

Medical Princess 371

Chapter 371 Qi Rongzhi Came Here out of Envy

Qin Wanru freshened up and organized her dress in Madam Dowager's inner room but she didn't come out immediately. She just sat there and listened carefully for their talk outside while her shining eyes were overshadowed. "Is Madam of Duke Xing unwilling to stop? Doesn't she know Qi Rongzhi is quite jealous?"

She was about to ask something about Duke Xing's Mansion while Qi Rongzhi suddenly came. What a big surprise...

Outside there sat Qi Tianyu and Qi Rongzhi.

They came here to send gifts to Qin's Mansion on behalf of Qi's Mansion. They said that Magistrate Qi brought some native products from Jiangzhou which had arrived this morning.

Qi Tianyu was courteous and so was Qi Rongzhi. She said that Qin's Mansion once helped her before so she particularly came here from Duke Xing's Mansion and brought some presents in order to show her gratitude to Qin's Mansion.

After a while, Qi Rongzhi looked around and asked smilingly, "Madam Dowager, where are Sister Yuru and Wanru? I haven't met them yet."

"Something happened to Madam Di so Yuru is taking care of her." Madam Dowager smiled and answered.

"What? I must go to see Madam Di!" Standing up immediately, Qi Rongzhi said hurriedly.

"Don't bother. Several doctors are treating her most of whom are male so it is inconvenient for you to go there!" Madam Dowager turned down her mildly.

"What about Sister Wanru?" Hearing that it was inconvenient, Qi Rongzhi stopped insisting and then sat down.

"Zhuzhuo now is checking her dress in the inner room because she went to see Madam Di and cried badly," answered Madam Dowager.

"Then I go to see Wanru!" Qi Rongzhi said anxiously. She seemed to care about Wanru very much, which made Madam Dowager stared at her out of curiosity as she knew Qi Rongzhi had always taken pride in bullying Qin Wanru. When did her become so kind?

"Madam Dowager, Rongzhi was quite immature before. When she went to the Duke Xing's Mansion, she finally found out that Second Lady Qin and she quite hit it off. Second Lady Qin is innocent and clever. Nobody can be comparable to her," answered Qi Tianyu, smiling. He only used a few words to explain the change of Qi Rongzhi's attitude and also apologized for her for her faults.

He sounded natural and relaxed as he looked gentle and refined, which quite impressed others in a good way!

Qi Rongzhi coordinated perfectly and quickly stood up. She deeply bowed to Madam Dowager, looking regretful. "Madam Dowager, I am really sorry for my immature which has aggrieved Sister Wanru before!"

"You don't have to, Lady Qi!" Qin Wanru's gentle voice came up as she appeared at the door of the inner room, staring at Qi Rongzhi. She gave Qi Rongzhi a cold shoulder even though she sounded polite.

Glancing at her slightly red eyes, Qi Tianyu found out that Qin Wanru just cried, badly. Since he had been in contact with Qin's Mansion for years, it was the first time that he had seen Qin Wanru cry so badly which led to her red swollen eyes. His eyes gradually darkened.

"Sister Wanru, what, what's wrong? Are you bullied by someone?" Seeing Qin Wanru's red eyes, Qi Rongzhi shocked and shouted.

She came to Qin Wanru and tried to take her hand.

Qin Wanru remained expressionless and quickly stepped backwards to avoid touching Qi Rongzhi's hands. Biting her cherry-red lips hard which then turned white, she answered, "Lady Qi, I am afraid I could not accompany you and I think I'd better leave and take a rest."

As she finished, she bowed sideways to Madam Dowager and Shui Ruolan. They both nodded in agreement for they could tell that Qin Wanru was not good.

"Sister Wanru, what happened?" Qi Rongzhi reached out and held Qin Wanru's sleeve. Tilting her head, she watched her face and showed her concern.

"Madam Dowager, may I accompany Sister Wanru to her room? I won't bother her as I would come back as soon as she arrives at her room!" Qi Rongzhi turned to Madam Dowager and asked concernedly.

Looking at Qin Wanru, Madam Dowager hesitated and said nothing.

"Madam Dowager, please allow Rongzhi to accompany Second Lady! She comes here today mainly because she wants to tell Second Lady Qin something!"

Qi Tianyu also said.

"Fine. Sorry to trouble you, Lady Qi!" Hearing what they said, Madam Dowager replied resignedly. She looked at Qin Wanru and saw her nodding silently.

Then they left together.

At first, they both kept quiet and walked shoulder to shoulder but when they were away from the entrance of the courtyard, Qi Rongzhi turned to look at Qin Wanru beside her and asked, "Sister Wanru, what happened to you on earth? Why would you cry so badly? Or did Qin Yuru bully you again? Let me know! Don't worry for I could help you!"

Seeing Qi Rongzhi pretending to be so righteous, Qin Wanru blinked her eyes in which a trace of sarcasm emerged. "Just a family matter. Don't bother."

"I won't get bothered! You took care of me when I was here even though we had a quite bad relationship. But I bullied you only because I had believed Qin Yuru's words! Now I finally find out that it

is Qin Yuru who tries to mess up our friendship secretly and that's why we couldn't get on well with each other before!"

Qi Rongzhi said angrily.

"Do you still remember the day we first met each other? You got on well with me! We shared everything, including those delicious foods and funny toys! We always played together!"

Seeing Qin Wanru still keep silence, Qi Rongzhi continued to say.

"You don't have a rough time in Duke Xing's Mansion, do you?" Unwilling to listen to her recollection, Qin Wanru asked lightly while her voice sounded much duller than before.

"No! No! Madam of Duke Xing likes me as well as the Old Madam of Duke Xing's Mansion. The latter even gave a lot of presents to me!" Qi Rongzhi laughed with her answer sounding complacent.

"If you do enjoy your life in Duke Xing's Mansion, you shouldn't be here today! Isn't Duke Xing's Mansion going to hold a ceremony to worship their ancestors? Now you are Madam of Duke Xing's nominal daughter. Don't you need to prepare? Even though your name has not been written down in Madam of Duke Xing's family list yet, you should follow your nominal mother, Madam of Duke Xing to the ceremony for your parents are not here with you!"

When Qi Rongzhi stopped laughing dramatically, Qin Wanru debunked her lie mercilessly without hesitation.

The smile immediately froze on Qi Rongzhi's face and finally turned into an angry look after a while. "It is your 'nice' Big Sister who led to this situation! Without her, I should be in Duke Xing's Mansion now and prepare for the ancestor worship!"

"Madam of Duke Xing sends you here, right?" asked Qin Wanru calmly.

"IT IS OLD MADAM OF DUKE XING!" Gnashing her teeth, Qi Rongzhi answered with hatred. She had thought she finally acquired relationships with Duke Xing's Mansion and was able to force Sisters of Qin's Mansion to honor her. However, she didn't expect that Old Madam of Duke Xing would prefer Qin Yuru!

"Old Madam of Duke Xing must worry what happened to Qin Yuru in Qin's Mansion so she asked me to check."

Once thinking that Nanny Yu, Old Madam of Duke Xing's servant, held her head high and inform her of this matter with other servants following her, Qi Rongzhi felt angry!

When she left Qin's Mansion, Qin Wanru once came to Qi Rongzhi and told her Qin Yuru tried to scramble for being Madam of Duke Xing's nominal daughter so she must be careful of Qin Yuru. And that was why Qi Rongzhi found an excuse to slap Qin Yuru twice when meeting her in Duke Xing's Mansion.

However, Qi Rongzhi didn't expect that Old Madam of Duke Xing would give Qin Yuru a blood jade bracelet in front of all the guests at the ceremony to celebrate her for being Madam of Duke Xing's nominal daughter! The bracelet given to Qin Yuru was much expensive and decent than hers, which embarrassed her to the utmost!

Qi Rongzhi once doubted Qin Wanru's warning but this time she was sure that Qin Yuru was quite ambitious in consideration of Old Madam of Duke Xing's behavior.

One nation can't have two kings and so did the position of Madam of Duke Xing's nominal daughter. Once she chose two ladies to be her nominal daughters, the position would not be wanted badly and be useful anymore. Therefore, Qi Rongzhi would definitely not let Qin Yuru take her position away.

However, she had no idea yet while Old Madam of Duke Xing today suddenly sent her old maid to tell Qi Rongzhi to check what happened to Qin Yuru here and said that Qin Yuru should visit her in Duke Xing's Mansion today.

"Qin Yuru again!" Qi Rongzhi's anger flared. However, she had to bite the bullet and took a carriage to go home. Then she found an excuse to come here with her brother.

"What do you want now?" Qin Wanru asked directly.

"I don't want to see Qin Yuru in Duke Xing's Mansion!" said Qi Rongzhi, gnashing her teeth.

"Well, it is... impossible," said Qin Wanru, "Old Madam of Duke Xing's Mansion likes Qin Yuru while Madam of Duke Xing also prefers her to you. It is only a matter of time. Their attitudes won't change only because of your complaint!"

"Why do they prefer her so much? They should dislike her, disdain her and discard her when thinking of Qin Yuru's personality, shouldn't they?" Qi Rongzhi shouted hatefully. Qin Yuru was the worst woman she had ever known in her whole life! This mean girl even dumped her brother after treating him! Every time she thought this she would felt terribly mad!

"Qin Yuru lies about her age and she now estranges herself from Madam Di. What's more, it is known that Duke Xing's Mansion once lost their little lady while Qin Yuru's information was similar to the lost lady's!" explained Qin Wanru expressionlessly.

As soon as she finished, she frowned, thinking that she had talked too much. Then she quickly organized her expression and said again, "Lady Qi, the matter between Qin Yuru and you has nothing to do with me. And I just heard about the news from others and I can't promise that they are true! You don't have to take it serious. I am really tired. If you have any problems, just let me know later. I should go!"

Then Qin Wanru lengthened her stride and hurried to leave, seeming that she was trying to escape something for saying something wrong.

Hearing Qin Wanru's words, Qi Rongzhi stared in amazement and was too shocked to react. She could hardly believe what she just heard.

"What is that?"

"Qin Yuru is the lost lady of Duke Xing's Mansion? What, what the hell is that? Hard to understand! Or does Qin Yuru want to pretend to be the real lady of Duke Xing's Mansion?"

Qi Rongzhi's mind went completely blank. She seemed to understand something but she just let the clue slip away. When she finally came to a sudden realization and wanted to ask Qin Wanru, she found out that Qin Wanru had gone away.

Standing still, Qi Rongzhi seemed jealous and irritated. Stamping her feet madly, she then turned around and rushed to Madam Dowager's Xinning Pavilion as an idea suddenly occurred that her brother got the evidence! Qi Rongzhi's mother once mentioned the matter was related to Qin Wanru in her letter!

She didn't care what Qin Yuru's plan was but she won't let her take away her favor from Duke Xing's Mansion...

Chapter 372 An Aggrieved Prude Who Seemed Pitiful

Qin Wanru didn't expect she would meet Qi's brothers at the evening banquet.

It was quite surprising to see these two brothers attend the family feast of Qin's Mansion.

When they were still in Jiangzhou, Qi Tianyu would come to Qin's Mansion and drink with Qin Huaiyong after having dinner in Qi's Mansion.

However, Qi Tianyu was dating Qin Yuru at that time. Although these two families didn't discuss their engagement directly, they had made a decision. But what now? Glancing at Qin Yuru who sat beside, Qin Wanru sat down slowly beside Shui Ruolan with her eyes darkening.

Madam Dowager took the middle seat with Shui Ruolan and Qin Huaiyong sitting on her both sides.

Qin Wanru happened to sit between Qin Yuru and Shui Ruolan while there was space between them.

Qi Tianyu sat beside Qin Huaiyong while Qi Baiyu was near his brother. Then with Qin Yuru was next to Qi Baiyu, then a circle was made.

Since Qi Baiyu had arrived in the capital city, he never met Qin Wanru. When he saw her, he winked at her. Qin Wanru smiled slightly. Qi Baiyu who looked very fair before now looked tanned and healthy. Nobody knew what he was busy for.

Qi Tianyu also smiled at Qin Wanru politely. He seemed to be much more mature than he was in Jiangzhou.

What now?

Qin Wanru sat down. Glancing at Qin Yuru sitting next to her, she found out Qin Yuru who freshened up looked quiet and a little bit shy, completely different from her crazy look before.

Qin Wanru didn't feel surprised to see Qin Yuru attend the dinner for Qin Huaiyong only had one birth daughter, which made him unable to punish her hard. Even though she had made such a serious mistake, Qin Huaiyong would only pretend to ignore it and just let her apologize to Shui Ruolan and Qin Wanru, seeming that she just misunderstood them and made a very small mistake. Even though there was something wrong, it was Madam Di herself who caused them and was self-inflicted.

It was only because Qin Yuru misunderstood? The cruel and heartless Qin Yuru who even intended to kill her own mother just misunderstood? A trace of sarcasm flashed upon Qin Wanru's eyes!

Fortunately, she didn't try to beat Qin Yuru now for Qin Yuru just was a pawn which would drag Duke Yong's Mansion to the hell. If she now was beaten, then she would be useless. Qin Wanru didn't want to push her to the edge now.

"First Lady Qin, may I exchange seats with you?" Qi Baiyu smiled at Qin Yuru, pointing at their seats next to each other.

If Qin Yuru agreed, then it would be Qi Tianyu who sat next to Qin Yuru.

"But..." Qin Yuru raised her red face on which her makeup was perfect and exquisite, making her look decent and mild. She was an outstanding beauty. Now she looked quite pitiful and aggrieved with her red eyes when she hesitated to say something.

Although she looked hesitated, she tried to stand up with her hand holding the table and it seemed that she was ready to exchange their seats.

"Baiyu! Mind your manner!" shouted Qi Tianyu.

Looking at Qi Tianyu pitifully, Qi Baiyu answered reluctantly, "Brother!"

Half rising, Qin Yuru stared at Qi Tianyu stiffly and embarrassedly with tears welling in her eyes.

"Please sit down, First Lady Qin. Sorry for Baiyu's immature and his balderdash. We are not in Jiangzhou now and we all have grown up. Even Second Lady Qin doesn't look like a little kid anymore!" Qi Tianyu smiled at Qin Yuru gently with his words sounding reserved and polite.

It seemed that nothing had happened between Qin Yuru and Qi Tianyu. Even though they hugged together behind the rockery secretly, he seemed to not care about that anymore and everything had passed. The past was the past. It was decisive and manful for him to cut off their relationship, leaving no trace of their past affairs.

He didn't mention how Qin Yuru made him embarrassed and lose face in Jiangzhou by turning him down. He looked quite generous.

Hearing his words, Qin Huaiyong kept nodding, thinking that Qi Tianyu was a real gentleman whom he chose. It was good for him to think in this way. With Qi Tianyu's help, the deep friendship between Magistrate Qi and he would not be ruin because of these private affairs.

Qin Yuru sat down and looked at Qi Tianyu mildly with her beautiful eyes full of love and affection. During the dinner, she sometimes fell her gaze on Qi Tianyu and put her attention on him even though he didn't respond to her.

Qin Wanru withdrew her look in an expressionless way while a trace of doubt emerged in her mind. Weird!

Although it seemed Qi Tianyu didn't care and he even forgave Qin Yuru generously, Qin Huaiyong should not invite him and make them look like a family! Didn't Qin Huaiyong know that Di Yan might doubt? Some rumors about the affairs between Qin Yuru and Qi Tianyu once spread. It was impossible for Di Yan to ignore this!

Qin Huaiyong would not do things like this. He would not want them talked about by others.

However, he did. In addition, he seemed to take it for granted and was not afraid that others might ask about this.

The relationship between Qi Tianyu and Qin Yuru was apparently severed but actually connected but they just pretended to be a prude. Who was the target of their performance?

Feeling strange, she glanced at Qi Baiyu and saw him wink at her again. Qin Wanru smiled.

Qi Baiyu still looked like a child. Qin Wanru had grown fast recently and she was almost as tall as Qi Baiyu.

Everyone was quiet when having dinner, except Qi Baiyu who always intended to talk to Qin Wanru. However, a silence hung in the room so he couldn't say anything. He was so upset that he kept scratching his head and looking at Qin Wanru while he could do nothing but to stare at her for there sat Qin Yuru beside him.

Realizing that Qi Baiyu wasn't having dinner obediently, Qi Tianyu raised his head and glared at Qi Baiyu. Then he turned around, smiled regretfully at Qin Wanru and then lowered his head politely to have dinner again. Qin Yuru hurried to raise her head to see Qi Tianyu as soon as he lowered his head but only to miss him again. She suddenly felt sad and lowered her head with tears in her eyes.

She looked really sad.

Other people seemed to not notice a drama was playing among these kids and only focused on their dinner. When all people finished, servants began to clean up.

They then took a rest and drank tea.

Qi Baiyu moved quickly this time and sat beside Qin Wanru directly, "Guess what I have been busy for these days!"

"What?" asked Qin Wanru in surprise. Seeing his restless look, she knew he had a good life recently.

"I am learning Kung Fu from a general!" answered Qi Baiyu excitedly with pride.

"Kung Fu?"

"Yes! Come and see if I grow taller than before and if I look healthier!" said Qi Baiyu proudly while he even tried to show his height with his hands.

"Well, you almost catch up with me!" Blinking her shining eyes, Qin Wanru chuckled.

Her words quickly made Qi Baiyu upset. He snorted and looked Qin Wanru up and down, and said, "You are shorter than me."

"But I am going to take the national examination for Kung Fu and be the best specialist. I don't want to read anymore!" After saying this, Qi Baiyu became happy again.

In her last life, Qi Baiyu didn't take the examination but chose his official career.

"Who do you learn from?" Qin Wanru asked directly. "Or is that man the right person Qi Baiyu had met in her last life?"

"I can't tell you until I succeed!" answered Qi Baiyu proudly.

Feeling speechless, Qin Wanru tried to mention him to be careful. However, she didn't know clear about Qi Baiyu's story in her last life and had no idea about how he gave up the military exam and chose the official career. If he took a shortcut to his career without attending the national exam, he must get promoted by someone because of his achievement. She didn't know what and how to mention him.

"I heard that lanterns in the capital city are extraordinarily beautiful. Where should we go first when we start?" Rolling his eyes, Qi Baiyu lowered his voice and asked.

"Lanterns?" Qin Wanru was stunned.

"You don't know that? Today General Qin invited us to watch lanterns in the evening with you! It must be crowded and funny on Lunar New Year's Eve! It must be much interesting than in Jiangzhou! Moreover, it is said that there would not only be lanterns show!" Qi Baiyu said feverishly.

Did Qin Huaiyong intend to let Qi's Brothers accompany Qin Yuru and her?

Qin Wanru didn't expect this. Turning to see Qin Huaiyong, Qin Wanru found that he was talking to Shui Ruolan in a low voice. They seemed good. When Qin Huaiyong looked at Shui Ruolan, he looked gentle and mild. Madam Dowager talked with them sometimes.

If there had not been Madam Di's matter, they would have looked like a happy family.

"Well, it isn't lanterns exactly because Lantern Festival is on the fifteenth day of the first month. It is pretty lively today! There are many activities such as guessing riddles and song and dance shows! It would be very bustling! Uncle wants Baiyu and me to accompany you in case there might be some accidents!"

Qi Tianyu explained gently beside.

Qin Wanru now discovered that Qi Tianyu sat beside Qi Baiyu while Qin Yuru who was next to Qi Baiyu looked very shy and listened to their talk quietly, seeming like a young new married woman with her handkerchief in hands.

She looked, weird, didn't she?

With her long and curled eyelashes flickering, Qin Wanru smiled and nodded. When she tried to say something, Qin Huaiyong's voice came up. "Be careful when you leave together! Get there earlier and come back soon! Don't be too late!"

"Don't worry, uncle. I promise you I would bring them back safely!" Standing up, Qi Tianyu replied.

Shui Ruolan reached out and held Qin Wanru's hand and said worriedly, "If it is too crowded, then come back soon! Follow your Big Sister and two Masters Qi. Don't get lost. You are not familiar with the city so you must be careful!"

Qin Wanru knew it was inconvenient for Shui Ruolan to go out because of her unborn baby so she could understand why Shui Ruolan didn't go with her. She nodded and answered, "Don't worry, mother. I know it!"

Since the itinerary had been made before and now it was getting late, Madam Dowager then asked them to play outside earlier for two Masters Qi just arrived at the capital city.

Since Shui Ruolan couldn't leave and Madam Dowager felt tired, Qin Huaiyong then stayed with them.

Qin Wanru and others just let one servant follow them. They left through the front gate. This time they didn't call a carriage for the main street was not far from here. So this evening their tour was play-oriented!

As soon as they left the mansion, Qi Baiyu quickly became energetic and lively! He kept talking with his hand pointing at all things he saw. He seemed to be familiar with the capital city.

As he mainly talked to Qin Wanru, they quickly went ahead, leaving Qin Yuru and Qi Tianyu behind.

"Brother Tianyu!" Finding Qin Wanru and Qi Baiyu didn't notice them, Qin Yuru called Qi Tianyu softly and gradually stopped...

Chapter 373 General's Calligraphy

"Let's catch up with them. They are still kids and I am afraid they would hit something while pushing their way through the crowd. You know, there are many noble men in the city!" answered Qi Tianyu gently, seeming that he didn't hear Qin Yuru's sweet voice. He sped up and quickly kept up with Qin Wanru and Qi Baiyu. Walking beside Qin Wanru, he warned Qi Baiyu, "Slow down! We need to wait for them!"

Qin Wanru looked back and found Qin Yuru who looked weepy. An imperceptible trace of doubt appeared in her eyes. She thought it was too strange!

Qi Baiyu who walked ahead slowed down as Qin Yuru hurried to catch up with them. Finally, they walked side by side.

Seeing Qin Yuru walking beside Qi Tianyu again, Qin Wanru smiled and quickly stopped watching them. A mysterious smile appeared on her face.

They finished dinner quite early today so it was just getting dark. Now along the street hung various shapes of lanterns. There were many activities held in front of some shops by sending gifts to pedestrians. The street was crowded full of laughter and cheering.

Taking this opportunity, some peddlers even laid good things out and kept yelling among the crowd, which added liveliness and excitement to the night.

Obviously, carriages couldn't go through the street for it was crawling with people, seeming that everyone walked out their houses and played on the street.

The hustle and bustle of the street also allowed men and women to forget those conservative rules and play together. On the street, there were many young couples walking and playing around.

Qin Wanru had never seen this scene before. When she was in Jiangzhou, the streets were busy and alive at this time of every year but they were hardly comparable to those in the capital city. She had even though Qin Huaiyong would not allow her to walk out the mansion when such an incident had happened.

She didn't expect that this tour had been planned so soon.

Well, there was no need to think why Qin Yuru could also walk out. Moreover, it was quite inconvenient for Qi's Brothers to accompany Qin Wanru only.

It should be Qin Huaiyong's solution when taking Qin Wanru's feeling into consideration.

Qi Baiyu quite enjoyed joining in the fun. "What is that? Let's go there, shall we?" Pointing at a place which was the most crowded, Qi Baiyu shouted. A stage was even set up. From their view, they could see people on the stage but couldn't hear what they were talking for the voice was covered by the noise giving off by the crowd.

Hearing Qi Baiyu's suggestion, Qin Wanru nodded in agreement. Then Qi Baiyu and his servant pushed their way for them to walk through. Soon they reached the stage.

They finally stopped. When Qin Wanru tried to say something, she suddenly heard somebody humming beside them. Turning around in surprise, she found Di Yan was just standing there. It was so coincidental running into Di Yan!

Among those who followed Di Yan, Di Fenglan was there. Seeing Qin Yuru and other people, Di Fenglan smiled and reached them. Holding Qin Yuru quickly, she said, "Sister Yuru, I heard that you are sick and unable to get up! But why are you here today?"

"I am with my Second Sister." Not expecting to come across Di Yan and his sister, Qin Yuru shifted the responsibility onto Qin Wanru in an uneasy way.

Di Yan's indifferent and hostile gaze fell on Qi Tianyu. He asked coldly, "Who is he?"

As Qi Baiyu was little and he still looked like a kid, Di Yan just ignored him.

"They are two Masters of Qi's Mansion which has built a deep relationship with our mansion. As they don't know others in the capital city, father especially invited them to have dinner together. Now they are accompanying us and enjoying the bustling night in the capital city!" Qin Yuru quickly moved away from Qi Tianyu and answered politely.

Her explanation sounded reasonable and polite but Di Yan still stared at Qi Tianyu doubtfully because he just saw Qin Yuru look at this man in an affectionate way even though he could recognize them vaguely because of the distance. Qin Yuru's look was quite similar with what she was when she just arrived in the capital city.

Qi's Mansion?

"Magistrate Qi's Mansion in Jiangzhou?" asked Di Yan indifferently.

"Yes. Nice to meet you, Master Di!" Qi Tianyu looked at him and raised his hands. Compared to Di Yan, his status was lower. An ordinary master was not comparable to an heir of a duke from a noble aristocratic family.

"Since we meet here, then let's play together!" Even though Di Fenglan disliked Qin Wanru, she couldn't just ignore Qin Wanru and leave her there. Therefore, she said cynically, "But be careful! Don't behave like an immature guy who always joined in the fun casually. If something happened, things would get complicated!"

Pretending not to notice Di Fenglan's provoking gaze, Qin Wanru smiled and stared at the stage which just set up.

The stage was arranged into a flower platform around which there were many pots of flowers. Although it was not spring now in which flowers would be in full bloom, several flowers blossomed.

Then these flowers added brightness and vitality to the winter night. Many ladies came here with their followers who protected them.

"There is a sheet of calligraphy! If anyone could copy that in the shortest time while his copy is the closest one to the original work, I would reward the winner with a big surprise!" A man who looked like the shopkeeper appeared and made a bow with hands folded in front to his audience with a big smile on his face.

"What? What calligraphy?" someone immediately asked loudly.

"Show it! Many people here are learned!" Another man shouted, making others laugh.

Hearing those words, many people looked around and found there were many people who looked learned and decent standing in front of the stage. They all looked thoughtful and insightful.

Those who were literate had always been interested in calligraphy and painting. Moreover, since there were many young ladies waiting to be married, there were many male scholars in the city than often.

The shopkeeper reached out with his hands pressing the air. "No rush, no rush! Meet the calligraphy first!" When the crowd gradually calmed down, he smiled and said.

His employee brought a sheet of calligraphy from the backstage and then the shopkeeper took it over carefully. He then hung it on the rope at the center of the stage.

After he finished, the paper unfolded, presenting the calligraphy whose every stroke of the characters was boldly and forcefully laid. There were only four characters. However, it could tell that the artist wrote them down with obviously firm strokes, making the ink penetrating into paper. Not everyone could write like this.

The audiences were amazed and praised with clicking their tongues. Those who were proficient in calligraphy were profuse in praise. The calligraphy was not only good-looking but powerful. Those gentlemen could hardly make it.

"This sheet of calligraphy has always been treasured by my shop. It is said that it is a general who wrote it and that's why it looks so powerful. If anyone would like to try, we would reward the champion, runner-up and the third winner with different unique copies after assessment." Pointing at the sheet of calligraphy, the shopkeeper smiled and explained.

Qin Wanru now realized that behind the stage was a large shop which mainly dealt in writing brushes, ink, paper and inkstones. However, since the stage was too large, the shop was blocked completely.

A general wrote it? No wonder the writing looked so powerful and firm. The audience kept praising but nobody wanted to try. For those literate men, writing was not quite difficult but writing steadily and firmly was hard. Watching the sheet of calligraphy on the stage, these literate men knew nobody could write like this without practicing for over twenty years.

Many scholars gathered under the stage but they all feared that they would embarrass themselves if they had a try first. As a result, nobody volunteered.

Staring at the sheet of calligraphy, Qin Wanru frowned and felt strangely familiar. However, she just could not think of where and when she saw this calligraphy before. Then she just frowned and stared at the work blankly.

Seeing Qin Wanru just staring at the calligraphy carefully, Qi Tianyu thought Qin Wanru was interested in this game so he quickly got close to her without being noticed by Qin Wanru. "Does Sister Wanru want to have a try?" Qi Tianyu smiled and asked.

He behaved too affectionate. How Qi Tianyu who looked very polite and gentle would say something like this in such an intimate way.

Glancing at Qi Tianyu in surprise, she shook her head. "It must be a literate general who wrote this work!"

"Yes." Qi Tianyu nodded and admitted.

"Our shop's owner always welcomes and prefers such style of calligraphy. If anyone possesses works like this, our shop's owner would offer high prices for it! Since today is a good day, we would send the seller a big present if we could complete the sale!" Seeing nobody have a try, the shopkeeper continued to say with a bright smile.

Qin Yuru also came. Looking around, she talked to Qi Tianyu softly. "Why don't you have a try, Master Qi?" Qi Tianyu was famous for his talent in Jiangzhou as he was also proficient in calligraphy and painting. Since he was quite talented at a very young age, he enjoyed a great reputation among scholars in Jiangzhou.

"I'll see," Qi Tianyu answered slowly as his eyes fixed on the stage, seeming that he was a little bit persuaded.

"Ha! Does he really think he is able to do that? Look! If the task were easy, then people would rush to try that. The sheet of calligraphy has always been hung here at this time of every year. Nobody can make it!" Di Yan quite disliked Qi Tianyu's confident look so he snorted and said.

"Or is there any other point which we should be particular about?" Feeling interested, Qin Wanru asked out of curiosity.

Noticing Qin Wanru's question, Di Yan lifted his head proudly and answered, "Of course. Last year, this work was also shown around. Many people had a try but they all failed. Their works were totally different from the original one. How embarrassing!"

"Why?" Qi Tianyu was also curious. Although it was difficult to copy this style of writing, they should possess good writing skills which would avoid themselves from being embarrassed in public.

"Can you recognize what type of paper the shopkeeper uses there?" Smiling sarcastically, Di Yan pointed at the work on the stage and asked.

The shopkeeper took out several pieces of paper and ink brushes and put them on the table. It seemed that he prepared these tools for those challengers.

“The type? Is that white-sand rice paper?” Qi Tianyu was talented. Glancing at the paper on the table, he then rolled his eyes and answered.

Finding Qi Tianyu was able to recognize the type of paper so quickly, Di Yan felt amazed but he gradually disliked Qi Tianyu more.

“Yes! You are right, Master Qi. It is white-sand rice paper!” Gradually fond of Qi Tianyu, Di Fenglan smiled and answered.

“White-sand rice paper? Then the ink brush must be made of white goat hair!”

Although white-sand ice paper was categorized into rice paper, it was harder to allow the ink penetrate it than other papers. People who used this type of paper must write slowly, steadily and strongly as the paper required high vigor of strokes and brawny wrist.

However, the white-goat hair ink brush was well-known for its feature that once the person who wrote firmly, the ink brush would slip easily which made the person hard to write. With this combination, those who didn’t get used to these two tools would certainly fail to write a good-looking character!

Chapter 374 Qin Wanru Left Secretly to Explore the Unknown

The combination of the white-sand rice paper and the white-goat hair ink brush increased the difficulty of this task. No wonder nobody dared to have a try. Those who had lived in the capital city just stood back while those who didn’t live here dared not to try first as they found nobody volunteered and they feared that there might be some traps. Thus they were careful of this task. As a result, an awkward silence appeared.

Qin Wanru felt the shopkeeper smiled awkwardly.

“Nobody won presents last year?” asked Qin Wanru.

“No. Nobody would know the shopkeeper would be so cunning. How could they combine these two things together! Nobody would practice writing with these papers! It couldn’t improve your writing but also it is quite expensive!” Di Fenglan popped her head up and explained.

Although it was expensive and hard to write on, it was easy to preserve!

Qi Baiyu’s eyes twinkled. He had always been quick-witted so an idea occurred to him. “Who wrote that? Can’t anyone find something similar? They just said that they would reward those who sell them sheets of calligraphy in the same style of writing!”

“Nobody knows who wrote it. Many people once checked and found out that they have never seen it before. Moreover, they thought that this sheet of calligraphy is not written by a noble man. A general? Nobody could figure out who the general is. It is hard to recognize!” Di Yan shook his head and sighed.

So, the shopkeeper just lied to them for fun!

Seeing nobody have a try, some scholars decided not to wait and quickly volunteered as they felt confident of their writing skills. Since someone started the challenge, there would be many followers waiting to have a try. Soon five tables were put on the stage and there was one challenger behind each table.

Once they got on the stage, they quickly took the ink brush and began to copy the sheet of calligraphy carefully. The audiences got silent and were waiting to see their works.

As soon as they started to write, they noticed the troubles brought by the particular ink brush and paper. Then their hand shook badly when holding the ink brush, which made them put the first wrong stroke on the paper. However, once they made mistakes, it would be hard to retrieve the error. The audience burst into laughter.

Those challengers were bold and professional. However, once they were laughed at, not to mention the difficulties caused by the ink brush and paper which embarrassed them, they felt nervous and then wrote badly. When they finished, they felt extremely awkward and got off the stage when comparing their funny copies to the original sheet of calligraphy.

The audience burst into laughter again when the shopkeeper hung their funny writing on the stage. It was so hilarious. How could those scholars write something like this? It just looked like those works which was created by babies who just began to learn writing.

Some people even asked, "Who is that? Who writes that? The middle one is extremely hilarious! How funny it is!"

"Yes! My servant girls would definitely be much better than them in calligraphy!"

The scholars who just volunteered hurried to leave by feeling embarrassed among the ceaseless laughter. However, because of this, nobody would dare to have a try again. Those who looked confident now all hesitated. They were ready to show off their talent in the capital city. How could they be laughed at before they passed the exam! How embarrassing!

No matter how the shopkeeper persuaded the audience to have a try, everyone hesitated and kept quiet when seeing those challengers' works. Nobody would like to be laughed at by others. Even though it did not matter too much, they always would be willing to laugh at others while unwilling to be laughed at.

The audience gradually dispersed. Somebody found there was no amusement and then pushed their way through the crowd and hurried to leave. Seeing everyone was leaving, Di Yan talked to Qin Yuru, "Cousin Yu, let's go. It is boring here."

Then he tried to take her hand.

Qin Yuru stayed away and avoided being touched by him expressionlessly. She nodded in agreement, "Okay, let's go."

Then they began to walk outward. When they didn't go too far, Qi Tianyu suddenly turned around and found Qin Wanru who should follow him disappeared! He was shocked and immediately stopped.

"Master Qi, what's wrong?" Noticing his shocked face, Qin Yuru also stopped and asked in a low voice.

"Second Lady Qin is not with us!" Looking around, Qi Tianyu only saw the crowded street but found no trace of Qin Wanru.

"What, what should we do? How would she disappear?" Qin Yuru also flustered and hurried to look around. She said to Qi Tianyu hurriedly, "Let's find her now! Second Sister played in the capital city for

the first time. She has never seen so many people before. I am afraid that she is too scared and hides somewhere.”

“Big Cousin, I heard that many criminals would commit kidnaps at this time of every year. They would especially prefer those young girls. Once they are kidnapped, they would be sold to those, you know, those places. Then their whole life almost got screwed up. There were some similar cases in the city before. A lady from an aristocratic family was kidnapped and found in the place, you know.”

Di Fenglan covered her nose and said disgustingly.

Standing next to Qin Yuru, she also heard the talk between Qi Tianyu and Qin Yuru. Seeing Qi Tianyu cared about Qin Wanru so much, she sneered and said.

“Hey! You! What the hell are you talking about? Can’t you say something as a human?” Qi Baiyu was ahead of them. Seeing everyone stopped, he quickly walked to them and got angry when hearing what Di Fenglan said.

“You, you are not a human!” Di Fenglan also got irritated by being shouted. Holding Di Yan’s hand, she waved her handkerchief and said, “Big Brother, let’s go! Qin Wanru’s missing has nothing to do with us. She does not come out with us. I just hope she would not be found in those places!”

Then she was ready to go by taking Di Yan’s hand.

“What’s wrong?” Di Yan was also ahead of them and now he turned around and walked to them.

“My Second Sister is missing! What should I do? If father and grandma know she disappears, they would not let go of me easily!” Qin Yuru looked scared and tearful. Grabbing her handkerchief, she looked at and said to Qi Tianyu helplessly.

“I will find her!” Qi Tianyu said and he quickly turned around.

“I will go with you. If I lose my sister, I fear, I fear that...” Qin Yuru looked more and more pitiful. However, she wiped her tear and followed Qi Tianyu quickly.

Di Yan tried to hold Qin Yuru’s hand as she now tried to follow another man, making him feel uncomfortable. However, he was late and only to find Qin Yuru had followed Qi Tianyu and gone away.

“I will also go with them!” said Qi Baiyu. He didn’t care about Di Yan and other people and just left quickly.

“Is that your fiancée, Master Di Yan?” One master who came with Di Yan pointed at Qin Yuru’s figure and asked smilingly.

Di Yan’s face turned livid but he just nodded, thinking that how Qin Yuru could embarrass him.

Qin Yuru not only stayed close to that man in front of Di Yan but also left with that man without caring about Di Yan! So embarrassing!

“Her sister disappeared! She is looking for her!”

“That one? Although she looked young, she is a beauty! I am wondering whether she is engaged with someone?” another master asked. He just stood beside Di Yan. When he saw Qin Wanru, he was shocked by Qin Wanru’s beautiful face and even was unable to speak. Now he finally calmed down.

“Maybe not. She is only a kid! Let’s go. She must be here still. I suppose someone just pushed her to the edge of the crowd!” Di Yan felt impatient when talking about Qin Yuru so he suggested.

“I will help!” This master was kindhearted. He even pushed his way through the crowd and began to look for Qin Wanru with his servant, seeming that he had decided that he must find Qin Wanru.

Actually, Qin Wanru decided not to follow them on her own. She went behind the stage. Staring at the shop, Qin Wanru hesitated for a while and then she walked in the shop directly.

Seeing a lady walking in, a shop-boy hurried to greet her with a bright smile.

Pointing at the stage outside, Qin Wanru asked curiously, “Who wrote that sheet of calligraphy? I haven’t seen it before.”

“Not a famous calligrapher. My boss just prefers his style of writing and still keeps looking for the general’s works. If you have any pieces of the general’s writing, please sell us. My boss would offer a higher price than others to buy it and send a present to you!”

The shop-boy was talkative. He answered fluently, seeming that many people had asked him about the same question before and that was why he would answer in such a fluent way.

“Who is that general?” Qin Wanru felt much more curious.

“Well, it is hard to say. My boss only says that it belongs to a general but he never mentions who the general is. So I think the general is not famous enough!”

The shop-boy shook his head and answered.

“Where did your boss get this?” Qin Wanru asked smilingly with her shinning eyes blinking.

“I... I really have no idea about his. I guess my boss just received it by chances.” The shop-boy smiled bitterly. “I never read books so I don’t know what the advantages the calligraphy possesses and don’t know why my boss likes it!”

His answer made Qin Wanru unable to ask more!

Looking the shop-boy up and down in an expressionless way, Qin Wanru gave a sweet smile on her fair face. “Actually, I own some pieces of calligraphy but I am not sure whether they are...”

She said hesitantly and looked uncertain. However, her words excited the shop-boy. He quickly showed Qin Wanru the way to the inner room and said, “Your grace, please take a seat. My boss would ask you about this in person. If you really possess any true pieces of this general’s works, my boss would definitely buy it! Please wait for a moment!”

After leading the way for Qin Wanru, the shop-boy advised a seat near a window for her. When Qin Wanru sat down, he quickly made some tea for her. Everything was arranged perfectly.

"Your grace, hold on please. I am going to inform my boss!" The shop-boy put down the pot and said after pouring tea for Qin Wanru.

Qin Wanru nodded and smiled but she didn't taste the tea.

Then the shop-boy ran out. Qin Wanru looked outside from the window and found that the evening was so beautiful and prosperous. With the light, the river looked shinning. The position was perfect as people outside would not notice who sat there inside while people inside could watch outside clearly.

She saw Qi Tianyu walking by with Qin Yuru hurrying to follow him and trying to take his hand. It seemed that Qin Yuru did this voluntarily. However, Qi Tianyu got rid of her hand. It was so obvious that Qin Yuru was pestering Qi Tianyu. How dare Qin Yuru with Di Yan still being here...

"Your grace. My boss is here!" The shop-boy's voice suddenly came up!

Chapter 375 The Seal—a Pine, a Stone and a Chrysanthemum.

The shop-boy moved aside, and the shopkeeper who had just stood on the stage turned out from the back of the shop-boy. Seeing Qin Wanru's appearance, he was stunned because he did not expect that she would be such a young Miss. After looking up and down at her, he looked more horrified in his eyes in that this Miss in front of him was really outstanding.

The shopkeeper had seen a lot of girls, but he had never seen such a young and excellent girl. So he dared not treat her without proper respect, he walked to Qin Wanru and saluted politely, "I have heard that Miss has some calligraphy to sell. I was wandering whether Miss could let me have a look?"

"I do not know whether it is the one you want." Qin Wanru smiled slightly. "So I come to ask first. If so, I will take it out next time!"

This obviously meant that she did not take it out this time, but it was reasonable. How could it be possible to take a piece of calligraphy with her when she was walking around the street in Chinese New Year's Eve?

A glimmer of disappointment flashed in the shopkeeper's eyes, but the smile on his face did not diminish, and he still said enthusiastically, "In that case, Miss, please take it out with you next time. If it is what we want, our master will certainly not let Miss suffer a loss and the gift I promise today will also be offered to you!"

"Who wrote this calligraphy?" Qin Wanru smiled.

"It... was not signed..." The shopkeeper's smile was awkward.

"No sign?" Qin Wanru frowned slightly and lowered her head as she seemed to soliloquize. "The one in my house seems to have no sign either, but I do not know who wrote it!"

The shopkeeper's eyes lit up. "Miss, the calligraphy in your mansion house also has no sign? Is there a small seal at the lower right corner?"

"This... It seems to have... but I did not notice it!" Qin Wanru thought for a while, and said with a little entanglement, "Tree? Or something else?"

"Is it a pine, a stone and a chrysanthemum?" The shopkeeper got excited and asked as he rubbed his hands.

"This... I did not see clearly..." Qin Wanru shook her head hesitantly.

"Which mansion is Miss from? If it is not convenient for Miss to come out, we can make house service and have a look." The shopkeeper did not hesitate because of Qin Wanru's hesitation and said enthusiastically.

"This is not necessary. My father is not willing to sell any calligraphy!" Qin Wanru shook her head.

The shopkeeper looked up and down again at Qin Wanru a few times, and found that this girl in front of him was really young. Despite her young appearance, she had already looked gorgeous, and had some scholar's style. She should be a young Miss from a literary aristocratic family. Of course, it was not convenient for a Miss of such status to sell calligraphy.

So she probably avoided others to sell this calligraphy.

Thinking in this way, the shopkeeper immediately understood, and said with a smile, "Whenever Miss is available, please bring the calligraphy over, and I will help you appraise it. It is not a piece of calligraphy from some famous person, so Miss does not have to worry that the elder in your mansion will ask about this. It is just an ordinary calligraphy!"

"Since it is an ordinary one, why do you care so much, shopkeeper?" Qin Wanru asked curiously.

The shopkeeper said, "In fact, it is our master that likes it. Our master only cares about the style of calligraphy all his life instead of the person who writes it. He will definitely buy the calligraphy that strikes his fancy at a high price. It does not matter whether it is from a famous one. Our master likes this style of calligraphy at first sight, so he specifically asks us to look for similar one!"

This reason could be regarded as sufficient. There were many people who did not merely collect artworks that must be the authentic works from celebrities. As long as they were eye-catching, these works were good. Who could be sure that many years later this would not become the only copy extant?

Before some masters became famous, their calligraphy was extremely cheap, but after they became famous, their works would immediately be worth a hundred times.

"Since it is so, then I will bring it over for a look next time!" Qin Wanru stood up and said.

"Well, what is your family name, Miss?" the shopkeeper asked diligently.

"How can our Miss's name be said casually!" Yujie snorted and stepped to stare at the shopkeeper and then held Qin Wanru to walk out.

The shopkeeper helplessly retreated aside and watched Qin Wanru leaving with Yujie as his brows frowned tightly.

"Shopkeeper, here comes Master!" A shop-boy hurried over and whispered in the shopkeeper's ear, and then the shopkeeper turned quickly inside.

Turning to the backyard of the shop, the main room in the middle was lit, and two guards in black stood at the door. When seeing the shopkeeper coming, they silently let him in.

The shopkeeper walked carefully to the door, and said respectfully, "Pay my respect to Master!"

"Come in!" A light voice came from the room.

The shopkeeper tidied his clothes and gently pushed open the door. Seeing the young man sitting under the lamp in the room, he hurried forward...

Qin Wanru went out and walked into the crowd and thought as she walked. That calligraphy, she did have!

A pine, a stone, and a chrysanthemum below the stone. It was an obvious feature, but there was no name on the calligraphy, so she did not know who wrote it. It was written powerfully with firm strokes permeating on the back of the paper. Not everyone could do such kind of skill, but this person succeeded.

There was not only one piece in Qin Wanru's hands. She had all four pieces of calligraphy. She did not know when they had fallen into her own hands, but since she had memory, these pieces of calligraphy had been in her private store room. This time she came to the capital city, she also specially brought them with her.

The reason why she could remember this so clearly was because when she had started to learn writing in her childhood, she had found some calligraphy to practice, and had gotten it when casually rummaged through her private store room. At that time, she had wanted to practice according to the characters on it, but Madam Dowager had not allowed and said that this style was not suitable for girls.

After that, she had given up and the calligraphy remained in her private storeroom with a small number of treasures.

Because these pieces of calligraphy were not from someone famous and had no sign, Qin Wanru did not care much about them, and had even forgotten them early. However, she still remembered clearly because she had reorganized her private store room and casually gone through them before entering the capital city.

"What do these pieces of calligraphy mean? Why do they appear in my private store room? Do I lose the memory in my childhood?"

"Does it mean that these are left to me by my own father?" She suddenly felt a strong heartbeat and stopped, biting her cherry lips. There was a speculation in her heart that made her uncontrollably excited. "Could it be written by father?"

But then she denied this speculation. She had seen the style of calligraphy of the former Heir of Duke Xing and it was not like this. That shadow wall was full of characters. Despite some differences between those characters, she could recognize that they were the same in nature and the trick was getting more proficient, which was completely different from this style of calligraphy.

Then if it was not written by Father, it meant that it had been collected by Father!

In terms of Father's status, he could collect any kind of calligraphy and paintings from famous masters, but he specially collected this unnamed calligraphy, which meant that these four pieces of calligraphy were different from others.

As for the shopkeeper's expression today, he became excited even there was only a bit of clue.

Qin Wanru concluded that it should be the shopkeeper, or the master behind the shopkeeper that was looking for these pieces of calligraphy. There must be some secrets that she did not know, but no matter what the secrets were, Qin Wanru did not think that she had let someone know that she had these pieces of calligraphy in her hands.

She felt inexplicably dangerous with her hair standing on end...

"Miss, I can't find other people. What should we do?" Yujie followed Qin Wanru to stop and said anxiously after looking around.

People were hurrying to and fro in the street, but they just could not see anyone that they were familiar with before. Actually, they were not that familiar because they arrived in the capital city for the first time!

"Let's go!" Qin Wanru's face slightly changed, and she reached out to pull Yujie, and hurried to hide aside.

Yujie was startled by Qin Wanru, but she always admired Qin Wanru and immediately followed Qin Wanru to hide aside.

The two rushed into a roadside alley, but there were a lot of people even in the alley. Qin Wanru's face was a little white and she was looking in the direction from which they had come.

"Miss, what's the matter?" Yujie whispered, and followed Qin Wanru's gaze, but she found nothing unusual. There were still so many people walking to and fro, but that was all.

Qin Wanru shook her head. She just had felt a sense of danger, but she frowned. "Have I worried too much?"

"Let's wait!" Qin Wanru thought for a while, with her watery eyes keeping paying attention to the stream of people outside.

Hiding aside for a while, she felt that it was inexplicably quiet and Yujie seemed to have been silent until now, so she subconsciously turned her head. However, she was stunned with her watery eyes wide open and quickly stepped two steps back, almost falling down. Yujie was not next to her!

In the tall and beautiful palace, Emperor was sitting at a higher level with Empress Dowager on one side and Empress on the other. In right-hand seats, other concubines were sitting respectively with smiles. Each of them was well-dressed and secretly looked at Emperor with affection when softly speaking to the people around them.

There were also a few princes and princesses below. The elder ones took their own seats separately, and the younger ones all followed their mother.

Chu Liuchen also sat in the palace. Although his seat was in a lower position, it was close to Empress Dowager. He had also drank a little wine, so his pale face was a little flushed and his eyes seemed to gleam like water, making people feel him more handsome and beautiful.

Emperor who sat on top calmly glanced Chu Liuchen's face and lightly sighed.

Unlike the performance of other happy people, Chu Liuchen's head leaned back slightly, making him look a bit weak. All his black hair tied up with a white jade crown, which made his face as clean and shiny as white jade.

"Chen'er, are you tired?" Empress Dowager kept watching him, and asked softly when seeing him leaning back with a pair of handsome eyes closed slightly.

Chu Liuchen reached out to touch his forehead. Perhaps because he had drunk a little, his voice was a little hoarse, and he forced a smile helplessly. "Imperial Grandmother, I am really tired!"

"Emperor, let Chen'er go to rest!" Empress Dowager turned to say to Emperor.

Emperor's eyes fell on Chu Liuchen's face with uncertain meaning. Seeing that Chu Liuchen looked very tired, he nodded slowly and said gently, "Chen'er, since you are tired, go to have a rest first. It is inconvenient for you to go out, so just stay in the palace!"

"Thank you Emperor Uncle!" Chu Liuchen stood up to give a salutation to the emperor. When standing up, he staggered slightly, and a weak smile appeared on his pale face. "Emperor Uncle, I may go out after a while. I hear that the night scene today is particularly beautiful."

Chapter 376 The Mysterious Woman Standing at the Gate of the Palace

He didn't say much but there was a bit of craving under his eyes. This eagerness made Empress Dowager's eyes red. The grandson that she was most concerned about might not see these night scenes that he was eager for at a time.

"It's OK that Chen'er wants to take a rest!" The emperor's expression became more and more gentle. Such a gentle tone could not be seen by many concubines.

For a while, many jealous eyes entangled in Chu Liuchen's body, but then a lot of sarcasm appeared on the corners of lips of many people. He was just a sick prince, and nobody would care about a dying man.

"Thank you, my uncle!" Chu Liuchen said. He went out of the hall with Xiao Xuanzi.

Outside the main hall, Chu Liuchen stood under the tree to calm himself down, and he reached out to rub his forehead. There were many people in the main hall. His head did feel a little uncomfortable. When he was outside the main hall, he felt slightly better.

"Chen'er..." He heard a very soft voice beside his ears. Chu Liuchen turned back and saw a beautiful woman appearing under the shadow of a tree, wearing light white clothes, and the moonlight shadow like stars dripped on them was like dark flowers printed on her clothes.

A pair of beautiful big eyes full of tears, looked at Chu Liuchen, which were full of longing.

The two palace maids stood behind her. Seeing that she was going to fall down, they hurriedly reached out to help her, while secretly looking at Chu Liuchen.

Chu Liuchen's eyes turned back calmly as if he didn't see the woman under the tree. He shook his robe sleeves, turning and striding away.

Xiao Xuanzi looked at that woman. After a quick ritual, he quickly caught up with Chu Liuchen.

Looking at the back of Chu Liuchen who was leaving, two lines of tears slowly slipped down on the pretty face of the woman.

"Imperial concubine, don't be sad. Your Highness will understand you." A palace maid comforted her in a low voice.

"He's blaming me. He has always been blaming me..." The woman muttered to herself, tears rolling down on her pretty cheeks like flowers. She cried silently.

"Imperial concubine, Your Highness will definitely understand you in the future and will forgive you!" The palace maid comforted her again quickly.

"Let's go back!" she said. The woman lowered her head and wiped her tears. She raised her head after a long while.

"Aren't we waiting for the emperor?" said another palace maid, looking at the tall palace over there.

"Why should we wait!" The woman shook her head and her purpose of waiting here had been achieved. So why should she wait again.

The two palace maids supported the woman to leave, as mysterious as when she came. All the concubines ranked were in the hall and nobody knew who was she?

"Master, where are you going?" Xiao Xuanzi followed behind Chu Liuchen, and asked him anxiously when he did not mean to turn to his palace.

"Exit the palace to enjoy the night scene!" Chu Liuchen said casually as if the woman just now did not disturb his heart.

"At this time? Would you like to take a break?" Xiao Xuanzi felt that his master's face was too red. Such a red face really didn't indicate that he was drunk?

"No, let's go to see the scenes!" Chu Liuchen said.

"Yes, master!" Xiao Xuanzi hurriedly said.

After leaving the palace gate, Chu Liuchen's carriage was stopped at the gate of the palace in an early time. Chu Liuchen stepped on the carriage at the door, and the carriage moved slowly. In the carriage, Chu Liuchen's long eyes narrowed slightly. He held his head with one hand, leaning on the couch on one side.

"Master, Second Miss is traveling with First Miss of Qin's Mansion and two Childe of Qi's mansion today. The two Childe of Qi's mansion are the two sons of Jiangzhou magistrate before!"

Xiao Xuanzi reported to Chu Liuchen.

“Why should they follow her?” Chu Liuchen said lightly.

“I don’t know. Maybe it is because that General Qin is afraid that his two daughters will get lost, so he finds them. When they were in Jiangzhou, the two families had good relationship!”

“When they were in Jiangzhou, they had good relationship but they didn’t have marriage relationship. Now they are like this. They could really go back to their original situation! He really had a big heart! Check what Qin Huaiyong wants to do!” Chu Liuchen sneered.

“Yes, I know. I will ask people to check it now!” Xiao Xuanzi nodded. This was indeed a peculiar thing, and it seemed to be abnormal.

“Where is she?” Chu Liuchen said for granted.

“Second Miss is strolling on the street and when she separated with others, she entered a calligraphy and painting shop. It was the calligraphy and painting shop that the shopkeeper had always been looking for that unknown general’s calligraphy. After entering, she has not come out yet!” Although Xiao Xuanzi followed Chu Liuchen all the time, he had got the news early.

“Go there!” he said lazily. Chu Liuchen’s lips hooked slightly.

“Yes, it’s not far from here, and it will be faster to get around from behind!” Xiao Xuanzi lifted the curtains and looked at the night view outside. It was very suitable to pass from here in the past, and it was fast, but today was different. People were blocking the main road, so going around on the small streets would be faster.

The carriage turned silently in one direction, and then entered a junction ...

Qin Wanru looked at the eyes of Xiao Xuanzi in front of her in shock and covered her face with a piece of parchment. Qin Wanru also recognized that it was Xiao Xuanzi. “Second Miss, come in with me. Our master is waiting for you inside!”

Xiao Xuanzi stood at the door not far behind Qin Wanru and said to Qin Wanru with a smile.

“Where is Yujie?” Qin Wanru looked around, failing to find the figure of Yujie.

“Yujie has already gone into it and she is in the yard now. Second Miss, please!” Xiao Xuanzi’s smiling face was like a blossoming flower, and he stretched his fingers behind him.

Qin Wanru stepped helplessly. When she went in the yard, she saw that Yujie did stand in the yard, but she was blocked by a guard in front of her, and the sword in his hand was across in front of Yujie.

“Let her go!” Qin Wanru said with a bit anger.

The courtyard door was closed. Xiao Xuanzi took off the handkerchief on his face and waved his hands. The sword in the guard’s hand fell, and Yujie hurried to Qin Wanru’s side, and said anxiously, “Miss!”

She was thinking about answering the words of her Miss, but she was pulled into this place by someone and before she was to talk, a sword reached her neck. She was so scared that she did not dare to move. When she saw it was Xiao Xuanzi now, she relieved!

"Don't be anxious, Yujie. This is to hide ourselves from others' eyes!" Xiao Xuanzi smiled and came over to apologize to her. Yujie gave him a stern glance and said nothing.

"Where's your master?" Qin Wanru asked, looking at the empty courtyard.

"My master is waiting for you upstairs. Second Miss, please quickly go up!" Xiao Xuanzi reached out his hands and pointed at the attic over his head.

There was light in the attic, and only one figure could be seen. Qin Wanru sighed helplessly and turned to walk in the room.

Yujie wanted to keep up with her movements, but was pulled by Xiao Xuanzi. "Yujie, please enjoy the scenery downstairs. The attic is where our masters appreciate the scenery, and we can't be insurgents!"

"Yujie, you stay downstairs!" Qin Wanru said slowly after setting her pace.

Needless to say this was the meaning of Chu Liuchen.

"Yes, Miss!" Although Yujie was unwilling, she had to stay, and gave Xiao Xuanzi a stern glance, shaking her hand fiercely to shake away the hands of Xiao Xuanzi. She stood under the wall on the one side of the courtyard alone. "Who wants to appreciate the night view, you do it if you want!"

Looking at Qin Wanru in front, who stepped into the room one step by one step, Xiao Xuanzi smiled with satisfaction. He looked at Yujie who was still very angry, running over and pointing at the wing next to them. "Do you want to go there to sit for a while? There are prepared pastries brought from the palace."

The pastries from the palace? Yujie was moved by him.

Seeing that Yujie was hesitating, Xiao Xuanzi followed her at once and said, "They were prepared by the imperial chef in the palace for today. Even if you want to eat them in the past, you may not have them!"

Even the people in the palace might not necessarily eat them, which could indicate that they were good things. Yujie felt that she was hungry. She ate a few in the mansion before, but it was only a little bit!

But even so, she didn't intend to forgive Xiao Xuanzi. She gave him a stern glance, turned and strode to the compartment. She was hungry now, so she wanted to eat these pastries first...

Qin Wanru stepped up the stairs step by step, turned a bend, and went up to the attic on the second floor.

There was a light in the attic, and there was a table next to the window with many dishes. The dishes were very hot, so it should be cooked just now and delivered on the table.

At this time, Chu Liuchen had sat back to the chair and reached out his hands to pick up the cup in front of him. He took a sip and slowly turned his head. His handsome face had a flush that never appeared in the past. He made people more and more feel that he was like a jade and no one was paralleled with him. Such a Chu Liuchen even made people feel amazing.

Handsome and flawless, unparalleled in the world.

Qin Wanru had to admire Chu Liuchen's face, which was so beautiful that women would be ashamed of their faces.

Such an appearance lacked certain beauty because of his pale face in the past. But now it would be a little more enchanting than before.

"Come, sit down!" Chu Liuchen reached out his hands and pointed at the chair opposite him.

There was a table full of dishes with two chairs. Looking from the window, it was an excellent place.

Qin Wanru walked here. After sitting down, she immediately swallowed a drool secretly in front of a plate of sweet pastries. She wasn't full actually. Before when she was in Qin's Mansion, Qi Tianyu and Qin Yuru sat there. She observed them carefully without eating much.

The thing was too weird so she lost her mind about eating. At this time, she became hungry because of the smell of the dishes in front of her.

Her stomach not only felt hungry but also made a sound.

Hearing the sound besides her ears, Qin Wanru's face was stunned first, then flushed, and then she looked at Chu Liuchen in shame, not even knowing how to react.

Even though she was reborn again, she had never encountered such an embarrassing moment. As a Miss of aristocratic family, she was so hungry that her stomach made a sound in front of Chu Liuchen. What situation it was.

Chu Liuchen was also stunned. He raised his handsome eyes and looked at Qin Wanru. No matter how intelligent he was, he could not expect such a scene. Later, when he saw Qin Wanru's ashamed eyes, he suddenly laughed...

Qin Wanru tried hard to keep herself calm and wanted to make her look normal, but when she saw Chu Liuchen's overly handsome face with smile, her face was flushed like blood. And what made her feel more ashamed was that her stomach made a sound again!

It even made a sound again...

Chapter 377 Search Someone Strangely at Night

Chu Liuchen finally stopped laughing when Qin Wanru looked unbearably ashamed and looked at Qin Wanru with interest. His handsome face showed a teenager's tiredness and less usual elegance and calmness. He looked very real, as if coming out from an ink and wash painting.

"Since you're hungry, why don't you eat some?" He looked up and smiled at Qin Wanru.

Since Qin Wanru had lost her face, she felt that she didn't need to pretend to be elegant. She picked up a piece of pastry with chopsticks indignantly and ate without raising her head.

The pastry was very savory and glutinous, and just melted in her mouth. She found the flavor a little familiar, and it was her favorite.

Looking at the pastry in front of her in astonishment, she could be sure that she had never eaten it. However, both its appearance and flavor seemed to be familiar, as if there was such flavor at the bottom of her memory.

She took another bite and savored it with a hint of hesitation across her watery eyes. Had she eaten it in the last life? In the last life, she had visited the palace, but why couldn't she remember it?

"What's wrong? It tastes bad?" Chu Liuchen raised his eyebrows and said. He held back his laughter, looking as gentle as jade under the light.

"It tastes... pretty good!" Qin Wanru said and raised her bright eyes to look at Chu Liuchen's face with hesitation. Her long black eyelashes fluttered above her watery eyes, making her look like an ignorant fawn.

"It should taste good. I specially ordered the imperial kitchen to make them!" Chu Liuchen said lazily.

"Your Highness, you also like this flavor?" Qin Wanru raised her eyes curiously and asked.

"I don't like this sweet and greasy flavor!" Chu Liuchen sneered and said with displeasure.

"Thanks a lot, Your Highness!" Qin Wanru expressed her gratitude consciously.

"Since you like this flavor, just eat more. It is not easy for me to bring these pastries out of the palace. But what's going on with your Qin's Mansion? They didn't offer you a fine dinner on the eve of the Spring Festival?" Chu Liuchen looked at Qin Wanru with disdain and said, while stretching out his hand leisurely and picking up a piece of the pastries Qin Wanru had just eaten. He frowned and said after tasting it, "It's too sweet!"

Since he disliked it so much, why did he eat it? Qin Wanru speechlessly watched Chu Liuchen elegantly eat the pastry mouthful by mouthful and then take another piece.

"Your Highness, if you don't like it, you don't have to eat it!" Glancing at the plate where there were only a few pieces of pastries left, Qin Wanru decided to be honest. She hadn't finished one piece yet, while he had finished his pastry.

"I'm hungry!" Chu Liuchen took it for granted, reached out to point at the plate in front of Qin Wanru and said, "I want to eat this!"

Only the two of them were upstairs. Xiao Xuanzi was not around. Chu Liuchen looked straight at Qin Wanru with his pretty eyes, waiting for her to pick up the pastry for him.

Glancing at the plate of pastries in front of her, Qin Wanru stood up helplessly, picked up the pastries in front of her and placed them in front of Chu Liuchen.

Chu Liuchen looked really hungry, even hungrier than Qin Wanru, whose stomach had growled a moment ago. She thought that it was actually very pleasing to watch a teenager, who was as pretty as a painting, eat, especially when seeing him behave so elegantly.

"Your Highness, didn't you have enough?" Even so, Qin Wanru asked in amazement.

"I didn't!" Chu Liuchen nodded and said.

"The dishes on the palace banquet are not delicious?" Qin Wanru asked in puzzlement. Would the dishes made by the imperial kitchen be not delicious? The answer was certainly no. She had tasted it, and found that it was much more delicious than those made by the old maid who had just begun to work in her mansion.

"I don't like to have dinner with them!" Chu Liuchen casually said, put down the chopsticks in his hand leisurely, and knocked on the table a few times with his long and angular fingers.

"Your Highness, you don't like to have dinner in the palace?" Qin Wanru became increasingly curious.

"It's boring!" Chu Liuchen answered her unexpectedly. He seemed to be in a good mood, raised his narrow and long eyes and looked at Qin Wanru, "You thought it very comfortable for me to have dinner in the palace?"

He was a deposed crown prince in poor health. Although the Empress Dowager favored him and the emperor seemingly treated him equally, could he really live well?

There were numerous and various people in the palace. As a sick and weak child without parents, he must have been disdained a lot and heard lots of gossip up to now!

How could he really treat his relatives in the palace as his family members? He, who had no parents like her, must feel as helpless as her, or even more uncomfortable than her.

The worst situation for her was being treated coldly in the General's Mansion. Moreover, Qin Huaiyong had no other child except for Qin Yuru. But the emperor was different. The emperor had robbed him of the throne, and pretended to be kind to Chu Liuchen!

No one knew what the emperor thought in private!

The imperial power had always been alluring, and those, who failed to win the throne, mostly lost their lives. Chu Liuchen had survived, but it was probably related to his poor health.

If he was really healthy, he might not be able to survive.

It was so easy to kill a baby in his infancy, even with the protection of the Empress Dowager!

His illness was the cause as well as the effect!

Qin Wanru inexplicably felt a trace of pity in her heart. Chu Liuchen seemingly lived a sumptuous life, but in fact he must have always been cautious like walking on thin ice!

Such a pretty teenager, who looked like walking out of a painting, was actually unhappy, or even felt unsafe like her who also had no parents.

She reached out to push the dishes in front of her towards Chu Liuchen. She had seen clearly that Chu Liuchen liked these dishes.

Nevertheless, he had just picked up them twice.

"What's wrong? You want to have dinner with me?" Chu Liuchen lazily watched Qin Wanru push the dishes with an increasingly casual smile.

"Your Highness, if you are hungry, you should have more of them!" Qin Wanru sighed helplessly.

"Since you want to have dinner with me so much, I can allow you to have dinner with me from the next Spring Festival!" Chu Liuchen raised his eyebrows and smiled.

Qin Wanru decided to drop the idea. He was not a pitiful deposed crown prince, but was going to be an emperor holding the dynasty's fate in his hands in the future. She should feel pity for herself rather than for him.

"Your Highness, when are you returning to the palace?"

"I'm going to stay up late!" Chu Liuchen said coldly with his face darkening. He seemed to be displeased again?

"Your Highness, shouldn't you return to the palace and stay up late with the Empress Dowager?" Qin Wanru asked cautiously for fear that annoying the Prince again.

"Are you unwilling to stay up late with me?" Chu Liuchen squinted at her and asked.

"I don't dare. But I've been out for a long time, fearing that my grandma and mother might be worried!" Qin Wanru said in an increasingly cautious way.

Qin Yuru would inevitably look for her when finding that she had got lost. If she continued staying outside, it would be terrible.

"What are you afraid of? I will send you back!" Chu Liuchen casually said, stood up and walked to the window. The gauze curtain in front of the window fell down, but they could see the scene outside the window.

The fine gauze enabled them to see the outside at a glance, especially when it was brilliantly lighted outside.

"Come here!" Chu Liuchen said to Qin Wanru.

Qin Wanru stood up, walked to the window, and looked at the night scene outside. Under the clear light of night, people were passing to and fro, looking very lively. Despite the distance, they could still feel the liveliness in the street.

"Look, over there!" Chu Liuchen reached out to pull Qin Wanru towards him, pointed at somewhere and said.

Qin Wanru staggered and bumped into Chu Liuchen. As soon as she stood still, she was attracted by the scene below. With her long eyelashes fluttering, she asked suddenly, "What are they looking for?"

In the middle of the street, there were several people, who looked different from those around them, seemingly looking for something. Despite their different clothes, all of them were young men. Some of them stood in the porch of a store, some were in the crowd, and some went with the crowd.

If it weren't for Qin Wanru's clear view due to her standing on a high place at the moment, she could never distinguish them.

The last one of these people stood in front of the bookstore where Qin Wanru had walked out before. There seemed to be several people standing in the darkness there. When a Miss passed by with a maid, a person came out of the bookstore, stepped forward to stop them, and then stepped aside.

After a while, another Miss and her maid were stopped.

On the night of the eve of the Spring Festival, many young Misses hung out with their maids. Although Qin Wanru couldn't recognize them from the back, she still felt keenly that all the Misses and their maids, who were stopped, were not high and still looked young.

"Looking for you! Zhuozhuo, what did you do to piss them off?" Chu Liuchen casually said.

Qin Wanru was so shocked that she didn't even notice that Chu Liuchen had put his hand on her shoulder and called her by her childhood name only used by her grandma.

"Looking for me... Why?" Qin Wanru said in horror with sudden sweat on her head. If she kept hiding at the entrance of that alley, she might have been found by them.

Although she had expected that the shopkeeper would send someone to find her, she did not expect that he would send so many people to do that. What was the meaning behind the calligraphy?

"What did you do?" Chu Liuchen asked leisurely, touching her black hair with his slender fingers after patting on her skinny shoulder. He felt that she and his fat cat were so alike, and it was so comfortable to touch her hair!

He slightly closed his pretty eyes, feeling at ease.

"I saw a sheet of excellent calligraphy on the stage over there, so I wanted to inquire about it. I also told the shopkeeper that I had a sheet of calligraphy and wanted to sell it. The shopkeeper was very interested, and said that it was their boss' favorite. After that, he didn't say anything, and I left. I didn't expect that he would look for me!" Qin Wanru said with tremor.

"Do you think that your life is too calm in the capital and want to see what the imperial family can do?" Chu Liuchen squinted at her playfully and patted her head. His voice was lazy and gentle, but concealed frightening dignity and gloom!

"What do you mean?" Qin Wanru suddenly felt a beat in her heart, withdrew her gaze, clenched her fists hard at the bottom of her sleeves and looked up at Chu Liuchen, wondering if she understood what he meant...

Chapter 378 Since the Person Dared to Stretch out His Claws, I'll Chop Them!

"They must be sent by someone powerful!" Chu Liuchen watched the few people searching for Qin Wanru in the crowd with interest.

They seemed to be casual, but actually cooperated well. When something happened, there was an immediate response. An experienced team like them must be sent by someone powerful!

Unexpectedly he found some clues here, which was really a surprise.

"Xiao Xuanzi!" Chu Liuchen said to someone downstairs through the window.

Although his voice was not high, Xiao Xuanzi standing downstairs heard it immediately, hurried upstairs, and said respectfully to Chu Liuchen, "Master!"

"Go, find something for them to do!" Chu Liuchen pointed to the downstairs with his chin.

Xiao Xuanzi glanced at the direction he was pointing at, also saw those people, and instantly understood, "Master, I'll go to arrange it now!"

"You must not spare the shopkeeper's life!" Chu Liuchen said with a smile.

"I understand!" Xiao Xuanzi nodded, glanced at Qin Wanru with a smile, turned and went downstairs again. He had already asked Yujie downstairs, and knew that Qin Wanru had been to a bookstore before.

That bookshop happened to be the one his master had been investigating recently. Unexpectedly they did something and were discovered by his master so soon.

"What is Xiao Xuanzi going to do?" Qin Wanru watched Xiao Xuanzi go downstairs quickly and asked in amazement.

"Since the shopkeeper has seen you and talked to you, I shouldn't spare his life." Chu Liuchen smiled slightly and said lazily.

His words made Qin Wanru feel horrified. Of course, she knew that it was the best solution. Although she didn't know for whom the shopkeeper worked, it was certain that he had kept an eye on her. It was her wrong speculation that caused such a result. The best solution was definitely to get rid of the shopkeeper.

She bit her lip, moved her fingers slightly, but didn't say anything to stop him.

She wouldn't be soft-hearted. If the shopkeeper stayed alive, she was very likely to be seen by him and even be killed, and the disaster might be brought on her entire family.

"Thank you, Your Highness!" She bit her lip, and heard herself whisper.

"Since you work for me, I would definitely not allow anyone to bully you! Since the person dared to stretch out his claws, I'll chop them!" Chu Liuchen said unhurriedly, with endless bloodthirsty coldness in his words.

Qin Wanru nodded. She would not feel pity for the innocent shopkeeper. If she were an ordinary Miss who just went inside to inquire about the calligraphy, she would probably have been killed this time. Moreover, if they failed to get the calligraphy from her, they might even exterminate her entire family.

It was definitely not the first time for them, who would rather kill one thousand innocent people than let go of one target, to do that.

They just did that in a ruthless manner and hid what they had done from everyone else!

"Aren't you afraid?" Chu Liuchen raised his eyebrows, seeming to be astonished by her calmness.

"If I were afraid, will they spare me?" Qin Wanru shook her head, with few ripples in her calm and charming eyes. The surge at the moment had receded. She had decided to no longer be soft-hearted

after being reborn. If she couldn't even protect herself and those whom she cared about, being soft-hearted was meaningless.

"Of course they won't spare you. You have probably stirred up something serious. The one who knows it should not spare your life." Chu Liuchen suddenly chuckled meaningfully.

"Your Highness, would you spare my life?" Qin Wanru raised her eyes and looked at Chu Liuchen. Her watery eyes reflected Chu Liuchen's handsome figure, but his figure seemed to be more furious and cruel than usual with his fists clenched fiercely on both sides. Only she knew that she was definitely not peaceful at this time!

"I will definitely not spare someone else's life, but regarding you..." No one knew when Chu Liuchen touched Qin Wanru's slender neck with his hand. As a teenager, his hand was not big actually, but it was a lot bigger compared with Qin Wanru's slender neck. His hand was placed on Qin Wanru's neck. She could even feel the thick darkness and bloodthirsty coldness in Chu Liuchen's eyes.

"You work for me. How could I kill you!"

He softly touched Qin Wanru's neck with his hand, and his smile became gentle, as if she had mistaken the bloodthirsty coldness and brutality in his eyes.

He moved his hand up again, stopped at the top of her hair, rubbed it gently and reminded her, "Zhuzhuo, look outside!"

Qin Wanru turned around to look outside, and her blood slowly returned to her heart from all over. Even so, she felt relieved and feeble due to her nervousness a moment ago. Chu Liuchen moved his hand from the top of her hair to her shoulder and gently supported her. He did that so elegantly, with no worldly temperament.

Qin Wanru shifted her attention out of the window. There was chaos outside the window. Someone was shouting, "Someone's been killed!"

"There are assassins!"

"Help!" ...

There suddenly came some screams, and the pedestrians on the street were scared and ran in chaos. Some people rushed to the place where the sounds came out. They were those who had searched for Qin Wanru in the crowd.

The sounds happened to come from the store.

Something happened in the store?

Biting her lip, Qin Wanru heard her calm voice, "Has that shopkeeper been killed?"

"Yes!" Chu Liuchen said affirmatively, with a trace of gorgeous coldness in his light smile, like an unsheathed blade scratching the sharpest part of someone else lightly and sharply, "Would you like to have a look?"

"Can I?" Qin Wanru turned around and asked.

"Definitely not. If you go downstairs now, someone will probably recognize you. After all, the shopkeeper isn't the only person who has seen you, right?"

Chu Liuchen laughed, seemingly amused by Qin Wanru's innocence!

On hearing his words, Qin Wanru fell silent and remembered that she had actually been seen by more than a shop assistant in the store. She suddenly felt a beat in her heart. "Is that shop assistant..."

"It's unnecessary to keep the place, so I also destroy it!" Chu Liuchen said with an increasingly gentle smile and his gaze falling on the street downstairs.

Qin Wanru turned around again, only to find that the store had caught fire with the flare soaring into the sky. Some people were calling for help, some were fighting the fire, and some were running away. They were in a mess.

There was more than one dead person. Qin Wanru's good eyesight enabled her to see that some of those, who had searched for her, were dead on the spot. It was the first time that she had seen people die in front of her since she was reborn, and they died because of her.

Her cold fingers shivered slightly, and she suddenly felt like she had touched something warm and soft. She lowered her head subconsciously, only to see that Chu Liuchen was holding her hand.

His hand was warm this time. He held her cold little hand and exerted a little strength.

"Are you afraid?" Chu Liuchen suddenly asked with a faint smile.

"No!" Qin Wanru raised her head, shook her head decisively and stared directly at Chu Liuchen's face which was so pretty that it seemingly belonged to a celestial teenager coming out of an ink and wash landscape painting. His cold eyes contained chill and rage!

It was a life-and-death situation where either they or she would be killed. She didn't think that they would be kind enough to spare her life.

If it weren't for Chu Liuchen's appearance, she would have got into trouble or even been dragged into a desperate abyss.

"That's good. Sit down. I want to tell you something!" Chu Liuchen laughed, took her hand and walked to the table. They sat down again.

"Your Highness, what do you want to tell me?" Qin Wanru asked.

"Mingqiu Nun has reached the capital!" Chu Liuchen looked at her with a smile.

"Where is she?" Qin Wanru was so excited that she instantly intended to get up with the support of the table and stared straight at Chu Liuchen with joy in her eyes. She estimated that it was time for Mingqiu Nun to reach the capital. However, she hadn't got any message from Mingqiu Nun until now, so she had intended to find a chance to ask Chu Liuchen about it.

"She has entered the palace to treat my grandma, and my grandma was very satisfied with her!" Chu Liuchen said meaningfully.

Qin Wanru froze, blinked her watery eyes and asked after hesitating, "Mingqiu Nun lives in the palace now?"

"Temporarily!" Chu Liuchen said.

"Uh... how can I meet Mingqiu Nun?" Qin Wanru said helplessly. The imperial palace was not a place which she could visit as she wanted.

Although the Empress Dowager had allowed her to enter the palace at any time and she had the pass given by Chu Liuchen, Qin Wanru did not dare to act rashly.

"In the next few days, I will take Mingqiu Nun with me when I return to my mansion. Mingqiu Nun has excellent medical skills indeed. I've got much better!"

Chu Liuchen squinted at her, picked up the wine pot on the table, filled his glass, and took a sip slowly.

"Considering Your Highness' health condition, you should drink less!" Qin Wanru looked at Chu Liuchen with disapproval.

"I'm in good health!" Chu Liuchen said casually, looking at her with a meaningful smile.

His words seemed to be true, and Qin Wanru felt like she had almost been convinced.

"Your Highness, you had better take care of yourself. Even if Mingqiu Nun is here, she must tell you the same thing!" Qin Wanru said implicitly. She was persuading Chu Liuchen sincerely. Chu Liuchen had saved her, so she should thank Chu Liuchen for that.

"You want to instruct me?" Chu Liuchen said with an increasingly gentle smile on his handsome face. Qin Wanru even thought that his smile could be considered gentle.

"I don't dare!"

"In fact, it is not impossible!" Chu Liuchen tapped the table gently with his finger, "You are going to marry into my Prince Chen's Mansion anyway, so it's justifiable for you to instruct me in advance!"

He said that so rightly that Qin Wanru blushed immediately. What did instructing him in advance mean? What was more, it was just a measure of expediency for her to marry into Prince Chen's Mansion. By the time Prince Chen fell in love with someone else, she would back out. It was unnecessary for her to instruct him!

"Your Highness, I don't dare!" She said again.

Chu Liuchen ignored her words, put down his wine glass, took a thick stack of things out of his arms, pulled Qin Wanru's hand, placed them in her palm, and then reached out to help her grab them and said with a slight and mild smile, "Zhuozhuo, I've prepared a new year gift for you. Have you prepared anything for me?"

Chapter 379 This Is My Betrothal Gift

"Gift?" Qin Wanru raised her eyes suspiciously, stared at Chu Liuchen in astonishment with her bright watery eyes, tried to move her hand, but found that she could not move at all.

“Of course you should give me a gift, because I gave you a red packet for the New Year!” Chu Liuchen looked Qin Wanru up and down.

He made Qin Wanru feel a little nervous for no reason. She subconsciously widened her eyes and nervously stared at Chu Liuchen with her watery eyes.

Her vigilant look pleased Chu Liuchen. He reached out to stir Qin Wanru’s earring, and an earring fell into his hand. He then moved his hand away from Qin Wanru’s hand and put it down, “You can give me this earring as the gift!”

Qin Wanru withdrew her hand and looked at Chu Liuchen, speechless.

“Look at my red packet!” Chu Liuchen said, showing some complacency of a young man.

When Qin Wanru lowered her head, spread her palm and found a big red packet in her palm, she didn’t know what to say.

She pinched the red packet and found that it was thick. As she opened the red packet, she saw that it was filled with a stack of notes. At the top was a note of ten liang of silver, followed by notes of twenty liang of silver, fifty liang of silver and one-hundred liang of silver. The stack of notes amounted to about ten thousand liang of silver!

It was the first time that Qin Wanru had seen so many notes. She retracted her head in astonishment.

“Your Highness?” Qin Wanru bit her lip and blinked her eyes, wondering what he meant. There were too many notes in the red packet!

Chu Liuchen did not seem to be surprised by her shock. He raised his eyebrows and said with a light smile, “This is a red packet as well as the betrothal gift from me. You are going to marry me anyway, so I won’t allow you to live a miserable life during the Spring Festival!”

“Uh... I shouldn’t accept them! There are too many notes!” Qin Wanru bit her lip, reached out to remove the note of ten liang of silver on the top and pushed the rest to Chu Liuchen, “Your Highness, thank you for your red packet!”

“Why... You don’t like it?” Chu Liuchen laughed with meaningful eyes. “Could it be possible that you are rejecting the betrothal gift from me?”

The so-called betrothal gift meant what Qin Wanru had promised before. She could reject the red packet, but seemingly had no reason to reject the betrothal gift.

But at the moment, this statement was really hard to accept. The so-called betrothal gift should be carried into her mansion in front of everyone rather than be given to her in private.

However, this Prince Chen made it right and proper.

“Your Highness, there are too many notes...” Qin Wanru said helplessly.

Even if it was the betrothal gift, it usually included notes of several thousands of liang of silver. No one would give so many notes at once.

“Since you are going to marry me, you certainly deserve it.” Chu Liuchen stroked his sleeves elegantly and suddenly turned his eyes, “Can it be possible that you look down on my betrothal gift!”

Did she dare to look down on it? Qin Wanru was extremely speechless. This Prince was so considerate that he actually did everything required by his marriage with her although she was just a shield for him.

Chu Liuchen saw Qin Wanru accept the notes, and his smile became increasingly bright. When he raised his hand and was about to speak, he suddenly heard someone coming upstairs in a hurry. They looked towards the stairs together.

It was Xiao Xuanzi who came upstairs. Upon his arrival, he bowed to Chu Liuchen, and then came over and whispered in Chu Liuchen’s ears. Chu Liuchen’s eyes instantly became deeper.

“Where is he?”

“He’s downstairs. Master, what do you think of it?” Xiao Xuanzi said uncertainly.

“Since he has guessed that I’m here, let him come upstairs!” Chu Liuchen said with an elegant smile, as if what he heard at the moment was in accordance with his expectation.

“Where should the Second Miss go?” Xiao Xuanzi looked at Qin Wanru anxiously. There was no other room upstairs and only one stairway down. However, the person was downstairs at the moment. It was too late for Qin Wanru to go downstairs even if she wanted to do that.

“She’ll stay upstairs! Bring my cloak upstairs!” Chu Liuchen said.

“Okay, I’ll go and pick it up immediately!” Xiao Xuanzi replied hurriedly.

He went downstairs in a hurry, and soon came up with a cloak made of white fox fur and respectfully presented it to Chu Liuchen. The gorgeous cloak was edged with a circle of light gray fur which added some different elegance to the cloak which looked extremely resplendent. Qin Wanru could tell that it was valuable at first glance.

Chu Liuchen took it, walked up to Qin Wanru, pulled her up, and covered her with the cloak. The cloak was large, while Qin Wanru was small. So she was covered in the cloak. Wrapped in smooth and soft fox fur, she felt extremely comfortable.

After that, Qin Wanru felt that her slender waist was held him. After taking a few steps under his guidance, she sat down and moved slightly. She didn’t know where she was sitting, but only felt something soft under her thighs. It was not a chair.

Suddenly there came Chu Liuchen’s soft voice. She felt that she was held tightly with his hands around her slender waist, “Don’t move. Someone’s coming!”

His words scared Qin Wanru and made her fall silent immediately. Although she couldn’t see anything in his cloak, she still felt her face was burning and the blood all over rushed to her cheeks. She just buried herself in the fox fur without moving.

Sensing that Qin Wanru seemed to be pretending to be dead, Chu Liuchen smiled joyfully, reached out to lean her head against his shoulder, put his hand around her waist, and nodded at Xiao Xuanzi beside.

Xiao Xuanzi went downstairs, and brought a young eunuch here this time. Seeing Chu Liuchen sitting there and holding a lady, who appeared to be wrapped firmly, in his hands, the eunuch immediately froze.

The cloak was large, but he could still see the top of the lady's head. It was a petite lady wrapped and held in Chu Liuchen's arms.

Chu Liuchen was still a teenager who hadn't grown into an adult. Being able to be held in his arms and lean on his shoulder, it must be a petite lady.

Why would Chu Liuchen hold a lady? Who... who was this lady? It was said that Prince Chen didn't like spending time with ladies. The palace maids sent to his mansion by the Empress Dowager and the Empress were even killed. In this case, who was this lady he held firmly and protected?

The young eunuch forgot his courtesy in amazement, and looked at Chu Liuchen in front of him in a trance. He had imagined countless scenes where he met Prince Chen, but had never thought of this.

This was so shocking, almost as shocking as the assassination happening today...

"Xiqi, does my uncle send you to tell me something?" Chu Liuchen casually reached out to fix Qin Wanru's messy hair wrapped in the cloak and asked with gentle eyes, as if he didn't know no one could calm down at the sight of the current scene.

"I pay you my respects, Your Highness!" Xiqi finally returned to himself, hurriedly suppressed the shock in his heart and stepped forward to bow to Chu Liuchen.

Chu Liuchen squinted and said with a bit of coldness in his eyes, "Uncle is not studying the Buddhist doctrine on the mountain. Has he come downhill?"

"Your Highness, my master came downhill on a whim on the eve of the Spring Festival. Unexpectedly we were assassinated. Hearing that Your Highness is here, my master specially sent me to ask for help!"

"Ask for help?" Chu Liuchen casually said, without being surprised by the fact that his whereabouts was discovered.

"My master had just walked into a bookstore and wanted to find some books. Unexpectedly, some strangers suddenly rushed out and intended to assassinate my master. My master hid in the bookstore to dodge them, but the bookstore caught fire. My master escaped after being injured. Seeing the guards standing at the door of this store, he knew that Your Highness is here."

"Does uncle want to come in for a rest?" Chu Liuchen asked unhurriedly.

Uncle? Who was his uncle? Qin Wanru was wrapped in Chu Liuchen's arms, but her brain was running rapidly. She couldn't remember who the so-called uncle was. So she opened her bright watery eyes in the dark and listened to them quietly.

"My master doesn't dare to disturb Your Highness. He is afraid that he cannot afford to disturb you. So he just wants to borrow two guards to send us back."

Xiqi said with respect, while involuntarily keeping glancing at Qin Wanru. Who was the lady wrapped inexplicably? Why had he never heard of her? If the affair between the lady and Chu Liuchen was publicized, it would shock the government and the public.

Could his master take advantage of this?

Because of his focus on Qin Wanru, the utterances he had prepared seemed a bit farfetched!

“Disturb me?” Chu Liuchen smiled suddenly with dim sparkle in his eyes, “I’ve brought only two guards. I can lend them to uncle, but if something happens to me...”

Xiqi was shocked, dare not look at Qin Wanru again, and said in a hurry, “Your Highness, rest assured. My master is in the yard beside. The two guards just need to pay more attention to the yard where my master is, and don’t need to go there and guard my master. This matter has already been reported to the palace, and they would send guards here a moment later!”

If something happened to Prince Chen, Xiqi’s master couldn’t bear the responsibility, let alone Xiqi.

He heard that after Prince Chen was assassinated, several Princes were all injured. Perhaps no one would believe that it was the truth. They just faked the accidents for fear of taking responsibility. However, even if the accidents were faked, the several Princes were badly injured and had to live in the Imperial Institute of Medicine.

It could be seen that no one dared to bear the responsibility, and no one could bear the responsibility!

“In this case, it’s no problem. You can go back and tell your master that I will order the two guards to take care of him and never allow him to be injured again. Regarding what you saw today...” Chu Liuchen reached out to touch Qin Wanru’s head gently again, and then reached into the cloak and pulled out a hand which was thin, white and tender...

“Your Highness, rest assured. I didn’t see anything at all!” Xiqi didn’t dare to look at him again, lowered his head hurriedly and looked down at the ground in front of him with his face turning pale due to nervousness.

This Prince Chen was moody. Others might not take it seriously. But if this Prince Chen wanted to kill him, it was no big deal. Although he served his master as an intimate servant, it made no difference.

Xiqi, who had served his master for more than ten years, was incomparable with general eunuchs, so he knew what to say at this moment.

“Go back! Take care of uncle. I’ll talk about the Buddhist doctrine with him when visiting him next time!” Chu Liuchen waved slowly and said.

“Okay, okay, okay, I got it!” Xiqi was covered with sweat and felt like surviving from a disaster. He dared not look at Chu Liuchen again and hurried downstairs.

The Buddhist doctrine? Qin Wanru, who was wrapped in the cloak, looked up in astonishment. “Bang”, she felt a blow on her head and everything went black...

Chapter 380 A Prince Who Liked Studying Buddhism

"Ah," the bitter cry came from behind. It was a lady's voice which was very light and gentle. Even if Xiqi didn't see anyone, he could tell that it must be a gorgeous lady.

No matter how curious Xiqi was, he didn't dare to look back and quickened his pace, for fear that his slow pace would annoy Chu Liuchen. His master had kept telling him not to mess with Chu Liuchen. His master had no choice this time, otherwise his master would not make use of Chu Liuchen as a shield.

Qin Wanru touched her head and burst into tears in pain. She didn't know what hard stuff she had bumped her head on so that she could see nothing but a pall of darkness at the moment.

She felt the cloak on her head was lifted up, and saw Chu Liuchen cover his chin with his long and white hand and his long and pretty eyes become gloomy.

Qin Wanru immediately realized what had happened and hurriedly reached out to rub her hair with a flattering smile.

"Your Highness, who is your uncle?"

She felt another hand fell on the top of her hair and gently rubbed her head. He then looked at her with disgust and said, "Ask Xiao Xuanzi to take you away from the back door."

As he said, he removed the other hand from his chin and held Qin Wanru's slim waist. Feeling her waist touched by a warm hand, Qin Wanru immediately came to her senses and stood up hurriedly, and the cloak slipped aside.

"Second Miss, please follow me!" Xiao Xuanzi came over from the stairs, bowed his head and said.

"Put on this cloak. Don't expose yourself!" Chu Liuchen stood up and put his cloak on Qin Wanru. This time he didn't cover Qin Wanru with it casually, but made a knot with the two straps and covered her head with the hood. From the outside, others couldn't see anything but a vague figure of a lady.

Qin Wanru knew that the guards from the palace would inevitably come over to inquire for a while. If she stayed here, it was easy to expose herself, so it was extremely inappropriate.

She followed Xiao Xuanzi downstairs. Yujie had been waiting at the entrance of the stairs. She was also draped in a gray cloak which completely covered her clothes and face.

An ordinary carriage was stopped at the back door. Xiao Xuanzi arranged for them to get in the carriage. After that, the carriage turned all the way out to another bustling street intersection, and then turned out of the street, went through a narrow alley and turned to a main street. After turning several corners, it finally stopped in a quiet alley.

"Miss, please get out of the carriage," the coachman said in a low voice after the carriage stopped.

Yujie jumped out of the carriage, followed by Qin Wanru.

"Miss, please leave the cloaks." The coachman reminded them. After Yujie put their cloaks back on the carriage, the coachman pointed at the main street in front of them and said, "After getting out of here and walking a distance, you can see the main street where the bookstore which has caught fire is!"

This was the way back to the main street!

Qin Wanru nodded, and Yujie stepped aside. The carriage moved forward again.

Qin Wanru led Yujie out of the alley and stood on the street. There were still numerous people on this street. Nevertheless, they didn't surge forward, but discussed something in groups of three and four. Qin Wanru walked over with Yujie and listened to their conversation. Hearing they talking about the bookstore which had caught fire a moment ago, Qin Wanru involuntarily stopped.

"Why is there assassin in that store? Will the shopkeeper of an ordinary bookstore be assassinated?"

"There is an aristocrat in the bookstore, and I heard it is a Prince."

"Really? Is the Prince alright? It will be a disaster if the Prince is seriously injured." Some people were very worried. If a member of the imperial family was seriously injured, those involved in it would get into great trouble.

"I don't know. I hope he's alright. It's no big deal that a small bookstore is burned down!" No one knew whether the talking person was appeasing himself or appeasing others.

Qin Wanru blinked her fluid eyes. She had actually figured out the identity of the Prince when she was upstairs.

He was Prince Cheng who liked studying Buddhism and was the younger brother of the current emperor!

It was said that Prince Cheng had liked studying Buddhism very much since he was a child and even had the idea of becoming a monk. If it weren't for being stopped by the Empress Dowager and the emperor, he would have done that.

He intended to be a monk due to his being keen on Buddhism rather than being frustrated by anything. Now he was not young, but had not got marry.

He and the current emperor were actually half brothers. Nevertheless, he had been raised by the Empress Dowager since his biological mother died in his childhood. Thus, the Empress Dowager liked him so much that she would not allow him to be a monk. Under her repeated pressure, Prince Cheng basically lived in those famous temples on mountains instead of his mansion.

He just went to visit the Empress Dowager when going downhill occasionally.

In Qin Wanru's impression, the prince was the most indifferent person, and even faded out of everyone's view. Everyone only thought that the sons of the emperor would fight for the throne, but didn't expect that the brother of the emperor had a great ambition but just covered it up with his usual performance.

In the last life, when Qin Wanru was cut in two at the waist, Prince Cheng was a master of Buddhism. Hearing that his elder brother was sick, he hurriedly entered the palace to take care of his elder brother.

Qin Wanru had spent much time in the palace in the last life, but had rarely met Prince Cheng. However, she had secretly seen something related to Prince Cheng and thus to know that Prince Cheng was not as indifferent as he seemed to be.

On that day, she passed an isolated palace. She couldn't remember what she went there for, but she seemingly went there for some business. There she saw two eunuchs secretly talking, and one gave something to the other. She was shocked beside.

One of the two eunuchs served Prince Cheng, and the other was the emperor's henchman. The eunuch serving Prince Cheng gave the emperor's henchman a package of stuff and asked him to put it in the emperor's meals. They seemingly mentioned Chu Liuchen, the crown prince at that time. But Qin Wanru was far away from them, and they talked intermittently.

Qin Wanru didn't hear them clearly. Nevertheless, if nothing was wrong with the package of stuff, why didn't they take it out and give it directly to the emperor? Seeing the two eunuchs' stealthy deeds, Qin Wanru didn't dare to move at the moment for fear of being discovered by them. If the two eunuchs found that she was hiding there, she would be killed...

The incident happening in the last life had caused her great confusion and panic at that time. Nevertheless, when she died in the last life, the emperor was still alright, and Prince Cheng was still a Prince who liked studying Buddhism and cared about brotherhood a lot.

Even though the royal family had always distrusted the brotherhood, they had no vigilance in front of such a Prince who set his mind on becoming a monk...

"Sister Wanru!" There came a voice. Qin Wanru looked back in astonishment, only to see Qi Tianyu standing behind her with a look of surprise.

Seeing her turn her head, he found it was really Qin Wanru and immediately smiled.

Was he really joyful to find her? She felt weird. Qin Wanru slightly frowned and looked at Qi Tianyu, feeling that there was something wrong she didn't know...

"Master, they've come!" Xiao Xuanzi went upstairs to report.

"Ask them to come here!" Chu Liuchen waved lazily and said.

Xiao Xuanzi nodded. After a while, there came the sounds of taking stairs, and a guard leader came upstairs. At the sight of Chu Liuchen, he stepped forward to bow and respectfully said, "I pay you my respects, Your Highness!"

"Forego formalities!" Chu Liuchen casually said, raised his face blushing due to drunkenness and closed his eyes. He could tell that the Prince was a little drunk.

"Your Highness, I'm ordered by the Emperor to investigate the incident of Prince Cheng's being assassinated!" The guard leader stood up straight and said.

"Is uncle alright?" Chu Liuchen reached out to touch his head and asked lazily.

"Prince Cheng is fine but just frightened!" The guard leader said and frowned secretly. If he failed to find out the truth, he couldn't report on his mission and it would be another disaster.

What had happened to the several princes had made everyone tense, for fear of another disturbance. Now the most indifferent and inactive Prince Cheng was assassinated. There must be someone plotting.

What did the person plot for? It was obvious. The guard leader was under great pressure!

"Since he's just frightened, it's nothing serious. I was terribly frightened too!" Chu Liuchen casually said, "Should I return to the palace or my mansion at this time?"

He asked so directly. The guard leader smiled bitterly and said tactfully, "Your Highness, the Empress Dowager and the emperor are worried about your safety, so please return to the palace!"

Such an incident happened, and Prince Chen got involved in the center of it. Even though everyone thought that Prince Chen got involved unluckily, the guard leader had to ask.

The guard leader was baffled. He really dared not inquire Prince Chen casually, but could only say something tactfully. It was most appropriate for the emperor to inquire Prince Chen by himself after they entered the palace. Regarding other things, he dared not ask too much.

After working in the palace for so long, the guard leader certainly knew the importance of Prince Chen. If something terrible happened to Prince Cheng and Prince Chen got involved in it, Prince Chen would be fine. However, if something terrible happened to Prince Chen and Prince Cheng got involved in it, it would be something serious. Should he feel lucky that it was Prince Cheng who was assassinated instead of Prince Chen with a higher status.

Up to now, the guard leader hadn't figured out why Prince Chen, who was extremely sick and weak, got involved in it, which made it harder for him to inquire.

"Uncle isn't returning to the palace with me?" Chu Liuchen smiled gently. His voice was mild, but exuded the dignity that could not be ignored.

The guard leader dared not refuse to answer.

"Prince Cheng will certainly enter the palace!"

"That's good. I accidentally thought of this house and wanted to enjoy the scenery here. I don't know when uncle moved to the yard beside mine and became my neighbor." Chu Liuchen stood up, raised his eyebrows and smiled lightly, with his face becoming increasingly gentle and elegant.

However, on hearing his words, with his face changing dramatically, the guard leader unconsciously hit his sword with his hand, making a clear sound of "clang".

Chu Liuchen looked towards the sword of the guard leader, and his face suddenly darkened.

Xiao Xuanzi came to kick the guard leader fiercely. The guard leader fell and rolled on the ground and screamed in fear, "Your Highness, it is a misunderstanding. I just encountered it accidentally and have no malicious intention!"