

The Doctor 91

Chapter 91: Wine

A man dressed in white brocade with gold-colored clouds approached slowly. He was tall, lean, had broad shoulders, and a narrow waist. When he moved, a dark light seemed to be flowing on the hem of his clothes.

The sun was high, yet there seemed to be a layer of cold air lingering on his body, surrounding him. He looked like an unattainable snowy mountain peak.

A pair of saber-like eyebrows slanted toward his temple. His nose was straight, and his eyes sparkled like the stars in the Milky Way on a beautiful night. One could easily lose oneself just by looking into his eyes.

His scarlet lips' curves were perfect. It added warmth to the somewhat thin lips with the bead in the middle.

The man's eyes resembled the world's most tranquil and brilliant starry night, while his lips had the colors of intimacy and seduction. He was warm as jade, yet cold and noble. The aloofness between his eyebrows made one yearn for him subconsciously.

Everyone fell silent.

Few had seen this man since his return to the city; most of the people here were even seeing him for the first time.

Nobody expected Prince Li, the one rumored to be weak and mysterious, would be born with such features!

Some of the women present blushed silently.

Rong Xiu was oblivious to those gazes. He made a beeline towards the restaurant's most inner part.

Chu Ning was the first to come to his senses. He was pleasantly surprised and stepped forward. "Your Highness, what brings you here today?" In Chu Ning's opinion, Prince Li was a great benefactor to them because he had saved his daughter from difficult situations time and time again.

When everyone had despised them, His Highness was the only one to lend them a helping hand. Naturally, he felt differently about Prince Li. He heard that Prince Li had been sick all this time and refused all visitors who had wanted to pay their respects.

He had sent the invitation out of courtesy without much expectation, but the prince actually came in person!

Chu Ning was simply delighted and surprised.

Rong Xiu nodded gently and smiled. "Lord Chu Ning's promotion is a joyous occasion. My health has improved lately, so I thought I should come, take advantage of the celebration, and join in the fun. However, I had been delayed because of some matters. I hope you don't mind."

Chu Ning hurriedly said, "Of course, not! Yue'er and I are so happy that Your Highness is here!"

Rong Xiu's brows rose slightly. He finally laid his eyes on Chu Liuyue at the side, quickly sweeping past her. "Oh? Does Ms. Liuyue think the same?" His tone of voice sounded polite. However, who would've thought that this man had stayed in her room the previous night and refused to leave?

Chu Liuyue was secretly cursing him. Since you want to put on a show, I'll go along with it!

She bowed. "My father's thoughts reflect my exact feelings. We are humbled and honored by your presence."

Rong Xiu watched her half-hearted appearance. The smile at the corners of his lips deepened.

Everyone was astonished by what they saw.

His Highness, Prince Li, seems to be friends with Chu Ning and his daughter. When did they get to know each other? Otherwise, why would he choose to be here today when he has rejected all the other invitations?

His Highness, the Seventh Prince, had a distinguished status and was a member of the royal family. He might have spent most of his time away from the Imperial City, but he was bestowed the title of 'Prince Li' by His Majesty as soon as he returned. It was proof of how much the emperor liked him.

When had Chu Ning forged a connection with him?

"Your Highness, please come inside."

...

Although many people came today, nobody had a higher status than Prince Li. Naturally, they had a place for him upon his arrival.

In other words, he was seated at the same table as Chu Ning and Chu Liuyue.

Yan Ge was also seated at the same table.

"Your Highness, please sit down."

"Lord Chu Ning, please don't stand on ceremony. I will follow your lead."

Chu Ning respected Rong Xiu, but His Highness didn't treat him with arrogance. The latter's behavior only made Chu Ning appreciate him more.

Chu Liuyue saw the way Rong Xiu and Chu Ning were talking to each other, and her mouth couldn't help but twitch.

Her own father had been completely deceived by Rong Xiu's appearance!

"Chu Liuyue, why don't you pour some tea for His Highness? His Highness has helped us several times, but we have yet to thank him properly," said Chu Ning.

A sudden thought came to Chu Liuyue. She reached out and picked up a jug of wine, avoiding the teapot.

The clear wine drew a line in the air and flowed into a cup. Its crisp, bamboo fragrance filled the air.

“Your Highness, please try this premium Green Bamboo Leaf Wine. You’ll definitely like it.”

A stunned Chu Ning stopped her with disapproval. “Yue’er, His Highness has just recovered. How can he drink wine?”

Chu Liuyue blinked and looked at Rong Xiu. “Your Highness, I noticed that you are wearing thin clothing. I was worried that you’d catch a cold, so I poured you some wine to warm you up. You don’t like it?”

Rong Xiu stared into her sparkling eyes. He knew she was doing this on purpose. “My body really can’t take too much wine...”

Chu Liuyue raised an eyebrow, and she was about to take the jug of wine away.

Rong Xiu suddenly lifted his hand and gently pressed on her wrist. His hand was cold, yet it seemed like a fire had started burning. “Nevertheless, Ms. Liuyue has poured the wine yourself. How can I refuse?”

He rested his hand for a moment, then withdrew it without fuss as if he was only stopping her from removing the wine jug.

Chu Ning didn’t see anything improper. He smiled helplessly. “I have a wilful daughter. Please forgive her, Your Highness.”

Rong Xiu’s thin lips curled. “There’s no need for that.” I’m already used to it.

Chu Liuyue snorted inwardly, shifted her attention, and realized Yan Ge was still standing at the side. “Second Master Yan, why aren’t you sitting?”

Yan Ge smiled awkwardly. “No, no. I-I’m... having a slight discomfort in my back. I’ll just stand!” He wouldn’t dare to sit at the same table with his master, even if he had the gall to do so!

Chapter 92: The Fourth Princess

Rong Xiu glanced at her with a half-smile. “Second Master Yan, have a seat.”

Yan Ge’s legs turned to jelly, and he almost dropped to his knees as cold sweat gathered on his back. It was fine if others called him this. However, for this person to call him this... It was killing him!

“... This, it’s not appropriate...” Yan Ge forced a smile. “Your Highness is of noble status. I think I’ll...”

“Ms. Liuyue asked you to sit. Don’t stand on ceremony.” Rong Xiu retracted his gaze.

Yan Ge knew it would be strange for him to keep rejecting, so he sat down nervously. “O-okay!”

Chu Liuyue looked at him strangely. Something is strange about Yan Ge’s behavior today... Even if Rong Xiu is royalty, given Zhen Bao Pavilion’s standing in Imperial City, he doesn’t have to act like this.

The fuzzy thoughts flashed across her mind. However, just as she was about to look deeper into it, a hand suddenly reached over and took her cup of alcohol from her.

“Young ladies should just drink tea.” As Rong Xiu spoke, he switched her cup and poured her a cup of tea.

His actions were so natural that none of the people around them thought it was strange. Even Chu Ning looked at him with increased admiration.

Chu Liuyue raised her eyebrows as she looked at the hot tea before her eyes. Is this... tit for tat?

...

“Hey, why do you all think Prince Li is here today? All the invites previously sent to Prince Li Mansion were rejected. What does Chu Ning have to be able to get him here?”

“Who knows? Chu Ning’s position as the imperial guards’ Commander in Chief is not low, but it shouldn’t be good enough for Prince Li to attend, right?”

“However, I heard that Prince Li helped Chu Liuyue out when the Fourth Princess made things difficult for her at the Crown Prince’s birthday banquet... It can’t be that he has his eyes set on her, right?”

“How can that be? He just returned to Imperial City!”

“How else can we explain why he stood up for Chu Liuyue? Surely he must know that coming here is the same as offending the Crown Prince and the Chu family, right?”

“Ha, I think you’re onto something. I think Prince Li is taking the chance to taunt the Crown Prince. He was crowned a lord the moment he returned. How can the Crown Prince not have anything to say?”

“He’s so sickly, what is there to fight for...”

“Don’t you know? I heard that Prince Li’s mother was... by the empress...” At this point, the person grew wary and stopped talking.

It was quiet all around as the people stared at one another before deciding to change topics.

“No matter what, Chu Ning and Chu Liuyue will have a stable position in the Imperial City after today... The Chu family has lost their face today. I don’t think they’ll take it lying down!”

“Hmph, the Chu family has not produced a prodigy like this in years. Without Chu Ning and Chu Liuyue, their days are going to be tough...”

“The Chu family has occupied a position in the top four families for too long...”

...

Chu Liuyue had just taken a sip of her tea when she heard a commotion outside. She walked towards the window and looked downstairs.

Their room had the best view on the second floor. The open windows on one side revealed the restaurant’s lake, while the windows on the other side revealed the street.

Chu Liuyue saw a group of people approaching on horses.

A number of stalls were knocked over on the streets, causing much chaos. But the owners of the disrupted businesses dared not speak and just hurriedly packed up their items.

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes before she saw that the group of people was dressed in armor. It was the imperial guards.

However... what has happened for them to be this anxious?

At this time, one of the guards broke away from the group and headed towards Phoenix Restaurant. "Can I ask if Commander in Chief Chu Ning is here?"

Su Hui was downstairs, and he knew that something was off, but he still promptly replied. "Lord Chu Ning is here indeed."

"I'm the leader of the seventh bridge, Ji Qingfeng. I request an audience with Commander in Chief!" The person looked like he was in his late twenties, and anxiety was plastered all over his face.

"Please hold on, Officer Ji, I'll report right away..."

"Please invite Officer Ji up directly," said Chu Liuyue.

Ji Qingfeng looked up and saw a slender silhouette by the window on the second floor. He couldn't be bothered with anything else and rushed upstairs.

Even though Chu Ning had not met this person, he had a working knowledge of the imperial guards' situation, so he had heard of Ji Qingfeng.

"Greetings, Commander in Chief!"

Ji Qingfeng had a tense expression. He was about to bow, but Chu Ning stopped him.

"What happened?" Chu Ning asked with tightly knitted brows.

"Commander, the Fourth Princess went to the hunting ground this morning. News just came in that she has accidentally fallen off a cliff!"

Chapter 93: Handicapped

"What?" Chu Ning was shocked. "Fourth Princess has bodyguards, so how can something like this happen?"

Ji Qingfeng shook his head. "All of this is not clear. It's just that the river current beneath the cliff is fast flowing, and it's been an hour since she disappeared. She has not been found yet! His Majesty is very upset. He has sent the imperial guards to go search for Fourth Princess. I'm here to ask you to join..."

Chu Ning nodded quickly. "Let's go!" He was the Commander in Chief. He had to be there during times like this. He had just taken a step when he suddenly remembered Chu Liuyue. He turned to look at his daughter guiltily. "Yue'er..."

"Fourth Princess's matters are more important. You should hurry and leave, Father."

“But...” Chu Ning was a little hesitant.

“I’ll look after things here. Lord Chu Ning need not worry. Father has always doted on Fourth Princess, so please put your best foot forward for the matter.” Rong Xiu’s words put Chu Ning’s mind at ease.

“If that’s the case, thank you for the trouble, Prince Li.” With that, Chu Ning and Ji Qingfeng quickly left together.

As the two of them stepped out of the room, Yan Ge sprung out of his seat. “Prince Li, Ms. Liuyue, Fourth Princess disappeared at Zhen Bao Pavilion’s hunting ground. I’m afraid I’ll have to hurry back as well.”

Chu Liuyue understood, and she nodded. “This matter is important. Second Master Yan should hurry back as soon as you can.”

No matter what, the incident happened on their grounds. Thus, they were partly responsible for it.

Yan Ge shot a quick glance at Rong Xiu, and he cupped his fists. “I’ll take my leave first. I hope that Ms. Liuyue will understand.”

“Second Master Yan is a busy man. Liuyue is grateful that you could join us today.” Chu Liuyue shook her head. “I’ll send you off...”

“No need! There are a lot of guests today, and Lord Chu Ning has just left. You have a lot of things to do, so I won’t trouble you! I’ll be taking my leave!” With that, Yan Ge quickly left without looking back.

Yan Qing, who was standing at the door, looked at Yan Ge with sympathy as he fled. What does Fourth Princess’s disappearance count as?

This fellow was probably traumatized from taking a seat earlier... His heart probably wouldn’t have been able to take it if he stayed any longer.

The rather lively room only had Rong Xiu and Chu Liuyue left.

Rong Xiu rubbed his cup, with worry between his brows.

“I heard that the hunting ground’s terrain is rather dangerous. This time... Fourth Princess is in danger.” Chu Liuyue looked at him. “Your Highness, Fourth Princess is in an accident. Are you not going to take a look?”

Rong Xiu drank the cup of alcohol slowly, and the fragrance of alcohol spread across the room. “Father has already sent the imperial guards to search for her. My presence would only create problems, so I might as well wait here,” he said plainly.

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. “Here?”

Rong Xiu tapped on the sides of the cup as he looked at Chu Liuyue. “I seem to have left something at your place. I’ll pick it up when all this is over.”

Chu Liuyue instinctively wanted to reject it. “There’s no need for so much trouble. Why don’t I go back and get it for you now?”

Rong Xiu paused and looked at her with a wry smile. "You want everyone here to know that my clothes are at your place?"

Chu Liuyue: "... But it's even more inappropriate for Your Highness to go to my place, right?"

Rong Xiu looked into her eyes, seemingly smiling, and nonchalantly said, "No one will see if I go at night."

Chu Liuyue was speechless. Shameless!

...

After both Chu Ning and the imperial guards were deployed, many people felt that something was wrong and sent people to investigate.

Many knew that the Fourth Princess was at the hunting ground today. Besides, given the gravity of the situation, it couldn't be kept under wraps.

The news spread quickly.

Everyone was stunned.

Hunting grounds were rather dangerous, but the Fourth Princess has bodyguards. How did something so serious happen?

Besides, if they were right, the hunting ground the Fourth Princess went to seemed to be the one that Zhen Bao Pavilion bought from Chu Liuyue a while back?

If anything happened to the Fourth Princess, a lot of people were going to be implicated!

A lot of people connected the dots, and some even got up and left.

Chu Liuyue knew what they were thinking. They were just fence-sitters. She was not bothered and sent them off.

When she passed by the room that Si Yang and the others were in, she saw that they were all standing at the door.

"You all are leaving too?" Chu Liuyue asked.

"Forget about that. How can you still have the time to think about this now?" Si Yang hurried forward.

"Do you know that the hunting ground where the accident occurred is..."

"I know."

"Why are you still so calm then? Aren't you afraid that His Majesty will blame you for this?"

Si Yang was not the only one who was worried. The others were rather worried as well, believing that the matter was rather troublesome.

"That hunting ground does not have much to do with me. Besides, Fourth Princess is the one who insisted on going there to hunt for high-level fiends. I don't think anyone else is to blame for it, right?"

Si Yang and the others paused.

That seems to make sense, but something seems off...

“But that’s the Fourth Princess...”

Chu Liuyue smiled. Rong Jin can’t even do anything after he was taken advantage of, not to mention Rong Zhen, who is asking for it.

“Fourth Princess is blessed and protected by His Majesty’s blessings. She’ll be fine, so let’s just wait patiently.

Si Yang and the others looked at each other and nodded.

...

The news came in the evening.

Fourth Princess Rong Zhen fell off the cliff and broke both her legs. Since she was attacked by a mysterious high-level fiend and did not receive treatment on time, her pearl of essence was destroyed, and she was handicapped.

Chapter 94: Suffer in Silence

The same night. Royal Palace, Jiaolan Palace.

The moon was high in the sky. It was an especially quiet night.

The entire Jiaolan Palace was enveloped in a somber atmosphere. Even the servants held their breath, afraid that they would get in trouble. Their eyes, which looked towards the inner palace, were filled with panic and fear.

Fourth Princess had regained consciousness an hour ago. In this short time, she had given orders for the execution of five people!

If they were not careful, they might be next!

Pak!

There was a sharp sound like something was thrown to the ground.

Everyone was petrified.

Nobody would be able to handle becoming handicapped overnight, not to mention Fourth Princess, who had been the apple of everyone’s eyes!

“I don’t believe it! I don’t believe it!” Rong Zhen’s voice was hoarse from shouting the past hour, but her voice grew increasingly shrill. “You all must be lying! I am the talented Fourth Princess! How can I be handicapped?!”

Inside the palace, Rong Zhen was seated on the bed. Her hair was a mess, and her eyes were vicious and crazed.

A few people knelt before her bed.

The person in the front was struck on the head by an object. Blood trickled down, looking rather messy. Even if they were afraid, they had no choice but to plead with her.

“Fourth Princess, your pearl of essence was broken, and your Yuan meridian has been damaged. Cultivating is going to be tough for you from now on...”

“You imbeciles! So what if my pearl of essence is broken? I can just form another one!” Rong Zhen cut him off suddenly, her voice sharp.

The few of them looked down silently.

Her pearl of essence was broken, and her body had taken a lot of damage. It was impossible for her to form another one.

“Heavenly doctor! Call for a heavenly doctor! If you can’t do it, the heavenly doctor can!” Rong Zhen refused to give up, refusing to accept the result.

As she looked at the people who remained silent, Rong Zhen felt more and more desperate. She actually knew what kind of fate was awaiting her. But... how could she accept it?!

“Zhen Zhen, your body is still weak. Why aren’t you resting?” A person hurried in from outside the door. It was the Empress.

While looking up at the person, Rong Zhen’s tears began to fall. “Mother! You have to help me!”

The Empress hurried over. Her heart ached to see her beloved daughter in this state, and she brought Rong Zhen into her embrace. “Zhen Zhen, don’t worry. Mother has called for them. No matter what, I’ll try my best to help you. However, you were too careless this time...”

Rong Zhen wanted to get up, but the sharp pain from her legs reminded her that they were broken. Her anguish, hatred, and anger only grew stronger.

She then burst out into a tantrum. “Mother! It’s all that beast’s fault! If it weren’t for it, I wouldn’t be in this state! Also, that hunting ground! Mother, didn’t you go and see Father? Has he agreed to close down the hunting ground? Chu Liuyue is the one who sold it to Zhen Bao Pavilion. They are definitely involved in this! I want them to pay for this with their lives!”

The Empress’ expression stiffened. She hesitated for a while before she spoke with much difficulty. “Zhen Zhen, this happened because you insisted on going to the hunting ground. I’m afraid... it’ll be hard...”

“Why?!” Rong Zhen pushed her mother aside but instantly understood something after seeing her mother’s hesitance. “T-this is Father’s wish?”

“You are dismissed.” The Empress dismissed all the people in the room before she sighed. She shook her head indignantly. “You know your father’s temperament...”

“Mother!” Rong Zhen looked at her in disbelief. “Father has always doted on me. Now that I’ve been ruined, he doesn’t intend to pursue the matter?!” How will I seek vengeance?

Chapter 95: He gave up on you

Rong Zhen could not return to her senses for a while.

What does Zhen Bao Pavilion have for them to be so wary? As the Fourth Princess of Country Yao Chen, do I not have the right to pursue the matter now that I'm in this state?!

"Mother, just what is Zhen Bao Pavilion's background to have Father protecting them like this? Does he not care about the lives of his children?" Rong Zhen could not understand! "It was the same with Crown Prince Brother! Zhen Bao Pavilion took over the hunting ground that he had carefully managed, but nothing came out of it!"

"You should know that even the Crown Prince doesn't stand a chance against Zhen Bao Pavilion!" The Empress cut her off. One was her son, the other her daughter. How could she not have hatred? Therefore, she went to plead with His Majesty despite knowing that Zhen Bao Pavilion was different to him.

However, the results were as expected—he did not intend on punishing Zhen Bao Pavilion!

"Besides, they turned you down several times when you wanted to go to that hunting ground. They only made an exception for you because you insisted. Many people know about this! Who can you blame for your accident now? Everyone at the hunting ground witnessed it. You only fell off the cliff because you insisted on chasing after that beast! What reason do you have to pursue the matter?"

The Empress felt anguished. Rong Zhen was in the wrong, so she could only suffer the consequences!

Rong Zhen could not refute her mother's words. However, she had always been arrogant and prideful, so how could she admit that it was her fault? "Even so, are they free of all responsibility? What will happen to me in the future?"

Am I really going to become handicapped?! How can I take this?!

The Empress suppressed her tempestuous emotions. "Zhen Zhen, don't worry! Mother will not abandon you. Even if they don't have any means, we'll think of something else! The envoys from Tianling Dynasty will be here soon. Maybe they'll have an idea..."

Rong Zhen's eyes lit up. "Really?"

The Empress forced a smile. "You know what kind of place the Tianling Dynasty is. For all we know... they might have a way. I will help you then!"

...

Night.

Chu Ning only returned home long after Chu Liuyue did. Chu Ning told her about the matter briefly and shook his head with a sigh. "It's a pity. Fourth Princess was rather talented. That's why His Majesty spoiled her. But from now..."

He thought of how Rong Zhen had made things difficult for Yue'er and mocked her for being a good-for-nothing at the Crown Prince's birthday banquet. Little did they expect the tables to turn. Yue'er was now the prodigy, and Rong Zhen was the handicapped one.

The father-daughter duo had been bullied back then, and they did not expect things to turn out the way they did today.

Chu Liuyue smiled. "Life is unpredictable. You have to repay what you owe."

No matter how one looked at it, Rong Zhen was the one responsible for the matter. Nobody else could be blamed for this. However, Chu Liuyue felt that something was a little strange.

It seemed like an invisible hand controlled everything, but she did not know who it belonged to.

"Oh, right. Father, did you all find the fiend that injured the Fourth Princess?"

"No, it was a high-level fiend. The people protecting the princess were not its match. They didn't even know what it was. His Majesty has ordered for a thorough investigation, but I think it'll be tough. I'll be busier during this time, so you should be more careful."

Chu Ning was a little hesitant as he spoke. "You've been in the limelight for the last couple of days, so they won't do anything. But after a while, I'm afraid... I'll send someone to protect you in the dark."

Chu Ning was naturally referring to the people from Crown Prince Mansion and the Chu family. He did not believe that they would give up easily!

Chu Liuyue smiled. "Father, don't worry. When the banquet ends, school will start again. You've just been promoted, and you have to deal with this. I know you'll be busy, so I intend to stay at school first. What do you think?"

Chu Ning heaved a sigh of relief. He had almost forgotten about this. Compared to outside, Tian Lu Academy was much safer. "You can make the decision. Of course, I'll agree to it."

...

"You want to stay in school?"

Chu Liuyue felt a cool scent when she returned to her room. She turned to look, and it was indeed Rong Xiu.

His deep gaze landed on her body, gentle but powerful.

Chu Liuyue was not surprised by his arrival. He was good at masking himself, so there was nothing she could do about it. She could always leave if he were here.

Chu Liuyue nodded. She smiled as she removed his cloak from the cupboard and handed it to him. "Therefore, it's better for Your Highness not to come. It's more important for you to recuperate in your mansion."

Rong Xiu glanced at the cloak and took it from her with raised brows. "I didn't expect Yue'er to be so concerned about my body."

Chu Liuyue shrugged. "You've offended the Crown Prince. I'm afraid your life is going to be difficult."

The Crown Prince clearly saw Rong Xiu as a thorn in his side. His attitude was clear from the banquet.

Now that Rong Xiu was on her side, the Crown Prince was bound to be even angrier.

Rong Xiu bent down when he heard this and inched closer. The distance between the two was closed; they were within inches of each other.

Chu Liuyue was about to back away, but she saw two tiny reflections of herself in Rong Xiu's deep eyes.

His voice was deep, like strings plucked by the wind. "I can't thank him enough for giving you up."

Chapter 96: Lousy Carriage

A thought flashed across Chu Liuyue's mind. His behavior at the banquet was deliberate, but... why?

"Your Highness, you..." Chu Liuyue wanted the situation clarified, but Rong Xiu had straightened himself.

"You've had a busy day. I won't bother you." Rong Xiu put his cloak over himself and left. His tall, dark silhouette disappeared in the night.

Chu Liuyue only sighed with relief after she stared in the direction Rong Xiu disappeared in for a while. She then curled her fingers.

Just now... Rong Xiu was so close to her, and her heart had begun to speed up.

In theory, she would never let someone 'disrespect' her like this, but... she did not seem to dislike Rong Xiu's closeness. For some reason, she seemed to believe that Rong Xiu would not harm her.

She did not know where her sense of trust came from.

After the heartbreaking betrayal in her past life, she thought that she would never get close to anyone. However, both Chu Ning and Rong Xiu were able to make her lower her guard gradually.

Chu Liuyue thought about it for a while, but she could not think of anything, so she stopped obsessing over it.

As usual, she sat on her bed and continued to cultivate, taking in the Heaven and Earth Force. She only lay down to rest after one Heavenly Cycle.

...

The celebrations at Phoenix Restaurant went on for two more days, but Rong Xiu did not appear again. This disappointed many who had wanted to take the chance to get close to Prince Li.

However, he was royalty, and it was rare for him to come at all.

Many tried to get information out of Chu Liuyue, but she dismissed them. They could only assume that Chu Ning and Prince Li had relations, but they did not get anything out of her.

From the way she spoke, Chu Liuyue did not seem like she was familiar with Prince Li.

That was expected. How could someone of Prince Li's status have dealings with Chu Liuyue? Even if she was in Tian Lu Academy and was a prodigious warrior and Xuan Master, there was a huge gap between herself and Prince Li since she didn't have the big families' support.

On the other hand, Chu Ning was the Imperial guards' Commander in Chief—the Emperor's close aide. Thus, he was of higher value. However, he was busy dealing with the Fourth Princess's accident and did not appear at the restaurant. This disappointed many.

The few events coupled together reduced the people's attention on Chu Liuyue.

Thankfully, Yan Ge was there the whole time, which helped Chu Liuyue a lot. It was also his presence that suppressed any ideas anyone would have.

No matter what, Chu Liuyue had the backing of Zhen Bao Pavilion and was not to be trifled with.

...

Time passed quickly. In the blink of an eye, school had reopened.

This was Chu Liuyue's first day of classes since she entered the academy.

Quite a number of people were at the academy's gates, which made it seem rather lively.

Chu Liuyue's descent from the carriage attracted many people's attention.

The lively entrance quietened.

Countless eyes looked over with mixed feelings.

"Little Liuyue, you're finally here!" Following the excited voice, someone hurried towards Chu Liuyue. It was Bai Chen.

Chu Liuyue greeted him. "Teacher Bai Chen."

He looked at her happily. "I've been waiting for you for a while. Why are you here only now?"

"I'm staying in school and had a lot of things to pack, so I arrived a little later," explained Chu Liuyue.

Bai Chen chuckled. "Your living quarters have been prepared. Just follow me!"

Chu Liuyue nodded. "Thank you for the trouble, Teacher Bai Chen."

"What trouble! You're not a popular character in the academy. Many wanted this chance, but they couldn't beat me! Hehe!"

Everyone had witnessed Chu Liuyue's talent. Though she had chosen to cultivate as a Xuan Master, she had not chosen a teacher yet.

All the Xuan Master teachers were excited. Everyone wanted a talented disciple!

Today was her first day in school. Of course, they could not miss the chance to get close to her!

Bai Chen did not have much hope about getting chosen, but he liked Chu Liuyue from the bottom of his heart, so he was happy to be here.

“Everything on this carriage is your belongings, right?”

“Yes. They’re just daily necessities.”

“Then, I’ll get someone to help you...”

Before Bai Chen could finish, a mocking voice cut him off. “What kind of lousy carriage is this? Someone also has the guts to park it in front of the school?”

The voice was a little familiar to Chu Liuyue. Chu Liuyue looked around and saw a familiar face.

Lu Feiyan. She stood from afar, covering her nose as she looked at Chu Liuyue’s carriage with disdain. Her arrogance was written all over her face. “Is this carriage made of rotten wood? Why does it smell like mold?”

Her gaze swept across Chu Liuyue’s body as she smiled coldly. She raised her voice deliberately and spoke to the girls around her. “Look, that horse’s fur is patchy and of various colors. It’s clearly a lousy breed. Will ladies of respectable families use something like this?”

They nodded in agreement.

“Yan’er, she’s no longer from a good family. Of course, she can’t compare with us.”

“Yeah! So what if she’s a prodigy? She’s still just as poor. What a joke!”

Bai Chen’s expression changed, and he was about to scold them, but Chu Liuyue stopped him.

“Teacher Bai Chen, I know that carriages cannot enter the academy, but I have quite the number of items. Could you get someone to help me?”

Bai Chen paused and then said, “Of course!”

Chu Liuyue smiled as she looked at Lu Feiyan and company. “Then, you all will do.”

Chapter 97: Lennart Green Wooden Box

Lu Feiyan’s smile stiffened. “Who are you to command me to do things?”

Not to mention that Chu Liuyue had already left the Chu family and was worth nothing, even if she were still the Chu family’s Big Missy, she did not have this right.

“Lu Feiyan, this is Tian Lu Academy, not your Lu family. Why are you throwing a tantrum?” Bai Chen spoke directly and harshly. He had seen such scenes often and was not affected by it at all. “If you want to throw a tantrum, go back to the Lu family.”

After getting scolded, Lu Feiyan toned down a little. However, it was impossible for her to be Chu Liuyue’s servant. “Teacher Bai Chen, Chu Liuyue only entered the academy today. Even though we’re in the same cohort, we shouldn’t be doing this for her, right?”

Bai Chen sneered. "Even though it's her first day here, her capabilities and talent are way better than yours. In Tian Lu Academy, capabilities are the most important thing. Besides, I'm just asking you to help her hold some things, yet you're so reluctant about it. Am I not a teacher in your eyes?"

Lu Feiyan and the rest did not dare to rebut Bai Chen and could only reluctantly walk over when they realized that they could not avoid it.

Lu Feiyan glanced at the horse carriage. What kind of good things can a lonely and poor household without backing have? I'm worried my hands will get dirty.

Chu Liuyue walked over and took out a black wooden box with flower engravings. It exuded a faint fragrance.

Bai Chen took a deep breath in and felt that the fragrance had infiltrated his body and refreshed his soul. His eyes brightened. "Is this lennart green?"

"Teacher Bai Chen, you have good eyesight."

Lu Feiyan knitted her brows once she heard the words 'lennart green'. Actually, when Chu Liuyue first took out the box, Lu Feiyan could smell the vague plum fragrance and guessed that it was lennart green, but she did not quite believe it.

Lennart green was very precious and only lived in harsh winter, growing an inch every three years. It would only blossom after living for more than 100 years.

An average person might not even be able to see it once in their lifetime, let alone have it.

The girl at the side could not help but softly ask, "Yan'er, your bracelet is also made from lennart green, right?"

Lu Feiyan's face turned a little pale. When she first entered Tian Lu Academy, her mother specifically bought her a bracelet made from lennart green to reward her. She loved it very much and always had it with her, so the people around her all knew about it.

This bracelet had attracted many envious stares. However, Chu Liuyue actually took out a wooden box made of lennart green. The box's material alone was worth a lot more than that bracelet of hers.

"Her wooden box costs quite a bit, right?" muttered another girl.

"What do you know? There are good quality lennart greens and bad ones. This wooden box might be big, but it's probably just made with some inferior and cheap material," said Lu Feiyan with annoyance.

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. "Oh, so Big Lu Missy has seen lennart green before. I can rest assured then; you can hold this."

Lu Feiyan was taken aback and suddenly felt some weight on her hands. Chu Liuyue had already placed the item on them.

The box was cold to touch, and Lu Feiyan could vaguely feel the engravings on the box. The fragrance was also much stronger than before. She could not help but look down and see the intricate carvings of lively plum blossoms on the wooden box.

She chuckled and could not hide her contempt. "You're really from a poor background and haven't seen much of the world. Lennart green grows very slowly and is found in cold places, so the material is cold and heavy, which helps to refresh one's mind. However, once you destroy the patterns and randomly carve something on it, the fragrance will quickly dissipate, and it'll just become a piece of rotten wood. Your lennart green is completely destroyed."

Chu Liuyue did not show any form of regret after hearing her words and laughed instead. "Everyone says that the Lu family's wealth is incomparable, and Big Lu Missy, you're really knowledgeable. Randomly carving on lennart green will indeed spoil it easily, but this problem won't exist if one soaks it in the juice made from lennart green flowers."

Lu Feiyan started stuttering. "W-what? Lennart green flower... juice? Soak it?"

Lennart greens were so hard to find, let alone its flowers. She had not seen one before.

"If you don't believe me, you can take a closer look at the plum blossom. The petals are green because of the lennart green flower juice used."

Lu Feiyan hurriedly looked down and indeed saw that the plum blossoms had a tinge of green. The fragrance was also especially refreshing. Lu Feiyan widened her eyes in disbelief.

This... This item can really be considered super precious. Just this lennart green box alone is worth hundreds of thousands of silver taels. With that lennart green flower juice...

"Y-you..." Lu Feiyan was stunned, but she refused to admit defeat. She could only put up a front and said, "I think this precious item of yours is your family asset, right? You even need to bring it with you everywhere in the academy..."

Chu Liuyue laughed lightly. "I put tea in the box, so I must bring it along."

Lu Feiyan was stumped and later chuckled coldly. "Tea? What kind of good tea do you have?" Chu Liuyue probably doesn't have any tea that is worthy of this lennart green box.

Chu Liuyue nodded gently. "I really don't have any good tea. I just placed some flower tea in it for me to soak my feet when I have nothing to do."

Lu Feiyan was stunned, taking a while to recover her senses. Her face flashed green and white at the same time, which made her look amusing. Chu Liuyue actually made me carry her foot-washing items?

Chapter 98: Everything She Liked

The worse thing is that Chu Liuyue actually used such a precious lennart green box to store the flower tea used for soaking her feet. She is simply... simply insulting this precious item!

Lu Feiyan really wanted to ask Chu Liuyue what she was thinking. However, when she was about to speak up, she saw Chu Liuyue's calm expression and heard her light tone. It was as though everything was very normal and not worth mentioning.

If I blow the matter out of proportion, it would seem as if I am overreacting and am not experienced enough. Lu Feiyan's blood boiled, and her chest felt as if it was blocked, making her feel like she was suffocating.

Since when did I—the Big Missy of the Lu family—ever do things such as serve someone? She almost exploded once she recalled that the item she held contained the tea Chu Liuyue used to soak her feet.

“Who wants to hold such a rotten...” scolded Lu Feiyan as she acted as if she wanted to smash the box on the floor.

“Big Lu Missy, please be careful. Even though this item isn't very precious, I might have to trouble Big Lu Missy to compensate for it if it's broken.” Chu Liuyue was very gentle and polite as her hand lightly tapped on the wooden box.

Lu Feiyan only felt a heavy force overwhelming her and suppressing her the next moment, causing her to be unable to move.

Since when did Chu Liuyue become so powerful? Also, I definitely can't produce enough money to compensate for it. She was shocked. After much internal conflict, Lu Feiyan finally released her force and said with clenched teeth, “I know! It's just a lennart green box, right? What's there to be happy about?”

Jeers could be heard from the crowd.

Lu Feiyan's sentence was filled with jealousy. When she first wore the lennart green bracelet, her chin was about to fly up to the sky.

Besides, Chu Liuyue's box was just used to store flower tea. The two could not even be compared.

Chu Liuyue smiled in satisfaction. “Big Lu Missy, you're really a sensible person.” After Chu Liuyue finished her sentence, she took out something else from the horse carriage. “Rainbow glass cup. This item is very fragile and will crack in extreme temperatures. May I trouble you to hold this carefully?”

“Purple jade fan. It's currently summer, and it's really hot, so it'll be good to have a fan with me.”

“Oh, this inkstone is a gold streaked inkstone that can't be directly touched with the hand. You must cushion it with a pillow made from silver thread.”

Chu Liuyue took out several items and informed the others on the things they had to be wary of at the same time.

The original arrogant Lu Feiyan and the rest were gradually dazed beyond words.

Every single one of the items was extravagant. They had even only heard some of them and not seen them before.

The originally angered and indignant Lu Feiyan's face became even more contorted as she stared at all the items. Initially, she thought that the lennart green box was the only presentable item Chu Liuyue had, but it was clearly not the case.

Lu Feiyan felt like her chest was blocked, and her face burned as she recalled how she mocked Chu Liuyue earlier about being born in a poor family. She really wanted to dig a hole and jump into it. Even a fool could tell who the ignorant one was.

If Lu Feiyan was in this state, the others were even worse. The few girls were long dazed as they stiffly held the items in their hands, not daring to move casually for fear of accidentally breaking something.

They could not afford to compensate Chu Liuyue.

The crowd, who was waiting to watch a scene, was also stunned.

This Chu Liuyue is too much of a spendthrift...

Didn't she and Chu Ning sever their ties with the Chu family?

Logically speaking, their pockets should be tight. However, it seems like their lives are better than most of the aristocratic families.

Even Bai Chen could not help but take a few more looks at those items. He said, "Little Liuyue, I didn't know you have so many valuable items."

These were not things that could be obtained even if one had money. He wanted some of those treasures, but he could not even find a way to get them.

Chu Liuyue smiled and did not say a word.

How would the original Chu Liuyue have all of these? Even the Chu family might not have such treasures.

Actually, she picked those things up from the boxes Second Master Yan gave her.

Just based on how the things I brought out have already attracted so many people's attention, I wonder how they will react when they find out that I have more at home and that these aren't even a tenth of my items.

She was already shocked when she saw that Second Master Yan had sent her so many gifts. She did not expect an even bigger surprise waiting for her when she opened them.

Every single item in those boxes were extravagant treasures.

The so-called 'prized possessions' in Zhen Bao Pavilion could not even be compared to them.

Chu Liuyue could not help but re-evaluate Zhen Bao Pavilion's wealth and background.

It had already been quite a few days since the Fourth Princess's mishap, but there was no news of the Emperor punishing Zhen Bao Pavilion. One could already guess quite a bit from this alone.

Zhen Bao Pavilion was much more mysterious than what she thought.

As the Tianling Dynasty's princess in her previous life, she used nothing but the best, so the value of these items could not shock her. However, these things... From the teacups to the ink and brushes used for writing, even the flower tea inside the lennart green box... They were all things she liked very much.

Everything was coincidentally her favorite.

Chapter 99: Choose a Teacher

Without a doubt, this was the work of the mysterious Zhen Bao Pavilion's master.

Chu Liuyue was becoming increasingly curious as she wondered who the master was and why he did so much for her. This was definitely not something that could be exchanged with a hunting ground title deed.

Initially, she tried to ask Yan Ge and said that she wanted to meet the Master, but was curtly rejected by Yan Ge as he said that the Master was rarely in the Imperial City. It was hard for even him to meet the Master.

If Chu Liuyue wanted to meet him, she had to wait quite a while.

Chu Liuyue looked at it from another perspective. Since the other party sent so many treasures over, she would just accept them. She would naturally be able to meet the other party when he wanted to meet her. It would not be too late to talk to him then.

Besides, she really liked all the items, and it would be a waste if she rejected them.

While looking at Lu Feiyan and the rest who were forced to surrender, Bai Chen laughed out loud. "Let's go. I'll show you your residence."

...

Chu Liuyue followed Bai Chen into the academy, while Lu Feiyan and the rest followed behind them, looking just like her slaves.

Their group of people had attracted quite a lot of attention on the way.

Even though quite a few people had seen Chu Liuyue during the previous assessment, most of them were from the same cohort as her.

Chu Liuyue's name was like thunder piercing through the ears of the students in the two batches above her. Now that she finally came, they wanted to take a closer look to see what type of person she was. However, nobody was insensible enough to cause trouble for her with Bai Chen around.

Chu Liuyue quickly saw many houses in the academy.

These houses were all independent ones with a small yard, and they were all equally spaced apart.

"The academy is very big, but we don't have a lot of students, so every student has their own house. This way, students could have their own place to cultivate in peace when they don't need to attend lessons," explained Bai Chen as he walked.

"In the academy, even though the arena and library are shared amongst everyone, we have separated territories as cultivation is different for warriors, Xuan Masters, and heavenly doctors. The one we just walked past is the warriors' territory. After passing the Shuang Qing Lake, it'll be our Xuan Masters' territory."

Chu Liuyue looked in front and saw the clear water flowing past. A seven-hole stone bridge was situated on top of the lake.

There were also individual houses on the opposite side of the river, but they clearly looked much bigger than the ones before.

“It seems like the students’ lodgings are also different...” Chu Liuyue muttered to herself.

“Hehe, of course! Our Xuan Masters’ living conditions are way better than the warriors’!” Bai Chen smiled happily. “The houses here are at least two times the size of those over there.”

Chu Liuyue nodded in understanding. It was normal for such a distinction as there were limited Xuan Masters, and Xuan Masters had a higher status than warriors.

“Look! You’ll be living in that house!” Bai Chen raised his hand and pointed towards a house near the lake. “It’s near to Jiuyou Tower and the library, so it’s very convenient!”

Chu Liuyue’s heart tingled. “Thank you, Teacher Bai Chen.”

“No need to thank me! Elder Sun specifically instructed me to do it! It’s normal to have this kind of treatment with your extremely good talent as a warrior and a Xuan Master. After all, the teachers all wish for you to become a strong person.” Bai Chen looked very serious.

Chu Liuyue could tell that he meant every word he said. Even though Bai Chen had a bad temper, he did not have evil intentions and did his job as a teacher dutifully.

After reaching the house, Chu Liuyue could tell that the place had been meticulously cleaned, so she felt even more satisfied.

When Lu Feiyan and the rest saw this, they became even more upset and left in a fury after putting the items down.

Chu Liuyue did not care about them. She did not need to waste her efforts on these people.

Bai Chen explained the things Chu Liuyue needed to take note of, and she wrote them down one by one.

“This is your nameplate and uniform. When you’re done unpacking, make a trip to Peach Garden. That’s the place where teachers normally attend to their tasks. Even though you’ve already chosen to cultivate as a Xuan Master, you haven’t chosen your teacher. After you’ve made your choice, head over to Peach Garden to meet your teacher, register on the booklet, and then you can formally cultivate.”

Chu Liuyue thought for a while and asked, “Teacher Bai Chen, must... I choose a teacher?”

Chapter 100: I Disagree!

Bai Chen looked at her weirdly. “Of course. Since you entered the school to cultivate, how can you not have a teacher? This is especially so for Xuan Masters as one needs detailed guidance from a teacher. If not, you’ll take a long path. Why? Do... you not want to pick a teacher?”

Chu Liuyue hemmed and hawed. Upon seeing his weird expression, she shook her head and smiled. "Not really. I just asked about it casually. There are many teachers in the academy, but I'm not too familiar with them as I've just come here. So, I haven't made up my mind for now."

Bai Chen did not doubt that she had another reason for asking this as he laughed out loud. "Oh, so that's the case! Actually, you don't need to be so conflicted. It's not too late to choose when you see the teachers individually at Peach Garden."

Chu Liuyue heaved a sigh of relief. "Then, I'm assured."

Bai Chen winked. "Actually, most of the students are like you when they first enter the academy and know nothing about the teachers. However, their range of choices isn't as big as yours. You took first place in the warrior assessment and second place in the Xuan Master assessment. All the teachers want to have you as their disciple now, so it's up to you to choose. Not everyone can have this treatment."

Only a rare talent like Chu Liuyue could stir up all those people's desires.

"Okay, I'll go over after unpacking my things."

...

Chu Liuyue's residence was a very clean two-story building.

She scanned her surroundings and discovered that everything she needed was already prepared for her. She did not need to bring anything along. However, she still placed her items neatly and changed into the academy uniform with the nameplate on her left chest area. Then, she walked towards Peach Garden.

Bai Chen had already told Chu Liuyue how to go to Peach Garden, so she arrived there smoothly.

From far away, Chu Liuyue already saw a traditional and spacious building.

When Chu Liuyue stood outside the door, she suddenly felt immense pressure coming straight for her. She focused her gaze but did not move. She stood still instead.

Hua!

The harsh aura suddenly disappeared when it almost reached her face. The remaining wind blew up the loose strands of hair in front of her forehead.

Chu Liuyue stood there calmly and cupped her fists. "Greetings, teachers."

Deep laughter sounded at the next moment.

"I said this girl has true capabilities, yet you insisted on testing her. You're not even afraid of being ridiculed by her." It was Sun Zhongyan's voice. "Girl, come in."

After he finished his sentence, the invisible force in front of Chu Liuyue vanished completely. She then stepped into the building.

Unlike its name, Peach Garden had no plants or flowers, only rough rocks haphazardly placed around. However, Chu Liuyue could immediately tell that the rocks formed a special Xuan formation.

With this place as the center, the Xuan formation energy exuded in all directions. The Xuan formation's power could definitely not be underestimated once activated.

Chu Liuyue quickly retracted her gaze.

Sun Zhongyan sat on a stone bench in the building and placed a chess piece down when he saw her enter.

Chu Liuyue noticed that the chessboard was exactly the same as the one she used to enter Tian Lu Academy. However, today's chess pieces were scattered around like stars in the sky, clearly much more complicated than the chessboard that day.

"Girl, have you chosen your teacher?"

After hesitating slightly, Chu Liuyue shook her head. "Teacher Bai Chen told me to come over and meet all the teachers." As she was talking, she scanned her surroundings and discovered that nobody else other than Elder Sun was in the yard.

However, some hidden aura was in the building...

"Elder Sun, the other teachers..." Chu Liuyue was confused.

Sun Zhongyan pointed towards the chessboard. "Since everyone wanted to be your mentor, we held a small competition. Now, all of them have lost, and I'm the only one left." He smiled and looked at Chu Liuyue. "What do you think of me being your teacher?"

Chu Liuyue was slightly stunned. If she did not remember wrongly, Elder Sun was also Si Ting's teacher.

When she was hesitating, a gray shadow suddenly dropped down from a distance, and a deep voice boomed like thunder in Peach Garden. "I disagree!"