

Finest 86

Chapter 86 Night Talk (Part 2)

"Lin Wan Rong " Qin Xian'er repeated a few times, her face somewhat shy. In a soft voice, she said, "Young Master, do you really intend to spend your whole life as a servant in the Xiao family? With your talent and knowledge, how many people in this world are worthy of your service?"

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Living a peaceful life is not easy; how can one have so many demands?"

Qin Xian'er sighed deeply, and after a long time, she said, "Young Master, please wait a moment."

She turned around and rummaged through something on the bed. Lin Wanrong only heard a flurry of rustling sounds before Qin Xian'er emerged with a package.

She unfolded the package and took out two small books, handing them to Lin Wanrong, "These are for you."

Lin Wanrong took them and saw two beautifully bound booklets. One was titled "Bodhidharma Subduing Tiger Fist," and the other, more surprisingly, was boldly inscribed with the three characters "Yi Jin Jing." The "Yi Jin Jing" was well-known. Lin Wanrong was a bit dizzy. Was she expecting him to practice martial arts again?

As expected, Qin Xian'er said seriously, "Young Master, you often travel outside and are so talented that it's inevitable others will be envious. These are some self-defense techniques gifted by some friends of mine. I'm giving them to you, Young Master, hoping they can keep you safe."

Lin Wanrong shook his head with a bitter smile. Qin Xian'er asked, "You don't like Shaolin Kung Fu, Young Master? No matter, I have others." She took out another booklet from the package titled "Celestial Big Dipper Sword Technique" and said, "Young Master, this is a unique skill of Wudang..."

Seeing that Lin Wanrong was still shaking his head, she continued to search, bringing out the Emei Chaotic Sword Technique, the Kongtong Seven-Injury Fist. Lin Wanrong was dumbfounded as she kept bringing out more books. This girl, is she wholesaling martial arts secrets? He wondered if they were just cheap goods. However, these booklets looked ancient and seemed to be genuine.

Qin Xian'er noticed that he didn't seem interested in any of the books, and unconsciously, she had emptied the package. She couldn't help but blush, asking, "Young Master, is there really not a single book that you're interested in?"

Seeing her look disappointed, Lin Wanrong suddenly remembered the look on Xiao Qingxuan's face when she gave him the secret book yesterday. He thought to himself, Are women so fond of fighting these days?

He was grateful for Qin Xian'er's kindness and said with a smile, "It's not that I don't appreciate them, but they don't appreciate me. Miss Qin, I'm not young anymore. I'm afraid it's too late to start learning martial arts."

Qin Xian'er sighed, acknowledging the truth in his words. Given his age, it was indeed a bit late to start learning martial arts.

Lin Wanrong, however, took it lightly and laughed, "Miss, I will always remember your kindness. But while I have no fate with martial arts, I do with beautiful women. Perhaps I will need Miss Xian'er's help in the future."

Seeing his cheerful character, Qin Xian'er admired him and giggled, "Young Master, you've been talking, but you're not being very serious."

Seeing Lin Wanrong silently smiling, Qin Xian'er suddenly spoke softly, "I regard you as a dear friend, treating you with sincerity. I ask you to keep today's matters secret for me."

Recalling how Xiao Qingxuan had tried to glean Qin Xian'er's identity from him, Lin Wanrong realized that she indeed was not an ordinary person. However, since she was so forthright with him, he felt obligated to reciprocate. He nodded and reassured, "Don't worry, Miss. I didn't see anything today."

Qin Xian'er was delighted to hear this, and her enchanting smile could outshine all the flowers.

Lin Wanrong stared at her, lost in thought for a while, then finally let out a breath, thinking to himself, This girl, along with Xiao Qingxuan, are truly captivating.

Seeing him staring at her, Qin Xian'er couldn't help but lower her head shyly, asking gently, "What... what are you looking at?"

Startled back to reality, Lin Wanrong quickly replied, "Nothing... actually, I have a favor to ask of you, Miss Xian'er."

Hearing this, Qin Xian'er was overjoyed and replied eagerly, "Please tell me, Young Master. As long as I can, I will do as you ask."

Seeing the surprise mixed with a blush on her face, Lin Wanrong couldn't help but tease, "Are you not afraid I might make an unreasonable request?"

Looking at him with a thousand kinds of amorous expressions, she replied, "A woman like me, a mortal, how could I possibly catch your eye, Young Master? Even if I were to wait on you, I fear you wouldn't glance my way."

As she spoke, a hint of melancholy appeared on her face. Lin Wanrong thought to himself, she really was a bewitching creature. Her sad expression alone could ensnare countless men's hearts.

Collecting his thoughts, Lin Wanrong said, "Actually, it's nothing much. A friend of mine is opening a tavern in a few days. I would like Miss Qin to help me find two girls to perform some songs."

"Oh?" Qin Xian'er asked curiously, "What kind of songs? We have plenty of girls who can sing at the Miaoyu Pavilion. What type of girls are you looking for?"

After thinking for a moment, Lin Wanrong said, "I'm looking for two younger girls with delicate features and similar height. Oh, and they should sing well."

Qin Xian'er laughed, "That's easy, Young Master. Please wait a moment." She left and returned after the time it took to brew a pot of tea, bringing in two young and beautiful girls. Smiling, she said to Lin Wanrong, "Young Master, these girls are still young and have good voices. What do you think?" She then told the girls, "This is Young Master Lin, greet him."

The two girls curtsied and said in soft voices, "Little Cui (Little Lian) greets the Young Master." Their voices were crisp, like orioles singing, and Lin Wanrong thought to himself, Qin Xian'er indeed has a good eye. Not only were these girls beautiful, but their voices were also quite pleasant.

Lin Wanrong nodded and said, "Hello, ladies. I believe Miss Xian'er has told you. I want to teach you a song, so you can perform at the tavern's opening day."

Little Cui and Little Lian glanced at Qin Xian'er. Seeing her nod slightly, they replied together, "We'll follow your instructions, Young Master."

Lin Wanrong pondered for a moment and said, "This little song is called 'The West Chamber'. It's a folk tune from my hometown, derived from a very famous story, 'The Romance of the West Chamber'."@@novelbin@@

"The Romance of the West Chamber?" Qin Xian'er asked with interest. "I haven't heard of this story before. Could you tell us about it, Young Master?"

Lin Wanrong gave Qin Xian'er a wry smile. He knew this mischievous girl wouldn't let him off the hook and now he had to tell another story. Qin Xian'er wrinkled her small nose and playfully glanced at him. Her eyes were filled with amusement, as if listening to him speak brought her great joy.

"It's an old story about a scholar and a beauty. Once upon a time, there was a wealthy young lady named Cui Yingying, and she had a maid named Hongniang..." Lin Wanrong fully utilized his storytelling skills, narrating the 'Romance of the West Chamber' with great excitement and suspense. Qin Xian'er and the two maids were engrossed in the story, and after a while, they burst into laughter, "I didn't expect such an interesting story. This scholar Zhang is indeed very fortunate."

Wiping a bead of sweat from his brow, Lin Wanrong nodded and said, "This folk tune from my hometown is based on that story. Both the melody and the lyrics are very simple. I assure you, ladies, you will learn it in no time."

Qin Xian'er watched Lin Wanrong with interest, her face flushing slightly with what might have been shyness.

For the sake of his tavern business, Lin Wanrong cast aside his embarrassment and softly began to sing:

"Passing by the West Chamber, a fragrance fills the air,

The lady next door is still amidst the flowers,

Forgotten the direction of my shoes,

Stopped at the age of melancholy of eighteen or nineteen,

Dare to ask how to appreciate the flowers in the basin,

Want to compare it to the young lady's appearance,

Willing to be a piece of mud next to the flower,

Even in non-March, it can intoxicate.

The day before the summer solstice,

The scholar walks through the West Chamber once,

Encounter the young lady at the window sill waiting for the rainy day,

How many times have famous poems been read, how many volumes of famous paintings have been copied,

The ignorant scholar's dream is in the West Chamber when he is young,

I pass by the West Chamber again,

Daydream of twelve years ago,

Writing down the you and me of that year,

A song of the water tune song head,

I pass by the West Chamber again,

Twelve years later, the talented and full of wit,

The flowers are still there, but the people have already left,

That flower, always blooming, people difficult to retain."

Luckily, he had plenty of practice singing to girls in the past, so he didn't feel too embarrassed once he finished the song.

Qin Xian'er remained silent for a moment before speaking, "Young Master, this little song from your hometown is indeed extremely simple, yet incredibly pleasing. I previously thought that what I had learned was quite impressive. But today, I've realized that I was really just a frog in a well, seeing only a narrow piece of the sky."

Lin Wanrong thought to himself, Naturally, these popular songs needed to have simple and catchy melodies to be widely circulated. If they were all sung in the same drawn-out style as your little tunes, who would listen?

Yet, Qin Xian'er seemed to have developed a great interest in this little song. After having him sing it once more, she sat in front of the zither. With a delicate touch, she remarkably played the entire song.

Seeing Lin Wanrong's stunned expression, Qin Xian'er asked shyly, "Young master, did I not play well?"

Lin Wanrong shook his head, "Not that it wasn't good, it was too good. Miss Qin, if you were to sing this little song, I guarantee you would bewitch all the men in the world."

Qin Xian'er's face turned red, and she said shyly, "Young master, please don't speak like that, I'm not worthy."

Lin Wanrong took a deep breath. This Qin Xian'er was sometimes flirtatious, like a young wife longing for love, and sometimes shy and innocent, like a quiet maiden. She truly was ever-changing, captivating one's soul.

Though Little Cui and Little Lian were first-time listeners to this popular song, they quickly grew to like it. Lin Wanrong taught them how to sway their hips, how to walk with style, and how to maximize their body's charm.

Qin Xian'er watched from the side, greatly amused. From time to time, she would glance at Lin Wanrong, her face blooming into a smile like a blossoming flower.

Chapter 87 Unexpected News

These two maidservants were quick to learn. After Lin Wanrong taught them for a while, they began to show some promise.

Seeing that it was getting late, Lin Wanrong didn't wish to stay any longer and decided to leave. Qin Xian'er, however, couldn't bear to see him go. "Young Master, will you be able to come back tomorrow?" she asked.

Lin Wanrong was taken aback. A hint of blush spread across Qin Xian'er's face as she whispered, "I don't know why, but I enjoy listening to you talk."

Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, "It's just chatting. As long as I have time, I will come."

Qin Xian'er broke into a smile, "If Young Master doesn't come tomorrow, I will continue to send invitations."

Lin Wanrong nodded and smiled, then began to leave. Qin Xian'er grabbed his sleeve, her eyes soft and watery. Gazing at him tenderly, she gently said, "Young Master, don't forget your promise to Xian'er. You must come to see me often."

Seeing her reluctance to part, Lin Wanrong found it somewhat amusing. Could it be that he had enchanted this famous courtesan? Qin Xian'er's fondness for him certainly satisfied his vanity.

This time, Young Master Guo had learned his lesson. Although he still reeked of alcohol when he left, he was not as disheveled as before. From his appearance, Lin Wanrong could tell that the courtesan had taken good care of him.

After returning to the manor with Young Master Guo and parting ways, Lin Wanrong was walking towards his courtyard when he saw a pretty figure pacing back and forth. She was mumbling something under her breath.

As Lin Wanrong approached, he recognized her as the second Miss from the Xiao family, Xiao Yushuang.

She had been pacing back and forth, tearing petals from the flowers in the garden and tossing them on the ground. It seemed she had been waiting for quite some time.

Unaware of his arrival, Xiao Yushuang muttered to herself, "That rascal, enjoying himself at that place. I hate him so much. If he doesn't come back to tell me stories in the time it takes to brew a pot of tea, I will, I will"

She didn't seem to know what she would do, which made Lin Wanrong chuckle. He walked up to her and asked, "What will you do to me?"

Startled, Xiao Yushuang stepped back, "When did you get back?"

Lin Wanrong replied, "Not long ago. I heard someone threatening me."

Blushing, Xiao Yushuang retorted, "Finally, you're back. What, that vixen didn't keep you overnight?"

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Second Miss, what's going on in that little head of yours? We were just chatting. It's not as scandalous as you imagine."

Xiao Yushuang responded, "Today it's chatting, who knows what it will be next time."

Arguing with this child was pointless. Lin Wanrong shook his head helplessly, "It's getting late, Second Miss. You should go home now to prevent Eldest Miss from worrying."

"Then, aren't you going to tell me a story tonight?" Xiao Yushuang asked hopefully.

Lin Wanrong shook his head, "Not tonight. I'm a bit tired and want to rest early."

Xiao Yushuang looked disappointed and reluctantly turned to leave. After a few steps, she suddenly turned back and asked, "Lin San, I'll ask you one more time, is it really impossible

for my family to join forces with the Tao family?"

What on earth was going on in this young girl's head? Why did she suddenly bring up this question? But seeing the eagerness in her eyes, Lin Wanrong nodded and said, "For the Xiao family, joining forces would be a road to ruin."

Biting her lip, Xiao Yushuang nodded, took one last look at Lin Wanrong, and then ran off as if she was flying.

This girl really was a bit strange, Lin Wanrong thought, shaking his head. He walked into the courtyard and pushed the door open, only to see Xiao Qingxuan sitting quietly at the table, looking at him.

One left, another arrived. What a strange feeling. Lin Wanrong blinked and smiled, "Miss Xiao, why are you up so early?"

Without any expression, Xiao Qingxuan glanced at him and said, "I just came to see when you can fulfill the promise you made to me."

Lin Wanrong nodded, "Don't worry, you won't be left out."

He took out the glass bottles he had bought, poured the perfume into the bottles in different ratios, and made some markings. Finally, he let out a long breath. The first batch of the experiment was officially completed. Although it was simple, judging from Xiao Qingxuan's reaction that day, the effect was not bad.

Xiao Qingxuan watched his actions silently. After he finished, she curiously asked, "What are you doing?"

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "These are different scents. You can choose whichever you like in the future."

A hint of joy appeared on Xiao Qingxuan's face, "Really?"

Lin Wanrong nodded, "When have I ever lied to you?" Saying this made him feel a little embarrassed, lying to young girls was his specialty after all.

Xiao Qingxuan carefully examined the glass bottles for a while before asking, "May I... smell them?"

Lin Wanrong shrugged, "Of course, you can."

Xiao Qingxuan carefully picked up a bottle, opened the cap, and took a sniff. She took a deep breath and after a while, she exhaled, "What kind of scent is this? It's so unique. It would be better if it was a little lighter."

The bottle she held was the one with the highest concentration. Lin Wanrong was secretly delighted. He didn't know Xiao Qingxuan's background, but judging from her demeanor, she definitely wasn't from an ordinary family. If she was praising it, it meant that this perfume would definitely sell well.

He waved his hand nonchalantly, "Miss Xiao, please continue to sample the scents."

One by one, Xiao Qingxuan opened the caps and savored the fragrances. The joy on her face grew. She held onto one bottle and said, "This one, can you give it to me?"

Seeing that she had chosen the lightest scent, which suited her character, Lin Wanrong thought it fitting. However, he couldn't agree to her taking away his sample.

Seeing Lin Wanrong shake his head, a hint of disappointment flashed across Xiao Qingxuan's face. She reluctantly put the perfume bottle back on the table. Watching her, Lin Wanrong couldn't help but smile, "Didn't I promise you? When the formal production starts, I'll definitely give you a bottle."

Xiao Qingxuan gave a bitter smile, "Of course I remember. But by the time you've made it, who knows where I will be."

Listening to her words, Lin Wanrong detected a hint of farewell. He asked, "Are you leaving?"

Xiao Qingxuan sighed, "I've been in Jinling for some time now and the things I came to do have not progressed. I'm not from Jinling, so it's normal for me to leave."

Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, "With parting comes the joy of meeting again, don't be too sad."

Xiao Qingxuan glanced at him, bit her red lip lightly, and after a while, she quietly asked, "How are things going with you and that Qin Xian'er?"

Recalling Qin Xian'er's previous instructions to him, Lin Wanrong wondered if these two girls were rivals. Why did they both have something to do with him? He nodded and said, "Of course it's going well. We sing songs and talk about life together. It's quite pleasant."

Xiao Qingxuan sighed in disappointment, "Such days indeed sound pleasant, but I am not destined for them."

Seeing her despondent look, Lin Wanrong couldn't help shaking his head, "You're still young, why so melancholic? Open up your heart a little. You should know, you're not the most miserable person in the world. The most miserable one is standing right in front of you."

Xiao Qingxuan asked curiously, "What do you mean?"

Thinking of his own situation, unable to return home and stranded in this unfamiliar world, Lin Wanrong felt a bit upset. However, being naturally optimistic, he saw the concern on Xiao Qingxuan's face and decided to tease her, "You think I'm not miserable? Have you ever seen a talented person who gets kicked into the river after a disagreement? That's me, and I almost lost my life."

Xiao Qingxuan blushed, realizing he was referring to her, "It was clearly you who took advantage of me, how is it that you are the one wronged?"

Seeing her flushed face, looking even more attractive than Qin Xian'er, Lin Wanrong's heart skipped a beat. He thought to himself, Having such a beauty in front of me, but with a sword, something I can look at but not touch, isn't that torture?@@novelbin@@

"Why are you staring at me like that?" Seeing Lin Wanrong looking at her without speaking for a long time, Xiao Qingxuan became a little flustered and her face turned even redder. In a hurry, she brandished her sword as if to intimidate him.

Lin Wanrong sighed, "Is the injury on your arm better?"

Hearing him ask about her injury, Xiao Qingxuan's heart softened for some reason, and she no longer had the heart to argue with him. With a shy look on her face, she gently nodded, "It's much better, thank you."

Lin Wanrong found it strange. The two women he knew, Qin Xian'er, although the courtesan, was mysterious, and the Xiao Qingxuan in front of him was even more of an enigma. Why do they both have something to do with me? Could it really be because I'm too handsome? Otherwise, it makes no sense.

"What are you thinking?" Xiao Qingxuan asked softly.

"Try to get into fewer fights in the future. Women should be gentle, like Qin Xian'er, she's very gentle." Lin Wanrong replied subconsciously.

Xiao Qingxuan huffed coldly, turning her head to say, "Gentle, is she? Perhaps only in front of you. This injury of mine is due to"

She stopped abruptly, and Lin Wanrong shook his head, "Regardless, it's not good for women to fight. If you want to fight in the future, you can find me. I have a bunch of little brothers who might not be good at anything else, but they do know how to fight."

Xiao Qingxuan covered her mouth and chuckled lightly, "Me, fighting? You make it sound so crude. Your men can't" She paused mid-sentence, as if remembering something, and gave him a look before falling silent.

Lin Wanrong laughed it off, "I know you look down on us who don't know martial arts. But, Miss Xiao, don't forget, it's the common people who hold up this world. If they rise, even you, with your high martial arts skills, won't be able to escape. This is called a people's war."

Xiao Qingxuan lowered her head, barely managing to mumble, "It's not that I look down on you. You're just the best at talking nonsense." Spending more time with Xiao Qingxuan, she didn't seem as cold as long as he didn't flirt with her. Everything was negotiable.

This Xiao Qingxuan, with her noble demeanor, elegant speech, and deep concern for national affairs, intrigued Lin Wanrong, a seasoned storyteller. For every topic she brought up, Lin Wanrong could offer unique insights and perspectives based on his past experiences.

His rich life experiences and understanding of society and human nature were beyond what Xiao Qingxuan could compare. Although not every word was a gem, he often hit the nail on the head. After a conversation with him, Xiao Qingxuan always gained something.

In the following days, Lin Wanrong fully committed to the creation of the perfume. He no longer needed to stand by in the study room, and used all his free time on the perfume. It filled his mind when he walked on the street and even while he ate.

The second Miss Xiao didn't bother him these days, and Lin Wanrong, enjoying the peace, was instead invited by Qin Xian'er daily.

Out of no choice, Lin Wanrong had to accompany Young Master Guo on their visits to the Miaoyu Pavilion under the pretext of studying. In the process, he also taught the two young maidservants a thing or two; he didn't want to have his grand opening ruined.

Qin Xian'er composed some more melodies, becoming increasingly joyful. Her previous melancholy seemed to have vanished. Lin Wanrong found it strange, wondering if her radiant look was due to consuming ginseng.

Meanwhile, Xiao Qingxuan seemed to have arranged with Qin Xian'er. Every day when Lin Wanrong returned from Qin Xian'er's place, Xiao Qingxuan was already waiting for him in the room.

The two would discuss national affairs. Lin Wanrong had no reservations and dared to say anything, which made Xiao Qingxuan break out in cold sweat. She thought to herself, This reckless man, if he hadn't met me, he'd have probably been executed hundreds of times.

As Lin Wanrong was speaking enthusiastically, he noticed her strange expression and asked, "What's wrong? Did my words scare you?"

Biting her lip, Xiao Qingxuan said, "Just keep these words between us. Never mention them to others."

Lin Wanrong laughed and said, "I only speak like this because we are close. Even if others want to hear it, I wouldn't bother to mention it."

Xiao Qingxuan blushed and glanced at him, "You're such a smooth talker."

Her smiling and shy expression contrasted with her usually cold demeanor. Lin Wanrong stared in surprise and said, "Miss Xiao, you should smile more. You look so beautiful like this."

Xiao Qingxuan stomped her foot and said, "Why do you keep making these frivolous remarks? I can't be bothered with you." However, for some reason, hearing these "frivolous" words gave her a subtle thrill of pleasure.

These past few days were incredibly comfortable for Lin Wanrong. He spent his days studying perfume and his nights studying beautiful women, making him wonder if he was dreaming. Being a servant to this extent, he thought, was probably unmatched.

One morning, while Lin Wanrong was deep in a pleasant dream, a maid's voice suddenly came from outside the door, "Brother Lin, Brother Lin"

Goodness! Lin Wanrong shouted in his mind, Is there no peace for sleep? Was it Qin Xian'er again, visiting him with an invitation card? That Qin Xian'er, now even delivering an invitation card in broad daylight. Didn't he just teach her the song "On the Golden Mountain of Beijing" last night? Why was she looking for him so early today?

Lin Wanrong got dressed and came out, grumbling, "I'm here, I'm here, who is it this time?"

A little maid hurried over, gasping for breath, "Brother Lin, Brother Lin, quick, quick, Madam is going to punish Second Miss."

Chapter 88 A Lifetime Promise?

"What?" Lin Wanrong yelled, pulling on his cloth shoes and rushing out. What on earth was going on? The Madam was usually so fond of the second young miss, how had things come to this in just a few days?

"Xiaoju, quickly tell me what's happening. Hey, stop crying and tell me what's going on!" Lin Wanrong urged anxiously.

Xiaoju sobbed, "I don't know exactly what happened. Early this morning, I heard that the Madam and the Eldest Miss had called a meeting with all the managers. Somehow, the second young miss stormed into the meeting hall, and it seemed like there was an argument. The Madam was furious and ordered the second young miss to be caned."

"Caning for entering the meeting hall? Damn, what the hell is this?" Lin Wanrong cursed.

"Brother Lin, you don't understand the rules of the Xiao family. The meeting hall is the most important place in our family, where all major decisions are made. Without permission, no one is allowed to barge in. Otherwise, according to the rules set by our ancestors, they must be caned. The second young miss is not yet a manager, and she entered in front of everyone, so the Madam wants to cane her. The second young miss sent me to find you, she said you would definitely save her. Brother Lin, you must save the second young miss!"

Lin Wanrong was both moved and furious. This young girl trusted him so much in such a dangerous situation, it really touched him. As for his anger, it was directed at Madam Xiao. What kind of stupid family rule was this? Even willing to harm her own daughter, was the Madam going through menopause or something?

After a few rushed steps, Lin Wanrong suddenly remembered that he didn't know where this stupid meeting hall was. If he was any later, the young girl would get caned. Damn it, why does the Xiao family need such a huge house? Is it for convenience in a battle? In a moment of panic, he didn't know which direction to go.

"Lin San, over here, over here." Just as he was at his wit's end, Guo Wuchang appeared from nowhere, "Lin San, you must save cousin Yushuang, I beg you."

A lifesaver! Lin Wanrong wished he could hug Guo Wuchang and give him a big kiss, but there was no time to talk now. He quickly asked, "Where? Lead the way."

Knowing the urgency of the matter, Guo Wuchang didn't waste time talking and led Lin Wanrong straight to the main courtyard of the Xiao family.

They hadn't gone far when they saw a two-story building. The door was half-open, Lin Wanrong looked inside to see dozens of managers, Madam Xiao standing tall with a furious face, and Eldest Miss Xiao kneeling on the ground, tearfully clinging to her mother's dress as if pleading. Beside them, Yushuang was lying on the ground, and a servant's big board was just being lifted--

Damn it! Lin Wanrong was filled with rage. He didn't know where he got the strength from, but he rushed forward, kicked the door wide open, and yelled, "Who dares to hit--"

Everyone in the room froze at once, only to see a servant standing panting at the door, his hat askew and his clothes disheveled. His intense anger seemed to shake the heavens.

"Lin... Brother Lin" Xiao Yushuang cried out in surprise, only to break down in tears again.

A man who seemed to be a manager stood up and shouted, "Where did this impudent servant come from?"

"Where did this wild dog come from, spewing filth from his mouth?" Lin Wanrong retorted with a dark expression. Damn it. If you want to play a war of words, I'm the master at this game.

The manager didn't expect such insolence from a servant, and he trembled in anger. He turned to Madam Xiao, "Elder Sister-in-law, this is your well-trained servant?"

Elder Sister-in-law? Lin Wanrong was puzzled. As far as he knew, the master of the Xiao family didn't have any close brothers. Could it be a distant relative?

Sure enough, Madam Xiao quickly said, "Fourth brother, please don't be angry. You and my husband share the same ancestry, so what's ours is also yours. Let me teach this servant a lesson."

Her face hardened as she turned to Lin Wanrong and demanded, "Lin Wanrong, what are you trying to do?"

"Madam, what are you trying to do?" Lin Wanrong took a couple of steps forward, glaring at Madam Xiao.

"Xiao Yushuang trespassed into the meeting hall. According to our ancestral laws, she will receive fifty heavy beatings." Madam Xiao gritted her teeth, "As for you, Lin Wanrong, not only did you barge into the meeting hall, but you also caused a commotion and showed no respect for your elders. You'll receive one hundred heavy beatings."

"Mother, please no," Xiao Yushuang pleaded, clinging tightly to her mother's legs, "Lin Wanrong only came in because of me. If you must punish someone, punish me."

"Mother, please don't punish my sister. I am willing to take the punishment for her." Xiao Yuruo also clung to Madam Xiao, crying and begging.

Seeing Xiao Yuruo willing to take the punishment for her sister, Lin Wanrong's impression of her slightly improved. At least the sisters seemed to have some affection for each other.@@novelbin@@

Madam Xiao was caught in a whirl of emotions as she saw her two daughters kneeling before her and begging. Tears welled up in her eyes. Suppressing her grief, she said, "Yushuang, even though you're my daughter, you trespassed into the meeting hall and showed disrespect. According to our ancestral rules, you must be punished. Today, in front of the elders of our family, I will teach you a lesson. Come, take Yushuang and this Lin Wanrong away, and give them one hundred heavy beatings."

Damn, truly impartial indeed. Lin Wanrong both respected and hated Madam Xiao. He shouted, "Wait"

Madam Xiao snapped, "What else do you have to say?"

Lin Wanrong gave a small smile, "Since the second young miss is a precious daughter, I'll take her beatings as well."

"Lin-Lin San, don't" Xiao Yushuang cried out, struggling. Xiao Yuruo quickly held her tightly and cast a grateful look at Lin Wanrong. No matter what kind of person this Lin Wanrong was, his concern for Yushuang was genuine.

Madam Xiao hadn't expected Lin Wanrong to make such a proposal. However, if he took the punishment, Yushuang wouldn't have to suffer. She sighed softly and waved her hand, "Since you're willing, then let it be one hundred and fifty beatings."

"Hold on, Madam. I can take the one hundred and fifty beatings, but I need a valid reason. According to the rule of the Xiao family's ancestors you mentioned earlier that is meant for punishing the second young lady, when exactly was this rule established?" Lin Wanrong asked.

Madam Xiao responded, "This rule was established when the old master was alive. What, are you planning to go against it?"

"Ha ha" Lin Wanrong burst into laughter. "Rules are made by people, and they can also be abandoned by people. The old master, when he was alive, set up such a rule to punish those with ulterior motives. But now, the second young lady is only trying to fulfill her filial duty and expand the Xiao family's influence. How can she be compared to those petty criminals? The second young lady is the old master's descendant. If she were to be punished by you, it would imply that she has ulterior motives. Where would that put the old master? I believe that even if the old master were alive, he would not want to see such a scene, right, Madam?"

Madam Xiao was momentarily speechless, taken aback by this servant's words. She had already delegated all of the Xiao family's management affairs to the eldest young lady, but today, when they were discussing a crucial plan concerning the survival of the Xiao family, Xiao Yushuang barged in and had a heated argument with the managers. With no other choice, she had to overstep the eldest young lady and directly punish the second young lady as an elder.

Seeing her mother wavering, Xiao Yuruo quickly grabbed her hand and said firmly, "Mother, you've already said that all matters of the household, big or small, are to be managed by me. Today, although Yushuang was in the wrong, she was also thinking about the Xiao family. She hasn't committed any serious misdeeds. Furthermore, she is a member of the Xiao family, she naturally has the right to know the details of this matter concerning the survival of the family."

Seeing her mother not saying anything, Xiao Yuruo turned around and coldly glanced at the managers, asking, "I wonder what the managers think?"

The Xiao family was large and had many businesses. The managers were all relatives, which was why the eldest young lady had gathered them to discuss the matter. They were somewhat afraid of Xiao Yuruo's swift and decisive handling of affairs. When they saw her glance at them, they all lowered their heads. Even the ones who had been the loudest earlier didn't dare to say anything.

Xiao Yuruo snorted internally, then took her sister's hand and said, "Yushuang, since you're here, it's just as well. You're my sister, and you have a share in the Xiao family. Sit beside me and listen to the discussion with our uncles."

Xiao Yushuang hummed softly in response, sneaking a glance at Lin Wanrong. Her face was filled with gratitude and joy. Remembering Lin Wanrong's words, she was no longer afraid of the uncles' gaze. She looked at her elder sister and loudly said, "Sister, our Xiao family cannot collaborate with the Tao family."

Xiao Yuruo sighed, "Little sister, you're still young. These matters aren't as simple as you think. We have to do whatever benefits the Xiao family."

As the sisters were speaking, the manager that Lin Wanrong had reprimanded suddenly said, "Eldest young lady, the second young lady is a member of our Xiao family. Her presence in the council hall is naturally acceptable. However, this servant not only trespassed into a forbidden area, but also spoke rudely and insulted the master. If we do not punish him, it will be hard to uphold the dignity of our Xiao family."

Seeing that Xiao Yushuang was now safe, Lin Wanrong was about to quietly slip away when he heard the manager target him. He was secretly annoyed. This damn manager, unable to win the argument, was resorting to dirty tricks.

Although Xiao Yuruo appreciated Lin Wanrong's righteous help for her sister, her overall impression of him couldn't fundamentally change. Seeing the manager seizing the opportunity to make trouble, she shot Lin Wanrong a cold glance but remained silent.

"Eldest young lady, if we do not deal severely with such an arrogant servant, I'm afraid our Xiao family will never have peace," the manager lamented.

"Lin San, your loyalty to the Madam is admirable. However, you trespassed into an important meeting area and spoke insultingly. If we don't punish you, it will be hard to convince others. Do you have anything else to say?" Xiao Yuruo glanced at him, her face expressionless.

Lin Wanrong sneered, "Eldest Miss, this Xiao residence is large and imposing. What does punishing a servant or two amount to? You don't need to do anything. From today, I quit."

"Lin San" Xiao Yushuang anxiously interrupted him, her beautiful eyes filled with tears. She went to his side, grasped his sleeve, and said, "Lin San, you promised me that you would help my sister. Our Xiao family cannot collapse."

She turned her face to Xiao Yuruo and her mother, a captivating blush rising to her cheeks. Shyly, she said, "Mother, sister, Lin San is actually not an outsider. He and I have already" She bit her lip and glanced at Lin Wanrong, continuing in a voice as soft as a mosquito's hum, "agreed to marry."

Chapter 89 Heartbroken

"What?" Second Miss's voice was soft, but Lin Wanrong, Lady Xiao, and Eldest Miss heard it loud and clear.

Not only were Lady Xiao and Eldest Miss stunned, but even Lin Wanrong himself also couldn't believe his ears. Had this young girl gone mad? He understood Xiao Yushuang's intention - she said this to exonerate him from his charges, but was it worth sacrificing her reputation?

Lin Wanrong sighed deeply, Fine, fine. Xiao Yushuang's sacrifice is just to help me assist the Xiao family out of their difficulties. Considering her sincere efforts, I should help them.

Seeing the disbelief on Lady Xiao and Eldest Miss's faces, Lin Wanrong felt a sudden calmness. He said to Xiao Yushuang, "I understand that you said those words to save me, but a woman's chastity is as important as her life. You shouldn't speak so carelessly."

"Yes, Yushuang, you can't talk nonsense. You're still so young, it's not even time to choose a husband. How can you talk about a predestined marriage?" Lady Xiao quickly held Xiao Yushuang's hand.

However, Xiao Yushuang didn't respond, only staring coldly at Lin Wanrong, her mind filled with unspoken thoughts.

For this honest and heartfelt young girl, Lin Wanrong sighed, "Madam, Eldest Miss, may I speak to you privately?"

Lady Xiao glanced at him, thinking that this matter should be kept secret. "Mr. Lin, come with me," Xiao Yuruo said.

"No, I want to go too," Second Miss hastily held her sister's hand, giving Lin Wanrong a concerned look.

"Are you not done with your nonsense?" Lady Xiao scolded, her face stern. Xiao Yushuang didn't dare to contradict her mother, and could only watch as the three of them walked into the next room.

It was a quiet little room. Once inside, the atmosphere became tense, and the mother and daughter of the Xiao family didn't speak.

Lin Wanrong thought it was better to start the conversation himself, lest they think he had abducted their young lady. He said, "Madam, Eldest Miss. What Second Miss said earlier was only to protect me. She spoke without thinking, and you must not take it seriously."

Xiao Yuruo gave him a look, scoffing, "What, you want us to take it seriously?"

Lady Xiao sighed, "Mr. Lin, I've heard a bit about your situation. Yushuang is still young, and her behavior can be a bit eccentric at times. Please don't misunderstand."

Lin Wanrong replied, "Rest assured, Madam. I won't misunderstand. Second Miss is still young. Some things are just her curiosity. Once her curiosity passes, everything will return to normal."

"Then swear to me, you won't harbor any romantic feelings for Yushuang" Xiao Yuruo said.

Damn it, they were overstepping their boundaries. Although he understood the mother and daughter's protective feelings towards their daughter (and sister), their disdain for him was irksome. What a lousy excuse, wasn't it just contempt for his status as a servant? If it wasn't for the young girl's pleading, he wouldn't have bothered to put up with their crap.

Thinking of Xiao Yushuang, Lin Wanrong felt a bit better. No matter what, the young girl's trust in him had genuinely touched him. He snorted coldly and said, "Eldest Miss, if you trust me, I don't need to swear an oath. You can see for yourself. If you don't trust me, even if I swear a thousand oaths, it would be useless."

Xiao Yushuang said, "You have a point there. In that case, I hope you can keep your word."

"Second Miss is innocent and lively, sincere and passionate, and I like her. But it's not romantic love. She's still young, and I see her as a little sister. I don't care how Madam and Eldest Miss see me, but you shouldn't doubt Second Miss," Lin Wanrong said with a clear conscience.

Suddenly, the door was pushed open with a bang. Xiao Yushuang stood at the door, her face pale. She stared blankly at Lin Wanrong, her eyes empty, as if devoid of any color.

Xiao Yuruo was taken aback and hurriedly asked, "Yushuang, why are you here?" She knew her sister's temperament well. This was a stubborn girl. Once she made up her mind, it was hard to change it.

Xiao Yushuang, as if she hadn't heard her sister, looked at Lin Wanrong and slowly said, "Lin San, were all the things you said true? Don't you really like me?"

"Presumptuous!" Lady Xiao shouted angrily. This girl had been flirting with this servant, it was disgraceful.

Xiao Yushuang seemed not to hear her mother's words. Her face was pale, her eyes wide open, biting her lip tightly, staring nervously at Lin Wanrong, waiting for his answer.

Lin Wanrong hadn't expected Xiao Yushuang to be eavesdropping on their conversation. Seeing her desolate expression now, he didn't know what to say. Such a good young girl, it wouldn't be bad to have her. For a moment, a thought rose in his mind that surprised even him.

Seeing him silent for a long time, Xiao Yushuang understood. She bit her silver teeth, trying hard not to let the tears fall, and looked deeply at Lin Wanrong, "Lin San, no matter what, remember the promise you made to me. You must help my mother and sister, or else, I, I"

She couldn't go on, turned around, and rushed out of the room. She ran quickly to the courtyard, the crystal tears welling up in her eyes glistening like pearls in the autumn sunlight.

The three people in the room were all somewhat dumbfounded. Lady Xiao and Eldest Miss understood Xiao Yushuang's temperament very well. They could see that the second young lady indeed had feelings for Lin San.

Lin Wanrong was also taken aback. If he couldn't see Xiao Yushuang's feelings, then he was a fool. This little girl, with her fiery temper, who knew what might happen? He was somewhat worried

about Xiao Yushuang, but he saw that the Eldest Miss was looking at him with a face full of anger, as if he was the root cause of all this.

Lin Wanrong helplessly shook his head. This was all too sudden and caught him off guard. He didn't know if it was a blessing or a curse. Being so charming was really a curse, he thought, not knowing whether he was being self-deprecating or narcissistic.

Lin Wanrong shook his head again, not wanting to think about these things. It was more important to take care of the tasks the little girl had entrusted to him. That way, he wouldn't let her down.

He looked at Xiao Yushuang and went straight to the point, "Eldest Miss, I heard from Second Miss that Tao Dongcheng wants to form a partnership with the Xiao family. But I don't know what Eldest Miss and Madam think about this."

He said this so naturally, completely forgetting that he was just a servant of the Xiao family. In the eyes of the Eldest Miss, he wasn't even worth an onion.

Xiao Yuruo was very dissatisfied with him for confusing her sister. She coldly said, "Lin San, you should go back and take care of your own business. These matters are not your concern."

Lin Wanrong was used to this haughty Miss and didn't bother to get angry with her. He just snorted, "Eldest Miss, nothing is absolute. Maybe in your eyes, I'm just a servant. But in my view, I'm unique and irreplaceable. Different perspectives lead to different conclusions, just like in business. You might only see the benefits, but you don't see the hidden risks."

Lin Wanrong was implying something, and Xiao Yushuang naturally understood. A flicker of surprise crossed her face as she looked at him, "Do you have some insight?"

Lin Wanrong didn't bother to argue with her. He said seriously, "Eldest Miss, what tempting conditions did the Tao family offer for partnering with the Xiao family? Let me guess, did they give the Xiao family a large share?"

"How did you know?" Xiao Yushuang was genuinely surprised. This matter was highly confidential, known only to her and her mother. Even Xiao Yushuang hadn't heard about it. Where had this servant heard it from?

"You don't need to be surprised, these are just my guesses," Lin Wanrong said. As a sales manager, he had a keen mind and a flexible brain. He was no stranger to these tactics. "How much of a share did the Tao family give you?" Lin Wanrong continued.

Xiao Yushuang was a bit curious. This servant did seem to have some ability. She snorted in her heart, and for some reason, she thought of the night when he had spanked her. Her annoyance flared up again. She listened to his question, remained silent for a long while, and then said, "Forty percent."

"Forty percent of the shares. Forty percent," Lin Wanrong paced a few steps, then scoffed, "Such an enticing offer, if it were me, I would certainly consider it."@@novelbin@@

"But Eldest Miss," Lin Wanrong changed his tone, "have you ever thought about why he would offer you such generous terms? You are partnering with three families, and you hold forty percent of the shares. The Tao family and the other, the He family, together only hold sixty percent. Why is that?"

Miss Xiao blushed slightly, but didn't speak. It was the long-silent Madam Xiao who spoke, "Yuruo and I discussed it, and it's very likely that Young Master Tao is interested in Yuruo, which is why he deliberately offered such generous terms."

Madam Xiao listened to Lin Wanrong's words, remembering the praises the servants in the mansion had for him, and his unique contract with the staff. She thought, 'Does this Lin San really have some ability? It's good to hear what he has to say.'

"Oh," Lin Wanrong suddenly understood. "Pretending to be generous, giving the Xiao family forty percent of the shares, as long as he wins the favor of Eldest Miss. Once they are married, he can effortlessly reclaim these shares. This Young Master Tao really knows how to calculate." Lin Wanrong said with a smile. It's no wonder Xiao Yuruo and her mother had such suspicions. Tao Dongcheng was trying hard to please Miss Xiao, so they couldn't help but consider this.

Xiao Yushuang's face reddened slightly, she glared at him, thinking 'What does my business with Young Master Tao have to do with you?'

"So, Eldest Miss, do you have some feelings for Young Master Tao? You should know that this question is related to the future destiny of the Xiao family. We must not be careless," Lin Wanrong teased Xiao Yuruo.

Chapter 90 The Alliance Debate

Xiao Yuruo looked a little dazed, only speaking after a long silence, "Whether it's Young Master Tao or any other Young Master Li or Young Master Zhang, as long as they are beneficial to my Xiao family, I can sacrifice everything. And besides, what's so bad about Young Master Tao? He's far better than you, a bad person who bullies people everywhere"

"Cough, cough," Lin Wanrong hastily feigned a cough to interrupt her. Xiao Yuruo's face turned slightly red; she had just remembered what he had done to her that day, which was quite embarrassing. She nearly let it slip out in her distraction. If her mother found out, she would have died of shame long ago.

But this Xiao Yuruo was, after all, a strong woman who had weathered storms. Her expression changed quickly, and she said doubtfully, "Actually, I have some suspicions. Even if Tao Dongcheng is interested in me, there's no need for him to make it so obvious. There must be something strange going on." This was a rather astute statement, which made Lin Wanrong sigh in relief, thinking that her involvement in business was not in vain.

From her words, it was clear that she had no particular fondness for Young Master Tao. As she said, she belonged to the Xiao family, and would do anything beneficial for the family, even if it meant sacrificing herself.

Lin Wanrong felt a bit sorry for this young lady, thinking that this girl had some spirit. It was a pity that her temperament was somewhat lacking. Otherwise, she would have been worth befriending. But he couldn't really blame her for having a poor impression of him. After all, he had taken advantage of her verbally during their first encounter and got caught visiting brothels with Young Master Guo, which naturally left a bad impression.

"In fact, there are two possibilities for such a joint venture," Lin Wanrong began to calmly analyze. "The first one, of course, sounds nice. It's called 'making money together.' It's great to have such a selfless attitude, and I believe that's how Young Master Tao has been promoting it to you, Eldest Miss. But for him to be so generous, giving forty percent of the shares to the Xiao family, even if he wanted to win over you, Eldest Miss, wouldn't he be afraid of idle talk from others? Moreover, what if the Xiao family took this forty percent of shares, and you, Miss Xiao, stood him up?"

"Stood him up? What does that mean?" The two women of the Xiao family asked in confusion.

Lin Wanrong smacked his forehead in regret. Damn, he had to play the glorious role of a public teacher again. After finally explaining this "foreign term," Eldest Miss Xiao blushed and said, "What's with standing someone up? Your words sound so unpleasant." However, Lin Wanrong's words did make her think. Being experienced, she thought for a while then shook her head firmly, "Tao Dongcheng is not of such a mind. Tell me about the other possibility."

Lin Wanrong nodded approvingly, "The other possibility is that the alliance is just a faade, and in reality, it's a game of merger."

"Merger?" Eldest Miss Xiao frowned, and Lady Xiao also sighed.

"We have also considered this possibility," Eldest Miss Xiao said seriously, "In fact, my mother and I have always been worried about this problem. But we can't find the crux of the matter. He gave so many shares, even if we do nothing, we will have forty percent of the profits every year."

Lin Wanrong didn't answer her question directly. Instead, he asked, "Miss, how do the three of your families allocate resources among each other? In simpler terms, how do you divide the work?"

Eldest Miss Xiao found it a bit strange. This servant seemed to know quite a lot. She answered honestly, "After the alliance, my Xiao family is responsible for the cloth and silk spinning workshops, and the He family is in charge of transportation."

Lin Wanrong chuckled coldly, "Does the Tao family take care of the sales, then?"

"How did you know?" Xiao Yuruo wondered. "After we collectively supply and transport, it is managed by the Tao family. Then we share the profits according to our shares."

Lin Wanrong shook his head with a bitter smile, "Oh, my dear Eldest Miss, you are being played and you don't even realize it. I'm afraid they've tricked you into selling yourself, and you're still counting your money."

Xiao Yuruo snapped, "What do you mean by that?"

Lin Wanrong didn't take her anger seriously and asked with a smile, "Eldest Miss, what do you think is the most important thing in doing business?"

"Honesty in operation," Xiao Yuruo answered without hesitation.

Damn, her answer was indeed accurate, but it was all nonsense.

"Eldest Miss, what I'm asking is, what is the most important aspect or department in doing business?" Lin Wanrong gently guided her. This era didn't have many theories on sales, and although Eldest Miss Xiao had been operating for many years, she had always been learning through trial and error. Lin Wanrong had to play the role of a teacher again.@@novelbin@@

Xiao Yuruo seemed to have realized something, her face turned pale. She looked at Lin Wanrong and said, "You mean... operations?" Eldest Miss Xiao was indeed quite capable. At this time, there was no such thing as marketing theory, all shops were in a spontaneous sales mode, let alone marketing. Sales were always an overlooked aspect, so for Eldest Miss Xiao, without Lin Wanrong's deep theoretical knowledge, to come to this conclusion was quite remarkable.

"Correct," Lin Wanrong said loudly, "It's operations, or what we often call sales. Eldest Miss, you might not yet understand the power of marketing. To exaggerate a bit, as long as there's a good sales team, even a pile of shit in a latrine, after packaging, I can sell it." Lin Wanrong chuckled.

"Vulgar." Xiao Yuruo looked at him with a red face, and snorted from her delicate nose. The bit of goodwill that had accumulated from his analysis disappeared quickly. Lady Xiao, who had been quietly listening to their conversation, also blushed.

Damn, swearing in front of a beauty, this feeling was really amazing. Looking at the embarrassed mother and daughter, Lin Wanrong felt a secret pleasure.

"To give the right to operate to the Tao family? That's like giving them your life. Tao Dongcheng may have a large business scale and rapid expansion, but it's hard for him to establish a complete marketing network in a short period of time. How can he match up to the Xiao family's years of hard work? Once the Tao family has the right to operate, they can legitimately use the Xiao family's resources to expand their strength, even replace it. Once the alliance is canceled and the Xiao family's marketing network has been wasted, what will you compete with the Tao family with? My dear Eldest Miss, this strategy of alliance, to put it bluntly, is like cutting off your limbs and crippling your own abilities, leaving you to be swallowed up."

After analyzing for quite a while, it was the final statement that was the crux. Lin Wanrong took a few deep breaths, thinking, damn, telling ten stories to that little girl wasn't this exhausting.

"Chunlan, Chunlan, get me a pot of tea quickly." Lin Wanrong casually sat down and commanded the maid outside, not regarding himself as an outsider at all.

Eldest Miss's face turned pale, and Lady Xiao's face also didn't look good. If Lin San's analysis was correct, the Tao family's alliance plan clearly harbored ill intentions, which was frightening.

"Could it be that the Tao family really wants to swallow us up?" Eldest Miss Xiao murmured to herself. She had no particular fondness for Young Master Tao, but she didn't dislike him either. Both of them were in business, and they had met numerous times, but she had never imagined that he harbored such malicious intentions.

"Of course, all of these are just my speculations. Eldest Miss and Madam shouldn't worry about it. Maybe Young Master Tao genuinely admires Eldest Miss and has the Xiao family's best interests at heart." Having said everything, Lin Wanrong was playing coy, pretending to be modest.

Eldest Miss Xiao's face showed a hint of determination. She huffed, "No matter what his intentions are, we must be on guard." She furrowed her brows and worriedly said, "But Tao Dongcheng's father, Tao Yu, is a silk manufacturer in Suzhou. We can't offend him lightly."

Lady Xiao was also frowning deeply. Among the three, only Lin Wanrong was relaxed. The saying goes, 'It doesn't concern me, so I don't worry.' Besides, the mother and daughter hadn't asked for his opinion, so it was wise for him to keep his mouth shut.

Xiao Yuruo glanced at this laid-back servant, thinking, this scoundrel does have some insight. The Tao family's tricks had deceived even her, but they hadn't escaped his eyes.

Remembering what Xiao Yushuang had said to Lin Wanrong before she left, Xiao Yuruo asked, "Lin San, what's your opinion on this matter?" Although her impression of Lin San wasn't good, this matter was crucial to the Xiao family's future, and she didn't want her personal feelings to affect the family's interests.

Lin Wanrong chuckled, "Eldest Miss, I'm just a servant in the Xiao family. It's not my place to speak in this council."

Eldest Miss Xiao glared at him fiercely. This bad servant, he had become so cheeky. Seeing that he was unwilling to answer her, Eldest Miss Xiao's temper flared up again. She snorted and gritted her teeth, "Since you don't want to say, I won't force you. What you said today has done a great service

to the Xiao family. Considering your merits and faults, I won't pursue the matter of you trespassing in the council anymore. You can leave now."

Lin Wanrong laughed heartily, gave a bow, and gracefully turned to leave. Eldest Miss Xiao huffed and said to Lady Xiao, "Mother, I think this Lin San does have some tricks up his sleeve. He doesn't want to talk to me, but what should we do?"

Lady Xiao pondered for a while and said, "I've heard from the servants that this Lin San indeed has some talent and knowledge. From what he said just now, it seems that he has done business before and has quite a bit of experience, and he already has a strategy for this alliance matter. If he can help our Xiao family, perhaps there is a way out."

Eldest Miss Xiao gritted her teeth and said, "This scoundrel, he loves to cause trouble. If it weren't for the fact that what he said today made some sense, I definitely wouldn't have let him off."

Lady Xiao stared at her face and asked, "Yuruo, did he do something to upset you?"

"No, no," Eldest Miss's face turned red, and she hurriedly said, "How dare he upset me? Mother, you don't need to worry."

Lady Xiao sighed, "You've been working so hard, tirelessly maintaining the Xiao family, I don't know when there will be an end to this. Yuruo, you've truly suffered."

Eldest Miss Xiao felt a lump in her throat. Thinking about how she, a woman, was hustling and bustling outside every day, one could imagine the heartache she felt. She looked at her mother determinedly, a firm light shining in her eyes, "Mother, don't worry. I won't let the Xiao family fall on my watch."