

## All Hail 371

### Chapter 371 Ten Deadly Sins

“Thirdly, for the sake of the war in Youzhou and the territory of our Great Zhou, the heir, Yin Huaixi, had no choice but to close the city gate and prohibit private escape. In order to help the battle, he gathered resources wantonly and personally went to the battlefield at the tender age of 10. He fought side by side with his father, King You, and finally eased the situation in Youzhou. When the army came to help, this thief actually instructed the local officials and nobles to join forces with the Imperial Court to report that King You had gathered his troops and persecuted the people.”

“Fourth, he harmed the bloodline of the royal family. This thief stole the military power of Youzhou and ambushed and killed the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi, under his horse on the battlefield. The heir is a relative of the royal family and the nephew of the current emperor. He’s a noble. This thief has risked the world’s condemnation and killed the bloodline of the royal family. The crime is monstrous. It’s not an exaggeration to kill his entire family.”

“The fifth crime is to persecute Consort You and Princess Chengping. This thief took advantage of the fact that the emperor had summoned King You into the capital and the heir had died from an uncontrolled horse. When there were only women and children left in the You Residence, he used the excuse that King You had colluded with the enemy to besiege the You Residence and kill 300 soldiers of the You Residence. He wanted to forcefully barge into the You Residence and humiliate Consort You and the princess. Consort You and the princess were alone and helpless. They took poison and committed suicide. In order to prevent the corpses from being humiliated, he burned the You Residence. When the news spread to the capital, it actually became Consort You and the princess committing suicide...”

“Sixth, he impersonated a general and the Di people invaded wantonly. The heir’s material assistance saved the situation in Youzhou. The Di people were forced to retreat step by step and we recovered two lost cities. However, this thief took all the credit for recovering the lost cities. He’s really despicable.”

“The seventh crime is to take advantage of the commoners. This thief is in charge of 300,000 troops in Youzhou and is in charge of the war in Youzhou. However, he’s arrogant and extravagant. He doesn’t want to govern the north and let his soldiers snatch the commoners’ women and tax them harshly, causing the commoners in the north to complain and suffer...”

“The eighth crime is to fill his own pockets and embezzle money from the army. After this thief took over the army of 300,000 soldiers in Youzhou, the soldiers in

the army earned less than half of the other soldiers everywhere. The soldiers used their bodies to protect their home and country, but they couldn't even support their families..."

"The ninth crime is to use the people as a substitute to seek credit from the Imperial Court. At the end of last autumn, the Di people's 3,000 cavalry charged into Youzhou City. This thief was drunk and dreaming in his new concubine's room. When he led the army to resist the enemy, it was too late. The Di people killed and set fire in Youzhou City, causing countless casualties. Blood flowed like a river in Youzhou City, and everything was in ruins. This thief was afraid that the emperor would punish him, so he actually disguised the dead people in the city as the Di people. The corpses of the 3,000 people were dragged out of the city and burned completely. He even shamelessly asked the Imperial Court for credit..."

"The tenth crime is to kill an official of the Imperial Court indiscriminately. My father, Ye Xiaoci, from the You Prefecture and the prefecture, joined forces with a group of good ministers from You Prefecture. They wanted to secretly report to the Imperial Court that this thief had replaced the people and asked for credit. They were locked in the residence by this thief. The rest of them were secretly executed. Their names were written on the list of casualties on the battlefield in an attempt to hide it. I was lucky to escape, but I was treated as a spy who had entered the city and was hunted down..."

The ten crimes he reported were heart-wrenching, causing an uproar among the commoners.

It wasn't until Ye Hanyuan had walked far away and the surrounding commoners had followed that the carriage finally could move.

When Yu Youyao heard his voice, her chest felt suffocated. When the carriage returned to the residence, she was still sitting in the carriage in a daze for a long time.

There was an indescribable indignation in her chest that she couldn't say.

She had guessed that there was an inside story behind King You's death, but she had never expected that a hero with outstanding military achievements would die under such despicable and inferior methods of the court officials.

Chun Xiao looked at Young Miss worriedly. "Young Miss, we're here!"

Yu Youyao nodded in a daze and asked Chun Xiao to help her out of the carriage.

Perhaps it was because the carriage was too bumpy, but as soon as Yu Youyao got out of the carriage, her legs went limp and she almost fell to the ground. Fortunately, Chun Xiao had the strength to support her.

Seeing that Young Miss's face was pale and her forehead was covered in sweat, Chun Xiao panicked. "Young Miss, what's wrong? Are you feeling unwell?"

Yu Youyao shook her head. "Quick, help me to An Shou Hall."

Chun Xiao quickly agreed.

The weather was hot to begin with and Yu Youyao looked very troubled.

Old Madam Yu held her hand and sat down. She pinched her handkerchief and wiped the sweat off her forehead. "Look at how sweaty you are. You must have bumped into Ye Hanyuan!"

Not to mention a half-grown child, even an old person like her, who had lived for many years, was so shocked that she even dropped a teacup when she heard someone hit the drum.

Once the drum was sounded, blood would flow like a river in the world again!

Nanny Liu brought over some tea. Yu Youyao took it and took a few sips. Then, she told her about Ye Hanyuan's ten charges against the Marquis of Changxing's Residence.

Old Madam Yu sighed slightly. "Previously, there was news from the palace that Mr. Xian Yun had brought someone into the palace to meet the emperor with the blood of the people of Youzhou."

After knowing that Mr. Xian Yun had entered the capital, she felt uneasy.

Indeed, something happened in a few days.

It was a huge matter.

Yu Youyao was stunned for a moment. She couldn't help but ask, "Doesn't Mr. Xian Yun care about nothing in the royal court?"

Old Madam Yu patted her back from time to time to calm her down. "Do you know who he brought into the palace?"

Yu Youyao said nothing.

However, Old Madam Yu said in a trembling voice, "It's the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi."

"What?!" Yu Youyao exclaimed.

Old Madam Yu said in a low voice, "More than three years ago, I mean it should have been almost four years, Mr. Xian Yun traveled to Youzhou and set up a precious chess game in Youzhou. He wanted to make friends through chess. However, as the chess game was too exquisite, there were many people who came and went, but no one cracked it. Later, this chess game was cracked by a mysterious young man in disguise. This mysterious young man was the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi. Mr. Xian Yun admired his talent and wanted to take him in as his disciple, but he was rejected by him..."

Yu Youyao's scalp tingled as she suddenly recalled her conversation with her cousin a few days ago.

"Do you know that Mr. Xian Yun traveled to Youzhou four years ago?"

"Cousin, don't tell me you met Mr. Xian Yun four years ago!"

"I've met him once."

“I heard that Mr. Xian Yun set up a precious chess game in Youzhou City, but no one cracked it. In the last game, it was cracked by a mysterious young man. Could that person be Cousin?”

“That longevity peach blossom stone seal of yours was won by me when I had a debate with him back then...”

Chapter 372 Who Is Yin Huaixi?

Every word and sentence was ringing in her ears. Yu Youyao felt dizzy and suddenly reached out to support herself against the table, panting hard.

Seeing that her face was pale, as if she had suffered a huge blow, Old Madam Yu was a little worried. “What’s wrong? Are you feeling unwell?”

Yu Youyao’s mind was in a mess, and her ears were buzzing. She subconsciously shook her head. “I-I’m fine. It’s probably because the weather is too hot today. The carriage is moving at full speed, and I’m a little dizzy from the bumpy journey.”

As she spoke, she felt a little dry-mouthed. In a panic, she picked up a pot of tea and was about to pour some.

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However, her hand accidentally touched a cup at the side, making a clang.

“Oh my, put it down. Put it down quickly. Eldest Miss isn’t feeling well. Just instruct me to pour the tea.” Nanny Liu was shocked. She quickly took the teapot, took a teacup, poured a cup, and placed it in front of Yu Youyao.

Yu Youyao took the teacup and quickly took a few sips. Then, she asked, “Grandmother, what else?”

Seeing that her expression had improved a little, Old Madam Yu continued, “Although Mr. Xian Yun and the heir, Yin Huaixi, don’t have a teacher-student relationship, they’re still quite close. In addition, King You was framed by a traitor. He’s been a hero for a lifetime and has won many battles, but he’s been accused of treason for no reason. It’s really a pity, so he came forward to explain his feelings.”

Yu Youyao finally understood why the people from the Military Department of the Five Cities had arrived not long after Ye Hanyuan hit the drum. It was because Mr. Xian Yun and Ye Hanyuan were in cahoots.

One entered the palace to settle his scores, and the other beat the drum to voice his grievances.

There was also Yin Huaixi.

He vowed to turn the royal court upside down this time, so that the Marquis of Changxing would have nowhere to escape.

Old Madam Yu sighed slightly. “Although the heir, Yin Huaixi, survived a calamity, his legs were crippled and his body was damaged. All these years, he has been holding on and wanting to enter the capital to clear his father’s name. I heard that he won’t live past 20 years old. When the emperor saw his nephew end up like this, he was furious...”

King You was a criminal who had rebelled. At the very least, this concerned the country and the empire. It was an internal matter of the royal family. Only the current emperor had the right to deal with the life and death of the heir, Yin Huaixi.

However, the heir, Yin Huaixi, had fallen to such a state. He was challenging the authority of the royal family.

Yu Youyao couldn't listen to a single word after that. She suddenly interrupted her grandmother. "Grandmother, is C-cousin in the residence now?"

Seeing that she was unusual, Old Madam Yu frowned. "Your cousin has been staying in the residence. What's wrong?"

Yu Youyao shook her head. She couldn't stay here any longer. Her face was pale. "Grandmother, I'm not feeling well, so I'll return to the Jade Courtyard first."

With that, without waiting for Old Madam Yu to react, she swayed and stood up. After stumbling a few times, she walked out in a daze.

Old Madam Yu was shocked. "What happened to Yao Yao?"

Nanny Liu also looked worried. "She was probably shocked. I heard that Ye Hanyuan was punished with 30 strokes of the cane and was covered in injuries. The blood on his body flowed all the way to Chang An Street. That scene was simply..."

Old Madam Yu also panicked when she heard this. She quickly said, "Tell the small kitchen to quickly brew a bowl of calming medicine soup and send it to Yao Yao. Don't let her fall sick from fright."

Qing Xiu quickly went down to make arrangements.

Seeing that Old Madam was worried, Nanny Liu quickly said, "Don't worry too much. Nanny Xu is in the Jade Courtyard. Young Miss will recover after resting for a while."

On the way back to the Jade Courtyard, Yu Youyao was in a daze. It was Chun Xiao who was helping her walk. Her mind kept replaying her conversation with her cousin and what her grandmother had just said.

"I heard that Mr. Xian Yun set up a precious chess game in Youzhou City, but no one cracked it. In the last game, it was cracked by a mysterious young man. Could that person be Cousin?"

"Later, this game was cracked by a mysterious young man in disguise. This mysterious young man was the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi..."

C-cousin was the legendary heir of King You, Yin Huaixi?

Then who was Zhou Linghuai?

No, that wasn't right.

Zhou Linghuai should be her cousin. For a long time, her cousin had actually used the identity as her biological cousin to live in the Yu Residence?

When they arrived at the lotus lake, Yu Youyao saw her cousin sitting on the white stone bridge in black from afar, looking at the lake of green lotuses. No one knew what he was thinking.

Yu Youyao was sure that her cousin was waiting for her.

If her cousin was Yin Huaixi, then who was “Yin Huaixi” who had entered the palace with Mr. Xian Yun?

She composed herself and walked over, calling out reluctantly, “Cousin.”

After shouting, she felt that it was a little inappropriate and couldn’t help but bite her lip.

Zhou Linghuai turned around and saw that her face was pale and her thin body was on the verge of collapse. He frowned. “Are you feeling unwell?”

Yu Youyao waved Chun Xiao away and walked to her cousin’s side step by step. She stared at him and asked word by word, “Cousin, tell me, who exactly are you? Did you suddenly come to the capital just to seek refuge with your relatives?”

The little girl’s face was pale. Clearly, she had suffered a huge shock.

Just as Zhou Linghuai was about to answer, he saw a section of the little girl’s jade-like arm with a large bruise on it. “How did you hurt your hand?”

Yu Youyao was filled with confusion and questions, but they immediately dissipated when she was interrupted by this concern. She subconsciously lowered her head and raised her arm. As expected, she saw a large bruise on her arm and felt a faint swelling pain. “On the way back, I heard someone knocking on the drum and felt uneasy, so I asked the coachman to speed up. It was probably a bump on the road!”

Zhou Linghuai’s expression darkened. “Come here!”

Yu Youyao’s scalp went numb. How could she care about that? With a thousand thoughts in her mind, she subconsciously walked up to her cousin. “It’s just a bump. It doesn’t hurt much. Cousin, don’t...”

“Stretch out your hand!” Zhou Linghuai took off a pouch at his waist. He carried medicine with him.

Yu Youyao pursed her lips, feeling a little aggrieved, but she listened obediently. She gently rolled up her sleeve and stretched out her injured arm. Her cousin had always coaxed her in the past, but he had never been so stern with her.

Zhou Linghuai opened the jade box and used a small jade spoon to pick out some transparent ointment. He gently applied it on the dark bruise on her arm and gently circled the bottom of the spoon to apply the ointment evenly. He repeated it for a long time until the ointment seeped into her skin and the outer layer was dry.

Zhou Linghuai held her arm and looked at it carefully. He said, “The blood has scattered. It won’t hurt anymore.”

Yu Youyao moved her arm. Indeed, it was not as swollen and painful as before. As usual, she smiled sweetly and thanked her cousin. However, she suddenly thought of what had happened today and pursed her lips.

The two of them stood on the white stone bridge.

Chun Xiao hid far away, and there were no other servants nearby.

Ever since she had accidentally discovered her cousin's tracks at the Precious Peace Temple, Yu Youyao felt that he was too mysterious.

### Chapter 373 Tenderness

Be it the Flower Festival at the Marquis of Changxing's Residence or King Ping's entry into the capital, all of this seemed to have nothing to do with her cousin, but her cousin's undisguised and understanding attitude made her inexplicably tremble in fear.

Ye Yuanhan had fled far from Youzhou to the capital, and he was not afraid of death. He had been punished with 30 strokes of the cane and beaten the drum. The 10 crimes of the Marquis of Changxing could not be faked.

King You had not colluded with the enemy to commit treason. He had been framed.

It was also true that the heir, Yin Huaixi, had been shot dead on the battlefield.

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It was definitely true that Consort You and the princess had been forced to die.

It was even more impossible for him to fake his military contributions and ask the Imperial Court for credit.

Just these four crimes were already a heinous crime. Before this, the Marquis of Changxing had just received a reward from the Imperial Court. It was probably not an exaggeration for the Cao family to exterminate his entire clan.

As a result, it was inevitable that the entire court would be in turmoil.

It was inevitable that the world would be unstable.

It was inevitable that the Marquis of Weining's Residence would be implicated, and the power in the court would be reshuffled. In order to fight for power, the royal court would inevitably be ruthless.

The court was in chaos.

How could a vassal king behave himself?

It was time for chaos in the world.

She had guessed that all of this might be her cousin's doing, but she had not guessed that all of this was actually done by her cousin alone. The reason he had done this was actually because...

He was the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi!

Zhou Linghuai's gaze landed on the lake full of green lotuses. "My father, Yin Lixing, the King of the North in Youzhou, is known as King You. My mother was the previous Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy and the Grand Tutor of the Crown Prince. She was the Grand Secretary of the East Pavilion and the daughter of Elder Wen, the second-in-charge of the cabinet, Wen Ruqin. Back then, my mother was known as the number one beauty and talent in the capital. My father was very happy and did everything he could to marry her. He knew that the Youzhou area was special and had always been a problem for the emperor. He did not hesitate to invite himself to the bitterly cold place in Youzhou to guard it. Later, Elder Wen retired due to his old age, so the emperor agreed to this marriage."

Yu Youyao was completely stunned.

Therefore, her cousin was really the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi!

A gust of wind blew over, wrinkling the lake green. The lake water rippled, and the lotus leaves rolled with thin waves.

Zhou Linghuai's expression was indifferent. He was neither sad nor happy. "On the third day after his marriage, Father brought his delicate wife to Youzhou. At this moment, my father was still just a pampered playboy in the capital. His only dream in life was probably to bring his wife to live a good life. Before this, he hadn't even read many books on the art of war. He didn't know the difficult situation he would face on this trip to Youzhou and the responsibility on his shoulders."

Later on, every time his father mentioned this, he would look regretful—

Damn it, his head must have been clipped by a door back then. Life in the capital wasn't easy, so why did he have to bring his mother to this lousy place to eat dirt?

It didn't matter to a man.

However, his heart ached for his mother!

When he heard this, he mocked, "You're not brainless!"

Every time, his father would take off his shoes and chase after him.

Yu Youyao pursed her lips and said nothing.

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "In the first year, the Di people invaded Youzhou City, and many people died in the city. My father was a man, and even his legs went limp from fear. It wasn't until the Di people broke into King You's Residence and almost harmed my mother's life that he truly realized the principle of being brave as a husband. He recruited scholars in Youzhou and learned the art of war. Every day, he trained in the army not to be loyal to the country, but to the delicate wife behind him."

Whatever he said about being a hero for a lifetime was nonsense. The sentence that his father often said was, "Whether others live or die has nothing to do with me. I only care about my own wife!"

"My father is a person with no ambition. He said that my mother has given up on wealth in the capital and accompanied him to Youzhou to suffer. Then, he should



take on the responsibility of a man and a husband to fight for her and create a peaceful and prosperous world.”

Yu Youyao’s heart ached. She opened her mouth, but she did not know what to say.

“Father would be so frightened by his subordinates that he would kneel on the washboard for the entire night. When my mother called him up, he refused to get up. He even said that if he didn’t kneel until the time was right, what if Mother quarreled with him in the future and used this matter to settle old scores? At that time, it would be really unfair. When he went out, even if he saw flowers by the roadside that bloomed beautifully, he had to pick a few and give them to my mother. Sometimes, when he saw a passing stone, he had to pick it up and give it to my mother...”

Yu Youyao also admired King You. She did not expect the King You in the eyes of the world to be such a person. She opened her mouth, wanting to comfort her cousin.

However, when the words were about to come out of her mouth, she realized how weak those so-called comforting words were.

Her cousin had gone from being the high-spirited heir of King You, Yin Huaixi, to a rebel. He had hidden his identity and moved into the Yu Residence. He was in hell, and his body was in bad shape. How could outsiders know about the despair, hardship, and struggle?

But what right did she have to comfort her cousin?

“Everyone in the world knows that my father has been a hero for a lifetime and has won many battles. In fact, he used his gentleness and became a steel rope. His heart was very small, so small that it can only accommodate his wife. Even my sister and I seem to have become unnecessary. In this case, he can calmly deal with the Di army, even if the enemies were pressing down on him. After resolving the problem of the supplies, he instantly turned the situation around. He said that my mother was still waiting for him at home. He can’t take a step back, let alone lose.”

Yu Youyao immediately burst into tears, but she lowered her head. She pursed her lips tightly, not daring to make a sound, let alone let her cousin know.

Zhou Linghuai did not notice her abnormality either. The smile on his lips was mocking. “When such a strong-looking man with a heart like a child heard about the fire in King You’s Residence in the capital and Consort You and the princess died, he did not even bother to say anything to defend himself. This was because the people who supported him to press forward without fear of death had broken. The person who was waiting for him to go home and tidy his clothes and hair. This person would against his chest. She was gentle and comforting him. Now, she was no longer around, so what was there to fear in death?”

Yu Youyao suddenly cried, her heart filled with sorrow.

The story that her grandmother had told her when she was young still seemed to echo in her ears.

Her voice was hoarse. "Your true identity is Yin Huaixi, the heir of King You. There have been rumors outside that you died on the battlefield without a corpse!"

She suddenly thought of her cousin's leg and her chest tightened.

Her cousin had said that his leg had been broken by a horse after he fell from a horse. It turned out that on the battlefield, the Marquis of Changxing had ambushed him and shot an arrow at him before he was stepped on by a horse.

It was difficult for her to imagine that a twelve-year-old young man stood with his father and killed many enemies. He was guarding the back and resolved the problem of the You army's supplies with lightning speed. Then, he fought side by side with King You.

It was really a case of father and son fighting together.

How admirable was he?

Chapter 374 Using the Zither to Send a Message

But in the end, he broke his leg.

In the past, he had been a well-dressed heir. After experiencing the destruction of his family, he had become an unfathomable crippled youth.

He restrained his sharpness and elegance.

Yu Youyao felt her heart ache so much that she could barely breathe.

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Zhou Linghuai laughed sarcastically. "Back then, I was indeed shot off my horse by the Marquis of Changxing's arrow. I was a soldier beside him, and I did not hesitate to use my body as a shield to block the trampling of the horses for me. After that, I was seriously injured and was in a coma for more than half a month. My legs were crippled, and the You Residence had a broken wall. The news of my death spread to the capital. Father was convicted of colluding with the enemy to betray the country, and I also became the son of the King of Sins."

Yu Youyao felt a lump in her throat and held back her tears. "Then who's the 'Prince Yin Huaixi' who entered the palace with Mr. Xian Yun?"

Zhou Linghuai said calmly, "The substitute sacrificial soldiers are people of the same age, height, and appearance. They have eaten and lived together since they were young. The sacrificial soldiers will imitate their master's words and actions. If necessary, they can act on behalf of their master. I still have to use the identity of Zhou Linghuai, so it's not convenient for me to appear personally."

Yu Youyao stepped forward and held his hand. "Cousin, King You and the Consort will live and die together. They'll also be in love for the rest of their lives. They'll die with their loved ones in this life and be intimate with each other in the next life. That's their choice. Ye Hanyuan has entered the capital, and King You's crime will be washed away. Then, you can also live openly in the future. Uncle Sun said that in two to three years, your leg will recover to its original state. At that time, you can come and go as you please." She said hoarsely, "Cousin, don't be sad."

Zhou Linghuai felt a lump in his throat. The little girl looked at him solemnly, her eyes dark and clear, filled with concern and worry for him.

He smiled. "Aren't you angry?"

When she saw him just now, it was as if she had seen a ghost. She even called him "Cousin" reluctantly.

Even though all of this was under his control and within his calculations, he couldn't help but feel a little uneasy. He was afraid that if he angered her, she would really disown him in the future.

Yu Youyao looked embarrassed. "I-I-I was too shocked and couldn't react in time. I wasn't angry with Cousin."

Previously, on Chang An Street, she had already been shocked by the scene of Ye Hanyuan beating the drum and causing her to be covered in blood. Blood had splattered on Chang An Street and she had shouted that the Marquis of Changxing had sinned ten times. Today, the weather was already hot, and the carriage had been moving at full speed. She was dizzy in the carriage.

As soon as she returned home, she did not even slow down. She had learnt about her cousin's true identity from her grandmother.

Everything happened one after another without any pause. It was inevitable that she would be a little stupid.

However, at this moment, she only felt sorry for her cousin and was not angry.

Zhou Linghuai heaved a sigh of relief, and his grip on the armrest quietly loosened, dropping to his side. Only then did he realize that his palms were sweating. "You're still calling me Cousin?"

Yu Youyao pouted. "If you don't call me Cousin, what should I call you? Young Master Yin or Young Master?"

Zhou Linghuai was also stunned. He was used to hearing her call him cousin, so he felt that other forms of address were unpleasant.

Yu Youyao shook her cousin's arm. "I don't care. As long as your identity isn't made public, as long as it's not made public, you're my cousin. Whether your surname is Zhou or Yin, I recognize you as my cousin, and the person I like the most."

Looking at the little girl's delicate face, Zhou Linghuai also felt a little happy.

Seeing that her cousin was silent, Yu Youyao said, "Cousin, you're not allowed to disown me after changing your identity. You promised me before that you would treat me well for the rest of your life. I'll always remember it."

Zhou Linghuai's mind exploded. She was probably the one who said that she would treat him well for the rest of her life!

Yu Youyao held her cousin's hand and shook it gently. "Cousin, what do you mean by not saying anything? I'm going to be angry!"

Zhou Linghuai suddenly smiled. "Don't be angry. I still have to stay in the residence for a while. I'll always remember my promise to you."

Yu Youyao immediately smiled. "Cousin, that's great!"

She had subconsciously neglected the fact that her cousin might stay in the Yu Residence in the future. In any case, everything would work out when the time came. She would think about the future later!

Zhou Linghuai smiled.

Yu Youyao said softly, "Actually, I'm still a little angry, but the person who has always been good to me is Cousin, not the so-called Cousin Zhou or Prince Yin, but Cousin. Therefore, in my heart, Cousin is Cousin. He's not angry because of his status, let alone his surname."

She wasn't a fool.

On careful thought, her cousin had never deliberately hidden anything from her.

It was just that her cousin's identity was too sensitive, so it was not appropriate to tell her openly.

Moreover, no matter what identity her cousin used to live in the Yu Residence, no matter what his motive was, she had eyes and heart to feel that all of this was true.

In that case, why bother with those indifferent matters?

Zhou Linghuai nodded. Seeing that the little girl's hair was messy and her clothes were wrinkled, he said, "Go back to the Jade Courtyard to wash up first."

The little girl did not look too good. It was probably because she had been suffering in the carriage all the way back.

The two of them returned to the Jade Courtyard.

Zhou Linghuai was reading under the Parasol Tree.

Yu Youyao took a bath again. After washing up, her mind cleared. Without even wiping her hair, she rushed into the study and carried the zither that her cousin had given her previously.

On the back, there was a calligraphy inscription on the top of the dragon pool. Below it, there was a carving of the Thousand Rock Ridge. The sun was shining brightly, and the wind sounded even more valiant.

On the left were engraved with the words "Yuan 18th Year."

After reading it, Yu Youyao asked, "This zither is called Ru Ling? Cousin's friend visited the Thousand Rock Ridge in the 18th year of the Yuan Dynasty and listened to the wind blowing the leaves. With a rustling sound, he cut off the wood on the ridge and made this zither?"

Thousand Rock Ridge, Ling Tongling—

The next day...

Ling Huai...

"Ah ah ah—" Yu Youyao rubbed her forehead and cried out a few times. She clenched her fists and pounded her little head a few times. "Yu Youyao, you're really stupid. Such obvious evidence is right in front of you, but you actually haven't discovered it."

Zhou Linghuai heard the commotion outside and turned his wheelchair into the study. "What's wrong?"

After asking, he saw the little girl hugging the zither that he had given her previously with a broken expression. He couldn't help but laugh. He clenched his fists and pressed them against his lips to hide the smile on his lips, afraid that the little girl would anger him again if she saw it.

Yu Youyao looked at her cousin resentfully and pouted. "So, Cousin, why did you give me this zither early in the morning?"

It was obvious that he was deliberately using the zither to pass on his message.

Chapter 375 Home Confiscated and Sent to prison

Zhou Linghuai held back his laughter. Afraid that the little girl would hear something amiss, he cleared his throat again. "No matter what my status is, I'm not willing to deliberately hide it from you."

The evidence was in her hands. Whether she could realize it depended on herself.

It wasn't that he was deliberately hiding or lying, so he couldn't be blamed.

It was a good plan.

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Yu Youyao pouted, feeling a little happy and unhappy. "So, this zither was actually made by my Cousin Zhou and given to you later?"

After confessing his identity, he was still her cousin in her heart.

Instead, her real cousin, Zhou Linghuai, had become Cousin Zhou.

Zhou Linghuai wanted to laugh. "Yes, it's him."

Yu Youyao opened her mouth.

Zhou Linghuai understood what she meant. "You want to ask if your Cousin Zhou is still alive?"

Yu Youyao's eyes widened. "How did you know?"

Zhou Linghuai smiled faintly. "The real Zhou Linghuai is still alive and well. He also tacitly agreed to me borrowing his identity. Otherwise, do you think that even if I was resourceful, would I have been able to get Old Madam Zhou's personal seal and her personal letter?"

Even until dusk, there was no news from the palace. The officials who had entered the palace in the morning did not return home. All the doors were closed.

The entire capital was in a solemn atmosphere.

The heavy atmosphere lasted until the third day.

A message came from the palace. "All ten families of the Marquis of Changxing's Residence, regardless of whether they're old, young, or young, they'll all be sent to jail for interrogation later."

The officials drew their swords and rushed into the Marquis of Changxing's Residence. Everyone in the house was arrested. The entire Marquis of Changxing's Residence was in chaos, screaming and crying.

The people from the Marquis of Changxing's Residence immediately took off their clothes and put on white prison clothes. Their hands and feet were shackled as they were escorted into the prison carriage.

The prison carriage drove past Chang An Street.

The commoners on both sides of the road were furious. They threw vegetables, rotten eggs, and even rocks at the people in the car. All kinds of curses were heard.

In addition, more than 30 officials in the capital were confiscated and imprisoned.

The first to bear the brunt were the Minister of War who was a second-grade official, the Grand Secretary of the Wenhua Pavilion, the cabinet aide Elder Sun, and his subordinates.

Secondly, the Imperial Inspection Court was also punished for failing to investigate.

Yu Zongzheng reported the matter of King You colluding with the enemy to betray the country back then and asked for a thorough investigation. He had accidentally escaped a calamity.

On the other hand, his superior, Yang Shiguang, who was also Yang Shuwan's father, did not escape. He was stripped of his black veil hat, official robe, and dragged away by the imperial guards in the golden hall.

Throughout the day, the prison carriage on Chang An Street almost never stopped from morning to night.

On the fourth day.

The emperor, who had not left the court for three consecutive days, sat on the dragon throne. His face was gray and he was already exhausted. Even his hands on his lap could not help but tremble.

The Cabinet Grand Secretary, Xia Yansheng, was very old. He was given a seat and was leaning against a chair, dozing off bit by bit.

Opposite him sat Mr. Xian Yun, who had also been given a seat. He was drinking tea with his head lowered and looked to be in good spirits.

Yin Huaixi sat beside him. His red lips matched his sickly face, giving off a soul-stirring aura. No one present dared to look at him directly.

The corners of his lips curled up slightly as Young Master's instructions appeared in his mind. "When Ye Hanyuan is done with the interrogation, hand over what I've prepared. Don't say anything else."

He did not understand and asked, "The old king was wronged. Why can't we tell the emperor?"

The corners of Young Master's lips curled up slightly with a hint of mockery. "In this world, the grievances that can be said aren't called grievances. They're called excuses. The grievances that can be shouted out aren't called grievances. They're called quibbles." At this point, he paused for a moment. "It only matters when others feel that you've been wronged."

At the thought of this, Yin Huaixi handed over the box that he had been holding with trembling hands. “Your Majesty, I have something to report to you.”

Below the golden hall, the exhausted emperor forced his eyes open and glanced at the servant at the side. “Bring it up.”

The emperor was very distant with this nephew.

It was also when King You was applying for an imperial seal for his son, Yin Huaixi, that he had seen him in a portrait. Later on, every year, there would be palace painters who specially went to Youzhou to draw a portrait of the heir.

In the painting, Yin Huaixi had long and narrow eyes, unlike his father, who had a pair of peach blossom eyes. Instead, he looked very much like his uncle. When he saw him, he couldn’t help but be happy and rewarded him a lot every year.

However, even a piece of paper could not hide his nephew’s defined eyebrows. Now, his legs were disabled and he was sick. Even the imperial physician said that he would not live past 20.

One could imagine how troubled he was.

The eunuch hurriedly stepped forward and took the box from Yin Huaixi’s hand, handing it to the emperor.

Yin Huaixi couldn’t help but cough a few times. He said hoarsely, “This item was an old item that the emperor had given to Father back then. Father had always kept it safe. When he was nine years old, Father gave it to him. Back then, when King You’s Residence was in flames, only the walls of King You’s Residence were left. In the past, all the old items were burned in the fire. Only this item was kept with him. Now that Father has passed away, he’s no longer worthy of carrying this item.”

The emperor’s expression was unfathomable. His hands trembled as he opened the box. There was a dagger inside. It was inlaid with gold and jade. It was decorated with seven gems and extremely expensive.

The eunuch serving the emperor was so shocked that his forehead broke out in a cold sweat and he immediately knelt on the ground.

When the emperor suddenly saw this dagger, he was even more stunned.

The entire court was so quiet that one could hear a pin drop.

Yin Huaixi lowered his eyes, his young master’s words echoing in his ears. “Once others resonate with your grievances, their hearts will often override their rationality. The decisions they make will often be made from their hearts, more than their rationality. Only then can you make full use of the human heart.”

So what if the heart was unpredictable?

No one could escape Young Master’s flawless plan.

Below, there were already officials who couldn’t stand the heavy atmosphere and trembled. Some people couldn’t help but gasp heavily.

Xia Yansheng, who had been dozing off, woke up with a jolt, not daring to look at the king on the dragon throne.

Even Mr. Xian Yun put down his tea and glanced at the calm Yin Huaixi beside him.

After a long time, the emperor's tired voice came from the dragon throne. "Back then, in the first year of my ascension to the throne, King Dong Ning of Cangzhou happened to hunt a strange dragon with a bump on its forehead in the East Sea. He pulled out its muscles and bones and hired the most famous swordsmith in the world to forge a short dagger that was only three inches long."

...

As he spoke, he took out the short dagger from the box. The dagger was probably well maintained. After so many years, the gold and jade on it was still the same.

#### Chapter 376 Not Letting Down the Emperor's Grace

His Majesty was silent.

After a long time, the emperor continued, "I heard that when this dagger was forged, it caused a roar that sounded in all directions, like the cry of a dragon in the sky. In an instant, black clouds pressed down on the city in the east, and thunder and lightning flashed. It rained heavily, ending the drought in the east. King Ning immediately felt that this dagger was auspicious and sent someone into the capital at full speed."

He had just ascended the throne not long ago and had yet to make any contributions to the country, so he was not a threat to the court officials. King Ning had sent someone to send this auspicious sign. The officials offered the dragon to the emperor to show their loyalty. It also expressed that it was fate that he had ascended the throne. Once that happened, God bestowed them with a divine weapon to reduce the rain and drought.

He was a true dragon!

This matter had even become a beautiful story.

The reason why he could stabilize his position as soon as possible was because of this dagger.

As the emperor's voice fell, the court officials thought of this past.

The emperor in the dragon throne held a dagger and said in a calm voice, "I was very happy to obtain this strange dagger. I tested its sharpness. It's indeed a rare divine weapon, so I named it the Four Seas Dragon Dagger."

There was another long silence in the royal court.

The emperor looked at the Four Seas Dragon Dagger in his hand, as if he had fallen into deep memories.

After a long time, he slowly unsheathed the dagger. It was so sharp that it almost hurt his eyes. "Later, Fifth Brother invited himself to Youzhou to guard it. I gave him this Four Seas Dragon Dagger and hoped that he could shake the four seas for the Great Zhou and deal with the nine states to calm the war."

In fact, ever since he ascended the throne, he had always been very afraid of the vassal lords of various places. He had given the Four Seas Dragon Dagger to Yin Lixing, and it was also filled with a deeper meaning that intimidated the vassal lords of the four lands.



At that time, he thought that although Yin Lixing was stubborn and could not bear such a heavy responsibility, he was still a member of the royal family. There were also generals in Youzhou to assist in the war, so he would definitely be able to intimidate the vassal lords.

The Marquis of Weining was already so shocked that his face turned ashen.

He knew very well that this Four Seas Dragon Dagger was the last fire that burned away the emperor's rationality. Once this fire burned, it was inevitable that there would be bloodshed in the entire court. The first to bear the brunt would still be the Marquis of Weining's Residence.

The emperor's finger gently touched the Four Seas Dragon Dagger. Unexpectedly, it was too sharp. With just a light touch, blood gushed out of his finger. He shocked the servant beside him. "Your Majesty! Someone, quickly send the imperial physician..."

In the hall, they panicked because of the emperor's injury.

However, the court officials below stood rooted to the ground, not even daring to breathe loudly.

The emperor looked at the blood in his hand in a daze. "Fifth Brother received the Four Seas Dragon Dagger and pulled it out of its sheath in the court. He cut his palm and blood gushed out. With blood to show his sincerity, he knelt on the ground and shouted, 'Long live your majesty. I will not let down the emperor's grace and my brother's trust.'"

In the next ten years, his royal brother guarded Youzhou. His reputation was illustrious, and he made the four seas submit to him. The Nine States were stable, and there was nothing to worry about in the royal court.

There were many officials who had personally experienced that scene back then. When they heard the emperor mention this past, they sweated profusely.

The imperial physician was already bandaging the emperor's wound. As he was a little closer, he heard the emperor mutter, "It turns out that it's so painful to cut the skin with the Four Seas Dragon Dagger. Furthermore, this promise is so solemn. In the end, I underestimated his words back then. 'I will not let down the emperor's grace and my brother's trust.'"

He was determined to be loyal to his country.

As a younger brother, he would definitely not let down his brother.

Upon hearing this, the imperial physician immediately sweated profusely, but he did not dare to show any abnormality.

After finally wrapping the wound up, the imperial physician hurriedly left. The emperor turned to look at Yin Huaixi, who had his head lowered. "Back then, when your father gave you the Four Seas Dragon Dagger, did he say anything?"

"Yin Huaixi" was silent for a moment before following Young Master's instructions. "As a loyal subject, I will definitely not let down my Imperial Uncle."

As soon as these words were spoken, there was silence.

Indeed!

King You had handed the Four Seas Dragon Dagger to Yin Huaixi because he was the heir. In the future, he would inherit his father's position and guard Youzhou. His sincerity was obvious.

On the other hand, after experiencing life and death, Yin Huaixi finally brought the Four Seas Dragon Dagger into the capital in the end. Wasn't this also his loyalty to the royal court?

The emperor placed the Four Seas Dragon Dagger into the box and handed it to the eunuch. He turned to Yin Huaixi and said word by word, "Keep the Four Seas Dragon Dagger well. In this world, no one is more qualified to have this than you and your son."

His voice was deep. After chewing each word, he spat them out with a terrifying ferocity.

When the eunuch heard this, he frantically handed the box containing the Four Seas Dragon Dagger to Yin Huaixi. He knelt on the ground and raised the box above his head.

Under the emperor's deep gaze, Yin Huaixi finally took the box from the eunuch after a long while. "Thank you for your reward, Your Majesty."

The emperor in the dragon throne looked at him steadily. "It's time for you to call me Imperial Uncle."

Yin Huaixi was flattered, but he lowered his head and said bluntly, "I feel guilty. I'll wash away my grievances and not let down the emperor's grace."

In other words, he was still a criminal. He couldn't change his words, nor should he.

The emperor did not force him. He stared at the Marquis of Weining, who was kneeling in the first row of the hall. After a while, he said, "I remember that when we rushed to the north, the Marquis of Weining was the commander-in-chief, and the Marquis of Changxing was the general of the north. He was under your command?"

The Marquis of Weining knelt down with a thud. "Your Majesty, I'm guilty. Back then, I was focused on the war in the north. I didn't know that the Marquis of Changxing was so bold to dare to persecute King You. I'm guilty of negligence. Your Majesty, please punish me."

The emperor stared coldly at the Marquis of Weining, his eyes dark. After a while, he said, "I'm tired, so let's disperse the court. Yin Huaixi will temporarily stay in Fuyang Palace. Choose the best imperial physician to treat the heir."

After four days of court assembly, it finally ended. Yu Zongshen and Yu Zongzheng returned to the residence in a daze and received news from the palace.

"Imperial Consort Lu has overstepped her position and has no respect for seniority. It's a great disrespect. Hence, she has been stripped of her title as Imperial Consort and is demoted two ranks to second-grade Concubine Lan. She will be moved to the Lanyi Palace. Temporarily, the Empress Dowager will be in charge of the affairs of the harem. The Marquis of Weining will be stripped of his title as a first-grade marquis and reduced to the second-grade Marquis of Ningyuan. All his duties have been suspended..."

Yu Zongzheng and Yu Zongshen were not surprised to hear the news.

Imperial Consort Lu had been doted on in the harem for many years. Now that her phoenix seal had been snatched away, she had lost her status in the harem. The Marquis of Weining had been reduced from a superior first-grade marquis to the second-grade Marquis of Ningyuan. All his duties had been suspended. To put it bluntly, he had lost his military power.

As a result, Imperial Consort Lu's lineage was also greatly damaged.

The two of them went to An Shou Hall together. Seeing that they were not in good spirits, Old Madam Yu quickly asked Nanny Liu to bring some snacks and tea over.

### Chapter 377 Born to Be a Valiant King

Yu Zongzheng drank some tea and felt a lingering fear. "Back then, when King You was accused of treason, I relied on my emotions and ignored the people from the Imperial Court's obstruction to report the ten contributions King You made for the country. I begged the emperor to investigate thoroughly again and punish him lightly. I was scolded by the emperor in court. Now, he's actually protecting my family."

Yu Zongshen turned to look at his eldest brother.

As soon as King You entered the capital, he committed suicide in the golden hall. The emperor hoped to end this matter as soon as possible, but his eldest brother was still a little rash in the royal court. He actually dared to ask the emperor to investigate thoroughly again.

He was already dead. How were they going to investigate?

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The emperor was so angry that he threw a memorial at his head and scolded him for being ignorant.

Previously, in the royal court, the Ministry of War was the first to bear the brunt. Seven or eight censors from the Imperial Court were stripped of their python robes and dragged down. Even their families were imprisoned.

They bypassed Yu Zongzheng.

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she also looked relieved. "It's obvious that this person can't do anything wrong."

King You had made outstanding military contributions, and the Eldest Son also respected him very much. With this respect in his heart, he created good karma that he was able to benefit from.

Yu Zongshen put down his teacup. "Ye Hanyuan has brought out evidence that the Marquis of Changxing has colluded with the enemy to commit treason. Last year, the Di people's 3,000 cavalry charged into Youzhou City, and the Marquis of Changxing couldn't withstand a single blow. The Northern Barbarians killed people, plundered things, captured people, and set the city on fire. The Marquis of Changxing was worried that the Di people would attack again, and when the time came, he couldn't hide it anymore. He personally wrote to the leader of the Di people, Harmon, and promised to be willing to offer 100,000 silver in hopes of maintaining peace in the north."

As soon as these words were spoken, Old Madam Yu was shocked on the spot. "Is the Marquis of Changxing crazy? When Emperor Gaozu first established the country, he had said that there would be no harmony, no compensation, no ceding of land, and no tribute that should change the fact that the emperor should die defending a country. All the previous emperors did not dare to forget the

ancestral teachings. In order to raise the prestige of the Great Zhou, there were many emperors who personally led expeditions...”

Just this disregard of the ancestral teachings was enough to exterminate nine generations of a family.

Yu Zongshen continued, “However, the money of the people who paid tribute to the Di people was the military salary of the 300,000 soldiers of the You Army and the pension of the families of the soldiers who sacrificed themselves. The soldiers secretly wrote a blood letter of 10,000 people. After their families found out, they also secretly participated. When their neighbors nearby found out, they joined as well. The blood letter of 10,000 people was written by more than ten thousand people...”

The blood letter of ten thousand people was written by the soldiers and commoners. They tore off the clothes in their houses and sewed them up piece by piece. It was Mr. Xian Yun who brought it into the palace in a large carriage.

It covered a total of five kilometers from the Golden Hall.

At this moment, some officials’ legs went limp and they fainted.

“Ye Hanyuan even took out the account books of the You army that the Imperial Court had distributed back then. Although the original account book had been destroyed by the Marquis of Changxing, the heir had thought far ahead. All the account books had two copies. There was the seal of King You on them, so they couldn’t be faked. They only needed to investigate it with the Ministry of War. The Ministry of War couldn’t surpass the Ministry of Revenue, so they couldn’t deny it even if they wanted to. Naturally, everything was clear. The Minister of War, Elder Sun, was punished on the spot.”

It was obvious how meticulous and strategic Yin Huaixi was.

Back then, if the Marquis of Changxing hadn’t ambushed and seriously injured him on the battlefield, causing him to be unconscious for more than half a month, everything would have been a foregone conclusion when he woke up. How could King You have ended up like this?

How could the Marquis of Changxing be as arrogant as he was now?

“Ye Hanyuan even took out the private accounts of King You’s Residence. After the emperor saw it, he was so angry that he fainted in the hall. As a prince, King You enjoyed the royal salary and was given farmland, manors, and so on. However, he needed to cover the expenses of the 300,000 troops in Youzhou. King You did not have many assets under his name. Even a lot of the dowry of the Princess Consort was used.”

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she fell silent.

The quality of evidence was more important than quantity. Firstly, it proved that the Marquis of Changxing had colluded with the enemy to betray the country. The crimes King You was accused of could be washed away.

Secondly, it proved that King You stationed his troops with dignity and was loyal to the court. All the crimes were committed by the Marquis of Changxing and the Ministry of War. In that case, King You was free from his crime of rebellion.

These two points were not as important as the last point.

All of this showed that King You was loyal to his country. He performed his duty properly. The private debt of King You's Residence was not much evidence, but it was King You's sincerity to the emperor.

Yu Zongzheng continued, "The heir of King You, Yin Huaixi, presented a dagger to the court. This dagger is called the Four Seas Dragon Dagger."

As soon as these words were spoken, there was silence.

After a while, Old Madam Yu said slowly, "Yin Huaixi was born to be a king, and he will become a hero in death. If you can befriend him, befriend him. If you can't befriend him, don't get involved with him."

Not to mention anything else.

Just based on the evidence that Ye Hanyuan had brought out three years ago, could it be that three years ago, Yin Huaixi had already noticed the change in the situation in the court and made plans in advance?

Such a far-sighted talent was rare in the world.

In addition, the dagger presented by the heir, Yin Huaixi, was really an act of killing the hearts and saints. Back then, King You had sworn a blood oath to form an alliance. For many years, he had guarded Youzhou and driven the Northern Barbarians 50 miles away from the border. He had maintained the peace of the Northern Region for more than ten years, protected the peace of the royal court, suppressed the vassal lords of various places, protected the emperor's safety, guarded the Great Zhou's territory, and protected the foundation of the Yin family's ancestors. He was worthy of the heavens, the earth, the emperor, and his brother's trust.

Although he was dead, he had no regrets!

Then, how would the emperor feel when he saw this Four Seas Dragon Dagger?

How should he react with his emotions, logic and the law?

It was hard to tell what the Emperor was thinking.

However, ever since Yin Huaixi entered the palace, he had been scheming step by step.

Yu Zongzheng's expression was solemn. "At this moment, Ye Hanyuan has finished his interrogation. The Minister of War, Elder Sun, is just a small piece of the puzzle. After the Marquis of Changxing is escorted into the capital and interrogated by the three divisions, the ten crimes that Ye Hanyuan has reported will be completely known. All the officials, eunuchs, and nobles involved with the Marquis of Changxing will be implicated. At that time, when the emperor is angry, the entire court will experience another turmoil!"

Old Madam Yu also felt sad, but she noticed something else. “The emperor has fainted in the royal court. His health... be it the harem or the royal court, there’s another undercurrent in the dark. Be careful.”

When Yu Zongshen and Yu Zongzheng heard this, their expressions turned solemn.

In the past few days of interrogating Ye Hanyuan, the emperor had been in low spirits and was relying on pills to stay alert.

#### Chapter 378 A Greeting from Mr. Xian Yun

The Four Seas Dragon Dagger expressed that King You had not let down the emperor and his brother. At the same time, it had awakened the remaining trace of so-called bloodline kinship buried deep in the royal family’s heart.

Emotions overrode reason. Who knew how many people would pay a painful price for King You’s death?

The next day, the first branch received a visiting card.

The gatekeeper basically crawled to An Shou Hall and handed over a greeting card.

Old Madam Yu opened the greeting card and read the contents. She was so shocked that her hands trembled. She quickly instructed Nanny Liu, “Quickly go to the Green House and invite Linghuai over.”

Nanny Liu did not dare to delay and quickly went to the Green House.

Zhou Linghuai was sitting under the corridor, holding a Kunwu Knife and carving a seal. There were hanging orchids in the corridor. The long arrow leaves and the drooping flowers looked extremely elegant.

Nanny Liu stepped forward and bowed. “Young Master, Old Madam wants you to go over.”

Here it comes! Zhou Linghuai’s pale lips curled up slightly. He nodded slightly, shook off the dust on his body, and went to An Shou Hall with Nanny Liu.

When Old Madam Yu saw Zhou Linghuai coming over, her expression softened a little. “Just now, Mr. Xian Yun sent a greeting card and wanted to visit you in the residence in three days.”

Mr. Xian Yun’s words were very polite. His words were unusually solemn.

Zhou Linghuai took the greeting card and took a few casual glances before closing it. “In the past, I once met Mr. Xian Yun in Youzhou and had a good chat. He probably heard I am living in the residence now, so he sent over an invitation. Grand aunt, please arrange it.”

His attitude was too casual. He did not seem to treat him like a famous person at all. Instead, he looked like an ordinary old friend visiting.

For a moment, Old Madam Yu was unsure of his attitude. She couldn’t help but scrutinize him.

Mr. Xian Yun had entered the capital this time as a Confucian sword that pointed straight at the Marquis of Changxing. It was obvious that he had an extraordinary relationship with Yin Huaixi. He had sent a greeting card to the Yu Residence at this time. Furthermore, the person he was visiting was Zhou Linghuai, who was inseparable from Youzhou. No matter what, it was suspicious.

Ever since Zhou Linghuai entered the capital, he had been living in seclusion.

The matters in the royal court did not seem to have anything to do with him. However, on careful thought, the position of commander of the You Prefecture was also a high-ranking military official. Although he was not directly under King You, he had a close relationship with the You Prefecture.

Then, it was terrifying to think about it. Was Ye Hanyuan involved in the matter of him beating the drum and reporting the Marquis of Changxing?

Zhou Linghuai was also related to Mr. Xian Yun.

Old Madam Yu was old and wise. Previously, because of the complicated matters in the court, she did not have time to think too deeply. However, now that Mr. Xian Yun was about to visit, many things suddenly became much clearer.

Zhou Linghuai's expression did not change. "What Mr. Xian Yun and I planned is all private matters and has nothing to do with the Yu Residence. The reason why I entered the capital has nothing to do with the Yu Residence." He chuckled with an indifferent expression. "The emperor is old. How can he remember what happened three to four years ago clearly?"

Old Madam Yu was shocked.

It was all because he had used two words: planned and reason.

What was he planning?

What was his reason?

It was terrifying to think about.

In a flash, Old Madam Yu thought of what Eldest Son had said yesterday. "Back then, King You was accused of treason. I trusted myself and ignored the people from the Imperial Court's obstruction to report the matter. I directly reported King You's ten contributions to the country and begged the emperor to investigate thoroughly again. I was punished lightly and was scolded by the emperor in court. Now, he actually protected my family."

Therefore, the people from the Imperial Court were sent to jail and fired. Even Eldest Son's father-in-law, Yang Shiguang, was implicated. Logically speaking, Eldest Son could not escape responsibility.

However, the emperor's anger seemed to have taken a detour and he deliberately ignored Eldest Son.

Now, it seemed that it was not because of a lack of reporting. It was clearly because a Buddha with unfathomable methods lived in the Yu Residence and had already reached out to the emperor.

Old Madam Yu's face tensed up. "What's your relationship with the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi?"

Zhou Linghuai said calmly, "We met when we were young."

Old Madam Yu's expression softened a little. "Since Mr. Xian Yun has handed over a greeting card, we naturally have to welcome him properly to avoid being rude."

Zhou Linghuai was from Youzhou, so he definitely had relations to Youzhou. It was the same for the Yu Residence.

From the looks of it, the heir of King You, Yin Huaixi, could not be underestimated. When the Marquis of Changxing was escorted into the capital and King You's crimes were cleared, he would definitely be reinstated.

As the legitimate son of King You and the heir, Yin Huaixi had to inherit his father's title. King You had died of injustice, so the emperor had to compensate him. The heir, Yin Huaixi, also had to be rewarded generously.

It wasn't a bad thing for the Yu Residence to be related to the heir, Yin Huaixi.

Moreover, there were some things that could not be avoided.

From the day the Yu Residence accepted Zhou Linghuai, they would have taken on any karma. Now that Zhou Linghuai was related to the first branch, there was no need to be cold because of some unnecessary doubts.

Just like before, they did as they were supposed to.

When Zhou Linghuai heard this, he understood what Old Madam Yu was thinking and smiled. "Thank you, Grand aunt."

She sighed inwardly. Old Madam Yu was indeed a sensible person. No wonder she had raised the little girl to be pure.

After Zhou Linghuai left, Old Madam Yu looked at his back. After a long while, she sighed softly. "Our main family is also filled with crouching tigers and hidden dragons. Zhou Linghuai has restrained his sharpness and is living in the backyard of the small Yu Residence. It's really unfair to him."

There were many things that were extremely terrifying when one thought about it carefully.

Firstly, what kind of sage was Mr. Xian Yun? However, he had personally sent a greeting card to meet a junior. Even if news of this spread, no one in the world would believe it.

With Mr. Xian Yun's status, reputation, and virtue, others would usually seek an audience with him.

In addition, back then, when Mr. Xian Yun traveled to Youzhou, the world vaguely knew that he had seen the heir, Yin Huaixi. They did not know that there was another Zhou Linghuai in Youzhou.

Just this point alone was enough to show that Zhou Linghuai was a fish in water.

Old Madam Yu sighed slightly. "A storm is brewing. I wonder if it's a blessing or a curse."

Nanny Liu said, "Whether it's a blessing or a disaster, it can't be avoided. With a genius like Young Master, it's not a bad thing to plan with him."

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she smiled. "To think that I've lived for most of my life. I'm not as insightful as you."

Zhou Linghuai was already related to the Yu Residence. No matter what happened in the future, he would be involved. With such a powerful junior's plan, it was naturally a good thing.



At night, when Yu Zongzheng returned from the government office, he was called by Old Madam Yu to go to An Shou Hall.

Old Madam Yu told her about Mr. Xian Yun sending over a greeting card to visit Zhou Linghuai.

...

Yu Zongzheng looked shocked and almost smashed the teacup in his hand. "How did Linghuai get to know Mr. Xian Yun? With your talent, reputation, and seniority, it's only right for Linghuai to personally visit you."

#### Chapter 379 The General Trend

Look, this was the reaction a normal person would have when receiving Mr. Xian Yun's greeting card.

Old Madam Yu looked up and said calmly, "It's said that they met in Youzhou in the past. I reckon that Mr. Xian Yun should be on par with Linghuai, so he handed over a greeting card like Mr. Hu Shan."

Yu Zongzheng took a deep breath and was a little stunned. "On par? Isn't the heir of the Zhenguo Marquis Residence, Song Mingzhao, also Mr. Xian Yun's disciple? Why is Linghuai on par with Mr. Xian Yun?"

Could it be that his nephew was even more talented than Song Mingzhao?

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Old Madam Yu reminded, "Linghuai has a close relationship with Youzhou. Knowing Mr. Xian Yun, I'm afraid he's related to the son of the prefecture's governor, Ye Hanyuan, and the mysterious heir of King You, Yin Huaixi. It's good that you know this in your heart. There's no need to be too conflicted. It'll be the same as before."

The reason why she said this was because the royal court was changing rapidly now. If she explained some things clearly, she could give a response. If she did not know much, it would be bad if she was taken advantage of.

Yu Zongzheng nodded solemnly. "Since he's entered the Yu Residence, he's a member of the Yu Residence. I know the severity of the matter."

Although he wasn't smart, he wasn't stupid. However, he couldn't control herself when it came to women and suffered a setback.

Old Madam Yu continued, "Don't tell anyone about Mr. Xian Yun's visit. On the day Mr. Xian Yun enters the residence, welcome him into the residence before going to the government office."

Even though they were of the same generation, the first branch could not be rude.

There had to be elders at home to welcome guests.

As a woman, it wasn't appropriate for her to step in. It was only logical for Eldest Son to step in. He would have taken a day off if not for the urgent matters in court.

At ten o'clock the next day, Yu Youyao went to her grandmother's house to learn "mind games." Old Madam Yu told her about Mr. Xian Yun's visit.

Yu Youyao was a little surprised, but only a little. She said, "Grandmother, don't worry. I'll definitely make the arrangements."

Seeing her attitude, Old Madam Yu knew that Zhou Linghuai was close to her granddaughter, so he might not have hidden many things from her. As a result, she felt more at ease with Zhou Linghuai.

Although Zhou Linghuai was related to the first branch, he had a cold personality and treated others coldly and distantly. His thoughts were as deep as an abyss, making it impossible to figure him out.

If he did not have the intention to belong to the main family, it would also be endless trouble.

However, since he was willing to open his heart to Yao Yao, that was another matter.

Old Madam Yu did not say much and only said, "Now that the court is in a chaotic period, the family's matters depend on you. It's been hard on you."

They were usually easy to settle, and it did not matter if anything went wrong.

However, now, a storm was brewing in the capital. A bloodbath was about to happen. Who knew when this calamity would fall on them? How could they tolerate any mistakes?

Yu Youyao knew the severity of the matter. "Although I'm in charge of the family matters, Nanny Liu and the stewards of the residence are in charge of all the big and small matters. With Grandmother around, it's not difficult." After saying that, she held her grandmother's hand and comforted her. "Punishment and rewards are all bestowed by the emperor. Grandmother, don't think too much. Second Uncle and Father are walking on thin ice in the royal court. We women and children don't know much about the matters of the country, so we can rest in peace and avoid their worries."

The old man was old and looked forward to her family's well-being.

How could she not understand this logic? Old Madam Yu laughed when she heard this.

After learning for an hour, Yu Youyao returned to the Jade Courtyard.

Zhou Linghuai was reading under the Parasol Tree. He put away the book and handed her a cup of tea. "You're back!"

Yu Youyao drank her tea. "Cousin, didn't you say that Mr. Xian Yun probably doesn't want to see you for the rest of his life? Why did you suddenly send a greeting card?"

Zhou Linghuai picked up his tea and took a sip.

The new tea made by the little girl had the taste of peppermint. There was a hint of bitterness in his mouth, but also a hint of coolness. He liked it very much.

After putting down his teacup, Zhou Linghuai said, "This is the general trend. Those I don't want to see will always meet with me in the end. Since my chessboard has been set up, there's nowhere to hide."

Yu Youyao glared at him. "Cousin, you're keeping me in suspense again."

Zhou Linghuai smiled and took out annotations from Heavenly Works. “Currently, I’ve only sorted out the farming and grain section. Take a look first.”

There was too much knowledge in Heavenly Works, and it was very complicated to organize. He had been rather busy recently, so he did not organize much.

Even though it was just a small section of farming and grains, he had already sorted it out in a thick book. Yu Youyao happily took the notes. “Thank you, Cousin. I’ll make Eight Treasure Cake for you another day.”

Her cousin liked the Eight Treasure Cake. She changed the wild ginseng inside to white ginseng. It was just right and not dry. It nourished the body, the spleen and lungs. It could also strengthen the foundation of the body.

It was fine even if he ate more every day.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. “Okay!”

Next, the cousins sat down and leaned against the Parasol Tree to read.

The notes were very detailed, and the content was easy to understand. Yu Youyao read for a while and felt a little tired. She picked up her tea and drank it. Seeing that her cousin was holding a copy of Guiguzi in his hand and looking very focused, she couldn’t help but look at him with her chin in her hand.

His cousin had a Daoist master called Xuan Jizi. It was said that he was an expert from Ghost Valley.

She had never heard of this person, but from her cousin’s casual words, it was not difficult to guess that he was even more unpredictable than Mr. Xian Yun.

Her cousin liked Guiguzi very much and said, “Ghost Valley is mysterious. It’s a place where society is unhindered, natural and hides the mysteries of the world. Its secrets are unfathomable. It’s a place where everything can be seen. It’s a place where the Six Daos are powerful and everything can be learned!”

“Yao Yao.” Suddenly, she heard a clear voice.

Yu Youyao nodded and tilted her head. Seeing that her cousin had closed the book and was looking at her, she asked, “Cousin, aren’t you going to read anymore?”

How could she calm down and read like this? Zhou Linghuai felt helpless. “Do you have anything to ask me?”

Yu Youyao stared at her cousin and finally asked the question she had been holding in for a long time. “Cousin, do you look like my Cousin Zhou or do you look like yourself?”

So that was what she wanted to ask. Zhou Linghuai smiled. “It’s just a little disguise. I still look like myself.”

Yu Youyao was in disbelief. “Cousin, you’re too bold. Aren’t you afraid of being recognized?”

Zhou Linghuai gently rubbed the cooling pearl in his hand. When he heard the little girl say that he was high-profile, his ears turned a little red. He coughed lightly and said, “Cough, I used to like to

disguise myself when I went out. After all, there are many inconveniences to my status as the heir of King You. I've always done as I please. I'm used to doing whatever I want. Cough..."

#### Chapter 380 At My Mercy

At this point, he looked up at Yu Youyao.

The little girl looked at him in shock. Zhou Linghuai felt his ears heat up.

Yu Youyao asked in a daze, "So, no one has seen Cousin's true appearance in the past?"

Zhou Linghuai shook his head. "I just haven't seen many people."

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Yu Youyao thought for a moment and understood. "Cousin Zhou's health hasn't been good since he was young, and he lives in seclusion. Not many people have seen him. You're about the same age as him, so you just need to disguise your more obvious characteristics a little. Moreover, you're friends with him, so you know a lot about Cousin Zhou. If you leave Youzhou and enter the capital, no one will notice. Moreover, Cousin has been staying in the residence and rarely goes out. If you don't see many people, the risk of being seen through will be greatly reduced."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "That's not really it. From the moment I entered the capital, the Marquis of Changxing's Residence was like a fish on my chopping block, at my mercy. Why should I worry about my identity being exposed? The reason why I borrowed Zhou Linghuai's identity was just to make things more convenient."

Yu Youyao was a little unhappy. "Then why didn't Cousin tell me earlier?"

Zhou Linghuai's expression froze for a moment before he lowered his eyebrows. "I still have the reputation of a traitor. I'm worried that I'll scare you."

This was only one aspect.

Yu Youyao looked gentle and sweet, but she was actually very guarded. He was worried that if Yu Youyao found out about his identity before the time came, she would refuse to get close to him.

Yu Youyao pouted but did not refute. However, she could not help but mutter, "I don't dislike Cousin. How can I be frightened? Hmph!"

Zhou Linghuai smiled and said nothing.

Yu Youyao thought of the Marquis of Weining's Residence and asked, "Cousin, the Marquis of Changxing is a direct descendant of the Marquis of Weining. The Marquis of Weining is also involved in the Marquis of Changxing stealing the military power of Youzhou. Why don't you take this opportunity to bring him down?"

The Marquis of Weining was the main culprit. The emperor's punishment for the Marquis of Weining was simply too light.

Zhou Linghuai said calmly, "The Marquis of Weining is a new noble. He was promoted by the emperor in order to balance the conflict between the two factions in the imperial court and threaten the imperial power. It's not so easy for him to fall. If we target the Marquis of Weining, it will

instead arouse the emperor's suspicion. He will think that it's a conflict in the court and the court is deliberately target him. The emperor will protect the Marquis of Weining instead."

Yu Youyao pursed her lips. "No wonder Imperial Consort Lu dotes on her so much."

Zhou Linghuai continued, "The Marquis of Weining's family is intertwined and closely related to the emperor's interests. If the emperor doesn't want to touch the Marquis of Weining, no one can touch him. Whoever touches the Marquis of Weining will be against the emperor's interests."

Unless the emperor wanted to touch the Marquis of Weining himself.

Yu Youyao looked thoughtful. After a while, she said, "Back then, as the commander-in-chief of the Northern Region, the Marquis of Weining indulged his generals and persecuted his relatives. He couldn't escape punishment. Moreover, after King You died, it was the Marquis of Weining who recommended the Marquis of Changxing to guard Youzhou. Now that Ye Hanyuan has reported the Marquis of Changxing for ten crimes, the Marquis of Weining still can't escape responsibility. The emperor will definitely be furious..."

Zhou Linghuai smiled but said nothing.

Yu Youyao's train of thought became clearer and clearer. "Cousin's spearhead isn't directed at the Marquis of Weining, but killing the Marquis of Changxing is undoubtedly crippling the Marquis of Weining's right arm first, causing his vitality to be greatly damaged. It also makes the emperor dissatisfied with the Marquis of Weining. Once a crack appears between the emperor and the subject, the crack will become bigger and bigger. One day, the crack will become an abyss, and the Marquis of Weining won't be far from death. I know that this is a scheme. On the surface, the Marquis of Weining has escaped, but in fact, Cousin's butcher's knife is already on his neck."

Zhou Linghuai nodded and chuckled. "Although King You is dead, the dignity of the royal family can't be provoked. The Marquis of Changxing's actions are undoubtedly crossing the line. The emperor can tolerate the court officials forming cliques and taking bribes, but he can't tolerate anyone provoking the dignity of the royal family. After all, they were able to attack King You yesterday, so it's hard to guarantee that they won't attack him, the ruler of the country, one day. The emperor's anger isn't something that the Marquis of Changxing can calm down. Anyone related to the Marquis of Changxing can't escape."

The emperor was unwilling to touch the Weining Marquis Residence now because there were too many implications.

However, in fact, the Marquis of Weining had already violated the limits of his family background. He was already on thin ice. If he took a wrong step, he would shatter into pieces.

Yu Youyao sighed. "Cousin, that's not all!"

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "The wicked will be punished by the wicked. Since you can watch the dogs fight, why dirty your hands yourself?"

He only needed to sit on the sidelines and reap the spoils later. When the time was right, he would give the Weining Marquis Residence a fatal blow. It was fine if he did not make a move, but once he did, he wanted to uproot Imperial Consort Lu's family and leave no future trouble.

This was in line with his style.

Yu Youyao was stunned for a moment before she reacted. "Cousin, you mean the cabinet? That's true. The cabinet doesn't get along with the Marquis of Weining's faction. Now that the Marquis of Weining's Residence has lost power, the cabinet will also take this opportunity to suppress the Marquis of Weining." She frowned. "But this way, the cabinet struggle will become more and more intense, and the court will become more and more tense."

The imperial court was in chaos. Was it still far from world chaos?

This was her cousin's goal.

Her cousin held the black and white chess pieces and pushed the chess game forward to get justice for King You. This was only a part of his chess game. How could a mere Marquis of Changxing and the Marquis of Weining calm the hatred in his heart?

She remembered that in the General History book that her cousin had given her previously, there was a sentence that described Ghost Valley. "With a smile, the world will prosper, and with anger, the world will perish."

Only by spinning the universe and doing the opposite could the anger in her cousin's heart be appeased.

Yu Youyao was a little frightened and did not dare to think too much about it. She quickly changed the topic. "When do you plan to deal with the Weining Marquis Residence?"

Just because she wasn't taking action for the time being didn't mean he wouldn't attack forever.

To be able to ask this, it was obvious that she knew him very well. Zhou Linghuai smiled. "There's no hurry. I still have use for the Marquis of Weining's Residence. Let's wait a little longer."

From her cousin's attitude, it was obvious that he had already set up a trap and was just waiting for the time to come.

Yu Youyao was a little curious. What kind of genius was so unpredictable that he could make every step of the court develop in the direction he had planned?

However, Yu Youyao did not ask.

At the thought of how hard her cousin had worked to set up the overall situation all these years, Yu Youyao suddenly said, "Cousin, you've suffered all these years."

Zhou Linghuai suddenly pursed his lips.

Then, she remembered that her father had later won many battles, but he always had to train in the military camp until he was exhausted before returning home.

Once, he asked, "You've already become a famous war god. Why don't you take some time to accompany your mother? Aren't you tired after training for so long every day?"

His father glared at him and recited a poem for the first time, "If two people are in love with each other, why should they be greedy for happiness during the day and night?"