

Immortal 701

Chapter 701: One Palm Cannot Clap

The officials lining up behind Zu An became unhappy. They all urged him to move aside for now.

Zu An straight up ignored them. He gave this official with the mustache a cold look. "My clothes are not orderly as long as you say they aren't? Who do you think you are?"

The official with the mustache cupped his hands towards the palace and said coldly, "This is the authority the court has granted me. When it comes to the inspection of the appearance of officials, I naturally have the last say."

"Does this mean that you have already made your decision to deliberately trouble me?" Zu An's expression was cold.

The official's nose pointed straight at the sky. "I have always enforced the law fairly, how could I possibly deliberately trouble you? Why am I not troubling others? One palm cannot clap. You should reflect on your own instead of blaming others."

Zu An was immediately shocked. He didn't expect to hear the classic quote of a certain someone from his past world.

The mustached officer said impatiently again, "You are wasting everyone's time here. According to the law, you should be made to stand to the side for two hours in punishment as a model for other officials!"

Even though it was early in the morning, the sun had already risen. Standing for two hours under the sun wasn't too big of a deal, but the humiliation was great.

After all, those who passed through this palace gate were all court officials. Once they witnessed this scene, he would become the laughingstock of the entire court.

Zu An's eyes narrowed. "May I ask what sir's name is?"

"What, do you want to get revenge on me?" The mustached official had a look of disdain on his face. "I will never give out a fake name, I am the Assistant Minister of the Huang Gate, Shi Jun! Everything that has happened today has been done impartially. You cannot do anything to me no matter how you complain and cry today."

"Shi Jun?" Zu An suddenly realized what was happening. "What kind of relationship do you have with Shi Kun?"

The mustached officer gave him a cold look. After a long time had passed, he said, "Shi Kun is this one's younger brother."

Zu An thought to himself, no wonder he found this guy familiar. So he was that kid's big brother!

Shi Jun continued and said, "I would never target you because of my younger brother. I am just doing my job according to official business."

The Shi clan's brothers were all close. This guy was the reason his younger brother died, so he obviously needed to get revenge.

The Shi clan was originally a bit cautious because of the crown princess, but King Qi Manor contacted them. With their cooperation, the Shi clan had nothing else to worry about.

As for Zu An defeating King Qi's heir, the Shi clan didn't pay that much attention. According to the reports, the only thing special about this fella is his movement technique. His real cultivation was only around the sixth or seventh rank.

The reason King Qi's heir lost was mainly because he underestimated his opponent, as well as the help of a mysterious expert.

Now that they were in the imperial palace, how could any mysterious experts dare to approach? The emperor would just kill him!

Furthermore, he was a seventh ranked expert himself, so he naturally dared to clash with Zu An head-on like this.

The officials who were passing by all snorted disdainfully. Who are you trying to fool? However, none of them would stand out at this type of time.

After all, there was no proof that he was avenging a personal grudge right now, and no one wanted to offend the Shi clan.

"Ah, so you're just doing your job according to official business~" Zu An repeated and deliberately stretched out the words.

Shi Jun harrumphed. "It doesn't matter what you think. You have no choice but to obey me. Get lost and stand to the side!"

He deliberately spoke this way to infuriate the other party. Once he could no longer hold back, he could call over the Imperial Guard. He was currently in a position of power, so he had more than enough methods to deal with Zu An.

Zu An shook his head. "Unfortunately, you made a fatal error."

"What?" Shi Jun frowned. He wondered to himself where he slipped up, but he understood the rules of etiquette like the back of his hand. Not even the emperor himself would be able to criticize him in any way.

Zu An chuckled and said, "Who said one palm cannot clap?"

As soon as he finished speaking, he instantly moved in front of Shi Jun. There was a loud and clear smack noise. A red handprint appeared on Shi Jun's face.

Zu An already returned to his original location. He stretched out his fingers. The recoil from that slap actually stung a bit. "Look, didn't one palm make a clapping sound just now?"

Everyone was stupefied. No one expected to see this! His speed was way too fast, and he actually dared to attack Shi Jun!

Shi Jun clutched his face. His head was ringing. His head went completely blank in that instant and he only reacted after the event.

I was hit?

This motherfucker hit me?

In front of so many people's faces?

He erupted into rage. "You bastard, you're courting death!"

You have successfully trolled Shi Jun for +999 +999 +999...

But even so, he didn't attack. Instead, he calmed himself down and said, "You dare to publicly attack an Etiquette Inspection Officer? This is a huge crime! Guards, arrest this man and punish him with a hundred strikes with the rod! Then, throw him into the imperial prison until further orders from his majesty!"

He thought to himself that not even King Qi's heir could take down this guy. Furthermore, the other party moved too quickly just now, to the point where he couldn't even see too clearly. He didn't think he could win against Zu An himself.

But he was currently in charge of inspecting the appearance of officials. In this type of situation, he could command the Imperial Guard.

The surrounding Imperial Guards were stunned. They had never encountered this type of thing before.

In the past, those officials who failed the inspection were all panicking in fear and obediently suffered their punishment by standing off to the side. When did they ever lash out against the inspector?

Ever since the founding of the Great Zhou Dynasty, no, since even further back, has anything like this ever happened before?

That was why they didn't immediately react when they heard Shi Jun's exasperated roaring. How were they supposed to deal with this type of event?

Zu An used this chance to speak to Shi Jun. "Again and again, you are saying how you are in charge of supervising the etiquette of all officials. Then let me ask you, what if there is an official whose clothes are so disorderly that they didn't even wear their pants properly?"

Shi Jun subconsciously replied, "They are looking down on the court's laws and discipline of course. Their crime of disrespect will remove them from office, and those whose crimes are more serious are to be banished."

He was stunned as soon as he finished this sentence. Why am I replying to him? I should be arresting this man right now.

He was just about to urge the guards again when Zu An said with a voice of ridicule. "Oh? I was just about to remind you that your pants dropped."

“Nonsense! Don’t think that you...” Shi Jun sneered. Unfortunately, he felt a chill between his legs as soon as he reached halfway through his sentence. When he lowered his head, he saw that his pants already fell between his legs. He immediately froze up.

Zu An said to the guards, “This person’s bearing is not in order. Why are you not arresting him already? He should be sent out to the front lines, right?”

Those imperial guards subconsciously nodded. But there was something wrong here, right? They didn’t know what was right here.

Everyone was shocked. The disturbance here became even greater than before.

The officials who were passing by were merely acting as detached bystanders, but now, they all surrounded this place for gossip. There were many people who even commented:

“The Shi clan’s people groom themselves pretty well. It’s white and clean.”

“But there’s no hair down there at all! They don’t look all that masculine.”

“Wow, his underwear is so fancy...”

...

Shi Jun raised his head to the sky and screamed in agony when he heard the surrounding discussions. “No!!!!!!”

He vomited a mouthful of blood. Then, he collapsed.

Throwing up a mouthful of blood looked terrifying, but with his cultivation, it wasn’t a big deal at all.

However, the shame he suffered was too much. Pretending to faint in this type of situation was better than to go through this pain.

It’s all this damn Zu An’s fault!

You have successfully trolled Shi Jun for +1024 +1024 +1024...

Zu An used this chance to sneak into the imperial palace. He was full of disdain inside. You want to use the rules against me? I’ll flip the damn table!

He arrived at the eastern palace and idly played a few games of five-in-a-row with the crown prince. There were several times when the crown prince was screaming in panic. Little Xu and Little He broke out into cold sweat from watching. Sir Zu really was brave, he actually didn’t let the crown prince win!

Time passed just like that. Soon afterwards, the morning court session ended. The crown princess returned with a sullen expression. “Gather all of the eastern palace’s important members. There is a huge matter to discuss!”

Chapter 702: Eastern Palace’s Predicament

After the crown princess gave her orders, she withdrew inside the inner palace with a grim expression.

Soon afterwards, the eastern palace's eunuchs and maids rushed out to spread the news.

Zu An was the only one who seemed to instead be at ease. It hadn't been long since he arrived at the eastern palace, so many officials didn't know him. He wouldn't know who to contact if he was given orders to spread the news, so he instead had nothing to do.

No, he had a task. He was here to play five-in-a-row with the fatty.

Zu An absent-mindedly played with him while asking, "Crown prince, what happened?"

"How would I know... Ah, you cannot put it there! I don't care!" The crown prince blocked a certain spot on the game board, stopping Zu An from putting a piece there.

Zu An couldn't help but chuckle. He took back his tile. What am I doing? Why am I asking this guy?

He was about to ask the crown princess, but judging from how cold her expression was just now, he was worried that now might really be a bad time. He thus prodded the fatty next to him and said, "Crown prince, something big seems to have happened. You're not going to take a look?"

"It's fine, we have Linglong to take care of it anyway." The crown prince waved his hand in annoyance. His attention returned to the go board.

Zu An sighed. "The crown princess is still a woman in the end. She has her moments of weakness, you know?"

The crown prince said indifferently, "Linglong was able to take care of everything during these years. Ah, stop talking about that and just play."

Zu An was speechless. I can win easily even if I'm distracted, yet you want me to play seriously?"

Just what the heck did the crown princess do in her past life for her to end up with this type of idiot?

But he didn't have to worry about the royal family's matters. He played with the crown prince while watching the surrounding activity.

Soon afterwards, there were officials who rushed over. Most of them were elders and middle-aged men. He didn't see many young people among them. If they didn't have red-crowned cranes embroidered on their clothes, then it was qilins. These were clearly important officials in the court.

The first rank of civil officials had red-crowned cranes on their uniforms, while the first rank of military officials had qilins.

Hm? There are python decorations too?

Zu An's eyes lit up. So it was an old acquaintance! It's King Liang!

There was another elder who came with them. Even though all of his hair was white and wrinkles covered his face, his eyes were still sharp. There was a domineering aura around him.

Furthermore, there was one more familiar person. General Liu Yao was respectfully following half a step behind him.

Zu An was stunned. The Liu Yao he remembered was so arrogant his nose was always pointed at the sky. Who the hell is this?

He had just recently arrived at the capital after all, so he didn't know that many people. However, he could ask the crown prince.

The crown prince gave that person a look. Then, he was so frightened his chubby face trembled. "That's my grandpa..."

He secretly hid his go piece under his seat while saying this. He looked really scared of this man.

Zu An realized who this was now. So it was the emperor's father-in-law, the War Chariot General Liu Guang! The empress, as well as the former empress, were both daughters of this man.

Liu Guang enjoyed great status because of his daughters, occupying the position of War Chariot General. In terms of the military system, his rank was second only to the Great General and White Rider General. His rank was even higher than the Qin clan's state dukes.

Of course, military rank was one thing, real authority was something else. The Qin clan's two state dukes had powerful men that worked under them, so their real authority was a bit greater.

Liu Guang just happened to be looking in this direction at this time as well. He stormed over in anger. How could the crown prince's movements escape his notice?

"Do you know what kind of situation we are in right now? Crown prince, how can you still be playing around here?!" Liu Guang was furious. He pointed at Zu An and said, "Drag this fool who has tricked the crown prince into playing around down into the dungeons to be flogged with a hundred strikes!"

Zu An's expression changed. He was being punished just for being here!

What the hell is going on today? Why do I keep encountering these ridiculous situations one after the next?

Suddenly, Liu Yao ran over to his brother's side and whispered a few words. Liu Guang's expression changed a bit when he looked at Zu An. "Oh, so it was Zu An. You've done some work these past few days. But..."

Before he finished, his figure froze, as if he was listening to something. There seemed to be someone conversing with him through ki transmission.

A while later, he changed his tone. "Since you're a newcomer, I won't hold you responsible since you don't know better. However, you are the crown prince's secretary and are in charge of overseeing the crown prince's studies. Do not behave willfully with the crown prince in the future."

"Understood!" Zu An cupped his hands. "Thank you, senior."

He was surprised. Did Liu Yao speak out for him? But this didn't make sense... They didn't really share any friendship. Furthermore, it would make more sense if this man hated him after what happened in Brightmoon City.

At this time, the crown princess appeared nearby. "Everyone, please come in for the discussion."

She sounded extremely tired. However, this instead gave her voice a unique tone that sounded soothing to the ears.

Zu An realized that it was the crown princess who spoke out for him.

“Crown prince, please come inside as well. This matter has to do with you.” The crown princess then gave Zu An a look. She had a look of hesitation on her face. However, when she thought about how his status was a bit too low compared to Liu Guang and the others, inviting him inside would seem a bit too abrupt, so she gave up on this thought.

Liu Guang and the others followed her inside. When they entered, he couldn’t help but say, “Linglong, you seem to value that brat quite a bit?”

The crown princess replied, “Even though Zu An seems a bit irresponsible on the surface, he is a rare genius. He has only been in the capital for a few days, yet he has already made King Qi suffer greatly. I believe that everyone has heard about how he broke Zhao Zhi’s legs yesterday as well, I presume?”

Liu Guang stroked his beard and said with a laugh, “This was the best piece of news I’ve received in recent years. Looks like even King Qi and the others have their bad days!”

King Liang Zhaoyi also said, “I have interacted with him before in Brightmoon City. Even though his bearing is rather ordinary, he is incredibly treacherous. He can also turn peril into safety, and it is instead his opponents who are badly humiliated.”

Liu Yao, who was standing nearby, immediately became upset. “What are you looking at me for?”

King Liang replied, “I was just looking around.”

The crown princess quickly interrupted the two of them to avoid a dispute from starting. “It is hard enough trying to rope someone like him in, so why is there a need to make him feel unwelcome over such a small matter? That was why I stopped senior earlier.”

Liu Guang nodded. This was something he agreed with.

Liu Yao instead complained, “Linglong, aren’t you favoring him too much? He’s just a scoundrel from the streets. What is so special about him? He’s just a bit lucky at most.”

The crown princess completely disregarded this simple-minded man and began to converse with the others.

...

Meanwhile, Zu An was chatting with Piao Duandiao and Jiao Sigun outside.

The two guards looked at him with worship. “Big bro, I thought that you were going to be punished by that great senior, but you’re still perfectly fine! I really, really admire you!”

Zu An rolled his eyes. “Why do I feel like you guys were hoping that I’ll get beaten?”

“Big bro, that’s a misunderstanding! Are we that type of people?!” The two of them quickly expressed their loyalty.

Zu An couldn't help but look in the inner hall's direction. "By the way, do you guys know what happened?"

Jiao Sigun said in complaint, "The two of us were being punished here all this time, so how could we know what happened? But judging from how the crown princess looks, it's probably something major."

Piao Duandiao nodded and parroted, "We've already worked for the eastern palace for many years. We've never seen such a huge gathering before."

"Then do you recognize the officials who went inside earlier?" Zu An continued to ask them questions. Even though Chuyan gave him a rough breakdown of the court's situation, he only knew their names and ranks. He couldn't match names with faces.

The two guards explained, "The one who went in first is the Imperial Secretariat's Right Confidential Assistant, Bi Qi. He is also the crown princess' father."

Zu An recalled the people who went in earlier. Bi Qi was probably the middle-aged man who arrived first.

He was quite handsome. After all, how could a father who gave birth to the crown princess possibly be ugly?

However, even though his face was expressionless, Zu An couldn't help but feel that his man was a sinister old fox.

This type of feeling was strange. It was like watching a show where the role the actor was playing was clearly a righteous one, yet because of who the actor was, the viewer will still subconsciously think that he is a villain.

This was the feeling Bi Qi gave him. He was clearly grand in appearance, and there weren't any strange expressions to be seen on his face. He even nodded towards some eunuchs and maids in greeting. Regardless of which angle one looked at it from, he would seem like a radiant and elegant man. However, the first impression Zu An had of this man was that he is a crafty person.

"The next to arrive was the Central Secretariat Supervisor Meng Yi. You seem to know the ones who just arrived, so we won't introduce them." The two guards explained from the side.

The shock in Zu An's face grew. These were all the crown prince faction's core personnel! Just what kind of event was this for all of them to be gathered together today?

Their group continued the discussion inside for most of the day. Only when night fell, did the people inside gradually come out. However, their faces were all full of worries.

When those people left, Zu An secretly sought out the crown princess. "Crown princess, what happened?"

"Crown princess?" Bi Linglong frowned. Suddenly, she laughed in distress. "I fear that I might not even be able to continue being the crown princess soon."

Zu An was alarmed. "Why would you say that?"

Judging from their recent interactions, he knew that this girl was proud down to her very bones. He had never seen her so dejected before.

Bi Linglong gave the crown prince, who was playing nearby, a look. Her eyes were full of helplessness. "King Qi's faction went all out today in court. The crown prince will soon no longer be the crown prince. Should that happen, then I will naturally no longer be the crown princess anymore."

Chapter 703: Test

"King Qi's faction went on the offensive? There is no way the emperor wouldn't do anything about it. Crown princess, you do not need to worry." Zu An said in consolation. However, he knew that any matter that could leave the crown prince's faction so dejected was definitely no small matter.

"If only it were that simple." The crown princess sighed. "During today's morning court session, our faction's officials questioned King Qi. After all, the assassination case is closely tied to King Qi. Regardless of how King Qi's faction tried to defend themselves, we would have ways of dealing with it. However, we didn't expect King Qi to be so vicious. He straight up took on all of the blame, but he then pushed all of the blame onto Cheng Xiong's father and son."

"Then, even though many of our people were doubtful, without any key evidence and with so many members on King Qi's side, more and more people began to speak out for him, so this matter was settled at that."

Zu An said with surprise, "But this is something that we should have expected. What was it that made all of you look like that?"

"It would've been fine if that was all." The crown princess sighed. "But soon afterwards, King Qi's faction began to wantonly retaliate with this topic. Many people mentioned that the crown prince doesn't even have the ability to protect himself, so how was he supposed to inherit this world?"

After all, the Great Zhou Dynasty was established through martial might. One's status in this world was decided through cultivation.

Previously, even though the crown prince was a bit of a letdown, he had the world's most powerful father. Even though everyone was unhappy, they still couldn't say anything.

The crown prince was almost killed after that attack. Everyone finally began to pay attention to this issue.

In order to denounce King Qi, the crown prince's faction had previously continuously stated how dangerous the situation was back then, how the crown prince almost died many times.

Yet in the end, everything became proof that supported King Qi's argument.

Many originally neutral officials in the court became extremely dissatisfied towards the stupid crown prince. They finally couldn't take it anymore.

Once the crown prince becomes the emperor, he might be done in by any random assassination. If that happened, wouldn't the entire country fall into chaos as well?

Those people didn't speak out for King Qi's sake, but rather out of a desire for the public good. As such, not even the emperor could speak much in rebuke.

Of course, the emperor wasn't someone who would let others step on him. He decisively sent those who were complaining the loudest to be flogged in order to snuff out the first signs of the uprising.

However, those people seemed to have already made a plan. They continued to step out one after another, none of them fearing death. Instead, they felt like being flogged was something glorious.

The emperor who cared a lot about his reputation knew what these people were thinking. They wanted to leave their names behind in history!

The emperor did everything he could to seek out immortality, and this immortality was nothing more than leaving his name behind. How could he allow these people to achieve the same result from just being flogged?

Furthermore, if this matter was really recorded, then whether the emperor's name would be recorded positively or instead as infamy was hard to say.

That was why under the condemnation of King Qi's faction and the neutral faction's cooperation, the emperor had no choice but to compromise.

He was going to hold a test for the crown prince. If he can pass, then that means that he has the qualifications to succeed to the throne. He has the ability to rule the empire.

But if he fails, then he can only abdicate from the throne.

King Qi's faction was satisfied with this result, because they knew that with the crown prince's skills, there was no way he could pass. As such, King Qi would then succeed the throne as the justified imperial brother.

The reason the emperor agreed to this proposal was because as long as the test was man-made, then there was room for manipulation.

He was caught completely unprepared this morning. By choosing a test, he can use this matter to buy some time and find a suitable solution.

But for the crown princess, she felt as if the sky was collapsing when she heard the news.

Others might feel that the crown prince was merely simple-minded, but she knew just how stupid this guy was. Other than eating, sh*tting, and playing, he didn't know a thing!

It was to the extent where even the games he played were mentally deficient games. For example, he was completely enamored by the five-in-a-row recently, which was an incredibly simple and uncouth game. She had no idea who came up with this type of game.

You can grab anyone off the street... No, any kid off the street and they might have a better chance at passing the test than this crown prince.

Zu An finally understood why everyone was so distressed after listening to the crown prince's explanation. No one had any confidence in that fatty.

“So what is he being tested on?” Zu An cut straight to the point.

The crown princess shook her head. “I have no idea what the contents are, but matters of cultivation and ruling are unavoidable. Both sides will have to discuss some more over what is being tested.”

She was extremely gloomy. The crown prince won’t be able to pass no matter what he is being tested on.

Zu An said in consolation, “Don’t worry too much. The crown prince is his majesty’s oldest son after all, so he will definitely get involved.”

“I hope that is the case.” The crown princess instead didn’t have much hope, because she didn’t think the emperor could do anything about this.

“By the way, I heard that the Shi clan’s men troubled you by the entrance today?” The crown princess collected herself and asked.

Zu An replied, “It’s nothing important and I already dealt with it. The crown princess doesn’t need to worry about it.”

The crown princess voiced her response. “Then you can just leave now.”

It was a pity that Shi Kun’s matter completely offended the Shi clan, which might push them towards King Qi’s side. However, she really wasn’t in the mood to think about these things.

She sighed when she looked at Zu An’s departing figure. If the crown prince was someone who saved her worry like this guy, then just how great would that be?

...

When Zu An left the eastern palace, a lesser eunuch ran up to him and told him the emperor had summoned him.

His expression immediately became helpless. Those concubines were all eager to meet with the emperor even once, yet he himself was seeing this man almost every day. What the hell is this?

But ridiculing was just that. There was nothing else he could do in this situation, so he could only follow the eunuch to the imperial study.

When he entered the imperial study, he saw that the emperor had an overcast expression. He immediately bowed tactfully. “I greet your majesty.”

The other party was still upset, so it was best not to provoke him.

The emperor voiced his response. Then, he picked up a memorial and said, “Someone accused you of using violence by the palace gates, that you attacked the inspector of etiquette Shi Jun. Did this happen?”

“I am being accused wrongly. There was nothing wrong with me, but that Shi Jun deliberately targeted me...” Zu An was just about to explain when the emperor cut him off.

“There is another matter that I am curious about. Why was it that his pants fell as soon as you said they would? According to the reports, this was also what you said to Han Fengqiu during your battle.” The emperor’s expression immediately became extremely sharp. “Do you have the dragon race’s blood? Do you have their Soulspeak ability?”

Zu An quickly explained, “Your majesty is wise. There was a dragon race elder who tried to kill me along the way, so how could I have any connection with them? Let alone the dragon Soulspeak ability.”

Keyboard Come was a skill that he absolutely could not tell the emperor about, or else he would be dead for sure. No emperors would feel at ease having someone that they cannot control under them.

“Then why did their pants fall? I refuse to believe that it is a coincidence.” The emperor gave him a cold look. One was at the peak of the ninth rank, while one was at the seventh rank. How could their pants fall just because you said that they would?

Zu An quickly explained, “I have no idea how Han Fengqiu’s pants fell, but that event gave me some inspiration. Shi Kun wanted to oppress me through etiquette, so when I rushed in to strike him in the face, I secretly broke open his waistband. He was still in shock and anger at the time, so he didn’t notice anything.”

The emperor was stunned. Then, he couldn’t help but roar with laughter. “You are quite the weird fella. Shi Jun was done in quite badly by you. He might not have the shame to take up etiquette inspection ever again.”

Zu An sighed in relief when he saw the other party laugh. Thank goodness my reactions are fast.

But this emperor really is cold... The Shi clan has established heroic contributions in the Great Zhou Dynasty, and the clan leader of the Shi clan is also one of the court’s prestigious eight dukes! He probably doesn’t care about the Shi clan at all and is only annoyed that they are now siding with King Qi.

The emperor continued, “I believe you have already heard about the test’s matter. You’ve always been quite the clever fella. Do you have any ideas?”

Chapter 704: Suspicious

Zu An’s first reaction was to teach the crown prince the way of guaranteed victory in five-in-a-row. After all, his age already completely studied this game. As long as he went first, he would definitely win.

But after thinking about it to himself, he still dispelled this thought in the end.

Even though five-in-row was easy, the sure-win method had all types of variations as well. If the crown prince could remember every choice he needed to make, then he wouldn’t be known as an idiot.

He thought for a bit, and then said, “With the crown prince as he is, we might have to cheat. What is he being tested on? We can give the crown prince the answers beforehand.”

The emperor replied, “The contents of the test have not been confirmed yet, but it will most likely be held by the Royal Academy. The academy’s staff are all stubborn and smelly like rocks in a latrine pit. They would never agree to helping the crown prince cheat. Your idea will not work.”

Neither side would be okay with the other side presiding over this test. Only the Royal Academy could receive the trust of both sides.

The Royal Academy had always remained neutral after both sides struggled for so long. They refused to join in on this struggle, but there was no need for them to participate either.

There were many outstanding cultivators who came out of the Royal Academy. They were scattered all across the world and had great status.

Regardless of who became emperor, it wouldn't bring them any benefits, but it wouldn't hurt them at all either. The people inside were all fanatical researchers without any interest in authority. It was to the extent where they believed that authority would only distract them from their cultivation.

It was precisely because of their zealotry towards cultivation that both the emperor and King Qi trusted that they wouldn't act impartially.

Zu An frowned. "Then things are much trickier. Should we have someone pretend to be the crown prince and take the test in his place? Are there any miraculous transformation techniques?"

This was a world of cultivation after all. There should be a way to pass off as the crown prince.

The emperor slowly shook his head. "There is, but it can only fool those who are not familiar with the crown prince. King Qi's faction will definitely investigate closely. I do not think this will escape their detection."

Zu An shrugged his shoulders and spread his arms. "Then there's really nothing I can do. Your majesty is powerful and brilliant. You will definitely think of a solution."

"I don't want to hear that pompous nonsense." The emperor paced around in the imperial study with an annoyed expression. If even he was using crude words, then that means that this matter really left him really annoyed today. If his mood was bad, then that meant even more people would become unhappy. "I'm giving you half a month to think of a solution. Otherwise, if the crown prince cannot remain the crown prince, then there is no use for a crown prince secretary either. I'll just throw you into the castration room."

Zu An: "???"

Motherfucker! You're making me do everything for you? Not even a production team would order their people like this!

Even though this was what he was thinking, he didn't show any dissatisfaction on the surface. "Understood!"

...

Zu An felt extremely irritated when he left the imperial study. He walked out of the palace. Fuck the crown prince and princess! If there's no choice, I'm just going to leave alone! The emperor might think that his seal is still in place, but he has no idea that a grandmaster already helped me get rid of it!

Hmph, I'm going home and embracing my lovely Chuyan! Like I give a sh*t if the crown prince dies or not.

A lesser eunuch ran over while he was thinking to himself. "Sir Zu, my clan's master invites you for a meeting."

Zu An was stunned. This lesser eunuch looked familiar. "Who is your master?"

"My master is Concubine Bai." The lesser eunuch replied respectfully.

Zu An gave the dusky sky a look. "It's already getting late. I don't think this is a good time?"

Normally speaking, subjects cannot walk willfully around in the palace. Only a few officials had this authority, and most of them were like secretaries and assistants to the emperor's everyday life.

Zu An could go as he wished with his status as the crown prince's secretary, but that was limited to the daytime. He had to leave the palace once it got dark, or else that would be a huge crime.

If there were any subjects who were still inside the palace after it got dark, ahem, there probably isn't a single emperor who is fond of being cuckold.

"It's related to the crown prince's exam." That lesser eunuch said.

"Lead the way!" After a bit of hesitation, he still followed this lesser eunuch. The emperor just gave him this mission with his life on the line. Even though he would run if he had no choice, it was best not to run away when he didn't have to yet.

Concubine Bai was the crown prince's concubine, so her rise and fall were tied to his. Her concern for the crown prince was real, so she might really have some ideas.

When they arrived at the Hundred Flowers Garden, the eunuch bowed before leaving.

A maid walked out from inside. It was precisely Concubine Bai's personal maid Xin Rui.

"Sir Zu, this way please!" Xin Rui bowed slightly and invited him in.

Zu An couldn't help but say, "Why didn't I see you first? I almost thought that the eunuch was trying to harm me."

Even though it never happened to him, he had seen more than enough examples of this. He didn't watch those dramas for nothing.

Xin Rui covered her mouth and laughed in a bashful manner. "Sir Zu must be kidding. Who would be brazen enough to harm someone in the palace?"

Zu An thought to himself that the servant really was a reflection of the master. Concubine Bai's personality was gentle and soft, Xin Rui's nature was also similar, perhaps even a bit more bashful.

The crown princess was rather tough, and Rong Mo was also like a hot pepper.

While he was thinking random thoughts, he was soon brought into the main hall. Xin Rui gestured inside. "Sir Zu, please come in."

Zu An nodded and walked inside. He had a good opinion of Concubine Bai the last time they met, and he also wanted to try that tea again. He wondered if he would have a chance to drink it again today.

He saw a beautiful figure seated at the other end of the table. Her posture was dignified, and her delicate body's lines were incredibly charming. He quickly shook his head. Stop, don't think that before I end up with some weird fetish!

But when he got closer and saw her appearance, he was stunned. It wasn't that she was ugly, but rather that even though she was gentle, graceful, and poised, she wasn't Concubine Bai at all.

This woman also looked at him in shock. Both of them spoke at the same time, "Why are you here?"

"Crown princess, why are you here?" Zu An asked in confusion.

The crown princess also harrumphed in annoyance. "I was the one who asked first."

This kid really doesn't follow the rules! I need to properly discipline him later.

Sigh, forget it. It's normal for talented people to have a bit of pride. I don't have too many people to use right now, so I shouldn't chase him away.

Zu An wrinkled his nose. This woman was always so domineering. I'll peel away your outer shell one day, let's see if it's still hard or soft inside. "Concubine Bai invited me and said that she had something to say about the crown prince's matter."

The crown princess frowned. "That's what she said to me too."

She suddenly got up and started to walk out after saying this.

After being in the palace for so long, she was naturally sensitive towards these matters. It was already dark outside, and there was no third person present. Being in the same room as another man would start a huge scandal.

But Xin Rui just happened to walk in with a cup of tea when she reached the entrance. "Huh? Crown princess, why are you suddenly leaving?"

The crown princess harrumphed. "What is Concubine Bai trying to do? Why isn't she here yet?!"

She was the crown princess. When had she ever waited for a concubine?

However, Concubine Bai sent someone to pass on the message that there was a solution to the crown prince's test. That was why she endured and came here.

But that woman invited a man here! Even though she was already familiar with Zu An, interacting in private like this still left her a bit uncomfortable.

Xin Rui explained, "Crown princess, please feel at ease. My master is currently preparing something and will come out soon. She told me to bring this Hundred Flower Tea to the two of you in apology."

The crown princess subconsciously licked her lips when she heard the words Hundred Flower Tea. She naturally knew of Concubine Bai's unique tea. She drank it a few times before and absolutely adored the flavor.

But because of her conflicting relationship with Concubine Bai, they didn't get along with each other. She was also stubborn as well, so she naturally couldn't lower her pride to ask for any. As such, she could only secretly long for it.

It would be a waste to not drink it since she is offering...

Pah! I am here because of the crown prince's test, it's not for drinking her shoddy tea!

"Fine then, I will wait for half a stick of incense's time for her. I will immediately leave if she is still not here by then." The crown princess sat down again and gracefully sipped on the fragrant tea. She sighed inwardly in praise. She really didn't know how Concubine Bai made such a delicious tea! She had some maids try to imitate it in private, but it would always be sickeningly sweet, and drinking it just didn't feel right. It lacked the natural simplicity and elegance of this Hundred Flower Tea.

A while later, she subconsciously tugged on her collar. She looked at Zu An and asked, "Do you feel like it is a bit hot today?"

Chapter 705: Scalp Numbing

Xin Rui placed the Hundred Flower Tea in front of the two of them. Then, she left with a sweet smile.

The crown princess frowned, but she didn't say anything else. Since this was related to the crown prince's test, they couldn't allow more people to hear about their discussion.

As for Zu An, he was still an eastern palace member in the end, so he wasn't a complete outsider. It should be fine for him to stay here for a short while.

The most crucial part of this was that Concubine Bai invited her for this meeting. Even though the two of them didn't really get along, she was still the crown prince's concubine after all, and she even gave birth to his son. The crown prince's prospects were also her own. Now that there was danger, there was no reason for her to do anything strange.

A powerful and refreshing fragrance swirled about her lips when she lifted the cup. When she swallowed the tea, the warm tea gradually spread through her body, and her anxious mood gradually calmed a bit.

Zu An was also drinking the tea. At the same time, he was secretly observing her.

Her eyes were bright and her skin was fair. Her lips were an enticing red. There was a faint hint of melancholy lingering between her brows, adding a bit of tenderness to her usually domineering bearing.

What was even a rarer sight was that even in this type of situation, her posture was still upright and elegant.

He had to admit that the crown princess was an incredible beauty.

He finally experienced what was the so-called feast for the eyes. The swirling steam coming from the Hundred Flower Tea almost seemed like a sweet fragrance that came from her body.

The crown princess' cheeks gradually flushed red. She could feel his gaze. How can this guy be behaving like this?

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +22 +22 +22...

However, saying anything in this type of situation would only make everyone embarrassed. It would make it hard for them to interact with each other in the future.

She was just wondering how she was going to rope him in. Now, it was clear.

She had been pretty ever since she was little, so she fully understood the uses of her own beauty. It was just that there had never been any situations where she had to make sure of her beauty yet.

Of course, she wasn't going to use a honey trap on Zu An. She was a glorious crown princess, she didn't have to lower herself to that extent. However, she could still use her beauty to speak some gentle words to him and rope him in that way.

Her red lips parted slightly when she thought of this. "Sir Zu, how did you meet the Chu clan's first miss?"

Zu An was stunned. He didn't expect her to suddenly ask him this. "It was actually quite the coincidence. I was washing myself in a pond in the wilderness, and then a girl suddenly dropped from the sky and landed in my arms."

"Huh?" The crown princess originally only planned to have a casual chat to get closer to him, but she immediately became interested when she heard this. "Was that Chu Chuyan? Why would she drop from the sky?"

When he saw her sparkling eyes, Zu An thought to himself, you really believed that? But he also became amused, so he continued to blabber, "Oh, back then, there was a cliff nearby. She jumped off of it."

Chuyan, my dear, I'm sorry for using you like this.

"What? Was she committing suicide?" The crown princess clutched her mouth. She really couldn't picture Chu Chuyan doing this. After all, she had already heard rumors about her before. Chu First Miss was an extraordinary beauty. During the short period she resided in the capital, she already left countless noble heirs in yearning day and night.

The most important part was that she was also a cultivation genius. There was practically no one at her level among her peers.

Why would such a stunning woman commit suicide?

"Ah, I think it was because she was told she had to marry a certain someone. With every hope turning to dust, she decided to just end it all." Zu An said nonchalantly.

The crown princess was shocked. She wondered just which clan it was that the Chu clan was going to join in marriage, but she rejected them one after another after thinking about it.

A while later, she suddenly became a bit sad, because she sympathized with Chu Chuyan's situation. After all, she was also left with no choice but to marry an idiot because of her clan.

But she wasn't as confident as Chu Chuyan, choosing to just end it all with death.

"Then?" Her mood became dejected.

“Then, I just happened to have saved her...” Zu An randomly weaved in the plot of Titanic, changing certain details along the way.

The crown princess was only asking casually, but she didn’t expect such a complicated and bizarre story. She was completely sucked in. “No wonder she ended up choosing you as her husband against everyone else’s opinions! Everyone else thought that a flower like her fell into... Ahem, but now, I understand her choice.”

Wasn’t this type of love story precisely the fantasies she indulged in during her youth? It was just a pity that the feelings of youth had long been buried deep within her heart, never to see the light again. But now that she heard his story, she seemed to have returned to her teenage years when she still knew how to dream.

Zu An was stunned when he saw her dumbstruck appearance. Hello? You’re the crown princess, don’t forget! Shouldn’t you be experienced and knowledgeable? Just a random Titanic parody already made you like this?

Now that I think about it, didn’t Chuyan also like to read that Domineering Sword Immortal stuff?

He suddenly felt that he could become an incredibly famous writer in this age! He could just randomly plagiarize any random love story and get tons of young ladies as his fans!

Wait, I might even be able to visit brothels without paying like Liu Yong, that Song poet... Ahem! This isn’t what’s important right now!

He gave that stunning beauty a look. “Crown princess, how did you and the crown prince meet?”

The crown princess would never answer this type of question normally. However, perhaps because she was moved by the story she had just heard, she was still quite emotional. After a bit of hesitation, she still replied, “Our meeting wasn’t as dramatic as yours. It was just a simple marriage between clans. His majesty approved of the Bi clan’s power and wished to bring us against King Qi with the marriage. My father wanted to stabilize the Bi clan as well, so he agreed to this marriage...”

The way she told this story made it sound as if this was something completely unrelated to her. He could sense the loneliness from this story and couldn’t help but ask, “Do you like the crown prince?”

“He is the crown prince, I am the crown princess, I have no choice but to like him. I don’t have a choice...” Her expression suddenly changed, as if she noticed that she forgot herself. “You’ve crossed the line. I don’t want to hear anything like this again.”

Zu An lost all interest when he saw that she returned to her normal proud self. He began to sip on his tea again.

“Why is Concubine Bai still not here?!” The crown princess was starting to get annoyed. She couldn’t help but loosen her collar. “Don’t you feel like it’s a bit hot today?”

“It is indeed a bit hot.” Zu An also felt a bit warm. “But that shouldn’t be, it is already dusk...”

Their expressions both changed the moment he said this. They were about to get up and leave, but they felt dizzy as soon as they stood up. Then, they both fell back into their chairs, losing consciousness.

Fuck, I fell into a trap! Zu An bit his tongue to try and stay awake, and he even transferred his ki to force out the poison. Unfortunately, the medicine's effects were extremely powerful, so his efforts weren't effective. He could vaguely make out a woman walking over. Then, she lifted his collar and walked towards the crown princess.

After that, everything went dark.

...

A while later, Zu An felt that he already dreamt that he was embracing Chu Chuyan. Chuyan's body really is smooth... Huh? But isn't her body normally cold?

Her size also seems a bit off...

Is it Manman? But Manman already went home, so how could she be here?

Is it Dandan? But she won't be back for a while either, right?

Huh? Why does this woman look a bit like the crown princess... I'm dreaming about her?

Wait! Crown princess!

A flash of realization passed by his brain. He remembered what happened before he fainted and immediately woke up out of fright.

His entire body went rigid when he saw the scene before him.

A completely naked girl was lying in his arms. Her skin was fine like satin, her body more fragrant than even the Hundred Flower Tea. Her face was exquisite and flawless, especially the slight blush on her cheeks which only served to make her even more enchanting.

If this was any other time, he might even celebrate his luck with women. But right now, his greatest emotion was horror, a scalp numbing horror.

After all, the one who was lying there in her birthday suit, was the crown princess.

As if sensing his movements, the crown princess also slowly opened her eyes.

Chapter 706: To Catch a Thief in the Act

The crown princess' eyes were still a bit blurry when she first saw Zu An so close to her, thinking that she was still dreaming. She subconsciously rubbed her eyes. This movement made her suddenly feel a chill throughout her body.

She lowered her head and saw that she was lying in his embrace without a speck of clothing on her. Her expression instantly changed.

"Ah!!!!!!!!!"

She immediately clutched her own mouth the moment she screamed out. Her scream came to a screeching halt.

Even in this moment, she still didn't lose her rationality. She knew that if she screamed, then it might draw people here. Zu An would die for sure, and she herself would be done for as well.

Her feet didn't hesitate either. She kicked him straight in the stomach.

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +999 +999 +999...

Zu An obviously wouldn't be so stupid as to let her really kick him. He reached out and grabbed her foot. He sighed and said, "Crown princess, we were clearly schemed against here!"

The crown princess' face went entirely red. Do I need you to tell me this? I obviously know that!

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +888 +888 +888...

"Let go!" The crown princess shouted. Her expression was extremely ashamed.

Her kick was a subconscious reaction. How could she have predicted that her foot would be grabbed by him?

The two of them weren't wearing anything right now. This type of situation was as vulgar as vulgar could be.

Zu An's eyes couldn't help but roam about her body. Then, his expression went rigid. He let go in an embarrassed manner. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry! It wasn't on purpose!"

The crown princess' face was incredibly gloomy. She was screaming inside right now as well. She quickly pulled the covers around herself. However, she had no idea how seductive she looked right now with just her exposed collarbone.

"Did you do anything to me earlier?" After her initial rage and alarm passed, the crown princess gradually calmed down. She knew that what was most important right now was dealing with this matter. She could settle everything else with him later.

Zu An hesitated. "I don't know either."

"You don't know?" The crown princess immediately felt her blood pressure go up.

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +666 +666 +666...

Zu An said, "I didn't wake up that much earlier than you, I'm just as confused as you are. I seem to have groped and embraced you, but I don't think I did anything... Can't you tell if we really did it or not yourself?!"

"You groped and embraced me? Is this still nothing?" The crown princess' eyelids jumped. She already checked herself while asking him under the covers. She indeed didn't seem to have been penetrated. But why did she want to hit him so much when she heard what he said?

She took a deep breath and forced herself to calm down. She looked around her and said, "Where are my clothes? Hurry and bring me my clothes."

She obviously wasn't in a state to look for anything right now, or else he really will see everything.

Zu An turned around and began to look. But because he got up, the crown princess' eyes narrowed. Is this guy a freaking donkey or something?!

After looking around, Zu An shook his head. "There are no clothes."

Since they wanted to frame the two of them, how could they allow them to wear any clothes?

He figured that it might be because he woke up earlier than they planned, which was why the plan wasn't fully in action yet.

Wait, why did the crown princess also wake up ahead of time?

But now wasn't the time to be worried about this. He quickly looked around and said, "Crown princess, do you know where we are right now?"

They didn't seem to be in the main hall they were in earlier, but rather a courtyard. Did they already leave the palace?

But that can't be. If they want to frame us, then we are definitely still inside the palace.

The crown princess' face became incredibly pale when she heard that there were no clothes. When she heard what he said, she subconsciously replied, "This isn't the Hundred Flower Palace. That disgraceful Concubine Bai wouldn't dare to frame me in her own palace."

She lived in this palace, so she understood the buildings' standards and styles well. The designs on the furniture, windows, and other parts of the room didn't match the standard of a concubine.

A clamoring suddenly sounded from outside. "It's right over here. I think I heard someone suspicious come this way."

Zu An was stunned. This voice seemed familiar. This is the voice of Shi Kun who harassed him this afternoon by the palace entrance! This fella actually went that far? He dares to mess with even the crown princess?

He suddenly connected the dots. No wonder Shi Jun dared to openly oppose him without any fear of the eastern palace behind him! So he planned to bring down the crown princess from the start!

But why is he so brave, to the point where he dares to touch the crown princess?

The crown princess' face turned deathly pale. She was so worried she was about to cry. "I'm finished, I'm finished..."

She was completely beside herself. Once those people barged in and saw the two of them here without any clothes on, no explanations would do anything.

Even if she spoke, no one would believe her. Furthermore, for the sake of hiding the scandal, the royal family would also silently eliminate her. Even the Bi clan would be destroyed.

Zu An felt his fine hairs stand on end as well. He knew that this was now a moment of life and death. The emperor told him to cut off his arm when he found out that he touched the crown princess. If he found out that his daughter-in-law ended up being this close to another man, he would definitely blast him to ashes.

Suddenly, a quiet voice sounded by his ears. The voice was extremely anxious. "Hurry and run! I'll help you stall them for a while!"

This was a female voice. However, he didn't have any impression of this person. This woman shouldn't have spoken to him before.

His first reaction was that this was part of the trap, that it was pulling him even deeper down.

But he quickly refuted this thought. He and the crown princess already looked like this right now. All those people outside had to do was barge inside. They didn't need to go further at all.

But who inside this palace would help him?

He knew that even though he had some friends in the palace, most of them were only acquaintances. They might help out with some small matters, but they definitely wouldn't want anything to do with something this major.

Was this one of Yun Jianyue's spies?

In the end, this was the only possibility. After all, he didn't know any other women in the palace.

He didn't hesitate at all. While his head was moving, he immediately fished out a set of clothes from the Brilliant Glass Bead and covered himself. He really was grateful that Mi Li previously taught him the way to refine the Brilliant Glass Bead into his body.

Without his approval, the other party wouldn't find the Brilliant Glass Bead even if they cut his stomach open.

As for the crown princess, he didn't have time to cover her up. Zu An wrapped her up in the blankets and then jumped out of the window.

"What are you doing?!" The crown princess was shocked and furious. She struggled frantically.

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +233 +233 +233...

Zu An said with a trembling voice, "When you catch a thief, you need the goods and you need to catch them in the action! As long as they don't find us there, then we still have a chance."

Bi Linglong was stunned. She now knew that she misunderstood him.

She saw that his expression was steady, and his usually frivolous attitude was nowhere to be seen. It was as if he became a completely different person.

"Don't show your face!" Zu An pressed her head into his chest. Then, he smashed through the window and frantically ran towards a certain direction.

"Over there!" Shi Jun shouted by the entrance. The group of people immediately charged towards them.

Zu An didn't use his normal instantaneous movement, nor did he use his Sunflower Phantasm. Otherwise, he would be dead for sure once a report reached the emperor.

That damn emperor didn't care about no evidence, he made decisions based on what he believed was true.

Fortunately, his cultivation had made tremendous progress, so his basic speed alone was already quite fast.

The sounds of drums being beat sounded. Even more people rushed over, and even the palace's Imperial Guard was alarmed.

Their enemy came prepared. They already set up an inescapable net.

The crown princess saw silhouettes in all directions. Her heart sunk. I'm done for... how can we possibly escape from so many people?

Rather than letting everyone see her current sorry appearance, she should've just died inside of that room.

Even though there was a blanket covering her body, she still didn't feel any sense of security.

"Halt!" Four Imperial Palace guards charged at them from the front. They brandished their blades. These four individuals had undergone strict training, making their coordination seamless. Two attacked at his vitals, one hacked at the crown princess in the blankets to get his attention, while the last one cut off his escape route.

Chapter 707: End of the Line

The crown princess felt her heart sink to rock bottom. These Imperial Palace guards were all around the fourth and fifth rank, and their armors and weapons were standardized with rune formations. Their armor could block the full force blow of someone at the sixth rank, and they could greatly diminish the power of a seventh ranked expert.

The blades also had different elements. When they worked together, regardless of what kind of element their opponent was, they could still cut through their elemental barriers.

Together with their formation tactics, they could easily take down a sixth rank expert, and they had a good chance against a seventh rank cultivator.

Regardless, they were going to be tangled up by these soldiers for a while. Other soldiers were closing in after receiving news as well. Once they arrived, there would be no hope left.

The crown princess clenched her teeth and said, "Let me go. We'll fight together!"

She couldn't even be bothered with the fact that she was naked right now. Once she faced them, these guards would see everything.

If they couldn't deal with these people as quickly as possible, more people would end up seeing her current state. She might as well just go all out now.

Zu An didn't pay her any attention. Instead, the Poisonous Prick appeared in his hands with a flick of his wrist. Then, he used the Sunflower Phantasm to weave about. He turned into countless afterimages. Those guards' armors didn't seem to offer any resistance at all and were cut through like paper.

He didn't choose to hit the exposed hands or necks, because those targets were too small. He needed to kill with a single blow, and what he lacked the most right now was time.

Those guards trusted their defenses too much, to the extent where they were fighting with the intent of taking damage themselves. However, how could they have predicted that the dagger would cut through them like nothing? It could even cut through a powerful expert's elemental barrier, let alone their armors.

Those guards felt like they were only slightly injured, so they completely ignored the damage. They planned to surround and take this guy down.

However, their bodies suddenly went stiff. Then, many black, cryptic runes spread out from their injuries. Everything went dark, and then they collapsed.

Zu An didn't dare hold back during this moment of crisis. These guards appeared so quickly as well, so they were definitely part of this trap. There was no reason for him to hold back.

The crown princess' beautiful eyes widened. She was thinking about how she should join hands with him to take them out a second ago, yet a second later, he already took care of these people!

"How did you do it?" Even though this wasn't the time to be worried about this, she still couldn't help but ask this.

After all, the report stated that his cultivation was only around the fifth or sixth level. Even though she found out that he defeated the eighth ranked Zhao Zhi, everyone believed that it wasn't his own strength that defeated King Qi's heir, but rather that there was a mysterious expert who helped him. Furthermore, that Zhao Zhi was always incredibly arrogant, so this result was probably because he underestimated his opponent.

Now that she witnessed this scene herself, the crown princess felt like she had to reassess this man's strength.

Zu An didn't reply and instead gave those guards a look. Then, he reached out his hand, sucking their corpses into the Brilliant Glass Bead.

"Spatial storage!" The crown princess was a knowledgeable person. She immediately thought to herself that spatial storages were usually not large at all. It would be hard to store the bodies of four large men. This man actually had this type of treasure on him too!

She reacted quickly and said, "Why are you storing them? Hurry and store me inside too!"

Right now, she only wanted a safe place to hide in. If she could hide in a storage space, then she wouldn't be discovered.

Zu An said impatiently, "Spatial storages can't store living things. If you want to become a corpse, then be my guest."

The crown princess bit her lip, and then she said, "If there really is no choice, then just store me inside! I would rather be a corpse than be seen like this!"

Whether or not she could still remain the crown princess was secondary to her current appearance. How was she supposed to continue living if she was exposed in front of the public without any clothes on? Let alone the fact that she would be dragging down the Bi clan. She would rather just die and end all of the troubles.

Zu An was shocked. He could roughly guess at her intentions. Sigh, the women of this world all cared greatly about the honor and glory of their clans.

For the sake of her family, Chuyan chose to take in a good-for-nothing piece of trash. Zheng Dan married into the Sang clan for the Zheng clan. Now, the crown princess was even willing to sacrifice herself for the sake of her clan.

He didn't stay here. Instead, he continued to run with the crown princess in his arms.

"Return to the eastern palace!" The crown princess immediately said. She knew that since Concubine Bai was targeting her, these weren't the only people they had to deal with. They would send people towards the eastern palace as well to prove that she wasn't there. The best way of erasing all suspicion is to return to the Eastern Palace. This way, as long as she refused to admit to anything, then all of her efforts to frame her would become meaningless.

"Fine!" Zu An rushed in that direction.

There were people everywhere in their path, yet he always seemed to be able to avoid them ahead of time, as if he knew where they were.

There were several times where the crown princess felt like her heart was jumping up to her throat. However, when she saw that he was able to evade them all, she couldn't help but sigh in relief.

She finally had a chance to raise her head and look at him. She suddenly discovered that this fella was quite handsome. His jawline was sharp, and his expression was firm. It gave one a strange feeling of security.

She thought to herself, how great would it be if this guy was like this normally as well? He just has to put on that stupid shameless appearance. It really takes away from his bearing.

The crown princess felt her heart begin to beat frantically like never before. She didn't know if it was because of the suspension bridge effect, but she subconsciously moved herself a bit closer to his chest.

His arms feel as warm as Sir Eleven's...

She immediately strangled this thought as soon as it emerged. How is this possible?! How can he compare to Sir Eleven...

But he really does have the ability!

Zu An didn't have the leisure of paying attention to her expression at all. Right now, he was a hundred and twenty percent focused. He used the jade badge to control the nearby creatures, borrowing their eyes to observe the guards around him.

It was as if he had a radar map in his head. That was why he was able to avoid these guards each time.

But the disturbance was getting greater and greater. More and more guards rushed over when they heard the news. There was less and less space for him to move around in.

There were several times where he would've been discovered if he moved half a second too slow.

But luck wouldn't favor him forever. There was once where he finally couldn't help but be seen by a guard. Even though it didn't take much time for him to get rid of them, he still lost the chance to break out of the encirclement... In reality, the security in the imperial palace was extremely strict. That so-called chance never existed. It was merely a matter of being discovered sooner versus later.

Zu An leapt into a rock garden's shadows with the crown princess in hand. He gasped for breath. He exhausted a lot of stamina from running for his life just now. Both his ki and mind had been taxed like never before.

"Is there no way out?" The crown princess was a smart person as well. She immediately reacted.

"Yeah." Zu An's face was grave. More and more guards were flocking over, and there were no more gaps to exploit. He could only wait for an opportunity now.

The crown princess' face was pale. Suddenly, she set her resolution and said, "You should just kill me, and then store me in the spatial storage. You might be able to get out if you're by yourself."

She wasn't making a heroic sacrifice. It was because she knew that with how she looked right now, she couldn't meet with anyone.

Zu An thought to himself. He thought about using Keyboard Come to see if he could say that the crown princess was currently in the eastern palace and teleport her over this way. However, he didn't know what kind of price his soul had to pay to accomplish this.

After all, his head felt like it was splitting just from saying someone's pants fell. He didn't reach the grandmaster level yet and didn't condense his soul. Keyboard Come wasn't a skill he could use carelessly.

He was worried that if he sent the crown princess to the eastern palace, then he might just die on the spot. He didn't dare take this risk.

Then, he thought about making a set of clothes for the crown princess. This way, they might be able to bluff their way out.

But he didn't know what kind of clothes the crown princess wore. He wanted to use Keyboard Come, but he couldn't picture a set of her clothes clearly.

He gradually understood that Keyboard Come, to a certain extent, was a realization of his thoughts. The reason why he could make Golden Token Eleven's uniform out of thin air was because he wore it every day, so he understood the details.

But the crown princess' clothes...

According to the palace rules, it was disrespectful for an official to even give the women of the royal family even a second look. Even though Zu An was daring and glanced at her a few more times, he never

wore it himself, so how could he possibly know the details of her clothes? He naturally couldn't make a complete set for her.

He was always confused why the ones who framed them took their clothes. He originally thought that this would make the situation look a bit too forced.

But now, he finally understood. Who cares if it is a trap or not? The key is that the crown princess cannot be seen with another man naked! As long as they accomplished this, then they already achieved their goal. That was why they wouldn't allow any variables and would rather others suspect that their clothes were stolen.

Zu An's expression suddenly changed when he thought of this. It was because he saw Zhuxie Chixin walk this way through the view of the small creatures around them.

He could deal with ordinary guards, but against a grandmaster like Zhuxie Chixin... he didn't have any confidence.

Chapter 708: Shameless to This Degree?

Even though judging from what Yun Jianyue said, he was only a pseudo grandmaster and hasn't really reached that level yet, this was definitely not someone he could possibly defeat right now.

There was a limit to challenging those of higher rank than yourself. This man was just too many ranks higher than him! If it was a girl, then he could try and use something like the Heiress Ball of Delights, but like hell he could do anything against a male grandmaster!

Even so, he didn't feel despair. He quickly thought of something. He took out a set of female clothes from the Brilliant Glass Bead. Regardless of whether it was Pei Mianman or Chu Chuyan, there were some of their clothes stored here.

After recalling the crown princess' build, he didn't take out Pei Mianman's clothes. They wouldn't fit too well then.

The crown princess was shocked when she saw him suddenly take out clothes. Why did this fella always carry female clothes around with him? Is he a pervert?

But she reacted quickly as well. She immediately shook her head and said, "It's useless. There are many maids who help me dress each day. There are recordings regarding what I wore today. I'll be playing right into her hands if I wear these clothes without any good reason."

Zu An threw the clothes impatiently into her arms. "Stop blabbering. Just put them on!"

"You!" The crown princess' eyes turned red. Who dares to speak to me like this normally? I've dropped so low that even you dare to bully me?

Zu An wasn't in the mood to care about her feelings right now. He began to panic as he watched her slowly receive the clothes. He immediately stored the blankets straight into the Brilliant Glass Bead.

The crown princess was buck naked again. She was shocked and furious. Her eyes were starting to become misty with tears.

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +555 +555 +555...

Zu An picked up the clothes and draped them over her. "Someone's coming. Put them on already unless you want someone to see you like this!"

The crown princess was about to go crazy from anger. However, with things how they were, she can only hold it in. She continuously consoled herself that this man already saw everything earlier on the bed anyway. She's just letting him see once more right now. She absolutely cannot let anyone else see anything.

She had all types of maids assist her with dressing normally, so she never realized that she could get dressed herself so quickly. These clothes were already on her after just a few seconds of time.

She was biting her lip the entire time, to the point where there was a bit of red by the corners of her mouth. Her mood right now was clearly not great.

While she was getting dressed, Zu An took out the corpses of the guards he collected earlier. He stripped their armor and put it on himself.

The crown princess blushed when she saw him strip down and quickly averted her eyes. At the same time, she was shocked. This man was going to pretend to be an imperial palace guard? But what is the point of this? He'll be easily seen through!

Zu An already changed. Then, he took out a thin skin mask and threw it onto her face.

The crown princess subconsciously shrunk back. "What is this?"

"Face mask. It can turn you into another person." Zu An quickly said. He didn't wait for her to reply and pulled her straight over to press the mask onto her face to make it fit tightly.

The crown princess no longer resisted when she heard that it could change her appearance and instead cooperated.

Her body even shook slightly when she felt the other party's fingers massage her face. However, she didn't say anything from start to finish.

Zu An put on a mask himself after putting it onto her. His face quickly became a common and ordinary one.

These were masks he took from the Blackwind Stockade's leader Chen Xuan back then. He hoped they would help him through this crisis today.

He put away everything else. Zu An's body suddenly froze. He pulled the crown princess' petite body until it was tightly sticking to him. At the same time, he powered his head to press his lips against hers.

The crown princess' head went completely blank. He dares to take advantage of me at this type of time?!

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +814 +814 +814...

After her initial blanking out, she instinctively began to struggle.

Zu An quickly said by her ears, "Stop moving and play along! Zhuxie Chixin is coming, so whether or not we can make it past this disaster will depend on your acting skills! You absolutely cannot reveal any cultivation!"

As long as one didn't attack or release ki fluctuations, it was hard for an ordinary person to tell what level of cultivation you had.

The crown princess' entire body went rigid when she heard what he said. She was an extremely smart woman. Even though the other party didn't have time to tell her the details, she already had an idea.

Sure enough, she stopped resisting and instead subconsciously wrapped her arms around his waist.

It was now Zu An's turn to be shocked. He didn't expect the crown princess to cooperate so well. This woman was tough inside after all!

He continued to kiss her red lips. He could feel the stiffness of her body, but it began to quickly soften.

If it wasn't because he could sense how unfamiliar with this she was, Zu An might've even suspected that she was used to this type of thing.

He was just going to play along at first, but as they kissed, he began to get more and more into it.

The crown princess' heart was also frantically pounding. Her status was incredibly great. When had she ever done something so passionate with another man?

So this is what a kiss feels like?

She originally thought that she would loathe being violated like this, but for some reason, she didn't feel uncomfortable at all. His movements were gentle and made her feel comfortable.

It was as if streaks of electricity were running through her body. This was something she never experienced before!

Ah!! Why is this guy so good at this?!

Does he do this to Chu Chuyan every day or something?!

I guess it makes sense though... Someone perverted like him managed to land a beauty like Chu First Miss. Why would he waste a moment of time to appreciate her...

Her thoughts were all over the place. Suddenly, there was a thud sound. She felt everything around her go bright. Turns out the rock garden around them had been removed.

When she raised her head, she saw Zhuxie Chixin and a group of Embroidered Envoy looking at them with unkind expressions.

Her heart immediately shot up to her throat. There was only a single voice repeating itself in her head. "We're finished, we're finished..."

Zhuxie Chixin is the emperor's trusted aide, and his cultivation is profound. Being seen by him is the same as being completely exposed!

Zu An wrapped his arms around her waist and patted lightly, indicating for her to not become nervous. The crown princess then slowly exhaled. Right, we have masks on right now. I hope it's enough to fool them.

But being seen like this is similarly a capital offense.

Zu An pretended to be shocked and horrified. He crawled backwards. "Sir... Sir Zhuxie!"

Everyone in the palace knew who Zhuxie Chixin was, so he didn't have to worry about saying this.

The crown princess was shocked. This kid's acting is just too good! He looked just like someone who was caught in an affair. The embarrassment and horror really were imitated to perfection.

Zhuxie Chixin's eyes roamed across the two of them. He frowned. "The two of you are quite brazen, doing this type of thing in the palace!"

In his opinion, this was probably an Imperial Guard and a maid's secret affair. After all, even though they were maids, all women in the palace were the emperor's private property. It was entirely possible for the emperor to one day be in the mood when he saw a maid.

That was why the chastity of maids were incredibly important. It was a huge offense for even eunuchs and maids to share food, let alone for an Imperial Guard to really do something to a maid.

Does this guard want his entire clan eradicated?!

"Sir Zhuxie, please spare my life, please..." Zu An's face turned completely pale, as if he lost all strength. He fell weakly to the ground, as if all he could do was continue this senseless plea.

The crown princess immediately expressed her alarm. She copied him and fell to the ground.

She was full of admiration inside. He really is sharp, doing this so that he doesn't have to kneel.

Zhuxie Chixin wasn't in the mood to bother with this matter. He asked with a stern voice, "Have the two of you seen... the crown princess anywhere?"

"The crown princess?" Zu An quickly shook his head. "We haven't! We heard a bunch of noise around us earlier and we were worried that we might be seen, so we hid here... Sir Zhuxie, please spare my life! It was this woman who seduced me! It has nothing to do with me!"

The crown princess' eyes immediately widened. This guy is actually shameless to this degree?!

Chapter 709: Heaven-Defying Charm

But jokes were just jokes. The crown princess was a smart person. She quickly reacted, screaming and howling while hitting Zu An. "You're a disgusting brute with absolutely no conscience! You told me just now that you would never leave me, but now, you dare say this?!"

Zu An gave her a huge thumbs up inside. The crown princess wasn't just a pretty decoration after all! She had managed to play along so well.

Zhuxie Chixin frowned. His expression was full of revulsion when he looked at Zu An. Even husbands and wives would abandon each other in the face of a real tragedy, never mind the fact that these two weren't even real spouses.

This imperial guard probably knew that his actions might constitute a clan eradication offense, so he wanted to find a way to clear his name. However, would he be able to? He shouldn't have done this in the first place.

"What division are you from? Who is your immediate superior?" Zhuxie Chixin asked with a stormy voice.

"I am from the armed escort division. My boss is Sir Qu Zhishang," Zu An replied. He had already spent a few days in the palace, so this wasn't something too difficult for him to answer.

Zhuxie Chixin looked off to the side. Then, an Embroidered Envoy nodded toward him, indicating that there was indeed someone named Qu Zhishang in the armed escort division. He now felt at ease. He pointed at the crown princess, asking, "And you? Which palace are you from? Which elder is in charge of you?"

The crown princess lowered her head and replied carefully, "This servant is from the Palace of Grace, under Elder Liang." She had lived for so long in the palace, so she knew these things even better than Zu An.

Zhuxie Chixin's subordinate was already nodding, indicating that such a person existed. His suspicions were lowered. "Have someone bring them to Eunuch Wen. Have him deal with this situation."

He didn't have the leisure of tending to these two right now. He had received news earlier that the crown princess and Zu An seemed to have had an affair, so he had to quickly find the two of them and cut off all information as soon as possible.

"Understood!" Two Embroidered Envoys accepted the order and began to escort the two of them toward Eunuch Wen.

Zu An sighed in relief. This was what he had been gambling on, that Zhuxie Chixin wouldn't be in the mood to deal with this. Furthermore, he was the emperor's personal investigator, so he was in charge of important matters. This type of illicit relationship stuff was better handled by someone else.

The crown princess also sighed in relief. She had to admit that Zu An's plan was utterly flawless. No one would suspect an imperial guard and a palace maid of having a secret affair, as it was a crime punishable by death. It might even involve their families.

Now that they had done such a thing, it seemed as if they were dead for sure on the surface, but they could instead use the Embroidered Envoys to bring them out of the encirclement.

These two Embroidered Envoys can't possibly be a match for Zu An and myself... Actually, I'm just a plus one. Zu An should be able to get rid of both of them on his own.

They had really managed to get out of such a dangerous situation! She felt more and more admiration. This Zu An really couldn't be judged based on his usual frivolous appearance. No wonder the Chu clan's first miss had been married to him! This was indeed a top level talent.

Zhuxie Chixin was already a few dozen li away when he suddenly voiced his surprise and turned around to look at the maid's rear figure. As the leader of the Embroidered Envoys, he had handled countless cases. He had much sharper insight than normal people.

Even though the woman's figure was ordinary, her bearing was elegant, and her back was straight when she walked, carrying a sort of noble aura. She didn't really seem like an ordinary maid!

"Wait!"

Zu An and the crown princess' faces both changed greatly when they heard Zhuxie Chixin's voice. They both instantly realized what the problem was.

The crown princess quickly gave Zu An a look. They might have to just risk it all and run while Zhuxie Chixin was still a few dozen li away. However, Zu An shook his head without giving anything away. That distance was absolutely nothing for a grandmaster. It was completely meaningless to try and run.

The crown princess bit her lip. She was really panicking now. Only when she saw that Zu An was still calm did she feel a bit more at ease.

Zhuxie Chixin arrived in front of the two of them with his subordinates. He waved his hand and said, "Interrogate them separately."

The Embroidered Envoys immediately understood what he meant. This was something they were extremely experienced in. Even though they didn't understand game theory, the many cases they handled had taught them that interrogating criminals separately would often reveal many holes in their stories.

Zu An and the crown princess' hearts were pounding crazily right now. They didn't have time to make sure their confessions matched up at all! If they were interrogated on information regarding the other party separately, then wouldn't they be immediately exposed?

But with things being how they were, they had no choice. They could only allow the Embroidered Envoys to lead the two of them in separate directions.

Zhuxie Chixin personally interrogated Zu An. "What is that maid's name?"

Zu An's expression sank. He knew that the crown princess was being asked the same question. However, everything had happened so suddenly that they hadn't had time to pay attention to these details.

He secretly used the jade badge, wanting to draw on the ground through the ants to contact the crown princess. However, he immediately gave up on that thought. Even if he answered this question, how was he supposed to answer the harder questions to come?

Furthermore, the Embroidered Envoys were all sharp individuals. If he used ants to contact the crown princess, he might just end up drawing their attention. If that happened, he would have used up one of his trump cards for nothing.

Zhuxie Chixin's expression became overcast. "What? Is this a hard question to answer?" His aura had already locked onto Zu An, as if he would immediately strike if Zu An said something wrong.

Zu An replied, "Her name is Tian Xiue."

Just then, a figure rushed past them. How could Zhuxie Chixin not notice it? He suddenly turned around and yelled, "Show yourself!"

That person didn't reply, and instead continued to run away.

"Bring them to Eunuch Wen! Everyone else, follow me!" Zhuxie Chixin quickly chased after the figure. Even though the guard and the maid were suspicious, there wasn't anything too significant. It was instead that figure who had rushed past that drew his suspicion. It seemed to be a woman! Was it Yun Jianyue?

But in order to guard against the unexpected, he assigned two more Embroidered Envoys to escort the pair. Four Embroidered Envoys would no doubt be enough to deal with most situations.

Then, he brought everyone else with him to chase after the woman who had just run past them. He didn't dare reveal any carelessness, since it might be Yun Jianyue. He also suspected that it might be the crown princess. He had to find her as soon as possible and figure out what was happening, to see if Zu An had done anything to her.

When the group left, the remaining four Embroidered Envoys escorted Zu An and the crown princess out.

The crown princess was still quite shaken up. Her eyes were full of relief when she looked toward Zu An. The very first question they asked would have already exposed her, and yet a glimmer of hope had suddenly appeared in the darkness.

Zu An wasn't in any state to react to her right now at all. Instead, he was completely focused on controlling Daji.

The figure that had rushed past was precisely the valkyrie he had summoned, Daji!

He'd really had no other options left, so he had to use Daji to draw Zhuxie Chixin away. But Daji only had five ranks of cultivation right now. It was just too difficult for her to escape Zhuxie Chixin's pursuit. He used the jade badge so Daji could avoid danger ahead of time, but no matter how great he was at manipulating her pursuers, the difference in strength was too great.

In the end, Daji finally couldn't get away, and Zhuxie Chixin grabbed her shoulder.

"Where do you think you're going?!" Zhuxie Chixin roared in anger. Just as he was about to strike the other party, Daji suddenly turned around.

Zhuxie Chixin was stunned. There was actually someone this beautiful in this world?

This woman looked like the lone goddess in a world of mortals, and yet also like a devastating beauty who could bring down an entire country. He would never have imagined that these two entirely different auras could actually appear on the same woman's body.

The other Embroidered Envoys were even more stunned. All of them felt great pity. How could they bring themselves to do anything to this woman? Even the capital's former number one beauty Yu Yanluo probably didn't exceed this level, right?

It was still Zhuxie Chixin who remained calm. He snapped back to reality and said, “Ma’am, who are you?”

Daji only looked at him silently without saying anything. Zhuxie Chixin felt as if he had treated this beauty a bit rudely when her eyes swept over him, and he subconsciously drew his head back.

Zu An could sense all of this. He almost burst out laughing. Zhuxie Chixin’s face was so feminine, Zu An had thought he was some transvestite or something. He hadn’t expected this man to have an appreciation for beauty.

When had he ever treated an enemy this nicely before? Wasn’t this still all because Daji was too pretty in the end?

However, Zhuxie Chixin still snapped out of his daze. “Ma’am, why did you trespass into the imperial palace?”

Daji still didn’t say anything. In reality, she didn’t have the ability to talk at all at the moment.

Zhuxie Chixin’s expression sank. “If ma’am is still unwilling to speak, then don’t blame me for being rude.”

He was someone with a firm will after all, so he immediately remembered his duty. It was just too strange for this ridiculously beautiful woman to show up out of nowhere. As such, he reached his hand toward her and planned to detain her for the time being.

Chapter 710: Secret Path

Daji instinctively wanted to evade, but unfortunately, she only had five ranks of cultivation. How could she avoid someone who was already close to reaching grandmaster rank?

Zhuxie Chixin immediately grabbed her shoulder. He was worried that he might hurt her when he saw her beautiful facial features, so he subconsciously used less strength.

“Ma’am, I apologize in advance!” However, he still didn’t forget his duty. He reached out his hand and was about to pour his ki into her body to seal up her vessels.

However, suddenly, there was a flash of white light. That ridiculously beautiful woman vanished without a trace.

Zhuxie Chixin: “???”

He turned around with difficulty. He looked at his own subordinates. “Was there a woman here just now?”

His reaction was completely normal. After all, with his cultivation, not even Yun Jianyue would’ve been able to escape after being restrained by him.

Yet someone with a trifling five ranks of cultivation vanished into thin air?

Could it be that this woman cultivated the rare spatial element? But with her shoulder's acupoint seized by him, not even a cultivator with the spatial attribute should be able to escape! What the hell is going on?

The other Embroidered Envoy subconsciously rubbed their eyes as well. They all looked at each other in dismay.

"I think there was a woman here."

"It was a really pretty one at that."

"I've never seen a girl that pretty in my life."

...

They began to chat among themselves, but they became more and more unsure. After all, that woman vanished in front of so many people's eyes!

Don't tell me it was a ghost?

They really lost their confidence after witnessing something this weird. Meanwhile, Zu An sighed in relief. Fortunately, he was able to recall Daji in time. He was worried that he might've not been able to recall her in time, but thankfully, his keyboard system was still as reliable as ever.

The two of them had already been brought out of the quarantined area during this time. Zu An knew that it was almost time. His previous limp self suddenly attacked, striking the closest Embroidered Envoy with his fingers. How could they have expected this sudden development? They were immediately knocked out.

The other two Embroidered Envoy were shocked when they saw this. They both drew the blades at their waist and charged over.

Zu An was extremely fast. He rushed forwards and pressed the blades back into the sheaths. The two Embroidered Envoy realized that Zu An's cultivation was powerful and not something they could deal with. They immediately reached towards their waist tiles so they could issue a warning to the others.

But the two of them suddenly fell limp to the ground when their hands just started to reach out.

Zu An raised his head and saw the crown princess' complacent expression.

"Hmph, I have some cultivation too, you know?" The crown princess harrumphed. Her eyes were sparkling proudly.

Zu An was just about to say something, but his expression suddenly changed. He squatted down to examine the two Embroidered Envoy. "You killed them?"

The crown princess gave him a surprised look. "What, should I have invited them to my new year party or something?"

She picked up their blades and finished off the two Embroidered Envoy Zu An knocked out earlier.

Zu An's breathing immediately became hurried. "We had no choice before, but these two are innocent! It was enough for me to just knock them out, so why did you need to take their lives?"

He was also a member of the Embroidered Envoy after all. Furthermore, he had his personal code of not killing people he didn't have to kill. After all, they were all people, and it wasn't easy making a living. It was one thing killing those guards since they were part of the scheme, but these Embroidered Envoy clearly didn't participate in that plan. They were really being wronged here.

"Innocent? I am freaking innocent! Who is going to defend me?" The crown princess' expression turned cold. "If we leave them alive, they'll immediately find out that we were the ones who attacked them. Zhuxie Chixin would definitely suspect our identities."

"By killing them, Zhuxie Chixin at least wouldn't know how they died. They might have been silenced by a passing expert. Maybe we were also captured by that expert... All of this can help mislead their judgment. Is this not something good?"

Zu An knew that she was making sense here. However, he still couldn't accept the fact that she took lives like nothing.

The crown princess' tone softened when she saw his unhappy expression. "I didn't have a choice either, you know? Once this matter got out, both of us would be done for. Furthermore, it isn't just us, even our clans would be wiped out. I don't think you want to bring down the Chu clan and harm Chu First Miss, right?"

Zu An's face was expressionless. "Enough already. You don't need to explain these things to me. We've already broken free, so let's part here. We'll all just return and do what we need to do."

He turned around to leave after saying this. The crown princess' eyes were swirling in inner conflict. She ran over and grabbed his sleeve.

"What are you doing?" Zu An looked at her with a frown.

The crown princess looked wronged. "The palace is in chaos and there are guards everywhere. How can I move around with how I look right now? Can you bring me back to the eastern palace?"

She was wearing Chu Chuyan's clothes right now. If someone found out that she left, and that she then changed clothes, then wouldn't rumors fly everywhere? She really would be done for then.

Zu An was able to somehow avoid danger ahead of time again and again earlier. Even though she didn't know how he did it, she knew that this man was reliable. With his protection, there was a much higher chance of her making it back to the eastern palace.

Zu An also knew that she was speaking the truth. After a long sigh, he said, "Fine, I'll bring you back. I'm leaving as soon as I do."

She was already dressed, so he didn't need to carry her anymore. He held her hand, and then he used the jade badge to search the vicinity for danger.

The crown princess looked at her hand. She could feel the heat coming from his hand. Her cheeks turned a bit red. After a bit of hesitation, she decided not to let go and allowed him to just hold her hand.

They were able to avoid all of the guards. They could already see the outlines of the eastern palace. Zu An suddenly stopped. "The Eastern Palace's security is extremely strict. It'll be extremely hard for me to get past them."

"We obviously can't go in from the front. Follow me." The crown princess said with a gentle voice. Then, she grabbed his hand and walked towards a well.

"Is there anyone nearby?" The crown princess looked around and asked uneasily.

Zu An shook his head. "The closest is thirty meters out, and there just happens to be courtyard walls and trees blocking his sight. He can't see anything."

"That's good then." The crown princess sighed in relief. She held Zu An's hand and said, "Jump down with me."

Zu An was a bit confused, but the crown princess already jumped into the well.

He followed her.

He was just about to fall into water when a hand suddenly reached out and grabbed him. He then noticed that there was an inconspicuous platform on the wall. The crown princess was standing there.

"This is the Eastern Palace's secret escape path. We can use this to quickly get away when there is danger." The crown princess gently twisted a mechanism after pulling him up. She opened up a stone gate.

Zu An nodded inside. He saw similar things in those shows of his past world. He couldn't help but become curious. "Then why didn't you guys try to run away during the attack last time?"

The crown princess replied, "That attack happened too suddenly. Me and the crown prince just happened to be out, so we didn't have time to come back inside."

Zu An thus understood. The opening was about a person's height tall. There were luminescent beads embedded deep into the walls, so it wasn't too difficult to see.

He felt the path wind upwards. The two of them continued just like this. The crown princess suddenly stopped. "Up ahead is where I sleep."

Zu An cupped his hands. "Since I've already safely escorted you here, then I am leaving."

But the crown princess reached out and grabbed him. "I need you to come with me inside. I have something I need your help with."

Zu An: "???"