

# Lady White Snake

Illustrated by Zi Qi



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*A beautiful and sad love story  
that happens on the lakeside of the West Lake*

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Once upon a time, an intellectual scholar by the name of Xu Xian was living in Lin'an City, bordering on the West Lake.

On a particular Tomb-sweeping Day, he made his way to the temple to worship his ancestors and on his way back home while he was enjoying the breathtaking views of West Lake, a spring shower started, dampening his enthusiasm of sight-seeing. He boarded on a boat berthing at the dock and was getting ready to head home.






The rain was getting heavier. Just as the boat was paddling in the river for merely dozens of meters, there was a shouting from the river bank. Two exceptionally pretty girls, dressed in white blouse and green blouse respectively, were intending to board on this boat as well.

Enticed by the extraordinary beauty of the girl in white shirt in particular, Xu Xian could feel his heart was pounding hard.





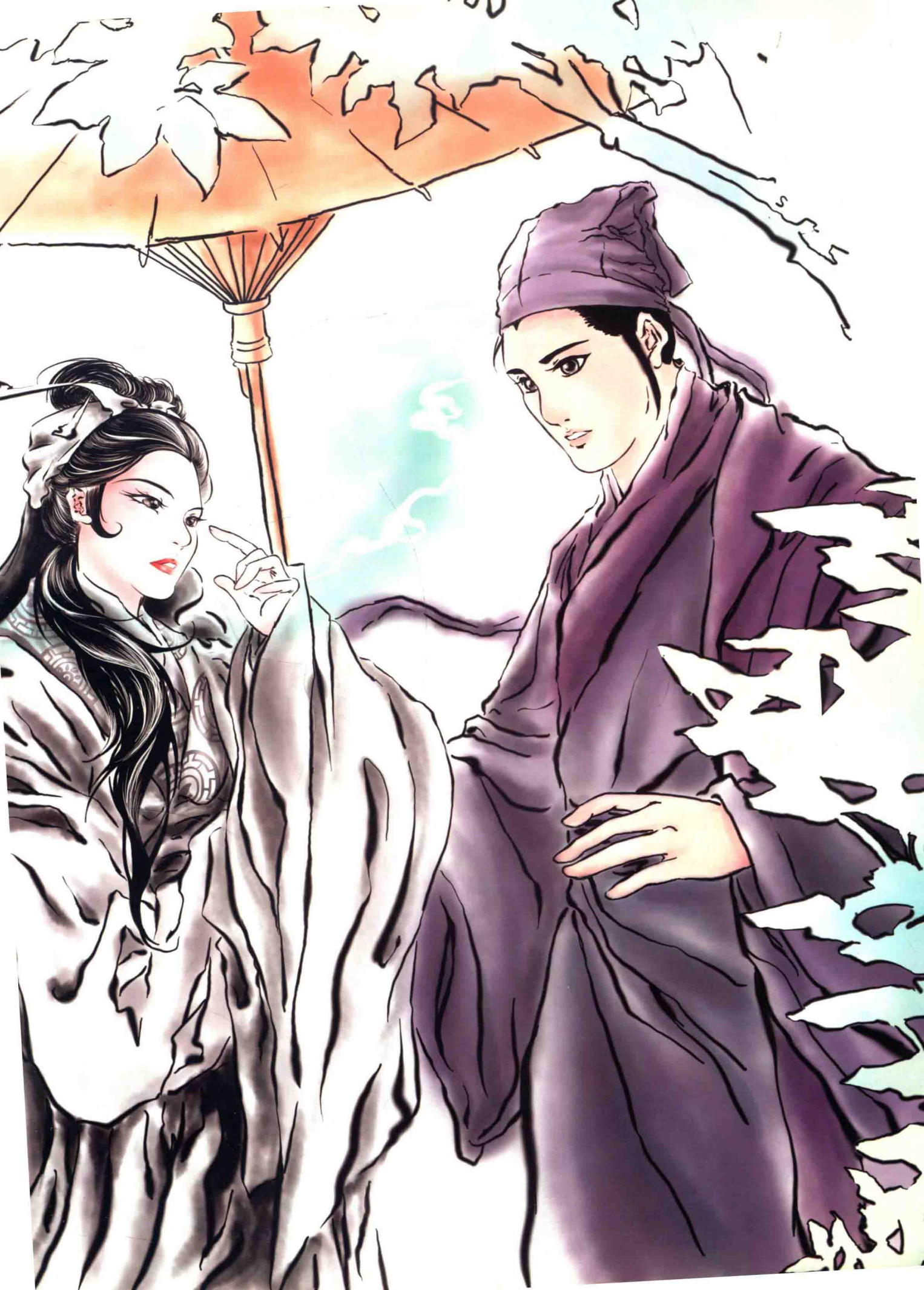


A stylized illustration of a traditional Chinese building with a tiled roof and a path leading to it. The building is rendered in a sketchy, artistic style with some color washes. The path is a simple line drawing. The overall scene is set in a traditional Chinese environment.

As the boat gradually halted at the destination, the rain still continued. Xu Xian generally offered his own umbrella to the girl in white shirt and politely asked her name.

The girl said her name was Bai Suzhen (Lady White Snake) and the girl in green dress beside her was her servant - Xiao Qing.

She confided in him that they were new in the city and reminded Xu Xian to drop by her home sometime to retrieve his umbrella after showing thanks to him.



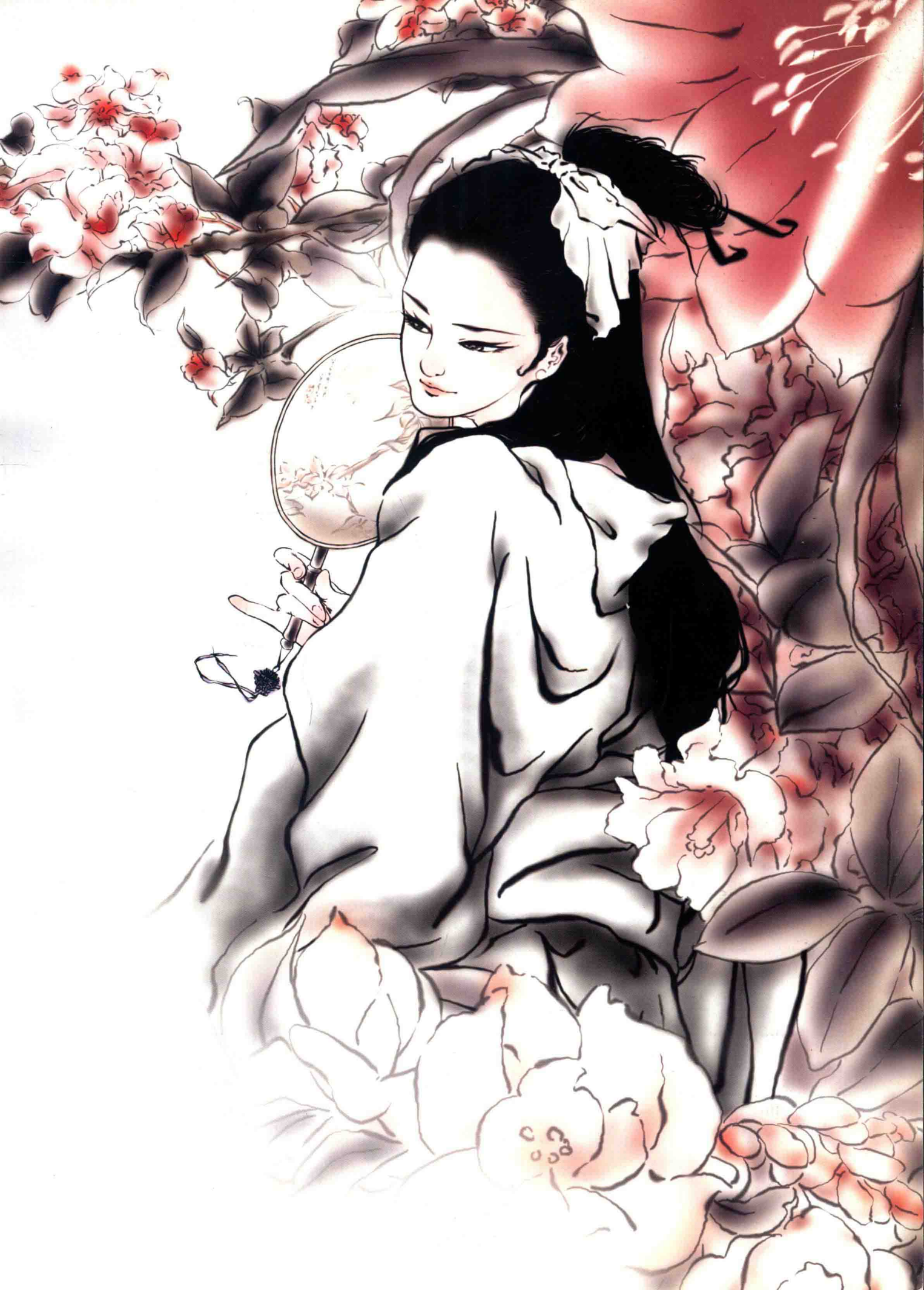


Xu Xian scurried home and he was already soaked up by the time he got back home. After changing his clothes and finishing the meal, Xu Xian tossed and turned in bed, and still couldn't get the girl he bumped into in the day out of his mind.

He even dreamed of her while sleeping and was slightly disappointed the next morning when he woke up and realized it wasn't real.









On the second day, Xu Xian found his way to the home of Bai Suzhen according to the address she left the previous day. Bai Suzhen requested Xiao Qing to prepare a sumptuous meal for Xu Xian.



Two of them soon got into a heart-to-heart conversation while drinking. It turned out a rampant plague that broke out a few years ago took away the lives of Bai Suzhen's relatives. Xiao Qing was the only person left to keep Lady Bai a company. No longer able to bridle his emotions, Bai Suzhen started to cry, inciting the pity and tenderly love from Xu Xian even more.







From then onwards, Xu Xian began to pay regular visits to Bai's residence and their bond was strengthened and consolidated through drinking, playing musical instruments and composing poems.

After learning that Xu Xian became an orphan from an early age following the deaths of his parents and thus was leading a pathetic and abject life, Bai Suzhen offered him a considerable sum of money so that he could earmark the money as betrothal presents to propose the marriage.



Xu Xian ran what happened by his elder sister and brother-in-law who, however, was in great shock. It turned out this particular sum of money was labeled with "Owned Exclusively by Lin'an Government", coinciding with the money stolen from the government a while ago.



