

## My Crown 561

### Chapter 561: Don't Defend Him

The crown prince was exasperated, and he pinched the small boy's waist gently while whispering, "You hold your tongue, this is your sister! Your eldest sister has returned!"

Our dear Qiao Sen instantly sported a stupefied face with two rows of tears still hanging on his cheeks. As a result, his expression was especially comical.

The crown prince glared at him both annoyed and amused, and he exhorted softly, "You've made your sister quite angry, I'm telling you. You have to coax her well, or else not only you, but also me, will be out of luck..."

Eldest Sister? She's the Eldest Sister that was always on Dad and Mom's lips, the one that went to a super large sect to cultivate?

Our dear Qiao Sen immediately wilted slightly.

"Look at the state that you've beaten him into! I don't believe that Mom taught you this! Abusing your power to bully others! Impervious to reason!" Qiao Mu was so furious that she strode up, intending to smack this punk again.

The crown prince stopped her hastily and incessantly smiled in apology as he said, "Qiaoqiao, your younger brother is still young. Don't hit him, don't hit him anymore."

"You step aside! Don't defend him all the time! Look at what you've taught him to become? Such a tender age, yet he's already procured the title of Little Tyrant of the Capital for himself! You really have made the Qiao Clan proud!"

Our dear Qiao Sen shrunk into the crown prince's embrace and was as silent as a cicada in winter as he watched his fuming sister. He only sobbed and didn't say anything.

"Come down, and immediately come with me to his family to apologize! I'm warning you, if you don't apologize today, I'll..."

"Ah, a-apol-apolo-apologize, apologize! Xiao Sen is very obedient, so he'll definitely go apologize!" The crown prince hastily tugged the little fellow's raised hand downwards while blinking at his little brother-in-law.

"S-Sorry, Ren Hongfei. I won't bully you again in the future. I-I'll take care of you in the academy." When the little fellow glimpsed the crown prince's meaningful glance, he immediately wilted and hastily apologized to the bloody-nosed and swollen-faced boy.

"Go to his house!" Qiao Mu was so rankled that she didn't even enter the Qiao Estate and directly pulled the two kids into the carriage. She turned her head aside with a sullen face and didn't speak a word at all.

The crown prince felt his heart beating like a drum as he observed her. He sneakily hooked her small fingers with his own, but Miss Qiao flung his fingers away at once.

The crown prince's handsome face immediately turned a bit green! He was done for! He really was implicated by his pig teammate of a brother-in-law this time!

What to do?

The crown prince's carriage rerouted to the Deputy Minister of Ceremonies Ren Pengjing's house.

When Ren Pengjing, who was serenely practicing calligraphy in the study at the moment, heard that His Highness the Crown Prince had come, he was dumbfounded. However, he still immediately called along his madam and two sons to change their clothes and go out to welcome the crown prince's carriage.

"This minor official pays his respects to His Highness! This official was not expecting His Highness, so please excuse this official for not going out to meet Your Highness." After hastily opening the main entrance, Ren Pengjing brought along his wife and sons outside to pay their respects.

When compared to the spacious and empty Minshun Boulevard, the road that the Deputy Minister of Ceremonies' house's entrance faced was extremely bustling.

When the commoners walking along the road heard that the crown prince's carriage had arrived at Sir Ren's estate, they frantically kowtowed along the road.

"Welcome, Your Highness the Crown Prince." Madam Ren was a typical gentle wife. She had noticed her badly battered youngest son being led over with a single glance, but she didn't say anything in denunciation even though she was agitated on the inside. On the contrary, she was still even-tempered as she brought her eldest son and second son over to pay their respects.

The crown prince felt a bit embarrassed and reached for Qiao Mu's small hand. "This is the crown prince consort."

As our dear crown prince consort was currently in a temper, she didn't bother to give him attention, so she slapped his hand away immediately...

Ren Pengjing and Madam Ren were momentarily astonished. Yet when they finally beheld the little lady's icy and celestial looks, they couldn't resist marvelling inwardly before hastily stepping forward to give their salutations. "Greetings to the crown prince consort."

## **Chapter 562: Punishment by Flogging**

"Qiao Sen, kneel down." Qiao Mu turned her head and gazed sternly at her younger brother.

A certain crown prince who was disdained by his wife hurriedly gave a light cough to remind his little brother-in-law that it was best not to anger Lady Sister at a time like this.

So our dear Qiao Sen knelt down aggrievedly with a lowered head, his academy's Little Tyrant character nonexistent.

Qiao Mu led Ren Hongfei over to Madam Ren and bent her waist in a respectful bow, which startled Sir Ren and Madam Ren into hastily avoiding it, as well as hurriedly returning the bow.

"Sir Ren, Madam Ren, I truly feel apologetic. My younger brother is lacking in discipline, and I really am distressed that he has beat your son into this state." Qiao Mu said gently, "I have already examined your

son on the trip here. Fortunately, he only suffered superficial wounds, and so I'll give this bottle of pills to your son. Take the red one orally and apply the white one externally, and he'll be back to full health in two days."

"Crown Prince Consort is speaking too seriously." Sir Ren and Madam Ren bowed together.

Qiao Mu shook her head. "It was my younger brother's fault in the first place."

After casting a chilly glance at her dear Qiao Sen, who was peeking at her, Qiao Mu spoke, "Shaoyao, bring me the ferule."

Shaoyao glanced at our dear miserable-looking Qiao Sen and hastily begged for mercy, entreating, "Miss, the little young master is young and immature. He won't dare to again in the future, so how about letting him off this time?"

"He'll be eight years old after the new year. Look at other families' eight year olds, which one of them is crafty, prodigal, and refuses instruction like him? Where did the etiquette and ceremony that he learned in the academy go?" Qiao Mu gazed at Shaoyao and asked coldly, "Are you not listening to my words anymore, too?"

"I understand!" Shaoyao immediately wilted, and she quickly turned around to retrieve the ferule.

Madam Ren stretched out her hand, wanting to stop her, but Qiao Mu blocked her. She gazed gravely at Qiao Sen, "Are you convinced, being beaten by Sister today?"

"Sister, I was wrong!" Our dear Qiao Sen glimpsed in terror at that frigid ferule and gave His Highness the Crown Prince, who was standing on the side, a gaze that cried for help.

After receiving his little brother-in-law's gaze, the crown prince hurriedly tugged Qiao Mu's small hand. "Qiaoqiao, Xiao Sen knows his mistake, so let's..."

"You're still defending him!" Qiao Mu was filled with anger, and she forcefully pushed the crown prince's hand away. She shouted at her younger brother, "Hand!"

Qiao Sen shuddered, and his small hand involuntarily raised up.

"Slap." The ferule landed on his tiny palm, hurting our dear Qiao Sen so much that his entire body shook, and he started bawling on the spot.

After seeing his little brother-in-law's red and swollen hand and how pitifully he was crying after three hits, the crown prince couldn't bear it anymore and went up to tug at his little wife. "Qiaoqiao, it's enough, it's enough now, Xiao Sen will certainly be well-behaved in the future. Rest assured, he'll definitely remember this beating and won't bully his schoolmates again in the future."

He hurriedly sent Qiao Sen a look as he said this.

Qiao Sen wailed, "Sister, I was wrong. Sister, wuwuwu..."

Madam Ren also didn't dare to truly offend the crown prince's little brother-in-law, and she hastily persuaded Qiao Mu to stop, saying forthrightly that it was a tussle between children and couldn't be taken too seriously.

After sending off the raging crown prince consort, the couple exchanged glances before pulling their youngest son over and examining him meticulously.

As expected, the wounds on his hands and face had already been tended to carefully. The medicine applied was also unknown of and unheard of before, which showed how precious it was. Some of the more minute wounds on the child's face had already healed by this time.

"Sister is a good person." Ren Hongfei said quietly.

His father glared at him. "What nonsense are you speaking, that is Her Highness the Crown Prince Consort. How can you claim relations so recklessly? Keep this in mind in the future."

### **Chapter 563: The Tractable Little Brother-in-Law**

After sorting out this mess, don't mention a reunion meal, they didn't even have time to drink a mouthful of water.

By the time they headed back to the Qiao Estate, lunchtime had already passed, and it was now the afternoon.

"Qiaoqiao, don't be angry anymore." After boarding the carriage, the crown prince quickly set a proper attitude, acknowledging his fault, all while fiercely sending his little brother-in-law a look.

Our dear Qiao Sen was one tractable cookie.

After seeing how even his extraordinary and remarkable Big Bro had to cautiously curry favor with Sister, he understood that this Lady Sister couldn't be offended at all!

Thus, he hurriedly wrapped his small hands around his sister's leg and wailed, "Sister, I was wrong, Sister, forgive me."

He normally gave the elders at home the image of a lovable and clever child. Hence, Wei Ziqin and the rest simply didn't know about his so-called Little Tyrant of the Capital title.

When this little fellow first arrived in the capital, he was not yet so audacious.

The primary catalyst was that after his Big Bro had smoothly resolved several incidents, he realized that his Big Bro was especially capable and awesome, so he started being all the more fearless because of this backing.

As long as he suffered any grievances and cried a bit in front of his Big Bro, it would immediately get settled in a flash...

In the beginning, there were still people who dared to bully him in the academy. Later on, not to mention how they would take a roundabout route whenever they saw him, they would also all kiss up to him and call him Little Young Master Qiao with extreme deference.

He would look for Big Bro whenever he wanted anything or got into some kind of trouble. Big Bro would visit his house practically every day with lots of gifts every single time, and he basically gave the little fellow anything that he asked for.

Besides, he was the only male grandson in the Qiao Family, so Elderly Lady pampered him exceedingly. Sometimes, when Wei Ziqin did want to reprimand him, Elderly Lady would defend him.

This child's single sentence simply garnered a response en masse. Qiao Sen passed his days conceitedly and extravagantly at such a tender age, so how could his small, arrogant tail not point up to the heavens?

Nevertheless, he finally understood by now how formidable Sister was.

If he provoked Sister, even Big Bro couldn't protect him! So this sister was very awesome.

Even though he was young, he understood how to observe people's expressions. Seeing that Sister's expression had softened somewhat, he exerted even more effort into wailing for mercy.

Qiao Mu hadn't wanted to thrash him. It was only that she had recalled her past life, when her good and fine younger brother was led astray by Wen Ruwan and raised into a prodigal debauchee. He would be fighting jealously with love rivals at the brothel every day, and he got beaten to death at age 16.

When she thought of this, she turned her head aside and stared outside the window with reddened eyes, not saying a word.

The crown prince's heart sank, and he frantically hugged the little one in his arms in both regret and anguish. "Sorry, Qiaoqiao. I vow that I won't spoil him anymore in the future. It's my fault, it's all my fault. It's because I usually indulge his requests that has led to his out-of-control behavior today."

"Don't be angry at yourself, you should just hit me." The crown prince held her small hand to slap his own chest. "Hit me hard."

Qiao Mu turned her head around to glare at him. This truly was an exceptionally good Big Bro!

How would she know that the crown prince had also been duped by his little brother-in-law? After all, this little-brother-in-law was usually very sensible and clever in front of him.

Besides, he didn't live in the Qiao Estate. Normally, he would come in haste and leave in haste, leaving after calling on his parents-in-law and delivering his presents.

How would he have known that this merely seven to eight-year-old brat was so devious and was only putting up a pretense normally?

When Mo Yu that imp was young, the crown prince had also given his younger brother everything that he asked for. There didn't seem to be a difference between his little brother-in-law and his own younger brother, so that's why...

But how would he have anticipated his little brother-in-law to have duped him!

#### **Chapter 564: Reunion**

The carriage backtracked to Minshun Boulevard, cruising along the streets that were paved with greenish-black stone tiles.

Inside the carriage, Qiao Sen continued to sob and sniffle for a while. His small face had flushed red, and he did indeed look quite pitiful.

Glancing at his red and swollen small hand, Qiao Mu compressed her lips together and didn't speak.

It was only after a while, when his sniffles had died down, that she pulled his arm over. She took out a small bottle of ointment with a flip of her hand.

This ointment was naturally extremely effective at dispelling blood stasis and reducing swelling. After smearing a small dab, Qiao Sen's red and swollen hand immediately went down by more than half.

"Sister, you're still angry." Qiao Sen peeked at his sister and said feebly.

"Xiao Sen. Do you resent Sister for beating you?" Qiao Mu paused her movements and asked softly.

Qiao Sen shook his head frantically.

This child was very quick-witted. When he saw the gaze that his Big Bro sent over, which clearly had "You dare resent? Bro will immediately give you another beating" written all over it, this imp immediately cowered.

"Then why don't you tell me, why did Sister have to punish you so severely today." Qiao Mu questioned.

After Qiao Sen peeked at the crown prince, who brusquely glared back at him, he then promptly turned his head back and said, "I-I shouldn't have bullied Ren Hongfei. I won't bully him again."

"It's not completely because of this." Qiao Mu gazed faintly at him. She set aside the ointment in her hand, and she explained gently, "It's because Sister feels heartache. Why is my younger brother like this? Sister doesn't ask that you use culture to pacify the whole world nor use force to subjugate the universe, but at the very least, the younger brother in my heart is able to safeguard a kind bottom line. And not what I'm seeing right now, impervious to reason and bullying the weak."

"Tell me, is it fun to bully him? There's so many of you ganging up on one person to punch and kick him! Do you feel proud of that?"

Our dear Qiao Sen sobbed and sniffled while latching pitifully to his sister's arm. He vowed persistently, "Sister, I won't again next time. Don't be angry, please, Sister, Sister, Xiao Sen will change, I'll definitely change."

His Eldest Sis's eyes that were as bright as the moon were showing disappointment. This caused our dear Qiao Sen to feel very vexed on the inside.

"Who is that Gao Fang?"

"He's also in the academy... His dad is one of the richest merchants in the city."

Qiao Mu didn't demand that her younger brother immediately break off relations with that Gao Fang, even though she knew that this Gao Fang was one of Qiao Sen's dissolute companions in her past life.

It was because she had taken the child's possible rebellious mood into consideration, so she temporarily put it off and didn't mention anything.

The reason Xiao Sen became like this couldn't be removed from his upbringing in the family. It was fortunate that he was still young and could be taught.

Therefore, Qiao Mu didn't continue to scold him and rather gazed pensively out the window.

She didn't believe that her parents would nurture him into this little tyrant. There must be some reason for this.

By this time, the carriage had arrived at the Marquis of Jiayuan's Estate's main entrance.

Wei Ziqin was currently standing at the entrance and peering anxiously.

She had heard earlier that Qiaoqiao coincidentally happened upon Xiao Sen having a scuffle with someone just as she was returning. This child didn't even enter the estate and immediately dragged Xiao Sen to the other person's house to apologize.

She didn't know what had happened and was agitated on the inside. When she glimpsed the carriage stopping before the entrance, her eyes brightened at once.

Wei Ziqin walked down the steps emotionally.

She saw the curtain lift up, and a fourteen to fifteen-year-old little lady scurried out of the carriage interior. Her frosty appearance, ethereal as if made by heaven, entered Wei Ziqin's eyes instantly, and it sent her into a daze in the blink of an eye.

It was as if she had seen...

Madam née Wei was greatly comforted from the bottom of her heart, and her eyes were instantly clouded over by glistening tears.

End of Volume 1.

### **Chapter 565: A Pity**

Qiao Mu had seen her mother standing at the main entrance with a glance. There were some fine wrinkles on her forehead and at the corners of her eyes now.

All at once, the thoughts of yearning in the depths of Qiao Mu's heart overflowed, and she strode towards her mother's direction. She walked faster and faster, breaking into a gallop in the end.

Wei Ziqin also hastily descended the steps. She flung away a maidservant's proffered hand to support her, and she opened up her arms as she ran towards her daughter.

"Mom!" Qiao Mu pounced over and got wrapped up in Wei Ziqin's embrace immediately.

Wei Ziqin patted her back twice without too much force and scolded while weeping, "You rascal! Do you remember what you said to Mom when you left? You said that you would be able to come back in three years if you were quick! How about now? How many years has it been? How many years has it been since you've come back! There hasn't been a letter in two to three years, either! You're really set on worrying Mom to death. This child!"

"I'm sorry, Mom!" Qiao Mu raised her head with reddened eyes. She acted like a spoiled child in her mother's embrace and whimpered pitifully, "Something happened, so Daughter wasn't able to come back in time."

“Look at you, you’re a young lady, about to have your coming-of-age hairpin ceremony, yet you’re still acting spoiled in Mom’s embrace.” Wei Ziqin turned her tears into laughter, and she poked the little lady’s forehead. When she raised her eyes and saw Mo Lian striding over, she was instantly a bit embarrassed.

“Xiao Mo, I let you see a spectacle.”

“How could that be? Auntie, let’s go in before chatting.”

“Okay, okay. Qiaoqiao’s Dad and Second Uncle still don’t know that Qiaoqiao has come back. Come, come, let’s first enter the house.” Wei Ziqin tugged her daughter’s hand and looked at Crown Prince Mo with slight regret.

Crown Prince Mo felt utterly frazzled by his mother-in-law’s regretful gaze.

*It’s unfortunate.* Wei Ziqin sighed in her heart. She didn’t know if this Mo Kingdom Monarch had suddenly gone nuts to abruptly decree a marriage for her daughter. Otherwise, she was extremely optimistic about Xiao Mo, this child.

This child, Xiao Mo, was mature and steady, and he had a good temper and personality. But most importantly, he was also filial!

Such a good boy was hard to come by even if you held a lantern to look for one. Granted, there was quite an age difference between them, but an older boy could dote on her daughter dearly. Besides, they were an ideal match and could be considered childhood sweethearts. She and her husband had also known Xiao Mo for such a long time, so they could be at ease if they were to entrust their daughter to him.

They were supposed to be a match made in heaven.

But now, sigh!

Even though her daughter was about to have her hairpin ceremony, Wei Ziqin still thought that she was still too young. The palace was a place where trouble and gossip ran rampant. How could she bear to harm her own daughter?

Yet, she could not disobey the king’s orders. Ever since that baffling royal edict was issued, Wei Ziqin didn’t eat much for lunch, her mood extremely melancholic.

Qiao Mu cast a covert glance at the crown prince before turning to beckon towards Qiao Sen, who had alighted from the carriage.

Qiao Sen hopped over with small steps, but his head had shrunk back slightly.

Upon glimpsing this naughty youngest son, Wei Ziqin’s expression turned fierce. “Xiao Sen, what did you do in front of the entrance just earlier? How did you anger your Eldest Sis just as she returned?”

Qiao Sen instantly went up to latch onto his mom’s thigh. “Mom, Sister has already forgiven Xiao Sen.”

“Oh my, Youngest Young Master, what happened to your hand?” A tall maidservant, whose face was as fine as jade, slowly articulated in a soft voice while bending over to hold up Qiao Sen’s small hand.



Wei Ziqin's gaze then landed on her youngest son's hand.

Although the swelling on Xiao Sen's small hand had gone down by more than half, it was still slightly red after all. It just didn't look as scary as before, when it looked like a mantou.

### **Chapter 566: Displeasure**

Wei Ziqin creased her brows. "Donghe, why aren't you greeting the Eldest Miss? How can you disregard the rules?"

It was only then that the maidservant called Donghe released Xiao Sen's hand in terror and bowed unhurriedly towards Qiao Mu. "Donghe greets Eldest Miss."

Qiao Mu swept her a glance before turning to look at her mother.

Wei Ziqin smiled and said, "You haven't come back in so many years, so it's natural that you don't know the people that we've taken in. Let's go in before chatting."

"Youngest Young Master, does your hand still hurt?" Donghe followed behind them, remarking in a soft and supple voice, "Youngest Young Master is tired, right. Let this servant carry you inside."

Our dear Qiao Sen was just about to hang onto the servant girl Donghe's body, just like usual.

However, he saw his Eldest Sister turn her head around abruptly, her clear and ice-cold eyes suddenly glaring at the maidservant. "Let go!"

This bellow immediately made the servant girl Donghe, as well as the two boy servants guarding the door, jolt in shock.

Donghe hastily retracted her hands, as if she had been bitten by a venomous snake.

"He can't walk by himself?" Qiao Mu couldn't tolerate those young masters and young misses' high and mighty behavior, and she gazed coldly at the servant girl called Donghe. "How old is he? Look at what he's become, mingling with people of questionable character all the time."

Donghe, the servant girl of questionable character, immediately reddened her eyes in grievance. She gritted her teeth and hung her head to mask the unwillingness in her eyes.

"Walk properly! Mom has told you how many times already, that you have to stand and sit properly. You deserve to be scolded by your Eldest Sis." Wei Ziqin brusquely whacked her son's back before dragging him through the door.

Our dear Qiao Sen obediently walked through the door by himself.

Steward Chang Zai, who came upon receiving the news, bowed with a wide smile towards the Eldest Miss and followed them inside.

After seeing a lot of new faces along the way, Qiao Mu involuntarily creased her brows.

"Mom, why are there so many idle people at home?"

Idle people...

Chang Zai twitched his mouth. *Sure enough, Little Master doesn't like the unnecessary servants.*

Wei Ziqin gazed at her daughter in mirth, and the mother and daughter walked arm in arm affectionately towards the main hall.

"It's actually not many people. Your grandmother likes it to be more lively at home, so we bought around a dozen servant girls and boy servants. We set aside two servant girls to accompany and chat with your grandmother. Tallying everyone up, our Qiao Family today only has 21 people in total. Compared to the operational structure of usual estates, we really have much fewer servant girls and boy servants," Wei Ziqin explained to her daughter goodnaturedly.

Qiao Mu turned her head around and glared at the crown prince in displeasure.

It's definitely because this fellow gave this and that practically every day that made the family extremely well-off. Otherwise, if they were to only depend on her father and second uncle going out to complete a mission occasionally, how could they support such a large batch of people?

In other words, the crown prince was supporting more than half of these idle people.

Giving a perfectly guileless look, the crown prince stepped forward and hooked Qiao Mu's small fingers with his own. "Qiaoqiao. Auntie isn't wrong in that the family hasn't taken in that many servants. Besides, they're living in such a large courtyard now, which is quite troublesome to maintain. You don't want Auntie to be too exhausted, right."

Qiao Mu gave a humph and turned her head aside, not wanting to bother with him.

On the other hand, Wei Ziqin was a bit panic-stricken and hastily stepped forward to separate the two's hands. She gazed at her own daughter, hesitating to speak. "Qiao, Qiaoqiao, there's something Mom n-needs to tell you."

The crown prince was baffled and couldn't comprehend why his mother-in-law stepped forward to break up mandarin ducks[1].

"Mom, tell me, what is it."

"Daughter, this morning, our family received a royal edict. For some reason, the king betrothed you to the current crown prince! I-I don't know what to say... sigh," Wei Ziqin sighed.

[1] mandarin ducks = affectionate couple

### **Chapter 567: Mismatching Mandarin Ducks**

Wei Ziqin wiped away her tears before gazing at the crown prince regretfully. She particularly couldn't bear to part ways with this boy that she thought highly of but still prompted, "Xiao Mo, Auntie knows that you like our family's Qiaoqiao. But this matter! Sigh, the king is mismatching mandarin ducks and has already issued a betrothal edict without rhyme or reason. There should be an appropriate distance between males and females. In the future, you shouldn't be too intimate with our Qiaoqiao."

Qiao Mu twitched her mouth.

The crown prince was flabbergasted and hastily protested, "That's not it, Auntie, that..."

"I know!" Wei Ziqin cut him short and heaved a deep sigh, pulling over Mo Lian's hand and patting it in a very practiced fashion. She then told him some meaningful and heartfelt words with the attitude of an elder. "Although it isn't very appropriate for us subjects to comment on the king. But there aren't any outsiders here, so let me tell you in private, this king is messing around too much..."

"Tell me, how could our family's Qiaoqiao be related to the current crown prince? Our Qiao Clan has always been a small household. I can't make heads or tails of it. How did the king's edict come about!"

The crown prince: ...

The crown prince glanced at Qiaoqiao, crying for help: *Why don't you go tell your mom!*

However, Qiao Mu kept mum. She even tugged the corner of her mouth while rolling her eyes at him, which had "you go play it by ear" written all over it. She then minded her own business and latched onto her mom's arm, walking forwards. "Mom, don't fuss over that whatever crown prince. Let's first see Dad and Second Uncle."

"This child, it's fine if you say this at home. You must not be like this outside. That is the current crown prince, you can't disrespect him." Wei Ziqin exhorted her daughter.

The crown prince felt an inexplicable hint of danger. Would Mother-in-Law drive him out in a fit of anger from embarrassment after learning the truth?

What was going on? Why were We so unlucky today? Why was everything blowing up on this particular day?

The group entered the main hall, and very soon, Father Qiao Zhongbang and Second Uncle Qiao Zhongxing ran inside with large strides after getting informed.

"Qiaoqiao. You're finally willing to come back from your sect at long last!" Qiao Zhongxing laughed heartily as he strode towards his niece.

"Daughter." Qiao Zhongbang also quickly ran over in great delight.

"Dad, Second Uncle." Qiao Mu observed both of them and discovered that her dad and second uncle's cultivation had each risen a bit.

Second Uncle was now a peak fourth-level body cultivator, while her father had reached level-seven phenomenal success mystic cultivation.

Compared to those large sects' prodigies, the two's increase in cultivation was extremely slow. She reckoned that it would get even more difficult to raise it as time passed.

However, if she could set aside some time to concoct some mystic breakthrough pills and body cultivation pills, she could assist the two in breaking through one or two more levels.

"Daughter, it's great that you've come back. Let me take a look, you've gotten a lot skinner. Your mom has been prattling about you in my ear every day. Since you've come back, you should live at home so your mom can nourish your body properly."

Upon hearing this, the crown prince immediately had the urge to scoop up his wife and hastily slip away.

If he had known earlier, he wouldn't have sent the little fellow back this quickly. Now, he couldn't bring her back after stepping through the door!

"Sis!!" Just as everyone was chatting, a shout came from the doorway.

Qiao Mu turned her head to look, and she saw Xiao Lin'er, whose rosy face was suffused with smiles, her pair of eyes crinkling as they shone, swiftly dashing through the door and pouncing at her with outstretched hands.

Qiao Mu hastily opened her arms to catch her, and her heart was stuffed full at once.

Her younger sis was no longer pitiful and blindly subservient like in her past life. This glowing and spirited expression was really charming!

"Sis, you've finally come back at last." As Qiao Lin was almost 11, she no longer had her baby fat like in the past. Instead, she was now a slim little lady.

### **Chapter 568: Xiao Mo is the Crown Prince**

"Xiao Lin'er, you've grown a lot." Qiao Mu felt her mood become joyous when she saw her younger sister's lively figure, just like a lark.

She temporarily threw those upsetting matters from the past to the back of her mind.

"Sis, you've also become prettier than before."

"Alright, alright. These two sisters, the first thing they do is compliment each other." Wei Ziqin couldn't resist chuckling, and she held both her daughters' hands in each of her hands while her face beamed with undisguised happiness.

"Qiaoqiao, let Mom show you around your Nanzhu Garden. You'll be staying there in the future, so if you don't like it, you can switch to another courtyard."

How could the crown prince stand hearing this; she was going to move in!

The crown prince hurried forwards and beamed at Wei Ziqin as he said, "Auntie, Qiaoqiao still has to return to the palace today. There will be a palace banquet tomorrow night, which I believe Auntie knows already. When the palace banquet ends, it won't be too late for Qiaoqiao to move back home after two more days."

The crown prince was saying, she had to wait two days after the palace banquet ended before she could come back home...

But actually, frankly speaking, the palace banquet hosted by the queen simply didn't have a lick of relationship with whether Qiao Mu moved back home.

Even if Qiao Mu moved back home right now, she could just enter the palace with her mother tomorrow night. Her mother was also a Marchioness with a third-rank imperial mandate after all, so she was certainly going to attend the banquet to greet the upper-class ladies of the capital.

Of course, there was no such thing as a good banquet; this was for certain. For the time being, she just had to see what kind of person didn't fear for her life and dared to provoke her.

Nevertheless, Qiao Mu's mom was strung along by the crown prince's words, and she looked slightly miserable when she thought of that palace banquet. "Qiaoqiao, I wonder what the crown prince's temper is like. Sigh, I reckon that you'll have to meet him face to face when you enter the palace tomorrow. What is that king thinking anyways! You haven't even had your coming-of-age hairpin ceremony, yet he already betrothed you to His Highness the Crown Prince. There should probably still be a period of time before the wedding ceremony, but your status has already been confirmed like this, sigh!"

Her mom once again started to prattle in deep worry for her daughter's bleak marriage.

Qiao Mu twitched her mouth. When she received the crown prince's imploring gaze that was begging her for help, she couldn't resist scolding "Serves you right" secretly, and she cast her small face aside with a humph.

The crown prince hastily extended a finger to scratch her small palm, and he tugged her gently.

Qiao Mu coughed. She held onto her mother's arm and spoke softly, "Mother, do you remember the incident I told you about before? One time, Daughter almost got kidnapped by someone from an evil faction but was rescued later on by a young chivalrous hero?"

"I remember, I remember. Mom of course remembers." Wei Ziqin's complexion paled slightly upon recalling this event.

She also remembered that her daughter said, the person from the evil faction had selected her for her talent and had wanted to capture her to make her into some kind of puppet demon.

"Mhm, actually, that young chivalrous hero was... the current crown prince."

Wei Ziqin's mouth gaped slightly. "His Highness the Crown Prince was the one who rescued you?"

"Mhm." Qiao Mu nodded her small head.

Wei Ziqin exclaimed gratefully, "Then Mom definitely has to properly thank His Highness the Crown Prince during this trip into the palace."

At this time, the pig teammate of a little brother-in-law who was standing on the side spoke up, "Big Bro, didn't Ren Hongfei's parents call you Your Highness the Crown Prince just earlier? Why does Mom have to enter the palace to thank you? Can't she thank you right now?"

Wei Ziqin turned around abruptly to look at the graceful youth whose posture was as upright as bamboo, her eyes already widened into large circles.

Mo Lian: ...

Qiao Zhongbang suddenly slapped his thigh. They had called him "Xiao Mo, Xiao Mo" so fluidly that no one had ever thought in that direction.

Actually, Mo Lian that child seemed to have divulged his surname when they first met. Wasn't the current kingdom surnamed Mo!

## **Chapter 569: A Vilifying Complaint**

Just as Qiao Zhongbang and Wei Ziqin wanted to come forward to give their salutes, Mo Lian hurriedly stopped them.

“Uncle, Auntie, there aren’t any outsiders here, so we won’t be particular about those mere formalities.” Don’t kid me, his little wife was presently glaring at him. How could he dare to let Qiao Zhongbang and Wei Ziqin bow to him?

“I wasn’t intentionally hiding it from you in the past, please forgive me.”

“Your Highness the Crown Prince is speaking too seriously.” Qiao Zhongbang replied quickly.

“Uncle, Auntie, you can call me Xiao Mo when you’re at home, just like in the past. Uncle, Auntie, and Second Uncle are all my elders. Calling me this also sounds more familiar.”

“This...” Qiao Zhongbang hesitated while Wei Ziqin, on the contrary, agreed forthrightly.

“Xiao Mo, truly, you didn’t say anything. You made Auntie worry for the whole day.” And she was thinking that the king had mismatched mandarin ducks[1]. Who knew that it was actually a misunderstanding?

Qiao Mu stood on the side without saying a word. She could indeed see that the crown prince spared no effort in chumming up to her family during this period of time. Look at how flattered he made her mom, who kept adding “Xiao Mo” to her every sentence.

At the beginning, there was still a bit of awkwardness due to his status, but after chatting for a while, her mom completely reverted to how she used to act.

After Crown Prince Mo chatted with Qiao Mu’s mom for a while, he turned his head to smile at Qiao Mu: *Look, I said that there was completely no problem on my future parents-in-law’s end!*

Qiao Mu turned her small head and pulled Qiao Lin’s hand, saying, “Xiao Lin’er, you’ve triggered your mystic meridians.”

“Mhm.” Qiao Lin nodded her head vigorously. “Last year, a mentor from the Mystic Cultivator Association helped me trigger my mystic meridians successfully! Sister, I’m a level-four mystic cultivator right now.”

A level-four mystic cultivator that was not yet fully eleven years old was already considered extremely talented, with an exceptional root constitution.

Qiao Mu nodded, very satisfied. “Sister can see that you’ve been working hard.”

Qiao Lin pursed up her small mouth with smiling eyes.

While the family was chatting merrily, Donghe loitered about the entrance for a bit before swiftly exiting and running frantically towards Elderly Lady’s Longevity Court.

Elderly Lady had been taking her afternoon nap, and Donghe happened to come just as she was getting up.

When she heard that Donghe had rushed over, Elderly Lady’s eyes flickered, and she told her servant girl Xiayun, “Bring her inside.”

Soon, Donghe's tall and slender figure appeared in Elderly Lady Qiao née Wang's eyes.

"Donghe, you came in such a hurry to find this old one, is it because something happened over at Master's end?" Elderly Lady held a cup of tea, and she drank unhurriedly without batting an eyelid while sweeping a glance at the servant girl Donghe who was kneeling before her.

The servant girl Donghe quickly crawled two steps forward on her knees to Elderly Lady, deliberately squeezing out two drops of tears as she said, "Elderly Lady, you probably still don't know. Eldest Miss has returned."

"What?" Elderly Lady was shocked. Upon hearing her mention Qiao Mu, that pair of ice-bead eyes that could chill the soul surfaced in her heart, and her hand that was holding her tea froze for some reason.

The servant girl Donghe didn't notice Elderly Lady's abnormality and added details to her story as she complained, "Eldest Miss is really an inflexible and strict person. Just as she stepped through the door, she gave Youngest Young Master a beating without room for objection."

"How old is Youngest Young Master! What can a seven to eight-year-old understand? Eldest Miss beat Youngest Young Master's palm until it festered from inflammation! Looking at it really makes the heart ache. Madam didn't say anything either and just let Eldest Miss have her way and be so reckless. This servant really couldn't look on."

"Besides, Old Madam, Eldest Miss has been back for this long, but she didn't even come to pay her respects to you. She truly is too unfilial!" The servant girl Donghe pursed her lips.

#### **Chapter 570: Successfully Stirring Up Trouble**

"Just now, seeing that Youngest Young Master was beaten so pitifully, this servant wanted to carry Youngest Young Master to apply some ointment. Who knew that Eldest Miss would chastise this servant without allowing for an explanation, and she even said that this servant was a person of questionable character." Donghe continued to complain aggrievedly, "Elderly Lady, for better or worse, you're the one who sent this servant to attend to Master and Madam. Since Eldest Miss doesn't care to give this servant face, then that clearly shows that she doesn't respect you, Old Madam, at all."

With every word Donghe uttered, Elderly Lady Qiao née Wang's complexion turned more and more unsightly. She finally smacked the table fiercely and shouted, "This little lass's temper has gotten more inflated. This old one will go and meet her! And see how excellent my good granddaughter is now, beating her own younger brother upon stepping through the door and throwing the entire family into pandemonium."

Donghe had achieved her goal, and she secretly revealed an evil smile as she quickly wiped away her tears. She stood up and followed Old Madam with tiny steps.

Xiayun knitted her brows and caught up to Old Madam's stride. She asked in a low voice, "Elderly Lady, are you going to the anteroom just like this? Then what are you going to do after seeing Eldest Miss?"

"Don't forget, Eldest Miss's status has completely changed now. Early this morning, His Majesty just issued an edict to betrothe her to the current crown prince!"

“Eldest Miss is now the genuine crown prince consort, and there is a distinction between the royal family and its ministers. If you rush over rashly and reprimand her like this, if people with ulterior motives were to find out, they would certainly take advantage and make a big fuss out of it.”

After contemplating carefully, Elderly Lady was almost startled into a body of cold sweat, and she turned to look towards Xiayun as she nodded repeatedly. “Xiayun has made a wise point.”

Seeing that Elderly Lady was going to back down, how could Donghe let this happen? She hastily exaggerated, “Old Madam, even if Eldest Miss is the crown prince consort now, but the current king also pays attention to filial piety. Can she disrespect her grandmother just because she’s the crown prince consort? This servant heard that when the Empress Dowager fell ill, His Highness the Crown Prince had also personally attended to the Empress Dowager tirelessly for a good several days. As the main wife of the heir apparent, the crown prince consort is the entire kingdom’s role model. The word “filial” is enough to intimidate her.”

“Donghe, what’s your intention for stirring up trouble here? Could it be that you want to see Old Madam and the crown prince consort be at odds?” She had long known that this Donghe wasn’t a good person. She was indeed clever, but she really was full of unnecessary misgivings.

If she had known that Donghe came today to instigate Elderly Lady into picking a quarrel with the crown prince consort, Xiayun really regretted not shutting her outside and shooing her back.

As servants, they only had to be familiar with the situation and be tactful. Then there wouldn’t be all this trouble. This Donghe was most likely reprimanded by the crown prince consort, and she couldn’t swallow her anger. Hence, she ran over here to goad Old Madam into taking control of the situation.

But Old Madam, at her advanced age, was already not as vigorous as she used to. Actually, she should just be enjoying her remaining years in peace. What was the use of haggling with the younger generation when it was nothing important?

“Sister Xiayun, what do you mean by this?”

“Alright, help this old one over to take a look.” Donghe’s words also made some sense. Even the current crown prince didn’t dare to not be filial, so she didn’t believe that that granddaughter of hers dared to disrespect her.

“This servant heard their conversation when she left the anteroom earlier. It turns out that that young sir who frequently comes to our estate to visit Madam and Master is His Highness the Crown Prince.”

“He’s the crown prince?” Elderly Lady Qiao née Wang was shocked, and she couldn’t help but sigh immediately afterwards. “He’s such a graceful young man with a fleeting bearing, so this old one thought that he was either from a wealthy or noble family at first sight. But I had never guessed that his status was so high.”