

## Royal Marriage 161

### Chapter 161: The Little Rabbit Almost Killed the Old Lady

Li Hongyuan knew he had to change clothes, but—

He looked down.

His hand was still in Jiang Ning's.

“The wound is treated. Shouldn't you let go now? Can't bear to part with this prince?”

“You're overthinking.” Jiang Ning shook her hand. “It's just stiff.”

Li Hongyuan said, “Since you can't let go, let's change like this. As your husband, I have nothing to hide from you. After all, I've seen you from every angle.”

“Do you think I'll be so embarrassed by your words?” Jiang Ning lay nonchalantly. “You've seen what you've seen. I don't care. Huang Ying, help me change my clothes.”

Huang Ying suppressed a smile and helped her sit up, starting to remove her clothes.

She took off the robe, then the upper garment.

As the upper garment was removed, her skin, white as jade, was revealed.

Huang Ying hesitated for a moment and asked, “Princess Consort, should I remove the skirt too?”

“Yes, take everything off. Can’t you see it’s stained with blood?”

“Yes.” Huang Ying reached for the belt around her waist.

Finally unable to hold back, Li Hongyuan slapped her hand away and said, “Shameless woman! To be so exposed before a man, you’re downright wanton!” “Weren’t you the one who said you had seen every part my body?” Jiang Ning smiled, “What, you’re not so daring now?”

“Do you have no sense of shame? I can’t believe I have to associate with a wanton woman like you!”

Li Hongyuan turned and walked away.

Jiang Ning waved her slightly stiff left wrist and said, “All bark and no bite.”

Huang Ying smiled, “Princess Consort, don’t bully His Highness like that.”

“With the words you use, people might think I’m flirting with him. Hmph.” Jiang Ning leaned on her bed to stand, making it easier for Huang Ying to help her change her skirt.

“When you were injured before, His Highness rushed over and saw you covered in blood. He was so scared that his face went pale. I saw it with my own eyes. It proves that he still cares about you.”

“You’re overthinking it.” Jiang Ning flipped something out of her purse and tossed a piece of candied fruit into her mouth. “He was just worried about the emperor’s eldest grandson.”

Upon reflection, Huang Ying realized that was indeed the case... At the time, the prince had first picked up the emperor’s eldest grandson.

Ah well.

After tidying up, Huang Ying called Xiaoman and carried Jiang Ning to the carriage.

Jiang Ning looked around and asked, "Where's Xiaoqian?"

"The emperor's eldest grandson is fine, just a little frightened. He's already been sent back to the palace."

"Alright, good." Jiang Ning got into the carriage with relief, only to find Li Hongyuan already inside. "What are you doing in my carriage?"

"Get it straight, this is my carriage."

"Where's my carriage then?"

"It was ruined by the assassins."

"...Where did the assassins come from? Were they targeting Xiaoqian?"

"No, they were after you."

"Me? Is it as a revenge from Marquis of Yuandong's residence?"

"You're scared now?" Li Hongyuan scoffed. "I thought you were fearless and didn't care about anything."

"Is it really them?" Jiang Ning didn't care about his sarcasm now.

"No, it isn't."

Jiang Ning glared at him.

He's being ridiculous.

"Though it's not Marquis of Yuandong this time, who knows about the future?" Li Hongyuan continued indifferently, "Though I haven't found out the specifics yet, I suspect it's either the King of Chen or Prince of Huai."

Jiang Ning said, "So it's all because of this little bunny in my belly. It almost got me killed."

"What did you call him?"

"A bunny."

"Say it again?"

"Bunny! Bunny!"

"..." Li Hongyuan looked away, calmly saying, "Don't go out carelessly before giving birth.."

Chapter 162: Does it Hurt or Not

Jiang Ning didn't talk back this time.

Although she was stubborn, she also valued her life.

"Are you brothers always so open in your fights and killings?" Jiang Ning asked.

"Of course not. It's just... some things, everyone knows in their hearts." Li Hongyuan said indifferently, "Throughout history, struggles for the Imperial Throne have always been bloody."

“Actually, isn’t it good to just be a rich and noble prince? Why must you compete for that position?”

“You don’t understand.” Li Hongyuan looked out the carriage window, his eyes becoming a bit distant, “Some things, once they are out of your control, there is no turning back.”

“It sounds like someone forced you to fight for it.”

“Of course. If you don’t fight for it, someone will force you to do so. If you don’t fight and give up the position to someone else, they won’t be merciful to you. Do you want to be trampled underfoot for the rest of your life?”

Jiang Ning actually understood this, but throughout history, there have also been wealthy princes who lived leisurely lives without a care in the world.

However, looking at the ruthlessness and life-and-death struggles between these brothers, there was absolutely no room for retreat.

If you don’t fight, you will die.

For the sake of her life, she decided to stay in the Prince of Yu’s residence for the remaining three or four months, not going out.

Moreover, her arm, although it was just an external injury, had a whole layer of flesh cut off.

Having a lame leg was one thing, but now with an injured arm, there was no way she could go out to have fun.

At that moment, the carriage suddenly shook.

Jiang Ning lost her balance and was thrown to the side, about to hit the carriage.

A hand grabbed her shoulder, steadying her.

“What’s the matter?” Li Hongyuan asked in a deep voice.

Chashan’s voice came from outside the carriage: “There’s a stone on the road. No problem.”

“Tell the coachman if the ride gets bumpy again, I will take their lives.”

“This servant understands.”

The carriage slowed down a bit, but it became more stable.

Li Hongyuan asked Jiang Ning: “Are you alright? Is there any discomfort? Does your arm hurt?”

“I’m fine.”

“Does your arm hurt?” She didn’t answer, so Li Hongyuan repeated the question.

“A little.”

How could it not hurt at all?

Li Hongyuan asked again, “Does your stomach hurt?”

“Why should my stomach hurt?” Jiang Ning glanced at him, “When I was at the Medical Clinic, you kept saying I was going to have a miscarriage. Now you keep asking if my stomach hurts. Do you really want me to have a miscarriage?”

“Do you have a brain?” Li Hongyuan was exasperated and retracted his hand, “I’m asking this because the child kept kicking your stomach!”

Jiang Ning said, "Who would have a stomachache because of the kicking?"

"No, it doesn't hurt?" Li Hongyuan's expression was a bit dumb.

Could something kicking inside the stomach not hurt?

"Of course it doesn't hurt." Jiang Ning thought for a while, and added, "At least not for now."

"What do you mean?"

"Right now, the baby is still small, able to move around in the stomach, and its strength is weak. In a couple of months, when it grows bigger and can't stretch its limbs, it may become uncomfortable when it kicks."

These were all things she learned from books and television in her previous life.

Li Hongyuan listened, a bit dazed, imagining a tiny baby swimming around in the stomach.

Would it drown then?

But he wouldn't ask these questions, so as to avoid being looked at by this dead woman as if he was an idiot.

Jiang Ning glanced at his hand and saw that she had scratched it.

Li Hongyuan sat with proper posture, staring straight ahead, pondering whether it was the King of Chen or the Prince of Huai who had made the move.

When he came back to his senses and realized that the noisy woman beside him had been quiet for a long time, he turned his head and saw her leaning against the carriage, asleep..

Chapter 163: Why Make Things Difficult for Her

Her belly was already obviously protruding, seeming tiring even when sitting.

But this carriage had double row bench seats and she could not lie down.

She leaned against the carriage, her injured arm hanging loosely, her eyes closed in sleep, a slight frown on her brow.

She seemed to be quite uncomfortable.

No wonder, her legs were not good to begin with, and now she was pregnant and had an injured arm.

Even imagining it made him feel pained.

Ordinarily, he only found her scatterbrained, outrageous, stubborn beyond belief and hard to communicate with, everything about her proving bothersome.

But seeing her in this state right now, he inexplicably found her pitiful.

Why did the royal family's power struggle have to drag in such a poor little creature like her?

Despite her leg problem, she was still the legitimate daughter of the Prime Minister's Mansion, she could've lived comfortably and carefree within the manor walls.



Yet now, burdened with the discomfort of pregnancy, she was confined to the back yard of Prince of Yu's Mansion, and even faced assassination attempts whenever she ventured out.

If he were to put himself in her shoes, he realized he would feel even more pain and resentment if treated this way.

Thinking about it this way, her usually willful behaviour didn't seem to matter that much anymore.

Perhaps she was just venting out her inner suffering in such ways.

Li Hongyuan watched her in silence for a while, then went and sat next to her, gently supporting her so that she could lean on him while sleeping.

That should make her a bit more comfortable.

Otherwise, watching her belly curled up and her arm recoiling as if in pain, it was truly hard to bear.

She was just a poor thing after all.

Why should he torment her?

With one hand free, Li Hongyuan smoothed out her brow, whispering, "You poor dear, just focus on safely delivering your child, and I can assure that you can spend the rest of your life peacefully in my mansion."

Her breathing was steady.

Seems like she was tired.

When the carriage came to a halt, Li Hongyuan carried her out and sent her to the Crystal Clear Manor. After instructing Huang Ying to take good care of her, he left.

Things at home were settled, but outside matters were far from over.

Upon leaving the Crystal Clear Manor, Li Hongyuan's face darkened, a glint of sternness flashing in his eyes.

Li Yuanyuan rushed over in a fluster, "I heard the princess consort encountered an assassin. How is she? Is the child alright? Ah, your hand... You're injured too?"

She reached for his hand.

The moment she touched it, Li Hongyuan was reminded of Jiang Ning's slightly cold fingers, and for some unknown reason he felt a wave of disgust at Li Yuanyuan's touch.

He shook off her hand, "I'm fine."

Li Yuanyuan awkwardly withdrew her hand, "I will go to check on the princess consort."

"She is sleeping, do not disturb her."

"Just a peek, I won't disturb her rest."

"What, are my words not carrying weight now?"

Li Yuanyuan hung her head, not daring to utter a sound.

Li Hongyuan glanced at her, sternly stating, "Keep your schemes to yourself. I may have ignored them in the past, but if you dare to plot against the princess consort again, you'll share Ms. Zhao's fate."

Li Yuanyuan shivered, quickly bending to her knees, "I will obey."

“Return, take good care of the household. Whatever the Crystal Clear Manor needs, supply it.”

“Understood, I will remember.”

Li Hongyuan didn't look at her again as he briskly walked away.

“I respect Your Highness,” Li Yuanyuan respectfully bowed, only standing up again after a while.

Her maid came over to help her, “His Highness seems to have changed his attitude towards the Princess.”

“More than a little,” Li Yuanyuan furrowed her brow, “Before, His Highness was indifferent towards the Princess, but everything changed when they discovered she was carrying a male heir. This boy is extremely important to His Highness, naturally he would treat her differently.”

“Then... should we keep the child?” asked the maid in a low voice..

Chapter 164: The Master's Command

Li Yuanyuan furrowed her brow and stayed silent for a moment before saying, “I... need to think about it further.”

“Ma'am, is there really a need to think about it?” The maid said, “Can't you see that Prince of Yu already highly values the Princess Consort and the child in her womb?”

“I know.”

“You should know that this child is an important bargaining chip in the hands of the Prince of Yu.”

“It is precisely because of this that the Prince will not allow anyone to harm the child.” Li Yuanyuan frowned, “If I act recklessly and the Prince finds out...”

The maid sneered, “Before, it wasn’t a big deal, thinking that she was just a cripple and the child might have been born out of wedlock. But now it seems that the child is actually Prince of Yu’s, and Judge Dong has confirmed that the child is a boy. Even the palace values it...”

“Alright, I’m well aware of all that.”

“This servant thinks you don’t seem to understand.” The maid didn’t stop talking just because Li Yuanyuan was getting impatient, but became more aggressive instead, “This child has now become the key to which family the Crown Prince title will fall upon. His Majesty has always favored Concubine Jin, and our Master’s biggest rival is the Prince of Yu. Now that our Master doesn’t have a son yet, Prince of Yu is about to have one. Who do you think His Majesty would prefer?”

“I said, I will think about it carefully.”

“This crippled woman is truly blessed to have survived all this.” The maid whispered, “Our Master must be furious.”

“Alright, aren’t you afraid that walls have ears when you say these things outside?” Li Yuanyuan was getting impatient, “Save it for when we get back home!”

She left with a flick of her sleeve.

The maid snorted coldly but immediately followed her.”

When they returned to the courtyard, they heard some noises inside.

The maid walked in, sat down casually, and said, “Is ma’am deliberately showing me attitude?”

Li Yuanyuan turned to look at her and snapped, "Who allowed you to behave like this in front of me? Xiangyu, you've become increasingly unruly!"

Xiangyu didn't move from her seat and said, "Ma'am doesn't need to put on an act in front of me. I've already received our Master's order to ensure that you deal with the issue before the bastard child is born."

With a gloomy face, Li Yuanyuan didn't say a word.

"Are you not even going to listen to our Master's orders?"

"Of course I will."

"Then act quickly!" Xiangyu stared at her coldly, "What are you hesitating for? It's been your own incompetence that you haven't been able to conceive a child all these years, yet a crippled newcomer has managed to do it first. Now that our Master has given the order, you just need to follow it. Or are you saying that you're truly in love with the Prince of Yu and can't bear to kill his child?"

"I'm not."

"That's for the best!" Xiangyu stood up, "Now that the cripple is injured and won't leave her room for a while, this is the perfect opportunity for you to strike. If you miss this chance, you know what the consequences will be."

"Alright, I understand. You can go now."

Xiangyu snorted coldly and left the room.

Li Yuanyuan stared at her retreating figure.

Another maid, Quan'er, came in and quickly tidied up the room, saying, "Ma'am, are you not feeling well? You just went to the Crystal Clear Manor with Xiangyu and returned so soon?"

“The Princess Consort is resting, and I didn’t want to disturb her.”

“I see.” Quan’er glanced outside and lowered her voice, “But ma’am, you’ve been too indulgent with Xiangyu. She was fine a couple of years ago, but she’s become increasingly unruly lately and even dares to shout at you... Even though she has been serving you all this time, she’s just a servant. You don’t have to put up with her nonsense..”

Chapter 165: Die now

Li Yuanyuan rubbed her temples, “She has served me for many years, and now that she is older, it is okay for her temperament to be a little harsher.”

“She is too submissive to everyone. She needs to make it clear who the master is. Watching her always irritates me, she is becoming increasingly bold. If we don’t stop it now, who knows what will happen in the future.”

“I got it, go make me a pot of hot tea.”

Quan’er obliged and left.

At night, Li Yuanyuan had trouble sleeping and called someone in to serve her.

It happened to be Xiangyu’s turn, she came in yawning, grumpily saying, “You are the master, and I am the servant. Serving you is my duty. It’s just that you barely let me sleep. If you’re so capable, why don’t you serve Prince of Yu over in Misty Cloud Pavilion? If you are able to bear a child, you can transform from a regular hen to a phoenix.”

“Why are you talking so much?” Li Yuanyuan snapped

“If you need someone to serve you, find someone else. Do you think that I am here to serve you? Don’t forget that we both had the opportunity to be the concubine of Prince of Yu. The Master chose you only because of your seductive beauty. And I am not your servant. The master dispatched me to keep an eye on you, to remind you, so as not to forget your place!”

Li Yuanyuan lay in her tent in silence.

Xiangyu was still chattering, urging her to harm the unborn child of the disabled Princess Consort, and preferably kill the Princess Consort as well.

Li Yuanyuan said: “I understand, I am very tired, would you kindly let me sleep? We can discuss the matter tomorrow.”

“You procrastinate day by day, the belly of that woman is getting bigger. Do you plan to wait until the baby is born?”

Li Yuanyuan slowly sat up and lifted the curtain.

Xiangyu did not even look up.

Li Yuanyuan walked to her, suddenly hugged her from behind with her right hand, raised her left hand, and a blade of silver flashing light aimed at her neck, fiercely cut it!

Spurt!

Blood sprayed out.

Xiangyu didn’t even get to say a word, her eyes wide open, she fell down.

Li Yuanyuan held the dagger with a cold expression, whispered, “Despicable wretch, go to hell!”

She put down the dagger, found a black bag, stuffed Xiangyu's body into it, and under the cover of night, dragged the bag into the courtyard, dug a hole, and buried the bag in it.

Returning to the room, she brought a bucket of water, carefully cleaned the blood-stained dagger, and wiped the blood off the floor, walls, and furniture until everything was spotless.

After finishing this, she took off her blood-stained clothes and burned them, then she took a bath.

After all of these tasks, dawn was already breaking.

Outside, the sounds of servants moving about could be faintly heard.

Li Yuanyuan went back to bed, closed her eyes and fell asleep.

She slept deeply.

She hadn't slept so soundly in years.

When she woke up, it was sunny outside.

Li Yuanyuan glanced at the colourful mosquito net overhead, stretched her body, and called out, "Quan'er."

Quan'er immediately let himself in, calling out to those outside, "The princess consort is awake, come and serve her."

Two maidservants came in carrying water and other items.

Quan'er helped her get dressed and looked around the room, asking, "Where is Xiangyu? Wasn't she with the princess consort last night?"



“She complained about the hardness of the small bed and went back in the middle of the night.” Li Yuanyuan replied casually.

Quan’er frowned, “That Xiangyu is becoming increasingly bold. Has she become the master?”

“Let her be.”

“You can’t keep spoiling her like this, princess consort.”

“Other than being lazy and complaining, there’s nothing else wrong.”

“But she always thinks she is wronged..”

Chapter 166: Flower Fertilizer

“Yes, her time as a servant here has indeed been unfair to her. Maybe she wants to seek a higher branch to climb.” Li Yuanyuan shook her head, “Forget it, let’s not talk about it. I’m a bit hungry, get me some porridge.”

“Yes.”

Having finished breakfast, she stepped out of the door and glanced at the small garden in the courtyard.

The once-fresh soil had been dried by the sun.

“I remember, the mansion just received some new rose plants yesterday. I love the scent of roses. Quan’er, ask someone to send one over.”

“This servant will go right away.”

It wasn't long before a rose bush was brought to her.

Li Yuanyuan rolled up her sleeves and picked up a trowel.

Quan'er hurriedly said, “Let them do these coarse tasks. Don't dirty your hands, My Lady.”

“You don't understand, planting flowers is an elegant pastime and I enjoy doing it myself.”

Li Yuanyuan, with the trowel in hand, personally planted the rose in the small garden and watered it.

“The gardener said that the plant needs careful care and should be fertilized regularly,” Quan'er said.

As she washed her hands, Li Yuanyuan smiled, “I believe that this rose will surely bloom beautifully and fragrantly.”

After all, it was being nourished by the best fertilizer.

Jiang Ning recovered for half a month, and her arm was almost completely healed.

During this time, people from the Jiang family visited her like running water.

Even Lin Zizi came.

She hugged her daughter and cried for a long time.

The young masters of the Jiang family's main branch gathered together and scolded the Prince of Yu for being unreasonable; he couldn't even protect his own wife, who ended up getting injured on the streets.

Jiang Yi returned as well, bringing lots of gifts. Seeing her sister like this, he was heartbroken and almost went to fight the Prince of Yu.

Even Master Wenren's Thirteen wanted to come, but he was stopped at the door by the housekeeper of the Prince of Yu's Mansion.

It's one thing for the Princess Consort's family to visit, but what business does an outsider have coming?

Since Wenren Thirteen couldn't enter, he asked Jiang Yi for help and sent some things along with him.

Jiang Ning opened the box and found that they were all new and interesting toys she had never seen before.

There were mechanical dolls with hidden mechanisms that could move, shackles that required much effort to solve, bamboo woven cages, and lifelike birds hidden inside.

Each item kept her entertained for quite some time.

Since Jiang Ning couldn't leave and had agreed not to make a fuss for the time being, she was bored staying in the backyard. The box of items arrived just in time.

Jiang Ning looked through each item, unable to put them down.

Seeing her fondness for them, Jiang Yi felt a bit annoyed, "These are worth so little, I've bought you so many expensive things, but you don't even look at them. I can get you a carriage full of these."

"I like all the things Third Brother gave me as well." Jiang Ning played with the mechanical dolls while lowering her head and smiling, "But these are toys."

After Jiang Yi left, he relayed this to Wenren Thirteen.

“You certainly know how to win a little girl’s heart.” Jiang Yi felt a bit sour, “My little Seventh Sister likes these things so much. She didn’t even look up at me when I left, her eyes fixed on those little toys.”

Wenren Thirteen smiled gently, “She must be bored while recuperating. These are just to help her pass the time; they’re nothing.”

“I used to think Master Wenren must have been old-fashioned and pedantic, but I didn’t expect that you’d be quite clever.”

“I’m not this attentive to everyone.” Wenren held a cup of tea and smiled.

“Don’t tell me you still have feelings for my sister?” Jiang Yi gestured to his stomach, “She’s already like this, and the Emperor won’t let the Prince of Yu divorce her. No one dares to separate them.”

Wenren Thirteen laughed, “Seventh Miss Jiang is a very interesting person, I admire her and think she’s interesting and adorable. If I could marry her, it would indeed be a wonderful thing in life..”

Chapter 167: Gifts for Brother and He Tang

“It’s a pity you came one step too late.”

“It’s my misfortune.” Thirteen smiled and said, “If I get it, I’m lucky. If I lose it, it’s fate. It doesn’t matter if I can’t get it. Being friends with an interesting girl is good enough.”

“It’s hard to be as open-minded as you.” Jiang Yi laughed and said, “If I had to choose, I would definitely choose you as my brother-in-law. As for Prince of Yu... it’s hard to say.”

The reputation of the Prince of Yu, especially among the common people, was very good.

But this reputation mostly came from his noble birth and dazzlingly handsome appearance.

However, one should not judge a book by its cover.

A beautiful appearance doesn't explain anything, nor does it mean that his character is as good as his looks.

On the contrary, those who are close to him know that he has a rather gloomy personality and will stop at nothing to achieve his goals.

He was no different from his brothers.

Jiang Yi never quite understood why his father was so eager to marry Seventh Sister to the Prince of Yu.

Not to mention how the Prince of Yu's character is, if he fails to seize the Imperial Throne, what good could come to his sister by following him?

Jiang Yi always felt that his father, who was usually shrewd and wise, was somewhat impulsive this time.

The Emperor did not like the princes to ally with the courtiers for personal gains. As the Prime Minister, eagerly taking sides with the Prince of Yu was not a wise decision.

However, things had come to this point, and as his son, there was nothing more he could say.

"Did you come back because of Seventh Miss's injury?" The two sat in the tea house, facing each other and drinking tea.

"That's one reason. Besides, I'm going to take the Autumn Examination."

"Oh, right, I almost forgot about that." Thirteen smiled and said, "I wish Brother Jiang success in the exam."

Three days later, it was the first day of the Autumn Examination.

There were three days in total, and during these days, one had to stay in the examination hall and could not leave. Eating, drinking, and excreting all had to be done inside.

Not being able to wash and bathe was tolerable, as well as the food being not fresh, but having to excrete in such a small space was unavoidable, and the smell was unbearable.

It was extremely torturous.

Although scholars from humble backgrounds might be able to bear it, most scions of wealthy families could not.

As the legitimate son of the Jiang Family, Jiang Yi could have relied on his father's shadow even if he didn't take the exam. Still, he chose the path of the examination.

On the day before the exam, Jiang Ning had someone send something to both the Jiang Family and the He Family.

What Jiang Ning sent was a portable flush toilet she designed and had the best carpenter build for half a month ago.

This was a pre-stored water toilet with only enough water for two or three days.

However, it was enough for the examination.

Jiang Yi received the item and tried it out, loving it immensely.

After the urine and feces were flushed into the sealed barrel next to it, there would be no smell at all.

This solved the most difficult problem.

This gift was wholehearted.

Jiang Yi was so delighted that he wished he could kiss Seventh Sister.

There were two toilets made, and the other one was given to He Tang.

He was also taking the Autumn Examination.

When Li Hongyuan heard that she had gone to great lengths to make these two items just for them to use during the exam, he sneered, "Sending one to her brother is fine, but what does sending one to He Tang mean? This woman still has ties with He Tang and is unclear with Thirteen. She's nothing but a loose woman!"

Chashan didn't dare to reply.

At this point, a housekeeper came in and said, "Your Highness, the kitchen has received some premium bird's nests. They are asking if they should cook it now for the Princess Consort?"

"She doesn't need those. Those broken things are enough to fill her!"

"...This slave understands."

The old woman left.

Li Hongyuan got up and went out.

During this time, he had been investigating and had basically confirmed that it was the third brother, the Prince of Huai, who had acted.

The evidence had already been submitted to the Emperor.

However, this was not enough. He still had to enter the palace and ask his concubine mother to speak to the Emperor Father in order to get the Prince of Huai killed..

Chapter 168: Want Me to Sell Myself?

Li Hongyuan visited Concubine Jin in the palace.

As a prince, he could visit his concubine mother anytime.

However, there had never been any scenes of motherly love and filial piety between the two.

At this moment, Concubine Jin was seated on a couch, cracking melon seeds.

A small mountain of seed shells had already piled up in front of her, with tea placed nearby.

In Li Hongyuan's memory, his beautiful concubine mother had always spent her days in such leisure, cracking melon seeds after each meal and listening to palace maids play the zither.

Seeing her like this, Li Hongyuan suddenly thought of Jiang Ning.

He began to realize why he had always been annoyed by Jiang Ning's laziness.

It turned out that she was very much like his mother.

Concubine Jin glanced at him, "Since you have already given the evidence to the Emperor Father, what else do you have to worry about?"



“This time, the third brother almost killed the Princess Consort and the child in her womb. With such a good opportunity, I want him to die thoroughly.”

“What would you like me to do first?”

“Naturally, to whisper in the Emperor’s ear at night.”

“I can’t do that.”

“Why not?”

“I have not been summoned to attend to him for a long time.”

“Then attend him.”

Concubine Jin casually threw a handful of melon seeds at his face, “You little rascal, would you have me sell my body for your petty matters?”

“Human life is at stake here, how is this a petty matter?”

“If he tried to harm your wife, why don’t you try to harm him back?”

“The third brother is like a turtle, don’t you know, Concubine Mother? He even sleeps in armor. Who could harm him?”

“Really?” Concubine Jin became slightly interested, “Does he not take off the armor when he sleeps with a woman? Doesn’t it hurt?”

Li Hongyuan:” ... Concubine Mother, please be serious.”

“If you don’t know, why do you bring it up to me?”

“How would I know what the third brother is like when he’s with women? Am I supposed to eavesdrop under his bed?”

“Who told you to eavesdrop? Can’t you get someone else to do it?” Concubine Jin said unhurriedly, “If you want to deal with him, that’s your business. I won’t be involved. But I will never take the initiative to serve the Emperor Father.”

“Aren’t you a favored concubine? Isn’t it your duty to attend to him?”

“There are plenty of young concubines in the Harem. As for me, I’m merely an old hand.”

Li Hongyuan squatted down to massage her legs, “In my heart, the Queen Mother is the most beautiful woman in the world.”

“How do I compare to your wife?”

“She cannot compare to you, of course.”

“Remember what you said and don’t let your wife hear it, or you’ll be in trouble.” Concubine Jin grabbed a handful of melon seeds, “Forget the pillow talk.”

Li Hongyuan said, “Concubine Mother, if the third brother takes the Imperial Throne in the future, you won’t have the good days you enjoy now.”

“Enjoy one more day of good life while it lasts. Nobody can predict the future.”

“Alright, if you don’t help me now, when I ascend to the throne, I will send you to the kitchen to do the hard work!”

“You little brat, how dare you threaten me.” Concubine Jin said indifferently, “I heard that when your wife was attacked, she was with the emperor’s eldest grandson?”

“Yes, if it weren’t for Xiaoqian and the Imperial Guards being there, Jiang Ning wouldn’t have survived the second assassination attempt.”

“It’s a pity that the emperor’s eldest grandson wasn’t injured.”

“Concubine Mother, what do you mean by that?”

“Your wife just suffered some superficial wounds, and the child in her womb is fine. The emperor’s eldest grandson was unharmed too. This incident is hardly significant in your Emperor Father’s eyes. He will, at most, punish the third brother slightly. He won’t do anything serious to him.”

“I understand.”

Li Hongyuan left the Splendid Palace and went to the imperial study..

Chapter 169: Fainting Blood

On his way, he ran into Xiaoqian.

Xiaoqian frowned anxiously. Seeing Li Hongyuan, he immediately threw himself at him, “Fifth Imperial Uncle!”

Li Hongyuan embraced him: “Why are you here alone?”

“I’m scared.” Li Tingqian’s big eyes were slightly red, his nose was flushed, and his eyes were full of fear.

Li Hongyuan picked him up and spoke softly, "Don't be afraid, Xiaoqian. Your Fifth Imperial Uncle will drive the bad guys away."

Li Tingqian shook his head: "I'm not afraid of bad guys, I'm afraid of my little aunt and the sibling in her belly."

"What?"

"Little Aunt lost a lot of blood." Li Tingqian said, his eyes flashing with fear. He shrank into Li Hongyuan's embrace, his small body trembling slightly, "Xiaoqian is afraid of blood..."

"Don't be afraid, Xiaoqian. Your imperial uncle and aunt will protect you."

Li Hongyuan patted Xiaoqian's back, but received no response.

Looking down, the child had actually fainted.

Startled, Li Hongyuan did not wait to summon the Imperial Physician, and directly carried him to the Imperial Medical Academy.

Fortunately, Judge Dong was there. Seeing the emperor's eldest grandson unconscious, he hurried over to take his pulse.

He frowned: "There's nothing abnormal about His Highness's body."

"If there's nothing abnormal, why did he suddenly faint?"

"Your Highness, don't worry. Let me first try acupuncture to wake His Highness up."

Dong Chaofeng took out silver needles and quickly inserted one into Xiaoqian's Renzhong point. Soon, Xiaoqian woke up.

He rubbed his eyes, sat up, slightly dazed, "Fifth Uncle, where am I?"

Li Hongyuan hurriedly asked, "Xiaoqian, how do you feel? Do you feel uncomfortable anywhere?"

Xiaoqian shook his head.

Everything seemed to be alright.

How strange.

At that moment, a eunuch rushed over with blood on his hand, saying that he had been injured while working and begged the Imperial Physicians for some wound medicine.

Seeing the blood on the eunuch's hand, Xiaoqian fainted again.

"Xiaoqian!" Li Hongyuan was shocked, "Master Dong, what is going on here?"

Dong Chaofeng was also surprised and carefully examined Xiaoqian again.

Still nothing was found.

The little prince wasn't injured, nor was he sick.

He had just looked at the injured eunuch and fainted.

"Ah!" Dong Chaofeng suddenly thought of something, "Could it be that His Highness has blood phobia?"

“What is that?”

“Simply put, it means being afraid of blood. When they see blood or even talk about blood, they will immediately faint.”

As he said that, Li Hongyuan remembered that the previous time Xiaoqian had fainted, he was also talking about Jiang Ning’s injury and bleeding.

Li Hongyuan was somewhat puzzled, “Xiaoqian has seen blood before, but he didn’t have this problem.”

Dong Chaofeng replied, “It’s not a disease, it’s just a shock, a stimulus.”

He pointed to his head, “This is not a physical disease, but a mental one.”

“A mental disease?”

“Exactly. His Highness must have been traumatized, which makes him afraid and faint at the sight or mention of blood. To cure it, you need to make him unafraid.”

Li Hongyuan picked up Xiaoqian and said, “Treating illness is a job for the Imperial Medical Academy. As this matter is significant, I am now taking Xiaoqian to see Emperor Father in the Imperial Study. Master Dong, why don’t you come with me so you can explain the situation to Emperor Father more effectively?”

Dong Chaofeng quickly packed his medicine box and followed Li Hongyuan to the Imperial Study.

The Emperor was working in his study, reviewing memorials and meeting with ministers. When Li Hongyuan entered, he didn’t expect that both the second child, King of Chen, and the third child, Prince of Huai, were there.

Although the brothers were only superficially harmonious and constantly competing behind the scenes, in front of their Emperor Father, they were the best brothers in the world..

Chapter 170: Avenge Aunt

Li Hongyuan carried Xiaoqian in, with Xiaoqian tightly clinging to his neck, his little face slightly pale.

The Emperor looked up and exclaimed in surprise, "What's the matter with Xiaoqian?"

King of Chen and Prince of Huai immediately crowded around to see.

Li Hongyuan recounted the events and insinuated, "Ever since the assassination attempt, Xiaoqian has been overly fearful and startled, fainting at the sight of blood. It seems he's been left with a lingering ailment."

"A lingering ailment?" The Emperor frowned as expected.

King of Chen said unhurriedly, "I've never heard of such an affliction."

"Since you don't believe it, fine."

Li Hongyuan casually tore off a jade pendant from his waist and aimed it at King of Chen's face.

King of Chen screamed and covered his nose.

Blood gushed out.

Li Tingqian closed his eyes and fainted again.

There were no signs at all; he fainted as soon as it was said.

Although King of Chen was initially enraged, seeing Li Tingqian like this, he was somewhat concerned, holding his nose and momentarily forgetting his anger.

The Emperor saw this scene with his own eyes and stood up abruptly, shouting, "Call Dong Chaofeng!"

"Imperial Physician Dong is waiting outside the hall."

"Call him in!"

Dong Chaofeng entered with his head bowed, knelt down and saluted.

The Emperor pointed to Xiaoqian: "What exactly is the matter with the emperor's eldest grandson?"

Dong Chaofeng hurriedly replied, "This humble physician has already diagnosed him. Indeed, the sight of blood would cause His Highness the emperor's eldest grandson to faint. With his condition, even hearing the word 'blood' would cause him to faint."

The Emperor was outraged, "How could a perfectly healthy child become like this?"

Li Hongyuan said, "Well, you have to ask the third son."

"Ask me? What does this have to do with me?" Prince of Huai said in astonishment, "This child has been glued to you, elder brother, since he was a child, running away whenever he sees me. Besides, Emperor Father treats him like the apple of his eye, and I dare not provoke him."

"You dare not provoke him, but... what if it was an accident?"

"What do you mean? You might not like me, but don't try to pin this shit on me!" Prince of Huai roared angrily, "You better not take advantage of your concubine mother's favor to act recklessly!"



“You harmed the Princess Consort of Yu in public, and Xiaoqian happened to be there, witnessing her injury and bleeding. This is how the illness took root. You dare to say it has nothing to do with you?”

“It’s my fault your princess consort was injured? Do you have any evidence? Without evidence, you are slandering me!”

“What if I can provide evidence? Will you, third son, be willing to apologize to Emperor Father for your death?”

“Enough! Both of you, shut up!”

The Emperor roared angrily, “Dong Chaofeng, wake up the emperor’s eldest grandson at once.”

Dong Chaofeng hurriedly took out a silver needle and woke Xiaoqian up.

The Emperor personally held Xiaoqian, his heart aching, “Grandson, why did you get so scared?”

Xiaoqian clung to Emperor Grandfather’s neck, feeling extremely aggrieved, “Auntie was bleeding so much... If Auntie hadn’t protected Xiaoqian, Xiaoqian would have died. Emperor Grandfather, you’ve got to kill the bad guy and avenge Auntie.”

“Alright, alright, Emperor Grandfather will avenge your Auntie and vent your anger, too.”

The Emperor patted Xiaoqian’s back, calming him down for quite a while before sending him back with the eunuch.

Xiaoqian’s father was the Empress’s son, and the Emperor’s only legitimate son. He was designated as the Crown Prince from a young age and was highly appreciated and admired for his modesty and ability. Unfortunately, he died young, leaving only one grandson behind.

Of course, the Emperor cherished him dearly.

He slammed the table, pointed at several of his sons, and shouted in anger, "You are all useless! If you had even half of your eldest brother's talents, I would be able to relax!"