arrested and brought into the stronghold due to his “superpower.” Moreover, both he and Yan Liuyuan possessed such a power too.

Wang Fugui sighed and said, “It’s over, that kid is done for.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Chen Haidong said that guy showed off his superpower to a scoundrel friend of his yesterday. That scoundrel sold him out as soon as possible. All of the strongholds are weeding out these supernatural beings right now. If there were no incidents of a supernatural being attacking a stronghold overseer, it might have been easier to handle. But now, they’ve become the people the overseers dread the most. What would you do if you were afraid of someone?”

“Kill them,” Ren Xiaosu answered calmly and firmly.

“See, that’s where the overseers of the stronghold are different from you.” Wang Fugui said with a frown, “The first thing they thought of when they realized the danger of this was not to kill them but to understand them better! Chen Haidong mentioned that a yard and building in the stronghold have been vacated for a psychiatric hospital to be temporarily set up. They’ve also sent a lot of medical devices over to that place.”

“Are they going to treat these supernatural beings?” Ren Xiaosu was stunned for a moment.

“Treatment? My ass!” Wang Fugui said, “Chen Haidong said that those devices are not meant for treating people. They were previously used for scientific research inside the stronghold. In just one day, the stronghold has arrested three supernatural beings. Those three people are more or less done for now.”

Ren Xiaosu felt a chill pass through himself. He could not imagine what it would feel like to be stuck in a psychiatric hospital and be studied by someone.

“Old Wang, are you still keen on getting a superpower?” Ren Xiaosu asked.

Wang Fugui thought for a while. “I don’t mind having one, but I won’t be so dumb as to let anyone know. The same goes for you, Xiaosu. If you and Liuyuan have any superpowers, don’t ever let anyone know.”

Ren Xiaosu put a strange expression on his face. “Um, okay.”

That same night, a major incident happened in town. Zhang Baogen’s father found his way into that scoundrel’s shack in the middle of the night, a place that was only a few square meters in size, and killed all four members of their family. In the end, he also died due to severe blood loss.

Meanwhile, Zhang Baogen’s mother hanged herself on the dead, wilted tree at the intersection in the town.

Zhang Baogen was the only child in their family and was pampered all his life by his parents. He didn’t even have to work as his parents would take care of him. Now that he was gone, his parents had no reason to live anymore.

In town, some people sympathized with them while others secretly mocked, “What a showoff. So what if you have a superpower? And that Zhang Baogen’s father, if he really had the courage, he would have charged straight into the stronghold instead.”

At this moment, Ren Xiaosu remembered the look on Zhang Baogen’s face when he was blowing the saliva bubble. “What a fucking awful era!”

The high and mighty aristocrats in the stronghold seemed to have the power to control the life and death of people, but Ren Xiaosu felt that this would change someday.

The only thing was, nobody knew when this day would come.

A group of people gathered together in town, gazing at the dead, wilted tree where Zhang Baogen’s mother had hanged herself. Ren Xiaosu saw that Mr. Zhang from school was also around.

Zhang Jinglin looked at some of the people next to him who had gathered around and said, “Did I teach y’all to be rubberneckers at school? Don’t gloat over the misfortunes of others, lest theirs be yours.”

When he said that, several young and strong men beside Zhang Jinglin looked down in shame. Zhang Jinglin sighed and said, “Help bury the couple together in the same place.”

“Teacher, we have to go to work at the factory now,” a few of the strong young men said hesitantly.

Wang Fugui said, “You won’t be working for nothing. I’ll fork out 800 yuan for their burial.”

“Aye,” the strong young men answered, “we’ll get to it immediately.”

