

## MEDICAL PRINCESS

### Chapter 1251 - 1251 Zhaoyi Di Left Something Behind



#### Chapter 1251 Zhaoyi Di Left Something Behind

“Cousin-in-law, do you know Zhaoyi Di in the Palace?” Hearing a few more questions, Qin Yiyan could no longer keep the secret. She pulled her chair close to Shao Wanru and asked in a low voice.

“Yes. What do you mean?” Shao Wanru frowned and nodded. Of course, she knew Zhaoyi Di.

“That day, she stopped me in the Palace and said something specious and groundless. It’s very strange,” Qin Yiyan said.

“What did she say?” Shao Wanru slightly raised her watery eyes and became even more surprised. There was little connection between Qin Yiyan and Zhaoyi Di. Why would they get together?

Shao Wanru clearly remembered Zhaoyi Di. But since they had met, Shao Wanru never saw her in the Palace again. Anyway, how could she care about a woman unrelated to her? At present, Consort Lan was the beloved woman of the Emperor. The Emperor was said to have spent most of his time in a month with Consort Lan and rarely had any other favored consorts.

“She said... She said you and my cousin were deeply in love with each other. My cousin’s love for you was as deep as the sea. Besides, no other person could sabotage your close relationship. She also sighed with emotion that my cousin was also a truthful and devoted lover...” Qin Yiyan said. She couldn’t remember much at the moment, so she simply said, “Anyway, she said a lot of good words about you. For example, you two were inseparable, and my cousin treated you wholeheartedly.”

“So, how did you react?” Qin Yiyan looked a little annoyed. Seeing this, Shao Wanru couldn’t help smiling.

Right now, Qin Yiyan revealed her true feelings. Shao Wanru remembered how Qin Yiyan put on an act when they saw each other for the first time. Recalling the scene, she found it indeed interesting.

Qin Yiyan did a lousy job of hiding her genuine purposes. Yet, she pretended to be experienced and astute. Back then, Shao Wanru was a little intimidated by her swashbuckling posture. But now, when thinking about it, Shao Wanru found it amusing.

Qin Yiyan rolled her eyes and replied, “How could I react? I just watched her and pondered the meaning of her words. Consort Lan had told me words said by the people in the Palace were half-true. When I had difficulty figuring out their real intentions, I might as well remain silent, showing them that I didn’t understand.”

Then she sighed and said, “Lives of people in the Palace are tiring. In my eyes, they might as well go back to their original families. At least they are far less likely to face so many schemes and plots.”

“Did she leave later?” Shao Wanru asked with a smile. Ever since Qin Yiyan gave up her ambitious idea, she became frank and outspoken before her. This made Shao Wanru feel that she was actually a straightforward girl without so many twists and turns in her mind.

Because of this, Shao Wanru became much closer to her.

Simple people were happy. At least Qin Yiyan seemed to be in a good mood now. Except for such unexpected troublesome things, she enjoyed her life now.

“She walked away later. Before that, she gave me an item. Could you look at it for me? I didn’t dare to show it to Consort Lan. She is always in a bad mood.

Though she is smiling, I feel she has never been happy. From time to time, she would ask about my cousin. Could you let my cousin go to see her? Consort Lan would love to see him.”

Speaking of this, Qin Yiyan forgot about her own business.

She felt sorry for Consort Lan. Sometimes, Consort Lan would ask her to bring food to her cousin when Qin Yiyan visited her. Consort Lan said that Prince Chen would like it. However, when Qin Yiyan brought the food to her cousin, he casually threw it aside without even looking at it. Of course, she wanted to persuade him not to do so. But when she saw his steel eyes, she was discouraged.

She had been living in the mansion during this period. Therefore, she figured one thing: no one else but Shao Wanru could change her cousin’s mind.

She reached out to pull Shao Wanru’s sleeve and said, “Cousin-in-law, could you talk to my cousin about it? No matter how much he dislikes Consort Lan, she is still his aunt. Besides, Consort Lan doesn’t have any other children. Except for my cousin, whom could she rely on?”

Qin Yiyan pitied Consort Lan because she never gave birth to any child. Even if she only had a daughter, it would be good. At least she would have a biological daughter. However, although the Emperor favored Consort Lan, she had no children. At her current age, she should not be able to give birth to any. Thus, no matter how much the Emperor doted on her, so what?

Whenever Qin Yiyan thought of this, she felt she could understand Consort Lan. Living lonely in the Palace, the only person related to her by blood was Chu Liuchen. However, it seemed that her cousin detested her. She did not know what was wrong with him.

“Well, I know. Sometimes, I have tried to persuade your cousin, but... I’m afraid it won’t work. Don’t get your hopes too high. Most importantly, don’t tell Consort Lan about it.”

Shao Wanru couldn’t help laughing and comforted Qin Yiyan in a soft voice.

This matter was a knot in Chu Liuchen’s heart. She couldn’t just go straight to persuade him. Besides, she could not say what she had guessed for fear that Chu Liuchen would be sad again. If he did not mention it, she would never ask.

It was better not to tear open the old wound in his heart. Gradually, it would heal. If others kept touching it, the painful wound might never stop troubling him...

“Well, I know it. It’s not easy to get close to my cousin. After all, he is somewhat unapproachable.” Qin Yiyan curled her lips. Knowing she couldn’t do anything about this matter now, she drifted back to the previous topic. She took a small pouch from the pocket before her chest, handed it to Shao Wanru, and said, “See? Zhaoyi Di left it for me.”

Shao Wanru took it. With a closer look, she found nothing special about this pouch. At least it looked ordinary. Except for the typical cloud pattern, there was nothing else worth mentioning. Shao Wanru turned it over and over in her hand but didn’t find anything usual.

“How did you know it was from Zhaoyi Di?” Shao Wanru asked. People in the Palace would often leave space for manoeuvres when handling issues. Even if something went wrong, no one could directly testify against them.

After the Duke Yong’s Mansion collapsed, Zhaoyi Di became more cautious. It was not appropriate for her to say those words to Qin Yiyan. Why would she even send Zhaoyi Di a small bag?

“She left it on the table when she left. I wanted to call her back and give it back to her, but she walked away so fast that I couldn’t catch up with her. It was obvious that she wanted me to keep it. She could not leave it behind by accident.” Qin Yiyan was frank by nature, but it didn’t mean she was stupid. She had gone to chase her. But since she was unfamiliar with the Palace, Qin Yiyan soon lost track of her after a few turns. In the end, she had to come back.

The purse was temporarily in her hands, so it was not convenient for her to ask Consort Lan about it. Consort Lan had been in a bad mood and needed to take medicine occasionally. Thus, Qin Yiyan didn’t want to worry her and came to find Shao Wanru.

“What did you find out?” Shao Wanru asked. Since Qin Yiyan felt it was inappropriate and went further after Zhaoyi Di, she must have checked the pouch.

“I checked it but didn’t find anything. I deliberately put it in the water. I even pulled out a piece of thread and burned it. But even so, I found nothing unusual!” Qin Yiyan pointed to a place under the pouch. Upon a closer inspection, she found that a length of thread had been pulled off. It looked a little messy, but if Shao Wanru didn’t look carefully, she couldn’t notice it.

“I can’t tell it either. I’ll ask your cousin to check it out later. It looks more like a man’s stuff,” Shao Wanru said.

The cloud pattern? Generally, women liked embroidering items with flowers and plants. Even if they didn’t do that, they would choose some lovely patterns. But this pouch only had the cloud pattern. Wasn’t it too simple?

But because there was only the cloud pattern, it was difficult to guess who the owner of this pouch was. The material of the purse looked good.

“It belonged to a man?” Qin Yiyan said with her face changing dramatically, “What did Zhaoyi Di mean?”

Shao Wanru put the purse on the table and slightly blinked her watery eyes. “Have you been in the Palace more often recently?”

“I had nothing to do anyway. Whenever I was free, I would go to see Consort Lan. You wouldn’t go with me even if I asked you to!” Qin Yiyan pouted her delicate lips and said unhappily. She wanted so much to go there with Shao Wanru. However, as soon as Shao Wanru entered the Palace, she would go to see the Empress Dowager or say that Chu Liuchen didn’t allow her to go. Anyway, she always had an excuse not to see Consort Lan.

“Don’t visit the Palace often during this period,” Shao Wanru said seriously. “Why?” Qin Yiyan didn’t understand.

Shao Wanru pointed at the pouch on the table and said, “If I guess it right, some people are not happy to see Consort Lan win the Emperor’s favor. They can’t get near Consort Lan, so they can only lay their hands on you.”

“What... what do you mean?” Qin Yiyan shivered and looked nervous.

“Nothing in particular. They intend to get to Consort Lan through you.” Shao Wanru looked at Qin Yiyan with an extremely calm look and said. Consort Lan seemed to have no weakness. Besides, she enjoyed a unique status in the Palace, and even the Empress couldn’t meet her at will. No one could do anything to her unless she took the initiative to come out.

“Is it Zhaoyi Di?” Qin Yiyan asked angrily.

“Not her!” Shao Wanru shook her head and said. Zhaoyi Di was not in the Emperor’s good graces and didn’t fall into disfavor. Under these circumstances, she couldn’t target Consort Lan. Moreover, if it had been her,

she wouldn't have appeared so openly before Qin Yiyan. Of course, it couldn't prove that she was not involved.

This pouch seemed more like an item used to sound out them.

"You'd better not go to the Palace so frequently during this period. If you have anything to say, tell me. Don't act rashly. Consort Lan has been safe in the Palace for so many years. So, she will be okay at this time. I will ask your cousin about this pouch and tell you when I know the answer."

Shao Wanru thought for a moment and said softly, eyes falling back on the pouch again. "This pouch is strange. Why would it be sent to Qin Yiyan?"

Holding it in her hand, she weighed. This pouch was sealed and of moderate weight. She had no idea what it was. There seemed to be something a little heavy except for the cotton. Was it gold, silver, or women's accessories?

Qin Yiyan knew she couldn't get anything out of it now, so she nodded helplessly and said, "Well, then, be careful. Maybe they're coming at you."

After talking for a while, Qin Yiyan was leaving. Shao Wanru asked Yujie to send her out, and her eyes fell on the pouch again. She reached out to hold it in her hand and gently weighed it. There was really something in it. She looked at it but found nothing after examining it for some time. Her watery eyes appeared more and more confused.

"There is something inside, and it must be special, isn't it?"

"When Chu Liuchen is back, I will ask him to have a good look at it."

However, he didn't return after she waited a long time. In the evening, he was said to be in the Palace and couldn't go out. Shao Wanru panicked because this had never happened before. Chu Liuchen had never stayed in the Palace for so long. What had happened today?

Chapter 1252 A Person Almost Forgotten

It had been a long time since the dinner. At about ten o'clock in the evening, Qing'er trotted over to report, saying Prince Chen was back and didn't look well.

The news flustered Shao Wanru. At once, she walked out with Qing'er and Yujie. On the way, they met Chu Liuchen.

"Why are you here?" Chu Liuchen took her hand and asked.

Shao Wanru stole a glance at him — he looked fine, and there was nothing wrong with him. Finally, she breathed a sigh of relief and asked, "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine. Don't worry!" Chu Liuchen shook his head and pulled her back inside. A group of servants followed them with lanterns in their hands.

Chu Liuchen's hand was slightly cold. Shao Wanru grasped his big hand, trying to warm him with her warm hands. Chu Liuchen's body temperature was slightly lower than ordinary people's. Unlike him, Shao Wanru was as warm as a cat bathing in the sun.

Along the way, Chu Liuchen didn't say a word. Although he maintained his composure, Shao Wanru felt the atmosphere was a little gloomy. As expected, something bad must have happened.

"Have you had dinner in the Palace?" Entering the room, Shao Wanru asked. Chu Liuchen shook his head.

Shao Wanru asked Nanny Yu to get the hot dishes from the kitchenette. Chu Liuchen looked starving. He put the bowl down only after eating three bowls of rice in a row. Then, he drank a bowl of soup sent by Shao Wanru before asking the servants to remove the tableware.

After washing up, he asked all the servant girls and old maids to leave.

When Shao Wanru came out, Chu Liuchen had washed his face and rinsed his mouth. He leaned against the bed and slightly furrowed his beautiful brows, apparently lost in thought.

As Shao Wanru went to bed, he reached out to hold her in his arms and pulled the quilt over them. Then he just held her in silence.

"Did anything happen in the Palace?" Shao Wanru raised her big eyes and asked.



“Uncle the Emperor suddenly spat out blood.” Chu Liuchen closed his eyes and gently touched Shao Wanru’s long hair. Her glossy hair hanging down loosely felt smooth in his hands.

“The Emperor vomited blood?” Shao Wanru suddenly opened her eyes wide with a trace of astonishment across them. “He has been fine. Why would he suddenly vomit blood?”

In her previous life, she had heard the Emperor fell ill, but she didn’t know why. She only knew he had become seriously ill. At that time, these officials persuaded the Emperor to appoint a crown prince. It caused a lot of disputes in the imperial court. All the matters about fighting for the throne must have happened during that time!

Chu Liuzhou plotted a rebellion, and Chu Liuxin died. In the end, Chu Liuchen became the final winner. He got the position of the crown prince. Governing the nation, he controlled the entire imperial court and was in charge of all the state affairs.

“We haven’t found the truth for the time being. It’s said that Uncle the Emperor has accumulated poison in his body. He didn’t seem to have been deliberately poisoned. Perhaps, he accidentally ate some conflicting food and tonic residues. Then, the poison gradually settled in him. He will be fine after spitting it out,” Chu Liuchen said. This was the conclusion made by several imperial physicians.

“Will it not be a big deal if he spits it out?” Shao Wanru hid the surprise in her eyes and asked slowly, relaxing again.

“That’s what the imperial physicians said, but how could there be such a coincidence?” Chu Liuchen sneered.

Shao Wanru thought for a moment and shook her head. She also felt such a thing was unlikely to happen. Imperial physicians with excellent medical skills had been taking care of the Emperor’s health. How could they let such a dangerous thing happen?

“But after a lot of surveys, we found nothing unusual. Everything was perfectly normal. All things provided to him were carefully selected. There was nothing unusual,” Chu Liuchen said coldly.

Shao Wanru pondered for a moment. This matter couldn’t be that simple. With this in mind, she said, “Nothing happened in the past. All of a sudden, such a serious matter happened. Did anything trigger it? Or was it because of something else?”

It was no big deal if he spat out a mouthful of poisonous blood that couldn't be released in time. Instead, it was good that he could spit it out. But what if it was not the case? Inexplicably, she felt flustered. Reaching out to grab Chu Liuchen's cloth, she tried hard to raise her head to see Chu Liuchen's face. She bit her pink lips and added, "I always feel something is wrong."

Many things were different from her previous life. She couldn't figure out the truth. She just subconsciously felt it couldn't be that simple. This kind of thing couldn't happen casually.

"Unusual movements have happened in the Palace recently. Be careful when you are in the Palace." Chu Liuchen reached out to press her head closer to him, put his hand on her beautiful hair, and reminded her.

The Emperor spat out a mouthful of poisonous blood. In every respect, Shao Wanru had to go to the Palace and see the Empress Dowager, who must have known this matter. After such a thing happened, Shao Wanru, as her granddaughter-in-law, should go to accompany and comfort the Empress Dowager.

Knowing Chu Liuchen was worried about her, Shao Wanru said with gentleness in her eyes, "Don't worry. I'll be cautious. I'll be fine. But you have to be careful. It is unknown who will get involved in such a thing."

If some people planned this matter, it could not be simple. There might be a backup plan. Therefore, the best way was to deal with it carefully and not be careless.

"You'd better be careful." Shao Wanru was deeply worried. Leaning against his chest, she rubbed her little head uneasily. She felt disturbed and couldn't help palpitating from nervousness.

Things happening in this life differed from those previous ones, but they seemed similar in some aspects. Was there anything wrong?

"Don't worry. I'm with you!" Sensing Shao Wanru was uneasy, Chu Liuchen lowered his head gently, kissed her hair, and comforted her.

That night, Shao Wanru didn't know when she had fallen asleep. Anyway, she didn't sleep well because she dreamed of past things. Sometimes, she was under the blazing sun, punished by Shao Yanru. Sometimes, she was back in Jiangzhou, facing curses from many people and looking pathetically embarrassed. She saw the faces of Qin Yuru and Qi Tianyu radiating with proud smiles. Then, there was a bloody mess — she was shocked to see the broken look of Shao Yanru...

“Ah!” Shao Wanru suddenly sat up and looked somewhere in the air in panic. The last scene was too scary.

“What’s wrong? Did you have a nightmare?” Chu Liuchen also woke up. Sitting up, he held her in his arms, gently patted her on the back, and comforted her.

“I…” Shao Wanru wanted to say something, but her voice became hoarse when she opened her mouth. It sounded as if she had experienced some great hardships. She couldn’t even utter any words and just gasped heavily. The suffocating feeling faded away. Only then did she realize that she was still alive, unlike in her previous life.

“Don’t be afraid. I’m here!” Chu Liuchen’s deep voice sounded particularly clear in the darkness. Although his voice was not loud, every word fell on her heart and somehow gave her courage. Instantly, it seemed she had found the power to move forward. Her eyes tightly closed, she reached out to hold Chu Liuchen by his firm waist. She snuggled close up to him and stayed in his warm arms.

“I had a dream and dreamed of something bad and bloody.” She didn’t know how to say some words in the past, but now she naturally told him, “And there were some things about Qi Tianyu and Qin Yuru a long time ago.”

Speaking of this, Shao Wanru paused and asked, “How is Qi Tianyu now?”

Somehow, she remembered Qi Tianyu, who had done many uncommon things in her previous life. She knew he was cruel as early as they were in Jiangzhou. Later, he had an affair with Qin Yuru. He was a scheming man with a good official career. Because of her, he seemed to have kept silent and lain low in this life. Nevertheless, he should not have remained obscure all his life.

Shao Wanru leaned her head against Chu Liuchen’s chest. Slowly, she lay down with him. Qi Tianyu was not simple. Now he appeared to be Chu Liuyue’s henchman. His younger sister Qi Rongzhi had been very close to Chu Liuyue. Back then, Shao Wanru had thought Qi Rongzhi would marry into the Prince Yue’s Mansion. But in the end, she chose the Prince Zhou’s Mansion. No matter how Shao Wanru looked at this matter, it couldn’t be simple.

“Qi Tianyu?” Chu Liuchen lay down with Shao Wanru in his arms. Patting her back from time to time, he said softly. He didn’t pay much attention to such a person. Shao Wanru didn’t ask him to intervene in the issue in Jiangzhou,

saying she would deal with it. After that, she no longer had any dealings with Qi Tianyu.

Qi Tianyu had a lower status, so he usually could not see Prince Chen.

When Shao Wanru mentioned him, Chu Liuchen was somewhat confused. But to reassure Shao Wanru, he comforted her softly, "Did he do something? Don't worry. I will ask someone to keep an eye on him and not give him a chance to do anything."

"You must watch him closely. He is not ordinary." Shao Wanru nodded and reached out to touch her chest. Somehow, her heart began pounding violently. She had forgotten a lot of things in her last life. Her memories had dimmed. It had been a long time since Qi Tianyu last appeared in her life. After such a long time, she could hardly remember him. But now, her heart fluttered with fear. She seemed to have forgotten something important.

"I will send someone to keep an eye on him." Sensing her in a shocked and scared state, Chu Liuchen reassured her with a trace of gloom across his eyes. He never noticed this person before. Since Zhuozhuo was so worried, he would like to see how this person named Qi Tianyu was. Qi Baiyu had been living outside. It was time for him to return and stay with his Eldest Brother for a while...

When Shao Wanru woke up again, Chu Liuchen was no longer on the bed.

Hearing the sound on the bed, several servant girls hurried to serve her. They helped her get up, wash her face, and lead her to sit before the dressing table. Then Qu Le began combing her long hair.

Chu Liuchen came in and saw her dressing up, but he didn't leave. He went straight to her side and asked with a sweet smile, "Do you want me to paint your eyebrows? My painting skills are pretty good."

"No way!" Shao Wanru refused decisively. Painting pictures and her face were two completely different things. Never would she allow Chu Liuchen to take her face as his paper for drawing.

However, Chu Liuchen was not aware of her resistance. He came over, picked up Shao Wanru's eyebrow pencil, and was ready to draw Shao Wanru's eyebrows. But how could Shao Wanru agree with that? She tried to push him away, but Chu Liuchen wouldn't give up, feeling reluctant to leave. Holding the pen beside Shao Wanru, he took her hand and was about to draw her eyebrows.

He wouldn't leave unless Shao Wanru let him paint her eyebrows.

Prince Chen had such a naughty side. Several servant girls snickered secretly and retreated one by one, leaving the young couple alone.

### Chapter 1253 The Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion Was Haunted

Shao Wanru didn't want Chu Liuchen to draw her eyebrows, but she couldn't drive him away. Fortunately, although Chu Liuchen had never drawn on anyone's face, his painting skills were good. After some strokes, he finished drawing the eyebrows. They looked not bad. However, with a close look, one eyebrow was longer. Except for that, there was nothing wrong with them.

"Look at your eyebrows. I told you I could do it well!" Chu Liuchen proudly held the eyebrow pencil in his hand. As he studied them closely, he felt very satisfied. Such a delicate little face immediately appeared more outstanding with the eyebrows painted by him.

"What makes you think they are good? See? They are not of the same length!" Shao Wanru pouted slightly and rolled her eyes at him.

"Aren't they good enough? Let me have a look?" Chu Liuchen pulled her face over and looked at her eyebrows carefully. Suddenly, with a sudden spurt of energy, he proposed making some changes. "Then let's wipe off the make-up. Let me do it again. I don't believe I can't draw them well."

"No, that's okay. I'll slightly adjust it!" Shao Wanru didn't dare to let him draw it again. The eyebrows he drew were barely acceptable. Her eyebrows might look even worse if he did all this all over again.

"Are you sure you don't want me to draw again?" Chu Liuchen said reluctantly. Looking at Shao Wanru's short and long eyebrows, he was eager to try again.

"No, no, you don't have to do that. They are perfect. Well done." Shao Wanru pushed Chu Liuchen away from her. She kept praising him for fear that Chu Liuchen would come over again.

"What a pity. I can draw better." Chu Liuchen looked at Shao Wanru's face as beautiful as a blossom, unwilling to give up. He felt he could draw perfect eyebrows no matter how he made the changes. Thus, he was anxious to use the eyebrow pencil.

"Next time. You can draw my eyebrows next time," Shao Wanru said in a hurry.

"Well, I'll do it tomorrow!" Chu Liuchen, unwilling to let this chance slip, fixed the date.

“Okay, okay. I got it!” Shao Wanru hurriedly agreed. Chu Liuchen seemed not to have enjoyed himself to the fullest, so he felt the urge to do it now. However, she couldn’t let him make trouble again. Otherwise, it would be too late for her to enter the Palace.

With the Palace in mind, she suddenly remembered the matter Qin Yiyan had talked about. Then, she took Qin Yiyan’s pouch from the dressing table, handed it to Chu Liuchen, and asked, “Take a look at it. What is this?”

“Where did this pouch come from? Or was it the one enshrined in the Buddha hall?” Chu Liuchen looked at it and asked, not taking it seriously.

“This... is not a man’s purse?” Shao Wanru was stunned for a moment. The situation was a little different from her original idea.

“Not a man’s purse. How could there be so many men’s purses in the imperial Palace? Items with such patterns are usually placed before the statue of Buddha. I’ve seen similar things several times at my Imperial Grandmother’s place.” Chu Liuchen asked casually, “Where did they come from?”

“It was said to be left by Zhaoyi Di. She was talking with Cousin Qin. After that, she left it there. But when Cousin Qin chased after her to give it back to her, Zhaoyi Di shook off her.” Shao Wanru replied in detail after thinking for a while. This should be what had happened, yet she didn’t know what it meant.

She wondered if Zhaoyi Di had deliberately given a man’s purse to Qin Yiyan. Few men could get in and out of the Palace except for the Emperor and several princes. In her mind, Zhaoyi Di must have intended to frame Qin Yiyan.

But it was not a man’s purse, which greatly surprised her.

“There is a Buddha hall in the Palace. Consorts there like making offerings to the Buddha hall with this kind of pouch,” Chu Liuchen said. He pulled the small bag in his hand and saw two silver ingots falling out of it. No wonder Shao Wanru felt it was not filled with ordinary cotton yesterday. There turned out to be two silver ingots in it.

“It is considered more sincere to place them before the Buddha as tributes. In the end, these items would be collected by those nuns.” Chu Liuchen said carelessly.

“Was it Zhaoyi Di’s offering to the gods?” Shao Wanru inexplicably felt something wrong. It didn’t make sense. According to Qin Yiyan, Zhaoyi Di deliberately dropped it. What did Zhaoyi Di mean?

“Maybe, or maybe not!” Chu Liuchen said, “How about I send someone to check it out?”

Shao Wanru thought for a moment and said, “You don’t have to do it. It’s not appropriate for you to deal with this matter. Let me check it out. Since this item was delivered to Cousin Qin, it would be brought to me.”

Zhaoyi Di was the Emperor’s consort in the Palace. Chu Liuchen was not supposed to get involved with her. It was better for her to check it by herself. The pouch might have been used to test them to see how they would react. Real tricks must follow it. At this time, she had better wait for the situation to change.

However, this Buddha hall reminded Shao Wanru of Pushan Nun. Ever since she entered the Palace, she had become the most trusted master in the Palace for those imperial consorts.

In the Palace, these consorts had been living peaceful but worthless lives. They rained praises on her for her profound understanding of Buddhist doctrines and striking painting skills. Last time, Shao Wanru had seen a disciple of Pushan Nun in the Empress Dowager’s place, but she never saw the disciple again.

“Was it Nanny Wei behind the gauze curtain last time?” Thinking of the Empress Dowager, Shao Wanru put away her pouch and asked. Though she knew what had happened in the beginning, she didn’t ask about the result. At this time, she asked curiously.

“It was Nanny Wei. She overheard the conversation and told Wei Dahai about it. Wei Dahai returned to his mansion after going down the mountain. His niece went to the Commandery Prince Qing’s Mansion shortly after that. I heard she went to visit Consort Dowager Qing there!” Chu Liuchen said lazily.

“Then what about Nanny Wei... What should we do with her?”

Shao Wanru pondered for a moment and asked. She believed Chu Liuchen could understand the hidden meaning in her words. It was dangerous if Nanny Wei stayed with the Empress Dowager.

“Keep her for the time being!” Chu Liuchen said slowly in a low voice, his eyes gloomy. He had secretly arranged for someone new to serve his Imperial Grandmother. Although Nanny Wei might do things against them, it was not the right time to get rid of her.

Shao Wanru nodded. Since Chu Liuchen took it to heart, he would not let Nanny Wei’s schemes succeed. After she lengthened her shorter eyebrow,

she asked the servant girls to come in and serve breakfast. Then she went to the Palace with Qing'er and Yujie.

This time, she did not enter from the side door. Instead, she got on the carriage at the door with her servants, and the carriage went to the gate of the Palace. Then, she got off the carriage and took the soft sedan chair at the Palace gate, heading for the Empress Dowager's Palace of Benevolent Peace.

Chu Liuchen went to his study. When he went to the second floor and sat behind the large desk, he ordered Ancheng, "Send someone to keep an eye on Qi Tianyu."

"Qi Tianyu?" Ancheng didn't figure out who Qi Tianyu was for a moment.

"He is Qi Baiyu's brother, the Number Three Scholar three years ago," Chu Liuchen said.

"Master, why should we keep an eye on such a person? He doesn't have a high position or great power. He seems to be useless. A few people who passed the exam the same year as him have made greater achievements than him. He is no match for Third Young Master Wen, the Number One Scholar at that time," Ancheng said indifferently. He sincerely felt it was a waste of time and energy to monitor Qi Tianyu.

"So? Are you not going to disobey my orders?" Chu Liuchen glanced at him evilly and coldly, which scared Ancheng. He hurriedly said, "That was not what I meant. Of course, I will do whatever you ask me to do. I will watch him, but what should I pay special attention to?"

"Everything from all aspects. Remember whom he has contact with, and see even the details clearly!" Chu Liuchen reached out to knock on the table near him and slowly reminded him in his deep voice.

If Shao Wanru hadn't mentioned it, he wouldn't have remembered such a man. But after hearing Shao Wanru's words, he remembered a few things about him. Qi Tianyu was an outstanding talent with an excellent reputation in Jiangzhou. But he has been buried in oblivion since he moved to the capital. He had a younger sister who would marry into the Prince Zhou's Mansion as a consort. Merely from this aspect, Chu Liuchen knew this matter couldn't be simple.

A magistrate's daughter would become a consort of a legitimate prince. She must be pretty capable!



Chu Liuchen had also seen that woman before. She looked mean and ungrateful. Neither she had a good appearance nor powerful background. How could the Empress take a liking to such a woman? For the Empress, such a family was an impoverished one. How could she let Qi Rongzhi become Prince Zhou's consort? But she accepted Qi Rongzhi at last.

"Qi Tianyu has a younger sister. She had been raised in the Marquis Xing's Mansion and was said to be the nominal foster daughter of Madam Jiang. Later, she had a conflict with Madam Jiang and returned to her elder brother's residence. Now she will marry into Prince Zhou's Mansion as a consort." Chu Liuchen raised the corner of his mouth. This matter must be fishy, but he had neglected it.

A sociopathic glint appeared in Ancheng's eyes. Responsible for secret investigations, he was very sensitive to such secretive matters. Thus, he immediately realized something was wrong. "Your Highness, Qi Tianyu is not good at literature and martial arts. How could the Empress choose his sister? Besides, they had a falling out with the Marquis Xing's Mansion. Who protected them at that time?"

Madam Jiang was not a good-tempered person. If anyone offended her, she might be wild for revenge. However, nothing terrible happened to Qi Tianyu and his sister. In the end, they even won the favor of the Empress, who took a fancy to his younger sister and made her Prince Zhou's consort.

"Go and find out whom Qi Tianyu works for!" Chu Liuchen ordered coldly.

"I don't think it's Prince Zhou." Ancheng thought for a moment and said.

"That person seems to be infinitely resourceful. Qi Tianyu's sister has been sent to Prince Zhou's Mansion. Besides, the Empress met her and even let her be her son's consort." Chu Liuchen sneered indifferently. To his surprise, someone would devise such a plan, and he nearly neglected it.

"I will send two people to keep an eye on Qi Tianyu and find out who is behind him." Ancheng agreed. "Qi Tianyu could not do this alone, so someone must have secretly backed him up."

"Find out all Qi Tianyu's whereabouts. He is not a simple person. If he discovers our people, kill him on the spot!" Chu Liuchen said lazily, with a trace of gloom across his eyes.

"I understand." Ancheng was not surprised by his master's cruel method. After all, he had followed Prince Chen for so many years. He was tender and softhearted only when facing Princess Chen. Before others, he was just the cold-blooded and ruthless Prince Chen. Qi Tianyu looked suspicious, but even

if he never plotted against anyone, Prince Chen had no intention of letting him go.

Ancheng didn't know how the man surnamed Qi had offended Prince Chen, who gave the order to kill him.

In the eyes of Ancheng, Qi Tianyu was already a dead man. But before he died, he was still of some value...

"How is Prince Cheng recently?"

"He is well-behaved, but something happened to the Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion again last night," Ancheng reported. This matter was not big but a little strange. Anyway, he did not disturb his master last night. "The Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion was haunted!"

Chapter 1254 The Empress Dowager Felt Anxious

"Ghosts appeared in the Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion?" Chu Liuchen asked with a faint smile.

"Yes, it was said to be so. I heard ghosts appear in the burned place. Some people said they saw the figure of the petty official from the Ministry of Justice. Some spotted headless ghosts. The whole Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion fell into a panic. Later, when Commandery Prince Qing came to investigate this matter in person, the whole mansion finally quieted down."

Ancheng smiled.

They wouldn't believe there were ghosts. There must be someone trying to mess up the Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion.

Chu Liuchen's beautiful eyes flickered slightly and turned indifferent as he asked, "No one suspicious visited Prince Cheng's Mansion?"

"No one. Since Prince Cheng was in his mansion, he has never caused any trouble. No one comes to visit him, and he has no intention of going out. Even when food is delivered to his mansion, some specially-assigned people will collect and send the food into his mansion." Ancheng reported. Then he added, "Prince Cheng is now Commandery Prince Cheng!"

Indeed, Prince Cheng's Mansion had become the Commandery Prince Cheng's Mansion. It was under supervision now. Not only secret guards of other mansions but also the guards sent by the Emperor closely surrounded the Commandery Prince Cheng's Mansion. No matter how capable Commandery Prince Cheng was, he could not pass on the message to anyone outside.

"Then go to the Yuyun Temple and have a look," Chu Liuchen said with a faint smile. He rolled his deep eyes and said casually.

"Master, do you mean Master Jieyan, the abbot of the Yuyun Temple," Ancheng asked knowingly.

"Just go there and look around. There will always be some clues." Chu Liuchen waved his hand and said meaningfully. His long eyelashes cast zigzag shadows on the snow-white skin under his eyes. The strange scene sent out an inexplicable chill.

"Yes, master. I'll look for clues in the Yuyun Temple right now." Ancheng nodded and withdrew. He really should go to check the Yuyun Temple. Master Jieyan worked for Commandery Prince Cheng. But when Commandery Prince Cheng went down the mountain, he didn't take Master Jieyan. At this time, he should have stayed in the Yuyun Temple.

Compared with other people in the Commandery Prince Cheng's Mansion, Master Jieyan was the most likely one to...

Yesterday, the Empress Dowager had just returned from the Huaguang Temple. She seemed to be in low spirits. Was it because of what had happened at the Emperor's place last night? When Shao Wanru left the Huaguang Temple, the Empress Dowager looked good, though in low spirits. But now, she became much more feeble.

"Imperial Grandmother, did you not sleep well last night?" Shao Wanru asked and reached out to her. "May I take your pulse?"

"Nothing serious. I didn't sleep well at night!" The Empress Dowager answered weakly. Nanny Wei took out a wrist cushion and put it under her hand.

The Empress Dowager and the people around her knew Shao Wanru had medical skills.

"You all can leave now!" The Empress Dowager Queen waved her hand.

One by one, the palace maids and eunuchs on both sides retreated carefully. However, Nanny Wei stood aside and continued serving them with a bright smile.

"You should also withdraw!" The Empress Dowager suddenly ordered.

Nanny Wei was stunned, for she had never expected the Empress Dowager to ask her to go outside. Briefly startled, she lowered her head with a flash of sadness in her eyes. Slowly, she retreated outside.

Standing still outside, she looked at the two rows of servants in the Palace on both sides — no one noticed her. Only then she breathed a sigh of relief. She felt depressed. In the past, when the Empress Dowager met Princess Chen, she had never asked her to go outside. Were they going to say something secretive today? And even Nanny Wei was not allowed to listen to their conversation?

Nanny Wei had served the Empress Dowager for so many years and had rarely seen the Empress Dowager being so cautious. In particular, Princess Chen was not of much use to the Empress Dowager. Why would Empress Dowager ask her to leave? Did the Empress Dowager no longer trust her?

Thinking of this, Nanny Wei felt increasingly gloomy. She simply stopped at the gate, listening quietly to what was happening inside.

She was too far away to hear their conversation inside. But if they made a big noise, she could hear it.

Shao Wanru reached out to feel Empress Dowager's pulse. After a thorough diagnosis, she finally let go of her hands.

"How is it going?" The Empress Dowager said weakly.

"Didn't you sleep well last night? At your age, you shouldn't worry too much. The Emperor and several Princees are there to handle all the affairs. You need to take good care of yourself," Shao Wanru suggested softly.

"How can I rest well after such a thing happened?" The Empress Dowager sighed heavily. She could barely find anyone and talk about some things, and Shao Wanru happened to come over. At this time, she felt it was best to speak to Shao Wanru.

"Don't worry, Imperial Grandmother. I heard from His Highness that it was not a big deal. His Majesty felt much better after spitting out that mouthful of blood." Shao Wanru comforted the Empress Dowager. Then she stood up and walked behind the Empress Dowager. Gently, she began massaging the acupuncture points on both sides of her forehead.

She wanted to relax her. She could feel the Empress Dowager was a little nervous.

Shao Wanru was very professional in massage. She pressed against the most aching and limp places with moderate strength. Feeling quite cozy, the Empress Dowager closed her eyes and said faintly, "How could such a coincidence happen to the Emperor? I can't believe it. Someone must have planned to hurt him. Otherwise, such a thing wouldn't have happened."

"Do you mean these imperial physicians made the wrong diagnosis?" Hearing what she said, Shao Wanru asked tentatively.

"It's hard to say whether the diagnosis is wrong. I'm afraid my son deliberately let these imperial physicians say so because he didn't want me to worry about him." The Empress Dowager pinched the handkerchief in her hand and added, "If anyone in the Palace were behind this, it would be a big deal. Who on earth wanted to harm His Majesty secretly? How audacious the person was to do this!"

With this, the Empress Dowager was in a filthy mood. The Emperor was in the prime of his life. Such a thing should not have happened.

"Don't worry, Imperial Grandmother. Since the Emperor has said so, he must have his reason. Maybe he has made a well-thought-out plan," Shao Wanru said.

This time, the Empress Dowager did not speak for a long time. The hall became so quiet that Shao Wanru almost thought the Empress Dowager was asleep.

"What do you think of the Empress?" The Empress Dowager asked in a low voice that only Shao Wanru could hear her.

Her gentle voice wafted across the spacious hall like a cold breeze, and Shao Wanru's hands trembled. She was so frightened that she almost pressed the wrong place. Hurriedly, she withdrew her hands, trying hard to suppress the horror in her heart. Then, she whispered, "Imperial Grandmother! I don't dare to talk about the Empress's affairs!"

"Then tell me, what do Consort Ming and Consort of Virtue think?" The Empress Dowager suddenly asked.

"Imperial Grandmother!" Shao Wanru turned to face the Empress Dowager, lifted her dress, and knelt. She couldn't afford to talk about these two people either.

"It doesn't matter. Only you and me are here. Only I can hear what you say. No one else can catch your words, and I won't blame you for anything you say." The Empress Dowager reached out and kindly held Shao Wanru's hands, trying to pull her up. There was even a faint smile on her face.

The Empress Dowager was in poor health, so Shao Wanru did not dare to refuse to stand up. Taking her hand, Shao Wanru stood up but looked embarrassed.

“Go ahead!” The Empress Dowager said. She looked at Shao Wanru but ignored her look of embarrassment.

Shao Wanru pursed her lips slightly and raised her watery eyes. The look on her exceedingly beautiful little face was no longer as troubled as before. Her limpid eyes looked calm and tender, with a hint of deep-hidden momentum. At this moment, she was no longer the frightened Princess Chen. She seemed to appear more relaxed and powerful.

Eyes on the Empress Dowager, she said unhurriedly, “Though Consort Ming has some ideas, Prince Xin, with a peaceful mind, won’t get involved in the competition. Even if Consort of Virtue wants to compete, she is not sure if Prince Yue can succeed.”

Shao Wanru knew from Empress Dowager’s attitude that she couldn’t avoid discussing this matter. In this case, she chose to face the reality.

The current situation was unknown. Every one of them might win or lose. No one would have the guts to assault the Emperor unless the person was sure to win.

“If anyone is sure to get the throne, the person might launch the first attack. Is that what you mean?” The Empress Dowager repeated what Shao Wanru said, her eyes growing slightly colder.

Shao Wanru’s heart skipped a beat. Lowering her head, she said, “Imperial Grandmother, I’m just talking about the matter as it stands. In their hearts, they might think they have a greater chance of winning. But in everyone’s eyes, the few princes have the same possibility of winning. It’s not worth it for anyone to take action. Even anyone with a secretive agreement may not win. Besides, if there is an agreement in secret, they would be more cautious now and never act rashly.”

“Why?” The Empress Dowager looked a little relieved and asked after thinking for a while.

“Think about it, Imperial Grandmother. The person with a private agreement is sure to get the throne. In this case, why would the person cause such big trouble? After that, His Majesty is bound to suspect this person. Besides, the few princes are not old. It doesn’t matter even if they must wait more than ten years. They will get the throne sooner or later. Then how could any of them be so anxious to seize it in advance?”

Her words made the Empress Dowager Queen silent again. She nodded and sighed softly. Although Empress Dowager still sighed this time, Shao Wanru

felt her mood was much better than before. Then, the Empress Dowager reached out to hold her hand, letting her sit on the chair aside.

“How does Chen’er treat you?”

They had been talking about the Emperor’s issue. But suddenly, the Empress Dowager changed the topic and began talking about the private things between the young couple. Shao Wanru felt herself blush. Lowering her head, she pinched the handkerchief and said shyly, “He is very nice to me.”

“Then that’s good. Chen’er has been a solitary child since his childhood. He was not willing to play with others. When he grew up, he couldn’t get close to anyone except me. He looks gentle, but his heart is somewhere far away from others. Back then, he abandoned himself to despair and didn’t care about anything, including his life. His Uncle the Emperor and me have been begging him with the greatest care. That is why he is willing to live for so many years.”

When the Empress Dowager spoke of this, the rims of her eyes reddened. Such a young child had been quiet since he was little. It seemed as if he had lived in a different space from others. He quietly watched others play, but his beautiful eyes had always been empty. He looked ahead blankly as if nothing was meaningless to him. Every time she saw him like this, the Empress Dowager felt distressed. After all, this boy was the most innocent one.

It was the fault of the previous generation. Why did this child have to take the blame...

#### Chapter 1255 Have You Fallen in Love With Anyone?

“Everyone thinks the Emperor and I dote on this child too much, but they have never thought of the reason behind it. If it hadn’t been for us, he would have lost his desire to live. Fortunately, he met you later.” The Empress Dowager said in a deep voice, “He is lucky to have you. Because of you, he is willing to live healthily and happily.”

The Empress Dowager just said a few simple sentences. She seemed to have said something important. However, all of this sounded to be her feelings and nothing practical. Somehow, the rims of Shao Wanru’s eyes also turned red. She only felt a sharp pain in her heart, which was almost bone-deep and very painful.

She knew he had always been listless. In the past, he never took medicine in time. But later, he told Shao Wanru that he would live well.

“Imperial Grandmother, please rest assured. He will be fine.” Shao Wanru tried hard to suppress the sadness in her heart and said, biting her lips with determination.

“Yes, he lives in contentment now and enjoys a good life. The Emperor and I feel very happy for him.” The Empress Dowager Queen nodded and gently wiped the corners of her eyes with a handkerchief. She looked up at Shao Wanru and said, “You are the one who will accompany him for the rest of his life. Even if the Emperor and I are gone in the future, he will not give up on himself with you accompanying him.”

“No, he won’t. Imperial Grandmother, he is fine now.” Shao Wanru nodded vigorously, saying, “You will live to a ripe old age. You and His Majesty will be alright.”

Shao Wanru could feel the Empress Dowager’s love and care for Chu Liuchen from the few short sentences. Deeply touched, she also firmly held the Empress Dowager’s hands, trying to let her feel her kindly feelings.

The Empress Dowager smiled. She let go of Shao Wanru’s hands and leaned back. “You are also a considerate child. With you around, Prince Chen will no longer feel lonely or do anything bad to himself. Go back now. I didn’t sleep well last night. I will have a good sleep now.”

The Empress Dowager closed her eyes. A relieved smile emerged on her face.

“Yes, Imperial Grandmother.” Shao Wanru stood up and bowed respectfully to Empress Dowager. The Empress Dowager waved her hand kindly and motioned for her to leave with an amiable smile.

Watching Shao Wanru walking away slowly, the Empress Dowager secretly nodded in approval in her heart. Though Shao Wanru was young, she was steady, bold, and responsible. If the Empress Dowager had asked others this question, they might have wept and wailed piteously, saying they did not dare to talk recklessly.

This girl was not bad. Finally, she chose a wife worthy of her grandson.

It was not because Shao Wanru was Rui’an Great Elder Princess’s granddaughter but because she deserved it...

Shao Wanru walked outside and told Nanny Wei, “Her Majesty is tired and needs to rest. You are asked to bring some people to serve her!”



"Yes, Your Highness. I'll go right away!" Nanny Wei nodded and bowed respectfully to Shao Wanru. Then, she picked a few palace maids to go in with her.

Shao Wanru went out. Qing'er and Yujie were waiting outside. Seeing her come out, they hurriedly followed her.

Standing before the red imperial building, Shao Wanru looked down at the soft sedan chair there and ordered, "Qing'er, let the soft sedan chair go to the gate of the Palace. I'd like to walk around!"

Qing'er answered and said to the two eunuchs waiting beside the sedan chair. As ordered, the two eunuchs carried the sedan chair and left.

The imperial garden was tranquil. Along the way, they didn't see any imperial consort. In the past, they would always meet one or two consorts. But now, there was no one else around. After all, the Emperor was not feeling well. No imperial consort would wander around at this time. They would rather wait in their places.

As Shao Wanru walked, she thought about what Empress Dowager had said. She didn't think Empress Dowager said those words on a whim. The little chat sounded more like a test for her. Otherwise, she wouldn't have asked Shao Wanru such questions.

At that time, she just thought for a moment. Without too much hesitation, she decided what to say next. But now, she felt a cold sweat on her back.

"My Lady, it's Prince Xin!" Qing'er suddenly lowered her voice and said to Shao Wanru.

Shao Wanru stopped. As she raised her head, she saw Chu Liuxin standing not far from her. It was the first time she had seen Chu Liuxin in such a long time.

He used to be a lively young man. He seemed to have grown up a lot and become a steady fellow. However, he looked a little gloomy and cold, no longer the young man full of vigor and vitality he used to be.

They happened to run into each other on this path.

"Greetings, Your Highness." The two servant girls bowed in unison.

Chu Liuxin came to his senses and waved his hand to motion for them to stand up. Then he stepped forward and said to Shao Wanru, "Greetings, Third Sister-in-law!"

"Your Highness, you don't have to do that!" Shao Wanru said, bowing sideways.

"Are you going to see Third Brother? He was here just now and must have gone there now." Chu Liuxin pointed in a direction and gently said with a less gloomy look.

"Thank you, Your Highness," Shao Wanru replied softly.

They passed each other, one walking to the east and one moving toward the west. With her two servant girls, Shao Wanru turned a corner and walked in the direction Chu Liuxin had pointed out just now. She was not in a hurry to return to the mansion. It was better to go and see Chu Liuchen first.

However, Chu Liuxin did not leave. Instead, he turned around and looked at Shao Wanru's receding figure. For some reason, he felt bitter and a mixture of feelings. After a long time, he turned around and wore his usual cold look again before walking forward.

"Hey, Fourth Brother, wait for me!" Chu Liuyue came over in a hurry from another path. When he saw Chu Liuxin, he breathed a sigh of relief and hurried forward. "Fourth Brother, don't be angry. I just mentioned it casually. You might not be happy to hear that, but how could you get angry?"

"Eldest Brother, but I don't want to get married for the time being." Chu Liuxin said unhappily.

"Nonsense. A man should get married on coming of age, and so should a girl. How could they refuse to get married?" Chu Liuyue rebuked gently, "Even if you are not satisfied with the people Consort Ming chose for you this time, you can't say that you don't want to get married. Consort Ming has started looking for some people suitable to marry you early. Then, you don't have to be too hasty when considering your marriage."

Chu Liuxin pressed against his forehead with a headache. He didn't want to talk about this topic now. It wasn't very pleasant to mention it. He was fond of someone; her slender figure had always stuck in his mind. This made him feel distressed and uneasy. There was a mixed feeling of unspeakable discomfort and anger. Now that the beauty was married, what else could he do?

"Don't worry about my marriage like my mother, Eldest Brother. If I want to get married, I will tell her," Chu Liuxin said with a troubled mind and distorted thoughts.

As he spoke, he hurried forward to get rid of him.

Chu Liuyue anxiously took a few steps to catch up with him. "This time, the woman is indeed beautiful. There are only a few beauties like her in the world. Spending your life with such a stunning beauty will be a pleasure."

Chu Liuyue didn't understand why Chu Liuxin refused his offer so resolutely. Marrying a Miss from an aristocratic family was good for him. Shouldn't his kind offer be a good thing?

"I don't want to get married at present, Eldest Brother. If you like such a beauty, she can marry into your mansion as long as sister-in-law agrees."

Since Chu Liuyue kept bugging him, Chu Liuxin was finally annoyed and retorted, unconsciously raising his voice.

"Fourth Brother, what are you talking about? I'm doing this for your good. But look at you. How could you treat me like this? What do you mean by saying that I like the beauty? Am I the kind of person who likes my sister-in-law?" Chu Liuyue was exasperated at Chu Liuxin's failure to meet his expectations. He stepped forward and pulled him. "Since Consort Ming asked me to look after you, I won't give up halfway."

"Eldest Brother, take care of yourself." Chu Liuxin irritably broke free from Chu Liuyue's hands. At this moment, disturbing thoughts were crowding into his mind. He was not in the vein for talking about his marriage. "You are going to get married soon. I heard the Miss from the Prime Minister Zhang's Mansion is not well-behaved either. Will your mansion be in chaos at that time?"

Chu Liuxin had thought that Prime Minister Zhang's daughter was a decent lady, but now he detested her. He had inquired about what had happened in the two foreign princesses' courtyard and learned about the truth.

"Prime Minister Zhang has been praised for his fairness and high integrity. Like father, like daughter. His daughter is equally good. Don't talk nonsense!" Chu Liuyue rebuked.

Chu Liuxin stopped and looked at Chu Liuyue. He wanted to say something but stopped on second thought. Yet, he still felt it necessary to remind him. However, Chu Liuyue's expression stiffened. It seemed that he was very satisfied with Zhang Qilan. Then, Chu Liuxin couldn't help but shake his head. "Why must I say these unpleasant things to him? It is a good marriage as long as Eldest Brother thinks so.

"It doesn't really matter whether I think she is good or not."

"Here you are. Pray before the Buddha and draw divination sticks for Consort Ming and yourself at a temple. After that, take the explanations of the sticks to

Consort Ming.” Chu Liuxin was in a disturbed state of mind but Chu Liuyue did not care about it. He showed a small pouch and said, “Consort Ming asked me to give you this. Just now, you walked away so fast that the people sent by Consort Ming failed to catch up with you.”

They had just come out of Consort Ming’s place. Chu Liuxin had been there early in the morning and was nagged by Consort Ming. It happened that Chu Liuyue came there to look for him. Then, he found an excuse and ran away, leaving Chu Liuyue behind.

“What’s the use of this thing?” Chu Liuxin said with an air of disapproval. Yet, he still reached out and took it. He had seen such a thing at his mother’s place and was told this was an offering to the Buddha.

“Don’t make Consort Ming angry. Just go to the Buddha hall and casually say a few words to draw a divination stick. If you get one, it will at least prove you are obedient to her. In that case, Consort Ming won’t get so angry,” Chu Liuyue advised with a smile. He handed the pouch to Chu Liuxin, smiling even more amiably.

“Thank you, Eldest Brother. I’ll go!” Chu Liuxin made an uncommitted reply, not taking it seriously. He reached out and casually put the pouch in the pocket before his chest.

He hadn’t yet decided if he would go there. Anyway, he didn’t want to go there. The Emperor, his father, had such an accident yesterday. How could he be in the mood to visit such a place? Besides, he didn’t believe praying could make all wishes come true. In the past, he had spent much time praying. But why didn’t any god help and send that person to him?

The more he thought about it, the sadder he became. Pursing his delicate lips, he felt weak.

“Fourth Brother, have you fallen in love with someone?” Seeing his sad look, Chu Liuyue suddenly approached him and asked in a low voice.

Chu Liuxin was startled and stepped back in a hurry. He retreated so fast that he almost fell. Finally, he managed to stand still by holding a tree. Then, he said seriously, “Don’t talk rot! If you say so, my mother will be more unwilling to let me go.”

“Really?” Chu Liuyue looked suspicious.

“No!” Chu Liuxin shook his head decisively.

Chu Liuyue didn't believe it. He knew his character well since he had been close to Chu Liuxin. At the moment, Chu Liuxin looked very guilty and uneasy. How could he be fine?

He looked around. Then, these eunuchs around them took two steps back, knowing their masters had something secretive to say.

#### Chapter 1256 The Mysterious Statue of Buddha

"Fourth Brother, are you still thinking about Princess Chen?" Chu Liuyue lowered his voice and asked.

"What did you say? I... What makes you think so?" Chu Liuxin blushed with embarrassment and growled out his disapproval — he was exasperated at his words. "If you say that again, I won't dare to come to see you!"

"Okay, okay, fine. I was wrong. I said a load of bull! I apologize!" Seeing that he was outraged, Chu Liuyue immediately smiled and advised as if he were a very sincere brother, "But, to be honest, it's time for you to get a wife. Consort Ming is also worried about you."

"Please, I'm not in a hurry." Chu Liuxin didn't want to talk about it.

Seeing his annoyed look, Chu Liuyue stopped and turned to say something else. Then they separated.

Watching Chu Liuyue leave, Chu Liuxin stood there for a moment before turning to the Buddha hall.

He pinched the pouch in his hand but was reluctant to go. In the past, his mother had told him to worship Buddha there to remove the bad luck, but he ignored her. Now, she even asked his Eldest Brother to send it over.

Helplessly, he turned to the Buddha hall.

The Buddha hall was in the Palace but located in a remote place. Along the way, he didn't see anyone. When Eunuch Liu pushed the half-closed door of the Buddha hall open, they saw a nun standing behind it. Seeing them, she quickly took a step back and said, "Greetings, Your highness!"

"Do you know me?" Chu Liuxin asked.

"I have seen you from a distance." The nun Huiqing said respectfully and put her palms together devoutly.

"I'm here to pray and draw a divination stick," Chu Liuxin said bluntly. He threw the pouch to Eunuch Liu, who handed it to Huiqing with a grin.

Taking it, Huiqing took a step back, pointed inside, and said, "Your Highness, please come in. Holders of divination sticks are there."

Chu Liuxin strode in. Three big Buddha's gilded images had been placed there for worship. Several rush cushions were on the ground with two tube-like holders of divination sticks.

After saluting the Buddha in the middle of the hall a few times, Chu Liuxin shocked the divination-stick holder. A divination stick fell from it. Eunuch Liu picked it up and handed it to Chu Liuxin. But upon closer inspection, Chu Liuxin still couldn't figure out what it meant. Then he gave the stick to Huiqing and asked, "What does it mean?"

Huiqing took it and said with a smile, "Your highness, please come with me. My master will explain it to you."

Chu Liuxin nodded and followed Huiqing to the side hall.

An old nun with a benignant look was sitting on a rush cushion in the side hall. She chanted scriptures, knocking on the wooden fish with one hand and twisting a long string of prayer beads with the other. She did not open her eyes even when she heard the sound and was still chanting scriptures calmly.

"Please wait for a moment, Your highness. My master won't stop until she finishes this passage of scripture," Huiqing lowered her voice to apologize.

Chu Liuxin nodded and casually looked at the layout of this side hall.

He was surprised to see more Buddha statues in the side hall than in the main hall, but they were much smaller. There were more than a dozen of them in a circle. A rush cushion was placed before each Buddha statue. Since Chu Liuxin had nothing to do, he observed them to verify the origin of these Buddha statues.

Although he didn't know much about them, he had read some books about Buddhism. He knew some widely known Buddhas. After walking around, he came to a Buddha statue in the right corner and observed it. This Buddha statue looked a little strange, and he was sure he had never heard of it.

It was a statue with ferocious features, holding something like both a writing brush and a fork. Beneath the statue's feet was a mount rather like a fish. Except for these, there was nothing special about it.

Chu Liuxin tilted his head and looked at it curiously. Upon recollecting the Buddhist scriptures he had read in the past, he found no similar Buddha statue.

This statue was smaller than the previous ones, so it should not be the main one. It looked more like the satellite statue of the Buddha statue beside it. This one was placed in a small wooden box. There was a similar cover above it. The cover happened to tilt to one side. Otherwise, Chu Liuxin would not have found it.

Unlike other statues, this Buddha statue in the corner under a glass cover didn't look kindly. Chu Liuxin wondered what exactly it was.

Out of curiosity, Chu Liuxin reached out. He wanted to pick up the little Buddha statue and take a closer look at it.

"Your highness, my master finished it!" Knocks from the wooden fish stopped abruptly. Huiqing's voice suddenly sounded nearby. It was unknown when Huiqing came over. Because she was too close to him, Chu Liuxin was startled. He withdrew two steps and looked at Huiqing unhappily.

But Huiqing seemed unaware that she got too close to him just now. With a grin, she said, "Your highness, please!"

Chu Liuxin snorted with a straight face. Ignoring her, he walked toward the nun in the middle.

"Your highness, please sit down!" Huiqing came along with him and said, pointing to a rush cushion before Pushan Nun.

Chu Liuxin sat down cross-legged.

Pushan Nun woke up in time. She opened her eyes and looked at Chu Liuxin smilingly, showing the delicate and gentle manner of a supermundane master.

"Your highness, nice to meet you here."

"Could you explain this divination stick?" Chu Liuxin said impatiently. When he saw Huiqing hand over the stick, he went straight to the point.

Pushan Nun took it. After looking at it, she smiled. "Your highness, what do you want to know?"

"My mother's health and my marriage!" Chu Liuxin said casually.

"But you did it wrong, Your highness. One divine stick can only answer one question." Pushan Nun said, still in a good temper.

"Then ask about my mother's health." He did not intend to ask about his marriage. Anyway, he just wanted to complete the task with a perfunctory visit. Since he was not allowed to ask two questions, he simply threw away

one of them. When he went back, he might as well casually make up an explanation. Anyway, his mother would not know about it.

Pushan Nun looked at the words on the stick in her hand and frowned slightly. After a glance at Chu Liuxin, she wanted to say something but stopped on second thought.

“Anything wrong?” Chu Liuxin asked with his face darkening. It was about his mother’s health. So, was there anything wrong with her?

“Lately, Consort Ming... Is she feeling unwell? She always has difficulty falling asleep, right?” Pushan Nun asked mildly.

“A little,” Chu Liuxin said. His mother did say so in the past two days. She looked less vigorous than before.

“Consort Ming... Did she get anything recently? Anything she likes?” Pushan Nun asked again.

“The thing my mother likes, and she got it recently...” Chu Liuxin thought for a moment and suddenly remembered something. With a nod, he said, “My mother made a new set of clothes recently. She likes it very much.”

It was made in the past two days, and Consort Ming was delighted with it. Chu Liuxin didn’t know who gave it to her, but she never wore it. When Chu Liuxin went to see her, the suit was placed on the table. Consort Ming felt it gently and affectionately with her fingers. He wanted to have a look at it. But she stopped him when he carelessly touched it, saying the suit couldn’t bear rough handling.

“Your highness, the clothes are ominous. You should burn the suit as soon as possible when going back!” Pushan Nun gave a warning.

“What?” Chu Liuxin didn’t get it.

“Burn the suit when you are back. It is bright red, right? It brings bad luck. It means Consort Ming will suffer from a bloody disaster recently. You should get rid of the suit as soon as possible,” Pushan Nun said seriously.

“A bloody disaster? How is that possible?” Chu Liuxin gasped, unwilling to admit such a thing. But when he recalled that his father suddenly vomited blood, he felt a little uneasy.

The clothes happened to be red. As Chu Liuxin thought of the red color, his face changed considerably. “With my mother’s identity, she is not qualified to wear red clothes. In the Palace, except for the Empress, no other imperial



consorts are allowed to wear bright red clothes, including Consort of Virtue and Consort Ming. Then, where did my mother get this set of clothes?

“No wonder she just looked at it but did not put it on. How did this prohibited set of clothes end up in her hands?”

“That’s the meaning of this divine stick. Please permit me to offer you some advice. You shouldn’t keep those things that you don’t deserve. Let go of them in time. Nothing is more important than your family. No matter what, you won’t get anything that doesn’t belong to you. A bloody disaster may ruin others and you,” Pushan Nun said. Her reply was slow and implicit.

It looked like Chu Liuxin paid attention, but he barely heard her. His eyes were full of panic. Instantly, he propped himself up with his hands and turned to leave.

Even a trivial matter related to the Palace was important. Her mother had been cautious all her life, so she mustn’t make a mistake on merely a piece of clothing. In any case, he must go back and tell her mother about it as soon as possible. Then, she could throw away the clothes that might cause serious trouble.

Chu Liuxin hurriedly went away while Huiqing followed him and went to the hall gate with him. Watching Chu Liuxin leave, she turned around and returned to the side hall.

Pushan Nun put her palms together before her chest in the side hall and seemed to be chanting something with her eyes closed.

Huiqing stood beside her and listened quietly. After a long while, Pushan Nun finally opened her eyes and looked at Huiqing coldly.

Huiqing was so scared that she knelt with a thud and said in a trembling voice, “Master!”

“Do you know what you did wrong?” Pushan Nun sternly asked. There was fury in her voice. It sounded nothing like the pleasant voice when she spoke to Chu Liuxin just now. If Chu Liuxin were still here, he would hardly believe that this spooky voice was from Pushan Nun, who had always been kind.

Huiqing lowered her head and answered, “Er... Yes. I, I didn’t hide the Buddha statue well, and Prince Xin saw it!”

“Do you know what you should do?” Pushan Nun asked.

"I... I know. I must leave the Palace and bear three cuts." Huiqing gritted her teeth with fear. She would have to take three cuts as a punishment. If her arm were chopped three times, it would be broken. How could she not be afraid?

"It's good that you understand. I'll spare you this time, but next time..." Pushan Nun said.

"There won't be a next time. I swear. Master, please trust me!" Huiqing said excitedly and kowtowed resoundingly a few times to Pushan Nun.

"Then why don't you cover it now? Do you want others to see it?" Pushan Nun spoke severely to her.

"Yes... yes. I'll go right away!" Huiqing stood up in such a hurry that she staggered and almost fell. She hurried to the corner of the side hall and carefully put the cover on the ferocious Buddha statue.

When Prince Xin approached the Buddha statue just now, Huiqing was so scared that her face instantly turned ghastly pale. Fortunately, her master stopped chanting when she was on the verge of grabbing it. At that moment, she got an excuse to talk to Prince Xin and successfully distracted him.

This Buddha statue was not just what it appeared. Huiqing was very clear that even her life was not comparable to it.

The sound of Pushan Nun chanting scriptures came from the side hall again. It seemed as if the incident had never happened. Suddenly, a figure flashed across the corner of the side hall...

## Chapter 1257 Shocked, Enlightened

"The Emperor's secret guard was also there?" Shao Wanru didn't leave the Palace. She was sitting in a pavilion behind a rockery. This place was peaceful and secluded, with a graceful bamboo forest opposite it. A breeze rustled the bamboo woods, which sounded very pleasant.

"Yes, when I went over, I noticed the secret guard. That was why I didn't dare to get too close to them. As a result, I couldn't hear them clearly. Later, the secret guard left, and the people inside said a few more words," Qing'er reported.

After saying goodbye to Chu Liuxin, Shao Wanru turned in another direction. Suddenly, she saw Chu Liuyue coming out. On the alert, she found a place to hide and watch them.

In her previous life, Chu Liuxin seemed to have died because of Chu Liuyue, but Shao Wanru didn't know the details. Thus, when seeing them together

today, she began keeping an eye on them. Unexpectedly, she saw Chu Liuyue give a pouch to Chu Liuxin. It was similar to the one brought by Qin Yiyang. Such small bags should be provided to the Buddha hall.

Shao Wanru didn't know why Zhaoyi Di left a pouch behind. But somehow, she thought of Pushan Nun living in the Buddha hall of the Palace. Pushan Nun was definitely not a simple woman.

Since this matter was about her, Shao Wanru sent Qing'er out and asked her to go to the Buddha hall first.

They didn't expect a secret guard in the Palace would stay outside the Buddha hall. More surprisingly, Chu Liuxin went there.

"A bloody disaster? To Consort Ming?" Shao Wanru frowned and said. She always felt that there was something wrong with it. Suddenly, she asked, "Qing'er, these people inside might have discovered the secret guard in the Palace. Do you think so?"

Hearing that, Qing'er pondered over her words and nodded, saying, "Your highness, I also think so. After Prince Xin left, the people inside the Buddha hall stopped talking. They remained silent for a long time till the secret guard in the Palace ran out of patience and left. Only then did the people inside say something. Someone was blamed for accidentally exposing a Buddha statue to Prince Xin."

Shao Wanru nodded. In this case, it could explain Pushan Nun's ambiguous words. It sounded like she was persuading Prince Xin not to do anything treacherous.

When she came up with this idea, her face fell. She pressed her hand on the stone table and wanted to get up. "Has Chu Liuyue started attacking Chu Liuxin?"

"The Emperor vomited blood, and the Palace is in chaos. What does Chu Liuyue want to do?"

"Is Pushan Nun with Chu Liuyue or another group?" She had a hunch. In addition to the few people working for the Prince on the surface, there also seemed to be Pushan Nun and others. An inkling of the matter appeared three years ago when she was in the Yuhui Nunnery. Some people appeared out of nowhere in the tunnel under Shao Yanru's painting studio. Also, she remembered the scene of Chu Qing escaping from the Yuhui Nunnery and the thing related to Mo Qiuyi, the future wife of Commandery Prince Qing.

And Wei Dahai, who was connected with Mo Qiuyi, was anxious to get money...

When Shao Wanru linked many things, she was more confident that something was wrong with Pushan Nun. She was not like a nun with no desires but more like a representative of a force in the dark.

This force had once colluded with Shao Yanru. In the past, except for those consorts in the Palace, Pushan Nun could also help Shao Yanru, right? After all, she was Shao Yanru's nominal master.

Thinking of this, she was suddenly enlightened. Shao Yanru had been living in the Palace as a lowest-ranking Secondary Consort for some time. Besides, both the Emperor and the Empress disliked her. Despite this, she hadn't had much trouble during this period. This demonstrated the strategies of her and Pushan Nun were both highly effective!

No matter how vicious this imperial consort was in the Palace, she did not dare to offend the Buddha. It proved that Pushan Nun was influential.

"Qing'er, did you see where Prince Xin went?" Shao Wanru asked.

"I saw Prince Xin go out in a hurry, seemingly heading for Consort Ming's place," Qing'er thought for a while and said. At that time, she just watched him from a distance and didn't dare to move. The secret guard of the Palace was waiting there. Once she moved, she would be easily discovered.

When she walked past in the very beginning, she didn't find the secret guard. Later, when she pretended to go through the place again, she discovered the guard. Then she sneaked back and acted very cautiously.

"Your highness, look. Isn't that Prince Xin?" Yujie suddenly reached out, pointed at a path nearby, and whispered.

Shao Wanru looked up. Meanwhile, Chu Liuxin happened to look over and see her. They met each other by chance.

Stunned, Chu Liuxin subconsciously wanted to turn around and leave. However, he stopped, turned around, and strode to the pavilion.

Qing'er and Yujie hastened to greet him and bowed respectfully.

"Third Sister-in-law!" Chu Liuxin said to Shao Wanru and managed to make himself look natural.

"Hi, I have something to ask you. It happens that you are here!" In a daze for a second, Shao Wanru immediately came to her senses. There were some things that she really wanted to ask Chu Liuxin face-to-face.

“What’s the matter?” Chu Liuxin was slightly taken aback. There was no avoiding it. Initially, he intended to walk away after saying hello. To his surprise, Shao Wanru came up to him.

“Did you go to the Buddha hall and meet Pushan Nun?” Shao Wanru came straight to the point.

“Yes, I did. What’s wrong?” Chu Liuxin’s heart leaped. Eyes on Shao Wanru, he asked in surprise.

“Did you see a Buddha statue? It made Huiqing nervous?” Shao Wanru didn’t know the specific situation. Thus, she could only speculate about this Buddha statue and Huiqing’s nervous status according to Qing’er’s words.

Because of this statue, Pushan Nun punished Huiqing. She was bound to appear panic-stricken.

“Nervous?” Chu Liuxin shook his head. He didn’t think there was anything to make Huiqing nervous. When they went out, Eunuch Liu told him the religious names of the two nuns inside. Therefore, he knew which one Shao Wanru was talking about.

When he was about to say no, he paused. It was because he suddenly remembered Huiqing’s unusual behavior: he was observing a strange Buddha statue when Huiqing came abnormally close to him.

Chu Liuxin hesitated for a moment and said, “I saw a strange one. The nun Huiqing was originally far from me, but she suddenly got very close.”

“What does the Buddha statue look like?” Shao Wanru asked.

“It’s a ferocious-looking statue holding something similar to both a writing brush and a fork. The statue is stepping on a mount half like a fish. There was nothing else worth mentioning. I just caught a glimpse of it. I had wanted to pick it up to take a good look, but Pushan Nun happened to finish chanting scriptures.”

Chu Liuxin thought for a while and carefully chose his words to describe the scene accurately.

Shao Wanru’s face changed drastically because she suddenly remembered the Buddha statue in a remote corner of the Buddha hall in the Yuhui Nunnery. Yujie had taken her to see it when in the Yuhui Nunnery.

“Are they the same one?”

“Your highness, did you go there to draw divination sticks?” Shao Wanru changed the topic.

Chu Liuxin nodded and said, "Yes. I went back to see my mother, but I happened to be delayed by something."

"May I ask what Pushan Nun said at last?" Shao Wanru asked again.

Chu Liuxin thought for a while. But this time, he shook his head blankly. He really didn't know what she said in the end. At that time, he was in a panic. How could he hear what Pushan Nun said?

"You'd better get to the bottom of it. If the Buddha statue looked abnormal in your eyes, Pushan Nun might not be simple," Shao Wanru reminded him.

There were some things that she couldn't figure out. Even so, she still chose to warn Chu Liuxin. No matter how she looked at this issue, she felt it was much more complex than it looked.

First of all, Chu Liuyue was not a good person. Secondly, there was something wrong with Pushan Nun. Why would the secret guard happen to monitor such a remote and cheerless Buddha hall?

Was it because Chu Liuxin wanted to go or because Pushan Nun was suspicious?

"What do you mean?" Chu Liuxin became severe.

"I don't mean anything, but I just think Pushan Nun is very suspicious. I heard... Imperial Grandmother told me that... someone seemed to be watching her!" Shao Wanru said with her thin eyebrows raised thoughtfully.

Of course, Chu Liuxin would not go to ask the Empress Dowager for confirmation.

Chu Liuxin was visibly shocked. He didn't care much about open strives and veiled struggles. Though he had no ambition to strive for a higher position, he was not stupid. "Is there something wrong with Pushan Nun?"

"If Pushan Nun harbors evil intentions, she might have ulterior motives to say these words to me. There might be a secret behind the Buddha statue I saw. If Pushan Nun is not trustworthy, what about my Eldest Brother? He chased after me and gave me the pouch. Was it really my mother's idea?"

For a moment, his mind was in turmoil. His face turned blue and was drained of color.

Subconsciously, he firmly believed in Shao Wanru and never doubted her word. He was now suspicious of Chu Liuyue — he had always known his Eldest Brother's ambition.

Something had happened recently, so he was not so close to his Eldest Brother. But in the past, he was vaguely conscious that his Eldest Brother wanted to ascend the throne.

Originally, he thought it was good. His Second Brother didn't get along well with him, and his Third Brother looked so sick and weak. He was not that ambitious. Then, he felt it best for his Eldest Brother to take the throne.

But what about now?

"If you don't believe me... forget it." Shao Wanru said helplessly. Looking at his gloomy face, she thought he didn't believe her. So, she stood up and was about to leave with her two servant girls.

The two of them had been standing here and talking for a while. If she stayed here too long, there might be some unpleasant rumors. After all, they were in an isolated spot. At present, the people in the Palace were anxious and nervous. Everyone was oversensitive and easily suspected others.

"I believe in you!" Chu Liuxin didn't hesitate and said with certainty. He trusted Shao Wanru for no reason but was very sure of it. She was still a little girl climbing over the wall when he first met her. She was a soft spot out of reach of others at the bottom of his heart.

"Thank you, Your highness. You'd better find out the truth in case you get into big trouble." Shao Wanru reminded him.

They brushed past each other and walked away.

Watching Shao Wanru leave, Chu Liuxin thought for a moment and also strode out. This matter was too confusing. He had to check it out. At this time, any doubt could lead to a catastrophe. His father, the Emperor, was poisoned, and the heir to the throne had not yet been determined. This matter meant that troubles were coming.

Eunuch Liu followed him closely with an anxious look. He was smart enough to understand the hint in Princess Chen's words. He felt Princess Chen was obviously more trustworthy than Prince Yue, who had too many intrigues and maneuvers. But his simple-minded master had always regarded Prince Yue as a good person.

Finally, Princess Chen successfully reminded his master. In this respect, Eunuch Liu was full of gratitude to Shao Wanru...



## Chapter 1258 A Wedding Suit

Consort Ming looked at the red clothes on the table, and the rims of her eyes were slightly red. When Chu Liuxin came in, he saw such a scene: his mother must have cried.

Seeing her son come in, Consort Ming wiped the corners of her eyes with a handkerchief and said with a mere trace of a smile, "What's the matter? Have you gone to the Buddha hall to draw divination sticks?"

"Mother, did you ask Eldest Brother to catch up with me and give me a pouch just now?" Chu Liuxin asked eagerly right after sitting down on a chair aside.

"Yes, what's wrong? I wanted to do it myself these days, so I asked the palace maid to make the pouch. But because you happened to be going there, I gave it to you!"

Consort Ming said in confusion.

She was a petite imperial consort with a pretty face. Even though she was getting old, she still had a gentle manner and was not much less charming than when she was young.

"I happened to go there? Mother, when did I say I would go there? Didn't you ask me to go?" Chu Liuxin paid special attention to it and immediately sensed something wrong in her mother's words.

Consort Ming smiled and said vaguely, "Oh, my dear son, look at you. Fine, fine. It was my idea, okay?"

Chu Liuxin said, and his face darkened. "Mother, please tell me the truth. This matter is critical, as it may relate to our safety."

Consort Ming was startled and hurriedly asked, "What... what's the matter? Why is it so important?"

"Mother, please tell me first, and I'll explain it later!" Chu Liuxin said.



Startled by his severe attitude, Consort Ming began to take this matter seriously. After recalling the scene for a while, she said, "Just now, you retreated fast, and I was furious. Prince Yue asked me not to be angry, saying that it would be good if you could meditate and worship the Buddha. Perhaps, the teachings of Buddha could calm you down. So I thought of asking him to bring you a pouch and tell you to get a divine stick."

"Did my Eldest Brother propose it?" Chu Liuxin asked.

"Yes. Prince Yue came up with this idea. I didn't remember it at first. I did want to go there before, but..." Consort Ming looked at the set of clothes, lost in thought. Her eyes became a little bloodshot.

"Mother, where did you get it?" Chu Liuxin looked over. He didn't ask it because he didn't take it seriously. But now, he had to get to the bottom of it.

Consort Ming sighed and said, "This was sent from my parents' home, made of cloth materials from the south. Also, it is the clothes for brides in my hometown."

Though as an imperial consort with noble status, she was not the Emperor's legal wife. Thus, she was not allowed to wear any clothes in red.

Since she was a child, she had imagined a romantic scene: one day, she would marry her husband in bright red clothes. However, events did not happen as she wished. In the end, she married into the Palace.

Chu Liuxin asked in surprise, "But we scarcely have any family members in my grandparent's home? Why would anyone send such clothes?"

Consort Ming had a miserable past. Her parents died when she was little, so she was sent to her uncle's family. Her uncle was okay, but her aunt was not because she often beat and scolded her. Consort Ming had a painful childhood. Fortunately, she was beautiful. Her aunt sent her to be a palace

maid in the Palace in exchange for five taels of silver. Later, the Emperor took a fancy to her. After giving birth to Chu Liuxin, she became Consort Ming.

Before she was sent to the Palace, she was adopted as a nominal daughter by a Madam of a small official who liked her. After that, when Consort Ming won her current high position, she took this petty official's family as her parents' home. But in fact, her original family only had her uncle now... And her aunt...

"I specially found such a suit. When you get married, my daughter-in-law can wear it. What do you think of it? I'll be happy to see that." The rims of her eyes turned red again. Full of emotions, Consort Ming thought of her childhood and looked at her grown-up son.

"Mother, it's not a big deal for you to prepare red clothes, but it will be terrible if others spread rumors about it. After all, I'm not engaged yet, but you have prepared such a suit. Then, who is it for?" Chu Liuxin reminded her. "Now that my father is in bad health, we should be more cautious!"

Hearing this, Consort Ming was slightly stunned, and her face changed slightly. Since she had thought of pushing her son to a higher position, how could she be insensitive to such things?

"Did you hear something?" Consort Ming asked, wiping the tears from the corners of her eyes.

"Mother, Eldest Brother chased after me and asked me to go to the Buddha hall. The two nuns there appeared very sneaky. When I saw a Buddha statue, they immediately became nervous and looked sly and furtive. Besides, they said something ambiguous to me. It seemed they were warning me to give up my wild dreams and talked something about you. When I left the Buddha hall, I saw a secret guard belonging to my father outside."

Chu Liuxin sorted out what he saw and heard and said to Consort Ming.

Of course, he would not expose Shao Wanru.

“What? Your father’s secret guard was watching?” Consort Ming had lived in the Palace for many years and was no longer the ignorant village girl. Her expression immediately changed, and she stood up, trembling fingers grasping the handkerchief.

Anyone or anything that aroused the Emperor’s suspicion would come to a bad end.

“Yes, I heard some sounds and stole a glance,” Chu Liuxin said with certainty.

Consort Ming uneasily bit her lip and asked, “Then... do they know I have a set of bright red clothes?”

“They should have known it. Mother, what should we do now?” Chu Liuxin asked. This kind of thing could be big or small. It was a bright red suit, not the Emperor’s dragon robe. It would not be a big deal, even if anyone discovered it. After all, Consort Ming did not wear it.

But in the Palace, any small matter could become a major crisis. If anything bad happened to the Empress at this time, this suit would be the evidence to prove that Consort Ming was plotting against the Empress. After all, she kept the red clothes only the Empress could wear in the Palace. Under such circumstances, Consort Ming must have made other preparations.

Notably, it would take some time to make a set of clothes that couldn’t be completed in one or two days. Others wouldn’t believe that this red suit was for her future daughter-in-law. After all, Chu Liuxin remained single and had not been engaged. How could she have a daughter-in-law?

After thoroughly analyzing the situation, Consort Ming said, “Let’s go and see your father!”

“Mother, why are you going to see my father at this time?” Chu Liuxin asked in surprise. His father was recuperating, so they might not see him.

“You don’t have to worry about that. Go and see him first. Meet him with this set of clothes.” Consort Ming gritted her teeth with determination. At this time, she couldn’t hesitate. The longer she put off this matter, the more serious the consequences would be.

Consort Ming had lived in the Palace for many years, so she undoubtedly had her own way of protecting herself.

Since Consort Ming said so, Chu Liuxin did not object. They straightened their clothes and went to the Emperor’s Supreme Harmony Palace.

Knowing Consort Ming and Prince Xin were coming together, Derong, the chief eunuch, hurried out to welcome them. But he said with an embarrassed look, “Your Grace, His Majesty is not feeling well and hasn’t fully recovered. It is inconvenient for him to see anyone. Please understand my difficulties and don’t put me in an awkward situation!”

“I’m just worried about His Majesty. How is he?” Consort Ming sighed and wiped the corners of her eyes with a handkerchief. Her eyes turned slightly red.

“His Majesty is fine. Don’t worry.” Derong replied with a smile.

“Are you sure?” Consort Ming was still worried but did not dare to barge in. Thus, she merely poked her head out, trying to see the situation inside.

“Everything is okay. Please rest assured!” Derong said.

“It’s good that His Majesty is fine. Then, please deliver this set of clothes to him.” Consort Ming turned around, took the red suit from the palace maid behind her, and handed it to Derong.

“Well... Er... May I ask what this is for?” Although Derong took it, he looked blank. “Where did Consort Ming get this set of clothes? What does she want to do?”

“The suit is bright red, not something Consort Ming could wear.”

“This is the wedding dress for Princess Zhou. I wanted to give it to Infanta Yuan’an. But she seldom comes to the Palace now. It’s not appropriate for Prince Xin to send it to her. So, could you send it to the Empress?” Consort Ming said with some embarrassment.

The Empress had been grounded but was not completely forbidden to go out. It was just that the Empress kept a low profile now. She rarely showed up in public and did not allow the imperial consorts to greet her. She was very well-behaved. Sometimes, she would push out gifts delivered by some imperial consorts.

It was a little unreasonable for Consort Ming to let him handle the red wedding dress for Infanta Yuan’an, but Derong could understand it.

But even so, Derong was unwilling to bear this heavy burden. He returned the red clothes to Consort Ming and said, “I’m sorry, but this is a bad time to ask me for help. I have to serve His Majesty. If he knows I’m distracted to send a gift for you at this time, I will be punished.”

Among all the things, the Emperor’s health was of the utmost importance.

In the past, it was just a small matter of a short trip, and Derong didn’t even need to do it in person. But at this critical period, the chief eunuch Derong believed that the less trouble, the better.

The Emperor was in a bad mood. As his personal eunuch, he might be scolded even if he was away for a while.

“What... what should I do?” Consort Ming looked confused, as if she had no idea how to send this gift.

“You can ask others for help. Perhaps, Her Majesty will accept things from you.” Derong reminded Consort Ming cautiously.

He would not take over this matter or make it clear to Consort Ming.

“Mother, let’s go. How about I send this gift to my Second Brother?” Chu Liuxin pulled Consort Ming’s hand and said.

“How could you do it? This is your second sister-in-law’s wedding dress. Do you think it is proper to do that?” Consort Ming said unhappily. Indeed, how could he send his sister-in-law a wedding dress? Derong couldn’t help but smile when he heard that. “Prince Xin is young and sometimes naive in his ideas.”

But in fact, it was good to be childish. At least no one would think Prince Xin was dangerous.

“Mother, what are you talking about... How could you say that...” Chu Liuxin was unhappy and looked a little gloomy.

“What makes you think I’m wrong? You are too childish, but you have grown up. Not long after, I will ask your father to grant you a marriage. You are an adult, old enough to get married. Think about it carefully before you speak.” Consort Ming glared at him and took leave of Derong. They walked out while talking. From time to time, Consort Ming would scold Chu Liuxin.

Derong shook his head and went back to report with a smile. Although Consort Ming had some thoughts, she was not aggressive. Honestly, she was the least troublesome.

Chapter 1259 Who Would Be the Eventual Winner?

“Consort Ming went to the Emperor’s place, then the Empress’s. She didn’t see either of them but left the suit at the Empress’s place.” The guard knelt and reported.

It was tranquil in the study. Apart from Chu Liuyue and his personal eunuch Xiao Qizi, only Mr. Liu, the assistant, was there.

“You can leave now!” Chu Liuyue waved his hand, and the guard left with respect.

“Mr. Liu, what do you think?” Chu Liuyue said with a frown. This matter was different from what he had thought. It would be difficult for them to take the next step without completing this one.

His assistant Mr. Liu also frowned tightly. This was their plan at the start. However, it unexpectedly failed, which was not a good thing.

“But this suit was delivered to Consort Ming according to your instruction. There was not supposed to be any mistake. Maybe, we were exposed when you talked to Prince Xin?”

They had prepared this for a long time, and every step was well-planned.

First, the red suit was sent to Consort Ming. Then, they led Chu Liuxin to the Buddha hall. A secret guard was watching that place because someone had reported something unusual there. As for the two nuns, the master and the disciple, in the Buddha hall, it was not a problem at all. They were asked to say something ambiguous, which triggered the whole thing.

After that, no matter what bad things happened to the Empress or Prince Zhou, Consort Ming and her son would be the prime suspects. Even if any unexpected accident occurred, no one would blame Chu Liuyue.

This was an inessential scheme. They were not sure if anything sensational would happen. But Chu Liuxin would have to shoulder the responsibility if something went wrong. No one could trace up to Chu Liuyue.

“I just went to visit Consort Ming with my Fourth Brother. Consort Ming asked my Fourth Brother to go to the Buddha hall. Whatever Pushan Nun had said or done had nothing to do with me. I seldom went to the Buddha hall.” Chu Liuyue carefully recalled what had happened today. He didn’t think he had ruined the whole plan. After all, he didn’t make any mistakes.

“Then, which part was wrong?” Mr. Liu said, “This matter was not right. Considering Consort Ming’s character, how could she give Infanta Yuan’an the wedding dress she had worked so hard to get?”

“What about now?” Chu Liuyue got a headache. He reached out to press his head and asked impatiently.

“Your Highness, let’s wait for a while. Don’t act rashly. We should wait and see.” Mr. Liu felt it was better not to act rashly. Someone might have targeted Prince Yue. Or, it was just a coincidence. Anyway, he couldn’t figure out the truth at this moment.

Chu Liuyue got up irritably, walked around in circles, and complained, “Wait, wait, wait. I’ve been waiting too long but hardly benefited from it. Instead, my sick brother has the upper hand. My father is ill... How long must I wait?”

There was something he didn’t say: he couldn’t wait any longer.

The Emperor was in such a feeble condition. How could he not be tempted by such a good opportunity?

If his father passed away at this time... As his eldest son with a group of supporters, he was much superior to the reckless Chu Liuzhou. He did not care much about Chu Liuchen. When his father died, and the Empress Dowager was in poor health, Chu Liuchen’s two mighty backers could no longer protect him. At that time, how could Chu Liuchen compete with him?

Chu Liuchen appeared to have ridden on the crest of success. The Emperor greatly valued him, and the Empress Dowager in the Palace protected him. But all his advantages were very brittle. Chu Liuchen had always been in poor health for so many years and struggled between life and death. He had recovered and rebuilt his force. But no matter what, Chu Liuchen couldn’t recruit so many people and be as fully prepared as him.

Whether in terms of time or other aspects, Chu Liuyue felt he would beat Chu Liuchen.

But things ran counter to his desires. Although Chu Liuchen had been on the verge of death, he left life and death out of consideration. He had built his power early to enjoy the fun even more when he was still alive. It would be more convenient for him to mess up the affairs between him, Chu Liuyue, and Chu Liuzhou.

When Chu Liuchen established his power, Chu Liuyue and Chu Liuzhou were still making tentative steps under the guidance of their mothers.

Who was the most influential person in the imperial court? Prince Chen, the most paranoid and gloomy, would be the final winner.

Of course, Chu Liuyue didn’t know all this. He was still complacent about his strength. In his mind, only Chu Liuzhou could be his close rival. At this time,



when anything was wrong with either the Empress or Chu Liuzhou, he could stand out and become the final winner.

But now, Chu Liuxin, who was supposed to be the scapegoat, deviated from the route Chu Liuyue had designed. This change made Chu Liuyue feel very uneasy.

“Don’t worry. The most important thing is the Emperor’s health,” Mr. Liu said implicitly.

“You can leave now!” Chu Liuyue waved his hand impatiently.

Mr. Liu had wanted to say something, but now he could only stand up and leave. Standing outside, he looked back at the study door. Mr. Liu knew Prince Yue was really anxious. The Emperor suddenly fell ill, which strongly stimulated Prince Yue. Yet, Mr. Liu still felt it was better to wait for some time. At this time, they should take a wait-and-see attitude.

“Your Excellency, please!” Not far away, a young servant led the way. The road was lit by flashing lights.

Mr. Liu stepped aside and saw a person in a heavy cloak coming from the opposite side. Judging from the tall figure, Mr. Liu knew it was a man. A servant from this mansion led the way ahead, while a servant he didn’t know followed behind. Seeing this, he couldn’t help frowning. “Does my master get another assistant?”

This idea upset Mr. Liu. After the person entered the study, the door was closed. The servant leading the way was guarding the door, watching around vigilantly. It looked as if he feared that others might hear the conversation inside.

Mr. Liu stood quietly in a dark corner on one side of the pillar, waiting for the person inside to come out.

He had been waiting outside for as long as ten minutes. Only then did the person wearing the cloak come out. This person didn’t look like Wen Xichi, Third Young Master Wen that he had met.

Mr. Liu breathed a sigh of relief. If there was anyone who could put great pressure on him, it must be Third Young Master Wen. In the past, he often gave Prince Yue advice and suggestions, which drew the admiration of Mr. Liu.

However, whenever Third Young Master Wen came over, he would come open and aboveboard. He would never come here at this time and dress up like this.

“Third Young Master Wen hasn’t been here for a long time for some unknown reason.” Mr. Liu wanted to suggest Chu Liuyue invite Wen Xichi over and discuss this issue with him.

Mr. Liu was arrogant because of his ability. But even so, he had to admit Wen Xichi had outstanding talent.

“But who is this person? Why hasn’t my master mentioned him to me? Does he think I’m of no great use?” Mr. Liu smacked his lips and felt very bad. Because Mr. Liu always played safe and asked Prince Yue to wait, Prince Yue was displeased. However, what else could they do except for waiting patiently?

“Wait? How long must we wait?” Like Chu Liuyue, Chu Liuzhou was also very annoyed. When receiving the red wedding suit from the Palace, Chu Liuzhou lost his composure and threw the red clothes onto the ground. “What did Consort Ming mean? Why would she send this red wedding suit? Did she think Infanta Yuan’an had nothing to wear?”

His mother had been locked up for so long, but there was no news about her. Chu Liuzhou felt he couldn’t stand it anymore.

“My father has fallen ill all of a sudden. My mother has been in charge of the affairs in the imperial harem, but no one has ever asked her to handle any matters. Instead, such a set of clothes is sent to him. Who asked Consort Ming to send the clothes? What did my mother mean? Consort Ming sent the gift to her place, so she simply passed it on to me?”

“Your highness, my master told you to take it easy. She said the suit was not bad.” The Nanny from the Palace who delivered the clothes for the Empress said with a smile.

“Seriously? Is Infanta Yuan’an short of clothes? A wedding suit? It looks strange.” Chu Liuzhou went furious. Because of Infanta Yuan’an, he was full of anger. He was annoyed at the thought of the disgraceful thing she had done.

He had thought Infanta Yuan’an was good, but now he didn’t. Except for her status, Infanta Yuan’an couldn’t compare with anyone else.

Prime Minister Zhang’s daughter was much more intelligent and valuable than her.

“Your highness, the Empress wanted you to send the wedding dress to the Ruiping Great Elder Princess’s Mansion. If anything goes wrong, they will deal

with it. You only need to send the suit there, and the other things will have nothing to do with you.” The Nanny from the Palace hinted.

Chu Liuzhou was silent for a moment and nodded. “When will my mother come out?”

He didn’t care about the wedding dress or other things like what clothes or jewelry Infanta Yuan’an would wear on the wedding day. Now, he only cared about his mother.

As long as his mother was free, she would regain control over the imperial harem. After all, the Empress Dowager was in such a feeble state. Then, he would be the first to know about his father’s physical condition.

“The Empress told you not to be anxious. When the time comes, she will inform you.” The Nanny said more and more implicitly. But then, she took a token from her sleeve pocket and handed it to Chu Liuzhou. It was not big and made of jade, which Chu Liuzhou had seen before.

“This... Did my mother ask you to bring it to me?” Stunned for a while, Chu Liuzhou became excited and reached out to take it.

“Yes. She wanted you to keep it. If anything is wrong, she thinks it will be easier for you to handle the changes than her.” The Nanny lowered her voice to say.

Sending the wedding dress was just an excuse; the most important thing was this token. Of course, the Empress also wanted her to check up on Prince Zhou.

Since the Empress had been grounded, she wouldn’t meet Prince Zhou even if he came to see her. The mother and son hadn’t exchanged messages for a long time.

At this time, Consort Ming sent over the wedding suit. It happened that the Empress could use it as an excuse to get in touch with her son.

“Okay, tell my mother. I will wait for her news and won’t get flustered.” Chu Liuzhou excitedly touched the token kept by her mother. He had always wanted it, but his mother never gave it to him. Now that she had sent it to him, he felt much more at ease.

Initially, it was a commander’s tally held by the previous empress, but it disappeared later. Prince Zhou and the Empress had searched the entire imperial Palace for it. They implicitly asked the Emperor about it, only to find that it was missing. The Empress had seen the Emperor investigating and searching for the tiger tally but didn’t find out the details.

The Emperor had sent her a token when she became the Empress. With it, she could mobilize some secret guards. But since the Emperor also had a token, the Empress did not dare to act rashly. But during these years, the Empress had secretly replaced some secret guards with her people.

In this case, this token was of utmost importance.

No matter how much the Emperor liked Consort Lan, she would never get this token. For this reason, the Empress no longer targeted Consort Lan after she failed to give her a hard time. After all, this token was the most important. But the Empress did not know that Consort Lan held half of the missing tiger tally.

#### Chapter 1260 Hesitating in a Dilemma!

Some people were waiting, some became anxious, and some were grounded in the mansion. Even the Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion was not peaceful. It was haunted, which made people in the mansion panic. There were all kinds of rumors.

Chu Qing didn't sleep well all night and felt dizzy. Deeply depressed, he didn't look well.

Hearing that Princess Yuyan came to his mansion, he ordered coldly, "Take her to see my mother."

He did not want to meddle in her matters anymore. His mother would deal with it no matter what she came here for. He believed that his mother could easily handle Princess Yuyan.

Chu Qing had no good feelings toward Princess Yuyan, a woman of loose morals. When he went to the Xu State, he probably paid more attention to her because of her beauty. But after the previous matter, he lost interest in Princess Yuyan. If such a woman married him, he would probably be cuckolded.

She was a woman of easy virtue.

Of course, it was not appropriate to fall out with her at this time. He would have to endure her for some time. According to his mother, he might as well leave her in a corner of the Palace when his great ambition was achieved. At that time, no one could criticize him for this. Even if the Xu State was displeased, they could do nothing. After all, the Xu State was too far away. If Xu State King was sensible enough, he would not go against Chu Qing because of Princess Yuyan.

Chu Qing didn't want to see Princess Yuyan, so he didn't go to Consort Dowager Qing's place. He only held meetings in his study. There must be

someone behind all these weird things in his mansion. Pondering over the problem, he found that Commandery Prince Cheng was the most likely to plot against him. After all, Commandery Prince Cheng was grounded, and Chu Qing joined to make it happen.

“Could it be that Commandery Prince Cheng found out about what I did?”

Thinking of this, Chu Qing was also very annoyed. He reached out to rub his forehead and asked everyone to leave.

The study became quiet, and even his servants had retreated to the door. Seeing the beauty coming over gracefully, all the servants straightened up respectfully.

The beauty waved her hand. Then, the servants left, and only the servant girls stayed outside the door. She went in.

In the study, Chu Qing leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes to rest.

He didn't care about the light footsteps, thinking that the servant must have come to change the tea. However, someone walked behind him and stretched out to gently press his temples. “What's wrong? Are you tired?”

“Why are you here?” Hearing the familiar voice, Chu Qing immediately knew it was Mo Qiuyi, so he asked without opening his eyes.

“I heard Princess Yuyan was here. I specially came to see her,” Mo Qiuyi said casually.

“Don't worry about her!” Chu Qing didn't want to hear anything about Princess Yuyan now. Princess Yuyan was his greatest shame. How he wished he could deal with her right now.

Seeing Chu Qing's sullen expression, Mo Qiuyi looked more tender and said, “Don't you like her?”

“How could I like her? If I had a choice, I wouldn't marry her!” Chu Qing snorted coldly and said with undisguised disdain, “She's in my mansion now. Be careful. Don't let her meet you and cause any trouble!”

“I will be careful. I'm just worried about you... So, I come to see you!” Mo Qiuyi said softly with affection in her eyes.

She deliberately came to check out the situation when hearing that Princess Yuyan had come. The status of her and Princess Yuyan in this mansion had not yet been decided. It was hard to say who would be the legal wife. The Emperor didn't make it clear because he wanted Chu Qing to choose.

But how could Mo Qiuyi be willing to give up her position as the legal wife?

She deserved the position after years of hard work. Without the position of the legal wife, she would be at a disadvantage in the future. This was not just a matter of being Commandery Prince Qing's legal wife.

"Rest assured. You are the only one I cherish in my heart. No matter how outstanding Princess Yuyan is, it has nothing to do with me," Chu Qing promised.

Hearing that, Mo Qiuyi blushed, and her voice became increasingly soft. "Brother Qing, you treat me wholeheartedly, but Princess Yuyan has supporters. I'm afraid..."

"Don't be afraid!" Chu Qing held her hand and pulled her before him. Opening his eyes, he comforted her softly, "You don't have to worry about anything. What's the relationship between us? I have no feelings for her. Even without this incident, I won't take her seriously. As for the force behind her, there are not many people she could use after the escape?"

Of course, according to Consort Dowager Qing, Princess Yuyan was backed up by some people, no matter how small the group was. Moreover, the influential person in the Xu State had been supporting Princess Yuyan overtly and covertly. As such, Consort Dowager Qing was delighted that Princess Yuyan would marry Chu Qing.

Consort Dowager Qing was satisfied, but Chu Qing was not. He was disappointed at the thought of Princess Yuyan, the unfaithful woman. Mo Qiuyi also felt quite upset. After all, how could she allow any other woman to take a share of her profits?

She and the family branch behind her had planned to win over the Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion for many years. How could she let Princess Yuyan and her supporters get the final victory?

"Is Princess Yuyan... very beautiful?" Mo Qiuyi lowered her head and asked with a bitter smile.

"I've seen many good-looking women. Not to mention anyone else, Shao Yanru, Miss Shao of the Marquis Xing's Mansion, was exceedingly beautiful. But what happened to her in the end? She died in the Cold Palace as a lowest-ranking Secondary Consort," Chu Qing took this matter lightly and comforted her.

As Mo Qiuyi heard this, her sadness all melted away. After thinking for a while, she said, "Then what about Shao Jie'er? She belongs to this mansion."

It's not good for her to stay outside. It's better to let her come back. After all, she had served you once."

Her words were full of consideration for Chu Qing. Hearing this, Chu Qing increasingly felt she was the most suitable candidate to be his legal wife. It was good enough for a person like Princess Yuyan to be a secondary legal wife.

"Better die outside," Chu Qing said.

"But... After all, she had served you. What if she gets pregnant?" Mo Qiuyi said, "I know how much you cherish me. But I can't bear to see your child wander outside. In the future, this matter might cause extra troubles."

"It's impossible. My mother had been giving her medicine," Chu Qing said indifferently.

His mother certainly would not allow Shao Jie'er to give birth to the eldest son of a concubine. Such a descendant would bring trouble to an ordinary family, let alone the royal family. If the Emperor's eldest son were the legitimate son, there wouldn't be so many disputes now.

"But... I don't think it's a good idea. Your highness, bring her back. The Marquis Xing's Mansion has taken such a downward plunge. If you bring her back, others will praise you for not abandoning your woman." Mo Qiuyi suggested. Shao Jie'er was no longer a threat to her. At most, she could be a concubine without status. Thus, Mo Qiuyi might as well use her.

Mo Qiuyi clearly knew she was far less charming than Princess Yuyan, but Shao Jie'er was good-looking. It would be beneficial for Mo Qiuyi to keep her and compete with Princess Yuyan.

"Then, I'll send some people to pick her up tomorrow!" Chu Qing said reluctantly.

"Let me do it tomorrow," Mo Qiuyi said with a smile.

"You?" Chu Qing was confused. "What are you going to do there? Don't you know you are much higher in status than her? She can only be an inferior concubine even if she returns to the mansion. You don't need to go there."

"I know it's inappropriate for me to go there, but I'm willing to do anything for you. You'd better keep a low profile now, but I have no such worries. More than anything, I want to help you manage the inner court well," Mo Qiuyi said softly and looked at Chu Qing with affection in her eyes.

Chu Qing was very satisfied with this. His legal wife should be like this. While she stabilized the inner court, he could focus on great things. She was nothing like Princess Yuyan, who was obviously not easy to get along with. Princess Yuyan would be a troublemaker in the inner court. From this point of view, it was better to make Mo Qiuyi the legal wife and Princess Yuyan a secondary legal wife.

He had been a little hesitant in making the decision, but now he made up his mind. Then, he nodded and agreed.

After they talked for a while, Consort Dowager Qing sent someone to invite Chu Qing over. Mo Qiuyi didn't stay any longer and left quietly. It was improper for her to confront Princess Yuyan at this time, and she didn't want to do that either. One of her purposes for this visit was to persuade Chu Qing. At present, Chu Qing's attitude was evident.

There was another purpose — she had to find Shao Jie'er. She heard Shao Jie'er, Shao Hua'an, and his wife were driven out together. They then lived in a small courtyard.

Mo Qiuyi made Chu Qing very happy and decided to make her his legal wife in his heart. But Princess Yuyan was not stupid. Consort Dowager Qing had some complaints about her, but somehow, Princess Yuyan managed to win her favor. When Chu Qing came over at her request, Consort Dowager Qing repeatedly suggested that Chu Qing should make Princess Yuyan his legal wife.

However, Chu Qing pretended that he didn't understand it. After saying a few words, he made an excuse and left.

When Princess Yuyan left, he returned to Consort Dowager Qing's place.

"Did Mo Qiuyi come here to see you just now?" Consort Dowager Qing had received the news at this time, and her face darkened. Although she chose Mo Qiuyi for Chu Qing, she was displeased when learning Mo Qiuyi made some secret moves behind her.

"She came to ask about Shao Jie'er and said it was not good for her to be left outside. With my permission, she will find Shao Jie'er and bring her back tomorrow!" Chu Qing explained.

Hearing his explanation, Commandery Prince Qing looked a little better. "Didn't she come for Princess Yuyan?"



“Mother, what are you talking about? Qiuyi wouldn’t do such a thing. She was just worried about Shao Jie’er. For fear that she would make trouble again, she thought it was better to let her stay in the mansion,” Chu Qing said.

After a moment of silence, Consort Dowager Qing looked at her son and stopped asking about Mo Qiuyi. “Qing’er, what do you think of Princess Yuyan?”

As a famous beauty in the Xu State, Princess Yuyan had a striking appearance.

Chu Qing knew what she meant, so he looked up and asked back, “Mother, a person only with a good appearance is useless. My legal wife must help me manage my inner court. Do you think Princess Yuyan is capable of it?”

They hadn’t decided who would be the legal wife and the secondary legal wife. Consort Dowager Qing was uncertain. But since she mentioned it, Chu Qing thought of her intimate attitude toward Princess Yuyan. It was not difficult for him to figure out that Consort Dowager Qing preferred Princess Yuyan.

Consort Dowager Qing must have fancied her because she was a princess backed up by the Xu State.

Consort Dowager Qing remained silent. Seeing this, Chu Qing knew she was reluctant to change her mind and had to persuade her, “The Xu State is too far away. Even if she has supporters there, they can’t help in time. In contrast, the Mo Family can be of great help. Think about Nanny Wei, who backs Wei Dahai up, and Mo Qiuyi’s grandmother... Don’t you think they are more useful than Princess Yuyan?”