

## Medical Princess 641

### Chapter 641 The So-called Fetus Poison

After coming out of the Empress Dowager's mansion, Shao Wanru was led to Prince Chen's Mansion.

They entered through a side door of the imperial palace. After that, they were led by people from Prince Chen's Mansion to Chu Liuchen's yard. When they entered the room, Xiao Xuanzi stepped forward and saluted, "Fifth Miss!"

"How is Prince Chen going?" Shao Wanru frowned slightly and asked softly.

"You can go to have a look!" Xiao Xuanzi shrugged his head and said. He brought a brocade stool to the bed and then stepped aside.

Shao Wanru walked over and sat down on the brocade stool. She bit her lip in silence and looked at Chu Liuchen, who was lying in the quilt. His face and lips were as pale as usual as if there was no trace of blood and he was lying in the bed without breath, which made her feel suffocated.

Xiao Xuanzi silently left the inner room and closed the door for them.

Shao Wanru reached out her hand. She hesitated for a moment, but still put her finger under his nose to feel his breath.

The breath was very light, but he did have.

Then, she got her hand into the quilt and gently pulled his hand out. She put her hand on his pulse and closed her eyes to carefully feel his pulse.

In fact, his pulse was not very weak. At least, it made Shao Wanru feel that his pulse was much stronger than his breath. She inexplicably relaxed. She knew that he would not easily die in that way! A scourge would last thousands of years. How could a scourge like him die early?

When she thought about it, the whole thing seemed to be happening right in front of her eyes, so it seemed that everything had been planned early. In this case, it was even more impossible for Chu Liuchen to die easily.

"You are worried about me, aren't you?" Chu Liuchen's voice came into her ears.

Shao Wanru suddenly opened her eyes and looked at Chu Liuchen, who was lying in the bed. She didn't know when he had opened his beautiful eyes. He looked at Shao Wanru with a smile. He looked a little lazy as usual, but his face was too pale.

"You... you are indeed fine!" Shao Wanru bit her lip and said after a long while.

"How could I be fine? I spat out a mouthful of poisoned blood, so I am not well!" Chu Liuchen said lightly.

"Poisoned blood? You were poisoned?" Understanding the meaning of Chu Liuchen's words, Shao Wanru couldn't help narrowing her eyes.

"I have been poisoned at an early age. The so-called fetal poison can also be the real poison!" Chu Liuchen held Shao Wanru's hand and said softly.

Shao Wanru's hands couldn't help trembling. Everyone knew that Chu Liuchen had been born with the fetal poison. The so-called fetal poison might have been caused by the Empress's diet and other aspects to which she had not paid attention. It turned out the real poison instead of the fetal poison, but Shao Wanru was not surprised at this point.

She had felt Chu Liuchen's pulse several times, and she always felt that this symptom seemed to be seen in someone poisoned, but this kind of poison was not very obvious. She had never felt the pulse of the fetus poison before, so she thought that it might be the fetus poison. Since it was also called poison, the fetus poison might also have similar symptoms to common poisoning.

Now she finally understood that the so-called fetus poison was just to deceive the public. Actually, he was really poisoned!

"Are you afraid?" Chu Liuchen raised his beautiful eyes and looked at Shao Wanru.

Shao Wanru nodded first and then shook her head.

"Don't be afraid. Of course, I will protect you. I still have the ability to protect the person I want to protect!" Chu Liuchen smiled slightly.

"The savior... What's going on?" After hesitating for a moment, Shao Wanru thought of the scene in Huaguang Temple and could not help asking.

"Becoming my savior... Imperial Grandmother will think highly of you. No matter how partial your grandmother is, it will be fine as long as Imperial Grandmother likes you!" Chu Liuchen said with a smile. Even now his voice was a little hoarse, it still made people feel that he was as gentle as jade.

Shao Wanru pursed her lips and wanted to say something, but she didn't know what to say for a while. She felt inexplicably panicked, so she turned her head and subconsciously avoided those burning eyes. There was an uncontrollable feeling in her heart, which she couldn't tell. She only felt that she didn't know what to say in this situation.

Her long eyelashes fluttered twice, and there was a very strange feeling in her heart, which made it hard for her to say what she had prepared for the moment.

"Thank you, Prince!" She bit her lips again to suppress her throbbing heart and thanked him.

"It was just a piece of cake. Anyway, you are also my future princess. If someone bullies you, that will make me ashamed!" Chu Liuchen's handsome eyes were filled with a smile. He reached out to hold her hand and closed his eyes slightly. This time he did it seriously though starting it as a false thing.

He achieved many things at one stroke, including using this as an excuse to cure his chronic illness. If his illness continued, his body would not be able to support that longer. The timing was just right!

"Is there really someone... or those men in black are yours...?" Shao Wanru hesitated for a moment and asked.

"They are not mine!" Although Shao Wanru was hesitant, Chu Liuchen knew what she was asking. Of course, he had made some contribution to it, otherwise, he wouldn't have taken advantage of this opportunity.

"Who is that?" Shao Wanru asked.

"Whoever is okay!" Chu Liuchen's words became more and more casual. He raised his thin lips with a sweet and elegant smile. Even though he was sick, he still looked extremely elegant and handsome.

When Shao Wanru said this, she knew that she had made a slip of the tongue. This was not something that she could inquire about. Fortunately, Chu Liuchen did not say anything, so she was not that embarrassed.

"Prince, do I need to do something?" She tried hard to suppress the uncertainty in her heart, and her watery eyes slowly became clear again.

"You have to do nothing. You can go back later. Since I'm still not well, I won't keep you here!" Chu Liuchen smiled slightly, but he still held Shao Wanru's hand with no intention of letting her go.

"Then Prince, take good care of yourself!" Shao Wanru tried to pull her hand back, but being held tightly made her dare not to exert too much strength. It seemed that Chu Liuchen was not just acting now, because she had felt his pulse just now.

"Of course, I have to take good care of myself, but it's still early for you to go back now. Take a rest with me!" As Chu Liuchen said this, he exerted force in his hand to pull Shao Wanru. She fell to the bed involuntarily and almost fell straight on him.

Seeing the pale handsome face in front of her, Shao Wanru was frightened to reach out and hold the edge of the bed. Finally, she stabilized her body, and her face couldn't help but show embarrassment and annoyance, "Your Highness!"

"Just for a while. Don't worry, I'm tired now and I really don't have much energy!" Chu Liuchen pulled her sleeves naturally and pulled her to his front.

Shao Wanru was pulled to lie on the bed in an extremely stiff posture. If it weren't for the fact that Chu Liuchen was so weak that he almost couldn't move, she would have struggled hard.

But now she didn't dare to move for fear that she would hurt him again!

"Prince, you can sleep first. I'm not leaving yet!" Shao Wanru said helplessly as she tried to push his hand away. She spoke this so naturally that her face turned red after she finished her words.

"Please stay here for an hour. Imperial Grandmother will be unhappy if you leave early!" After taking the medicine, Chu Liuchen really couldn't hold on any longer. He closed his eyes slightly and relaxed his hands a little so that Shao Wanru could sit at the edge of the bed.

"Prince, please rest assured. I'll stay here for an hour before I leave!" Shao Wanru sighed helplessly and leaned against the bed. She also knew that it was better to leave after an hour. If she left too early, the Empress Dowager would be a little unhappy and think that she was too perfunctory. The good situation created for her before might be gone!

In the quiet room, only Chu Liuchen's light breathing could be heard. This time, the breathing was next to her ears, which was not as weak as the sound she had hardly heard when entering the room.

Her heart also relaxed, and her watery eyes turned to Chu Liuchen. His handsome and elegant face was really like a god from heaven, and he was also a cold god because one can see the coldness in his character from his light-colored thin lips.

Shao Wanru had always known that Chu Liuchen was cold and heartless. It could be said that since she was reborn, she had known this clearly. Although her memory of the last life was messy, the scene that those women in the emperor's harem had died there clearly appeared in her memory. This was because of Chu Liuchen.

So many beauties had died in a ferocious and twisted way under the sky. Even the sky had also been bloody!

How could Chu Liuchen be a kind person? Even though he had always looked harmless in front of others and like a noble and beautiful young man who walked out of the ink-wash mountains and rivers.

But these didn't prevent Shao Wanru from knowing Chu Liuchen's cruel nature.

But now this ferocious and beautiful young man was sleeping quietly beside her. His long curly eyelashes fell on his pale eyelids, making people feel that he was much more handsome than an ordinary person. Because of his pale face, he looked even delicate at this time, although he had never shown this kind of weakness in the past.

If she counted in the ages of her two lives, Shao Wanru felt that she was actually older than him!

Thinking of what he had done for her just now, she put a strand of his hair aside and inexplicably felt soft and warm in her heart. In her two lives, no one had ever taken the initiative to take care of her like this. He had done many things for her, and he could think of her at the moment that he might die.

She clenched her hand hard and poked her palm with her fingertips to make her mind clear. She took a deep breath to suppress the thoughts about something else in her heart at this moment, and her watery eyes became clear. She reached out to tuck a corner of the quilt for Chu Liuchen and then turned her head to look at his handsome face quietly!

After an hour, Xiao Xuanzi came in to remind her. Shao Wanru carefully pulled her hand from Chu Liuchen's hand and then left Prince Chen's Mansion quietly.

After she withdrew her hand and left quietly, Chu Liuchen opened his eyes slightly and reached out to rub his eyebrows. There was a little confusion in his clear eyes, and he looked at the slightly closed door with a rare hesitant look.

Xiao Xuanzi opened the door and walked in quietly. When he saw Chu Liuchen's slightly open eyes, he took two steps forward and said in a low voice, "Master, how should we deal with those people who led the assassins here?"

Although his master deliberately prepared this plan, it was certain that these people were not reliable.

"Kill them without mercy!" The cold voice was filled with a strange hostility. The gentle and elegant young man just now had immediately become as bloodthirsty as a ghost...

## Chapter 642 Bullied Piaoyun Courtyard

When they stepped into Duke Xing's Mansion again, the gate of Duke Xing's Mansion was wide open. Seeing Shao Wanru's carriage coming over, they hurriedly stepped forward and saluted. Their respect was even more than that in Rui'an Great Elder Princess's Mansion.

It made people feel that everyone was currying favor with this Fifth Miss Shao in front of them.

After she was invited in, she went to visit Old Madam first. Old Madam did not see her with a sick body this time. Although her expression was not cold or warm, she managed to squeeze out some kind expressions on her face and asked something about what had happened in Huaguang Temple.

The most important thing was to ask about the assassination of Chu Liuchen. Now it was widely said that Shao Wanru saved Chu Liuchen.

Although Chu Liuchen was always in bad health, his life had always been precious. Shao Wanru saved his life, which was equivalent to being appreciated by Empress Dowager Queen. Even if Old Madam of Duke Xing was secretly angry, there was nothing she could do.

She could not respect Shao Wanru, but she had to respect Empress Dowager Queen. The Empress Dowager Queen had sent the reward just now and praised Shao Wanru again and again. She also sent someone to say to Old Madam of Duke Xing that it had taken Shao Wanru three years to observe mourning. In the next period of time, she could stay in the mansion. After all, there would not be much time left.

Although it was said that mourning in Huaguang Temple was a more filial form, most people would mourn in their own homes. Shao Wanru had done a very good job. For such a long time, she had been mourning with the green lamp and ancient Buddha. It was even rare in the capital city!

Since the Empress Dowager Queen had said so, Old Madam didn't dare to disobey her. Fortunately, the courtyard had been prepared before, and Shao Wanru's supervisor old maid was in charge of it. It didn't matter if she moved in now!

"Grandma, I don't know much about Prince Chen Your highness. I happened to meet him at that time and didn't think too much, so I blocked for him. Fortunately, Your highness is fine!" Shao Wanru said honestly.

"Can you tell who it was?" Madam of Duke Xing said with a gentle face, and her concern was obvious.

"I didn't see it. It was very chaotic at that time and it happened suddenly. I accidentally ran into it..." Shao Wanru shook her head and frowned slightly.

"You can't tell anything at all. Have you found anything?" Madam of Duke Xing asked again.

Shao Wanru shook her head.

"Go down and have a good rest first. Then you don't have to go to Huaguang Temple. After the thing happened to Prince Chen, the Huaguang Temple has to be investigated again. You won't feel quiet if you stay there. Just stay at home and observe mourning!" Seeing that she couldn't get any information, Old Madam's expression became cold.

"Yes!" Shao Wanru had already expected such a result. She stood up respectfully and bowed. When she was about to leave, she stopped at the door. On the table by the window, there were some gifts like some beautiful satin and embroidery patterns on some gorgeous brocade boxes.

At first glance, one could tell that it was not ordinary things. She slightly narrowed her watery eyes and walked out of the door calmly as if she had not seen the pile of gifts.

Those were rewards from the palace!

Outside the door, Yujie came up and looked angry. Fortunately, she could bear it. When she saw Shao Wanru's calm face, she took a deep breath and suppressed the anger she had just suffered. Even her Miss could bear it, she could not. She glared at a proud servant girl beside her and followed Shao Wanru.

They left Old Madam's courtyard one after the other and returned to their own courtyard. At the gate of the courtyard, Nanny Yu had been waiting there for a long time. When she saw Shao Wanru coming over, she immediately came up to greet her.

"Have you set up everything?" Shao Wanru asked as she walked in.

"Everything has been arranged. Great Elder Princess brought a few people to help me set up. When her people went back, Madam of Duke Xing asked someone to come here to help. I chose some second-class and third-class servant girls and old maids." Nanny Yu said as she led Shao Wanru inside.

Rui'an Great Elder Princess was Shao Wanru's grandmother, so she couldn't interfere in the affairs of Duke Xing's Mansion. She just asked someone to clean up the yard for Nanny Yu and then they went back. Duke Xing's Mansion sent a lot of people here. Nanny Yu picked some who looked capable and put them in the yard.

As for the position of the principal maid, Yujie and Qu Le would take it. Shao Wanru also had Qing Yue. There were three of them. Although the First Miss of an aristocratic family often had four principal maids at her side, two or three were enough. Only when they got married would they have four principal maids.

Shao Wanru had three now, which was not a small number. Even Shao Yanru, the First Miss of Duke Xing's Mansion, didn't have four.

Nanny Yu was in charge of the affairs. Nanny Zheng, as an etiquette instructor, also entered into Piaoyun Courtyard where Shao Wanru lived now. Nanny Zheng came with the people of Rui'an Great Elder Princess. Because she worked for Rui'an Great Elder Princess and said that she would leave after helping them, Duke Xing's Mansion didn't baffle them and let them enter Duke Xing's Mansion easily.

After the people of Rui'an Great Elder Princess left, Nanny Zheng stayed alone and no one paid attention to her.

Nanny Zheng, who stayed in the Piaoyun Courtyard, temporarily helped Nanny Yu deal with affairs. Although Nanny Yu was loyal, because of her vision, she did not do well in many places. With Nanny Zheng's help, she could arrange the whole courtyard better.

Fortunately, with Nanny Zheng's help, the whole courtyard became much more organized so that Shao Wanru could live in even though she returned to the mansion in advance.

However, there were still some things that were not satisfying. After all, the person in charge of Duke Xing's Mansion was Madam of Duke Xing. Nanny Yu was just a servant from other places. It was very inconvenient for her to ask for something from the people of powerful Madam of Duke Xing!

Qing Yue also came with Nanny Zheng. When they heard that Shao Wanru had come back, the group of trusted subordinates greeted Shao Wanru in the room and talked about what had happened in Duke Xing's Mansion during this period of time.

Nanny Yu started the talk.

"Miss, when I came here, although this courtyard could accommodate people and everything was complete, the things were not good. Not to compare them with those from Great Elder Princess's Mansion, they were even not as good as those of the Qin's Mansion where you lived before. They looked very bright on the surface, but in fact, they were nothing. They just looked good!"

Nanny Yu said angrily. She had been in Duke Xing's Mansion for a period of time, and she could not get anything she wanted. But no one refused her directly. When she asked for things, everyone shirked and she was busy all day but couldn't find a person who could make the decision.

"Miss, it's the same with me. Every time we needed something in the Piao Yun Yard, they would refuse us. It's as if no one wanted to get involved in our Piao Yun Yard. Because of them, every small thing could not be finished. In the end, it's our mistake!"

Qing Yue, who had always owned a good temper, also said angrily.

Fortunately, Miss didn't live in Duke Xing's Mansion in the past three years. Otherwise, she would be ground to death because of such little things. Moreover, Miss was still young at that time. Even if she had something to say, she wouldn't say it directly. In the whole Duke Xing's Mansion, Miss had no one to rely on.

"Miss, when I was standing outside the door just now, Old Madam's principal maid talked to me as if she was giving charity to me. She also asked me to take this and that. I just endured her when I thought of you!" Thinking of what had happened just now, Yujie said angrily.

She had just arrived at Duke Xing's Mansion today. Even if there was anything, Yujie could only bear it. Otherwise, what would others think of her Miss!

"Yes, I came back first. I asked some old maids and servant girls I met along the way how to come to Piaoyun Courtyard. They all seemed to avoid me as if I took poison with me. Someone answered me. Some of them hurried to avoid me, and some even spat at me!"

Qu Le also said angrily. She came back first with Qing'er after entering the door, and she had suffered a lot because of her anger along the way.

Shao Wanru smiled slightly, and there was a trace of darkness in her watery eyes. The whole Duke Xing's Mansion did not like her. This was what she thought before, but she was no longer herself three years

ago. Although she had no right to speak as a fourteen years old girl, no one could ignore what she said as she was a child.

There were many thirteen or fourteen-year-old girls in marriage. They couldn't be considered as children anymore!

With a buffer of nearly three years, it was not so easy for Duke Xing's Mansion to control her. Moreover, some situations had changed a lot because of these three years.

Duke Xing's Mansion didn't dare to go too far. This time she came back with saving Chu Liuchen's life.

"Don't worry, Nanny Yu. Let the people in our courtyard come to the corridor to see me first!" Shao Wanru said after thinking for a while.

"Yes, I will ask them to come over right away!" Nanny Yu nodded. Shao Wanru should have been like this since she entered the Piaoyun Courtyard. It was necessary to establish her prestige. The people sent by Madam of Duke Xing just looked good, but Nanny Yu could not find out whether they were loyal or not, or belonged to someone else.

When Nanny Yu called all the people over and tidied up, Shao Wanru came out with Qu Le, Yujie, and Qing Yue. They stood in the corridor.

Nanny Zheng didn't come out since Shao Wanru had other arrangements!

There were more than a dozen of second-class and third-class servant girls and old maids standing in the yard. All of them looked at the Miss standing in the corridor in amazement. They didn't expect the most unfavored Fifth Miss of Duke Xing's Mansion to be so outstanding!

The servants of Duke Xing's Mansion had always been proud of their First Miss. In the capital city, there could not be a Miss from an aristocratic family who could be compared with First Miss. But what was going on with this Miss in front of them? Wasn't she the most inferior Fifth Miss? She was also the least liked by Old Madam and Madam. But no one expected that the Fifth Miss was so beautiful.

Even though she stood in the corridor with a serious face, she was still breathtakingly beautiful. However, compared with the First Miss who had always been smiling and dignified, she seemed to be mightier. At first glance, one could tell that she was not easy to deal with!

Didn't they say that she didn't have the favor of Old Madam and Madam so she didn't have the confidence? Why was the Fifth Miss Shao so confident? It seemed that she was going to deal with the servants harshly.

Without the support of Old Madam and Madam, why could she do this?

The servant girls and old maids whispered to each other in groups. They were so surprised that they couldn't help whispering on the spot.

Of course, this discussion was also in control. Anyway, the Fifth Miss hadn't said anything yet, so it didn't matter if they just talked about it in a low voice...

#### **Chapter 643 The Supervisor Old Maid Transferred in the Same Position**



Shao Wanru stared at the group of servants in front of her with deep eyes.

Nanny Yu had actually made a good choice if their attitudes were ignored. They looked sincere and seemed to be capable. She just wondered how they behaved because they might not subject to Nanny Yu in discipline for the time being.

Before they walked out, Nanny Zheng had told Shao Wanru that although Nanny Yu had warned these old maids and maids a few times after they entered the Piaoyun Courtyard, Nanny Yu hadn't been hard on them. After all, Shao Wanru was not in the mansion. Nanny Yu couldn't deal with them as the supervisor.

At the same time, Nanny Zheng had also told Shao Wanru the news she got. Most of the maids and old maids assigned to the Piaoyun Courtyard this time had been servants in Duke Xing's Mansion since they were born and their families had been servants in Duke Xing's Mansion for generations. Besides, they had complicated connections with the servants in other courtyards.

Shao Wanru couldn't dismiss them even if she wanted to, because a slight move in one part might affect the situation as a whole!

Because Shao Wanru remained silent, the maids and old maids, who had been on guard at the beginning, started to discuss loudly and wildly in the courtyard. They thought that the Fifth Miss seemed to be tough, but was a wax spear which looked like made of silver and threatening but was actually timid.

"Pull the old maid out!" After staring at them coldly for a long time, Shao Wanru suddenly pointed at the most vigorous old maid in the discussion, who was standing in the middle and said.

This was the supervisor old maid mentioned by Nanny Zheng just now! She was sent by Madam of Duke Xing to manage the servants who had just come to the Piaoyun Courtyard. Strictly speaking, she was sent by Old Madam of Duke Xing and could be considered respected in front of Old Madam of Duke Xing. When Shao Wanru walked out, the old maid looked at her scornfully.

Yujie went over and pulled out the old maid engaged in the discussion. She tried so hard that the old maid staggered out of the crowd and fell down in front of Shao Wanru only after taking a few steps.

The old maid cried out in pain and wanted to swear. However, seeing Shao Wanru's cold eyes, she couldn't help shivering.

The old maid realized what was going on and intended to get up with her hands on the ground. However, Yujie stepped on the hem of her clothes, making her unable to get up!

It became quiet immediately in the courtyard!

Although some old maids and maids here had their own backing, none of their backings could compare with that of the old maid, who was not a first-class supervisor in Old Madam's courtyard but was respected and had a voice in front of Old Madam.

A maid, who was leaning against the door of the courtyard, took a quick glance at Shao Wanru, and then lowered her head, shrank her shoulders, and cautiously slid to the door of the courtyard. After getting out of the courtyard, she turned around and ran out to report the news!

In the corridor, Shao Wanru sneered. As she expected, the maid in her courtyard actually worked for someone else!

“What do you mean by doing that, Fifth Miss?” Pressed by Yujie with the hem of her clothes under Yujie’s feet, the old maid could not get up, looked at Shao Wanru in front of her in a shameful rage, and said.

Shao Wanru looked at her calmly with her eyes which were so deep as if they each contained a severely cold spring. She was still dressed in the black clothes she wore in the nunnery. However, the plain black clothes made her look severe and cold. With no expression on her delicate face, she looked down at the old maid coldly.

Her threatening gaze made the old maid secretly swallow a mouthful of saliva. Wasn’t the Fifth Miss a fragile lady? Shouldn’t she go to complain after being upset by their unkindness? However, the complaint was useless, because no master in the mansion took her seriously!

“Are you a second-class old maid assigned to this yard?” Shao Wanru asked coldly with an icy face.

“I’m sent by Old Madam and was a second-class old maid in Old Madam’s courtyard. When Madam sent me here, she promised me that I would be a first-class old maid here!” The old maid said with dissatisfaction.

Madam of Duke Xing did promise her that before she came here. Since she had worked in Old Madam’s courtyard before, it was reasonable for her to be a first-class supervisor nanny after she was assigned to another courtyard. This was usually how the second-class old maids in Old Madam’s courtyard got promoted to the first-class old maids!

However, when she came here, she found that there was already a supervisor nanny in the yard, and the supervisor nanny was sent by Rui’an Great Elder Princess. Moreover, Rui’an Great Elder Princess said that the supervisor nanny had been Shao Wanru’s supervisor nanny and wet nurse before. With her identity and Great Elder Princess’s order, the supervisor nanny’s position was determined.

Besides, Duke Xing’s Mansion was in the wrong at that time, so they couldn’t argue for an old maid.

Therefore, the second-class old maid, who had intended to be the supervisor nanny, was assigned to the Piaoyun Courtyard in the same position without getting a promotion. Speaking of this, the old maid was full of resentments.

“How can I trouble an old maid working for Old Madam? I have a lot of servants here. Send her back to Old Madam’s courtyard!” Shao Wanru said coldly.

“Yes, Miss!” Before the old maid reacted, Yujie said, lifted her feet on the hem of the old maid’s clothes, pulled her up, and dragged her out.

“Fifth Miss, I’m sent by Old Madam to serve you. I didn’t do anything wrong and didn’t offend you. Why do you deal with me indiscriminately as soon as you come here? Is it because I’m sent by Old Madam?” The old maid, who realized the situation, struggled to loosen Yujie’s grip of her collar while shouting with a red face.

If she was dragged out by Yujie in front of so many people, she would be too ashamed to continue staying in Duke Xing's Mansion.

Perhaps rage stimulated her strength. She was even on par with Yujie, and neither of them could break the balance at the moment.

By saying that, she indicated that since she had worked for Old Madam, Shao Wanru couldn't do anything to her even if Shao Wanru was dissatisfied with her!

"Slap her!" Shao Wanru said coldly.

Yujie grasped the old maid's hands with both hands. Qu Le went over and slapped the old maid hard. The old maid was stunned, even forgot to struggle, and looked at Shao Wanru in front of her in disbelief.

She had indicated that she was sent by Old Madam. How dared Shao Wanru hurt her!

The two hard slaps scared everyone in the yard. They had never met Shao Wanru, but had imagined what kind of person the Fifth Miss Shao was. They all thought that the Fifth Miss Shao was just a fragile lady even with the support of Rui'an Great Elder Princess.

After all, as her maternal grandma, Rui'an Great Elder Princess couldn't have a louder voice than her paternal grandma, Old Madam of Duke Xing's Mansion!

She could rely on her maternal grandmother's power when she was not in Duke Xing's Mansion. However, now she had moved to Duke Xing's Mansion where everything was under the control of Old Madam and Madam of Duke Xing. Although these servants were assigned to the Piaoyun Courtyard, few of them took Shao Wanru seriously. Moreover, Shao Wanru came from a small place, so they just considered her a timid Miss who had seen nothing of life.

She probably wouldn't even dare to rebuke the servants because of the complicated connections among them!

However, they didn't expect that the Fifth Miss in front of them would change their thoughts dramatically.

The ravishing Fifth Miss in front acted so simply and rudely without any tactic, but it achieved her desired result directly. Looking at the red and swollen cheeks of the old maid, the rest of the maids and old maids felt like they could feel the same pain and did not dare to say a word.

They were just waiting for the development of the situation!

The maids and old maids were wondering whether it would end up in a storm or nothing definite, but no one would be stupid enough to stand out and just wait and see how Shao Wanru would deal with this old maid.

"Fifth Miss, I'm sent by Old Madam. Even if I did something wrong, you can't punish me at will!" The old maid said. She, who was stunned by the slaps and held down heavily by Yujie, trembled in rage. She was respected even in front of Old Madam and had never been humiliated in this way. She had intended to endure it, but now she couldn't bear it anymore and shouted with a furious and ferocious look.

Although the old maid was held down firmly by Yujie, she kept struggling desperately so that she flushed in a rage with an obvious reluctance to give in.

“You are sent by Old Madam?” Shao Wanru said coldly and raised her eyebrows. Despite her slight expression, the old maid considered it scornful.

“Fifth Miss, do you look down on me or Old Madam?” The old maid, who was furious at the moment, shouted.

“Are you sure that you are sent by Old Madam?” Shao Wanru asked.

“Of course, I am sent by Old Madam to serve you, but not to be humiliated by you. A humiliation to me is equivalent to humiliation to Old Madam!” The old maid said, getting increasingly furious because of the pain in her hands held by Yujie. If it weren’t for Yujie’s great strength, she definitely would have knocked down Yujie and slapped her violently in front of Shao Wanru!

Now she got the opportunity. Sensing that Yujie loosened her grip, the old maid immediately pounced on Yujie and intended to slap her hard. Yujie, who was caught off guard by her sudden counterattack, took two steps back and bumped into the two people behind her. Because she tilted her body, the old maid slapped another old maid behind Yujie.

Getting a sudden slap, the old maid standing behind Yujie shouted and jumped up in pain!

The old maid, who suddenly jumped up, bumped into several maids and old maids around her and made them fall and bump into others. The rest of them stepped back respectively, turning the place into a mess.

“What’s going on here?” A displeased voice suddenly came from the door of the courtyard. Everyone looked back and saw Madam of Duke Xing standing at the door with a large group of maids and old maids. Although she looked calm, there was some displeasure in her eyes. There was another lady beside her, but Shao Wanru had never seen her before.

Despite her young age, the lady standing beside Madam of Duke Xing was not overwhelmed by Madam of Duke Xing who was stately!

In the corridor, Shao Wanru lifted the corners of her tender lips and thought that Madam of Duke Xing probably brought the lady to suppress her...

#### **Chapter 644 Send the Servants away Simply and Rudely**

“Madam, please save me. The Fifth Miss wants to beat me to death!” Seeing Madam of Duke Xing come over, the old maid found her in a stronger position. She rushed to Madam of Duke Xing, knelt on the ground, and cried loudly while wiping her tears and complaining.

“What happened? The Fifth Miss just came back. Why do you make such a scene?” Madam of Duke Xing raised her eyes to look at Shao Wanru, who was walking over slowly from the corridor and said with a frown.

She talked in a low voice, seeming to be talking to herself or to the old maid.

The old maid, who felt extremely aggrieved, finally met the person who could uphold justice for her. Hearing Madam of Duke Xing's question, she immediately told what had happened, added inflammatory details, and described herself as the most aggrieved loyal servant and Shao Wanru as the evil master with no filial piety.

After all, she had worked in Old Madam's courtyard before.

The lady coming in with Madam of Duke Xing glanced at Shao Wanru with disdain and sneered.

"Greetings, Second Aunt!" Shao Wanru came over, bowed deeply to Madam of Duke Xing, and said.

At the moment, the old maid had finished telling the whole thing and wiped her tears, while looking at Shao Wanru complacently. She didn't believe that Shao Wanru dared to do anything to her in front of Madam of Duke Xing!

Shao Wanru was just an orphan, who was unfavored. The old maid didn't believe that she could turn around the situation!

"Wanru, let her get up and dismiss the servants! You made such a scene as soon as you came back, which is really inappropriate. If you are really dissatisfied with the servants, tell me whom you are dissatisfied with detailedly after getting in. I'll assign other servants here!" Madam of Duke Xing said softly to Shao Wanru.

"Second Aunt, do you think I shouldn't deal with her?" Shao Wanru raised her eyebrows and said in disapproval despite her soft voice.

"It's not a matter of that. You just came back and began to sort out the servants in your courtyard. You can deal with her after finding her dissatisfactory some time later. It's not a good idea to deal with her directly!" Madam of Duke Xing explained patiently.

"Second Aunt, do you mean that I shouldn't deal with her? Just now, the old maid said that she worked for grandma, so she wouldn't subject me to discipline. In this case, what's the point of letting her stay for a period of time?" Shao Wanru said calmly and didn't intend to make any concession.

"Wanru, how can you talk like that! I just think that even if the old maid did something wrong, there's no rush and you can deal with her later!" Madam of Duke Xing advised softly.

"Second Aunt, do you mean that I can't directly deal with those servants working for grandma or you even if they do something wrong? In this case, I'll send this old maid to the government office, because I can't solve this problem!" Shao Wanru said indifferently while glancing at the old maid who was still kneeling on the ground with an aggrieved look.

Was she going to send the old maid to the government office for this kind of thing? The lady coming in with Madam of Duke Xing involuntarily sneered.

"It's not a big deal... It will be embarrassing to bring it to the government office and make it a farce in front of others!" Madam of Duke Xing froze and then said with a smile.

"Second Aunt, do you think it not a big deal?" Shao Wanru raised her eyebrows and said.

“Uh... it’s not a big deal!” Madam of Duke Xing said sarcastically and thought that Shao Wanru was a petty girl from a small place indeed. Wasn’t it a trivial matter? Nevertheless, Shao Wanru’s one-track mind was helpful to her. She brought Infanta Yuan’an here today with the intention of making Infanta Yuan’an a witness.

Old Madam didn’t have a voice in some things in front of the Empress Dowager, but Infanta Yuan’an did!

“Well, Second Aunt, please have a look!” Shao Wanru said coldly and gestured to Yujie beside her. Yujie took two steps forward, pulled the old maid up, took out a small box after touching her sleeve, and handed it to Madam of Duke Xing.

“When I came in just now, I saw her sneaking out. When I instructed Nanny Yu to bring the servants here, she deliberately instigated a discussion in the yard. When I asked her to come over and intended to check on her, she claimed that she worked for grandma and I couldn’t deal with her at will!”

Shao Wanru looked calmly at Madam of Duke Xing, whose face stiffened, and said, “Second Aunt, since the old maid works for grandma, why is she assigned to my yard? If she comes here to serve me, why does she claim that she works for grandma? If I don’t deal with her now, should I deal with her after she sells the stuff?”

With a stiff smile, Madam of Duke Xing looked at the small gift box held by Yujie in astonishment. The exquisite patterns on it indicated that it didn’t belong to their mansion. Thinking of this, Madam of Duke Xing felt her eyebrows twitched and figured out where it came from!

It was one of the gifts from the Empress Dowager. Old Madam kept most of the gifts in her courtyard, while a few of them were sent to Shao Wanru’s Piaoyun Courtyard. Could the old maid be daring enough to steal one of them?

“Madam, I didn’t do that. I don’t know what it is and where it comes from. You must have planted it on me on purpose!”

Seeing the box in Yujie’s hands, the old maid hurriedly cried out a grievance with her face changing dramatically.

“Second Aunt, shouldn’t we send the old maid to the government office? The stuff looks unusual anyway!” Shao Wanru raised her watery eyes to look at Madam of Duke Xing and said without looking at the old maid’s flustered look.

“Let me have a look!” As Infanta Yuan’an said, she reached out to take the box from Yujie. Looking at the gorgeous box with golden patterns, she said with a strange look, “It is from the imperial palace. This... this old maid is really daring!”

She, who just looked down on Shao Wanru at the beginning, now thought that the entire Duke Xing’s Mansion was so out of order that even an old maid was daring enough to steal the gift from the imperial palace!

“Second Aunt, do you think it necessary to send her to the government office?” Shao Wanru said unhurriedly.

"I will make the decision after I report it to Old Madam. If it is true, this evil old maid must be beaten to death!" Madam of Duke Xing gnashed her teeth and had to say with a flattering smile.

"Second Aunt, when I came in, these servants were talking about me and didn't treat me as their master, and this old maid came out, despised me, and claimed that she worked for grandma. What should I do if someone else comes out later and claims that she works for you or grandma?"

Instead of asking about how to deal with the old maid, Shao Wanru shifted the subject to the servants in her courtyard.

She took a step back for two steps forward by making a concession in dealing with the old maid so that Madam of Duke Xing couldn't prevent her from dealing with the servants in her courtyard again, especially when the old maid stole a gift from the Empress Dowager. If she brought it to the government office or even to the Empress Dowager, Madam of Duke Xing could imagine how furious the Empress Dowager would be!

At this time, Madam of Duke Xing could only please Shao Wanru and prevent her from stirring up trouble!

"You can pick some servants from them. If you are dissatisfied with..." Madam of Duke Xing had to make a concession in this matter.

"Is it okay if I'm dissatisfied with all of them? Second Aunt, can you find me a servant trader tomorrow? I want to pick some new servants. Regarding the servants present, just send them back to their former masters' courtyards. I can't make other masters short of servants!"

Shao Wanru said!

Her words sounded nice and she seemed to make the decision for the sake of other masters in the mansion. However, considering what was going on in front of them, the meaning behind her words was not as nice as it seemed to be. Madam of Duke Xing felt so aggrieved that she almost lost control of herself and twisted the handkerchief in her hand into a ball. She had intended to use Infanta Yuan'an to suppress Shao Wanru. Unexpectedly, not only did she fail to do that, but also Infanta Yuan'an saw the scene in front of them.

The box was probably a trap set by Shao Wanru. However, it was difficult to find out the truth, and no one could prove the old maid's innocence.

Making her agree on picking some new servants in front of Infanta Yuan'an was like a slap in her face. However, in this situation, she couldn't say no.

"Wanru, since you are dissatisfied with them, I'll find you a servant trader tomorrow!" These words almost came out through her gnashed teeth. Madam of Duke Xing thought that she could restrain herself well, but at this moment, she almost lost control of herself!

"Thank you, Second Aunt!" Shao Wanru said with a sweet smile like an innocent girl, which made Madam of Duke Xing so furious that her lungs almost exploded!

However, she couldn't say anything.

“Second Aunt, you can take this old maid away and deal with her. I hope you can find out the truth. This old maid may be wronged!” Shao Wanru looked at the old maid, who almost collapsed and shivered in fear, and said indifferently.

The gift given by the Empress Dowager was discovered from the old maid when Shao Wanru just returned to the courtyard in Duke Xing’s Mansion. If the old maid was not the thief, who was the thief? Someone had to take the blame. However, the servants here were not innocent!

Although they did not steal the gift from the imperial palace, something else they had done might be found out. Madam of Duke Xing had specially picked some problem servants to send here, so the servants present had all done something wrong.

“Wanru, rest assured. Old Madam and I will find out the truth and not let you feel aggrieved!” Madam of Duke Xing had to promise to prove her innocence.

“Thank you, Second Aunt. I hope that you won’t think that I overstep the line!” Shao Wanru said in an increasingly gentle voice and bowed to Madam of Duke Xing sideways with a smile. She behaved so properly in accordance with the rules that no one could find fault with her.

A trace of gloom and rage flashed across Madam of Duke Xing’s eyes, but she still had to show a gentle and comforting smile, because she had to take it. She had thought that Shao Wanru would at least deal with the servants a period of time after she moved to Duke Xing’s Mansion. After a period of time, it would be impossible for her to deal with all the servants in her courtyard.

Unexpectedly, Shao Wanru acted so simply and rudely and disrupted all her plans as soon as she moved to Duke Xing’s Mansion. At this moment, she had to make a concession in front of the servants who were going to be driven away from here. Madam of Duke Xing had never felt so embarrassed since she married into Duke Xing’s Mansion.

“Wanru, have a good rest. I’m taking them away now!” Madam of Duke Xing said reluctantly.

“Thank you, Second Aunt!” Shao Wanru said and bowed politely again. The more polite she was, the angrier Madam of Duke Xing got. However, she had to take it at the moment, because it was related to the Empress Dowager. She couldn’t lose a great deal through trying to save a little.

Gnashing her teeth, she winked at the one beside her and turned to leave.

“Madam of Duke Xing, please wait a minute!” A cold voice suddenly came from beside her and stopped Madam of Duke Xing, who was about to leave.

Shao Wanru stopped and rolled her watery eyes. Despite her astonished look, she seemed to be clear about what was going to happen. She was right. The matter hadn’t been settled yet!

Since Infanta Yuan’an had seen it, how could she turn a blind eye to it? If she really turned a blind eye to it, she would be blamed for ignoring it...

## **Chapter 645 Princess Zhou in the Last Life**

“Madam of Duke Xing, aren’t you going to look into it? After all, it’s a gift from the imperial palace.” Infanta Yuan’an looked up and asked curiously as if she just asked casually.



"Of course, I will. Nevertheless, it's related to Old Madam, so I have to start from Old Madam's courtyard!" Madam of Duke Xing made an excuse with a forced smile.

"Although it's more convenient to start from Old Madam's courtyard, how could an old maid be so daring?" Infanta Yuan'an looked at the maids and old maids in the courtyard and said.

Madam of Duke Xing's face almost stiffened. Although they were all maids and old maids, each of them had connections with other servants in Duke Xing's Mansion. If she dealt with them all, it would break the peace of the entire Duke Xing's Mansion and even cause a lot of trouble.

Moreover, none of them was innocent!

Madam of Duke Xing decided that she could never let that happen. If the request was made by Shao Wanru, as an elder, she could use Old Madam to excuse herself from looking into the matter. However, the request was made by Infanta Yuan'an. At this moment, Madam of Duke Xing began to regret bringing Infanta Yuan'an, who was supposed to be the witness of Shao Wanru's crude and rude behavior.

Madam of Duke Xing had intended to show Infanta Yuan'an that Shao Wanru was so disrespectful to her elder that she dealt with the servant sent by her elder on the first day she moved to Duke Xing's Mansion. She didn't expect that she would lift a rock only to drop it on her own feet at this time!

"Come on, lock them up and forbid them to meet anyone before we find out the truth!" Madam of Duke Xing gnashed her teeth and had no choice but to say so.

Madam of Duke Xing had intended to bluff it out. However, now she definitely could not end it by pushing the old maid forward to take the blame. She had to talk it over with her daughter after returning and see how many servants she should push forward and who should they be. However, the more servants she pushed forward, the more criticisms she would receive as the hostess of Duke Xing's Mansion. Thinking that others would inevitably gossip about her evil intentions behind her back, Madam of Duke Xing was so furious that she almost spat blood.

It was discovered in front of Infanta Yuan'an that the old maid stole a gift from the imperial palace. She had intended to bluff it out by making a scapegoat of the old maid. Now that Infanta Yuan'an had asked her to look into it, she could not reduce it into a minor one. The Empress Dowager would probably ask about it personally one day. If Duke Xing's Mansion could not give a proper explanation, they would be rebuked by the Empress Dowager!

"Madam, you are as fair as I expect!" Infanta Yuan'an said with a slight smile and joyfully watched the maids and old maids taken away by a group of people. After that, she looked towards Shao Wanru, as if she had just seen her. After looking Shao Wanru up and down a few times, she said slowly, "Are you Rui'an Great Elder Princess's granddaughter, the Fifth Miss of Duke Xing's Mansion?"

Shao Wanru bowed sideways and nodded gently and politely.

"I am Ruiping Great Elder Princess's granddaughter, Infanta Yuan'an!" Infanta Yuan'an said with a gentle look, looking at Shao Wanru with no obvious emotion in her eyes. The obvious contempt in her eyes had been replaced by curiosity.

Shao Wanru felt her heart skipped a beat and remembered who Infanta Yuan'an was. She was Chu Liuzhou's consort, the future Princess Zhou. Shao Wanru had heard that she was dignified, decent, and impartial and had been widely praised among the Misses from aristocratic families.

In the last life, Infanta Yuan'an did marry Chu Liuzhou and almost became the Crown Princess. If it were not for Chu Liuzhou's rebellion, she would have been the Crown Princess. Although Shao Wanru had never met her, Princess Zhou at that time, Princess Zhou enjoyed a good reputation in the imperial palace.

But later, Prince Zhou was defeated and mistakenly killed in the rebellion. Although Infanta Yuan'an, who almost became the Crown Princess, was fine, she, who had no children, also lost her power and stayed in the declining Prince Zhou's Mansion.

Infanta Yuan'an was still alive when Shao Wanru got killed.

"Greetings, Infanta Yuan'an!" Shao Wanru said in little astonishment and bowed again.

Although her grandma and Ruiping Great Elder Princess were both princesses, they were not very close. Ruiping Great Elder Princess married a child from an aristocratic family, which inherited the title later and lived a smooth life with children and even grandchildren now. Infanta Yuan'an was even ennobled as an infanta not long after she was born.

It could be said that she had both the title of nobility and power, which made her the best candidate for a princess. She was even better than Shao Wanru. After all, she was an infanta with a fief.

"Although you are the granddaughter of Great Elder Princess, you can't cross the line. Madam of Duke Xing is in charge of Duke Xing's Mansion anyway!" Infanta Yuan'an said with a smile and bowed sideways back to Shao Wanru, looking very kind. Although what she said was unpleasant, her kindness made it acceptable.

As the descendant of another Great Elder Princess, it was very convincing for her to advise Shao Wanru in this way, and people would even consider that she was reasonable and sensible and didn't make use of her identity as a member of the royal family to suppress others.

Meanwhile, what she said made Shao Wanru appear to be someone making use of her identity to suppress others, although Madam of Duke Xing obviously should take the blame for what had happened before.

Madam of Duke Xing, who had maintained a stiff smile, felt her face relaxed and seemed to be stroked by a spring breeze.

"Thank you for your teachings, Your Highness!" Shao Wanru said, raised her eyebrows slightly, and bowed to Infanta Yuan'an respectfully again. Despite her indignant look, she behaved properly. After that, she lowered her head slightly and acted as if she were listening respectfully.

As the descendant of another Great Elder Princess, despite her title of infanta, Infanta Yuan'an and Shao Wanru were of the same generation and had just met for the first time. The so-called teaching was a little strange. At the thought that Shao Wanru had to restrain her indignant look and listen to Infanta Yuan'an respectfully, people might think that Infanta Yuan'an, who looked kind, was actually the one making use of her identity to suppress others.

Infanta Yuan'an looked towards Shao Wanru, who slightly lowered her head, without turning a hair and frowned slightly. Unexpectedly, Shao Wanru was so difficult to deal with. She thought that she could suppress Shao Wanru with her identity as the infanta. However, with just a few words, Shao Wanru made her seem like the one making use of her identity to suppress others.

Fortunately, she was in Duke Xing's Mansion. If she said the same words in the imperial palace, she probably would not be able to deal with the situation. With vigilance in her eyes, she no longer dared to look down on her gorgeous cousin.

Strictly speaking, Shao Wanru was indeed her cousin, but she didn't take Shao Wanru seriously before and considered Shao Wanru just a good-looking plaything no matter how pretty she was. But now, she didn't dare to look down on the Fifth Miss Shao in front of her.

"Don't mention it. We are cousins, so you don't have to be so polite. I come here today to meet the First Miss Shao and should leave now. I will definitely pay you a visit the next time I come here!" Infanta Yuan'an said friendly with a smile as if she didn't notice Shao Wanru's silent resistance.

She acted as if she really considered Shao Wanru her cousin.

"You are over courteous. I've just moved here. My courtyard is in a mess with no servants to receive a guest. If you come here later, I'll definitely clean up the couch to welcome you!" Shao Wanru raised her head and said with gentle eyes as if the displeasure she had shown were just an illusion.

What she said was true. There had been a lot of servants in her courtyard, but now they had been taken away. The maids she brought were far from enough. Besides, she had just returned to the mansion, so it was indeed inconvenient for her to receive a guest.

"It doesn't matter. I'll come to visit you next time. By the way, I'm going to hold a banquet a few days later. Why don't I send you an invitation card? You can come over, and then we can get close to each other!" Infanta Yuan'an suggested with a smile.

"Uh... I'm afraid I can't go. I've been observing mourning for my parents!" Shao Wanru refused in embarrassment.

"Oh, you are right. It's my fault to neglect it. I'll invite you after you finish it. I intended to introduce you to other Misses from aristocratic families!" Infanta said with regret.

"Thank you for your kindness!" Shao Wanru said softly.

The two of them talked happily. After an intimate chat, Infanta Yuan'an made her farewells with a smile and left. Seeing her leave with Madam of Duke Xing, Shao Wanru stared at the back of Infanta Yuan'an thoughtfully with the smile fading on her face.

In the last life, she was not acquainted with Infanta Yuan'an and only heard that she had an excellent reputation and was fine even after Prince Zhou was defeated. Besides, she heard something through the grapevine, but didn't know whether it was true or not. Now she couldn't remember where she heard it and who told her about it.

It was said that the record of her horoscope indicated that she was meant to be an extraordinary person. If it was true, it was not surprising that she would be Princess Zhou.

But in the last life, she had never heard that Infanta Yuan'an was close to Shao Yanru. When Shao Yanru tortured her for various reasons in the imperial palace later, she had never seen Infanta by Shao Yanru's side. Unexpectedly, she met Infanta Yuan'an in Duke Xing's Mansion earlier in this life, which was really surprising!

In their short conversation, Infanta Yuan'an had changed her attitude several times from her indifference at the beginning to her intimacy in the end. She had even tried to suppress Shao Wanru and invited Shao Wanru to her banquet and said that she would introduce Shao Wanru to other Misses from aristocratic families as if she didn't know that Shao Wanru had been observing mourning for parents. All of these made Shao Wanru think deeply.

"Fifth Miss, be careful of Infanta Yuan'an!" Nanny Zheng came out at some time, stood behind Shao Wanru, also looked at the back of Infanta Yuan'an, and said with a frown.

"Nanny, why do you say that?" Shao Wanru restrained the suspicion in her eyes and turned to ask Nanny Zheng. Her suspicion of Infanta Yuan'an was caused by what had happened in the last life, but what caused Nanny Zheng's suspicion of Infanta Yuan'an?

"Infanta Yuan'an is one of the Empress Dowager's favorite young members of the royal family. When she enters the imperial palace, she usually likes to chat with the Empress Dowager and the Empress Dowager likes to hear some gossip from her. Every time Infanta Yuan'an enters the imperial palace, she makes the Empress Dowager very happy."

Nanny Zheng said while organizing her words.

It meant that Infanta Yuan'an had a voice in front of the Empress Dowager! Meanwhile, she was not a member of Duke Xing's Mansion. It seemed that Infanta Yuan'an's visit to Duke Xing's Mansion was not a coincidence, but Shao Wanru wondered whether the trap was set by Shao Yanru or Infanta Yuan'an.

Or it was set by the two of them. Otherwise, how could it be such a coincidence that she met Infanta Yuan'an, who had a voice in front of the Empress Dowager when she just moved to Duke Xing's Mansion. At the same time, the Empress Dowager supported her in Duke Xing's Mansion by sending gifts...

With a deep smile on her face, she thought, "What a coincidence!"

## **Chapter 646 Two Sides of a Coin**

"Thank you for your visit, Your Highness!" Shao Yanru, in her room, picked up a cup of tea, stood up, drank the tea as a substitute for wine, bowed sideways to Infanta Yuan'an, and spoke softly.

"We're as close as sisters, so don't mention it!" Infanta Yuan'an picked up the tea with a smile, took a sip, took Shao Yanru's hand to have her sit down, and said helplessly, "It's not a big deal. I intended to come to back you up, but didn't expect that your Fifth Sister is not simple! I'm not sure if I've been more of a hindrance than a help!"

Knowing that she was talking about the matter of her making Madam of Duke Xing unable to excuse herself from dealing with the servants assigned to the Piaoyun Courtyard, Shao Yanru said kindly, "Your Highness, you don't have to say that. It's supposed to be my mother's fault. No one would expect that someone would be daring enough to steal the gift from the Empress Dowager."

She would not take the blame for it! Claiming her ignorance of it was the best excuse!

"I appreciate that you think so!" Infanta Yuan'an took her hand and said with a smile, "Since the gift was given by the Empress Dowager, it can't be neglected, let alone stolen by a servant. If the news gets out, you will not only find the gossip unpleasant, but even enrage the Empress Dowager!"

"I know... I went to advise my grandma to investigate into it thoroughly... lest the old maid ruin our reputation and make others misunderstand our mansion... Your Highness, please explain it to the Empress Dowager," Shao Yanru said, then sighed softly and held Infanta Yuan'an's hand with tears in her pretty eyes, looking extremely aggrieved.

"Don't worry. I will explain it to the Empress Dowager. Strictly speaking, you shouldn't be blamed for it... It was caused by the disappointing servants. Probably because of the Fifth Miss's long term absence in the courtyard as the master, the servants had other thoughts!"

Infanta Yuan'an tried to straighten her out in a gentle tone.

"It makes sense. The courtyard was not supposed to be prepared in a hurry, but Rui'an Great Elder Princess intervened in it... My mother can't disobey Rui'an Great Elder Princess's order, so she prepared it early and selected some servants to work in the courtyard. Unexpectedly, a prepared courtyard with no master made the servants try to steal something!"

Shao Yanru spoke while nodding.

Both of them tried to absolve Duke Xing's Mansion from blame by suggesting that the servants were fine when being selected and assigned to the courtyard, but they got out of control without a master and did wrong. Generally speaking, what had happened today was caused by a prepared courtyard without a master.

It shouldn't be the fault of Duke Xing's Mansion.

Madam of Duke Xing was even less responsible for it. After all, when she selected the servants, they were fine. She shouldn't be blamed for what they did later in the Piaoyun Courtyard, where there was no master.

Hearing Infanta Yuan'an's words, Shao Yanru felt relieved. Infanta Yuan'an had a voice in front of the Empress Dowager and had always enjoyed a good reputation and been considered a fair-minded person. Since she said so here, she would say the same thing to the Empress Dowager.

She sort of explained what had happened just now for Duke Xing's Mansion.

It was just the two sides of a coin. Duke Xing's Mansion didn't have to bear the brunt of the blame.

"Even Rui'an Great Elder Princess shouldn't intervene in the domestic affairs of your mansion. Your Duke Xing's Mansion can turn down such an inappropriate request!" Infanta Yuan'an said in a soft voice. She was totally speaking on Shao Yanru's side, which could leave a good impression on Shao Yanru!

"But... she's my Fifth Sister's maternal grandma. For the sake of my Fifth Sister... how could Rui'an Great Elder Princess not intervene in it?" Shao Yanru sighed softly and said helplessly. Then she lowered her head and wiped the corners of her eyes with a handkerchief. When she raised her head again, her eyes were slightly red.

Meanwhile, she said reluctantly with a proper smile, "Well, let's stop talking about this. My grandma and mother will handle it. I'm really sorry to trouble you to come here. I only intended to bring her pressure with your power and influence, I didn't expect to cause you to be wronged. I apologize to you on behalf of our Duke Xing's Mansion!"

What had just happened in the Piaoyun Courtyard had been reported to Shao Yanru, who had learned that Infanta Yuan'an had run into a stone wall in Shao Wanru's place. Now she mentioned it in a subtle way in an attempt to provoke Infanta Yuan'an's rage.

Meanwhile, she said it sincerely, as if she really meant it. Moreover, she took the initiative to admit her mistake, which even left a better impression!

"It doesn't matter. Since there's nothing else, I'll go back now. I'm going to the imperial palace later, as the Empress Dowager sent someone before to tell me!" With a sparkle in her eyes, Infanta Yuan'an said and stood up with a smile, as if she didn't realize Shao Yanru's attempt to provoke her.

Shao Yanru also stood up and said, "Let me walk you out, Your Highness!"

"First Miss Shao, you don't have to be overly courteous to me. You should help your mother handle what happened today. After all, the gift is from the imperial palace, so you should handle the matter properly. If the Empress Dowager asks about it, I will report it truthfully. When the time comes, it will be inappropriate to let the Empress Dowager know that your mansion has not handled it!"

Infanta Yuan'an spoke with a smile, patted Shao Yanru's hand intimately, and then left with her entourage, as if she didn't see Shao Yanru's slightly stiff face!

Although she didn't like Shao Wanru, she didn't intend to become Shao Yanru's weapon!

She had thought that her identity could be a deterrent to Shao Wanru, but she found that Shao Wanru was not as simple as she seemed. In this case, she decided not to pick a side just yet and to take a wait-and-see approach.

Her grandma said that with her identity, she could definitely be a princess. Now she was waiting to see which prince she was going to marry, while Shao Yanru was her biggest competitor...

In fact, the Piaoyun Courtyard had been decorated properly and looked good. However, in addition to some fine ornaments sent by Great Elder Princess, Shao Wanru could see some simple and ordinary ornaments that Duke Xing's Mansion had prepared for her in the courtyard from time to time.

The entire Piaoyun Courtyard looked neat, but in fact, it hardly had any class. However, Shao Wanru had to bear it.

Because she hadn't finished observing mourning for her parents and cultivation in seclusion, she had to bear it no matter how ordinary her courtyard was. However, if she chose to bear it for the time being, she could not say anything about it even after finishing observing mourning for her parents and cultivation in seclusion. After all, when she moved here, she had said nothing.

Mentioning it afterward would make her look hypocritical and make others wonder if everything she had done before was just a show, after which she just felt free to throw off her disguise!

Although Shao Wanru's returning at this time was an accident, she had said that she would come down the mountain before the Spring Festival and spend the last few days of her observing mourning for her parents in Duke Xing's Mansion. Even though she came down the mountain at that time, it was still inconvenient for her to interfere with the decoration of her courtyard.

On one hand, it was still during the period of her observing mourning for her parents. On the other hand, Madam of Duke Xing had plenty of things to handle before the Spring Festival, so it was reasonable that the Piaoyun Courtyard wasn't prepared perfectly!

"Miss, that's too much!" In the room, Nanny Yu angrily told her what had happened recently and then pointed to a screen behind her and said, "This screen is obviously in poor condition, but no one came to change it. I turned to Madam, who said that the screen was placed here on the instructions from Old Madam. Then I turned to Old Madam, but she said that it was for Madam to take care of..."

As Nanny Yu spoke, she became angrier. In fact, besides the screen, many items in the room were so ordinary and even shabby. She found it ridiculous to place such ornaments in her master's room. Nanny Yu was furious, but although she had turned to every master in Duke Xing's Mansion, they all just passed the buck.

Moreover, most of the time, she was sent away by their trusted servants even before meeting them. So even if the matter became significant, they could pretend that they knew nothing about it.

None of them should take the blame. Besides, Shao Wanru couldn't take the initiative to find them now!

Since she could cultivate in seclusion on the mountain, how could she stir up trouble because the decorations in her courtyard were not gorgeous enough after returning to Duke Xing's Mansion? Madam of Duke Xing did that because she was sure of it.

After Nanny Yu told her all the grievances, Shao Wanru smiled slightly and turned to look at the screen behind her.

This screen included 12 parts and was extraordinary in size. Even the screen in Old Madam's room was smaller than it.

In this case, no one would think that Duke Xing's Mansion treated her lightly, because they placed such a big screen with 12 parts in her room, while the only other screen with 12 parts in the entire Duke Xing's Mansion was in Old Madam's room.

The screen with 12 parts was made of top-grade yellow pear wood. However, the embroidery on it was worn with curling edges. The flower patterns, which were supposed to be gorgeous, had been blurred and even damaged. Some threads had been worn.

The screen was worn and disagreeable to the eye.

From the extremely gorgeous peonies in spring to the ethereal red plum blossoms in winter, all of these were supposed to be amazing from every direction. But at the moment, it looked mildewy because of being used for long.

In fact, besides the screen, a large part of other ornaments seemed to have been well-used. They should be thrown away or repaired before being reused. However, they were placed in this room directly.

“Miss, how could they do that!” Yujie looked around the room and said angrily.

The ornaments in the room were completely different from those when they had lived here three years prior. At that time, the decorations were extremely gorgeous and every ornament was meticulously prepared. Although they had been used for some time, they looked new after being polished. But now, everything in front of them obviously had been used by others or was too worn to be used.

They were just placed here without cleaning and repair.

“Miss, let’s ask Great Elder Princess to have a look.” Qu Le, who was also very angry, suggested after walking around.

“No, I can’t always turn to my grandma!” Shao Wanru shook her head and said. Rui’an Great Elder Princess couldn’t intervene in the business of Duke Xing’s Mansion again and again. Otherwise, it would inevitably displease the Emperor and the Empress Dowager.

She couldn’t let her grandma intervene in the business of Duke Xing’s Mansion. Even if it was necessary, her grandma could only intervene in Hao’er’s business rather than waste the opportunity on something unimportant. She would handle this kind of thing and wouldn’t bring more trouble to her grandma. With gloom in her eyes, she thought that she wouldn’t suffer the loss!

“We’ll repair them by ourselves. We should find a way to make them look more decent, shouldn’t we?”

#### **Chapter 647 Discover a Small Note in Her Meal**

“Repair them by ourselves? What should we do?” Qu Le blinked and asked in confusion.

Meanwhile, Nanny Zheng, who was beside her, seemed to be lost in thought!

“Nanny Zheng, does Qi Rongzhi still live in the mansion?” Shao Wanru changed the topic, looked at Nanny Zheng, who remained silent, and asked.

Nanny Yu had argued with others in Duke Xing’s Mansion with the assistance of Nanny Zheng, who was sent by Great Elder Princess’s Mansion secretly. She got little attention from others in Duke Xing’s Mansion, so it was easier for her to do something.

The small gift box given by the Empress Dowager was secretly handed to Yujie by Nanny Zheng in secret, and then Yujie put it on the old maid when they pulled and pushed each other.

“Miss Qi is still in the mansion, but she has been grounded!” Nanny Zheng said. Since she came to the mansion, she seemed to be busy with helping Nanny Yu handle some trivial matter, but she actually took the opportunity to look into something as Shao Wanru told her.

“Miss Qi has been locked up since the carriage crash happening to you. She’s not allowed to go back to the Qi’s Mansion, but is allowed to send letters, most of which was for her eldest brother!” Nanny Zheng said in detail.

“Even if the First Young Master Qi has powerful connections, he can’t save the First Miss Qi this time!” Nanny Yu curled her lip and said.



“Didn’t she leave Duke Xing’s Mansion before? Why did she come back?” Shao Wanru frowned slightly and asked after thinking for a while. Qi Rongzhi had intended to meet her before but certainly came with someone else.

“It is said that she was brought back. She did leave and go back to the Qi’s Mansion. However, she was brought back later by the First Young Master Qi, who said that since Miss Qi was a Miss of Duke Xing’s Mansion, she couldn’t leave at will. After that, he left!”

Nanny Zheng had made a thorough investigation. Hearing Shao Wanru’s question, she answered casually.

Qi Rongzhi was brought back by Qi Tianyu? After the carriage crash, Duke Xing’s Mansion was equivalent to a wolf den to Qi Rongzhi. How could Qi Tianyu bring her back?

It seemed that Qi Tianyu brought Qi Rongzhi back because he was threatened or someone promised him great benefits. As Shao Wanru thought, she lifted the corners of her lips slightly. Since Qi Rongzhi was still in Duke Xing’s Mansion, she could use some help from Qi Rongzhi and didn’t have to think of some other way.

“How is Duke Xing’s Mansion going to deal with her?”

Neither Madam of Duke Xing nor Shao Yanru was a kind-hearted person, so it was impossible for them to watch Qi Rongzhi tarnish Shao Yanru’s reputation without doing anything. Grounding Qi Rongzhi didn’t sound like the punishment Shao Yanru and Madam of Duke Xing would be satisfied with.

“I heard that she is going to marry Childe Wang!” Nanny Zheng thought for a moment and said, “Other servants said that he’s Duke Xing’s nephew, but I have never met him before!”

Childe Wang? Wang Shengxue? Shao Wanru involuntarily thought that Wang Shengxue seemed like a ghost reluctant to leave Duke Xing’s Mansion and seemed to be related to everything about Duke Xing’s Mansion!

Nevertheless, Wang Shengxue was quite a good match for Qi Rongzhi, who knew well about what he had done. Qi Rongzhi probably would rather get killed than marry him!

Someone like Qi Rongzhi would definitely try everything to make a scene out of it. However, she was now locked up peacefully without making any scene, which indicated that things were not as they seemed. Could it be that Qi Rongzhi knew that Qi Tianyu had a plan to prevent Wang Shengxue from marrying her, so she was willing to be grounded in Duke Xing’s Mansion without making trouble?

As Shao Wanru thought of this, she immediately figured out the connections among many things!

“Does Childe Wang still live in the mansion?” Shao Wanru asked.

“He doesn’t live in the mansion, but only occasionally comes to visit Miss Wang, who still lives in the mansion and said to be in poor health. Although she can still take some food, she can only lie in bed and is unlikely to recover. Most of the time her brother only came to have a look at her and then went to please Madam of Duke Xing, Old Madam, and other masters in the mansion!”

Although Nanny Zheng had never met Childe Wang, she heard a lot of things about him. Everyone in the mansion looked down upon Childe Wang. Even the maids and old maids gave a scornful look when speaking of him and thought him a born loser.

If it weren't for the kinship between him and their master, the servants wouldn't have taken a glance at him.

"Did he send some gifts to the mansion?" Shao Wanru, who noticed a point Nanny Zheng neglected, asked with a slight smile.

"Yes, the gifts are all sent to please the masters in the mansion, especially Madam of Duke Xing, while none of them was sent to his sister!" Nanny Zheng answered after thinking for a while.

With a sparkle in her eyes as dark as ink-colored glaze, Shao Wanru lifted the corners of her tender lips. There should be someone making trouble in the mansion. Since there was no such a person now, she could find one for them. When the one made a scene, the "worn" ornaments in her room could be exposed in public.

Madam of Duke Xing and Shao Yanru were sure that she had to take it, but she didn't want to...

Although Qi Rongzhi was grounded, she didn't live a difficult life and was served proper meals. Her everyday food and clothing were not the same as before, but they were actually not much worse for her, who had always been neglected and inferior in Duke Xing's Mansion.

The kitchen even specially sent someone to serve her decent meals because she was locked up. After all, when her eldest brother brought her back to Duke Xing's Mansion that day, he specially talked with the Eldest Young Master of Duke Xing's Mansion.

Her eldest brother's words still rang in her ears. He told her to stay in Duke Xing's Mansion for another period of time, and he would take her back to the Qi's Mansion when people gradually forgot what had happened. After that, her marriage would have nothing to do with Duke Xing's Mansion. But it was inconvenient for her to leave Duke Xing's Mansion now.

This was not a good thing for Duke Xing's Mansion and her. From her perspective, people would think her ungrateful if she left when Duke Xing's Mansion got stuck in the rumor related to her. From the perspective of Duke Xing's Mansion, it would be too merciless to drive her away after the incident without finding out the truth.

Or they should handle it after a period of time even if they couldn't find out the truth.

Qi Rongzhi had always been obedient to Qi Tianyu. Since her elder brother said so, of course, she chose to go back to Duke Xing's Mansion. In order to marry into the prince's mansion and seek a bright future, she certainly could not make trouble at this time and had to get it through even if her everyday food and clothing were not so good.

Moreover, Duke Xing's Mansion didn't treat her lightly in everyday food and clothing on the surface!

Today she was served steamed buns and a few simple dishes. Although they were not so good and Qi Rongzhi found them difficult to swallow, they were fresh anyway. What was more, her eldest brother

had promised to secretly give some money to someone working in the kitchen so that they wouldn't treat Qi Rongzhi in meals shabbily.

Chewing a steamed bun feebly, Qi Rongzhi asked, "Is Shao Wanru back?"

Although she couldn't go out, there were plenty of servants talking about it, and even the two old maids guarding the door were among them. She couldn't ignore it even if she wanted to!

"Yes, they... they said so!" Chunyi answered in a low voice. When she was in Jiangzhou, she could be considered a respected principal maid, but now she became increasingly timid.

"She is so lucky that she survived!" Qi Rongzhi curled her lip and said coldly with disdain, "If I had known that she's so lucky, I would have worked with Qin Yuru to torture her to death when we were in Jiangzhou. In that case, all of the following things wouldn't happen!"

Chunyi didn't dare to answer and cautiously handed Qi Rongzhi a handkerchief. Qi Rongzhi wiped her hands with the handkerchief and bit her hand hard as if she were biting Shao Wanru she was so jealous of. How could Shao Wanru become the granddaughter of Rui'an Great Elder Princess luckily?

Why wasn't she as lucky as Shao Wanru? Thinking of the days when Shao Wanru and she were in Jiangzhou and the gap between Shao Wanru and her at the moment, Qi Rongzhi felt both great jealousy and hatred.

Shao Wanru, who she could tread underfoot and humiliate as much as she wanted, now lived a better life than she did. It made her feel extremely uncomfortable as if she were bitten by thousands of caterpillars, and wish she could tread Shao Wanru underfoot again and torture her as before.

"I heard that the Empress Dowager sent a lot of gifts to Shao Wanru today. Why is she so lucky? She didn't fall to death on the mountain path before and managed to survive by clinging to the tree. Now she survived again in the assassination and even saved Prince Chen. I'm wondering if she's fortunate or unfortunate." Qi Rongzhi raised the corners of her mouth and said viciously with a sneer.

Now she had nothing to do every day, and she was not willing to practice calligraphy and paint quietly. So she, who was terribly bored, was even more vicious and mean when speaking of Shao Wanru. Although she had restrained herself a little before because of her hard life in Duke Xing's Mansion, she had no scruples at this moment with only her two personal maids around.

She said whatever she wanted while exposing her mean and vicious character!

Chunyi and Chunxi lowered their heads, acted like two blocks of wood, and didn't dare to talk nonsense with her. After being punished by Qi Tianyu, they didn't dare to go along with Qi Rongzhi at will!

Seeing that the two maids remained silent, Qi Rongzhi glared at them with displeasure. She knew that they acted on instructions from her eldest brother and now she could only rely on her eldest brother, so she did not dare to disobey her eldest brother's order. She could only vent her spleen on her maid by reaching out to pinch the back of Chunxi's hand hard. The great pain made Chunxi's face changed dramatically, but she did not dare to cry out in pain and could only kneel on the ground and beg for mercy!

Loosening her grip of Chunxi's hand, Qi Rongzhi chewed the steamed bun hard, as if intending to bite off all Shao Wanru's luck. Suddenly she felt something between her teeth and reached out to pull out a folded note through her teeth. Qi Rongzhi was stunned and unfolded it hurriedly, disregarding the crumbs of the steamed bun on it.

When she saw the words on it clearly, she was annoyed at the moment and even forgot her fear of Madam of Duke Xing. She pounded the table hard, suddenly stood up, and said, "Go to invite Madam of Duke Xing here and ask her what she means by doing that!"

#### **Chapter 648 The Heir of Duke Xing**

"Mi... Miss, what's the matter?" Chunxi looked at Qi Rongzhi with some timidity and asked. She really didn't dare to offend Madam of Duke Xing, who was in charge of the entire inner courtyard of Duke Xing's Mansion. Even the principal maid serving Old Madam was very respectful to Madam of Duke Xing, not to mention her.

To put it nicely, Qi Rongzhi was the foster daughter of Madam of Duke Xing, but to put it bluntly, Qi Rongzhi just lived under the roof of Duke Xing's Mansion and no one took her seriously. Even the servants in the mansion were snobs. What was more, Qi Rongzhi had never been favored since she moved to the mansion.

Qi Rongzhi was treated lightly, not to mention her maids. In the past three years, Chunxi had been bullied many times in Duke Xing's Mansion, so she didn't dare to turn to Madam of Duke Xing to look for trouble.

"It's so hateful... I... I didn't expect that she let the scoundrel Wang Shengxue set me up!" Qi Rongzhi said furiously, unfolded the note in her hand, and read it again. When she saw the words in front of her clearly, she only felt her eyes became sore.

How could Madam of Duke Xing let her rascal nephew hook up with her with frivolous and shameless words? Thinking of Wang Shengxue, Qi Rongzhi felt so sick that she even wanted to vomit. She decided that she would never marry such a disgusting man even if she had to remain unmarried all her life.

"Miss, how do you know that it's Madam of Duke Xing who told him to write this?" Chunxi asked.

"It's written on it that Madam of Duke Xing won't release me unless I agree on the engagement with him arranged by Madam of Duke Xing. Otherwise, she will lock me up all my life. I doubt whether she can do that!" Qi Rongzhi sneered, tore the note in her hand, and said angrily.

At this moment, she had calmed down and known that it was useless to send someone for Madam of Duke Xing. The one she sent might not even be able to meet Madam of Duke Xing, let alone make things clear.

"Miss, don't worry. The Eldest Young Master will help you. Maybe he has made an agreement with the prince's mansion and will directly send a sedan chair to take you away later. No matter how powerful Duke Xing's Mansion is, they can't compare with the prince's mansion, right?" Chunyi took up her remark.

Her words calmed Qi Rongzhi down. She trusted her eldest brother very much. Who did Wang Shengxue think he was? How dared he dream of marrying her? He really should look in the mirror to see what a loser he was.

At this moment, she had no appetite, so she instructed the two maids to clean up the dishes.

She thought that it was over, but she didn't expect that she would discover other notes in the next few meals. Wang Shengxue even wrote in a note that he would come to meet her secretly at dusk and he could marry her and she could be released as soon as she agreed. What was more, he repeatedly indicated that he would treat her like a treasure with frivolous and disgusting words.

Qi Rongzhi was both annoyed and anxious. She didn't even dare to sleep alone at night and kept the two maids by her side. But even so, she could still hear some sounds from outside the courtyard from time to time. She couldn't tell what was going on in the dark, but she was sure that the sounds were made by someone.

After spending two days in anxiety, Qi Rongzhi almost had a nervous breakdown. She could neither eat well during the day nor sleep well at night. Any slight sound could make her wake up the two maids at once and looked at the door vigilantly, for fear that Wang Shengxue would suddenly break in. If Wang Shengxue managed to sleep with her, she would be doomed.

However, there were only two maids loyal to her. They were brought into the mansion by her and now also locked up together with her. She could not even send a message to Qi Tianyu, who was outside. Looking at her haggard face in the mirror, Qi Rongzhi picked up the mirror and threw it to the ground in rage.

The sharp breaking sound seemed to break Qi Rongzhi's silence at once. She screamed sharply and turned her hand to slap Chunxi, who was standing behind her, and Chunxi took two steps back. If it were not for Chunyi's help, she would have fallen on the ground scattered with sharp broken glasses.

"Miss, don't get angry. We can think of another way!" Chunyi held Chunxi and said.

"What else can I do? What else can I do? The bastard said that he would come in the next few days, but... but my eldest brother still doesn't know it!" Qi Rongzhi said emotionally with tears and stamped hard on the ground as if she were treading on Wang Shengxue and Madam of Duke Xing.

"Miss... Actually, there is another way, but... it is..." Chunxi looked at Qi Rongzhi and said hesitantly, seeming to want to say something but stop on second thought. Obviously, she was not sure whether it was a good idea.

"Say it!" Qi Rongzhi wiped off the tears on her face violently and said in a harsh voice.

"Since the Eldest Young Master is outside, he obviously doesn't know our predicament and can't help us, but... but we can ask someone else for help... such the Eldest Young Master of the mansion!" Chunxi trembled under Qi Rongzhi's horrifying gaze and said with drifting eyes.

"The Eldest Young Master Shao Hua'an?" Qi Rongzhi was stunned. She slowly sat down and said with a frown.

Although Chunxi didn't finish her sentence, Qi Rongzhi immediately understood what she meant. After moving to Duke Xing's Mansion, Qi Rongzhi found that everyone in the mansion did not like her and completely ignored her.

Qi Rongzhi could barely meet Madam of Duke Xing after Madam of Duke Xing pretended to be kind to her on the day she recognized her as a foster daughter. Besides, Madam of Duke Xing even sent someone to tell her that she didn't need to go to pay her respects, and didn't say a word and ignored her when running into her on the road.

Old Madam of Duke Xing's Mansion was not someone she could meet and please as she wanted.

Although Shao Yanru allowed her to follow her from time to time, Shao Yanru just considered her a maid and she couldn't make any decision. However, everyone thought Shao Yanru was so kind-hearted that she even cared for and treated a "foster daughter", who was not favored by Madam, kindly.

In fact, she could just act on instructions from Shao Yanru. Nevertheless, if she didn't follow Shao Yanru, her life in Duke Xing's Mansion would be even more difficult.

Everyone in the mansion was unfriendly to her, and even the maids and old maids dared to challenge her. Only the Eldest Young Master of Duke Xing's Mansion was nice to her, and he stopped and talked to her gently every time he met her.

He was the only person she could count on, so she certainly would not let go of such an opportunity. Every time she met Shao Hua'an, she acted gentle and even pitifully like a young lady from a noble family. Her gorgeous look and elegant manners made Shao Hua'an appreciate her a lot.

Qi Rongzhi even noticed that Shao Hua'an looked at her in the way Di Yan looked at her at that time. Of course, it meant that Shao Hua'an had a crush on her.

"No, I'm going to marry into the prince's mansion. I can't have any connections with Shao Hua'an!" Qi Rongzhi thought for a while, and then said and shook her head.

"Miss, you don't have to have any connections with the Eldest Young Master. We just want to ask him for a favor!" Chunxi said.

"Yes, Miss. You can ask the Eldest Young Master Shao to stop Childe Wang or frighten him, and we can do it in secret without telling Madam. As long as Childe Wang doesn't make trouble, we can wait for the news from the Eldest Young Master."

Chunyi said.

Hearing the words of the two maids, Qi Rongzhi became hesitant and nodded after thinking for a while. Shao Hua'an was indeed the only one who was kind to her in the entire mansion as well as the only one who could help her at this time.

"Grind the ink!"

"Miss, the First Miss Qi has sent the note to the First Young Master Shao!" When Qing'er entered the room to report to Shao Wanru, Shao Wanru was standing by the window and drawing a portrait of a lady. The lady in the portrait only showed half of her face, and there was a red maple forest behind her.

The lady was dressed in a plain eight-piece dress and stepped on the maple leaves as red as fire. Although she only showed a small half of her, it gave an impression of fascinating beauty.

“What did Shao Hua’an do?” Shao Wanru asked, put down the writing brush in her hand, and looked at the painting she had not finished yet. In fact, she was not very satisfied with it. In the last life, she was famous for portraying the best look of the candidates for the consort selection, and the portraits would be presented for selection.

Painting different scenery from different perspectives could make her painting completely different.

“The Eldest Young Master led a few servants to intercept Wang Shengxue, who was going to enter the mansion, dragged him to a corner and beat him, and then advised him not to take liberties in the mansion! Otherwise, he would be driven out of the mansion!” Qing’er said, and then told the whole thing in detail.

Beating Wang Shengxue secretly without letting anyone realize it and making his intention clear, both these indicated Shao Hua’an’s extraordinary tactics.

Shao Wanru showed a meaningful smile. She had met the First Young Master Shao several times. He looked very gentle every time, treated her as his biological sister, and seemed to be perfectly impartial. Nevertheless, she had neither met him nor talked with him in private, so she did not know about his personality.

But after this, she could tell that Shao Hua’an was not so easy to deal with, and he was the one who could inherit Duke Xing’s Mansion instead of Hao’er.

Compared with Hao’er, Shao Hua’an, the Eldest Young Master of Duke Xing’s Mansion, should be the candidate for the Heir of Duke Xing’s Mansion in favor with the general public!

In the last life, Shao Wanru had met Shao Hua’an in Shao Yanru’s place. On that day, Shao Yanru made her kneel at the entrance as a punishment. When Shao Hua’an entered the courtyard, he glanced at her and gently asked her who she was. After knowing who she was, the gentle and elegant Heir showed a trace of contempt, looked down at her arrogantly, and said, “As a humble person with no manners, you should keep kneeling!”

He hated her, a girl he just met for the first time, so much after knowing her name. Of course, it was not only because of her name. Needless to say, the First Young Master Shao also knew her real identity, so he harbored deep hatred against her and involuntarily mocked her as soon as he knew her identity.

In the last life, she was ignorant and didn’t understand why she enraged the Heir of Duke Xing’s Mansion, who was said to be a graceful child. It turned out that all members of the Second Branch of Duke Xing’s Mansion had a desire to kill her family members!

In this life, she would tear apart the mask of all members of the Second Branch so that everyone could see their true colors. They should pay back what they owed Hao’er and her in the last life anyway...

It was better to take action as soon as possible, and she could use Qi Rongzhi to make the first move!

## **Chapter 649 Beaten Twice for No Definite Reason**

Shao Hua'an did not directly mention Qi Rongzhi, so it could be seen that the First Young Master Shao was cautious and not easy to deal with. He beat Wang Shengxue with the excuse that Wang Shengxue flirted with several maids in the mansion and the maids complained about it in front of Madam of Duke Xing, so he taught Wang Shengxue a lesson on behalf of Madam of Duke Xing.

It seemed to have nothing to do with Qi Rongzhi and have no influence on his reputation. From this point of view, it could be seen that it was not by chance that the First Young Master Shao had always enjoyed a good reputation.

"Keep sending notes to Qi Rongzhi!" Shao Wanru said coldly with deep eyes.

"Yes, got it!"

In the next few days, Qi Rongzhi found that not only did Wang Shengxue continue keeping on at her, but he went even further. She could even hear someone calling her from the top of the wall at night, which scared her and her two maids so much that they stuck together and shivered. Two days later, Qi Rongzhi secretly bribed the two old maids guarding the door again and asked them to deliver a letter to Shao Hua'an.

The last time when they delivered Qi Rongzhi's letter to Shao Hua'an, Shao Hua'an rewarded them, so they once again delivered the letter without any hesitation this time.

Madam told them to keep Miss Qi in custody and forbid her and her maids to go out and communicate with outsiders, but she didn't say that the Eldest Young Master was among the outsiders. The Eldest Young Master was the only son of Madam and the future master of the mansion, so as servants, they didn't dare to displease the Eldest Young Master.

Although the Eldest Young Master did not say anything before, they could tell from the reward from him that he agreed to their deeds.

Therefore, the two old maids were rewarded by Shao Hua'an again this time.

After that, Shao Hua'an beat Wang Shengxue again with an excuse and warned him not to take liberties in the mansion, let alone to flirt with the girls in the mansion. Otherwise, he and his sister would be driven out of the mansion.

Wang Yishu had been recuperated in Duke Xing's Mansion and maintained her life with medicine. If it weren't for the medicine, she would have died. If they were really driven out, not to mention that Wang Shengxue would run behind his expenses, even Wang Yishu would die.

Although Wang Shengxue, who almost limped in pain after being beaten, gnashed his teeth in anger, he had to promise that he would never do something so shameless again and almost swore.

After Wang Shengxue limped away, Shao Hua'an left with a frown.

"Why did the Eldest Young Master beat Childe Wang again and again? Did Childe Wang offend the First Young Master?" Suddenly, a maid's voice came across the wall. She obviously had seen what had happened just now.

Wang Shengxue stopped with his hands on his waist and listened attentively. How could he not get angry after being beaten for no definite reason? Of course, he hated the maids in Duke Xing's Mansion



the most, because someone among them must have complained about him in front of Shao Hua'an. In fact, he was very well-behaved in Duke Xing's Mansion and didn't dare to flirt with the maids in Duke Xing's Mansion.

"How could Childe Wang offend the Eldest Young Master!" The other maid said in disapproval. On hearing her words, Wang Shengxue kept nodding, because he had not figured out what he had done until now. If he found out which maid secretly spoke evil of him, he would think of a way to kill her after returning.

"If he didn't offend the Eldest Young Master, how could the Eldest Young Master beat him for a maid? The Eldest Young Master has never meddled in the domestic affairs. Besides, Childe Wang is the Eldest Young Master's cousin. How could he beat his cousin for a maid?" The former maid asked in confusion. This was also what confused Wang Shengxue.

He thought to himself that he had always been respectful to his cousin and never treated him lightly, and he even had always been respectful to the servants around his cousin. Wang Shengxue was not stupid. Otherwise, he would not have been able to get official rank. It could be an accident the first time, but must be something else the second time!

"He offended the Eldest Young Master's beloved girl rather than the Eldest Young Master!" The other maid said with a sneer.

"Which maid?"

Wang Shengxue stretched his ears. If he knew which mean girl went to complain about him and talk nonsense, he would definitely teach her a lesson.

This time, he was beaten even harder than the last time, which made him limp for a while!

"It's not a maid. If the Eldest Young Master really takes fancy to a maid, he could just have her transferred to his courtyard. Madam wouldn't turn down his request. That day I saw the old maids guarding the courtyard over there deliver a letter to the Eldest Young Master." The maid said in a harsh and low voice. She was obviously a mean gossip.

But the news from this kind of gossip was usually more convincing.

"Which courtyard is it?"

"It's just over there... Isn't someone locked up there... Madam intends to marry her to Childe Wang... But the Eldest Young Master feels pity for her... She's so good-looking... How could she agree to marry Childe Wang... What a shame..." The maid's voice became further, and it was obvious that she was walking in another direction.

Wang Shengxue stood by the wall and became sullen with his face turning blue and white alternately.

He knew who the two maids were talking about. It was obviously Qi Rongzhi.

He, who visited Duke Xing's Mansion frequently, certainly had met Qi Rongzhi. Although Qi Rongzhi was beautiful, Wang Shengxue had never liked her and somehow didn't thought her a good person. She was almost as humble as a maid in front of other members of the mansion, while acted as if she were superior to him in front of him. He really found it hard to like her.

Unexpectedly, Madam of Duke Xing had him over and suggested that he should marry Qi Rongzhi, whose eldest brother was quite promising. Although Wang Shengxue had no feelings for Qi Rongzhi and could even be considered disgusted with her, he agreed since Madam of Duke Xing made such a suggestion.

He certainly would not hesitate when he could please Madam of Duke Xing. Moreover, although he didn't like Qi Rongzhi, he was clear about his current situation. Those fair young ladies from aristocratic families probably would not be willing to be his wife, so it was good for him to marry Qi Rongzhi, who at least had a promising eldest brother to support her.

Although Magistrate Qi was far away in Jiangzhou, it was said that he doted on his daughter.

So their engagement was settled temporarily. Madam of Duke Xing was very pleased and said that she would make their engagement official later. Unexpectedly, before their engagement became official, Shao Hua'an couldn't bear it and found an excuse to beat him twice for the girl.

He couldn't bear to swallow the grievance!

He turned around and limped to Madam of Duke Xing's courtyard in rage. The engagement was arranged by Madam of Duke Xing, and he even didn't like the b\*tch. As he thought, there was a trace of gloom across his eyes. How dared the b\*tch, who lived under the roof of Duke Xing's Mansion and tarnished Shao Yanru's reputation, set him up? Did she really think herself a fair lady?

He didn't believe that Madam of Duke Xing would not get mad after knowing that this b\*tch secretly hooked up with her son!

"Miss, Miss Qi's courtyard was smashed!" Yujie came in and said breathlessly, while Shao Wanru was sorting out the set of needles of hers.

She picked up a thin needle and gently wiped it with a snow-white handkerchief. The disturbance in Qi Rongzhi's courtyard was expected. Madam of Duke Xing thought so highly of Shao Hua'an that she wouldn't even allow Qi Rongzhi to do the slightest damage to his reputation.

Hearing Wang Shengxue's words, Madam of Duke Xing almost burst with anger.

If such a thing happened in the last life, Madam of Duke Xing might be more prudent and would not immediately take action by sending some servants to smash Qi Rongzhi's courtyard.

However, the situation was different in this life. Duke Xing's Mansion seemed to be flourishing but gradually declined in many respects. Madam of Duke Xing's most outstanding son and daughter were supposed to be her biggest pride, but now they got into trouble repeatedly and their reputation had been tarnished, which made Madam of Duke Xing very anxious and uneasy.

"Did she go to the Eldest Young Master's courtyard?" Shao Wanru said. The thin needle flashed under the light coming through the window with burning brightness.

"Yes, Madam went there in rage. I heard that she kicked everyone out and came out soon. After that, Madam looked much better and went to Miss Wang's place. The Eldest Young Master went out after Madam left, so I can't tell how he looks!"

Yujie reported in detail and became even more appreciative of her master.

Her master's speculation was pretty close and even predicted Madam of Duke Xing's reaction correctly.

"She went to Wang Yishu's place?" Shao Wanru put down the needle in her hand, slightly turned her fluid eyes, and said thoughtfully. It seemed that Wang Yishu was going to take the blame again this time.

"Yes, she went to Miss Wang's place. I heard that Madam of Duke Xing instructed two maids to go to the kitchen to fetch some Miss Wang's favorite pastries which should be light because Miss Wang's illness has recurred recently and she has a poor appetite and excessive internal heat!" Yujie, who knew about medical skills, curled her lip after finishing her words.

Wang Yishu was so sick that she couldn't get out of bed. Why did Madam of Duke Xing say that her illness had recurred recently and she had a poor appetite and excessive internal heat? Now her diet was based on her condition, and other things had little influence on her condition.

"Yujie, you have learned from Mingqiu Nun for so many years. Judging from Wang Yishu's current situation, do you think she is really sick or there is something behind it?" Shao Wanru raised the corners of her mouth slightly and asked with her long eyelashes fluttering.

"How could she be so terribly sick? She obviously pretends to be sick. At that time, she just passed away. How could she remain sick for so many years and couldn't even get up? It's obviously an excuse she made up to avoid what happened in the imperial palace!"

Yujie said with certainty.

Others might not know what had happened at that time, but Yujie was very clear that Wang Yishu obviously fell down in panic. So far, it had become a mystery case without clues. Even if everyone suspected Madam of Duke Xing, it was suspended because Wang Yishu couldn't offer the evidence.

"Well, why does Wang Yishu keep recuperating during these years without showing up in front of others? If she keeps pretending to be sick, it will last a lifetime. Isn't Wang Yishu anxious?" Shao Wanru said thoughtfully.

It was possible for someone to pretend to be sick for one day or two days or even one month. But she had never seen someone who pretended to be sick for three years!

There must be something behind it!

### **Chapter 650 Does She Really Fall Sick or Pretend to Be Sick?**

"Miss, do you mean that Wang Yishu is not pretending to be sick? It's true... that she can't get up and can only lie in bed?" After thinking of Shao Wanru's words carefully several times, Yujie said with her face suddenly changing, "Miss Wang has been drugged, so she can't get up all these years?"

Only the drug could make someone, who pretended to be sick, really fall sick.

Shao Wanru nodded. Wang Yishu was probably unwilling to waste her life in bed. But now she couldn't determine her fate, so she had been lying in bed for three years.

Seeing Shao Wanru nod, Yujie thought of another problem and asked, "Miss, since Miss Wang could be a threat to Madam of Duke Xing, why doesn't she kill Miss Wang directly? Anyway, she has drugged Miss Wang. She could end it by poisoning Miss Wang. Isn't that better?"

The existence of Wang Yishu was a hidden danger for Madam of Duke Xing, so the best solution was to kill Wang Yishu.

“Wang Yishu can’t die. If she really dies, others will be more suspicious of Madam of Duke Xing. At that time, everyone thought it was Madam of Duke Xing who intended to deal with me. If something happened to Wang Yishu as soon as she returned to Duke Xing’s Mansion, Madam of Duke Xing would definitely take the blame. Moreover, I have reclaimed my identity now!”

Shao Wanru stared at Yujie meaningfully and said.

Yujie was frightened by her words, but after thinking about it for a while, she thought that her master was right. When her master was still the Second Miss of the Qin’s Mansion, others might not think that Duke Xing’s Mansion would set up her master, because there were no connections between the two mansions.

But now, her master was the Fifth Miss of the Shao’s Mansion, the only daughter left by the former Heir of Duke Xing. The relationship between the two branches of Duke Xing’s Mansion indicated that the overt and covert struggles for power and position between them were normal. It was very likely that Madam of Duke Xing had known Shao Wanru’s identity long ago and attempted to kill her before she reclaimed her identity.

In this case, Duke Xing’s Mansion would get into big trouble!

Not only Madam of Duke Xing was vicious, but also the second branch of Duke Xing’s Mansion would be suspected of plotting to murder a member of the eldest branch of Duke Xing’s Mansion. If Rui’an Great Elder Princess got the evidence, they would not be able to settle it by determining Hao’er as the Heir of Duke Xing’s Mansion.

Duke Xing’s Mansion could not take drastic steps on it.

“They should maintain her life for a few more years. In this way, no one will associate it with Madam of Duke Xing, because no one will care about Wang Yishu after a long time.” Shao Wanru continued saying.

She said calmly even with a faint smile on her delicate little face. However, her smile was frightening, as if there were some bottomless coldness in her eyes.

“Check on Wang Yishu!”

“Miss, it’s not easy to get close to Miss Wang. That place is very remote, and few people go there at normal times. My showing up there must be conspicuous. Moreover, Miss Wang and you have borne grudges against each other. If I go there openly and something happens, they will probably shift the blame onto you.”

Yujie had scruples and thought it inappropriate to do so. Based on her master’s remark, Madam of Duke Xing had always considered her master as a threat and had an evil intent towards Wang Yishu, so Madam of Duke Xing would definitely kill two birds with one stone by shifting the blame for murdering Wang Yishu onto her master once she got the chance.

When the time came, the grudges between Wang Yishu and her master would be mentioned. Her master would be disdained by everyone because of killing a patient, who was on her deathbed, due to the previous grudges between them.

“Let Qing’er do it. You don’t have to do it, but you can occasionally show up around the area. You don’t have to be too close to the place and just watch from a distance! Your frequent showing up there will make her anxious!” Shao Wanru was amused by Yujie’s anxiety and said. She picked up another needle and carefully wiped it against the light.

Yujie’s frequent showing up there would inevitably make Madam of Duke Xing anxious. If she got anxious, she would inevitably cover it up. With some other guards to help her, Qing’er could naturally come and go without being noticed.

Qing’er acted quickly and came back with detailed information the next day. From the dregs of Wang Yishu’s medicine and food to Wang Yishu’s appearance, all of these showed that Wang Yishu was in very poor condition. If she remained in this state, she might really die.

“Miss, the medicine is actually a general tonic for nursing her health rather than curing any disease. I find nothing else in her medicine and food, both of which are ordinary.” Yujie reported after finishing checking the dregs of the medicine and food and cleaning her hands in the warm water.

Everything seemed to be normal as if Duke Xing’s Mansion really tried to cure Wang Yishu. However, it was actually useless for a patient to take some common tonic medicine instead of an antidote against the disease.

“Miss, Wang Yishu seems to be sick. I saw her face. She looked very old with yellow hair and even some wrinkles on her forehead and dark circles under her eyes. She obviously has lived a terrible life and been in very poor condition. She couldn’t fall asleep until the doctor treated her with acupuncture. During the rest of the time, she was too weak to get up, couldn’t fall asleep, and lost her temper easily!”

Qing’er reported what she had seen to Shao Wanru.

She was not a doctor, so she did not know what kind of disease Wang Yishu suffered from. But judging from Wang Yishu’s appearance, she could tell that Wang Yishu was obviously in poor condition and seriously sick.

“Miss, if she’s really poisoned, how did they poison her? Besides, she’s still alive after being poisoned for three years. The poison doesn’t seem to be very toxic!” Yujie, who was curious about this kind of thing, said to Shao Wanru in a low voice.

Shao Wanru said, “It seems to be something unusual, which is non-toxic but could make her weak and unable to get up! Many kinds of medicines reinforcing or counteracting each other could achieve the effect!”

Connecting a series of things, she was now sure that Wang Yishu must have been taking medicines reinforcing or counteracting each other. General poisons were easy to expose. Even if Wang Shengxue had Wang Yishu buried directly without looking into it, if someone intended to reverse the case years later, Wang Yishu’s bones would be different from those of ordinary people, which could get Duke Xing’s Mansion into trouble easily.

If someone stirred up trouble by requesting to check Wang Yishu's body immediately, it would be exposed easier.

Of course, these medicines were not enough!

"Miss, what kind of medicinal materials do you think they are?" Yujie couldn't figure it out and asked with a frown.

After all, Yujie was not a famous doctor and had no access to some of the medicinal materials. Although Shao Wanru was skilled in acupuncture, she even knew less about the efficacy of medicinal materials than Yujie.

Shao Wanru couldn't figure it out at the moment. She picked up the medical book beside her, flipped through it, gently bit her lips, and then asked Qing'er, "Where does the doctor come from?"

"It's said that he's a skillful doctor with ancestors working in the imperial palace before. He's hired by Madam of Duke Xing with a high salary from another place to specially treat Miss Wang during all these years. Now he lives in the mansion and treats Miss Wang with acupuncture twice a day!"

Qing'er told all information she got.

Shao Wanru suddenly had an inspiration, stood up with her hands on the table, and said, "Acupuncture?"

"Acupuncture!" Hearing Shao Wanru's words, Yujie immediately realized something, stared at Shao Wanru in horror, and said.

Shao Wanru nodded silently. She and Yujie had learned from Mingqiu Nun, but neither of them could compare with Mingqiu Nun in medical skills. Despite their speculations, they could not get the correct answer.

It seemed that they should turn to Mingqiu Nun for confirmation.

With an idea in her mind, Shao Wanru calmed down. Since she couldn't find out anything about it, for the time being, she decided to put it aside and change the topic, "Did Wang Yishu take the blame for what happened to Qi Rongzhi?"

"There is indeed such a rumor in the mansion. It is said that Wang Yishu was in a bad mood, but Miss Qi went to piss her off. So Miss Wang sent a few servants to smash everything in Miss Qi's room!"

Yujie said.

In fact, there was no need to inquire about it, because today everyone in the mansion was talking about it in great detail as if they had seen Wang Yishu send some servants to smash Qi Rongzhi's courtyard.

How could a half-dead person get furious and send some servants to smash Qi Rongzhi's courtyard? It sounded really inexplicable.

"She is so sick that she can only talk in a voice even too low to be heard. How could she send some servants to smash Qi Rongzhi's courtyard? Madam of Duke Xing did choose a perfect scapegoat!"

Qing'er said with a sneer. She, who was sent to watch over Wang Yishu, could tell from Wang Yishu's current condition that it was impossible for Wang Yishu to vent her spleen on Qi Rongzhi.

"Where is Wang Shengxue?"

"He still comes to the mansion with the excuse of visiting his sister when he's free and spends most of his time visiting Old Madam and Madam of Duke Xing." Yujie said disdainfully. It was obvious that Wang Shengxue didn't care about his sister much.

"When you are free, you'd better go to Wang Yishu's place and leave if someone comes. Even if no one comes, you should leave alertly!" Shao Wanru advised.

"Rest assured, Miss. I know!" Yujie understood and said.

"Miss, Old Madam sent someone to invite you over!" While they were talking, a maid, who was outside the room, reported.

Shao Wanru glanced at Yujie. Yujie understood and turned to walk out of the room. Seeing her lift the curtain and come out, a little maid standing in the corridor and facing the door showed a brighter smile.

"Why does Old Madam want to meet the Fifth Miss?" Yujie looked the little maid up and down and asked.

"I don't know. Maybe Old Madam misses the Fifth Miss and wants to ask about her physical condition!" The little maid gave a flawless answer.

"You can go back now. My master will come over after tidying herself up!" Seeing that she could not get any information, Yujie said.

"Yes, I'm going to report it to Old Madam now!" The little maid said with a smile. After bowing sideways to Yujie, she turned around and left.

After the maid left, Yujie entered the room. Shao Wanru was sitting in front of the dressing table. Qu Le set her hair into a simple bun and picked a simple hairpin to insert into Shao Wanru's bun.

"Use this one!" Shao Wanru shook her head and said while drawing another hairpin from her jewelry box and handing it over.

"Miss, this hairpin was given by the Empress Dowager that day!" Qu Le took the hairpin, looked at it, and then reminded her. Although it was also of a simple style, its superior material made it an extraordinary hairpin.

"Just use this one!" Shao Wanru said with a sneer on her face as pretty as a flower. Old Madam should give an explanation for deducting most of the gifts from the Empress Dowager, and it was time for Old Madam to meet her.

Even Old Madam couldn't deduct such a large proportion of the gifts given by the Empress Dowager to her!

“Yujie, go to watch over Wang Yishu. If you see the doctor, who treats Wang Yishu with acupuncture, think of a way to get some information from him. Qing’er, go to watch over Qi Rongzhi. I’m taking Qu Le to Old Madam’s place!”