

Sorrowful Beginnings Lead to Happy Endings

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Sorrowful Beginnings Lead to Happy Endings

by [Leo_Matthew](#)

Summary

Zhou Zishu is an omega. That changes everything, and nothing.

Or, my insufferable need to see Zhou Zishu be taken care of causes me to write one of the saddest things I've ever written, and both regret it, and not, at the same time.

Notes

Warning: This fic will contain graphic depictions of domestic violence. If that isn't for you, but you would also like to read the story (as it will not just be filled with violence), you can skip the parts you need to. It will be marked with a "~Trigger Warning: Extreme Violence Ahead~" at the beginning, and a "~Trigger Warning: Extreme Violence Over~" at the end. This is only for the extremely violent parts, as I have tagged violence in the story. If you skip over these parts, you will not miss much, except for a few references.

Prompt: As an omega, ZZS is forcefully mated by Prince Jin and has his kid. Then, his kid is killed as punishment for a mistake ZZS made during a mission. Years later, he meets WKX in Jiangnan on a sunny day.

Sorrowful Beginnings

Zhou Zishu didn't know how so many other omega's could do this. Barely an hour into the start of his contractions and already, he felt like he was going to burst.

His child was making an early appearance - about five weeks early.

His skin felt like it was on fire, like his sorrow at being unwillingly bonded has clawed its way up his skin and dug itself into his bones. His itchy consort robes clung to his sweaty skin, he wished more than anything to be able to take them off. However, one of the rules dictated that the royal consort must only show his or her skin for their husband.

These robes were specially made to be thrown away later, robes just for giving birth. The robes were a simple and plain set, consisting of only an inner and outer robe, the inner robe was light linen, the only part of the robe he was going to wear during the actual birthing, while the outside was itchy wool, meant for after he had given birth - to keep the baby and himself warm. Certainly, giving birth in the middle of winter did not suit him.

His hair had to be kept in a tight bun on the top of his head. The bun pulled on his temples and raised a headache on the crown of his head.

Slowly, Zhou Zishu's hand came to rest upon his stomach, willing his child to calm down and let him rest, if only for a minute.

"Quiet, Qing-Yuan. Your Mama is trying to rest." He whispered to his baby. He got a kick to his kidney in response.

"Consort Zhou, I need to check your dilation, now." The healer that was assisting with the birth said. He was an old man, nearly reaching 85, now. He always treated Zhou Zishu with detached coldness, as if he didn't care about Zhou Zishu. Secretly, Zishu was relieved to be treated with this kind of honesty for once.

"Of course." Zhou Zishu moved into position, laying on his back with his legs bent at the knee and hip-width apart. The healer lifted Zishu's robe and his eyebrows furrowed. This immediately alarmed Zhou Zishu, as he began to fretfully try to sit up.

The healer harshly pushed him back down onto the bed, coldly stating that "something is wrong with the baby. Lay still, or I will be forced to sedate you."

Zhou Zishu could only lie back, breathing harsh, muscles freezing, bone turning brittle, and his womb suddenly bursting with pain. It was sudden and unexpected, harsh and everlasting. Zhou Zishu suddenly found that he could not breathe, for the blinding, white-hot pain in his womb.

He could not hear himself scream, could not feel himself flail, could not see the healer's assistant come towards him with a sedation needle.

He could only hear echoes of his desperate wails, could only feel the ache in his bones from his flailing, could only remember the red of the healer's assistant's robes, after it had all been done.

He fully regained consciousness two hours later, when his baby was being placed in his arms, and his husband was walking into the room.

His arms felt like jelly, his head muddled, and his lower body numb. He wondered what had been wrong.

"Prince Jin," the healer bowed to the prince. "Consort Zhou experienced an issue with his birthing. You see, due to the premature nature of your daughter's birth, Consort Zhou's body had not yet fully finished its preparations for the birth."

Zhou Zishu had been worried about that, about how the stress of being around Prince Jin, the stress of having to kill people, of having to watch people be killed - the constant anxiety of being forcefully taken for doing something wrong. It came as no surprise to him when he went into labor early.

"Healer Nie, thank you. What did you have to do?" Zhou Zishu wondered that, too. His entire lower half was numb, and his mind felt drugged.

"Ahem. About that. You see, normally, when a male omega gives birth, he developed a third opening, where the baby can be birthed. This process happens about a week before the actual birth. Since your daughter was born five weeks earlier than she was supposed to, Consort Zhou was unable to develop this special opening. We had to cut one into him."

Ah, no wonder he was numb.

Zhou Zishu tuned out the rest of the conversation between his forced husband and the healer, instead choosing to focus on his baobei.

Even though he knew, legally, her name was Wanshan, his baobei would always be Qing-Yuan to him.

His Qing-Yuan was smaller than he had expected, easy to hold despite his jelly-arms. She had been cleaned, swaddled into a light blue blanket, and tucked into a tiny hat. Her skin was a soft shade of pink, and she let out little babbles or coos every once in a while. Zhou Zishu never knew that he could love someone so fiercely after just meeting them.

Soon, the healer and Prince Jin were done talking, evidenced by the fact that the bed next to Zhou Zishu dipped and the door leading out of the room closed softly.

Slowly, Zhou Zishu turned his head away from his Qing-Yuan and faced his husband.

The last thing he expected was the slap that came next.

"Why would you cause so much trouble, a-Shu?" The words, unlike all the other times Prince Jin, said them, seemed to run over his head, washing away in the cool winter breeze.

Zhou Zishu didn't feel much like replying, he didn't even know if he could get his tongue to work, after all. Beside him, Prince Jin sighed. The Prince stood from the bed, walking over to the window.

"A-Shu, a-Shu. Don't you know what is going to happen now? First, you almost get our child killed, then you try to leave me. tut-tut. If you want to leave me so badly, why don't I just kill you?!"

Zhou Zishu didn't know if Prince Jin was joking this time. He had finished the duty bestowed upon him, he had born an heir for him, now he could die having fulfilled his marital duties. But-

"Please... I want to stay with her..." He somehow managed to choke the words around his loose tongue and tingly teeth. Already, whatever sedative they had used had begun to wear off, his head becoming clearer by the moment. That was how he managed to turn his head away in time to avoid the kiss Prince Jin was going to give him.

The Prince reared back in offence, scoffing at Zishu. Suddenly, he jerked his hand towards Zishu, who jerked back, expecting another slap, only for his baobei to be ripped from his arms.

"No!" Zishu shrieked, reaching for his child, following Prince Jin on his trek out of the room. "No! Give her back!"

"A-Shu, a-Shu. I have to do this, don't you realize? You have paid more attention to this child than me. She needs to be removed, now." The Prince whispered, cruelly.

Prince Jin slammed the door on the way out, taking care to do it as loudly as possible, which scared both Zishu and Qing-Yuan. From behind the door, trapped in this room, Zhou Zishu heard his daughter crying, and his husband locking the door, completely ignoring Zishu's baobei's distress. After a while, the sounds faded down the hallway, and Zishu could no longer hear his baby.

Crying, Zishu knelt at the door, sinking into himself as if the life has drained away.

He stayed there until his husband found him, three days later.

Happy Meetings

Chapter Summary

Zishu meets an attractive and mysterious alpha and two unruly children. His life will never be the same.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

This was the first time that Zhou Zishu had enjoyed the sun in a while. Sure, he always made sure to sunbathe every couple of days, but it had been a while since he had allowed himself the luxury of doing it for so long. Since he had planned to spend the night in Jiangnan, he was in no rush to leave the nicety of the sun.

As he was sunbathing, a nicely dressed young lord walked by him, only to turn back around, and tell the servant next to him to offer him some money. Zhou Zishu almost laughed to himself. A young lord, offering a peasant beggar, money? Ridiculous.

The thud of metal against his chest was surprisingly light. At first, Zishu attributed it to the money being small change, nothing special, but when he looked down, he found that it was three coins, altogether enough to buy three meals and a hotel room.

It looks like he's losing his sense of touch, now. Oh well, it was bound to happen sooner or later.

Unwanting of the money, and not wanting for the young lord to waste his money, Zhou Zishu brushed the coins off of him.

The servant next to the young lord said, disdainfully, "Young Master, look at him. He didn't even thank us. No wonder he's a beggar."

"Who told you to throw it on him?" The young lord said. Zhou Zishu was silently impressed with him, not many young lords would have scolded their servant for throwing money onto someone and not handing it to them.

Suddenly, just as Zishu was getting ready to move, a young girl's voice rang clear, "Hey, Beggar!" It said, "I'll treat you to a meal, alright?"

Opening his eyes, Zishu locked eyes with a young girl standing on a nearby pavilion. "Kind lady, how about you treat me to a drink, instead?"

He saw the young lady turn towards the man near her, and say something. With his withering hearing, he could not understand what she was saying (seeing as his lip reading only worked

when someone was facing him, he didn't try to employ that skill).

"Okay! I'll treat you to a drink." She said with an 'above it all' look about her. Something in the way she stood told Zishu that she was an alpha. It also seemed to tell him that he should be wary of her.

She grabbed the pitcher containing the alcohol and jumped off of the pavilion. Unsurprisingly, she turned out to be a martial artist.

"Here." She said, handing over the alcohol. Zishu eagerly took it, quickly gulping some of it down. Sure, he couldn't taste much of it, but the familiar burn of the wine down his throat made it all worth it.

"Are you not afraid it's poisoned and you'll spill your guts after drinking it?" She asks.

"Good wine!" Is Zishu's only response. He continues to gulp it down as fast as he can. "It's worth it even if I die from poison. Toast to you! Thank you, Kind Lady!" He says, raising the pitcher to toast the young girl.

She repeats the words "kind lady" to herself, giggling. Then, she scrapes the coins on the ground with her boot, flinging them into the air, and into her open palm.

"Here." She hands the coins to the young master.

Now that Zishu is looking at him, he looks like an omega. With long, flowy robes made of silks and gold embroidery, and his hair, still rather short, was loose and flowing, with two braids hanging near his ears.*

All of these clothes were indicative of a young, unmated omega. It was quite rare to see an omega unaccompanied by either their mate or a parent/older sibling.

The young girl wore her hair up in a ponytail, with two braids running along the side of her head, and the ponytail resting across her shoulder. Her robes were made of high-quality linen and cotton. They seemed to be made to allow mobility. She was definitely an alpha, and a martial artist as well. Immediately, Zishu was on edge. Even though logically, he knew this alpha didn't stink*, or the young lord would have left already.

"Miss, your martial arts are really good!" Says the young lord. The girl giggles to herself, smirking at the compliment.

"Let me ask you." She addresses Zishu, who was just about to drink again. "Why don't you want their money? You want wine but not money. You are so picky for a beggar!"

Zishu laughed to himself, "Who says I'm a beggar? I'm just here to enjoy the sunshine."

The young girl gasps, looking over at the pavilion holding her friend. He looks back over, still slowly fanning himself.

Zishu made eye contact with the man, and suddenly, he felt something inside himself shift. For the first time in years, he felt attracted to someone.

He was startled out of the hazy attraction he felt when the young girl started to yell at him. “You’re trying to trick me into giving you wine? Give it back!”

He just managed to dodge her hand grasping for the wine. When she missed, she reached again, only for Zishu to move the pitcher into his other hand. When she missed again, she aimed a kick at his head.

Seeing it in time, he managed to dodge out of the way, picking up his hat and maneuvering away from the girl. His swift-moving steps carried him safely away. His back crashed into the cart next behind him, and he grunted from the shock of it.

While he couldn’t feel light touches, and even something like coins being tossed onto his chest, or crashing into a cart felt light - the suddenness of the cart against his back startled him.

After he had gained his bearing, he went to take another drink of the wine.

“I can’t give back the wine, but you can have my life,” Zishu said

“Do you think I don’t dare to take your life?” The young girl replied, defiantly.

She lunged at him, flipping her whole body so that her heel would have hit him, had he not moved out of the way. The foot hit the bags of rice on the cart, and ripped open the bags, spreading rice everywhere.

Silently, Zishu mourned the loss of such fresh rice.

While spinning away, Zishu flung his hat at her, forcing her to kick it away. In doing so, she sent his hat flying back at him. The impact of his hat at such a high speed sent his weak body backward, landing against a stall cart, he grunted, this time with some actual pain.

While Zishu was still getting a grip over his pain, the young lord ran up to the young girl, asking, “Miss, how could you bully a sick person with your good martial arts?”

Zishu thought, the boy at least knew the most common tactics to calm down an alpha. Complimenting them usually worked to distract them for a moment - which was all the time one needed to come up with a getaway plan.

“Martial artists should help the poor and weak. You should be righteous and just!” the young lord claimed. Zishu knew this as getting into dangerous territory for the young lord. When angry, alpha’s would get volatile*. With the way the young lord was speaking to the young alpha, Zishu worried that he might have made himself a target.

She turned around to look at the young lord, “Little idiot, are you lecturing me right now? Be careful, I might cut off your tongue!”

Zishu knew from her tone of voice that she didn’t actually mean it. That didn’t mean that she wouldn’t mean it later.

She turned back to him and suddenly moved.

Grabbing her whip and launching herself in the air, she brought her whip down in a mighty strike. Behind Zishu, the cart he was resting on broke, being cut in half by her whip.

Zishu moved out of the way, grabbing the still intact umbrella from the cart that was just destroyed, and using it as a shield to cover him from her whip.

She used her whip again, this time cutting the umbrella in half, and causing Zishu to use his swift-moving steps to get out of her reach.

He came to a stumbling halt. Logically, he knew he was more skilled than her, logically, he knew he could escape from her. But right now, all he was seeing was Prince Jin standing over him, whip in hand, all he was smelling was the iron scent of blood, all he was tasting was the sour tinge of bile and the iron of blood.

“Kind Lady,” he said, trying to snap himself out of that nightmare, “quite a sweet face but such fiery conduct!”

Zishu scoffed, trying to cover up what he knew was a brief look of panic.

“I don’t believe it!” She called back, then swung her arm back, preparing to launch her whip at him.

He knew he could move, he knew he should move, and yet, he was held still, as a cold shock of fear rushed through him.

The whip rushed at him, and suddenly, he was back with Prince Jin, chained to a cold chair and being whipped mercilessly.

His eyes closed of their own volition. He waited for the hot jolt of searing pain that usually accompanies a whip strike, and yet it never came.

He opened his eyes, slowly, afraid of what he would see.

Instead of any of the nightmarish things he had pictured in the PTSD-induced imagination, he saw a broad back, covered in fine white silks, with soft black hair trailing down it.

It was the girl’s friend. Up close like this, Zishu could only catch a hint of his tantalizing smell, like citrus and crushed herbs, like water and fresh grass.

It was gone a moment later, either due to the man reining in his pheromones, or Zishu’s lack of ability to smell things.

“Master?” The girl asked.

Slowly, the new alpha started to pull the girl’s whip, dragging her in with it. There was a prolonged awkward silence while he did so.

The girl pouted.

“A-Xiang, stop being an embarrassment.” The man said. “Your martial arts are poor, now you have poor taste, too?”

His voice was deep. It commanded respect and dignity. It sent shivers down Zishu’s back. He had never felt this way about someone, had never felt such raw physical attraction to anyone before this. Zishu didn’t like it.

The young girl, A-Xiang, looked over at Zishu, pleadingly, a cute pout on her face. Zishu shrugged helplessly.

The man turned to Zishu and bowed. “I apologize for my maid’s rudeness.”

“I don’t deserve this. I should apologize, instead.” Zishu replied, hoping that he didn’t anger the new alpha.

The man smirked knowingly at Zishu, and the omega was ashamed to admit that it sent a warm flutter to his belly. To abate the awkwardness, Zishu gave a small laugh and looked away.

The man smirked at Zishu once again, before unfolding his fan and turning away. Behind his back, A-Xiang pointed at him and tch’ed. Zishu, again, shrugged helplessly.

Walking back to his resting place, Zishu passed by the young lord from before, who bent down to grab his discarded hat, and gave it back to him.

“So, you know martial arts, too?” The young lord asked. “You’re my friend in the martial arts world, then. I’m sorry. I was neglectful just now.” The kid bowed.

“I’m Zhang Chengling. I belong to the Mirror Lake Sect of the Five Lakes Alliance. May I ask, which sect are you from? What’s your name?”

Zishu scoffed, “I don’t deserve that.” The last thing he wanted was to drag a kid into his troubled life. Qing-Yuan is evidence of that.

Zishu fake coughed to cover the tears that arose when thinking of Qing-Yuan. unfortunately, the fake cough turned real, which sent him into a coughing fit.

“Friend, are you injured or ill?” the young lord, Zhang Chengling, asked.

In lieu of answering the question of his physical state, Zishu chose to respond to the previous question. “I’m not talented. I don’t belong to any sect.” His coughing was only aggravated by the talking.

“Young Master, Let’s go. Let’s not bother about him.” The servant with Chengling whispered. Instead of listening, Chengling pulled out his name card and placed it on his chest.

“Since you came to the area of Yue’s Mirror Lake Sect, if you don’t mind, you’re our guest now. No matter if you’re injured, ill, or facing a problem. You may always bring my name card to the Mirror Lake Sect for a stay.”

“Young Master, even if you have a name card, we can’t randomly give it out to people on the street. Master has said that this name card-” The servant was cut off by Chengling.

“This is what father told me to do. We rely on our parents at home but depend on our friends outside. Righteous men shall help each other.”

Secretly, Zishu hoped that this boy’s sect wouldn’t snuff out his kindness. That would be a tragedy.

“Look, he’s so ill. Since I met him...” Chengling reminded him of his own coughing fit. By now, he had gotten so used to the coughing that he usually just retreated into his mind to avoid dealing with it.

“Young Master,” the servant sneered. “How do you know he’s a righteous man? Look at his attire. What if he’s a bad guy?”

Zishu looked over sadly, hating the fact that Chengling’s kindness was being repaid in such a way, but knowing that he couldn’t do anything.

“Young Master, we shall leave. We will be late if we don’t hurry up.”

Chengling sighed, as if he was used to this, and turned back to Zishu.

“Thank you for your kindness, Master Zhang.” Zishu wanted the boy to continue being kind. There were definitely not enough kind people out in the world. “Are you busy? I shall not hold you up.”

“Yes, I almost forgot it. I’m rushing to buy my mother some pastries.” Chengling replied, “Friend, you’re very welcome. Everything will stay as it is. We will meet again.”

The young lord bowed and then left with the servant. Selfishly, Zishu hoped they would meet again, even if he knew it would not bring anything good for Chengling.

After the young boy had left, Zishu pulled out the name card he was given, contemplating whether or not he should visit.

‘Forget it. When Jiuxiao was young, he was just as silly. Maybe that’s why I’m so drawn to him.’ Zishu thought.

He couldn’t get involved with other people. Not when Prince Jin was still hunting him down.

1* = in ancient China, unmarried/unbetrothed girls would wear their hair down, usually with a few braids (imagine Gu Xiang's hairstyle for most of the series). I am applying this to omega's as well. This hairstyle, on Chengling, is meant to signify that he is a young, unmarried/unbetrothed omega.

2* = omega's have developed a 'sixth sense of sorts, where they can sometimes smell an alpha's personality. I.e. if an alpha smells nice, your personalities match well, but if an alpha stinks, then your personalities don't match up. Usually, omegas use this as a tell of whether or not an alpha is dangerous to them.

3* = not all alphas are volatile when angry, but Zishu's only experience with alpha's being angry at him has ended in violence.

Author's Note

Hello!

I'm trying to set a regular schedule for posting new chapters of this story about every two weeks. Unfortunately, these past few weeks have been pretty hectic and stressful, and as such, I didn't get the chapter for this week done. I'll hopefully be able to post by Wednesday, but plans may change.

Sorry for the disappointment. From what I've read of all of your comments, you all seem to enjoy my story, and I wish I could make an actual story post today, but alas, life has gotten in the way.

Stay tuned for the next chapter, where we get to see Wen Kexing's reaction to meeting Zhou Zishu, the murder of the Zhang family, and poor traumatized Chengling.

I promise I'll get back to a normal posting schedule soon.

Thank you for understanding!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!