

Medical Princess 1151

Chapter 1151 A Chance Prepared to Temper Hao'er!

"Madam Jiang, I won't let her off!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess gnashed her teeth and said.

"Your Grace, if you want to avenge my master's death, I will sacrifice my life for it. I am at your service!" Seeing that it was almost the right time, E'niang kowtowed again. With a determined look, she sincerely looked at Rui'an Great Elder Princess and made an impassioned plea.

"What do you want to do now? If you want to leave the Marquis Xing's Mansion, I can help you!" Great Elder Princess frowned and said.

E'niang shook her head vigorously and said, "Your Grace, I won't leave. I will stay there until I avenge my master. Otherwise, I would stay there forever!"

"Are you... going to avenge Qinghua?" Rui'an Great Elder asked after looking at her a long time.

"Yes. I vow to avenge my master's death. She saved my life. Without her help, I would have died long ago. Otherwise, how could I have survived till now?"

E'niang continued with intense hatred in her eyes, "I'm going to marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion. Madam Jiang is no longer what she used to be. I can find a way to deal with her. No matter what, I will let her pay with her life for my master."

"But you are just a mistress. If Shao Jing cared about you, he would not have let you live outside for so many years. Anyway, Madam Jiang is the legal wife!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess stated the fact without giving an affirmative or negative answer.

"Your Grace, trust me. As long as I marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion, I will avenge my master even at the cost of my life!" E'niang gritted her teeth with hatred and said, "For so many years, I have been doing everything possible to take revenge, but I have never had a chance. Now, here comes the best chance to deal with Madam Jiang. I will never let it go!"

"You are merely a mistress. How can you marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion? Even if you make it, you'll only be a concubine much inferior to Madam Jiang. As the legal wife, she has plenty of ways to deal with you. If you go there, you'll lose your life before doing anything against her!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess said.

"I'm not afraid of her. I can face death with no regrets!" E'niang insisted.

Seeing her determination, Rui'an Great Elder Princess pursed her lips and stopped talking. Nanny Gao seemed touched by her and couldn't help saying, "Your Grace, that's what E'niang wants. Why not help her out? Give her a higher status to get married, and let Marquis Xing make her the second legal wife. In this way, she may compete with Madam Jiang."

"How can a servant girl defeat Madam Jiang? Besides, she is my daughter's loyal servant. How can I bear to watch her go back into a place full of dangers?"

Rui'an Great Elder Princess sighed and grabbed a handkerchief to wipe her eyes. "Get up. I will avenge my daughter by myself!"

"Your Highness, if you don't agree, I won't get up!" E'niang insisted and still knelt on the ground, clenching her hands.

"Your Grace, please help her achieve her aim. She has affection and faith. She escorted Infanta Qinghua back and is now determined to avenge her. You can give her and her daughter a better life when this matter is settled!" Nanny Gao persuaded her master to reconsider it. Obviously, she was deeply moved by E'niang.

"You have a daughter?" Rui'an Great Elder Princess asked. It seemed she had softened her stance, "If anything happens to you, what about your daughter?"

"I do have a daughter. She has been living outside the mansion, but is educated, reasonable, and sensible enough to understand loyalty. She won't stop me. Even if anything goes wrong with me, she will still be the Miss of Marquis Xing's Mansion. Madam Jiang can't do anything to her, right? Besides, even if she may target my daughter, I won't regret it!"

E'niang said, looking grieved.

Seeing this, Rui'an Great Elder Princess sighed deeply and asked Nanny Gao to help her up. "Well, I can help you. I will give you a new identity and let you marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion as a second legal wife!"

"Thank you, Your Grace. Thank you so much, Your Grace!" Though wearing a sad look, E'niang appeared very excited.

"Your daughter... I'll wait for the right moment and take her as my adoptive kin!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess granted her one more favor.

It was a great thing to be an adoptive kin of Rui'an Great Elder Princess. Even if it was just a title, it could promote the status of E'niang, who was still a mistress.

Again, E'niang wanted to kneel to express her gratitude but was stopped by Rui'an Great Elder Princess. She ordered, "You go back first. I'll think about how to arrange your identity properly. I can't let Shao Jing find anything wrong with it and endanger your life!"

"Thank you very much, Your Grace. How can I thank you enough for what you do for me?" E'niang thanked her repeatedly. Afterward, a servant girl took her away.

When she left, Great Elder Princess violently smashed the teacup onto the ground and said with a dark face, "How dare she lie to me? Marrying into the Marquis Xing's Mansion with higher status? Punishing Madam Jiang? If Zhuozhuo hadn't reminded me earlier, I would have fallen into her trap this time. I might have taken this treacherous servant girl as a loyal and righteous person!"

E'niang was so familiar with Rui'an Great Elder Princess's character that she could accurately predict her reaction. E'niang must have been secretly plotting against her for a long time!

"Your Grace, don't be angry. Lucky for us, Princess Chen has expected it!" Nanny Gao tried to appease her. Just now, she cooperated with Rui'an Great Elder Princess and put on such a show. It was also Princess Chen's idea.

"Let's go to the Prince Chen's Mansion!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess stood up and ordered. She was particularly eager to see her granddaughter and talk about this matter.

Nanny Gao asked someone to prepare a new carriage. This time, no one stopped it. The carriage left the gate of Rui'an Great Elder Princess's Mansion and went straight to the Prince Chen's Mansion.

Chu Liuchen went to the study early, and only Shao Wanru was in the inner court. She had just got up. Hearing her grandmother come, she was stunned and hurriedly asked someone to invite her.

"Grandma, what happened?" When Rui'an Great Elder Princess came in with a livid face, Shao Wanru hastily stood up. She took two steps forward and bowed before asking.

Rui'an Great Elder Princess took Shao Wanru's hand and led her to sit with her. Then she growled, "I met that woman, the servant girl staying with Shao Jing. She is dreaming of high status!"

"E'niang came to meet you?" Shao Wanru asked, not surprised at all. After Shao Wanru rejected her idea, E'niang would turn to ask for her grandma's help. Both Shao Jing and E'niang would not give up.

"Yes, she said she wanted to avenge your mother. She would marry there even at the cost of her life. According to what you said, I promised I would give her a good identity and help her marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion as a second legal wife. At once, she became too delighted to cry out." Rui'an Great Elder Princess was boiling with rage. Her daughter died many years ago, but others were still anxious to take advantage of her. Whenever she thought of this, her heart ached.

Rui'an Great Elder Princess reached out to cover her chest, feeling her irregular heartbeat. She felt a stabbing pain as if something had pricked her old wound. There, her unhealed injury was bleeding profusely again.

How could she not be full of hatred and bitterness? How she wished she could overturn the Marquis Xing's Mansion!

"Grandma, be at ease. No matter how my mother passed away, it must have something to do with the Marquis Xing's Mansion!" Shao Wanru said with murderous intent flickering in her eyes, but she immediately hid it at the bottom of her eyes.

Shao Wanru hadn't yet figured out everything about her mother. At this time, she didn't want her grandma to worry about this like her. Her grandma appeared in good health. However, tortured by sadness over many years, this tough lady was covered with sores. Before everything was settled, Shao Wanru didn't want to tell her grandma anything. If her grandma felt worried, angry, or depressed, she would become increasingly fragile.

Rui'an Great Elder Princess calmed down a little. Holding Shao Wanru's hands, she said, "I didn't send that servant girl to accompany your mother in the Marquis Xing's Mansion when she married. Perhaps, Old Madam, that old lady, gave her to your mother as a gift. Later, I saw her serve your mother, but she was not your mother's closest servant. Your mother had many servants. What should we do now? I reassured her and let her wait as you had told me to."

"Since she wants to marry into the mansion and fight with Madam Jiang, let her do it!" Shao Wanru said carelessly. She would not sympathize with Madam Jiang or support E'niang. In this case, she might as well watch them fight!

"Grandma, you can get a new identity for her, a fake one, but don't link yourself with it. No matter how others investigate it, they can't trace it back to you!" Shao Wanru suggested.

It was not good for her grandmother to get involved too much. She should stay far away from the two women.

"It's easy to do that. We can give her an identity. I happened to hear something, and I can use it!" Her granddaughter's comforting words quickly calmed her down. With a handkerchief, she wiped the corners of her eyes and thought for a while. Then she turned her head and asked Nanny Gao, "Did the family lose their daughter?"

"Yes... Yes. I heard they lost their daughter. I know what to do!" Nanny Gao immediately understood what Rui'an Great Elder Princess meant and nodded repeatedly.

"Grandma, does it have anything to do with you?" Shao Wanru asked worriedly.

"It has nothing to do with me. Don't worry!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess patted Shao Wanru's hand and looked at her with soft eyes, feeling relieved.

"Grandma, let's do as you say, but don't tell E'niang about it too early. Leave her out in the cold for a few days. If she comes to your place again, you can ask Hao'er to meet her. You have heard her lies, and I think she should have prepared many excuses for Hao'er too." Shao Wanru expressed much in a few words.

"How could she think of using Hao'er?" Great Elder Princess was furious. She clenched the handkerchief tightly as if she were strangling E'niang.

"Grandma, Hao'er will be the heir of a duke of Marquis Xing's Mansion. He may inherit the Marquis Xing's Mansion and take charge of it alone. No matter how well you protect him, he must reach out to the outside world. Since they have come to us, we can take this chance to let Hao'er understand the affairs of Marquis Xing's Mansion. He is no longer a little child. It's time for him to gain some worldly wisdom!"

Shao Wanru comforted Rui'an Great Elder Princess in a soft voice.

Hao'er had grown up a little and was very intelligent. The only thing that dissatisfied Shao Wanru was his attitude toward the Marquis Xing's Mansion. He never said he liked or disliked those people from Marquis Xing's Mansion. Although he frowned upon some things they did, he could always find an excuse for the Marquis Xing's Mansion. After all, he didn't know the heartbroken inside story.

It was not his fault. These people planned to destroy him by heaping excessive praise, but how could a child know it? Back then, he was just an insufferably arrogant boy who was deliberately spoiled!

This time, it happened that he could see the true colors of Marquis Xing's Mansion. He didn't owe them a debt of gratitude but a huge debt of his parents' blood! Under the adverse influence of the Marquis Xing's Mansion, he might turn against her and her grandma. To prevent it from happening, Shao Wanru thought they might take this troublesome issue as a chance to temper Hao'er!

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Chapter 1152 Is It Possible They Made a Mistake?

As soon as Infanta Yuan'an arrived at Princess Yuyan's courtyard, she saw Princess Yuyan coming out with a smile. Seeing her, she pulled her inside and said, "I happen to have something to talk to you about!"

"What can I do for you, Your Highness?" Infanta Yuan'an looked around but didn't see Chu Qing.

"You'll know it when you come in!" Princess Yuyan pulled her in with a smile. They sat down in their seats as the guest and the host. Afterward, Princess Yuyan smiled and handed over a piece of paper beside her, saying, "Take a look at it for me. How about I invite these guests?"

In the beginning, Princess Yuyan knew few of them. Thanks to the information from Chu Qing, she got familiar with most of the people on the list. Before she wrote down their names, she weighed the pros and cons.

Infanta Yuan'an glanced over the name list and was secretly shocked. "She chose the right ones. Associating with these people can greatly benefit Princess Yuyan. Is there anyone back her up?"

"This list is excellent, but I'm afraid Prince Yue, Prince Zhou, Prince Chen, Prince Xin, and Commandery Prince Qing may not come!" Infanta Yuan'an put down the paper in her hand and said with a smile.

"I need your help to invite Prince Zhou over. As for Prince Yue and Prince Xin, I'll go and invite them in person. That day, my Eldest Sister mentioned it to Princess Chen. I guess she and Prince Chen may come together." Princess Yuyan arranged everything in an orderly manner.

Infanta Yuan'an looked up and asked in astonishment, "Are you going to go to Prince Yue's Mansion to invite Prince Yue in personally?"

"What are you afraid of? I can find the way. I'll send someone to get the address." Princess Yuyan said disapprovingly.

"But the Prince Yue's Mansion has no hostess. It's improper to drop in on him so casually!" Infanta Yuan'an reminded her implicitly.

"I know no hostess lives in the Prince Yue's Mansion, but I have no other choices. I can't ignore Prince Yue just because his mansion has no hostess!" Princess Yuyan sighed and said.

However, the radiant smile on her face did not match her regretful tone. Somehow, Infanta Yuan'an felt Princess Yuyan was delighted that no hostess was in the Prince Yue's Mansion.

Infanta Yuan'an's eyes flickered as she suppressed a trace of displeasure in her heart.

"Would she also take a fancy to Prince Zhou when she sees him?" After all, like the Prince Yue's Mansion, the Prince Zhou's Mansion also had no hostess for the time being.

"You're right. I'm narrow-minded!" Infanta Yuan'an apologized generously with a light smile.

Her response made a good impression on Princess Yuyan. With a smile, Princess Yuyan explained, "We are the princesses of the Xu State. For our first banquet, we must invite royal family members. There are only a few princes of similar age. We should have fun at the banquet and get familiar with each other. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Dongcang must be willing to see us get along well!"

When Princess Yuyan brought this matter up to the national level, how could Infanta Yuan'an dare to say anything against her idea?

She couldn't say that it was inappropriate for Princess Yuyan, an unmarried lady, to go to the Prince Yue's Mansion alone. Anyway, she had tried to change her mind. It didn't matter to her whether Princess Yuyan listened to her or not.

If anything went wrong, she would not be implicated. With this in mind, Infanta Yuan'an quietly raised the corners of her lips. "You and your sister have made a good name list. But not all the people on it will come. You should be mentally prepared."

Many people in the capital city adopted a wait-and-see attitude toward the two princesses from the Xu State.

"I know, but most of them will come." Last night, before making the final decision, Princess Yuyan had discussed it with the people around her for a long time. Today, she showed it to Infanta Yuan'an. For one thing, she wanted to hear Infanta Yuan'an's opinion. For another, if Princess Yutao asked about it, she could say Infanta Yuan'an had gone through this list.

Since Princess Yutao only knew a few people in the capital city, many names on the list were new to her. Princess Yuyan could not explain why she would invite so many people that Princess Yutao had never heard of.

"It's best that you know it. I'm afraid that you might be disappointed if you expect a lot. You have decided how to invite the other princes, but what about Commandery Prince Qing? Did he come today?" Infanta Yuan'an naturally turned their conversation to Chu Qing.

"He won't come today! He was here yesterday." Princess Yuyan said indifferently. She picked up the list and looked at it again, feeling very satisfied.

"Yesterday? He came so fast!" Infanta Yuan'an smiled, her eyes flickering. Then she continued, "Princess Chen is competent. I thought Commandery Prince Qing would come here today at best but didn't expect Princess Chen to solve the problem yesterday!"

The smile on Princess Yuyan's face faded. She didn't think much about it before, but she suddenly got an uneasy feeling when thinking back on it now. Then, Princess Yuyan put down the paper in her hand.

"Has Prince Yue asked to marry Princess Chen? Does Prince Chen know about this?"

Her current goal was Prince Yue.

"Prince Chen should not know it. Anyway, the Empress won't take the initiative to mention such a thing. Besides, Prince Chen is never interested in inquiring about this kind of thing." Infanta Yuan'an shook her head. "It's not surprising that Prince Yue would ask to marry her. I heard they knew each other before Princess Chen moved into the capital. But at that time, they were too young to consider their marriages. Princess Chen hadn't yet returned to her original family!"

"Princess Chen used to be Ningyuan Army General's daughter. Why would she become a Miss in the Marquis Xing's Mansion later?" Princess Yuyan's eyes wandered restlessly as she asked. She heard of this matter but didn't know the specific situation. For some reason, she felt she could make good use of it.

Infanta Yuan'an thought for a moment and said vaguely, "Well... I heard it was because of the former heir of Duke Xing and Infanta Qinghua. But I don't know the details!"

"Is it possible they made a mistake?" asked Princess Yuyan.

Infanta Yuan'an suddenly straightened up and said hesitantly, "It is unlikely to happen. Her identity was said to have been confirmed and approved by Old Madam of Marquis Xing's Mansion and Rui'an Great Elder Princess. How could it be wrong?"

"See? You look confused by my question. Think about it, what if many people think so?" Princess Yuyan hinted with a smile.

"Well..." Infanta Yuan'an pondered over it and said with certainty, "But people from the Marquis Xing's Mansion and the Rui'an Great Elder Princess's Mansion won't think this way!"

"So what if they won't think so? What will happen if everyone thinks this way? I heard the Marquis Xing's Mansion is in bad condition, and its relationship with Princess Chen is not good. Moreover, Princess Chen is not close to her biological grandmother and has even tarnished her reputation!"

Princess Yuyan said and was not bothered about Infanta Yuan'an's words.

Infanta Yuan'an's heart skipped a beat. Suddenly, she smiled and said, "If that's the case, maybe the Marquis Xing's Mansion will go back on their word. But I'm afraid it won't be easy to achieve that!"

"It's challenging but not impossible. I hope you can help me!" Princess Yuyan leaned over to whisper in Infanta Yuan'an's ear.

As the future Princess Zhou, how could Infanta Yuan'an get along well with Princess Chen? They were destined to be rivals. When Infanta Yuan'an led them to the Prince Chen's Mansion yesterday, Princess Yuyan had seen it clearly.

"Well... I'm afraid there is little I can do to help!" Infanta Yuan'an looked embarrassed.

"It's just a small favor. How could you have the heart to turn me down?" Disappointed, Princess Yuyan glared at Infanta Yuan'an and said.

"It's a good idea, but not many people will agree in a short period. Old Madam of the Marquis Xing's Mansion doesn't like Princess Chen, but even she won't rashly say Princess Chen is not her biological granddaughter..." When the time was ripe, Infanta Yuan'an said this with a smile.

A flicker of a smile crossed her face — Princess Yuyan liked the hidden meaning of her words. She delightedly narrowed her eyes and asked, "Please enlighten me?"

"I just saw Zhang Qilan on your list. She is the future Princess Yue. Because of what happened between Prince Yue and Princess Chen, she is very dissatisfied with Princess Chen. But in the past, they were a pair of good friends. On that day when you and your sister entered the capital city, I saw Zhang Qilan standing downstairs and looking up at Princess Chen with jealousy and hatred..."

Infanta Yuan'an paused for a moment. As expected, when Princess Yuyan heard this, her spirits soared, and her eyes sparkled.

"Princess Yue is having problems with Princess Chen, but they used to have a good relationship?" Princess Yuyan grasped the critical point and was overjoyed. In the past, she just had such a half-baked idea. But after Infanta Yuan'an's advice, she suddenly felt it was feasible.

She casually brought up this idea to sound out Infanta Yuan'an. But at this moment, she felt it was a brilliant idea. She had to deal with both Miss Zhang and Shao Wanru. Neither of them was easy to deal with. But what if they struggled against each other?

"Your Highness, the two of them had been close friends. Their relationship has turned sour recently. Since then, Zhang Qilan hasn't visited Princess Chen. But Princess Chen still regards Zhang Qilan as her best friend. If... If Princess Chen's reputation suffers a disastrous decline, Old Madam of the Marquis Xing's Mansion would say she is not her biological granddaughter. At that time, if anyone inflames the situation..."

With a smile, Infanta Yuan'an shared the plot that Chu Liuzhou had given her. She had been worried there was no chance to deal with Shao Wanru. To her delight, Princess Yuyan appeared just at the right time.

"Great, great, a wonderful idea!" Princess Yuyan understood and was overjoyed. She clapped her hands repeatedly and said, "I'm so lucky to meet you. From the start, you and I are like old friends, but Princess Chen and I hate each other. I couldn't bear to see her being so delicate, spoiled, and kittenish."

Although Princess Chen only appeared fragile on the surface, Princess Yuyan didn't like her. Why would the two men she liked want to marry Shao Wanru? Princess Yuyan had been proud of her beautiful appearance. However, she paled beside Shao Wanru. When they were together, Shao Wanru threw her into the shade.

"Your Highness, I'm afraid that Prince Chen will do something bad if he finds out about this. We'd better forget about it!" When Princess Yuyan took the bait, Infanta Yuan'an looked hesitant. It seemed she wanted to do it but didn't dare to. She permitted herself a wry smile and said, "You probably don't know Prince Chen treats Princess Chen very well. My Second Brother nearly bumped into Princess Chen on the stairs. Merely because of this, Prince Chen broke his arm, though he did not even touch Princess Chen!"

"How could this happen? Your Second Brother is Her Grace's grandson. How dare Prince Chen be so unscrupulous?" Princess Yuyan gasped. Her eyes widened in surprise as she asked in confusion.

"It's mainly because the Empress Dowager dotes on Prince Chen, her favorite grandson. Even the Emperor can't do anything to him!" Infanta Yuan'an said helplessly. Since she didn't want to scare off Princess Yuyan, she didn't dare to describe how the Emperor treated Prince Chen in favor. As for the identity of Consort Lan in the Palace, a humble princess from a small foreign country didn't need to know it.

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Infanta Yuan'an would be Princess Zhou. In contrast, Princess Yuyan would be Commandery Prince Qing's legal wife at best. What was worse, she could only be a consort if she wanted to marry into another prince's mansion.

At this time, she was still a Xu State princess, a princess of a country. But after marrying into the prince's mansion, she could only be a consort. There would be a world of difference between their statuses. For this reason, Infanta Yuan'an disdained Princess Yuyan from the bottom of her heart.

But now, she needed Princess Yuyan.

Princess Yuyan had also made up her mind to befriend Infanta Yuan'an. Both of them had ulterior motives but pretended to be intimate with each other. Hand in hand, they moved to the window to discuss how to deal with Shao Yanru...

Chapter 1153 Shao Yanru's Plot

It was getting dark. Shao Yanru, with her servant girl Mo Yan, appeared in the darkness of the tall tower in the Imperial Palace.

A heavily disguised person emerged and pointed to a dark corner, saying in a gruff voice, "Secondary Consort, the thing you want is right there!"

"Will there be any mistakes?" Shao Yanru didn't go straight to fetch it. Instead, her eyes fell on the person in the shadows as she asked nervously. She especially came here because this was her last chance.

"There won't be any mistakes. Don't worry, Secondary Consort!" the figure replied in a deep voice.

"Don't call me Secondary Consort. I'm not a Secondary Consort!" Shao Yanru suddenly flew into a rage, cocking her eyebrows sharply. The title "Secondary Consort" was what bugged her more than anything. She hated it like poison.

She was working her way to the top! She wanted to stand supreme other than remain as a lowly Secondary Consort.

"When you are in the Palace, you are still a Secondary Consort." The shadow seemed to have smiled. There was a chill in her voice. "But when you are outside the Palace, who cares whether you are Secondary Consort, First Miss, or Miss from any other family?"

Surprisingly, her words calmed Shao Yanru down. She cracked a smile and asked tentatively, "You are my acquaintance, aren't you?"

"You're wrong, Secondary Consort. I didn't know you before!" The person in shades sneered as if she thought Shao Yanru's words were too amusing. "I've been in the Palace all the time. How could I get a chance to go out and meet you? If you want to talk about the past, I'm afraid you've got the wrong person. I have something else to do, so I have to leave, Secondary Consort!"

The figure in the darkness walked back. After taking a few steps, she heard Shao Yanru catch up. Abruptly, she stopped and said, "Secondary Consort, aren't you afraid that others will know the business between us? Please stay where you are!"

After saying that, she continued to walk forward, but Shao Yanru stopped chasing after her. Her eyes fell on the receding figure that hadn't yet vanished. Shao Yanru pursed her lips — there was a big possibility that this person was her old acquaintance.

But now was indeed not the best time to uncover them. Therefore, Shao Yanru decided to let them go on pretending to be mysterious!

“Secondary Consort!” Mo Yan took two steps forward and whispered.

“Go and get it!” Shao Yanru controlled her anger and ordered steadily. A little impatience spoils great plans. Especially now, she couldn’t afford to be disturbed and distracted.

Mo Yan hurriedly took out a small paper parcel from that place. Carefully, she took it over and handed it to Shao Yanru, saying, “Secondary Consort.”

“Let’s go!” Shao Yanru turned around and said. For the time being, she would not come to this place again. She would not be in such a dismal situation when she entered the Palace in the future. She must enter the Palace with great fanfare as a high-ranking imperial consort or even an empress.

A trace of hatred flashed across her eyes. She had been eminent above all others, but how could she become the lowest-ranking Secondary Consort? What a joke!

Even the imperial Palace could not trap her...

“Sister, trust me. I can do it!” Shao Yuanhao squared his narrow shoulders confidently and beat his chest to show he understood.

In the pavilion, Shao Wanru covered her mouth and smiled, slightly raising her watery eyes to look at Chu Liuchen. He was leaning against the rail aside, languid to the extreme. Even in the mansion of Shao Wanru’s grandmother, he looked free and easy as he was at home.

Chu Liuchen, leaning against the pavilion’s rail, also looked up with his beautiful eyes and caught Shao Wanru’s limpid eyes. In silence, he raised the corners of his thin lips and narrowed his eyes slightly, just like the white and fat cat in his arms.

“Indeed, a pet always behaves like its master.” Shao Wanru thought to herself.

“Come here, Yuanhao!” Chu Liuchen waved at Shao Yuanhao.

“What’s the matter?” Shao Yuanhao immediately ran over, faster than when Shao Wanru called him over.

Shao Wanru thought Shao Yuanhao looked more like Chu Liuchen’s younger brother.

Chu Liuchen reached out and stroked Shao Yuanhao’s hair. Feeling quite comfortable about that, Shao Yuanhao smiled and narrowed his eyes. In Shao Wanru’s eyes, her young brother, much like the cat in Chu Liuchen’s arms, was almost going to roll and snore to show his affection toward Chu Liuchen.

“Your sister is worried about you. You are still too young to understand something, so she came here and exhorted you to be careful. But I don’t think it is necessary. You’re man enough now, and you should protect your sister in the future!” Chu Liuchen said gently. Appreciation showed clearly in his words and manner.

Shao Yuanhao puffed out his chest with pride and said complacently, “You can rest assured. I’ve grown up, and I can protect my grandma and sister. I won’t let them worry about me anymore.”

"It's best for you to think this way. Your grandma only has two families connected by blood: you and your sister. You and your grandma are everything to your sister. As the only man here, you are certainly their backbone!"

Chu Liuchen said with a smile, appearing handsome and refined. Shao Yuanhao thought his brother-in-law was like a gentleman with charming and elegant manners described in books. Everything Chu Liuchen said sounded absolutely right to him.

He looked at Chu Liuchen with admiration in his eyes, nodding repeatedly. He was the backbone of her grandmother and sister. As the most indispensable man in the family, he had the duty to support her sister in the future.

Thinking of this, Shao Yuanhao suddenly hesitated. "To back my sister up, I may have to fight with my brother-in-law, right?" A few classmates had mentioned it. If brothers-in-law didn't treat their sisters well, these brothers would go to get even with them.

However, in Shao Yuanhao's eyes, his brother-in-law was gentle and graceful. How could he bully his sister? Therefore, he did not have to worry about that.

When he was a child, Shao Yuanhao had been bullied by Chu Liuchen, but he consciously glamorized those memories in his heart. When he left the unpleasant things behind, he thought Chu Liuchen was like an immortal descending to the human world. He was worthy of his sister.

"Well, let's go to pay our respects to grandma!" Shao Wanru said, watching helplessly at her silly brother. At this moment, Shao Yuanhao was looking at Chu Liuchen in high spirits with sparkling eyes. Obviously, Chu Liuchen successfully tricked Shao Yuanhao into being his admirer.

"Go ahead. I'll take a rest here for a while and won't go with you!" Chu Liuchen waved his hand and said very lazily.

The scenery here was delightful, and the terrain was also pleasing to the eye. On the rockery, his field of vision was surprisingly broad. It was indeed a nice place. It was inconvenient for Chu Liuchen to show up at this time, but Chu Liuchen also felt pleasant in this place.

"Then I will take Hao'er there. I'll come back later!" Shao Wanru said.

"Okay!" Chu Liuchen nodded smilingly.

Shao Wanru and Shao Yuanhao walked out of the pavilion, descended the rockery, and headed for Rui'an Great Elder Princess's courtyard.

Just as they arrived at the main room door, Shao Wanru heard someone talking inside. With a hint of sarcasm, she raised the corners of her mouth silently. The woman named E'niang was inside the room. Shao Wanru and her grandma had decided to ignore that woman for a while. As they had expected, she rushed over as soon as she got a chance.

When Nanny Gao heard the servant girl's report, she hurried to the door and lifted the curtain. "Her Grace is talking about you two!"

"Is there anyone else inside?" Shao Wanru stood still and asked in a low voice.

"She is not an outsider. She happened to come here today!" Nanny Gao explained softly.

"Hao'er is also here. I don't think it's proper for them to meet!" Shao Wanru hesitated and looked at Shao Yuanhao.

"Hao'er, Zhuozhuo, come in. She is not someone you can't meet. Let's spend some time together!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess heard them from inside and called out.

Since Rui'an Great Elder Princess had asked them to go in, Shao Wanru stopped talking and entered.

Shao Wanru and Shao Yuanhao walked into the room together. When seeing Rui'an Great Elder Princess sit in the middle, they stepped forward to salute her.

"Greetings, Grandma!"

"Greetings, Grandma!"

Rui'an Great Elder Princess reached out to pull them over and told them to sit on the chairs next to her. Then she looked at Shao Wanru and asked. "Zhuozhuo, why are you here? It's rare for you to come here with Hao'er! Let me look at you. Are you feeling better?"

Although she knew Shao Wanru would come here today, she was still worried, fearing something would go wrong.

Shao Wanru went to the Marquis Xing's Mansion but quickly came back because she felt poorly. Rui'an Great Elder Princess knew it, but Shao Wanru didn't tell her the specific reason, only saying she was very uncomfortable at that time.

This was the first time Shao Wanru had come out since she returned from the Marquis Xing's Mansion. Rui'an Great Elder Princess was very worried about her. In case Shao Wanru might smell something unpleasant, Rui'an Great Elder Princess didn't even put a flower in her room.

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"Grandma, don't worry. I'm fine. I haven't seen you for a long time, so I came here today. I met Hao'er on my way and walked over with him."

Shao Wanru smiled and said.

"Hao'er has a day off today and stays at home. I wanted him to sleep a little longer, but I didn't expect him to get up early!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess looked at the two grandchildren and felt increasingly satisfied with them. Her face was wreathed in smiles.

Usually, Shao Yuanhao was not in the mansion because he had been studying at the Imperial Academy.

"Grandma, it's not that early. My brother-in-law said even if I didn't go to school, I should get up and practice martial arts." Shao Yuanhao shook his arms and said. Since he hadn't yet fully grown, he was thin and not tall. Yet, he looked very energetic. Chu Liuchen especially found a master to teach him martial arts.

He would practice fighting skills for some time when he came back from school. Even during the holidays, he would get up early to take exercise.

Shao Yuanhao was fond of practicing martial arts. Compared with his gentle and weak little classmates, Shao Yuanhao felt himself to be much stronger. Rui'an Great Elder Princess had protected Shao Yuanhao very well. But when fighting with his little classmates, Shao Yuanhao never suffered losses, which made him cheerful and confident. Of course, he was willing to heed Chu Liuchen's advice: he would not attack unless he was attacked.

If anyone asked Shao Yuanhao whom he admired most, he would say nobody but Chu Liuchen.

"Grandma, why is she here?" Shao Wanru asked after casting a sidelong and cold glance at E'niang, who was standing aside.

"Greetings, Your Highness. Greetings, Your Grace!" Seeing that Shao Wanru finally noticed her, E'niang immediately stepped forward and bowed. She was so excited that her eyes turned red when she saw Shao Yuanhao.

"His Grace has grown up. If my master saw him like this... she would definitely... definitely feel gratified!" As she said that, E'niang wiped the corners of her eyes with a handkerchief and forced a smile. She reached out and smacked her cheek gently. "It's all my fault. I'm so happy to see the little heir of a duke and said something inappropriate. I deserved a slap. His Grace and his father look very similar. They are as like as two peas."

...

E'niang's words were pleasing to the ears, and the joy in her eyes was almost overflowing. She looked so sincere that Shao Wanru couldn't help sneering in her heart. "Exactly! Birds of a feather flock together. When she and Shao Jing fake a kind appearance, they look likable and can always make a good impression on those who don't know them well!"

Shao Wanru came here especially to "accidentally" meet E'niang!

Chapter 1154 Satisfied, the Matter Is Finally Settled

"Why are you here?" Shao Wanru looked E'niang up and down and asked in a brusque tone.

"Don't say such silly childish things! Where else could she be if she weren't here? Your mother was lucky to have her around. She is just a servant girl but an extremely loyal one!" Rui'an Great Elder Princess rebuked Shao Wanru in a deep voice.

Although Rui'an Great Elder Princess criticized Shao Wanru, she did it gently. She must be very affectionate toward her granddaughter and didn't want her to suffer any grievance.

It was rumored that Prince Chen valued Princess Chen mostly because of Rui'an Great Elder Princess! After all, everyone could see how much Rui'an Great Elder Princess loved her granddaughter.

"Grandma! I think it was all over," Shao Wanru said, not taking it seriously.

"Although it was in the past, I can't let it go." Rui'an Great Elder Princess said, her face darkening, "I won't let your mother die with injustice unredressed!"

“Grandma, but it’s been so long. You can’t find out the truth about everything. How can you listen to and believe only in her words?” When Rui’an Great Elder Princess adhered stubbornly to this, Shao Wanru became anxious.

“Well, stop talking about it. It has nothing to do with you and won’t involve you. You just need to enjoy your high status as Princess Chen!” Rui’an Great Elder Princess was displeased, but even so, she just said a few words in an injured tone. Never had she tried to beat Shao Wanru down with her seniority as a grandma.

E’niang panicked as she listened aside. Once again, she lamented how much Rui’an Great Elder Princess doted on Princess Chen. When they didn’t coincide in opinion, Rui’an Great Elder Princess never scolded her. She just grumbled about it and made a few mild comments.

In E’niang’s judgment, Princess Chen only wanted to live a comfortable life and had no intention of taking revenge for her mother’s death. If she had known this, E’niang thought she would have come straight to Rui’an Great Elder Princess. Compared with Rui’an Great Elder princess, Princess Chen was powerless and seemed to have no desire for revenge. When E’niang returned, she would report Princess Chen’s attitude to Marquis Xing.

There was no need to be afraid of Princess Chen.

Marquis Xing had misjudged Princess Chen, regarding her as a key to solving their problems. But in fact, E’niang made progress only after she turned to Rui’an Great Elder Princess for help.

E’niang slightly lowered her head and hid the complacency in her eyes. With profound respect and humility, she stood aside, her hands trembling and not daring to say a word.

“Grandma, Sister, what are you talking about? Anything about my mother?” Shao Yuanhao looked at Rui’an Great Elder Princess and Shao Wanru with a puzzled look.

“He is still a child. Usually, no one would tell him this kind of thing.” E’niang struck upon a bright idea and stole a glance at Shao Yuanhao, who was at a loss and didn’t know what was happening.

“Shao Yuanhao can also be a good starting point for my further plan!”

“Hao’er, it has nothing to do with you. You can leave now. I have something serious to talk about with your sister!” Rui’an Great Elder Princess said to Shao Yuanhao, smiling. She seemed to have just noticed that Shao Yuanhao was with them. It was inconvenient for them to discuss this issue with him around.

“Sister...” Shao Yuanhao turned to Shao Wanru.

“Go ahead. I do have something important to tell grandma. Just give us a moment. You rarely have time to rest and can walk in the garden. Chu Liuchen asked me to bring you some items. They are in the open space beside the peach blossom grove in the garden. You will like them!” Shao Wanru also said softly with a smile. Like Rui’an Great Elder Princess, she also wanted Shao Yuanhao to leave.

Since his grandma and sister didn’t want him to be here, Shao Yuanhao had to stand up and say, “Grandma, Sister, I’ll go back first. Sister, don’t leave after this. I also have something good for you.”

“Okay, I won’t leave later. I will come to see you!” Shao Wanru promised with a smile.

Shao Yuanhao walked out after Shao Wanru readily agreed to his request.

As soon as Shao Yuanhao was out, the room quieted down. Rui'an Great Elder Princess's face clouded over. Shao Wanru looked delicate but obviously a little stubborn. Looking around, Nanny Gao didn't know where to start, though she wanted to mediate the dispute. In the end, she could only sigh helplessly.

This awkward scene made E'niang see the situation more clearly.

"Obviously, it is not the first time that they disagree with each other. Rui'an Great Elder Princess and Princess Chen must have had different views on this matter since I met Princess Chen last time." At the thought of this, E'niang kept her eyes lowered, carefully hiding her numerous thoughts.

Marquis Xing told her to be careful when dealing with Princess Chen, who was shrewd and deep. E'niang could tell that Shao Wanru was difficult to deal with from their previous contact. At least, Princess Chen was more cautious and skeptical than Rui'an Great Elder Princess. Even after knowing E'niang was her mother's "loyal" servant, she didn't let down her guard.

Compared with the others, E'niang felt it was better for her to avoid Princess Chen. She had secretly prioritized all her choices in her heart. It was the most challenging to fool Princess Chen. Then, it was Rui'an Great Elder Princess. The little heir of a duke should be the best choice for her. From their attitudes toward the heir of a duke, E'niang knew Rui'an Great Elder Princess and Princess Chen had protected him well.

All-round protection had both its pros and cons. Under such protection, he would not be easily framed but was prone to be deluded. With scanty life experience, he could hardly understand all these complex twists and turns, let alone shoulder great responsibility.

"E'niang..." An icy voice in her ear shocked E'niang. She hurriedly raised her head, not allowing herself to be distracted again.

"I'm here!"

"E'niang, you were my mother's servant girl. But I don't know how my mother saved your life back then and how you managed to serve my mother. My mother had a lot of servants. Why she had to accept you?" Shao Wanru asked, eyes fixed on E'niang. Her manner was intolerably aggressive.

This was the reason why E'niang put her heart and soul into avenging Infanta Qinghua's death!

"Your Grace, Your Highness." E'niang quickly composed herself. Since she mentioned the story, she was fully prepared for it. "My parents died, and I became an orphan. I had been raised in my uncle's house. My aunt saw that I was good-looking and planned to sell me to a brothel. When I knew that, I escaped in the middle of the night but accidentally fell into the river. My master happened to pass by and ordered someone to save me. After that, I swore to serve her with my life. My master accepted me and let me serve by her side."

Speaking of this, E'niang was full of gratitude. "Without her, I would have died long ago. I owe her my life. I swear to collect this blood debt for her."

Shao Wanru had been watching E'niang closely. E'niang poured out words in a steady flow, carrying herself with ease. Silently, Shao Wanru sarcastically raised the corners of her mouth. "Sure enough, she is all ready to answer this question, and this matter seems to be true.

"Her story applies to many questions. Even if my mother didn't want such a servant girl, she might have been moved by E'niang's insistence and let her be a servant girl. Horrifyingly, she never knew E'niang was far from being a loyal servant girl but a bloodthirsty viper!"

There was an icy place covered with sharp blades of hatred at the bottom of Shao Wanru's heart. "Their conspiracy mustn't have been initiated recently.

"They started plotting against my mother long ago. That was why they sent such a person to serve my mother. Shao Jing learned about my parents' whereabouts from her. Back then, the Duke Xing's Mansion had spent so much effort looking for them but failed. However, Shao Jing secretly left the capital city and found them. How could he do that?"

Shao Wanru tightly clenched her handkerchief. Then, slowly, she relaxed her grip on it, her eyes gloomy and vicious. "This woman is Shao Jing's accomplice. She started working for Shao long ago.

"Perhaps, she is more than an ordinary pawn that was put into use long ago?"

Shao Wanru was sure that nothing could prove E'niang was lying about this. Even if her mother had sent someone to check her background, they could only have found she was telling the truth. No ordinary orphan girl could do this. Shao Wanru's eyes fell on Qing'er, who had been following her. Slowly, she looked away, seemingly absorbed in thought. "Qing'er is also an orphan. She had once told me something about her previous missions..."

"E'niang, Zhuozhuo wants you to live a peaceful life. There is no need for you to get involved in the affairs of Marquis Xing's Mansion. After all, you are the only servant left by my daughter. At least Zhuozhuo and I will take care of you. If you want to leave Shao Jing and live a new life with your daughter, we can help. It's nothing serious!" said Rui'an Great Elder Princess.

"Your Grace, I, I must avenge my master's death. If you and Her Highness don't allow me to do so, I would rather die here now. Every day during so many years, I have been missing my former master day and night in extreme grief!" E'niang shed tears again. She wiped her tears with a handkerchief and looked agitated.

"What about your daughter?" Shao Wanru asked.

"She is His Grace's daughter. Marquis Xing will take care of her even if something terrible happens to me. At least, as his daughter, she won't live a worse life than me. Even if I die, it doesn't matter," said E'niang in tears. Then, she lowered her head and wiped her tears.

This time, she looked less excited. Shao Wanru glanced at her thoughtfully, her long eyelashes fluttering, but she didn't speak.

Rui'an Great Elder Princess sighed gently, saying, "Alright, we've known the whole thing. There's no hurry. I'll discuss it with Princess Chen and see what status we can offer you. Anyway, I can't watch you marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion and become a concubine with inferior status. If you confront Madam Jiang with your humble status, you will have no chance of winning!"

“Thank you, Your Grace. Thank you, Your Highness!” E’niang said gratefully and finally felt relieved.

“His Grace has told me many times that without Princess Chen’s approval, I couldn’t succeed. Rui’an Great Elder Princess asked me questions before Princess Chen because she wanted Princess Chen to understand my thoughts. Since Princess Chen didn’t say anything, she must have agreed to it.

“Finally, I made it!” A barely perceptible smile flashed across her eyes, and she seemed totally relaxed.

Next, Madam Jiang would die. Marquis Xing had promised to let her be Madam of Marquis Xing. But if Madam Jiang was still alive, E’niang would never get the chance. When E’niang thought an orphan like her could also get such a high status, she was nearly beside herself with joy.

At this point, E’niang didn’t need to stay here any longer. Rui’an Great Elder Princess asked a young servant girl to take E’niang away. When they were out, Rui’an Great Elder Princess’s face instantly darkened, and she said with a gloomy face, “Zhuzhuo, this slut betrayed her master. How should we punish her?”

Chapter 1155 Falling into a Trap, Tricking Little Heir of a Duke

Paths in the Rui’an Great Elder Princess’s Mansion were complex. The little servant girl who led the way was about eleven or twelve. She smiled sweetly and looked adorable. Along the way, she answered whatever questions E’niang asked. Unlike other arrogant servant girls in this mansion, she was very kind and never looked down on E’niang.

After turning a corner of the path, E’niang looked up at the courtyard before her. Suddenly, she stopped and asked in surprise, “Is that the garden in this mansion?”

“Yes, if we go through here, we can reach the garden. It is a lovely garden. The flowers there are blooming in all their beauty. It is the best time to enjoy the scenery!”

The servant girl also stopped walking and said with a bright smile.

!!

“I... May I go and have a look?” E’niang pointed at the garden with a longing look. She blushed slightly, seemingly embarrassed by her proposal.

“Well... okay!” The little servant girl hesitated for a fraction of a second before responding. Since Great Elder Princess had called this woman over, there must be a reason. It was not a big deal for the little servant girl to walk around. “Let’s go through the garden and take a long detour before we return to the mansion gate, okay?”

“Thank you!” E’niang nodded repeatedly. She took out a purse from her sleeve and handed it over.

The little servant girl accepted it. Smilingly, she took the previous turn and walked into the Great Elder Princess’s garden.

Rui’an Great Elder Princess had lived in this mansion for many years. All the decorations inside were gorgeous and eye-catching. There were a lot of flowers and trees. Occasionally, they could see some delicate flowers carefully nourished leaning against the branches. The scene delighted both the eye and the mind.

E'niang clicked her tongue in praise as she enjoyed the scenery. From time to time, she would ask about something. The maid was clever. Though she didn't know all answers to her questions, she knew quite a lot. Her words seemed well-grounded and reasoned. The more they talked, the better their relationship became. Along the way, they acted intimately as if they were mother and daughter.

"Xiaohuan, I heard the peach blossom grove in Her Grace's mansion is superb. Could I go and have a look?" E'niang had already obtained the servant girl's name and asked affectionately.

"All right. But most of the peach blossoms have withered by now," said Xiaohuan with a smile. She then turned and walked toward the peach blossom grove.

Even before they arrived at the peach blossom grove, they could see the flowers in the distance. Many peach blossoms had fallen and scattered about. Yet, there were still some on the branches. From a distance, it looked like a pink sea of flowers. Its color was not very bright, but it looked more delicate and charming than the surrounding landscapes.

When they got closer, they found some petals scattered on the ground. As the branches swayed, flowers fell.

"Peach trees in our mansion have long flowering periods. The peach blossoms in other places withered early." Xiaohuan said with pity on her face.

E'niang glanced around the grove. It was not small. From here, she couldn't see the other side where the little heir of a duke might be. Rolling her eyes, she came up with an idea and abruptly squatted down with a cry. "Ow!"

"What's wrong?" Xiaohuan looked over and asked.

"I seem to have sprained my ankle!" E'niang rose to her feet by holding a branch nearby, moved her right foot, and frowned tightly. She looked at the little servant girl with embarrassment and said, "Xiaohuan, could you please go and find some medicine sprain injury? There is still a long way to go out of the mansion. I am afraid that I can't walk all the way like this!"

Xiaohuan looked at her and was sure that she couldn't walk a long way. Thus, she helplessly reminded her. "Well... okay, then wait here. Don't walk around, or I can't find you later!"

The Rui'an Great Elder Princess's Mansion was very large. If she got lost, the little servant girl might not find her when she came back. Since Xiaohuan was particularly worried about this, she had to warn her in advance.

E'niang looked around and saw a stone bench by the road. Then, pointing to it, she said, "Okay, I will stay put. Go ahead. I'll wait for you there!"

"Then I'll go and look for the ointment. Please don't leave!" Xiaohuan nodded and said before leaving.

After Xiaohuan left, E'niang looked around. There were few people here at this time. After all, it was not the season to appreciate the peach blossoms. After thinking for a while, she turned right. The little heir of a duke should be in this peach blossom grove. Since no one was on this side, she would go to look for him on the other side.

At first, E'niang went to the right, but Shao Yuanhao was not there. Then she turned to the left side of this place.

This time, she didn't go far when she heard some people talking. After listening to the voices carefully, she recognized Shao Yuanhao's voice. She was overjoyed and took a few quick steps to that place.

Shao Yuanhao was practicing with a sword, and two servants served him aside.

There was a large box before him, which should contain the gifts Princess Chen had mentioned.

Shao Yuanhao wielded his sword twice and put it down. Afterward, he took a bow from the box, tried it with effort, and said to the servant on one side, "Try it!"

"Your Grace, I can't do it. I have never used it before!" The servant stepped forward with a bitter face. He reached out to take the bow but staggered a few steps back. "Your Grace, why is this bow so heavy?"

"It's heavy indeed. Maybe my brother-in-law thinks I should practice my arm strength!" Shao Yuanhao raised his arm to show his strength.

"Your Grace, be careful. Don't get hurt!" A woman's voice suddenly came from behind them, and E'niang hurried to grab the bow in the servant's hand. Her voice sounded anxious — she seemed so afraid that the bow would press against Shao Yuanhao.

As the bow fell into E'niang's hands, she took two steps back, falling heavily to the ground. She cried out in pain, "Ouch!"

Shao Yuanhao and his servants were shocked as they looked toward E'niang. After looking her up and down several times, Shao Yuanhao still didn't recognize her. "Who are you? Why did you suddenly come out?"

When the two servants saw the place where she ran out, their faces changed suddenly. In a great hurry, they stood before Shao Yuanhao to protect him. One even picked up the sword Shao Yuanhao had put aside and barked, "Who are you? Who sent you here to assassinate our master?"

"An assassin..." The other servant was not that brave. After murmuring something, he craned his neck, and the blue veins on his neck stood out. It seemed that he would soon scream for help at the top of his voice.

"I'm not an assassin. I'm Infanta Qinghua's servant girl. Your Grace, didn't you see me at your grandmother's place just now?" E'niang saw that the situation was not good. She feared the timid servant would ruin her plan, so she hurriedly explained. When she shook her hands wildly, the bow fell to the ground.

Shao Yuanhao's eyes fell on E'niang, and he sized her up again. "It seems so!"

"Yes, I am!" E'niang breathed a sigh of relief and added anxiously.

"But what are you doing here? Did my grandma ask you to come here?" Shao Yuanhao asked impatiently and waved his hand, motioning the two servants to withdraw.

Since she was not an assassin, the servants didn't need to stand before him in defense.

"Her Grace and Her Highness asked me to go back. When I came here, I sprained my ankle. When I rested nearby, I happened to hear your servants talking. I didn't see the situation here clearly before rushing out. I did it because I heard the bow was very heavy, and I feared it might accidentally bear down on you." E'niang explained with a lingering fear, pointing at the bow at her feet.

E'niang had only taken two steps back just now. Shao Yuanhao had seriously tried the bow, so he knew he would probably have taken more than two steps back if he accidentally got the bow. Just now, his servant was almost pushed down to the ground. If Shao Yuanhao didn't pull him up in time, the servant would make a fool of himself.

The servant holding the bow was older. He was 14 years old with good arm strength and should be more robust than this woman before them. In the end, this woman fell to the ground as if she could barely hold the bow. However, Shao Yuanhao saw her retreat two steps on purpose. It could be seen that she was strong enough to handle this scene to a nicety.

Sure enough, this woman was not simple.

"Then, thank you. You can leave now!" Shao Yuanhao said casually. He reached out, took a few more arrows from the box on the ground, and played with them in high spirits.

The arrows were well-made, and the arrowheads were sharp.

"Prince Chen sent such things to a child as toys?" E'niang was speechless when seeing these gifts from Prince Chen. "These items are sharp weapons. How could he let a child play with them?"

"Be careful, His Grace. You'd better send these things back to Prince Chen. You are young and will have plenty of chances to play with these things in the future!" E'niang advised with concern.

"Don't worry about me. I just want to have a look!" Shao Yuanhao said carelessly, digging around in the box. Suddenly, he seemed to remember something and looked at E'niang. "You said you were my mother's servant girl. But didn't all her servant girls die long ago? Why are you still alive? Why would you look for my grandma today?"

His questions came out one after another, somewhat incoherently. An ignorant child could only ask questions in such an illogical way. It never crossed his mind that his grandma and sister told him to leave because they didn't want him to know about these things.

E'niang was thinking about how to arouse the heir of a duke's interest. Thus, when she heard what he said, she was overjoyed. "Of course, it would be best to achieve my goals quietly and smoothly like this."

Initially, she came here to look for Shao Yuanhao. If Shao Yuanhao didn't ask anything, how could she go on with her performance?

"Your Grace, I..." Speaking of this, she looked at the two young male servants on both sides. Although they no longer suspected she was an assassin, they looked at her with continued vigilance.

"You stay away from me!" Shao Yuanhao waved his hand and said.

...

"Your Grace..." The younger servant felt wronged and wanted to say something. But when Shao Yuanhao glared at him, he could only back up a dozen paces with another servant. They didn't stop until they were far away from Shao Yuanhao and E'niang.

"You can tell me now. What's going on? Why do you want to avenge my mother? My mother died of poor health. Is there any other reason?" Shao Yuanhao put down the arrow in his hand and looked up at E'niang. Although he was still a child, he had a dignified air.

"Your Grace, Madam Jiang in the Marquis Xing's Mansion provoked your mother and caused her to die in anger. At that time, your mother had just given birth to you, but unpleasant things about your father depressed her. Therefore, Madam Jiang deliberately chose this period to irritate your mother from time to time, saying that she led to your father's death. Your mother was so weak back then that she couldn't stand it, so..."

E'niang wiped her tears with a handkerchief, looking extremely sad.

"Is what you said... true?" Shao Yuanhao's eyes also turned red. He gritted his teeth with rage and asked angrily.

"Of course, it's true. I told Her Grace and Her Highness the same thing. If you don't believe it, you can ask them about it. Just don't tell them you heard it from me!" E'niang also said sincerely, the rims of her eyes turning red.

Chapter 1156 Families with Different Importance

"Oh, I'm going to find my grandma!" Shao Yuanhao turned around and was about to leave.

"Wait a minute, Your Grace!" E'niang grabbed Shao Yuanhao's sleeve and said, "I have something else to say!"

"What? Say it!" Shao Yuanhao ordered grumpily.

"Your Grace, you can rush over and make everything clear, but then what? Do you want to deal with Madam Jiang? No matter how wrong she is, she is still your Second Aunt!" E'niang advised him, seemingly earnestly. Of course, she could not let Shao Yuanhao rush out to Rui'an Great Elder Princess and Princess Chen recklessly like this. At that time, they would not spare her.

"Then tell me what I can do?" Shao Yuanhao could listen to the advice of others. He stamped his foot hard and said, "She murdered my parents. I will never live under the same sky with my sworn enemy!"

"Your Grace, that's what I think. Trust me. When I move into the Marquis Xing's Mansion, I will help you take revenge. It's also my purpose. That was why I asked Her Grace and Her Highness for help. As long as I marry into the Marquis Xing's Mansion, I can avenge your mother's death for you!"

E'niang advised.

"You want to avenge my mother? But why are you willing to do that?" It was not easy to fool Shao Yuanhao into believing her words. At this point, he started sizing her up with suspicious eyes.

"Your mother saved my life. Even if I must pay for it with my life, I will avenge your mother!" E'niang took a deep breath and vowed in a low voice.

"Thank you so much!" Shao Yuanhao looked at E'niang and suddenly took a step back, bowing to her.

"Your Grace, please don't do this. I'm just a servant girl. It's my duty to do this!" She hurriedly stepped aside to avoid his salute, twisting her ankle a little. It seemed that she was indeed injured just now.

"Take a rest. I'll ask someone to fetch the ointment!" Seeing that she had difficulty in moving, Shao Yuanhao ordered the servant beside him to fetch the ointment for external injuries.

One servant left, and the other stayed to keep an eye on E'niang from a distance.

"Thank you, Your Grace. I have to go back now. Can I come to find you if I have something to do in the future? Her Grace is powerful and influential. I don't dare to disturb her often. Could you help me pass messages on to her?" After thanking him, E'niang looked at Shao Yuanhao and asked.

Her words made sense. Rui'an Great Elder Princess was of noble status, and not everyone could meet her casually.

"You can see me at the Imperial Academy!" Shao Yuanhao thought for a moment and said.

"Thank you, Your Grace. Many thanks! With your words, I feel so relieved. Her Grace may not hear the news in time if Madam Jiang tries to play any tricks. I'm afraid it will ruin the big plan!" E'niang thanked him repeatedly and bowed sideways, shedding joyful tears.

When it was time to leave, she said, "Your Grace, I'm leaving now. A servant girl leading the way is waiting for me!"

"Is your foot okay?" Shao Yuanhao asked.

"Nothing serious. Don't worry, Your Grace!" E'niang said. Since she had achieved her goal, she did not dare to stay any longer. Otherwise, someone would report it to Rui'an Great Elder Princess or Princess Chen.

Shao Yuanhao had agreed to see her. In the future, she could get in touch with him easily. Better still, she didn't have to meet him in the Rui'an Great Elder Princess's Mansion, which would be much more convenient.

Seeing that she insisted on leaving, Shao Yuanhao did not ask her to stay any longer. He nodded and watched her hurriedly hobble over to the peach blossom grove, heading in another direction.

When E'niang was out of sight, Shao Yuanhao told the servant who stayed behind, "Send all the items to my courtyard later!"

After that, he left the servant behind and walked forward.

The servant worriedly watched him, looking up at the pavilion on the rockery high above the garden in the distance. Then, he responded, feeling secure.

"Prince Chen is there. My master must have gone there to see His Highness. He will be safe."

As expected, Shao Yuanhao was going to find Chu Liuchen!

When he ascended to the pavilion and saw Chu Liuchen leaning against the railing, he still could not restrain his anger. Chu Liuchen smiled as he came over in a burning fury, slightly raising the corners of his mouth. "Is it settled?"

"It should have been completed. This woman is indeed malicious." Shao Yuanhao walked to Chu Liuchen's side and sat down, saying with hatred.

"Marquis Xing has long coveted your father's title of nobility!" Chu Liuchen's eyes turned cold and solemn as he reached out and patted Shao Yuanhao on the shoulder. "You are the only younger brother your sister has. Never let her down. You are her closest family related by blood. No one loved her when she was in Jiangzhou, but now she wants to give you all her love!"

The rims of his eyes were red. Shao Yuanhao lowered his head and said, "I know it!"

He could hardly recall the things happening between him and his Second Uncle and Second Aunt. Compared with them, his sister and grandmother were his closest family. As he grew older, Shao Yuanhao gradually understood the evil trick of ruining a child by spoiling him. However, when he recalled the past, he couldn't help feeling that they had at least raised him.

His gratitude for their so-called love and care in his childhood had become faint, yet he always remembered being a Shao Family member.

"Your father and mother were the victims of the fight for the title of nobility. You and your sister became orphans and even strayed to other places. Because of this, your sister couldn't reunite with you. If you still care about their small favor in raising you, you might as well return the title of nobility to them, lest they plot against you and your sister again. Even your grandmother might fall into the abyss of pain. Her daughter died back then, and she might lose her grandson and granddaughter in the future!"

Chu Liuchen's eyes fell on Shao Yuanhao. Although his voice was lazy, it was full of frightening coldness and majesty.

"If you can't tell who is your closest families, give up this honor that originally belonged to you. In this way, you may be able to stay alive!"

Chu Liuchen spoke to Shao Yuanhao bluntly without reservation. At this moment, he didn't treat him as an ignorant child.

He could not let Shao Yuanhao be a burden to Shao Wanru, even if he was her biological younger brother.

Since the matter had been exposed, Chu Liuchen felt it best to get to the bottom of the case. Therefore, he decided to show the enemy's cheap intrigues to Shao Yuanhao.

"Brother-in-law, don't worry. I know who are my beloved families!" Shao Yuanhao felt great pain, as though his heart were cut into many pieces by Chu Liuchen's words. But when he came to his senses, he gritted his teeth with determination and said, "I am the only man in the mansion whom my grandma and sister can rely on. I have to protect them!"

A man should protect the people he cares about. Shao Yuanhao understood this.

In the past three years, Rui'an Great Elder Princess thought she had protected him well and never let him get involved in anything troublesome. But he had secretly learned from Chu Liuchen for three years. He had been an ignorant boy, but gradually he became sensible. Anyway, he was not the innocent child as he looked on the surface now.

When Shao Wanru and Chu Liuchen left, Shao Yuanhao walked them to the carriage.

"Hao'er, go back and be filial to our grandma!" Shao Wanru turned around and told Shao Yuanhao. As a boy who hadn't reached adolescence, he was still a little shorter than Shao Wanru.

"Sister, please rest assured. I see!" Shao Yuanhao pulled Shao Wanru's sleeve, looking like an innocent child again.

Shao Wanru lowered her head slightly.

"Sister, the next time that woman comes, I will send someone to tell you!" Shao Yuanhao lowered his voice and said with a kind and honest look.

Somehow, Shao Wanru found this expression quite familiar. She glanced sideways at Chu Liuchen, who was smiling with his hands clasped behind his back. He looked gentle and refined indeed.

She couldn't help smiling and exclaiming. "Hao'er has grown up!"

She joked. Inexplicably, when she said it, the rims of her eyes turned red. She hurriedly forced a weak smile to cover up her sadness. Then, she turned around and got on the carriage with Chu Liuchen's help.

She was afraid she would burst into tears if she stayed any longer.

In her last life, she didn't know where the child had been wandering. Perhaps, he did not even have a chance to grow up. Now he was standing right before her, alive and kicking. This scene made her feel unreal.

In this life, many things changed. She was no longer the humble woman living in misery in her previous life.

Chu Liuchen got on the carriage. After coming in, he saw Shao Wanru leaning on one side with slightly red eyes. He casually reached out to hold her in his arms and patted her gently.

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Shao Wanru remained silent in his embrace but felt her heart was no longer so empty. In this life, she was no longer lonely and always had someone to turn to. Her eyelashes fluttered twice and gently lowered, casting two uneven shadows under her eyes. When she felt secure, her tender eyes made her delicate face more pleasant.

The corners of her rosy lips curled up slightly...

The carriage went straight to Prince Chen's Mansion, but Shao Wanru was still asleep. While still in a daze, she was carried out of the carriage by Chu Liuchen. When she woke up, four hours had passed.

She slept so soundly that she didn't even have a dream. The painful and lingering memories of her previous life had tortured her the whole time. But at this time, it seemed she could finally handle her agonizing past with ease.

"My Lady, you're awake!" Yujie stepped forward and lifted the gauze curtain with a smile.

"Where's Chu Liuchen?" Shao Wanru took a cup of warm water from Qu Le, took a sip, and asked.

"His Highness has just left. He asked you to have a good rest and not to worry too much," Yujie said.

Shao Wanru got up. After washing up, she saw some fruit on the fruit tray on the table and asked curiously, "Where did these fruits come from? Why haven't I seen any of them before?"

They looked like apples but were smaller. Each was plump. At first glance, she could tell that they were picked when ripe.

"They are rewards given by Consort Lan from the Palace. This kind of fruit is said to be a Xu State specialty, so not many were brought over. Only a few consorts in the Palace received some. Consort Lan has awarded you this plate of fruit!" Yujie said with a smile.

They were from Consort Lan. Shao Wanru had guessed it but still felt a little surprised.

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The matter of the Empress seemed to have calmed down, and Consort Lan appeared before everyone. Without the previous restriction, Consort Lan came to public attention. Yet, she seldom left her place and did not meet other imperial consorts.

The Empress Dowager was sick and preferred a quiet life, not allowing those imperial consorts to pay their respects to her.

The Empress kept a low profile. Also, she announced she was not feeling well and did not require imperial consorts to visit and inquire after her. Although everyone was very curious about Consort Lan, few people saw her. It was said that even Consort of Virtue and Consort Ming were rejected when they came to see Consort Lan. They were told that Consort Lan felt too poorly to meet guests.

Chapter 1157 Miss Qin, I Don't Want to Know It

"Did His Highness know this?" Shao Wanru asked.

"Yes. He said this fruit wasn't that delicious. He just wanted you to have a taste of it!" Qu Le chuckled and said, "My Lady, how about you having a try?"

Shao Wanru looked at these fruits and shook her head. "Forget it. I don't want to eat them now. Did she say anything else?"

"She said if you were free, you could spend some time with her in the Palace. It was better to take Miss Qin with you." Qu Le reported.

Qin Yiyan had been in the Prince Chen's Mansion for a few days. During this period, she was well-behaved. She was vastly different from what she used to be in the Shuangxi Hall. She neither came to

bother Shao Wanru nor tried to get close to Chu Liuchen. More than that, she had stayed far away from Chu Liuchen as if she wanted to avoid arousing suspicion.

"Miss Qin, how is she recently?" Shao Wanru blinked and asked. If Qin Yiyan remained in her proper sphere all the time, she was willing to treat her well as a close cousin.

Previously, when she was not in good health, she sent someone to tell Qin Yiyan not to come and greet her.

"Miss Qin is fine. She has been doing embroidery. Occasionally, she would enjoy the scenery in the garden. Even if she encountered His Highness, she would only bow to him from a distance. She always has good manners."

"Go and ask Miss Qin to come over!" Shao Wanru thought for a moment and said. Since Consort Lan had mentioned Qin Yiyan, she would not keep it a secret.

Yujie nodded and went out. After a while, she came back with Qin Yiyan.

"Greetings, Cousin-in-law!" Qin Yiyan entered the room and bowed to Shao Wanru.

"Miss Qin, you are too polite. Please sit down!" Shao Wanru said with a smile and asked Qu Le to invite Qin Yiyan to sit down.

"Cousin-in-law, are you all right?" Qin Yiyan asked softly, looking up at Shao Wanru with clear eyes.

"I'm almost recovered. I just received a message from Consort Lan. She wanted you to see her in the Palace with me. When will you be free?" Shao Wanru got straight to the point.

Qin Yiyan raised her face and looked slightly surprised. After thinking for a while, she smiled and said, "I have nothing serious to do here. I can go there whenever you feel free. I am at your orders!"

Qin Yiyan looked very docile with a gentle smile.

"Then, when I go to see the Empress Dowager in the Palace in a few days, I will take you there to accompany Consort Lan." Shao Wanru decided after silently pondering it.

"Cousin-in-law, won't you go there? I guess Consort Lan should be glad to see you, right? It's inconvenient for my cousin to see her in the Palace, but it's just right for you to go there!" Qin Yiyan looked at Shao Wanru and said in surprise.

Consort Lan was undoubtedly on the side of the Prince Chen's Mansion. As Princess Chen, Shao Wanru should be on good terms with Consort Lan. But she seemed to take this relationship very casually.

With a light smile, Shao Wanru said implicitly, "I heard Consort Lan loves peace and quiet. It's not proper for me to disturb her. His Highness also thinks I shouldn't bother her at this time. The Empress Dowager is ill, and the Empress is not feeling well. I'd better visit them in the Palace!"

Of course, she meant Chu Liuchen didn't want her to be close to Consort Lan.

"Don't you like to be with Consort Lan?" Qin Yiyan suddenly looked up and asked after thinking for a while.

This question was very abrupt. It even came as a complete surprise to Shao Wanru. Her watery eyes flashed. With a faint smile, she said, "She is the Emperor's consort. It's not up to us to decide whether or not our relationship should be close. What's more, Prince Chen is just the Emperor's nephew. It's better to avoid some conflicts!"

"But didn't His Majesty say my cousin could also..." Qin Yiyan was unconvinced.

Shao Wanru interrupted her directly, and her face darkened. "Miss Qin, although you are in the Prince Chen's Mansion, not the imperial Palace, you should be more guarded in what you say. If you are careless and implicate Consort Lan, it will be bad for all of us. Miss Qin, you don't want anything bad to happen to Consort Lan, do you?"

"That was not what I meant. I want to say His Majesty has already regarded my cousin as one of his sons. Is that so?" When Shao Wanru criticized her way of speaking, Qin Yiyan calmed down and smartly changed her words. From what she had observed in the past few days, she knew Shao Wanru, her cousin-in-law, was intelligent.

Shao Wanru was not only clever but also had excellent judgment. For Qin Yiyan, Shao Wanru should see Chu Liuchen's advantage and mustn't estrange herself from Consort Lan at this critical time.

At this moment, she had no idea what Princess Chen was thinking about!

"Miss Qin!" Shao Wanru's eyes fell on Qin Yiyan's face, and she said with a stern look, "I don't care why you came to the capital city, but whatever your purpose is, you'd better be a Miss keeping a low profile. Recently, the Xu State princesses have also arrived here. I'm afraid that the capital city is not peaceful. Miss Qin, please pass on my words to Consort Lan and tell her to be careful in everything!"

"Cousin-in-law!" Qin Yiyan's expression changed. With a touch of anger and coldness, she continued, "But do you know..."

"Miss Qin, I don't want to know and hear anything about it. If you regard yourself as Prince Chen's cousin, you can live here quietly. Forget your fancy dreams, and don't ask too much. When there is a chance, I will grant you a congratulatory gift and a magnificent wedding."

With this, Shao Wanru meant that the Prince Chen's Mansion would find her a good match, but Chu Liuchen would never marry her.

Qin Yiyan was Consort Lan's niece. Also, she was a descendant of the family related to the previous empress, but the family had dissipated. With her status and position, she should be even more cautious than ever and keep her head down.

Qin Yiyan flushed, feeling angry and embarrassed. She asked defiantly, "Does my cousin know what you are thinking?"

"Of course, he knows. We are of one mind and principle. You have lived here for such a long time. Why has he never come to see you if he has any other intentions?" Shao Wanru said bluntly. No matter what Qin Yiyan was up to, she would not let her bring any damage.

At least Shao Wanru would not allow her to harm the Prince Chen's Mansion.

Qin Yiyan glared at Shao Wanru. Although she called Shao Wanru cousin-in-law, she was older. She was more slender compared with ordinary women. In terms of her stature and height, she looked more overwhelming than Shao Wanru. However, Shao Wanru looked at her leisurely with a faint and casual smile — she did not take her anger seriously.

Finally, Qin Yiyan felt defeated and asked peevishly. “Do you know what I have?”

“No matter what it is, His Highness won’t care about it. Miss Qin, you can do as you please!” Shao Wanru remained unmoved and said, her eyes calm as if she had expected Qin Yiyan to say that.

Without any cards in her hand, Qin Yiyan wouldn’t have entered the Prince Chen’s Mansion. After all, Chu Liuchen never listened to Consort Lan. How could he accept a cousin he hadn’t seen for many years?

“I’ll go to find my cousin later. He will be willing to see the thing I have!” Qin Yiyan said, unconvinced, feeling very bitter about Shao Wanru’s refusal. It was not that she yearned day and night to get into the Prince Chen’s Mansion but that she had to do it. To avoid bothering Shao Wanru, she deliberately stayed far away from her cousin.

But never had she imagined that Shao Wanru would be so arrogant. Shao Wanru pushed her away for her own benefit, though she could be of great help to Prince Chen. Now, Qin Yiyan realized that all her efforts would be in vain.

“You can’t go to his place at will. If you have to see him, I’ll send someone to inform him first. But it’s hard to say when he will meet you. If you try to run into him, the consequence is not really in my control!” Shao Wanru said softly. Qin Yiyan was annoyed, but she remained in a tranquil mood and seemed to have known everything.

Somehow, a sharp look appeared in her soft, limpid eyes under her long eyelashes. If pressed, Qin Yiyan and Consort Lan would take the initiative to say something, no matter what their purposes were. It seemed that Qin Yiyan didn’t come here just for the position of Princess Chen. Therefore, Shao Wanru hoped they could express their meaning clearly. Bad things might happen if they couldn’t be completely honest about their intentions.

Consort Lan had devoted herself unreservedly to helping Chu Liuchen, and Shao Wanru never doubted that.

However, the road to hell might be paved with good intentions. The best way was to force Qin Yiyan to tell her secrets. Shao Wanru believed that no matter what secrets they had, Chu Liuchen could deal with them very well!

Now that the time was right, Shao Wanru gave a shove to let her reveal the truth...

Hearing Shao Wanru’s words, Qin Yiyan felt very wronged and uncomfortable. With all her strength, she struck back but missed the target. She didn’t knock down her opponent but made herself spit out a mouthful of blood.

But her aunt had told her not to act rashly.

"Thank you, Cousin-in-law!" Qin Yiyan said coldly. She couldn't stand it anymore and had to make it clear to her cousin. She could be of much help to assist her cousin. If Shao Wanru hindered her from supporting her cousin, she would not be a qualified Princess Chen.

For Qin Yiyan, she didn't have to take the position of Princess Chen. However, if Shao Wanru didn't fit the position, she might as well replace her.

With this in mind, Qin Yiyan went back to her courtyard, sat on the stone bench, and quietly waited for the message from Chu Liuchen. No matter how much her cousin disliked her, he would send someone to invite her over when knowing she had something important to tell him.

However, events did not happen as she wished. She waited for a long time, but no one came. Later, she became restless and wanted to send someone to ask about the situation. Finally, Xiao Xuanzi, the eunuch beside Chu Liuchen, walked in.

"Miss Qin, my master invites you over!" Xiao Xuanzi said with a grin.

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"Did my cousin just know it? I asked to see him, and Princess Chen said she would pass on the message to him!" Qin Yiyan stood up discontentedly and pulled the thin crease on the hem of her dress.

"Her Highness sent the message early, but my master has been very busy. At this time, he could finally get some rest. When he remembered this matter, he asked me to come here." Xiao Xuanzi said casually and reached out his hand to one side. "Miss Qin, please! If you are late, my master may have something else to do. I'm afraid you may not get a chance to talk to him!"

Of course, he meant she couldn't see Prince Chen if she didn't hurry up.

Qin Yiyan's face was livid with anger. "These people around my cousin are so insensible. I must ask my cousin to discipline them..."

Chapter 1158 Hand over the Token or Leave

"Master, Miss Qin is still outside!" Xiao Xuanzi looked downstairs outside the window. Qin Yiyan stood under the tree, helplessly looking at the two guards at the door. It had been a long time, but she still did not leave.

Chu Liuchen sat inside casually. Unhappily, he raised his head and ordered coldly, "Let her come up to me!"

"Yes, I will ask Miss Qin to be here right away!" Xiao Xuanzi breathed a sigh of relief and hurried downstairs from the second floor. Miss Qin was excessively stubborn. He said his master was busy, but she insisted on seeing him.

In the end, she could talk to Prince Chen. But even so, Xiao Xuanzi believed she would have to suffer. He knew his master's character. Throughout, his master only accepted one woman in his heart: Princess Chen.

Hearing that Chu Liuchen asked her to come in, Qin Yiyan breathed a sigh of relief. She was really worried that Chu Liuchen would not see her. Since she could see him, everything would be fine.

Her servant girl was asked to stay downstairs while she followed Xiao Xuanzi up to the second floor.

When the door of the second floor was pushed open, Qin Yiyan subconsciously narrowed her eyes and saw a man leaning against the back of a spacious chair.

The handsome man looked up at her, his eyes sparkling. He seemed full of affection. However, in an icy voice, he reproached, "If there is nothing else, don't bother me!"

"Cousin..." Qin Yiyan stepped forward to greet him.

"As a cousin, you had a reason to live in my manor. But since you have moved in, there is no need to talk about this relationship anymore."

Chu Liuchen looked down, his beautiful eyes landing on the memorial in his hand.

"But I am your cousin!" Qin Yiyan was a little anxious, although she had been mentally prepared. Consort Lan had told her many times that Prince Chen was not like what he appeared. She warned her never to be obsessed with some fantastic ideas. Otherwise, she would come to a tragic and terrible end.

"So what?" Chu Liuchen raised his eyebrows.

Qin Yiyan didn't know what to say at the moment. It would be much more challenging to serve Prince Chen than Princess Chen.

She had wanted to complain before, but now she had no intention of doing so. Obviously, Prince Chen would not listen to her.

"Cousin, Consort Lan asked me to..." Qin Yiyan said in frustration.

"This is not the imperial Palace, but my mansion," Chu Liuchen responded coldly.

Qin Yiyan was stunned. Unexpectedly, Consort Lan did not have any real influence over Prince Chen.

"Cousin, Consort Lan works heart and soul for your interests. Everything she has done was for you. Why are you so..." Somehow, Qin Yiyan felt depressed and became agitated.

But in the next moment, she was chilled to the bone and never dared to be so emotional.

"Let's get down to business. If you don't have anything to say, just leave. I'm very busy." Chu Liuchen looked up at her impatiently and fixed his eyes on these official documents before him. He looked impatient as if Qin Yiyan was here to trouble him.

"But I was sent here by Consort Lan to help you." Qin Yiyan felt very wronged. She thought she was strong-minded, but she was instantly full of grievances at this time. She desired to assist him. Besides, it was the decision of Consort Lan and her family. But how could Prince Chen be so indifferent to her?

"Ten minutes!" Chu Liuchen's cold words came to her ears again, and she asked subconsciously, "What?"

Chu Liuchen looked up at her as if he were looking at an idiot.

Xiao Xuanzi reminded her in a low voice, "My master means he gives you ten minutes to talk. If you want to say anything, hurry up and say it. Or you may be driven out!"

It was not that Xiao Xuanzi wanted to scare her. He knew his master well. How could he allow such an irrelevant person like her to waste so much time?

"I..." Qin Yiyan felt so wronged that her eyes turned red. She looked up at Chu Liuchen and took a deep breath to suppress the grievance in her heart. Sure enough, Prince Chen did not have any compassion for women. If she cried, he would ask someone to throw her out.

"Cousin, the Qin Family has a secret squad of bodyguards who can help you. At present, it is in my charge. Because of this, Consort Lan brought me here!" Qin Yiyan had to tell her purpose honestly.

After that, Qin Yiyan raised her head proudly.

She was the Qin Family's only descendant, the legitimate daughter of the direct line of descent. Since there were no other offsprings, the power of the Qin Family fell into her hands.

The Qin Family was of some use as the previous empress's relatives. Before the previous empress died, she asked them to preserve their strength. In fact, the previous empress was in charge of this squad of secret guards at the very beginning.

If her cousin knew she had such a powerful force in her hand, he would think highly of her.

"So what?" Chu Liuchen asked, still coldly. His voice had no warmth, and his eyes looked penetrating and steely. "Does Consort Lan want to achieve something big by relying on a secret squad?"

"Can't... can't we?" Qin Yiyan had been full of confidence. Because she had a secret squad, she had always felt superior to other weak women who could only depend on their men. In her mind, she would become an empress assisting her husband in governing a country. Of course, she didn't have to be an empress. Being a powerful consort could also win the trust of the emperor.

But she didn't understand what Chu Liuchen meant at the moment. She looked at Chu Liuchen in front of her in astonishment. "So, he thinks nothing of my strength? But how... how is that possible?"

"Does your family want to rise in rebellion or Consort Lan?" Chu Liuchen asked.

Qin Yiyan hurriedly shook her head. "Cousin, you've misunderstood. The Qin Family doesn't have any wild ambitions like that. Consort Lan, as an imperial consort, is not ambitious either!"

"Then, why do you need a secret squad of guards?" Chu Liuchen raised his lips sarcastically, and a smile emerged on his handsome face. However, such a smile disheartened Qin Yiyan.

"No... it's not like that. But you need it!" She was wondering what had gone wrong. Why was the reality so different from what Consort Lan had thought? She and Consort Lan had good intentions to help. It was not that the Qin Family or Consort Lan aimed high.

"But we all want to support you!" Qin Yiyan explained.

"What makes you think I am short-handed?" Chu Liuchen asked, raising his eyebrows.

"But Consort Lan said it would be good to give you these guards and let them protect you secretly!" Qin Yiyan said uneasily.

"Give the squad to me?" Chu Liuchen smiled and reached out his hand to Qin Yiyan. "In this case, just give me the token for this squad!"

"Cousin, it's not for you. They can only do things for you according to my... my orders. Do you understand what I mean?" Qin Yiyan bit her lip and said.

"If it is for me, just give it to me. But if I must control them through an outsider, get out!" Chu Liuchen said rudely, with a little coldness in his eyes, "No matter who sends them, I'm in complete control of the Prince Chen's Mansion. No outsiders can intervene in my mansion's internal affairs. I don't care if you are my cousin or not."

Cold sweat broke out on Qin Yiyan's forehead. She was sure that he did not just say these words to frighten her. If any secret guards in her hands appeared in the Prince Chen's Mansion, Prince Chen might kill her.

At that time, both sides would suffer, and it would do no good to her.

"Cousin, my people are yours. How could you treat us like this?" Qin Yiyan said indignantly.

"Hand over the token or leave!" Chu Liuchen looked at her and said with an increasingly glum smile. A trace of viciousness appeared on his pretty face. His gaze slithered across her eyes like a venomous snake with terrifying skin patterns leisurely flicking out its tongue. It made her tremble all over with fear. Taking two steps back, she didn't dare to stay any longer. Immediately, she turned around and hurried downstairs.

She had to discuss it with Consort Lan. Initially, she had been full of confidence, but now she was at a loss because of Prince Chen's attitude.

Shouldn't Prince Chen think better of her when knowing she had a secret squad? Then she would become his capable assistant with this squad of secret guards at her command.

She didn't want to be a fragile woman like Shao Wanru or care about how many women her cousin had. As a unique woman indispensable to Prince Chen, she was destined to stand high above others, hand in hand with him one day.

She despised women like Princess Chen, who could only be a burden to her cousin. How could Princess Chen progress and achieve great success together with her cousin?

But now, she had been driven out by her cousin for no reason. How could Qin Yiyan not feel aggrieved?

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She returned to her living place and sat silently to thoroughly reflect on things that had happened lately. Gritting her teeth, she told herself, "Even if my cousin cares much about Princess Chen, so what? I'm the most suitable woman who can help him a lot."

She had to find a chance to discuss it with her aunt in the Palace. Her aunt was best qualified to speak on the matter of the secret squad. Her aunt told her she was the most powerful force supporting Prince Chen that day. At the present stage, she just needed to let her cousin listen to her aunt.

Thinking of this, she breathed a sigh of relief. She could not act rashly before she met her aunt in the Palace. To avoid causing unnecessary trouble, she mustn't let these secret guards enter the Prince Chen's Mansion.

Qin Yiyan was waiting quietly to enter the Palace with Shao Wanru and see Consort Lan. Chu Liuchen upset her, but Qin Yiyan firmly believed Consort Lan would help her win back Chu Liuchen's respect. She even began to suspect Princess Chen. How could her cousin treat her so rudely? Could it be that Princess Chen slandered her before him?

She thought about everything carefully and found such a thing was possible!

"Women like Princess Chen are troublesome. How could she foolishly be jealous of me at this critical time? I've tried my best to avoid such a misunderstanding.

"I'm capable enough, with much better qualities than her. Even if my cousin has many women, I can tolerate it. I don't even care that my cousin has a legal wife. I am the one who can do great things, but Princess Chen is just a useless woman holding us back."

Qin Yiyan thought Shao Wanru would enter the Palace in two days because she had almost recovered. So, she needed to prepare something in advance to meet Consort Lan.

Surprisingly, Qin Yiyan didn't receive the news of Shao Wanru entering the Palace. Instead, she learned that Shao Wanru would attend a banquet in the courtyard of the princesses.

At this time, the invitation card had entered the gate of Prince Chen's Mansion, along with another thing...

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Chapter 1159 Many Invitations

"Changxing Grass?" Out of curiosity, Shao Wanru picked up a few stalks of grass in the box and asked, "What is Princess Yuyan up to?"

Many accidents were related to Changxing Grass, and she was nearly killed because of it. What did Princess Yuyan mean by sending the grass here now? Of course, Shao Wanru didn't think it was a coincidence.

Chu Liuchen looked at the Changxing Grass in Shao Wanru's hand lazily and said carelessly, "I had asked for the grass from the Xu State."

"Why do you want the few stalks of grass?" Shao Wanru asked in confusion and waved the half-withered grass in her hand. It didn't dry up and looked fresh, at least.

"I asked for them for Uncle the Emperor, but the Xu State had always said they didn't have the grass. They needed some time to look for the grass. Even in the Xu State, finding this kind of grass is not easy. It is because they grow only in remote and untraversed mountains and marshlands."

"Then... why did His Majesty want it?" Shao Wanru blinked her watery eyes and asked hesitantly.

“He certainly wanted to find out what happened at that time. All incidents have something to do with the Changxing Grass. Did the Xu State send the Changxing Grass that year? Or, did anyone consort with the Xu State and find some Changxing Grasses? The answers to these questions are still unknown. Yet, neither is a happy issue!” Chu Liuchen said.

He was dressed in a long dark-colored robe with an overlapping collar. It made his creamy white face as shiny as pearls and his deep eyes even more penetrating. At this time, he did not look as refined and gentle as he used to be. With a little indifference, his manner became quite similar to Shao Wanru’s. He seemed more aloof and detached than before.

Shao Wanru meditated in silence. She had indeed been involved in the previous matters, but Chu Liuchen took over them. She believed these matters would no longer implicate her. However, she was afraid that he would be involved. These things could be big or small. Initially, she thought these matters had been settled, but now it seemed the Emperor had only shelved them for the time being.

The envoy of the Xu State had ulterior motives!

“Will the Changxing Grass be sent to the Palace?” Shao Wanru thought for a moment and stopped pursuing the previous matter. “Will it get you involved?”

“Yes, the grass will be delivered to the Palace. But don’t worry. I won’t get involved in this matter. In the first place, Uncle the Emperor told me to ask for some grass from the Xu State, not on his behalf, but in my name. It could be regarded as a personal favor I wanted from the Xu State. If I got the grass from the Xu State without hindrance, it meant Xu State King didn’t know anything about it. Otherwise, there would be something fishy!”

Chu Liuchen smiled, and his face softened. There was a glimmer in his limpid eyes.

“Judging by the present situation, do you think they were willing to do it or not?” Shao Wanru shook the Changxing Grass in her hand and asked curiously.

“They were a little reluctant. But it doesn’t seem to be about Xu State King, but someone around him. The person must have a close relationship with Xu State King!” Chu Liuchen smiled with a thoughtful look.

That day before he left, he made such a request to Xu State King. At that time, Xu State King hesitated a little and was about to agree. However, Princess Yuyan and Consort Li suddenly mentioned something else about Princess Yuyan after she arrived at the Kingdom of Dongcang. As a result, this topic was put aside. Then, before he left, Chu Liuchen asked the envoy about this matter, but he said he was not clear about this.

Since Chu Liuchen was about to leave, it was too late for him to ask about it. Moreover, he didn’t ask for it in the name of his country. It was only a small favor to him. Thus, it didn’t matter whether people in the Xu State would give it to him.

He had thought Xu State King would pretend to have forgotten about it. To his surprise, Princess Yuyan brought over the grass for him. It was worthwhile to fathom the hidden meaning behind this matter!

It looked that the few stalks of Changxing Grass were from Princess Yuyan, whose purpose was to show kindness to Chu Liuchen.

Princess Yuyan was just a princess in the imperial harem. Although she was familiar with the Changxing Grass, she would never collect any. The grass should be from Consort Li if Princess Yuyan didn't have it. Before Xu State King could say anything about it that day, Consort Li and Princess Yuyan abruptly changed the topic, leaving the matter about the grass unsettled.

"Are you going to attend this gathering?" Shao Wanru asked with understanding in her eyes, curving up her rosy lips.

"Of course, I'll. Since Princess Yuyan is so sincere, how can I not join the fun?" Chu Liuchen said with a meaningful smile.

"Consort Li is very suspicious!

"If it were Consort Li, whom would she collude with? Matters related to the Changxing Grass are half-genuine and half-sham. I have also interfered and know some things are true."

It was true that someone secretly touched the Changxing Grass. The coachman of Prince Zhou's Mansion did use the Changxing Grass. He had checked it and found that the few stalks of Changxing Grass were not from the national treasury, although the grass stored there was gone.

The same invitation card also appeared on Chu Liuyue's desk. Looking at this exceedingly exquisite card, Chu Liuyue looked up at Princess Yuyan opposite him and said, "Thank you for coming here in person. I will be there."

"Thank you for your support, Your Highness. I've just arrived in the Kingdom of Dongcang. The first honorable guests I must invite should be the few princes, including you. You have given me a definite reply. I wonder if the other princes will also do me this favor!" Princess Yuyan said with a smile.

She got dressed up today, exuding a kind of casual charm.

She was dressed in a full-length dress with complicated peacock patterns. The ribbon wound across her light gray coat, hanging from her arms. It swayed as she walked. Even when she stood still, it made her delicate and brilliant. Another ribbon of the same color had been tied around her slender waist. Men's hearts would race uncontrollably when seeing her slim waist and ample breasts, not to mention she had seductive eyes.

She smiled sweetly at Chu Liuyue, her beautiful eyes full of tender affection falling on his face.

"Won't you send invitations to the other mansions in person?" Chu Liuyue's heart skipped a beat, and he asked with a smile. His fingers scraped on the invitation card, and he looked thoughtful.

"No, I won't go. I've asked Infanta Yuan'an to invite Prince Zhou. Previously, Princess Chen promised my Eldest Sister that Prince Chen would come with her. As for Prince Xin, my Eldest Sister will go to invite him. I don't know if he will come. I came here. I was worried that you might give me the cold shoulder. Fortunately, you didn't embarrass me!"

Princess Yuyan pretended to be lucky and patted her ample bust.

Chu Liuyue unconsciously looked down and fixed his eyes there. Then, he slowly looked up. "You came here to send the invitation in person, which I feel was more than I deserved. You came all the way to the

Kingdom of Dongcang. I should have treated you first, but I didn't expect you to hold a banquet before me!"

"Your Highness, you flatter me!" Princess Yuyan said in a tender and sweet voice.

"I didn't say it out of politeness!" Chu Liuyue waved his hand and said, "I mean it. In the beginning, I planned to do it, but since there is no hostess in my mansion, I feel too embarrassed to invite you and your sister!"

Speaking of this, Chu Liuyue frowned slightly and seemed a little unhappy when discussing this topic.

"It is so considerate of you to think about that. My sister and I are very grateful for your kindness. But I wonder why you haven't married. Prince Chen ranked third, but he got married before you. Is this acceptable in your country?" Princess Yuyan asked curiously and leaned closer to Chu Liuyue.

She bound her breasts high, and her collar was appropriately dressed, neither too high nor too low. But when she leaned forward, Chu Liuyue saw a trace of snow-white skin there, which looked pretty attractive.

This time, Chu Liuyue remained composed as if he was not tempted. He shook his head with a bitter smile and leaned back to pull himself away from her. "In our country, elder brothers should marry first, but my Third Brother's situation is special. He was in poor health back then. Imperial Grandmother was afraid that he might... So, she let him get married first!"

"But you are the eldest prince, after all!" Princess Yuyan said, offended on Prince Yue's behalf. "All activities have certain orders. We can't break ethics and social rules. If we change rules casually, many things will end up in a mess!"

Her remarks were full of meaning.

Many things? She might talk about the fact that Chu Liuchen got married first or the order of succession to the throne. According to the rules, the throne should be passed to the eldest prince.

"Do you believe everything should be done in order of arrival?" Chu Liuyue raised his eyebrows and smiled. He liked this statement.

"Of course," Princess Yuyan said, her lustrous eyes on Chu Liuyue. "I heard Prime Minister Zhang's daughter would be your legal wife. I'm wondering how beautiful she is. I've sent someone to invite her, but I don't know if she will come. Could you please send someone to talk to her again and ask her to do me this favor?"

"I can't help you with this," Chu Liuyue said awkwardly.

"Why? Wouldn't Miss Zhang do this small favor for you?" Princess Yuyan was surprised, staring at Chu Liuyue with her sparkling eyes.

"I'm not very familiar with Miss Zhang. I've just met her twice. We have nothing to say even if I meet her somewhere." Chu Liuyue frowned, and it could be seen that he was a little displeased.

Princess Yuyan's heart leaped with joy. It seemed that the relationship between Miss Zhang and Prince Yue was fragile. That was great! Although she thought so in her heart, she didn't show happiness on her

face. Instead, she looked more surprised and asked, "Aren't you going to get married soon? But haven't you got familiar with each other? How... how can you have any feelings for each other?"

"Our parents and match-makers decide this marriage!" Chu Liuyue said implicitly.

"I know your country advocates this kind of marriage, but I also heard that if princes are unsatisfied, their marriages won't be settled. Are you happy with yours?" Princess Yuyan asked, looking at Chu Liuyue with fake concern in her luminous eyes full of charm.

Princess Yuyan was exceedingly beautiful and could be regarded as a rare beauty. But her bewitchingly charming appearance could hardly arouse the man's pity.

After all, Princess Yuyan was not as good-looking as Shao Yanru. Sometimes, Chu Liuyue could see the same charismatic manner in Shao Yanru. But since Princess Yuyan overexerted herself, her act of seduction looked obvious. Compared with her, Shao Yanru, with intangible charisma, was far more alluring. Therefore, Chu Liuyue saw through Princess Yuyan's intention at a glance.

However, this was a good thing for him. If Princess Yuyan was willing to be his consort, he didn't mind letting her marry into his mansion. The Xu State could be of some help to him. This was why he echoed Princess Yuyan's words.

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As for Zhang Qilan, he was indeed not very satisfied with her. He had two specific reasons...

Chapter 1160 Is Zhang Qilan Up Ahead?

There were two reasons why Chu Liuyue disliked Zhang Qilan.

The first reason was Prime Minister Zhang's attitude. Even though he had agreed to marry Zhang Qilan as his legal wife, Prime Minister Zhang showed no partiality to him, appearing very impartial and fair in the imperial court. Every time Chu Liuyue wanted to get closer to him, he just smiled and walked away, treating Chu Liuyue the same way as before. But Chu Liuyue, anxious in his heart, felt very uncomfortable about his indifferent response.

The second reason was that Zhang Qilan was not as good-looking as Shao Yanru. Initially, Shao Yanru captured his fancy. Although Zhang Qilan was pretty, she was still far inferior to Shao Yanru.

Consort of Virtue chose Zhang Qilan as his legal wife, but Chu Liuyue was not very satisfied with the arrangement.

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He knew Zhang Qilan was his best choice at the moment. Nevertheless, he always felt it was not enough. If he could get some extra help, it would also be a good thing for him. Thus, he would not disappoint Princess Yuyan, who took the initiative to come to him.

One had other intentions, and the other showed affection. While speaking, they were closely allied in opinion and feelings. Chu Liuyue had always acted like a gentleman not disturbed by Princess Yuyan's full chest. However, he looked more tender than before and even displayed some faint affection.

Though Chu Liuyue had never mentioned his feeling openly, Princess Yuyan was very satisfied with this result. After all, she was used to male adoration in the Xu State. Whether a man was genuinely fond of her was evident in her eyes.

They had a most agreeable and long chat. In the end, seeing it was getting late, Princess Yuyan reluctantly got up. There was no hostess in the Prince Yue's Mansion, so it was very inappropriate for her to stay for dinner.

Chu Liuyue personally sent her to the gate. Anyway, she was a Xu State princess. He should see her off. After Princess Yuyan's carriage left, Chu Liuyue turned around and slowly walked back into the mansion with a mocking smile. A princess from a small, foreign country threw herself at him. It was a humiliating thing for Chu Qing. As for him, whoever came would be welcome.

If the Prime Minister Zhang's Mansion didn't like it, he could tell them to argue with the Xu State.

If Prime Minister Zhang didn't give him some practical benefits, he would stand by and watch the fight between Princess Yuyan and Zhang Qilan.

Princess Yutao and Princess Yuyan didn't invite many people. All their guests were young, either rich or noble.

This could be considered the first friendly contact between the Xu State and the royal family of the Kingdom of Dongcang.

There were not many people, plus the two princesses' courtyard had no male master. Therefore, they decided not to separate men and women during the banquet. According to Princess Yuyan, in the Xu State, they would not keep males and females apart when in small gatherings of those descendants of aristocratic families. Male and female guests could enjoy the scenery and go around together. Guests would only be separated by screens during the meal.

The few princes with distinguished status were the only male guests of this banquet.

As for the female guests, they were not outsiders. More or less, they were related to these princes.

When the carriage of Prince Chen's Mansion arrived, Princess Yuyan had been waiting there for a long time. But Shao Wanru alone got out of the carriage. Seeing this, she deliberately looked back to check out the situation with a smile and ensured no more person would get out of the carriage. Then, she asked teasingly, "Your Highness, why doesn't His Highness come? Is he busy today?"

"He will be here soon," Shao Wanru said softly.

"I thought he would not come. In that case, Your Highness, please come in!" Princess Yuyan said affectionately and reached out to hold Shao Wanru's hand. However, Shao Wanru happened to turn sideways and say a few words to Yujie. Skillfully, she avoided her hand.

A trace of anger flashed across Princess Yuyan's face, but she immediately covered it up. She put down her hand and still said with a bright smile, "Among the Misses coming here today, you have the highest status. Could you please help me and introduce each of them?"

Although Shao Wanru was young, her status was indeed the highest. Before Infanta Yuan'an and Zhang Qilan married the two princes, their status was lower than Shao Wanru's.

Her request was fair and reasonable.

"I'm afraid I'll have to disappoint you. I don't know many people. Since I married Prince Chen, I've been in poor health and have never seen many noble ladies in the capital city. You can ask Infanta Yuan'an for help. She has superior status and has grown up in the capital city. Besides, you are on good terms with each other!"

Shao Wanru refused with a smile.

She would not interfere in today's banquet. If she did, it might be hard for her to explain away some things in the future. In her eyes, Princess Yuyan wouldn't act properly to her status and behave well, no matter what. Therefore, she only felt safe when being an ordinary guest here.

"Infanta Yuan'an is nice but not in a position as high as yours." Princess Yuyan had a deep sense of grievance, but she didn't show resentment on her face.

"Infanta Yuan'an will be Princess Zhou with prominent status. Even if we don't talk about her future as Princess Zhou, she is a noble lady with a strong background in our country. What's more, I heard you are friends attracted to each other by similar tastes." Shao Wanru said.

She implied that Infanta Yuan'an had a close relationship with Princess Yuyan. Infanta Yuan'an was familiar with the Misses of aristocratic families in the capital city, but Shao Wanru knew little about it. If Princess Yuyan chose her instead of Infanta Yuan'an, she would arouse suspicion.

Princess Yuyan didn't expect Shao Wanru to be so cautious. Her smile died, and the look on her face hardened. Fortunately, Infanta Yuan'an had reminded her of this situation before. Back then, Princess Yuyan didn't believe it, thinking Shao Wanru would do this to show respect to the Xu State. In particular, the reason she prepared was appropriate and sound.

Princess Yuyan held her anger in check and kept her radiant smile. With pity, she said, "Then, I'll have to give up this idea. Originally, you were my first choice because of your most eminent status!"

While talking, they had already entered the garden.

This courtyard was prepared when a foreign princess was said to marry into the Kingdom of Dongcang. The Xu State princesses would only live here for now and soon marry into another mansion. No matter what, this place would become useless. Therefore, this place was of moderate size. It was not a large place. Undoubtedly, it was not comparable to the princes' mansions. It was just an empty residential place. The servants had tidied it up before the two princesses moved in.

The garden was quite exquisite. Some flowers and plants inside seemed newly planted, but they presented a beautiful sight. There were flowers scattered among these green and luxuriant plants.

"Your Highness, take a walk first. I have to pick up a few other Misses," Princess Yuyan said with a dazzling smile. "There are tea and snacks along the way. If you are tired, you can rest in the pavilions by the roadside. Have some tea and desserts. I'll bring other Misses here later."

Princess Yuyan said, pointing somewhere. It didn't seem to be a main road of the garden but a winding path leading to a picturesque place. Those pavilions and pagodas loomed from a distance through the sea of plants, bushes, and flowers. What an impressive sight.

"Where is Princess Yutao?" Shao Wanru didn't immediately step forward but asked with a smile.

"She has gone to the outer court. There should be a prince coming. Today I'm responsible for welcoming the womenfolk in the inner court, and my Eldest Sister greets those in the outer court. We'll bring them all here later!" Princess Yuyan explained with a smile.

Since there was no male master, the two princesses cooperated and shared the work. It was appropriate for Princess Yutao to pick up the few princes. Princess Yutao could be considered a prince in the Xu State and might inherit the throne.

"Your Highness, rest assured. Miss Zhang has also arrived here. If you walk a little faster, you might meet Miss Zhang. I heard you were best friends before you married." Princess Yuyan pointed forward with a smile. "She came a little earlier than you. She should be not far away from here!"

At this point, it was improper for Shao Wanru to ask Princess Yuyan to stay. Thus, she nodded with a smile, said goodbye to Princess Yuyan, and went straight into the flowers and trees with two servant girls.

Not long after she walked forward, she met a servant girl of the mansion. At the sight of Shao Wanru, she hurriedly stepped aside and bowed respectfully.

Looking at the teacup she took away, Shao Wanru stopped and asked, "Who is in front of us?"

It was obvious that the teacup had just been used. Since it had been removed from the table, the people drinking the tea must have left.

"The Miss of Prime Minister Zhang's Mansion just rested in a pavilion before us!" The servant girl answered in a low voice.

Shao Wanru waved her hand and asked the servant girl to leave. Then, she continued to walk forward with Yujie and Qing'er.

After walking for a while, they did see a pavilion on the side of the path. The curtains fell, and only one side of the pavilion facing the road was left uncovered. As the thin gauze curtains swayed in the wind, she saw the fruit tray and teacups on the stone table, but no servant was outside the pavilion. The maid who left just now must have been serving here.

It was a peaceful and secluded place. A few bird calls from somewhere made the scenery here more vivid.

"Look, My Lady. There are bird cages above." Qing'er had sharp eyes. Immediately, she spotted two birdcages hanging on the pavilion's edge. Inside, several colorful birds were jumping around and chirping occasionally, which looked quite cute.

Shao Wanru walked toward the pavilion. It was indeed an excellent place to watch birds and rest. The journey was neither too short nor too long. She didn't see anyone around, so it was good to have a rest here.

Upon entering the pavilion, she found all the utensils inside were clean. Even if someone had drunk tea here, servants changed the tea set.

Yujie reached out and touched the teapot in the middle. It was scorching. She opened the cover and picked up the empty cup on one side, pouring tea for Shao Wanru.

The tea was light-colored and fragrant, and the tea leaves were top-grade. It could be seen that this place had been prepared with meticulous care. Not far away, they saw a high and upturned courtyard corner, but no one knew what that place was. Because it could not be seen clearly, the mysterious scene brought them some subtle feelings and moods.

There were a few clusters of flowers outside the pavilion. The branches were vines, which didn't look like any of the flowers Shao Wanru had seen. The green vines dotted with little flowers spread out beneath them. These flowers didn't look like those delicate flowers raised in the capital city. However, judging from the sharp thorns on the flower branches, Shao Wanru could tell this kind of flower should be full of vitality.

These flowers were small, but the vines were strong.

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"My Lady, this kind of flower seems to grow in the mountains. When living in the nunnery, I sometimes went to pick herbs with Mingqiu Nun in the mountains. Those extremely vigorous vines may have such small flowers. At that time, I felt they looked stunningly beautiful, more appealing than the flowers in the garden."

Walking to the pavilion entrance, Yujie squatted down to observe them and said to Shao Wanru with a smile. She liked flowers in this shape. Before serving Shao Wanru, she was a wild and naughty girl raised in the mountain. This kind of flower was her favorite. Occasionally, she would pick a few flowers and put them into the hair near her temples. She was not a nun without hair but just a young girl who had been living in the nunnery. After all, the desire to look attractive is universal.

"I'll pick one and show it to Mingqiu Nun. It may be useful!"