

#1 Pretty Boy of the Immortal Path by Yi Shi Si Zhou (Shisi)

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Translation by [watercresscent](#).

Extra 2

The city traffic was busy like flowing water. A person was standing on top of a building, looking down: it was Xiao Wuque.

Xiao Wuque squinted at the pedestrians who formed figures of many shapes and colours. “The clothes changed,” he murmured to himself. “Looks like I’ve slept for a hundred years this time.”

He had a good sense of fashion, so after observing for half an hour, he came to a conclusion: between transforming into the most beautiful woman or the most handsome man on the streets, he chose the latter after brief consideration. After changing, he examined his own figure, feeling satisfied.

Facing the cityscape, he closed his eyes. In the abstract space that formed around him, a lotus petal fell, dispersing ripples around it.

He opened his eyes once more and looked ahead, his gaze falling upon a large building.

Fortunately, the language used by mortals hadn’t changed much in the past hundred years, so he could recognise it as a museum.

On this day, at this hour, someone would appear in that place.

Many ancient tools were displayed along the corridors. He had lived through all the years they came from, he thought.

People stared at him as he walked by. The women of this era were pleasing to his eye, but he had no interest in them.

The displays within the depths of the fourth floor were not categorised by era. They were things with origins that could not be determined.

He walked in their direction, knowing that most of these tools that could not be comprehended by mortals contained traces of Immortal Dao.

In the innermost area of the exhibition hall, there stood a person. He wore a plain white shirt like a mortal scholar, his wrists were encircled with two apricot-coloured

Buddhist bead bracelets; and on the beads, one hundred and eight sins were engraved, looking as if they did not belong to this mortal world at all.^[2]

[2] 108 is a number important in Buddhism as it is believed that there are 108 kleshas, that is, things that cloud the mind. Buddhist bracelets have 108 beads to rid oneself of these kleshas.

Interestingly, Wukui 無愧 (guiltlessness/shamelessness), is also a klesha.

Xiao Wuque stopped in his tracks.

He lowered his head and bit his lips. He wanted to intrude on the scene in front of him, but did not dare to. And so he slowly turned away, as if the act was very difficult for him.

Then he saw a three-foot long sword that was completely black in colour.

The plaque in front of the display detailed the story behind the sword. After a thunderstorm on a certain day, some university students discovered it on the rooftop of a building, and modern scientific technology was unable to determine its origin.

He had a slightly dazed look in his eyes, placing his hand against the display glass as if he realised something. Then in the next instant, he broke through the glass.

He retrieved the sword.

At that same moment, the person slowly turned around.

A pair of black eyes—looking like they held millions of things, and like they held nothing at all.

His expression was quiet, reflecting the muddled, transient dusts of the mortal world.

But he said, “What are you doing?”

Xiao Wuque laughed like he did not care.

He used his bare hands to break the glass. Fresh blood flowed from them, but he didn’t stop it, as if it was something he deliberately wanted others to see.

He lifted the sword in his hands. “My brother, I’m taking him up there.”

The person did not speak, simply gazing silently at him.

Xiao Wuque shifted his eyes to the beads on his wrists, “Buddhist tribulations—one hundred and eight sins, one hundred and eight reincarnations. This should be the final lifetime. It’s about time you remembered everything.”

The corners of his lips held a cold smile. “Monk, I’ve followed you around for one thousand and five hundred years. I won’t now, I’m going to ascend. So do whatever you like.”

“Everything with appearance is unreal,” The person lowered his eyes slightly. “This wrong path you’ve foolishly persisted on has not only lasted for one thousand and five hundred years.”

“Suit yourself,” Xiao Wuque’s smile only grew colder. “If all appearances are seen as unreal, then one will see Tathāgata’—I’m tired of persisting down the wrong path, so I’m heading to the immortal realm to find my fathers and sister. You can stay here and live it out with your Tathāgata.” ^[3]

[3] Tathāgata (如来) is one of the ten names used for Buddha.

The monk’s “Everything with appearance is unreal” (凡所有相,皆是虛妄) is a direct quote from the Buddhist Diamond Sutra. Wuque replies with the next line in the sutra, “If all appearances are seen as unreal, then one will see Tathāgata” (若见诸相非相 即见如来). The quote suggests that everything is inconstant and impermanent, therefore, there is no meaning in stubbornly fixating on something. Applying the novel’s context, the monk is giving Wuque a Buddhist lecture that he should not (romantically) fixate on him, since after all, such desires are worldly for a monk (in the novel’s universe, at least). There are several alternate translations out there as this is a famous Buddhist text, but I chose the word “see” in particular because this line will be referenced again later.

He tore apart his gaze, as if he wanted to turn away, but only the rims of his eyes reddened.

Water had fogged up his vision. Within the blur, he could see that person walk towards him.

His wrist, dripping with blood, was taken hold of. Someone entangled the Buddhist beads on him.

That person spoke in a voice tranquil and ethereal. It seemed cold, yet very gentle, like it came from the Buddhist lands from far away:

“When I see you, it is as if I see Tathāgata.”