

**Legends Of Bai Li II.
Love Like Pink Blossom**

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To the ones who love.

Lose all glory but with no regret.
When I reminisce,
tears fill my eyes,
as my humble soul ponders upon it.
When the clouds gather from disparate realms,
let us be sparing,
with our deep affections.

Chapter 1
Suyu City

Long ago, in the realm of the Ziyu Kingdom, nestled within its verdant landscapes, stood the magnificent Suyu City. With its picturesque surroundings of lush mountains and serene waters, the city thrived with life. Within its borders, green trees flourished, casting a perpetual emerald hue, while a sprawling peach blossom forest extended for miles. The city itself boasted elegant structures adorned with black tiles and bricks, while pristine white sheets fluttered from the lofty interiors. The denizens of Suyu, predominantly from the esteemed Suyu Clan, donned attire in white and black, their waists adorned with tassel jade pendants, radiating an air of refined grace.

The owner of the Suyu City is Sumo, also known as Sugu Taoist, who is one of the gods from Gods Realm. As time passed, Suyu City prospered, attracting an influx of Suyu Clan members. Sumo chose six disciples among the Clan. Sunan, one of the disciples, found love in the arms of Wu Nisan, the daughter of Wu Min, a servant in the Ministry of War of the Central Court for the Ziyu Kingdom. The marriage of Sunan and Wu Nisan solidified the long-standing bond between the Suyu Clan and the Wu family, who had been close friends for years. Together, they welcomed a daughter into the world, they called her Subini. On the day she was born, Sumo proclaimed her extraordinary spiritual aptitude, designating her as the future heiress of the Suyu City.

During this era, Ziyu Kingdom was nearing its twilight, burdened by a beleaguered emperor and the plight of its people. A multitude of heroes arose, and countless small nations sprouted amidst the tumultuous landscape. Throughout these turbulent times, Suyu City remained a revered sanctuary for martial artists, independent and untouched by the imperial court's influence. Sumo, indifferent to the power struggles between nations, implored his disciples to maintain neutrality in such conflicts.

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Sumo had always been strict with his disciples, but his love for little Subini knew no bounds, and he displayed unwavering patience towards her mischievous nature. Despite her youthful naughtiness, Subini possessed a charming countenance with thick eyebrows, large eyes, and a lovely face, endearing her to everyone. Sumo nurtured Subini from a young age, teaching her the ways of Taoism, immortality, musical instruments, and poetry. Since childhood, Subini delighted in pestering Sumo, forging a deep bond between the old Grandmaster and his young disciple—a companionship that others found incredibly intriguing.

One day, Sumo and Subini sat together, engrossed in their musical instruments. Subini nestled closely to her Grandmaster, a mischievous glint in her eyes.

"Grandmaster, would you play that Xiao¹ again for me? I love your Xiao the most."

"Very well, didn't I play it this morning?"

"Hmm...but I still want to hear the one...what was the name again..." Subini pursed her lips, contemplating earnestly.

Sumo smiled. "Could it be... 'Green Water Lake'?"

"Yes! That's the one!"

"Okay, as you wish."

Subini listened with narrowed eyes, a smile dancing on her lips.

Sumo picked up the Xiao once more, its gentle and ethereal sound filling the air. Amidst the lingering melodies, one could envision misty clouds, emerald hills, crystal-clear waters, and the fleeting shadows of blossoms. Throughout the performance, Subini watched intently, her gaze fixated on Xiao. At just seven years old, she recognized that although her Grandmaster appeared much older than her, his kindness and affection knew no bounds. She cherished their time together and reveled in the company of her beloved Grandmaster.

¹ Xiao: A special flute music instrument in China.

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After Sumo finished playing, he turned to Subini and inquired, "Have you heard enough this time?"

"Yes!" Subini responded, a contented smile gracing her face. She then shifted her gaze to Sumo's long white beard and asked, "But, Grandmaster, everyone says that gods do not age. Why does your beard turn white?"

Sumo smiled. "I have lived for over five thousand years. It is natural that I should soon return to the earth..."

Subini grew visibly concerned. "Huh? Grandmaster, are you going to die?"

"That is the natural order of things—everyone must face death," Sumo responded with a calm tone.

"No, no, Grandmaster cannot die. You must always stay with me.." Subini's words trailed off as tears welled in her eyes. She leaned over and embraced Sumo tightly.

Moved and anxious, Sugu patted Subini's back. "Subini, my dear, do not be saddened. Another will accompany you in place of me."

Subini's sorrow seemed to subside, yet she still bore a mournful expression, tears streaming down her face. Observing her distress, Sumo regretted bringing up the topic. In an effort to console Subini, he suddenly remembered a few bottles of peach blossom wine—the very drink Subini adored.

"Well, stop crying, Subini, my good girl. How about, just for today, I make an exception... and secretly share a drink with you?" Sumo looked at Subini, a smile playing on his lips.

As soon as Subini heard the mention of wine, her interest was piqued. While others often claimed she was too young to drink, Subini felt that a little indulgence would do no harm. Her Grandmaster had offered to drink with her in secret.

"Hmm...That sounds wonderful!" Subini exclaimed, her eyes brimming with tears.

In Sumo's heart, he found Subini's genuine nature endearing. He promptly fetched the wine, along with two bronze cups.

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Subini glanced at her cup and noticed a bird with an owl's head intricately carved upon it. She inquired, "Master, what is the spirit depicted on this cup? A bird with a cat's head?"

"That is one of the ancient spirits, Bai Li, the goddess of war. Bai Li often took the form of an owl in battles. I spent a great deal of time crafting this owl," Sumo replied, a smile on his face.

Subini, however, did not take it seriously. She pouted, peered at her cup, and mumbled, "Well...but this bird with the cat's head looks rather dull... No, no, I want the cup with the phoenix bird from you!"

Sumo chuckled at her words, finding them oddly familiar. He exchanged his cup with Subini's and said, "Very well, as you wish."

Thus, they secretly indulged in the wine within Sumo's chambers, sharing both laughter and tears.

In Gods realm, God Xuwu has a great relationship with God Sumo. One day, God Xuwu descended to the mortal realm and chanced upon Sumo in Suyu City. As the two encountered each other, Sumo found solace in honing his swordsmanship amidst the tranquil Suyu peach blossom forest. With the Qian Kun Sword firmly gripped in his hands, he gracefully swayed it amidst the lush forest, a captivating sight to behold.

"God Sumo, your divine body radiates an abundance of spiritual prowess!" Xuwu stepped forward, addressing Sugu with admiration in his voice.

Sumo's countenance beamed with delight, poised to respond, only to hear Xuwu continue, "Why do you appear so aged? Your hair has turned as white as winter snow, and a beard now adorns your face. Yet... why? Even if you look so old, you exude an irresistible charm and boundless charisma. Others will envy your eternal allure!"

It had been a while since Sumo had last encountered Xuwu, and his praises elicited unrestrained laughter from Sumo.

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"You didn't change at all, right? My friend, you flatter me, though I fear my remaining years are limited. I shall rely on you to take care of Subini in the days to come," he said, his voice filled with a hint of fondness.

A smile danced across Xuwu's lips upon hearing those words. "Certainly, she will be my esteemed disciple. I shall protect your beloved."

"But Xuwu, have you ever contemplated sealing some of your memories? You tend to tell too much..."

"Hmm... indeed, perhaps that is a wise course of action. We shall attend to it once you leave..." Xuwu replied, rolling up his sleeves and letting out a soft sigh.

Sugu's smile persisted. "Very well, I shall make my way to Ling Mountain shortly."

Curiosity flickered in Xuwu's eyes. "So soon? Pray to tell, why the rush?"

"Subini is blossoming into a young woman, and I fear that she might develop affection for me, thus disrupting her destined path." Sumo confessed, his thoughts swirling with concern. He dreaded the thought of Subini's sorrow upon witnessing his eventual demise...

Xuwu playfully retorted, "Ah, such narcissism! How can you be certain that Subini will have affection for you?"

Sumo chuckled wholeheartedly, "Once again, you jest at my expense. But how do you know that I do not know?"

Xuwu, too, embraced a smile. "Indeed, it appears I cannot engage in verbal jousting with you any longer. Let us abstain from further debate."

After a few months had passed, on this evening, Sumo gathered his disciples in the Suyu Hall and informed them of his intention to leave Suyu City. Everyone felt reluctant to see him go. In the evening before his departure, Sumo visited Subini. She had just fallen asleep when he woke her up. Subini was delighted to see her Grandmaster and instantly lost all drowsiness.

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"Subini, come, I have something fun to give you," Sumo said, smiling as he produced a round white jade spiritual stone, hanging from a wooden-coloured string.

"Oh?" Subini looked over and exclaimed with surprise and curiosity, "A stone? It's so beautiful. Where did you get it from?"

Sumo couldn't help but smile inwardly, thinking how much she resembled Yunxi, his wife a long time ago. He then said, "This was left to me by my wife."

"Oh? Is it the token of affection between you and your wife?" Subini asked earnestly.

Sumo smiled and replied, "Well, you could say that."

"In that case, I don't want it," Subini firmly stated.

Sumo laughed again and asked, "Why not?"

Subini's expression turned serious as she said, "Since it was given to you by your wife, you should keep it safe. I can't accept it."

Sumo chuckled, thinking how similar her nature was to Yunxi's. He then explained, "Keep it. I am over five thousand years old, and soon I will die. There won't be anyone to inherit this item. How about you help me keep it?"

Upon hearing this, Subini pondered for a moment and said thoughtfully, "Hmm... all right then." With that, she accepted the stone.

"Okay, I am leaving then." Sumo said, looking at Subini holding the stone, and smiling.

"Eh, don't go, Grandmaster. Since you're here, spend more time with me! I'm afraid to sleep alone. How about you sleep with me tonight?"

Sumo felt a pang of sadness upon hearing that and indeed had a hard time letting go. So, he agreed. Later, he held Subini, watched her fall asleep, and quietly left.

Sumo walked out of Subini's room, tears welling in his eyes. That night, he embarked on his journey to Ling Mountain alone.

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Chapter 2
The First Time We Met

The Ziyu Kingdom was in ruins, with corrupt officials dominating the imperial court, rampant decay, and people living in misery. Chaos and turmoil prevailed everywhere. The court had long relied on the military support of the Xiao² Family Army, led by Xiao Bing, to maintain stability on the borders. Xiao Bing, stationed at the border for years, remained unaware of the affairs within the court.

However, one day he received an urgent decree that threatened his family in the capital, commanding him to secretly return and eliminate the current Prime Minister Wu Yu along with more than fifty individuals in his residence. That night, Xiao Bing hurriedly made his way to the capital with several thousand soldiers from the Xiao Family Army. They surrounded the Prime Minister's residence and killed Wu Yu and everyone inside. Wu's grandmother and Sunan's wife, Wu Nisan, were relatives. Before his death, Wu Yu quietly ordered a trusted confidant to send his five-year-old son, Wu Qi, to Suyu City, together with a letter written in blood to entrust Wu Qi to Sunan.

Upon receiving the letter, Sunan's wife burst into tears, and Sunan himself was filled with deep resentment. Sunan and Wu Yu had been close friends for many years, and Sunan admired Wu Yu as a prime minister who worked for the country and the people. He was overwhelmed with grief and anger, grabbed his sword, and left the house to seek revenge on Xiao Bing.

Sunan arrived at the territory of the Xiao Family Army in the north of the Ziyu Kingdom and waited for an opportunity. He intercepted Xiao Bing and his son, Xiao Hua, who were about to embark on a journey, at the Ferry outside the city.

"Xiao Bing, you killed my good friend Wu Yu, and I come for revenge!" Sunan confronted Xiao Bing with his sword.

² Xiao: The 'Xiao' used here represents a family name.

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At a glance, Xiao Bing recognized Sunan as a member of the Suyu Clan. He also knew about the relationship between the Suyu Clan and the Wu family, so he quickly understood the situation. As Sunan approached, Xiao Bing didn't bother explaining and the two engaged in a fight. Unable to match Sunan's immortal arts and swordsmanship, Xiao Bing was severely injured within a few moves. Xiao Hua, still young, rushed over and began crying as he hugged his father.

Sunan said to Xiao Bing, "As a general, how could you listen to the orders of a tyrant ruler and wrongfully kill a loyal prime minister?"

In his final moments, Xiao Bing recounted the events and realized that he had been mistaken about the Wu family. Trembling, he used his last breath to plead with Sunan, "Sunan, I was blind before and believed in that tyrant ruler. Now I deeply regret it. I only ask you to spare my nine-year-old child..."

Moved by the sight of little Xiao Hua, Sunan couldn't bear to harm him either. He agreed to spare Xiao Bing's son and said to Xiao Hua, "You're still young, and this matter has nothing to do with you. I won't kill you. But if you seek revenge in the future, come to Suyu City to find me." With that, Sunan turned and left.

After returning to Suyu City, Sunan raised Wu Yu's son, Wu Qi, together with his own daughter Subini. To avoid being pursued by the court, he changed Wu Qi's name to Suqi and took him as his top disciple, nurturing him as he grew up. Wu Nisan took good care of this newly acquired foster son, showering him with love and care.

One day, Suqi, curiously wandering around Suyu City alone, had reached the forest when Subini spotted him. Subini knew about the new brother in their family, but her mother had been taking care of him diligently and hadn't allowed them to meet. When Subini saw Suqi, she quickly guessed who he was and approached him with excitement.

She patted Suqi's shoulder and asked, "Hey, little kid, what are you doing here all by yourself?"

"You're only a little taller than me, why do you call me a kid?" Suqi replied, slightly indignant.

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"Well... that's true." Subini nodded seriously and continued, "So, what's your name?"

"Qi. And you?" Suqi answered.

"Subini. Now that I've told you my name, will you play with me?" Subini asked, tilting her head with earnestness.

Though young, Suqi felt a sense of familiarity and closeness to Subini as he looked at her serious, tilted-head expression. He responded, "Sure, well then. What do you want to do?"

Delighted by his agreement, Subini said, "You'll see when you come with me." With that, she took Suqi's hand and led him towards Suli's place.

They sneaked into Suli's place and walked to a cabinet beside the bed. When they opened it, they found two bottles of wine. Subini was ecstatic at the sight and reached out to take them. Suqi realized what Subini was up to—they were here to steal something—but he was also curious.

"Is this wine? Are you trying to steal it?" Suqi whispered.

"Shh, keep your voice down," Subini replied, and they left with the wine.

Subini was delighted and started drinking with great enthusiasm. Then she thought of Suqi and asked, "Do you want to try?"

Suqi was curious about the taste, as adults had always forbidden him from drinking. He replied, "Okay."

Subini became intrigued and said, "Let's have a competition, but... I doubt you can't outdrink me."

"I'm a man, how can I not outdrink you?" Suqi said, slightly defiant.

Subini laughed, finding it amusing, and said, "Then let's have a competition."

Suqi immediately agreed, "Let's compete!"

However, Suqi had only taken a few sips before he fell to the side. Seeing this, Subini chuckled and said to Suqi, "Look at you trying to be tough." As