

Three-Time 211

Chapter 211: 211. Make a late-night snack for you

When Su Liang woke up early in the morning, the beautiful face she had seen last night was still lingering in her mind.

“With that appearance and her special abilities, could she be a deity who has descended to the mortal world?”

Su Liang thought about this as she sat up, laughing softly when she remembered the pumpkin and eggplant that had come with Gu to “chase her”, looking forward to the dumplings tonight.

The challenge for Su Liang in setting out again was not horseback riding, but continuing to pretend to be sad.

To save herself the trouble, she decided to tire herself out by staying at the very front, so that others couldn’t see her expression.

They traveled nonstop all day and stayed at an inn when night fell.

The waiter brought hot water, and Su Liang took a bath, changed her clothes, and ate a bit of dinner, saving room for the dumplings.

Once her hair was dry, Su Liang casually braided it into two plaits, letting them hang over her shoulders.

While waiting for Ning Jing to appear, she read a few pages of a medical book.

The sound of a stone hitting the back window rang out, and Su Liang blew out the light in the room..xaml’>

After the person who had been spying on her left to report to Fang Tongling, Su Liang went to sleep.

After running and jumping over the courtyard wall, Su Liang landed quietly and saw a familiar tall silhouette under a tree nearby.

Su Liang walked over lightly and saw that Gu Ling was still wearing the exquisite wooden carved mask.

“Where are the dumplings?” Su Liang asked. His hands were empty.

Without waiting for Gu Ling’s response, Su Liang saw him looking behind her, and thought there was someone there, so she quickly turned around to check.

As she turned her head, one of her braids fell into Gu Ling’s hand.

The alley was silent, with no third person around.

Su Liang looked back at Gu Ling, speechless as she watched him holding her braid and studying it as if it were some mysterious mechanism...

“Are they evenly divided into four strands Gu Ling asked.

Su Liang: ...Her grandmother used to braid her hair into four strands when she was a child. How could she evenly divide her hair tonight when there was so much of it? Count them one by one?

An exasperated Su Liang hummed, "I divided it evenly. If you don't believe me, you can count."

As soon as she finished speaking, Su Liang instantly regretted it and felt somewhat embarrassed. She coughed lightly and said, "I was just joking. I didn't mean for you to actually count. Let go."

Gu Ling released his grip, and the braid fell back onto Su Liang's chest. He answered her earlier question as if nothing had happened, "The dumplings are somewhere

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Su Liang hurriedly followed.

They arrived quickly, at another inn. The two entered through the back door and came to a small courtyard.

This was a place Gu Ling had reserved, complete with a small kitchen.

At the entrance, Su Liang heard the gurgling sound of boiling water.

Gu Ling went in and added some more wood to the fire.

Su Liang saw that there was warm water in the wooden basin, so she washed her hands with it. The temperature was just right.

After washing her hands, Su Liang dried them with a towel and walked over to see the neatly wrapped dumplings on the chopping board. It was clear that Gu Ling had made them himself – there were two different shapes, almost identical in size and very delicately made.

"I'll cook them," Su Liang said, feeling like she should contribute something.

As the dumplings were cooking, Su Liang used a spoon to gently separate them while the steam wafted towards her face.

Gu Ling stood not far behind Su Liang, staring at her braids for a while. Before Su Liang turned around, he went to wash his hands.

Soon, the dumplings were ready, filling two plates.

While cooking the dumplings, Su Liang had also prepared two bowls of dipping sauce. Gu Ling liked his with a bit more vinegar.

The two sat across from each other in the room, eating their late-night snack. Su Liang tried one and gave a thumbs up, "Great God, you definitely have the talent to become a Kitchen God. These dumplings are delicious. You should try making more dishes in the future."

It really was delicious, made entirely according to Su Liang's recipe. Their home-grown pumpkin was perfect for making dumpling filling, and the seasoning was spot-on.

Unlike meat-filled dumplings, the pumpkin and egg filling was refreshingly palatable, and it was Su Liang's favorite.

The only pity was that after Gu Ling revealed his true face to Su Liang last night, he had disguised himself again tonight. Otherwise, Su Liang felt that tasting delicious food while looking at a beautiful man would be even more perfect.

However, Su Liang's sincere praise was met with Gu Ling's response, "Not as good as yours."

Su Liang chuckled, "Let's discuss who will be cooking and who will be making the fire in the future."

The dumplings were an odd number. Gu Ling divided them equally into two portions, leaving the last one in a small bowl.

"Mine?" Su Liang reached out with his chopsticks.

Gu Ling shook his head, "Half for each."

Su Liang: ...The Great God is a fair person, very reasonable.

So, the last dumpling was shared, with each person eating half.

Su Liang put down his chopsticks and let out a comfortable sigh, "Thank you for the hospitality, Great God."

Gu Ling collected the bowls and took them to the kitchen. When he came back, he saw Su Liang standing under the eaves looking at the moon.

"When are you leaving?" Su Liang asked.

Gu Ling shook his head slightly, "Not leaving."

Su Liang frowned, "You changed your mind? Not looking for your grandfather anymore?" He wasn't an impulsive person.

"Uncle Liang will come looking for you when he gets the news that Ning Jing is dead," Gu Ling said.

Su Liang was taken aback for a moment, "That's true. It's even better this way. If your grandfather is untrustworthy, you might be taken advantage of if you show up at his door. Let Uncle Liang help with passing the message, and after your grandfather clears your rebel identity, you can show your face."

"Mhm." Gu Ling nodded.

"So what's your plan now?" Su Liang asked.

"No plan," Gu Ling said indifferently.

A smile tugged at the corner of Su Liang's lips, "If you have nothing to do, be my secret guard. The Emperor must think that Ning Jing had left skilled defenders to protect me, which allowed him to have an accident. So you can't show yourself, but you can exist."

"Alright," Gu Ling agreed.

"You can't use the Wen Gu identity anymore, Second Brother Lin knows it's you. If you want to completely erase the identity of Ning Jing, you have to break ties cleanly," Su Liang said.

Second Brother Lin and the real Ning Jing had deep feelings. Over the past six months, Gu Ling had impersonated Ning Jing, and together with Su Liang, they had helped Lin's family through several difficulties, but at the same time, they had deceived them.

By now, they couldn't let them think that Ning Jing was still alive, because Gu Ling would no longer use that identity.

"Why not disguise yourself as an old man?" Su Liang suggested, "That way your martial arts skills would be reasonable, and no one would suspect your identity." Su Liang's eyes brightened as he continued, "I've got it, you could pretend to be my master! After all, everyone believes I must have had a skilled master to become what I am now."

Gu Ling's voice was haunting, "But you told people that your master is a high monk."

Subconsciously, Su Liang looked at Gu Ling's hair and blinked, "Actually, I think if the Great God shaved his head, he would definitely be the most beautiful monk in the world."

"Stop your nonsense," Gu Ling said.

Su Liang cleared his throat, "Let's be serious. If you want to be seen in public, you need to change your appearance to be completely unrelated to your current appearance." Disguise was not so magical. If Ning Jing was dead, and a man appeared beside Su Liang with the same age and body shape, someone would definitely suspect that Ning Jing hadn't died. There were too many smart people in the capital city keeping an eye on Su Liang.

"Secret guard," Gu Ling made his choice. Before his real identity could be restored, he would no longer openly pretend to be someone else.

"Alright," Su Liang nodded, "Thank you for your care, Great God. I'd like to have Chicken Soup Noodles for tomorrow's late-night snack, thank you, see you at Hai's time." Su Liang turned to leave, not giving Gu Ling a chance to refuse.

But the next moment, her flying braid was caught by Gu Ling.

Su Liang stopped helplessly, "I should have shaved my head. Great God, if you have something to say, don't use force."

"No ordering," Gu Ling said.

Su Liang raised an eyebrow, "There will be a late-night snack, just without ordering? I agree. Great God, you can have your free rein. Thank you."

After seeing Su Liang off, Gu Ling returned to the inn where he was staying.

As he sat down by the bed, he removed his hairpin, and his ink-black hair cascaded down like a waterfall.

He grabbed a handful of hair, then parted out some more, until the strands in his hand were about as thick as Su Liang's braids. He began to count how many hairs he had...

Back at home, Su Liang fell asleep quickly, unaware of what someone was doing. If she had known, she would definitely have exclaimed, "Are you crazy...?"

In the following days, Su Liang traveled during the day and sneaked out to find Gu Ling for a late-night snack at night, behind Fang Tongling's back.

To avoid being caught by Gu Ling again, Su Liang never braided her hair again.

The night before they reached the capital city, Su Liang finally got to eat the chicken soup noodles she had mentioned wanting to eat some days earlier.

"It's easy to deceive strangers, but it's hard to pretend to be sad in front of friends," Su Liang sighed.

"After we get to the capital city, don't linger. Deliver the coffin back to Xunyang City," Gu Ling said.

Although it was now summer, when Gu Ling left the capital city, "Ning Jing's" corpse had already been arranged to be stored in an ice cellar, waiting for Su Liang's return before deciding what to do with it.

"That's for the best. Their grief is real, mine is fake; it feels terrible. It's better to spare each other for a while. Maybe after some time has passed, it'll be easier to meet again," Su Liang said. "As for Duanmu Cheng, right now, as long as he's dead, I'll be the prime suspect. I'll let him live for now, losing everything, living in misery. When the time is right, I'll take his life."

Before noon the next day, Su Liang rode into the capital city.

"Miss su!"

Hearing Qi Jun's voice, Su Liang took a deep breath, trying to maintain a blank expression. She saw him running over from a short distance away.

"Master instructed me to wait here for you, Miss Su!" said Qi Jun, sighing deeply, with a mournful expression on his face. "Mr. Ning is gone. Please take care, Miss Su!"

"Where is he?" Su Liang asked coldly.

Qi Jun was momentarily startled, then realized that Su Liang was asking about Ning Jing's remains. He hurriedly answered, "At the Su Mansion, Fourth Prince has arranged for an ice cellar to store it."

"What about Wan Cong?" Su Liang asked.

"In the Heavenly Prison, awaiting execution," Qi Jun replied.

"I see." As soon as Su Liang finished speaking, she urged her horse towards the Su Mansion.

Soon, the news of Su Liang's return spread. Those who saw her said her expression was frosty.

Qi Jun reported back to Xing Yusheng at Marquis Zhong Xin's Mansion, and Fang Tongling went to the palace to receive his orders.

Alone, Su Liang rode back to her home in the capital city. Government soldiers stood guard at the entrance, saluting solemnly as they saw her return.

She dismounted and entered. When she had left, it was late spring, and many flowers in the mansion had not yet bloomed. Now, as she returned, petals littered the ground, and the trees were lush and green.

She was led to the ice cellar and shivered as soon as she entered.

"You may all leave," Su Liang said before approaching the coffin alone.

She pushed open the cold coffin lid and saw "Ning Jing's" body.

Even though she knew it was fake, seeing that familiar face devoid of life still weighed heavy on her heart and brought out a touch of grief.

The funeral clothes were neatly arranged, with no wounds visible. The sleeves were long, and Su Liang suddenly had a thought. She reached out and pulled at the corpse's left sleeve.

Seeing that there was no hand, she hesitated slightly. Gu Ling had not mentioned that this man's hands were also cut off, nor had she asked in detail how this man had died.

Upon further thought, Su Liang realized that perhaps Gu Ling had deliberately chopped off this man's hands to avoid any flaws being discovered. After all, hands were always exposed and carried a person's characteristics; for example, the hands of a scholar and a martial artist would be noticeably different.

Not spending much time in the ice cellar, Su Liang exited and returned to the courtyard where she had previously lived.

Pushing open the door to Gu Ling's old room, it had already been cleaned thoroughly, showing no traces of the murder that had taken place.

Returning to her own room, everything was as she left it. She closed the doors and windows, sat down at the table, and sighed in relief.

Last time she left, she hadn't expected to return with so many things having changed dramatically. Now, she could only take one step at a time.

Su Liang rested for a while, unpacked her baggage, and put away her things when she heard footsteps and then Xing Yusheng's voice, "Su Liang!"

Su Liang opened the door to see Xing Yusheng and Qi Jun walking over. "Ajun, you go keep watch at the door." Xing Yusheng instructed.

"Yes." Qi Jun sat down in the courtyard.

Xing Yusheng entered the room and looked at Su Liang with concern, "Are you okay?"

Su Liang closed her eyes, "I'm fine."

“How could you be fine? Although I don’t know if you and Ning Jing are really going to get married, anyone who isn’t blind can see that you have a great relationship!” Xing Yusheng clenched his fist and slammed the table, “If you want to cry, just cry! Don’t hold it in! No one will laugh at you!”

Su Liang shook her head, sat down, and spoke softly, “I don’t want to cry.”

Seeing her like this, Xing Yusheng felt she was suppressing herself, “Su Liang, I have to tell you something. The mastermind behind Ning Jing’s murder is not Wan Cong, but Duanmu Cheng! Ajun and I both saw a bloody character on the bed, the character ‘Cheng’! It must have been him who found out who his enemy was before he died!”

Su Liang frowned but said nothing.

“The emperor knows, but he wants to cover for Duanmu Cheng!” Xing Yusheng’s anger was still uncontrollable, “No matter what you want to do, I support you!”

Su Liang sighed slightly, “I know. He is gone now, and there’s nothing I want to do.”

Xing Yusheng furrowed his brow, “Su Liang, don’t you want to avenge Ning Jing? This doesn’t seem like you.”

“Xing Yusheng, thank you. I know you’re sad for Ning Jing and that you care about me, but let’s not talk about that incident anymore.” Su Liang lowered her head, “Your family’s peaceful days have not come easily, cherish it. You are not alone, you will soon be married, you don’t have to do anything for me and Ning Jing.”

Xing Yusheng frowned, “I... I used to think, let my father rebel and seize the throne, then you can get your revenge.”

Su Liang shook her head, “I understand your intentions, but don’t think about that anymore, I don’t need it, and your father wouldn’t agree.”

“Actually, I know that this idea is foolish, but I just want to do something for you...”

Xing Yusheng muttered, “You always helped me before, and with Ning Jing gone, I can’t do anything, I can’t even reveal the truth!”

“If he is watching from heaven, he would want the people he cares about to live well.”

Su Liang whispered, “You go back first, remember my words, live your life well, I know what I should do. If I need you, I won’t be polite.”

“Let Xueqing accompany you.” Xing Yusheng sighed.

Su Liang shook her head, “Don’t let her come, I don’t want to see anyone right now.”

Xing Yusheng wanted to say something, but finally left with Qi Jun.

As they left, Qi Jun lowered his voice and asked, “Master, did you mention that matter to Miss Su?”

Xing Yusheng shook his head, “Let’s not talk about it.”

Someone came from the palace, and Su Liang changed her clothes and went to the audience with the emperor.

Duanmu Yi listened to Su Liang's request to send "Ning Jing" back to Xunyang City for burial the next day and only told her to keep her grief in check and return to the capital city soon before letting her leave the palace.

When Su Liang returned home and entered her room, she heard someone tapping on the wall next door.

Without going over, Su Liang leaned against the wall and talked to Gu Ling, "Xueqing might come to me to cry later, what should we do?"

"I don't know." Gu Ling said.

"If Master wants to accompany me back to Xunyang City, what should we do?" Su Liang frowned.

"I don't know." Gu Ling said.

Su Liang held her forehead, "You're so carefree now, my life is too difficult."

"I believe you will handle it well." Gu Ling said.

Su Liang spoke with a melancholic tone, "Thank you very much!"

"Would you like me to make a late-night snack?" Gu Ling asked.

Su Liang snorted, "A table full of delicacies."

Gu Ling said, "The little squirrels in the lake have grown up, so tonight, we'll have squirrel fish.."

Chapter 212: 212. Count me as the winner

Su Liang knew that telling Xing Yusheng not to bring Lin Xueqing would be useless.

But she was psychologically prepared. Unable to cry, she maintained a stony face, expressing her grief in her silence.

Seeing Qin Yujin with reddened eyes, and Lin Xueqing yet to utter a word, her sobs choking her speech, Su Liang hugged her. She gently patted her back and thought to herself, if the real Ning Jing has a spirit in heaven, he will see that there are people in this world who genuinely cared for him.

"Liang, if you want to cry, just cry." Qin Yujin held Su Liang's hand. Su Liang shook her head but didn't stop Lin Xueqing from crying. Emotions need to be vented.

Xing Yusheng and Qi Jun came again. As soon as they exited the car, they saw an unfamiliar man and woman talking to the guards at the door.

The guards were arranged by Duanmu Chen and did not leave after Su Liang returned.

Xing Yusheng walked over and asked, "Who are these people?"

“Master Xing, this lady claims to be the younger sister of Lord Ning,” one guard replied.

Xing Yusheng’s gaze fell on the fair-faced young woman, dressed simply and obviously pregnant. He heard Qi Jun whispering in his ear, “Master Ning originally had a half-sister who was still alive. Her name is Ning Xiner and she’s the third son’s concubine in the house of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Revenue.”

After Ning Jing was framed and expelled from the Ning Family, the real power in the Ning Family fell into his half-brother Ning Yao’s hands. Ning Xiner, Miss Nine of the Ning family, married into the Sun family in the capital last year as the concubine to the illegitimate third son of the Sun Family.

It was a marriage plotted meticulously by Ning Yao in order to curry favor with the official families in the capital city. But even though the Ning Family was one of the four major businesses of Qian Country, his sister didn’t even have the qualifications to be the main wife of a bastard of an official family. Pushing it, she could only be a small concubine.

To avenge the real Ning Jing, Gu Ling obliterated all the scum in the Ning Family in Xunyang. Only Ning Xiner, who was in the capital at that time, was left.

The wife of the third son of the Sun family had died in difficult childbirth last year. Having yet to remarry, they didn’t dare to seek out “Ning Jing” for kinship.

Sun was “Ning Jing’s” supervisor in the Ministry of Revenue. They convened amicably, but he never mentioned this concubine of his son.

It wasn’t until half a month ago, the day after “Ning Jing” died, the Sun family elevated Ning Xiner’s status.

When Su Liang returned today, Ning Xiner and her husband came to visit.

“What are you here for?” Xing Yusheng asked coldly. Even though he didn’t know all the twists and turns, he was sure of one thing, Ning Jing didn’t have any brothers or sisters.

Ning Xiner, with reddened eyes, said timidly, “I just wanted to see my seventh brother.”

“Wait outside.” Once Xing Yusheng finished speaking, he walked in with Qi Jun.

Ning Xiner and her husband waited outside.

“Master, I believe the Sun family wants to use Ning Xiner to claim the Ning Family’s assets,” said Qi Jun. He had investigated Ning Xiner in his spare time while pretending to be Ning Jing and working at the Ministry of Revenue. When her parents and brothers met disaster, she was spared from being thrown out by the Sun family because she was pregnant. She hadn’t given birth yet, and it was rumored to be a son.

Qi Jun believed that the Sun family had initially let Ning Xiner, a merchant's daughter, enter the household out of avarice. It was rumored that Ning Yao had given her a very generous dowry and gifted the Undersecretary Sun many valuable antiques and curios.

Not all the officials in the capital were wealthy, only those who came from noble families.

With "Ning Jing" taking back the Ning Family, the Sun family's path to wealth via Ning Xiner was blocked.

But now, with "Ning Jing" dead, the matter of who would inherit the Ning Family's fortune was attracting much attention behind the scenes.

Although Ning Xiner wasn't a legitimate member of the Ning family, her family name was Ning, after all.

Xing Yusheng listened to Qi Jun's input and coldly snorted, "Dream on! Since Ning Jing has gone, even if Su Liang doesn't want his possessions, it isn't the turn of that bastard sister and her natal family!"

"I wonder if Miss Su will claim the Ning Family's properties. If she does, it may invite disapproval," Qi Jun objectively analyzed.

Because Su Liang and "Ning Jing" were not yet officially married. If calculated properly, in many people's eyes, if the Ning Family had no other descendants, Ning Xiner had more of a claim to the Ning Family's estate than Su Liang.

The master and servant entered the courtyard and heard Lin Xueqing crying.

Xing Yusheng sighed deeply. As soon as he entered, he saw Lin Xueqing leaning on Su Liang, her eyes swollen from crying.

"Xueqing, don't do that. Su Liang is already distraught enough," Xing Yusheng tried to comfort her.

Qin Yujin also said, "Yes, don't cry any more. If Ning Jing's spirit is watching, he would hope for you two to be well."

Xing Yusheng broke the gloomy atmosphere in the room by mentioning Ning Xiner's vms1L.

Su Liang was stunned for a moment. She knew about this person but had completely forgotten her. She wondered if Gu Ling had simply forgotten about her or deliberately ignored her.

Regarding Ning Xiner suddenly popping up now with the backing of her in-laws, Su Liang certainly understood what the Sun family wanted to do.

"What do you think of the Ning family's properties?" Xing Yusheng asked Su Liang.

Su Liang said coldly, "Ning Jing said before he died, the Ning Family has two masters, him and me. Now that he's gone, all his belongings are mine. No one else can touch them!"

Xing Yusheng nodded, "Then let Ning Xiner get lost."

Su Liang knew that this would make her look greedy, but that didn't matter. Ning Xinxin was just a pawn manipulated by Ning Yao, and Su Liang had no interest in her anymore. But if she thought she could use the surname "Ning" to seek anything, she was being delusional.

Indeed, Gu Ling had told every steward in the Ning Family that Su Liang was his adopted sister and the only mistress of the Ning Family besides him. If something happened to him one day, everything in the Ning Family would belong to Su Liang.

Su Liang didn't lack money. Even if she were to donate all of the Ning Family's assets to charity in the future to console the departed soul of Zhen Ningjing, she wouldn't possibly let Ning Xinxin get a single cent.

After much persuasion, Su Liang managed to convince Lin Xueqing to leave.

Xing Yusheng also left saying he would kick Ning Xinxin and her husband out.

At last, when all the guests were gone, Su Liang finally let out a sigh of relief. She went to the garden and saw someone fishing, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat that shielded his face.

"Have you not caught any fish after such a long time?" Su Liang pointed out the empty bucket.

Gu Ling sat unmoving, "none of them are the squirrel."

Su Liang held her forehead, "Poor creature, being targeted by you. But have you ever thought, perhaps Qi Jun might have caught and eaten your squirrel when we were not at home?"

She knew that Gu Ling had marked that fish but felt it was unnecessary, really unnecessary.

The hand that Gu Ling was holding the fishing rod with paused for a moment,

"Why not?" Su Liang was curious.

Gu Ling said, "I feel that it's still there."

Su Liang shrugged, "If you trust your intuition that much, you can keep fishing." Then she brought up the issue of Ning Xinxin with him.

Gu Ling simply said two words, "Kick out."

Replied Su Liang lightly, "The Sun family might think that for the sake of my good reputation, I would voluntarily give up the property of the Ning Family and even mend relations with Ning Xinxin so she could perform the last rites for Ning Jing. Well then, I'm willing to bet that the Sun family won't dare to openly rob me unless they have given up on their image."

So what if they accused Su Liang of ill intent? Ning Xinxin's identity as Miss Ning was questionable itself. Moreover, she was already married.

Su Liang was a pragmatist and she didn't care about the fictitious reputation.

After watching Gu Ling fish for a while, Su Liang felt it was boring and decided to return.

Not long after Lin Xueqing left, Lin Shuzhi came. Su Liang could only gather her energy to deal with him.

Lin Shuzhi told Su Liang about “Ning Jing’s” last meeting with him before his death. His words were interrupted by tears, “I know you were still in his heart, even though he was too stubborn to admit it. And then this happened. Even though he didn’t leave any messages, I saw him grow up since he was a child and I know he was kindhearted. He definitely wouldn’t want you to be sad for him. You are still young, you have to look ahead, and you still have a long way to go.”

Su Liang nodded, “Master, don’t worry, I understand.”

“I heard from Yusheng that you are going to send Ajing back to Xunyang City tomorrow. I won’t go because I won’t be able to help you. Your second brother can accompany you on this journey.” Lin Shuzhi said solemnly.

Su Liang had anticipated this and shook her head to refuse, “There’s no need. My second brother just got married recently. He should stay in the capital. I can do this alone. Moreover, I have already asked for leave from the Emperor, planning to stay in Xunyang City for a while after burying Ning Jing, to get familiar with the business of the Ning Family.”

Seeing Su Liang insist, Lin Shuzhi gave up, “Well, you have always been the most resourceful, if you want to be alone for a while, I won’t let others bother you. I hope you can sort out your feelings and come back soon.”

Su Liang sent Lin Shuzhi away and called for the two stewards of the Ning Family in the capital to arrange the matters of sending “Ning Jing” back to Xunyang City the next day.

Ning Xinxin and her husband had been driven away by Xing Yusheng. As to what the Sun Family would fabricate about Su Liang, she couldn’t care less.

Su Liang also knew that an important reason why the stewards of the Ning Family dared not “rebel” was that she was not easy to provoke. She held dual positions in the military and the medical fields and was a favorite of the Emperor in the capital city. Even the Sun Family, who only aimed to morally kidnap her, would not be able to cause much trouble.

As the sun was setting, Chang’an paid his respects and brought Duanmu Chen’s greetings, asking Su Liang about her plans for leaving the capital the next day.

“No need for his Highness, the fourth prince, to trouble himself. The Ning Family has capable people in the capital city. Everything has been arranged.” said Su Liang.

“Don’t worry about the Sun family, Su Miss, they won’t bother you anymore,” hinted Chang’an.

Su Liang wasn’t surprised that Duanmu Chen already knew that Ning Xinxin had been here and planned to help handle the matter and she didn’t refuse. She simply asked Chang’an to convey her gratitude to Duanmu Chen.

Su Liang had Chang’an withdraw his guards, and he complied.

As for the issue about the blood-written words, Duanmu Chen didn’t ask Chang’an to mention it to Su Liang again because he knew Xing Yusheng would tell her.

Su Liang did not agree with Xing Yusheng’s proposal to rebel. One of the reasons was that Xing Yusheng himself did not have the ability to do so. Even if he really wanted to do it, he would need

Xing Ji's support. Xing Ji however was not an ambitious man. On the contrary, he valued loyalty and hoped for a stable family life. Moreover, it was truly unnecessary. Duanmu Yi's act of covering for his son did not equate him to a tyrant. Su Liang wanted revenge for a personal grievance and it was not necessary to create such an uproar, sacrificing innocent people.

Actually, Xing Yusheng also realized it would not be appropriate when he calmed down. Therefore, when he met Su Liang, he just mentioned it once and never brought it up again after being denied by her as he had expected.

The Su Mansion calmed down and the kitchen received fresh food ingredients from Su Liang which the steward had brought in. She was a little hungry and was thinking about what to make for dinner. She didn't bother about someone who had gone fishing and hadn't returned yet.

Just when she had finished washing the vegetables, she heard footsteps. Turning around, she saw Gu Ling walking in carrying a wooden bucket.

"Did you catch your little squirrel?" Su Liang looked into the bucket.

A fat fish in the bucket was flapping its tail, hitting the sides of the bucket and swimming around.

"How do you know that it's the squirrel? If you call it, will it respond?" Su Liang joked.

Gu Ling's thin lips opened lightly, "Su Liang."

Subconsciously, Su Liang responded.

Then Gu Ling said, "You are Su Liang. But you are not a fish, you don't know how a fish responds."

Surprised, Su Liang blinked her eyes, "You are not me, how do you know that I don't know how a fish responds?"

Gu Ling spoke up, "You are not me, how do you know I don't know that you don't know how a fish..." Before he could finish his sentence, apparently realizing how silly it was, he ended this potentially endless loop of conversation, "I'm hungry."

"I'm also hungry. Acting is exhausting. You promised to cook tonight," Su Liang added.

"I only cook fish." Gu Ling said, taking out the fish from the wooden bucket.

"Gu Ling." Su Liang called him.

"Huh?" Gu Ling responded.

With a light laugh, Su Liang said, "You heard it. That's how a fish responds."

Glancing at Su Liang, Gu Ling pointedly made to throw the fish he intended to put into the wooden basin at her instead.

Subconsciously, Su Liang covered her head with her hands, thinking that Gu Ling was going to hit her with the fish, and thought to herself that he really couldn't take a joke.

But the fish ended up flipping its tail into the basin, and Gu Ling took a kitchen knife to stun it.

Su Liang murmured melancholically, "The poor little squirrel."

Gu Ling retorted, "Then don't eat it."

Snorting lightly, Su Liang said, "You wish."

It turned out that Su Liang still had to prepare dinner, as Gu Ling only cooked the squirrel fish as he promised, and he even needed Su Liang to instruct him.

However, Su Liang had always believed that there was nothing Gu Ling couldn't learn if he wanted to. The fish he prepared was even more delicately and evenly cut than what she made.

The two of them collaborated in the kitchen to prepare dinner, with little difference from their previous shared cooking experiences, even somewhat improved, as someone was no longer just a sidekick.

"By the way, are you the one who severed the corpse's hands?" Su Liang suddenly remembered.

Gu Ling nodded, confirming her guess.

"To avoid being discovered?" Su Liang asked.

Gu Ling shook his head and raised his left hand.

There, Su Liang saw the fragrant wood hand string she gave him on his wrist, and was taken aback, "Right. If you didn't cut off his hands, you would have to put this thing on him. Hu Er sent a pair of fragrant wood dragon and phoenix pendants as a wedding gift. If you don't want them, they're mine."

"They're all mine," Gu Ling said.

Nonchalantly, Su Liang nodded, "If you want them, they're all yours. They're antiques, and the carving is superb. You like carving, you can learn from them." Once the squirrel fish was done and taken out of the pan, dinner was ready.

After tasting a bit, Su Liang praised it, "The little squirrel is truly delicious."

Only after a few bites did a familiar female voice come from outside, "Sister Liang!"

Gu Ling picked up the squirrel fish and his bowl and utensils and quickly disappeared into the inner room.

Su Liang's outstretched chopsticks failed to grab anything. She turned her head to see Yan Shiba barge in and lunge at her...

Su Liang didn't dodge. She put down her chopsticks and let Yan Shiba hug her.

"Sister Liang, when I heard that the pretty boy was dead, I hurried back here to see you. Are you okay?" Yan Shiba took a good look at Su Liang's face, grinned, "You haven't lost weight," then her gaze fell on the food, "You still have the mood to cook? I knew it, you never liked that Ning pretty boy!"

Gently, Su Liang pushed Yan Shiba away, her expression indifferent, "He's gone. I don't want to hear any more nonsense from you."

Yan Shiba coughed lightly, then took a seat where Gu Ling had been sitting just before, "Alright, alright. I won't speak of it anymore. Let Ning Jing rest. In the end, who killed him? Do you need me to help you take revenge?"

"Did you finish your business in Yin Country?" Su Liang countered.

The moment Yan Shiba heard this, her face turned into a scowl, "Don't mention it! Those bastards from Yin Country even dare to trick me! It was a traitor from Yanyun Building who wanted to get rid of me, collaborated with an assassin group from Yin Country, and set a trap for me! Yan Shiqi died saving me!"

Su Liang, furrowing her brows, asked, "Did you escape and came back here?" As she said this, she reached to take Yan Shiba's wrist to feel her pulse, "Your internal injuries are severe."

A moved expression appeared on Yan Shiba's face, "I knew it, I'm in Sister Liang's heart. "

Su Liang shook off her hand, "Talk properly. Is Yan Shiqi really dead?"

"If he is dead, he's dead. It saves me from his daily nagging, which was annoying me to death." Yan Shiba said nonchalantly, "He willingly chose his fate, it wasn't me who forced him. You can't call me cold-blooded because of this, there are just people who are that despicable, there's nothing we can do!"

Su Liang felt that Yan Shiba hadn't changed at all. Those matters had nothing to do with her and she didn't want to comment on them.

"Get some medicine for me, once I recuperate, I'll take people to go seek revenge!" A chilling light flashed in Yan Shiba's eyes as she reached for Su Liang's chopsticks, "I'm starving. Let me eat something!"

Su Liang didn't let her succeed, "Come back to get the medicine in an hour. I don't serve meals here."

"It's been such a short time since we last met and you've become so stingy?" Yan Shiba stood up and said, "Fine, fine. An hour is long enough for me to go and see the beautiful Cloud. I'll be going!"

As soon as Yan Shiba finished speaking, she left. She had severe internal injuries and didn't notice that there was someone else in the room.

Su Liang closed the door, and Gu Ling, carrying a squirrel fish as well as bowls and chopsticks, came out. He put everything back in its original place without stealing any food.

Since Gu Ling prepared the fish, he asked Su Liang to help wash the dishes, which Su Liang thought was reasonable.

Once they cleaned up the kitchen together and heated up the water, Su Liang went back to her room to prepare medicine for Yan Shiba.

An hour later, Yan Shiba returned right on time with a worse look on her face, “Damn! Didn’t get to see brother Cloud, and was mistaken as an assassin by an old monk, even got slapped by him!”

“Could you stop bothering Cheng Yun in the future? He is a monk now and it’s not appropriate to be with you.” Su Liang seriously suggested to Yan Shiba.

Yan Shiba giggled and pinched Su Liang’s chin, “My little beauty, if you come with me, I’ll leave him!”

Su Liang rolled her eyes and threw the medicine at Yan Shiba, “Get out!”

Yan Shiba had no intention of staying anyway. She needed to find a place to recuperate. Before leaving, she said to Su Liang, “After I deal with those pests, I’ll continue to help you find your beautiful Gu. Don’t get involved with any other ugly men!”

The night deepened.

Su Liang finished packing her luggage for tomorrow. Seeing Gu Ling still reading in her room, she asked him, “Where will you sleep? Your room has a dead body. If you don’t want to go there, take your bedding and shift to another courtyard. ”

Gu Ling closed the book he was holding, stood up and said, “I’m going to plant a tree.”

Su Liang paused, “What?”

“The tree Xing Yusheng sent.” Gu Ling was already out the door as he finished speaking.

Su Liang then realized what he meant. There was a pomegranate tree lying in the garden, which Xing Yusheng had sent half a month ago. Because “Ning Jing” met with misfortune, no one had taken care of it yet and it had still not been planted. It rained twice in the meantime, the tree should still be alive.

The moonlight was bright, the night breeze cool, and the lake lightly rippled.

Gu Ling had dug a hole for the tree long ago, by the lake. He dug it again and then he and Su Liang together put the tree in and covered it with soil.

Gu Ling walked in front and Su Liang followed behind him. Together, walking around the tree, they compacted the soil.

Looking at Gu Ling’s back, Su Liang suddenly made a sneak attack!

The two were circling the tree, making moves at each other. After several rounds, Su Liang was pushed towards the lake. She almost fell into the water but was caught by Gu Ling.

Taking advantage of the situation, she threw herself into Gu Ling’s arms but spun around just before they touched and pushed him towards the lake.

The phrase “All is fair in war” almost escaped Su Liang’s lips, but she was taken aback seeing Gu Ling truly falling into the water.

“Mighty God, were you planning to take a bath?” Su Liang asked with doubts. Because with Gu Ling’s ability, even if she was successful in her sneak attack, he could have still managed to get back to the shore before falling into the water.

Gu Ling’s head surfaced, his hair soaking wet, he looked at Su Liang with clear and cold eyes and commented on her martial arts, “You’ve progressed.” Su Liang nodded, “You weren’t here, but I kept practicing diligently.” “You may leave.” Gu Ling said.

Su Liang froze for a moment, “You’re not planning on coming back up?” Gu Ling uttered two words, “Taking a bath.”

Su Liang turned around shaking her head and waved without turning back, “I won’t disturb you.”

Walking a few steps ahead, Su Liang stopped, not turning her head, said, “Mighty God, you don’t seem to have any clean clothes to wear after the bath. You didn’t just say you were going to take a bath because I nearly pushed you into the water, did you?”

Hearing the tease in Su Liang’s words, Gu Ling who had already come out from the opposite side looked at her silently and disappeared without a word.

Su Liang didn’t hear any response, and when she turned back, there was no one in the lake.

“I’ve indeed made progress. I’ve won this battle tonight.” Feeling cheerful, Su Liang went back to sleep..

Chapter 213: 213. I don’t believe it.

Early the next day, the three Lin siblings and Xing Yusheng came to send Ning Jing off on her last journey.

Lin Bojun offered to escort Su Liang and her party back to Xunyang City and said that he could immediately ask the emperor for a leave of absence.

Su Liang still refused, saying that she would take care of Ning Jing’s funeral.

“Sister Su, don’t be too sad.” Lin Xueqing’s voice choked, and her eyes were swollen like peaches.

Su Liang’s face was calm, “Don’t worry, I will be back in a few days. But I may not be back in time to drink the wedding wine for you and Young Master Xing.”

Lin Xueqing shook her head with tears in her eyes, not minding this at all. She originally wanted to postpone her wedding because she was upset, but Lin Shuzhi did not agree.

“Miss Su, Master Cheng Yun is here.” Qi Jun reported.

Cheng Yun was his usual self, and when he saw Su Liang, he clasped his hands together and recited a Buddhist chant, “Miss Su, please take care.”

Su Liang let the others sit down, and she went to the courtyard to talk to Cheng Yun.

“Your master is in good health, and he misses you very much. Your second master is still away on his journey.” Su Liang knew the purpose of Cheng Yun’s visit.

Cheng Yun hurriedly thanked her, “Thank you, Miss Su, for informing me. I am relieved now.”

“Will you always stay in Huguo Temple?” Su Liang asked.

Cheng Yun shook his head, “I will return to Ping’an Temple, but the timing will depend on my master’s arrangements.”

“That’s good.” Su Liang said, “I’ll be back in a few days, and I’ll visit you at the temple then.”

Cheng Yun’s eyes were filled with warmth as he sighed, “Miss Ning was a kind and compassionate person, but her fate has come to an end. Miss Su, you must take care of yourself.”

“I will.” Su Liang put her hands together and gently nodded her head.

Cheng Yun took out a Bodhi bracelet and handed it to Su Liang, “These safety beads were given to me by Master Huiming. I hope Miss Su will accept it.” Su Liang took it, put it on her wrist, and thanked him.

Cheng Yun asked to see “Ning Jing” one more time, and Su Liang accompanied him to the mourning hall set up in the front hall of the Su Mansion.

The coffin would be taken away shortly after. It had already been moved from the ice cellar this morning and placed in the mourning hall with ice blocks.

Standing beside the coffin, Cheng Yun recited the scriptures devoutly, praying for “Ning Jing” to pass on peacefully.

Listening quietly, Su Liang stayed until he finished reciting and left.

The Ning Family’s steward and servants came, all dressed in mourning clothes.

The coffin was lifted onto a large carriage and secured with ropes.

The carriage Su Liang would ride in was also covered with black cloth, and the luggage had been put in.

Without being officially married, Su Liang would send “Ning Jing” off as siblings.

As she was preparing to get into the carriage, the Ning Xinxin couple who came yesterday came again, but only stood at a distance. Ning Xinxin was wiping her tears and did not dare to talk to her.

Duanmu Chen and Chang’an came to see her off, but they only exchanged a few pleasantries before leaving.

There were also “Ning Jing’s” colleagues from the Ministry of Revenue, whom Su Liang thanked one by one.

The gate of the Su Mansion was locked from the outside, and Su Liang, dressed in plain clothes, stood beside the carriage and waved to the Lin siblings, “Go back.”

“Sister Su, come back soon.” Lin Xueqing said with red eyes.

Su Liang nodded, got into the carriage, and ordered to set off.

Xing Yusheng originally planned to let Qi Jun go with Su Liang to help with “Ning Jing’s” funeral but was also refused by her.

Other than Su Liang, the rest were all stewards and servants from the Ning Family.

People stood outside the Su Mansion, watching the procession go further and further away. Even when it disappeared from sight, Lin Xueqing continued to wave silently.

Fifth Prince’s Mansion.

Duanmu Che stood in the garden feeding a falcon, and Huang Bo rushed over,

“Master, Miss Su has left the capital with Young Master Ning’s coffin.”

Duanmu Che’s complexion was much better than before, but still pale. He remained silent upon hearing the news.

Huang Bo hesitated for a moment before saying, “Master, you mentioned before that you would send Huang Rui to deliver a message to Master Lin. It’s been some time, and he should be back soon.”

A gloomy light flashed in Duanmu Che’s eyes, “Perhaps he is delayed by something. He has always been reliable. There’s no need to worry too much.” Huang Bo let out a deep sigh, “I hope nothing goes wrong.”

The falcon flew away, and Duanmu Che turned around, “Prepare a carriage. I’m going to the palace to play chess with Father Emperor.”

Huang Bo answered and hurriedly went to prepare the carriage.

When Duanmu Chen received the news that Duanmu Che was playing chess with Emperor Duanmu Yi again, he snorted, “Is he trying to please Father Emperor and compete for the title of crown prince?”

Chang’an nodded, “It seems so. Recently, the Fifth Prince has been visiting the palace frequently. The message from the Imperial Concubine says that the master should also pay more attention and visit the palace more. After all, the emperor once favored the Fifth Prince, and now that he is regaining his health and not causing trouble, what if...”

Duanmu Chen’s eyes narrowed slightly, “I originally thought that after Duanmu Cheng and Duanmu Ao were abolished, there was no other possibility for the position of Crown Prince besides me. But the emperor has not yet established a new crown prince, making it difficult to guess what he is thinking.”

“Now that the Wan Family has been completely abolished and Eldest Prince cannot pose a threat, Master should be careful of the Fifth Prince,” Chang’an said with a serious expression.

Duanmu Chen was silent for a moment, and then picked up the book he had been reading, “No, the more it is like this, the more I have to stay calm. I cannot be impatient or chaotic. As long as the emperor is truly choosing the most suitable heir for Qian Country, I will not lose to the sickly Duanmu Che.”

Seeing that Duanmu Chen had made up his mind not to deliberately please

Duanmu Yi, Chang'an no longer persuades him and mentions another matter,

"Previously, the emperor wanted to select concubines for the Master and the Fifth Prince, but there was a lot of trouble and it was put on hold. It is still unknown what will happen."

Duanmu Chen shook his head indifferently, "When the emperor remembers, he will arrange it."

Seeing Chang'an hesitating, Duanmu Chen snorted softly, "Just say what you want to say."

Chang'an unconsciously lowered his voice, "Although it's not appropriate to talk about this at this time, I was wondering if Ning Jing is gone, would the emperor grant Su Liang to the Master?"

Duanmu Chen was stunned for a moment, "This..."

"If the emperor really has such a plan, it would be a great blessing for the Master," Chang'an said.

Duanmu Chen's face suddenly changed, and he threw the book in his hand at

Chang'an's face, "Shut up!"

Chang'an was somewhat confused, "Doesn't Master like Miss Su?"

Duanmu Chen's eyes narrowed slightly, "I like her, but that doesn't mean I want to marry her, or that I can marry her. Now that you mention it, I also feel that the emperor might pay attention to her marriage, but I have put so much effort into getting along with her and don't want to lose it all in the end. She is a predictable and righteous person, so as long as I don't do anything to provoke her or commit evil, I can trust her character and support for me."

Chang'an frowned, "So Master means that if Master wants to marry her, he will offend her?"

"I don't want to," Duanmu Chen shook his head, "She is very outstanding, even more capable than me. It is best to cooperate with such a person as it is now, but if I marry her, I will have to be cautious of her feelings for the rest of my life. Moreover, she doesn't even like me."

Chang'an asked weakly, "Doesn't Master feel hurt in self-esteem?"

Duanmu Chen looked at him coldly, "No. It's not because Su Liang looks down on me that she doesn't like me, but simply because she doesn't like men like me. There's no need to think too much about it. I don't take matters of the heart too seriously, and I don't want to conquer her. That's the premise of our cooperation. "

Chang'an nodded, "But what if the emperor insists? After all, Miss Su is so capable, and the emperor may think she is suitable to be the Crown Princess."

Duanmu Chen motioned for Chang'an to give him the book back, smiling ambiguously, "Don't worry. Su Liang is a reasonable person. If the emperor does something wrong and I don't, she won't do anything to me."

Seeing the meaningful smile on Duanmu Chen's face, Chang'an shuddered and dared not ask any more questions.

Ever since Gu Ling fell into the water last night, Su Liang had not seen him again and did not know where he had gone.

Watching the towering city walls of the capital gradually shrink in the view, Su Liang lowered the carriage curtain and let out a sigh of relief.

Being constantly in mourning for the past two days has been more tiring than fighting with people. At last, it's over. She would stay in Xunyang City for a while before returning to the capital, and the name "Ning Jing" could disappear from her life. Everyone hopes that she can move forward, and she will do it well.

Regardless of where Gu Ling was at the moment, Su Liang found a comfortable position to sit, and opened an unfinished book.

There would be people replacing the ice cubes along the way. After all, money could turn most problems into minor issues.

During the break, the Ning Family's steward had carefully prepared food and water for Su Liang so she didn't have to worry.

On the first night, they stayed in an inn that had been booked in advance. Su Liang had a separate courtyard.

After the servants left when dinner was served and arranged, Su Liang had just picked up her chopsticks when she saw Gu Ling walk out from the inner room. Apparently, he had arrived earlier than her.

He took off his mask, revealing not his true face, nor "Wen Gu," but another appearance created by the Disguise Technique.

Gu Ling sat down opposite Su Liang, who stared at his face and felt a strange familiarity, but couldn't put her finger on it.

"Who does it look like?" Su Liang unconsciously asked.

Gu Ling replied indifferently with one word, "You."

Su Liang was stunned for a moment, then suddenly realized that it resembled her eyebrows, but not her current appearance, but the appearance of her previous life.

Gu Ling had seen it, because when Su Liang first learned the Disguise Technique, she had disguised herself as her previous life's appearance.

Su Liang looked carefully again, smiled and nodded, "Like my brother."

It was similar to her previous life's appearance, like blood siblings, and the more she looked, the more intimate it seemed.

Of course, it was not feminine, only some similarity in the features, but the face shape and temperament still had quite a cold and majestic male character.

"Do you have a brother?" Gu Ling asked.

Su Liang shook her head, "No biological brother." Cousins and the like didn't count, and they didn't look alike.

Su Liang picked up her chopsticks again, "There are no bowls and chopsticks for you."

Gu Ling took out a long wooden box from his pocket, and from it, he took a pair of chopsticks and a spoon. He then claimed the only bowl of soup, along with the bowl itself.

Su Liang was used to this. When it came to eating, Ning Jing always prioritized himself, at most sharing equally, and occasionally putting himself first.

"Where did you sleep last night?" Su Liang asked.

Gu Ling answered with one word, "Home."

Su Liang nodded, "Oh, then I didn't notice. How are you going to sleep tonight?"

Gu Ling shook his head.

"Not sleeping?" Su Liang asked.

Gu Ling shook her head again, "You don't need to worry about it."

Su Liang coughed lightly, "Then suit yourself. I just wanted to say that if you are going to sleep on the floor in my room, I can fetch the bedding from the carriage."

She had brought a set of bedding from home, of course for herself, and the extra could be given to Gu Ling.

"That's fine," Gu Ling nodded.

"You should restore your identity as soon as possible. Otherwise, it'll always be inconvenient," Su Liang said.

Though he was asked to act as a secret guard, he was not a real one after all, so eating and sleeping were always problems.

After dinner, Su Liang had someone fetch her bedding from the carriage. They laid the original bedding from the inn on the floor for Gu Ling to use.

That night, just as Su Liang was about to sleep, she heard Gu Ling's voice, "You said last time that you'd tell me the story of Water Margin."

Su Liang had already told Gu Ling, intermittently, the stories of Journey to the West and Romance of the Three Kingdoms, and he had even created two illustrated books based on her descriptions. Su Liang had seen them, and they were beautifully made, with lifelike drawings.

"I'm sleepy," Su Liang yawned.

Gu Ling's voice came from the outer room, "Tomorrow."

"Alright then," Su Liang replied. The room went quiet, and she soon fell asleep.

In the following days, Su Liang traveled during the day and stayed in inns at night where Gu Ling would appear and have dinner with her. He would sleep on the floor in her room, and before going to sleep, she would tell him the story of Water Margin, two chapters at a time as agreed upon.

After six days like this, they arrived at Xunyang City.

The news of Ning Jing's death had already reached here, and over a hundred members of the Ning Family were waiting at the city gate.

Su Liang sat in the carriage and heard the sound of crying from outside. She lifted the curtain and saw an old man with white hair, supported by someone else, crying with tears streaming down his face on the coffin.

Su Liang had heard from Gu Ling about his trip to Xunyang City to avenge the real Ning Jing. After turning the previous housekeeper's accomplices into ashes, he sent the wicked housekeeper to jail and promoted the old steward who had taken care of the garden to the new housekeeper. The old man was loyal to the Ning Family and had served the old Master personally.

Su Liang thought it must be him.

The old housekeeper was pulled away as the procession slowly entered the city and stopped at the Ning Family mansion.

Su Liang got out of the carriage and saw a group of people in mourning clothes kneeling down. The old housekeeper wanted to kneel, but she held him up. "Before his death, the young master told me that if he was not around, everything in this family would be up to Miss," the old housekeeper said, wiping away tears.

Su Liang nodded without saying anything and was surrounded by people as she entered the Ning Family mansion.

The Ning Mansion was full of grief. The memorial hall had already been set up, the coffin was carried in, and the funeral would be held the next day.

"This spirit tablet was made by the young master himself when he came back last time. He said that the previous young master had passed away..." The old housekeeper watched as Su Liang offered incense to Ning Jing's spirit tablet.

This spirit tablet had been personally carved by Gu Ling for Ning Jing and had been placed in the Ning Family's memorial hall previously. Now it had been taken out.

The old housekeeper led Su Liang to the living quarters prepared for her. The furnishings were luxurious. She put down her luggage and said she wanted to visit the place where Ning Jing had stayed.

Upon arrival, she asked everyone else to leave, saying that she wanted to sit for a while in the room.

As she closed the door and just sat down, she was not at all surprised to see someone emerge from the inner room.

"What if I resign from my position and stay in Xunyang City to plant and sell tea?" Su Liang suddenly asked.

Gu Ling shook his head, "You can't resign."

Su Liang's medical skills were irreplaceable, and the royal family needed her as the Imperial Physician. As the only female general of Qian Country, she had established great achievements despite her short term. Unless she hid herself, the court would not allow her to leave as she pleased.

Su Liang didn't want to hide because she still had friends, and she wanted to live a normal life. Just like Gu Ling, once she hid, and her identity became suspicious, it would be difficult to live an open and honest life.

Su Liang sighed, "Such a hassle. Let's stick to the original plan, get rid of Duanmu Cheng first, and then consider how to break away. Is Uncle Liang coming soon? Should I let him know that I know who you are?"

"You don't need to worry about him," Gu Ling said.

Su Liang immediately understood, "You'll intercept him so that he won't come directly to me? That's even better."

At dinner time, Su Liang returned to her living quarters.

The dishes were abundant, and the old housekeeper explained that he didn't know her taste, so he prepared a variety.

Su Liang thanked the old housekeeper and, after the servants left, glanced into the inner room but didn't see Gu Ling come out.

"Hey," Su Liang called out to the inner room.

There was no response. She turned to look out the window, and the sky was already dark.

"Has Uncle Liang arrived?" Su Liang frowned, picked up her chopsticks, and decided to eat first.

In a grove on the outskirts of Xunyang City.

The night was deep, and the insects and birds in the forest made lonely sounds.

"Young Master, I knew you wouldn't be in any danger!" Uncle Liang looked excitedly at Gu Ling.

Gu Ling wore a mask and didn't look at him. He tilted his head slightly upwards and looked at the full moon through the gaps in the leaves, "Uncle Liang, you should know why I'm doing this."

Uncle Liang's face stiffened, "Yes...it's all this old servant's fault for not protecting Master's identity. Now that things have come to this, Master can no longer use Ning Jing's identity. Just go back to Liang Country with this old servant! When King Yue sees you again, he will definitely be very happy!"

Gu Ling shook his head, "I will meet him, but not now."

Uncle Liang furrowed his brows in confusion, "Has Master fallen for Su Liang?"

Does she know Master's true identity? Why is Master still around her?"

"If I weren't here, how would you have found me?" Gu Ling asked coldly.

Uncle Liang was taken aback, "Master purposely waited here for this old servant? Then, Su Liang doesn't know Master's secret?"

"Hmm." Gu Ling nodded, "The identity of Ning Jing involves many people.

Sooner or later, I will have to abandon it. I don't want to harm others."

Uncle Liang nodded repeatedly, "This old servant understands. Master is always kind-hearted. After all, it's a fake identity. Abandoning it earlier is better anyway."

"I still have things to do. Go back and tell my grandfather to help me get Qian Country's royal family to cancel the manhunt for me and pardon my crimes," Gu Ling said indifferently.

Uncle Liang's face was filled with surprise, "This..."

Gu Ling took out his mother's hairpin and jade token with the characters

'Chang Ning' engraved on it from his bosom, "These are my mother's relics. Bring them to my grandfather."

Uncle Liang took them and sighed deeply, "Master doesn't trust King Yue?"

"I only met him once when I was young, so there's no basis for trust or distrust." Gu Ling shook his head. "If he wants me to go to Liang Country, let him do that thing first."

"Alright, this old servant will tell the King. He will definitely help the Master. Once the royal family of Qian Country stops the manhunt for Master, Master can live a free and aboveboard life!" Uncle Liang put away the hairpin and jade token, "Now that Master has nothing to do with Su Liang, where should this old servant find Master next time?"

Gu Ling shook his head slightly, "Once the matter is settled, I will come and find you. If it doesn't work out, there's no need to meet again." His figure disappeared as soon as his words fell.

Uncle Liang chased after him for a few steps but couldn't catch up. After a moment of musing, he also left quickly.

Su Liang heard a movement at the back window and soon saw Gu Ling coming out of the inner room.

"Did Uncle Liang come?" Su Liang asked.

Gu Ling nodded, "He left."

"You didn't eat, how will you have dinner?" Su Liang asked.

"I want to eat small wontons." Gu Ling said.

Su Liang nodded, "Oh, you can make them yourself, no need to make my share."

Gu Ling didn't speak but stood there, watching Su Liang quietly.

Su Liang rubbed her forehead, "Even if you keep looking at me, I won't make it for you. It's not like I didn't let you have dinner."

“Why don’t you go to a restaurant? I’ve already had dinner, and suddenly making a late-night snack requires getting ingredients, which seems very strange. ”

“Great God, don’t act like I owe you,”

“Fine, fine, you win. We did agree that I would be responsible for cooking, so I’ll do it!”

Su Liang got up and went out in annoyance, called a servant from the yard, and ordered the necessary ingredients.

“I want to make some late-night snacks that Ning Jing likes, so I can offer them to him,” Su Liang whispered.

The servant hurried to prepare the ingredients.

It wasn’t long before the old housekeeper personally brought a lot of ingredients and asked Su Liang if she needed a servant to help.

Su Liang politely declined.

As the old housekeeper left, he kept sighing, what a nice girl, pity his young master isn’t so lucky...

The kitchen was filled with an enticing aroma, and Su Liang filled a bowl with steaming hot small wontons, “This is for Ning Jing.”

The rest were for Gu Ling.

When Su Liang took the bowl of wontons to the Memorial Hall and offered them, burned some paper money, and came back, Gu Ling had already finished his late-night snack, and was cleaning up the tableware. “Great God, I have an idea.” Su Liang looked serious.

Gu Ling nodded, “Go ahead.”

“It’s really inconvenient now, with me in the open and you hidden. I still have to worry about you eating and sleeping, but it’s easy for you to arouse suspicion if you appear in my life with a different identity. I just thought of a great solution.” Su Liang’s eyes were bright, “You can disguise yourself as a girl! Nobody would suspect Ning Jing is alive, let alone suspect you are Gu Ling. ”

As Gu Ling said nothing, Su Liang smiled, “Great God, don’t you always like to experience things you haven’t done before? You want to be a woman in your next life, right? You don’t have to wait for the next life, you can try it now.”

Gu Ling shook his head and said one word, “No.”

Su Liang tried to persuade him again, “Don’t worry, I won’t laugh at you. I swear I’ll keep your secret and won’t tell your future daughter-in-law and children! I swear!”

Gu Ling got up, “I don’t believe you.” The words fell as he entered the inner room.

Su Liang followed in, only to see the back window open and Gu Ling’s figure was gone.

With a regretful expression, Su Liang said, "It's a pity not to wear a skirt when you're so beautiful.."

Chapter 214: 214. No need, thank you

On the day of the funeral, both the Wan and Yang families sent representatives.

The ones who came from the Wan family were Wan Hui's husband, Lu Yu, and her younger brother, the fifth son of the Wan family, Wan Li.

Su Liang had met Wan Li before when she and Gu Ling, who was disguised as Ning Jing, went to Qingyang City to visit Zhengzheng.

"Miss Su, please accept my condolences," said Wan Li as he offered the funeral gift.

Su Liang bowed slightly in return.

She turned to Lu Yu, asking, "How are Sister Wan and Zhengzheng?"

Lu Yu took a deep sigh, "We haven't told Zhengzheng about Ning Jing's death yet. He only thinks about when he can see you again."

"We will visit in a few days," Su Liang said.

The person who came from Yang family was Yang Yu's attendant, Ya Yan, whose real identity was Nian Jincheng.

Yang Yu had wanted to come to see Su Liang but was persuaded otherwise by Nian Jincheng.

Nian Jincheng said that there was important information from Yang Yu for Su Liang, so the two of them went into a room alone to talk.

"It's not him, is it?" Nian Jincheng asked, getting straight to the point.

He no longer being a general, he had lost some weight, and the appearance he was disguised as was the one that Su Liang had seen before. His fake voice was also very practiced.

Apart from his height, from head to toe, it was already quite hard to see any trace of the stern and strict Nian Jincheng that he had been before.

Even though he had already guessed, it wasn't until Su Liang nodded that Nian Jincheng finally breathed a sigh of relief, "I knew he wouldn't be in any danger." After that, Nian Jincheng asked about what had happened.

After Su Liang gave a brief explanation, Nian Jincheng frowned, "I didn't expect Uncle Liang to be unreliable. But it's better this way, as he can't live with that identity forever. Where is he now? What are his plans for the future?"

"He's here, but I don't know where at the moment. Maybe you'll meet him soon," Su Liang said. "As for the future, you should ask him. How is Yang Yu?"

"She's doing well. She was very worried about you when she heard the terrible news and cried for a while. She originally wanted to come in person, but I finally managed

to persuade her otherwise. She also said that she would accompany you if you return to the capital city," said Nian Jincheng with a slight sigh.

He knew the real Ning Jing was already dead, and throughout Yang Yu's acquaintance with "Ning Jing," it had been a false character. Now, that identity was supposed to vanish, as if there had been no actual death.

But these things absolutely must not be said.

"Tell her I'm fine," Su Liang shook her head. "What about you? How are you adjusting to your current situation?"

Nian Jincheng nodded, "I'm doing well." After hesitating for a moment, he began, "Yang Yu and I want to get married this year. You probably don't have any objections, right?"

Su Liang was a little surprised, but she soon laughed, "I'm a bit surprised, but it is still not entirely unexpected. It's perfectly normal for an attractive couple to fall in love over time."

The next moment, she heard Nian Jincheng counter with, "And what about you and that certain someone?"

With a calm tone, Su Liang replied, "Oh, it's just that he is not normal."

Nian Jincheng felt quite emotional, "I never thought that there would be a person who could be so compatible with me, always wanting to be by her side, and thinking about her every day when we're apart, until I met Xiaoyu."

With a deep and emotional voice, Su Liang said, "And I thought you and that certain someone were soulmates. Does he still have a place in your heart now?" Nian Jincheng decisively shook his head, "He belongs to you now."

Su Liang: ... Very good, this was exactly the Nian Jincheng she had hoped for. Life is short, and it's not only a waste of time but also self-inflicted misery to give one's heart and soul to someone who isn't worth it.

At that time in the capital city, Su Liang had noticed that there was something going on between Yang Yu and Nian Jincheng, both of them being unfortunate souls who lacked love and yearned for family. With their compatible personalities and being by each other's side day and night, it was only natural for feelings to develop over time without any obstruction.

They didn't talk for very long, as they needed to go out for the funeral procession.

As the funeral was over, it began to rain heavily in Xunyang City.

Ning Jing's spirit tablet was placed back in the ancestral hall, alongside his mother and maternal grandfather.

The guests who had traveled from afar had not yet left, and because of the bad weather, Su Liang asked them to stay at the mansion and told the servants to take care of them. She also instructed the steward to prepare some high-quality tea leaves as gifts for the Wan and Yang families.

Later in the afternoon, Su Liang wrote two letters, one to Wan Hui and one to Yang Yu, telling them that she was fine and they didn't need to be worried. At dinner, Su Liang personally received Lu Yu

and Wan Li but did not invite Nian Jincheng, choosing instead to send some food and wine to the place where he was staying.

Lu Yu was a very quiet person, and although Wan Li was young and originally quite talkative, he didn't dare to say much at such a time. Thus, the meal was consumed in silence. Su Liang, however, took the initiative to ask about the health of the head of the Wan family and inquire about their business. After they put down their chopsticks, Su Liang handed the letter she wrote for

Wan Hui to Lu Yu.

"We will return early tomorrow morning, as Hui'er is still waiting at home," Lu Yu said.

Su Liang nodded, "Alright. I expect to return to the capital city later in July at the latest."

Watching Su Liang leave, Wan Li sighed, "She is truly so strong."

Lu Yu nodded, "Yes, she and Ning Jing, though not married, had a relationship like that of close siblings and best friends. They had very close feelings, and the pain must have been hidden deep in her heart."

Su Liang knew that Gu Ling was with Nian Jincheng, so she didn't go to see him and went straight back to her living quarters.

"You want to be recognized by the Liang family?" Nian Jincheng was surprised.

Gu Ling reached out and took away the only bowl of soup in front of Nian

Jincheng, then took out his own chopsticks and spoon and began to taste it. Nian Jincheng: .

It was only after Gu Ling had finished half a bowl of hot soup that he nodded slightly, "Yes."

Nian Jincheng was speechless, "You're still the same, huh? Talking to you is exhausting. Even if King Yuezhen does ask the Royal Family of Qian Kingdom to forgive you, you still won't be able to reach out to Su Liang publicly, right?"

There was a difference between the Royal Family announcing that they would no longer pursue Gu Ling and them wholeheartedly accepting him as a person.

Even if Gu Ling could go wherever he wanted in the future, he and Su Liang, in the eyes of the world, would have no interaction.

If he suddenly appeared and wanted to marry Su Liang or be friends with her, people would certainly feel that there was something fishy going on.

"You don't have to worry about it," Gu Ling said indifferently.

Nian Jincheng snorted, "Right, my brain isn't enough to handle this, so I can only take care of my own affairs and not add trouble to you guys. Now that you have Su Liang looking after you, there's nothing for me to worry about."

Gu Ling quietly sipped his soup, not disputing the claim that Su Liang was

"taking care of him."

Once his doubts had been addressed, Nian Jincheng spoke again with a hint of laughter barely hidden at the corner of his mouth, "Let me tell you some good news."

Gu Ling glanced at Nian Jincheng, "You're marrying into the Yang family?" Nian Jincheng was taken aback, "How did you know?"

"Besides that, there isn't any other good news worth mentioning," Gu Ling said.

Nian Jincheng's mouth twitched slightly, even though it was the truth, it still made him want to punch Gu Ling...

However, Nian Jincheng really wanted to share his happiness with his best friend, "Xiaoyu is an upright and kindhearted person. Although she appears fragile, she is much stronger, smarter, and more capable than me." He sincerely praised Xiaoyu and then changed the subject, "But she admires me a lot because I have great martial arts skills, and she thinks I'm impressive."

Gu Ling looked at Nian Jincheng, whose eyes and eyebrows were brimming with joy, and did not sarcastically retort. Instead, he simply said, "Protect her well."

Nian Jincheng nodded with a serious expression, "I will."

He shared some common experiences with Yang Yu, understanding and appreciating each other, and he cherished this hard-won happiness. "And what about you and Su Liang?" Nian Jincheng asked Gu Ling.

Gu Ling shook his head, "Don't worry about it."

Nian Jincheng sighed, "Never mind. Both of you are capable and determined, I shouldn't meddle. We plan to get married before Mid-Autumn Festival, so make sure you come to our wedding."

"Alright." Gu Ling nodded.

The night deepened, and the rain continued to fall.

As soon as Su Liang closed a book, a dark figure moved past the window, and Gu Ling sat across the room.

Su Liang had a study room next to her bedroom. She claimed it was to rest when she tired from reading, but it was actually for Gu Ling to stay there.

At that moment, the two sat in the study room. Su Liang mentioned Nian Jincheng and Yang Yu's upcoming marriage and jokingly said,

"Congratulations, you've successfully sold off your brother."

Gu Ling nodded, "He has nothing, it's a relief that Yang Yu doesn't despise him."

Su Liang agreed, "It's all about fate."

They then talked about the Ning Family's business.

Su Liang planned to study it thoroughly before deciding how to manage it. Gu Ling claimed no interest and left Su Liang to it. He wished that Su Liang would have more time to teach him medical skills and tell him stories.

The rain stopped in the middle of the night.

Early the next morning, after bidding farewell to her guests, Su Liang went to the front hall to meet the Ning Family's stewards and listen to their business reports.

With no shortage of money, Su Liang was not particularly interested in expanding the business and making more money, but she did have some interest in tea. She planned to study the tea business thoroughly and visit the Ning Family's tea mountains later on, picking and drying the tea to experience it all firsthand.

Due to "Ning Jing"'s funeral, all the major stewards from other places had gathered in Xunyang City to pay their respects. The reports were not yet finished by the time it was approaching noon.

Su Liang listened and took note of the names, features, and businesses of each person without providing any opinions.

The housekeeper appeared in the hall with an anxious expression, "Miss, someone is here from the Governor's Mansion!"

Su Liang wasn't sure what was going on, so she had the person let in.

As she was not only the new Ning Family head but also a military commander, the visitor came in and knelt down to kowtow, "General Su, my mistress is experiencing a difficult childbirth, please save her life!"

Su Liang was taken aback, not expecting it to be a request for medical help.

Without asking any further questions, she grabbed her medicine box, mounted a horse, and hurried to the Governor's Mansion.

The old housekeeper stood at the door, watching Su Liang leave with admiration, "Miss not only has great skills but is also so kind-hearted."

An older steward asked the housekeeper, "My son has been suffering from a strange illness and hasn't recovered in more than half a year. Can we ask the family head to help...?"

The old housekeeper nodded, "Sure, when Miss comes back, I'll ask her."

It took Su Liang four hours to return from outside. She looked exhausted and told the old housekeeper that she would deal with the other stewards the next day.

"How did it go at the Governor's Mansion...?" the old housekeeper asked. "The mother and child are safe and sound." Su Liang handed the reins to a servant and carried her medicine box inside. Seeing the old housekeeper still following her, she stopped and asked if there was anything else.

The old housekeeper brought up the older steward's son who had been suffering from a mysterious illness and had not recovered. He asked if Su Liang could help.

"Is the child in the city?" Su Liang asked.

The old housekeeper hesitated, then hastily replied, "Yes! Yes, he is!"

"Bring him here tomorrow. If it's urgent, you can bring him today." Su Liang said, "If it's not convenient, I can come over."

"Miss doesn't need to go there, we can have him bring his son here." The old housekeeper expressed his gratitude, "Thank you, Miss! "

“No need for thanks.” As Su Liang finished speaking, she strode forward.

At night time, the old steward’s child was brought before Su Liang.

After taking his pulse, Su Liang asked, “How many children do you have?”

The old steward thought that Su Liang meant his son was beyond help and that he should give up. His face turned pale, and he collapsed on the floor.

The old housekeeper sighed as someone helped the old steward up. He only had that one son, born to him late in life.

“Don’t panic, there’s still hope,” Su Liang said calmly. “Someone has been poisoning him all this time. If it continues, he will truly be beyond saving. I can save him, but you need to think carefully about who in your family would want to harm him.”

The old steward was overjoyed upon hearing Su Liang say there was still hope. After listening to her words, his eyes widened, and he trembled with rage, his face turning ashen.

Su Liang first applied acupuncture to expel the poison, then fed the patient an antidote she had made. She prescribed a course of treatment and told the old steward to take his son home and return the next day. Continuous acupuncture would help him recover faster.

The old steward kowtowed in gratitude, and Su Liang couldn’t dissuade him.

Once the people were finally sent away, she changed her clothes, washed up, and had dinner served in her study.

The table in the study was further inside, so people outside wouldn’t see their silhouettes reflected on the window.

Su Liang heard the door close, and Gu Ling was already seated in his usual spot.

Without speaking, the two shared their dinner. Halfway through, Gu Ling asked about the two people Su Liang had saved that day.

“It was actually three people,” Su Liang said. The childbirth was very dangerous, and it almost took both the mother and child’s lives.

Gu Ling wanted to hear how Su Liang saved them, but he had no opportunity to witness childbirth firsthand.

“If you don’t mind the psychological impact, you can watch your wife give birth in the future.” Su Liang then went on to talk about the strange disease affecting the old steward’s son.

“He only has this one child, so it’s possible that his nephews want to seize his property and poison his only son.” Su Liang guessed this because of her acquaintance with the veteran General Peng Wei in Xuanbei City.

She had promised Peng Wei to treat his son, and it might not be long before Peng’s family sent him to her.

After dinner, they didn't need to wash the dishes themselves. Gu Ling collected them and Su Liang left them under the eaves for the servants to pick up.

As the night deepened, Su Liang told Gu Ling two more stories from the Water Margin. As she spoke, Gu Ling sketched and wrote.

When she finished, yawning and preparing to sleep, Gu Ling handed her a piece of paper.

Su Liang took a look, nodding repeatedly, "Incredible, you have such great skill, your drawing of Lu Zhishen uprooting the willows is so lively. If you have time someday, could you paint a portrait of me?"

Feeling that her appearance was different in the mirror and on paper, Su Liang was curious about what it would look like when painted. Gu Ling agreed, "Fine, but I need to charge."

Su Liang coughed lightly, "How much for a painting?"

Gu Ling's lips barely moved, "One purse."

Su Liang nodded, "Deal, I'll buy one for you tomorrow."

Gu Ling shook his head, "Make it yourself."

Su Liang stood up to leave, "In that case, I don't want it. Thank you." She didn't like embroidery and wasn't skilled at it. Her own purses were gifts from Yang Yu and she didn't want to make them herself..

Chapter 215: 215. Rabbit Purse

Early in the morning, Su Liang went for a run in the garden to practice martial arts. By the time the sun rose, she was already bathed, dressed, and tidied up.

The old housekeeper delivered breakfast to her in person, a proud and appreciative expression in his eyes as he looked at her. He had no doubts that Ning Family would only continue to prosper under this talented, diligent, honest, and kind lady of the house.

But the more he thought this way, the bigger his regret became. He sincerely wished that Ning Jing was still alive.

"The mistress is a very busy person and should not be left unattended. An old servant like me has a granddaughter who is fourteen this year. She may be a bit clumsy, but she can do all the chores, like washing clothes and cooking. She's also very obedient. If the mistress doesn't mind..." The old housekeeper phrased his words carefully as he proposed getting Su Liang a maid.

Although he was a servant, his family was wealthy compared to the common people and didn't need to serve others for a living. He really appreciated Su

Liang and was considering a reliable maid for her, as he didn't trust outsiders.

While Su Liang was deep in thought and somewhat distracted, she still caught the gist of what he was saying and quickly replied, "There's no need for that. I will return to the capital city soon. I can't stay here for long."

“Once you’re back in the capital city, you’ll need someone to serve you even more.” The old housekeeper stated with great emphasis.

Su Liang shook her head, “There’s really no need. If necessary, I will find one on my own.”

The old housekeeper seemed slightly disappointed, but he didn’t push further.

After all the servants had left, Su Liang went to call Gu Ling from next door. Seeing that he wasn’t there, she didn’t press further. After finishing her breakfast, she resumed her unfinished tasks from yesterday in the front hall.

The eldest son of the governor’s family came to deliver some thank-you gifts mid-morning, kneeling at Su Liang’s feet as soon as he saw her. His wife had been the one who was having a difficult childbirth the day before.

Su Liang asked about the condition of the mother and child and gave them some advice for care.

She accepted the expensive thank-you gifts without refusal, along with an invitation card for the child’s baptism ceremony with gilded characters on it.

It crossed Su Liang’s mind that there would certainly be many guests at the ceremony. Her attendance would garner as much attention as a panda at the zoo, so she graciously declined the invitation, stating she had a commitment to visit a friend outside the city that day.

Once the guests had left, all the stewards who had been waiting on the side throughout the whole process felt a big difference between the current Ning Family and the previous one.

Not until noon did the stewards finish their first round of reports for the day.

Looking at the steward group, which comprised mostly elderly men, Su Liang felt that Ning Family’s business management needed fresh blood. While she wanted to understand the full process of the tea trade, she didn’t have the time and energy to manage such a massive operation herself.

If only there was a “Family Owner’s Assistant”...she thought. She would likely be able to relax a great deal if she could find a capable person to oversee Ning Family’s business for her.

So, she formed a preliminary plan during lunch.

In the afternoon, she summoned all the senior stewards for a meeting, announcing her plans to “recruit” a head housekeeper.

The reason she used the word “recruit” was that she was not only considering promoting someone from within the Ning Family, but also looking for external candidates.

Because Su Liang is amiable, a steward dared to suggest that bringing in someone from outside to fill such an important position was risky.

“I’ve just taken over the Ning Family’s business and have only recently met you all. There isn’t much of an understanding between us yet.” Su Liang explained calmly, “I will be personally selecting the head housekeeper. The position will be given to the most capable candidate. If any of you are interested, feel free to come find me. If someone from outside the Ning Family applies, I will look into their background thoroughly.”

That day, Ning Family made a splash in the city by posting a unique recruitment notice in the most conspicuous location, immediately causing a sensation among the public.

The term “Head Housekeeper” shocked many, as no one had ever openly recruited outsiders for such an important position before.

The recruitment notice itself was also unusual: competency was key, and if you were brave enough, they wanted you to come forward.

At first glance, people found it amusing and then felt that Su Liang definitely was a person of courage. Otherwise, she wouldn’t have done something like this.

Su Liang didn’t see Gu Ling again until dinner time.

She had already put her thoughts about the painting she longed for and then gave up on last night behind her. She asked Gu Ling where he had been during the day.

“Gathering herbs,” said Gu Ling.

Su Liang was startled and only then noticed a basket on the ground nearby. She put down her chopsticks and went to look. There were quite a few medicinal herbs in it, among which two were quite rare.

“Great God, you really are one to make work where there is none,” Su Liang said laughing as she sat back down to continue her meal.

This was complimenting Gu Ling. Even though there weren’t any mandatory tasks to be done, he always found things that piqued his interest, made his days fulfilling, a rather remarkable ability, indeed.

“Did you hear about me recruiting a Head Housekeeper today?” Su Liang asked, “What if you applied with a different identity? I believe you would be competent as my assistant.”

Gu Ling shook his head and straightforwardly refused, “Not interested.” Too much to do, and none of it was what he enjoyed.

“Then never mind,” Su Liang only asked casually. When she planned to recruit people, she hadn’t considered Gu Ling at all.

After dinner, while Gu Ling was processing the collected herbs, Su Liang was talking to the old housekeeper in the courtyard.

“It was by his good-for-nothing brother that his son was poisoned in hopes of adopting his son and inheriting the fortune his brother earned all his life,” The old housekeeper sighed repeatedly as he revealed the truth behind the poisoning of the servant’s son that Su Liang saved yesterday, “He supported his brother’s family, never thought he was raising an ungrateful wolf. It’s really heartbreaking!”

This was in line with Su Liang’s speculation, and similar to the plight of Peng Wei and his son.

Fair people are often bullied, some would forsake kinship and morality for wealth and power, and commit all sorts of evil.

The old steward had already found evidence, reported it to the authorities, and thrown his brother's family out.

After discussing this matter, the old housekeeper asked about Su Liang's recruitment plans. He mentioned someone, "The Master always praised him as a business talent during his lifetime. If it hadn't been for Miss and Ning Feng who tricked her into marrying into the Ning family, it should have been him. Miss married Ning Feng, and the Master tried his best to stay, but he still left, I don't know where he went."

The man the old housekeeper spoke of was surnamed Song, with a single name Qi. His ancestors were also prominent, but by his generation, he had already declined. He liked tea and came to the Ning family in Xunyang City to find a job. The old Master Ning discovered that he was a talent and cultivated him intensively. He wanted him to marry into the family as a son-in-law. But Ning Qingqing turned her nose up at Song Qi for his ordinary appearance and became enamored with the ambitious and handsome Ning Feng instead, leading to a disaster.

Su Liang became interested upon hearing this, "Do you know where this Song Qi is now?"

The old housekeeper shook his head, "He left for a distant place, and there has been no news for many years, but servant remembers, his old home is in the south. If the young lady is interested, should I send someone to find him?"

Su Liang nodded immediately, "Since it is someone that Grandfather Ning valued, he must be quite good. Go and find him. But whether he would still be willing to return to the Ning family, whether he still has his abilities and ambitions from his younger days, all depend on the circumstances. Just because he had a relationship with the Ning family in the past, doesn't mean that I would definitely hire him."

The old housekeeper repeatedly nodded, "Of course."

After the old housekeeper left, Su Liang returned to the study, where Gu Ling had already cleaned up the medicinal herbs he had gathered for the day. Hearing the name Song Qi, Gu Ling commented, "I know him."

Su Liang was very surprised, "Do you know him?"

Gu Ling nodded, "Sort of. I saved him once."

Su Liang blinked her eyes, "The kind with a blackened face? You've saved quite a lot, tell me about Song Qi?"

"Right now, he should be helping Master Lin grow oranges," said Gu Ling.

Su Liang rubbed her forehead, "How does it involve Lianshun now? That's right, they mentioned Song's family was in the south."

Gu Ling explained that he had secretly traveled to the southern part of Qian Country when he was thirteen. It was in the fall, and Lin's Orchard was quite famous. He went to pick oranges and noticed a man whose face was darkened by an ill omen, so he watched him for two days.

"It was Ning Feng who hired someone to kill him," Gu Ling said.

Of course, Gu Ling saved Song Qi by a lucky chance, but Song Qi did not know about it. At that time, Gu Ling only heard his name.

“Great God, confess honestly, didn’t you sneak into the Lin’s Family to steal oranges?” Su Liang asked with a smirk.

Gu Ling nodded, admitting it straight away.

However, Su Liang found it hard to picture a thirteen-year-old Gu Ling sneaking into the Orange Garden, sitting in a tree and stealing oranges. Because he’s so aloof now, she could only compare it to the Monkey King stealing peaches...

“Were you very lively when you were 13?” Su Liang asked curiously.

Gu Ling shook his head. “No.”

Su Liang chuckled, “Unless you paint me a picture of you stealing oranges in the orange garden of the Lin Ershan’s Home at 13, I’ll just imagine you infiltrating the peach garden like the Monkey King!”

As she finished speaking, Su Liang couldn’t help laughing at the mental image of Gu Ling changing into the Monkey King. The thought was amusing.

Gu Ling squinted slightly, looking at Su Liang who was laughing at him, he suddenly raised his hand and flicked at her forehead.

Su Liang didn’t dodge in time and was flicked in the forehead. It didn’t hurt, but she was speechless, “Great God, are you piqued?” Gu Ling looked indifferent, “Don’t dream about getting my painting.” Su Liang huffed softly, “I won’t tell you stories in the future.”

“That was agreed upon earlier, don’t break your word.” Gu Ling said.

Su Liang massaged her forehead. Indeed, Gu Ling was someone who liked to clarify things, especially between them. Every time he wanted Su Liang to do something, he always got her explicit promise.

And once Su Liang committed to something, she never went back on her word.

Su Liang stopped joking, and said seriously, “I’ll tell Yu Bo tomorrow where Song Qi is, and have him send someone over to ask. It won’t be considered as stealing the talents from under Lin Shun’s nose. It all depends on Song Qi’s own wishes. If he still loves tea and is willing to come back, the Ning Family will gladly welcome him. If not, then it’s okay.”

That night, Su Liang told the story of “Song Jiang’s Reluctance to Kill” from the Water Margin, and Gu Ling drew another painting.

After Su Liang complimented him, she saw a new purse hanging on Gu Ling’s side.

“Bought it today? It looks pretty good,” Su Liang said. The style was simple, the color scheme was very unique, and there was an herb outlined with silk thread on it.

Gu Ling shook his head, “I made it myself.”

Su Liang expressed her surprise. She knew Gu Ling could sew because he made his own underwear, and the rest were prepared by Yang Yu when he sent new clothes for Su Liang, so he almost never bought from outside.

But Gu Ling making his own purse was a first. Su Liang gave him a thumbs up, "Not bad, it's much better than mine." "Do you want it?" Gu Ling asked Su Liang.

Su Liang immediately countered, "What do you want in exchange?" "Tell me two more stories today." Gu Ling put forward his demand.

Su Liang smiled, "Deal!"

It was late, and after telling Gu Ling two more stories, Su Liang yawned and went back to her room. Before going to bed, Su Liang was thinking that Gu Ling might be sewing in the next room.

"Gu Ling is indeed an oddball." Su Liang muttered to herself and went into the dreamland with closed eyes.

The next morning, Gu Ling disappeared again, but Su Liang didn't bother about it.

When she saw the old steward again, Su Liang said she had a friend called Lin Shun, who had mentioned that the steward of his family's orchard had once worked for the Ning Family.

The old steward's eyes lit up, "It must be Song Qi!"

"At that time in the capital, I was with Ning Jing, and Master Lin mentioned it to Ning Jing, I just overheard, but didn't pay much attention," Su Liang said.

"In that case, I will have someone look for him today and see if he wants to come back," the old steward affirmed it was Song Qi.

That day, several senior stewards of the Ning Family came to see Su Liang to vie for the position of the head housekeeper.

Su Liang asked them some questions and was not satisfied. The head housekeeper needed to have a sense of the bigger picture, have his own ideas about the future development of the Ning family, as well as possess enough boldness.

Although the Ning Family's recruitment notice caused a lot of discussion, no outsider came to apply for a while.

However, the incident of Su Liang saving the governor's wife was already known to everyone.

That day, someone came to the door asking for medical treatment.

When faced with the situation of healing and saving people, she couldn't refuse.

So, an unusual sight appeared in Xunyang City.

The recent martial arts champion, newly appointed imperial physician and military commander, the new family head of the Ning Family, Su Liang, set up a temporary clinic in the Ning Family's home and started to practice medicine.

No matter their background, if a patient came to the door, someone from the Ning Family would welcome them.

For a while, Su Liang was praised by everyone, and there was a continuous stream of people coming to seek medical treatment.

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When it comes to saving lives, one would not turn them away,

Thus, a strange sight appeared in Xunyang City.

The current martial arts champion, newly appointed imperial physician and military commander, the new head of the Ning Family, Su Liang, set up a temporary clinic in the Ning family's house and started practicing medicine.

No matter their status, when a patient sought help, they will be received by the Ning Family.

In no time, Su Liang was praised by everyone, and the stream of people seeking medical treatment was never-ending..

Chapter 216: 216. Zhengzheng wants to eat peach slices

Although she found it overly adorable and not quite in line with her temperament, Su Liang put on the new purse the next day.

Gu Ling was still home during breakfast that day.

Su Liang had the servants set breakfast in the study. After they left, she entered the room, and Gu Ling walked out from behind a screen. His gaze shifted downward and fell on Su Liang's delicate waist.

As she moved lightly, the little rabbit on the purse gently swayed, hopping vividly and cheerfully.

Su Liang didn't notice Ning Jing's gaze, and while she scooped half of the porridge into a small bowl for him, she said, "I told the people at the Governor's Mansion that I won't be attending their

feast today because I'm going out of town to visit friends. It would seem rude if I stayed home without going out."

"There's a Lingyin Temple outside the city," Gu Ling took the porridge handed over by Su Liang and sat down.

Su Liang nodded, "Then let's go visit the high monk at Lingyin Temple!"

After breakfast, the elderly housekeeper said that a long queue had formed outside again, all of whom were seeking medical treatment.

Su Liang frowned, "Just tell them I've gone out of town and ask them to come back another day."

The old housekeeper nodded, "That's fine. In my opinion, none of the illnesses are too urgent, most are here out of admiration."

Su Liang knew that most of the patients she treated yesterday were suffering from common minor ailments. Xunyang City was a major trading city with many doctors practicing medicine.

If there were any truly urgent cases, they wouldn't be waiting in line for Su Liang's help.

Hearing that Su Liang was indeed going out of town, the old housekeeper wanted to prepare a carriage. Su Liang declined, saying she would ride a horse to the Lingyin Temple.

When the old housekeeper proposed assigning two attendants, Su Liang also refused, so he could only comply with her wishes.

Su Liang, dressed in men's clothes without disguise, rode a horse out of the back door of Ning Mansion alone. The old housekeeper pointed out the direction to Lingyin Temple from afar, telling her how to get there.

"Don't worry, I'll be back before nightfall." Su Liang said, then urged her horse to leave through the back alley.

It wasn't until her figure disappeared from view that the old housekeeper returned to the front gate and sent away those seeking medical treatment.

As Su Liang went on her way, she leisurely enjoyed the scenery, not moving too quickly.

During midsummer, as she headed toward the outskirts of the city, the lush green trees and beautiful flowers seemed even more vibrant. Brilliant sunlight filtered through the gaps of the leaves, casting golden speckles while the sounds of insects and birdsong filled the air.

After passing through a dense forest, she arrived at the foot of the mountain where Lingyin Temple was situated.

The old housekeeper said that the temple was originally a small shrine, which had been expanded with funding from Ning's grandfather during his lifetime. A bluestone path leading up the mountain was also built, which even carriages could traverse.

Yesterday was June 15th. Today, there were fewer visitors to Lingyin Temple, so Su Liang encountered no difficulties riding her horse up the mountain path. Along the way, she spotted a little rabbit running through the grass and instinctively glanced down at her purse, finding it cuter and cuter.

Great God appeared cold on the outside but was actually still childlike... Su Liang thought.

She didn't see Gu Ling appear until she dismounted outside Lingyin Temple.

Su Liang didn't know where he was nor did she arrange to meet him there. She thought it felt nice to go out for a walk and clear her mind.

After tying up her horse, she entered Lingyin Temple. The scent of incense filled the air, and the Buddha statues were dignified.

Su Liang paid her respects at the front hall, praying for the safety of her friends and family, then moved on to see the scenery elsewhere in the temple.

Along the way, she heard people mentioning a peach forest in the back mountain, and her interest was piqued. It wasn't the season for peach blossoms, but the peaches should be ripe.

The peach forest belonged to Lingyin Temple and was a variety of famous premium peaches Ning's grandfather had bought from the south years ago. In recent days the peaches had ripened, and visitors to the temple could receive a peach soaked in Buddha's scent to take home, while people from nearby Xunyang City came specifically to obtain one for their offerings.

As Su Liang approached, she saw the alluring pink peaches hanging on the treetops over the courtyard wall.

However, at this moment, the visitors were being held outside, lining up, and not allowed in yet.

Standing at the end of the queue, Su Liang asked the old lady in front of her, "Is it because there are too many people, and we have to wait for those inside to come out before we can go in?"

Without turning around, the old lady explained, "Every year, the temple would pick the best peaches and send them to the Ning family as a token of gratitude. It's a shame that the young master of the Ning family has passed away, but his cousin, General Su, is still in the city. Today, the temple is preparing to send fruit to General Su. After their selection, they will allow us to enter."

Su Liang raised her eyebrows, so it turned out that they were currently preparing to send her peaches? How coincidental.

However, Su Liang was thinking about how to get in and have a look around since she had already set her eyes on one of the peaches and wanted to pick it herself.

At that moment, someone exclaimed, "General Su?!"

All the surrounding gazes converged on Su Liang.

The man who recognized her had accompanied his father to the Ning family for medical treatment the day before.

The old lady who had just spoken to Su Liang was excited, "So this is General

Soon, a monk ran over with his hands clasped together, "Amitabha, the Abbot

Master has invited you."

Su Liang smiled, "Let them distribute the peaches as usual, and don't make the elderly wait too long."

The monk then called over the monk responsible for guarding the peach forest and whispered some instructions before leading Su Liang in another direction.

Su Liang looked back again and saw that the peach she had been staring at earlier had somehow disappeared! But that shouldn't have happened – she hadn't noticed anyone climbing a tree to pick it.

Su Liang couldn't help but feel regretful.

Following the monk to a secluded courtyard, Su Liang met the Abbot Master Fangji of Lingyin Temple.

There was a centuries-old cypress tree in the courtyard. Master Fangji and Su Liang sat down in the cool shade beneath it to have some tea.

“This tea was given to me by the late Ning benefactor,” Master Fangji said, a hint of melancholy in his expression when mentioning Nings grandfather.

Su Liang took a sip, and it was indeed an excellent tea.

Master Fangji asked if Su Liang planned to stay in Xunyang City to manage the Ning family's properties. Su Liang replied that she would find someone capable to take care of it on her behalf while she returned to the capital city.

“That's good. I've long heard of benefactor Su's talents, and seeing you today, you are indeed extraordinary,” said Master Fangji.

Su Liang could tell that this old monk was not like Master Pu Qing, who was content with his simple and devout life. This one still had traces of worldliness and was quite smooth in his speech.

Su Liang didn't have a strong opinion on this. They were all people who needed to survive, eat and live, so it was impossible for them to become detached from worldly affairs just by shaving their heads.

After not speaking much, Su Liang expressed her desire to visit the peach forest, and Master Fangji had a guide monk lead her there.

Su Liang picked a ripe peach, wiped its fuzzy skin with a handkerchief, then gently peeled it and took a bite. It was deliciously sweet and soft.

As she ate the peach, she continued to venture deeper into the forest.

It wasn't long before she came upon a certain Gu, carrying a basket and picking peaches.

Su Liang was not at all surprised to see him there, “I had my eye on a nice peach, but you must have taken it.”

“Yes.” Gu Ling admitted. He had been watching Su Liang from a hidden spot and noticed her staring at a particular peach intently.

“No need to pick more, the temple is sending me some, and I won't be able to finish them,” Su Liang said.

“You said you would make peach preserves,” Gu Ling replied.

Su Liang coughed lightly, “But I absolutely never said I would make it for you.” She was quite sure about this point, and since she hadn’t agreed to do it, it was natural for her to refuse.

Gu Ling’s expression was calm. “Zhengzheng probably really wants to eat your peach slices.”

Su Liang: ...speechless. Such delicious peaches, of course, should be shared with her lovely little Zhengzheng.

She told the old housekeeper that she would return before dark. After leaving Lingyin Temple alone, Su Liang continued to go to the top of the mountain, leaving the horse behind to ride when she left.

On the way, Su Liang picked a few wild fruits and reached the top of the mountain, where there was a large flat area covered with flowers and plants, which looked like a bright-colored carpet.

The sunshine was just right, and there was a gentle breeze.

Gu Ling came up from another path with one hand holding a basket and the other carrying a plump wild pheasant.

The two of them picked a spot with the best view, lit a fire, and prepared to have grilled chicken with fresh peaches for lunch.

In this process, the two people did not chat because Gu Ling asked Su Liang to continue telling the unfinished story.

After telling the story twice, the wild chicken exuded an enticing fragrance, and it was time to eat.

Su Liang squeezed the juice of sour berries on top of the grilled pheasant. The sweet and sour aroma was refreshing, somewhat like a lemon. She tasted it, and the flavor was excellent.

After eating the delicious grilled meat, Su Liang found her favorite peach in the basket. It was too big, so she split it with Gu Ling and each had a half.

They were full, and the warm sun shone down, making them a bit drowsy.

Su Liang lay down under the shade of a tree and took a nap, not caring about what Gu Ling was doing.

After waking up, Su Liang saw that Gu Ling’s coat was covering her and he was sitting not far away carving something.

It was still early, so Su Liang got up, took Gu Ling’s coat over to him, and said, “Thank you. This place is really nice. It’s been a while since we’ve had a friendly competition. Would you like to coach me?”

Gu Ling put away the stone and the carving knife he was using, put on his coat, and nodded. “If you lose, give me half of the peach slices you make for Zhengzheng.”

On hearing this, Su Liang’s competitive spirit flared up. “In that case, you fight with me using one hand, how about it?”

“All right.” Gu Ling agreed.

So, under the clear blue sky, the two began sparring on the mountain top.

Gu Ling kept his right hand behind his back, using only his left hand to spar with Su Liang.

They went back and forth, fighting until the sun was about to set. Gu Ling, who had been feeding Su Liang moves, suddenly stopped. "Look at the sunset."

Su Liang turned around and saw the magnificent sunset casting a red glow across half of the sky, sinking lower and lower, both grand and beautiful.

Just as Su Liang was intoxicated by the beauty of nature, she was unexpectedly pushed down by Gu Ling. She was about to fall to the ground but was pulled back by him.

Su Liang looked at Gu Ling's strange series of actions, speechless.

Then she heard him say three words. "You lost."

Su Liang: ...So the earlier break was just to watch the sunset? What could she say? It was perfectly normal for someone to do such a thing to rightfully get the peach slices she promised.

The sun set, and it quickly became dark.

The two of them went down the mountain together and separated near Lingyin Temple, where Su Liang rode her horse alone back to the Ning Mansion.

The lanterns in the Ning Mansion illuminated the old housekeeper's aged face as he looked out of the doorway for a long time. Finally, he saw a familiar figure appear, breathed a sigh of relief, and hurriedly ordered the servants to prepare dinner.

"The young lady is back!" The old housekeeper was somewhat worried. After all, Su Liang was definitely a big shot here, and it was hard to guarantee that no one would want to harm her.

The white lantern swaying gently in the night breeze and the black-on-white couplets on the door reminded Su Liang to try her best not to laugh. "The scenery here is beautiful. I wandered around and went too far."

The old housekeeper explained that the Governor's Mansion had sent another thank-you gift today. It was a gift for washing and sending to relatives and friends according to local customs, not too valuable but also a token of appreciation.

In addition, Lingyin Temple also sent a basket of peaches, which were placed in Su Liang's residence.

After returning, Su Liang washed up briefly, and dinner was served in the study room.

After the servants left, Su Liang and Gu Ling had dinner together, and the main task for tomorrow was to make peach slices.

After finishing the usual story and admiring Gu Ling's painting, Su Liang was about to go back to her room for a bath when the old housekeeper came again, saying that someone was looking for Su Liang outside the door.

"Do you know who it is?" Su Liang asked.

The old housekeeper said it was a young gentleman who claimed to be surnamed Peng and came from the north.

Peng was not a rare surname, and there were quite a few people in Qian Country who had this surname, so it would not make people think of the Peng military family from Liang Country.

But the only Peng from the north who could be looking for Su Liang was from Peng Wei's family.

"Please show him to the outer study room. I'll be there shortly," Su Liang said.

Watching the old housekeeper leave the courtyard, Su Liang returned to her room to change her clothes and touched her hair a bit messily, so she combed it again.

As Su Liang entered the outer study room, she saw a young man stand up and salute her, 'General Su, my name is Peng Fan.'

She had heard this name before; Peng Wei always mentioned him as his precious grandson.

Unlike the rough and impulsive Peng Wei, Peng Fan had strong features, steady eyes, and demeanor. Although his appearance was not outstanding, he still exuded an impressive air of valiance.

"No need for formalities. Please have a seat." Su Liang's expression was

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"Thank you, General Su, for saving my grandfather's life at Ping'an Temple." Peng Fan's expression was solemn. "My grandfather asked me to bring my father to Qian Country to seek medical treatment from General Su. On the way, we didn't dare to delay and didn't expect to hear the news of General Su's fiancée, Young Master Ning, being killed. We hope General Su will grieve and move on."

Su Liang nodded, "Has your father come to Xunyang City too?"

"Yes," Peng Fan replied. "I originally planned to bring my father to the capital city of Qian Country, but on the way, I heard that General Su had escorted Young Master Ning back to Xunyang City for burial. I didn't know when

General Su would return to the capital, so we came here. My father is in an inn. Due to the long journey and the jolting, his condition has worsened, so I had no choice but to come and bother General Su late at night. Please forgive me."

Seeing Peng Fan's apologetic and uneasy expression, Su Liang stood up, "Then let's go. I'll go and have a look."

Peng Fan breathed a sigh of relief and was about to go outside when he saw Su Liang hesitate and turn back. "Since you are already in the city, bring your father to stay here. It will be more convenient for me to treat him."

There were many people outside, and there were also people in Xunyang City watching Su Liang. Although she was just a doctor, after all, the Peng family's identities were sensitive, and it was always better to avoid attracting attention.

It was the dead of night, and nobody should be aware of the Peng family's father and son since they had just arrived.

Peng Fan had heard Peng Wei talk about Su Liang's generous and chivalrous character, and upon meeting her today, he found it to be true. Because of his concern for his father, he did not decline, thanked her, and hurriedly left to pick up Peng Qian.

Su Liang instructed the old housekeeper to prepare a guesthouse for her friends who would be staying for a few days.

While Peng Fan went to pick up Peng Qian, Su Liang went back to pack her medicine box.

Just as she was about to leave again, she saw Gu Ling appear silently behind her like a ghost.

"Great God, teach me how to practice this skill of vanishing and appearing out of nowhere." Su Liang spoke as she bypassed him and walked outside. "The person who just came is Peng Wei's grandson, and the patient will arrive soon.."

Chapter 217: 217. This can be possible.

Peng Qian's disease was so severe that he had fallen into unconsciousness, oblivious to the world.

After seeing Su Liang take his pulse and remain silent, Peng Fan couldn't help but urge, "Does General Su have a cure for my father's illness?"

Su Liang sighed softly, "He's been sick for too long, I can only try."

After inserting acupuncture needles into Peng Qian, Su Liang left, saying that she would deliver the decoction once it was prepared.

Peng Fan thanked her repeatedly, but Su Liang remained indifferent, stating that she was only doing this to fulfill a promise made to his grandfather and would do her best.

After instructing the old housekeeper to arrange for food and lodging for Peng Fan, his father, and their two accompanying servants, Su Liang returned to her residence.

Upon entering, she saw that Gu Ling was still there, and the initially messy table had been tidied up. He was reading the medical book she had recently studied, with her notes beside him.

"It's very late, you can go to sleep if you're tired. I need to make a decoction for Peng Qian." Su Liang said, yawning.

Gu Ling closed the book and stood up, "Let me do it."

Su Liang thought for a moment, "That's a good idea. There are two medicinal herbs that we need, can you help find them?"

An hour passed, and Su Liang had prepared the medicinal ingredients. She began to boil the decoction on the small stove in the corridor.

The door was half open, and Gu Ling sat inside, not too far away from her.

Su Liang told Gu Ling about Peng Qian's condition and her preliminary treatment plan. After listening, Gu Ling asked, "How long will it take?"

After carefully considering, Su Liang responded, "If the treatment is effective and everything goes well, he will require at least a hundred days to restore his body to the point where he can take care of himself. But to get out of the danger zone, we will need to observe for half a month."

Even though peace between Liang and Qian country had temporarily been restored after the death of Wei Yao and Wei Hao, no one could be sure whether this peace would last for three months. Peng Wei was old and still recovering from injuries, and without his sons by his side, he was likely to be powerless in case of any unforeseen circumstances.

Therefore, Su Liang had decided to stay in Xunyang City for another half month. Once Peng Qian's condition improved and the Peng family returned to their country, she would return to the capital city.

Gu Ling had no objections to this plan.

While Su Liang was half-asleep after adding firewood to the stove several times, the decoction was finally ready. She poured it out and personally delivered it to the guesthouse.

Peng Fan was wiping his father's hands. Seeing Su Liang, he quickly got up, "Thank you for your efforts, General Su."

"Feed this medicine to your father." Su Liang handed the decoction to Peng Fan, "You've come a long way, you should just rest here. As for the remuneration, I will not be shy to accept."

Peng Fan nodded earnestly, "If General Su can cure my father's illness, I will be forever at your service."

Su Liang shook her head, "That's not necessary. I have to go now. If anything happens, feel free to call me."

After speaking, Su Liang turned around and left. After Peng Fan fed the medicine to Peng Qian, although his face didn't show any noticeable improvement, being in a warm and comfortable room, holding a bowl that was still warm, his tense body and mind were able to relax a bit.

When Su Liang returned again, Gu Ling had already left her room. After a simple wash, it was already late at night, and she soon fell asleep.

The next day when she went to see Peng Qian again, he was still unconscious, but his complexion had stabilized compared to the previous day.

"Would you like me to teach you how to make the decoction?" Su Liang asked Peng Fan.

Peng Fan was taken aback, "I... don't understand..."

Su Liang explained, "I have some things to handle, so I don't want to entrust it to the servants, to avoid any mistakes. I will teach you how it works."

Peng Fan immediately agreed and listened carefully to Su Liang's explanation of how to decoct the medicine. When the servants from Ning Mansion moved the stove and the tools needed for the decoction, Su Liang also gave him the prepared medicinal ingredients.

“The sign has been hung, and we are no longer receiving guests.” The old housekeeper told Su Liang, “Mistress has been busy since returning, you should take a break. After returning to the capital in a few days, you will inevitably be busy again.”

It was Su Liang who had ordered the old housekeeper to close the door to guests, but she still instructed him to find her immediately if a critically ill patient came seeking treatment.

After closing the courtyard door, Su Liang stretched her body out in the bright sunlight, getting ready to start a sweet task she had planned – making candied peach.

Some of the fresh peaches were set aside for eating, while the remaining were a basketful of large, plump ones.

Early in the morning, Gu Ling went to the mountain where Lingyin Temple was located, and picked a good amount of sour berries that Su Liang had used to roast chicken yesterday. He then smashed them into a juice.

The two of them washed the peaches, removed the skins and pits, cut them into evenly sized strips, and marinated them thoroughly with sugar and the berry juice.

By the time these tasks were completed, it was approaching noon. Su Liang went to see Peng Qian again. He had finally regained consciousness, but his mind was still a bit hazy. Upon hearing from Peng Fan that they were at the Ning family’s residence in Xunyang City, Qian Country, and that Su Liang was treating his wounds, Peng Qian’s hand trembled slightly – he looked at Su Liang but couldn’t utter a word.

“Don’t rush things, we need to take it slow,” Su Liang said, and suddenly asked about Peng Wei, “As you’ve come to Qian Country, is everything safe on your grandfather’s side?”

Peng Fan replied seriously, “Thank you for your concern, General Su. A martial arts expert is with my grandfather, so he should be safe.”

“That’s good.” Having said that, Su Liang left.

This time Peng Fan noticed the pouch at Su Liang’s waist. The cute rabbit on it was a big surprise to him. He felt it somewhat out of character for Su Liang.

After lunch, the pickling process of peaches was completed.

As Gu Ling started the fire, Su Liang cooked the peach flesh over a low heat until it was slightly soft. This did not take long.

Once the pan was removed from the fire, Su Liang deeply inhaled the aroma of the sweet and tangy fruit in the air, and said with a smile, “Let it soak overnight, then take it out to dry tomorrow.”

“Can’t we eat it now?” Gu Ling asked.

Su Liang nodded, “You can try it if you want.”

Gu Ling scooped a piece out with a small bowl, gently cooled it, and slowly tasted it. “So this is what cooked peaches taste like.”

“How is it?” Su Liang asked.

“Not as good as fresh peaches.” Gu Ling finished the remaining half, washed the bowl and chopsticks, and put them back in their place.

At dusk, a woman in a critical condition, who was indicated as beyond help by the doctors after falling heavily while pregnant, came seeking help.

The elderly housekeeper immediately reported it to Su Liang. Su Liang rushed over in a hurry and managed to save her after a strenuous night, though the child, being too premature, could not be saved.

Riding alone, Su Liang, with her medicine box, passed through most of Xunyang City in the middle of the night on her way back to the Ning family.

As she passed a secluded street, a sharp arrow targeted her back.

She reacted quickly, narrowly avoided the arrow, and was drenched in cold sweat. She was initially a bit tired, but instantly became extremely alert!

A group of black-clad assassins appeared, surrounding Su Liang.

As she leapt off her horse, the Twin Blades were already in her hands, and she faced the assassins with icy, steady eyes.

She wasn't entirely surprised. Since she crossed over to this world nearly a year ago, she had made some friends but also managed to offend some important figures. Leaving the capital didn't mean she was safe, Su Liang knew this well.

In the midst of the fight, Su Liang seemed to be back on the back mountain of the Su Family's village last year, dealing with the assassins from Yanyun Building.

That was when Su Liang's strength dramatically increased under the immense pressure of life and death that Gu Ling had created for her.

There were eight assassins today. Comparing their skills with the top assassins of Yanyun Building who had come to steal her pitch adjuster, they were a notch lower.

But still, one against eight made Su Liang feel somewhat strained.

In the midst of the fight, a mysterious masked man suddenly appeared to help her against the assassins.

To Su Liang's surprise, it wasn't Gu Ling. She wasn't sure, but she had a feeling that Gu Ling was nearby. Yet, he was not the one who emerged.

The helper's martial arts skills were impressive, taking half of the pressure off Su Liang.

After about a quarter of an hour, Su Liang sheathed her sword, watching as the only surviving assassin bit his tongue and committed suicide. She let out a small sigh of relief.

“General Su, are you alright?” A not so unfamiliar voice came.

Su Liang was taken aback, “Mr. Peng?”

The man removes his black face mask under the moonlight, his face rugged and determined, it's Peng Fan.

"I'm fine. How came Master Peng is here?" Su Liang asked calmly.

Responding to Su Liang's enquiry which wasn't expressed as gratitude, Peng Fan explained, "I heard a servant from Ning Mansion mention that you had not yet returned from the rescue, and the housekeeper was worried about your safety. With my fair share of martial arts skills, I informed the housekeeper and came looking for you."

Su Liang nodded, "I see, thank you."

Peng Fan found Su Liang's horse in a nearby alley and walked with her back towards the Ning Mansion. Peng Fan walked alongside her, mentioning that Peng Qian was regaining consciousness and was able to recognize him.

"Good, let it recover slowly." Su Liang said.

"Does General Su plan on returning to the capital of Qian Country?" Peng Fan asked.

Su Liang nodded, "Yes, I'm going back. Once your father's health improves, you can leave in about half a month and return home for further recovery."

"I hope so." Peng Fan sighed. "My grandfather once mentioned that Ning Jing had a good friend who rescued him alongside you in Xuanbei City. If possible, could you tell me the name and whereabouts of that benefactor? I would like to express my gratitude in person."

Su Liang shook her head, "After the incident with Ning Jing, we separated, and I have no idea where he went."

"If General Su happens to meet that benefactor again, could you convey my gratitude?" Peng Fan said earnestly.

"Alright." Su Liang replied. The main gate of Ning Mansion was now in sight.

When Su Liang returned to her room, she realized she was covered in blood. But she had only a slight wound on her arm and was fine overall.

After she had a bath and cleaned her wound and applied medicine, dawn was already breaking. Just as she was about to go to bed, Gu Ling finally appeared.

"Great God, I have a thought," Su Liang said gravely.

Gu Ling's attention fell on Su Liang's right arm and then shifted away. He asked calmly, "What is it?"

"How about I take advantage of my time in Xunyang City for you to run a trip to the capital and kill Duanmu Cheng?" Su Liang suggested. "I was attacked tonight, Peng Fan was kind enough to help. He asked about you later, which got me thinking, the

Emperor probably assumed that Ning Jing had been accompanied by a martial artist, which is why he had agreed to send him to

logical for his martial artist friend to seek revenge for him. I will surely be suspected, but with a perfect alibi, I will be able to excuse myself saying that I did know that Ning Jing had such a friend who had guarded me before, but I am not aware of your details, nor have any knowledge of where you went. If the Emperor grows suspicious and chooses not to trust me with important tasks, all the better. I'd then be free to travel elsewhere! It's a win-win situation!

Otherwise, I don't know when I will find a chance to get rid of Duanmu Cheng!" Gu Ling countered, "How is Peng Fan's prowess?"

"I didn't pay much attention, but I think it's probably stronger than I expected," Su Liang said, "Great God, are you worried about me? If I encounter trouble after you leave, I'll ask Peng Fan for help, he would certainly be more than happy to."

The reason she said this is because the Peng Family owes Su Liang a big favor.

Seeing Gu Ling silent, Su Liang laughed, "It's just a sudden thought I had tonight. If you're not willing to go, it's okay. I'll figure out another way." "Fine." Gu Ling agreed.

Su Liang thought he meant she should think of another way, so she yawned and prepared to go to bed. "I'm practically dead from exhaustion, please take your leave."

Gu Ling stood up, "You ask me to kill someone in the capital and now I have to leave without a farewell?" Su Liang turned her head and blinked at Gu Ling, "Didn't you reject my offer?"

"I said, yes." Gu Ling stated.

Su Liang rubbed her forehead. This man could often communicate by answering only half the question.

She faced Gu Ling, straightened her body, and bent slightly to salute him, "Thank you for your assistance, Great God."

Gu Ling nodded slightly and then spread his arms.

Su Liang hesitated, then moved a step forward and hugged him, "Take care on your journey, Great God."

The two parted after a brief embrace.

"It's a pity, it's not very suitable at this moment, otherwise I could prepare some dried food for you," Su Liang said.

Gu Ling nodded, "In that case, I'll leave another day."

Su Liang: ...

Gu Ling looked indifferent, "You'll still be in Xunyang City for half a month, even if I leave in three to five days, it would still be in time, wouldn't it?"

Su Liang sighed, "Yes. Great God, you weren't planning on leaving tonight at all, were you?"

Gu Ling shook his head, "You said it, to prepare dried food for me. Let's talk after it's ready."

Su Liang was left without a comeback.

“Go to sleep.” Gu Ling left after his last comment.

Su Liang laid on her bed, covered herself, a wave of sleepiness overcame her, and she quickly fell asleep.

Knowing that Su Liang went to bed late last night, the old housekeeper didn't let anyone disturb her. She didn't wake until mid-morning. After freshening up, she went to check on Peng Qian, he had woken up the night before and was now fast asleep after drinking his medicine.

Peng Fan asked about Su Liang's wound, Su Liang waved her hand, “It's nothing. ”

When she got back, Su Liang had breakfast, and then laid the soaked peach slices to dry in the sun one by one.

After all this, Su Liang went out in the afternoon to visit the pregnant woman she had saved the night before. Upon returning, she still didn't see Gu Ling, so she asked the old housekeeper to prepare some excellent tea for her.

The Ning family was never short of tea leaves. Su Liang also requested a small stone mill, and then ground the tea leaves into matcha powder.

The servants brought her dinner, and she told them to leave it at the door of the study. She then busied herself in the kitchen and finally made green tea cakes.

The tea was excellent, and the quality of the sticky rice flour was top-notch. Su Liang tried one, it had a gentle tea aroma, a subtle sweetness, and a soft, glutinous filling. It was a big success.

After setting up dinner, Gu Ling, who had been missing all day, finally appeared.

“Great God, where have you been?” Su Liang asked.

“I went to meet a friend,” Gu Ling replied. Su Liang was stunned, “You actually have a friend I wasn't aware of?”

Gu Ling shook his head, “It's your friend.”

Su Liang twitched the corner of her mouth, “So when you said you went to find a friend, you actually meant my friend? Do you think that's reasonable, Great God?”

Gu Ling candidly said a name, “Yan Shiba.”

Su Liang frowned, “Why were you looking for her?”

“To protect you.” Gu Ling said with an indifferent expression, and his gaze fell on the green tea cake, “What is this?”

“Am I that weak? I'm not going to die without you,” Su Liang grumbled, and then answered his question, “Green tea cake, I specifically made it for your journey.”

Gu Ling took a bite, and nodded “Good.”

“Where did you find Yan Shiba?” Su Liang asked with curiosity.

Gu Ling said he just found someone from the Yan Yun Building and posted a mission to kill Su Liang.

Su Liang swore in shock, “So Yan Shiba, aware of the mission, will certainly come to Xunyang City to find me? Great God, have I ever told you what a genius you are?”

Gu Ling responded with a question, “Do you have red tea cake?” Su Liang nodded reluctantly, ‘Yes, that can be arranged.”

“Wait for your peach slices and red tea cake to be ready, then I’ll head to the capital.” As soon as Gu Ling finished speaking, he ate a green tea cake and elegantly wiped his hands in a napkin..

Chapter 218: 218. Lian Shun ‘s confession

Su Liang saw Peng Qian again, his consciousness had cleared up, with watery eyes and weak voice he murmured, “Thank ... thank.

“For the sake of your elderly father and your child, I hope you won’t give up on yourself. You will get better.” Su Liang’s expression was serious.

Peng Fan’s gaze fell on the rabbit purse at Su Liang’s waist, looking at her with a faint curiosity and exploration.

Peng Qian was in poor spirits, so Su Liang only spoke briefly with him, and left after administering the acupuncture.

Today there was no plan on what to do, so Su Liang asked the old housekeeper if the tea garden was far away.

The old housekeeper said that there was a large tea garden near Lingyin Temple in the suburbs of the city, and Su Liang could go at any time if she wanted to.

“Let’s go for a walk then, and prepare some food and fruits.” Su Liang instructed.

Half an hour later, Su Liang left the house and got on a low-key luxurious carriage heading towards the tea garden.

Aside from carrying her medical kit, she also brought along a medical book she hadn’t finished reading and the notes taken by Gu Ling, which were arranged and tucked in the book.

As Su Liang opened the book, the latest note caught her eye, and after she glanced at it, she brought it up once again.

“How to defeat the weirdo Great God?”

This was what Su Liang had written while lost in thought while reading a few days ago.

Below, the two lines “1. Daydream” and “2. Dream at night” were written in the same handwriting as Su Liang’s, making her doubt whether she had written them herself while sleep-walking. She was certain she hadn’t written it when sober and wouldn’t write something like that!

However, Su Liang didn't have a habit of sleep-walking. The next moment she realized that this was certainly the work of a certain quirky Great God.

It is worth noting that after crossing over to this world, Su Liang started learning to write calligraphy, first copying Gu Ling's handwriting, and later learning another font, Ning Jing's.

As a result, both their writings could blend together and were hard to distinguish.

If Gu Ling was here, Su Liang would definitely paste the note on his face and tell him, "Let's wait and see".

But at this moment, Su Liang was alone in the carriage, sneering, putting down the note, and continuing to read her book.

As they passed the street where the assassination occurred last night, Su Liang heard people discussing the bodies that had been found this morning.

Su Liang didn't investigate because they were all Death Soldiers and there would be nothing to find. The person who wanted to kill her could only be a certain prince in the capital city.

Su Liang and Duanmu Cheng now share a 'kill or be killed' relationship, both clearly understanding this.

Duanmu Cheng knew what he had done, realizing now that after Duanmu Ao's death, the collapse of the Wan Family, and Wan Cong's beheading, Su Liang would never let him go.

Thus, the only way for Duanmu Cheng to survive was to kill Su Liang first.

Compared to Duanmu Cheng, who had been driven into a corner by Su Liang, she was not afraid, but she could not change her intention to kill him.

The carriage stopped, Su Liang put the note back in the book, closed it, and lifted the curtain to see the vibrant green scenery, feeling refreshed.

Driving the carriage was the old housekeeper's grandson, who Su Liang only knew by his nickname of Asi, a dark-skinned teenager with a honest and simple smile.

The tea garden manager and a group of people had been waiting at the entrance for Su Liang's arrival. They knelt to greet her, but she stopped them.

Asi carried Su Liang's medical kit in one hand and her food in the other, following behind her into the tea garden.

The manager respectfully introduced Su Liang to the tea garden. She was knowledgeable about tea and asked some questions, which impressed the manager and made him even more attentive.

After a brief tour of the tea garden, Su Liang was invited to a pavilion built on a small hill. Asi mentioned that his grandfather had told him that the old Marquis Ning liked to come here to drink tea and play chess, which was why the pavilion had been specially built.

The table was set with tea, various desserts, seasonal fruits, and Su Liang's medical kit.

Su Liang asked everyone to leave, then stood at the edge of the pavilion, admiring the view of the tea garden. She sat down, had some tea, ate a couple of desserts and a peach, thinking about the peach she had dried at home, which should be done in a few days.

As the gentle breeze blew, Su Liang enjoyed the faint scent of tea trees in the air. She opened her medical book, continued reading, took out her writing supplies from her medical kit, and circled the quirky question and answer mentioned earlier before continuing to take notes.

Su Liang didn't know if Gu Ling was secretly following her, but this location was too eye-catching, so he definitely wouldn't appear.

Approaching noon, the manager came to ask if Su Liang wanted to have lunch in the tea garden. He said that his daughter-in-law could cook and could prepare a meal for her if she didn't mind.

Su Liang let the manager prepare it and planned to finish the book before leaving today.

"Miss!"

Hearing Asi calling her, Su Liang looked up to see him leading a familiar figure towards her. As they got closer, Su Liang recognized the person and closed the book in her hands.

"This young master said he has urgent business with Miss. Grandfather allowed him to find you. Miss, do you know him?" Asi asked.

Su Liang nodded, "He's my friend. You can go."

Disheveled Lian Shun sat down opposite Su Liang, saw an empty teacup, picked up the teapot, and poured himself a full cup of tea. He took a deep breath after draining the cup in one gulp, looked at Su Liang with concern and asked, "Are you alright?"

Su Liang's expression was indifferent, "Master Lin, weren't you on your way to the north to join the army and glorify your family name? How did you get the time to come here?"

Lian Shun sighed deeply, "Did he really die?"

Su Liang nodded, "Yes, Ning Jing is really dead."

Lian Shun closed his eyes, "Although our friendship wasn't deep, he was an interesting person. I wanted to befriend him sincerely, and he once told me that I was his friend. I had thought that when we met again, you two would already be married, but I never expect..."

"Please accept my condolences." Su Liang said with a calm expression.

This was what Lian Shun had intended to say to Su Liang, but he didn't expect to hear it from her first. He became filled with sorrow, "To be honest, before I heard you say he was dead, I always thought there might be some hidden truth, that he just didn't want to be an official anymore, faked his death to escape and travel the world or find a utopia to live in. Actually, I don't know much about him, but I have a feeling he could do something like this."

Su Liang remained silent. Lian Shun's intuition was quite accurate, but there were some secrets he couldn't know.

After taking a deep breath, Lian Shun said seriously, "I took leave from Marquis to come specially to see you, and I will go back to Xuanbei City afterward. He is very worried about you, but he has important tasks to complete and cannot leave."

"Thank you, please tell Uncle Xing that I'm fine and will return to the capital in a few days." Su Liang said.

“It’s good that you are fine.” Lian Shun hesitated for a moment before changing the subject and began talking about the situation in the northern part of Qian Country after Su Liang left Xuanbei City.

“Now, Che Yun is in charge of training the soldiers, using your new approach, which has significantly improved the overall strength of the army. In Xuanbei City, you can hear people praising you wherever you go, saying that you were born with a General’s star,” Lian Shun said.

Su Liang shook his head, “That’s an exaggeration. I’ve never been on a battlefield.”

“Even so, I believe if one day you command an army, you will be amazing,” Lian Shun said.

“How are Che Yun’s parents’ health?” Su Liang asked.

Lian Shun nodded, “After your treatment, they have improved a lot. But as you know, they suffer from heartache, and without Che Xiao, they won’t get better.” “I’ve asked for help in finding him, but there’s no news yet,” Su Liang said.

“I’ve also been keeping an eye out for the past few years, but haven’t found anything,” Lian Shun sighed, “In reality, that’s also Che Yun’s heartache. On the surface, he’s just like me, big-hearted, but he keeps many things to himself.” “You’ve become much more mature than before,” Su Liang said.

Lian Shun shook his head, “With the death of a friend, I can’t just laugh and joke around. I’m not heartless.”

“Is there anything else?” Su Liang asked.

Lian Shun frowned, “Are you trying to send me away? I’ve traveled a long way just to see you, and I’ve only had two cups of tea. No matter what, I am the master who taught you the Disguise Technique. If you’re upset, you can even beat me up, but don’t you think ignoring me is a bit too much?”

Su Liang nodded, “Fine, I’ll treat you to a meal, and after that, I’ll beat you up and you can’t fight back.”

Lian Shun twitched the corners of his mouth, speechless as he looked at the sky...

The Tea Garden housekeeper’s wife cooked authentic homemade dishes, especially a green tea minced meat tofu dish that Su Liang really liked. So she called the housekeeper couple over and asked them how it was made.

Lian Shun quietly savored the delicious food while listening to Su Liang talk to the housekeeper’s wife.

When they left, Lian Shun sighed, “Seeing your demeanor, it feels as if nothing has happened, as if he’s still alive and you’re learning the recipe to cook it for him.”

Su Liang’s hand paused slightly, hidden under the table and unnoticed by Lian

Shun.

His intuition is too sharp... Su Liang thought, she needs to be more cautious, and not let Lian Shun discover any flaws.

Seeing Su Liang's silence, Lian Shun hurriedly apologized, thinking he had touched on her sorrowful past.

"No, I thought you heard Ning Jing died and came to pursue me. I didn't expect your feelings for him to be so deep," Su Liang said surprisingly.

Lian Shun was choked by a mouthful of soup, covering his chest and coughing uncontrollably...

After a while, Lian Shun looked at Su Liang again, his tone somber, "Since you put it so bluntly, I'll be straightforward too. If I say I want to pursue you while Ning Jing's body is still cold, it would appear heartless. But I admit, I have been considering pursuing you once you have sorted out your feelings. I really like you, and have always known I couldn't beat Ning Jing, so I gave up before. I hope you can give me a chance."-

Su Liang quietly continued eating, as if she didn't hear a thing.

Thus, after Lian Shun's confession, the atmosphere became incredibly awkward.

Lian Shun picked up his chopsticks again, but some of the taste was lost. He originally came just to see Su Liang and didn't plan on confessing his feelings, but she pointed out his intentions first. Regretting his words, he couldn't understand what Su Liang was thinking and felt that the timing was not right at all.

When Su Liang put down her chopsticks, Lian Shun silently followed suit.

"Your cousin Duanmu Che was also involved in the attempt to kill Ning Jing," Su Liang spoke again.

Lian Shun had just imagined countless ways for Su Liang to reject him, but he didn't expect that she would suddenly mention Duanmu Che, let alone that Duanmu Che would attempt to kill Ning Jing.

"Did he... do it to get you?" Lian Shun's face darkened.

Liang nodded, "Probably. Although I can't understand why Duanmu Che, who initially hated me so much, changed so drastically later on. Some people just do whatever they want, trying to get everything they desire by any means necessary, and never give up."

"Has he gone mad?" Lian Shun's anger came from the fact that he still had expectations of Duanmu Che since they had a brotherly bond, which led him to seek medical treatment for him.

"I'm just telling you this," Su Liang said, "You are you, and he is him. However, I want to ask, if I were to kill Duanmu Che, would you try to stop me?"

Lian Shun's face was pale, and after a long silence, he asked Su Liang, "Was Ning Jing killed by Duanmu Che?"

Su Liang shook her head, "Not exactly. Duanmu Che attacked, but he didn't succeed."

"If it were really him who killed Ning Jing, I would feel very guilty, because his survival up to now is closely related to me," Lian Shun sighed, "If you have evidence and want to avenge Ning Jing, it would be perfectly justified. I have no reason to stop you. He and I are not on the same path after all. The brotherly bond we had before was just my wishful thinking. Although my grandfather left a will for me to take care of him, I can't do so at the expense of human ethics and morality."

"Alright," Su Liang nodded, "As for the matter of you pursuing me, just forget about it. You can't catch up, so don't waste your energy and affect our relationship."

Lian Shun was caught off guard by Su Liang's sudden change in tone and stared at her in a daze for a moment, unable to speak. Even though being rejected should have made him sad, he couldn't help but laugh in the end, "You're really good at frustrating people with your words. Did you learn that from Ning Jing? Or did he learn it from you? Or is it because of this that you two ended up together?"

"I learned it from him," Su Liang replied, implying that she was influenced by Ning Jing, and that she was originally quite gentle. However, in such a situation, it was best to be straightforward. It had nothing to do with others; she thought Lian Shun was a good person and genuinely treated him as a friend, but she didn't have that kind of feeling for him.

"You really won't consider me at all?" Lian Shun let loose, returning to his original playful and carefree manner, holding his face in both hands, and looking at Su Liang with aggrieved eyes, "Am I really that bad? Am I not even worth one of Ning Jing's hairs?"

Su Liang shook her head, "No, you're not. At least you're worth two of his hairs. Don't belittle yourself."

Lian Shun: ...

"Before coming here, Che Yun told me that you wouldn't accept me, and sure enough..." Lian Shun rubbed his face, sitting upright, "But what did you mean just now when you said it would affect our relationship? Do we even have one beyond friendship?"

"Don't cross the line; we can be friends. If you cross the line, we won't even be friends," Su Liang bluntly told Lian Shun her principles for making friends.

Lian Shun nodded gloomily, "I understand. Should I thank you for your honesty? I do like how straight-forward you are. Ah, what nonsense am I talking about, I take it back! I haven't crossed the line! But..."

Suddenly, Lian Shun leaned closer, staring into Su Liang's eyes, "What kind of person do you like? If not me, what about someone like Che Yun?"

Su Liang slapped Lian Shun's head, "Neither of you will do!"

Lian Shun lamented, "Then the two of us should just live together! We won't bother you anymore!"

Su Liang nodded, "That seems doable."

"Just kidding, I like cute girls. Who would want to live with that big-bearded rough man Che Yun?" Lian Shun shook his head, stood up, and said, "Weren't you going to beat me up? Come on, I'll leave after you're done!"

"I just did earlier, you can leave now," Su Liang said.

Lian Shun looked at Su Liang, crying and laughing, "Su Xiaoliang, you are really something! This trip wasn't a waste after all. After seeing you, I feel that even with Ning Jing gone, you can take care of yourself. You're strong when it comes to hitting and scolding people. Not bad! In that case, I'll go back. It's said that one should make great achievements to bring glory to their family; it would be too shameful to give up halfway through. You can go on killing whoever you want, it has nothing to do with me! I'm curious to see which god you'll marry in the end!"

With that, Lian Shun emptied the fruit plate and desserts on the table into a cloth bag he carried with him, and left with a confident stride..

Chapter 219: 219. Insane Assassination

After Lian Shun left, the steward's wife came to collect the bowls and plates, served new tea, and brought a plate of green tea cakes she had made herself. Su Liang ate the sweet and non-greasy treats, called the woman over, asked for the recipe, and gave her a reward.

Asi came to ask when Su Liang would return home. She planned to finish reading the book in the tea garden as planned, so she told Asi to go and have fun and come back before sunset.

"Great! There's a small river over there, I'll catch some fish for you to eat!" With her face bathed in sunlight, Asi's eyes sparkled brightly.

Su Liang nodded, "That sounds good, go ahead, but be careful."

After Asi left, Su Liang opened the book again and thought of Lian Shun who had come hurriedly and left quickly. She sighed softly. She had considered marriage before, but every time she had almost gotten married, she had thought about how not to get married, using Gu Ling disguised as Ning Jing as a cover more than once.

When Asi returned with a bucket of fish, Su Liang had finished reading the medical book she had brought with her.

Standing in the pavilion, she watched the sun set in the west and the sky darken. She packed up her medicine box and returned home with Asi.

Upon entering, the old housekeeper greeted her, "The gentleman who came today claimed to be from the Lin family. Was he the young master of the Lin family where Song Qi worked as a

steward, as you mentioned before?” Su Liang hesitated, “Yes, but I forgot to tell him about Song Qi, and he has already left.”

She hadn’t thought about it when she saw Lian Shun.

“If Song Qi wants to come back to Ning Mansion, Lian Shun should not mind,” Su Liang said, “He and Ning Jing are good friends.”

At her words, the old housekeeper became mournful, “How wonderful it would be if the young master was still alive!”

Su Liang took one fish and let Asi deal with the rest.

Returning to her residence, she didn’t see Gu Ling, so she put down her things and went to cook the fish in the kitchen.

When the fish was cooked and dinner was served, it was laid out in the study room as usual.

After the servant left, Su Liang took her seat, and Gu Ling appeared.

“Sometimes I suspect you’ve installed a monitoring device on me,” Su Liang complained about Gu Ling’s recent mysterious disappearances and punctual appearances at dinner time.

Gu Ling, who was very interested in everything about Su Liang’s past life, had heard her talk about what a “monitoring device” was. Although he still didn’t understand how it worked, he knew what it did.

“I went to pick herbs,” Gu Ling said as he sat down in his seat.

Su Liang asked, “What did you find?”

Unbidden, Su Liang marveled, “Great God, how can your luck be so good when it comes to picking herbs?”

Gu Ling shook his head, “I looked for a long time.”

Su Liang was puzzled, “Given our current wealth, we are not short of things like ginseng. The Ning family has even better ones. Why do you bother looking for it?”

“I just wanted to see what a living ginseng looks like,” Gu Ling said.

Su Liang nodded, “That’s just like you.” It made sense.

She then said earnestly, “So, Great God, you must want to see all the herbs you’ve never seen before in their living form? I fully support you. You go and find them, I’ll provide food, and any herbs you find will be mine. Deal?” Gu Ling’s eyes turned cool, “With your current wealth.”

Su Liang coughed lightly, “That’s not the point. I believe that some herbs cannot be bought with any amount of money, but you, Great God, can find them.”

Gu Ling nodded, “Alright.”

Su Liang was a little surprised, only to hear Gu Ling continue, “Herbs are yours, but any medicine you make from them will be mine.” Su Liang snorted, “Great God, do you think I’m stupid?”

Gu Ling shook his head, "Not too stupid."

Su Liang was speechless, "Well, thank you."

"No need." Gu Ling picked up the chopsticks, "That's settled."

Su Liang thought to herself that nowadays, most of the medicines she made were taken by Gu Ling, so there wasn't much difference. What she cared more about was not what medicine she got, but the process of learning to make it.

With that in mind, if Gu Ling could really find some rare medicinal ingredients and allow Su Liang to learn about them, it would be beneficial to her. "Alright." Su Liang ate her meal while saying, "Today at the tea garden, Lian

Shun came by."

Gu Ling didn't show any surprise. "He found out Ning Jing is dead, so he came to pursue you?"

"How did you know?" Su Liang was surprised. There were no tall trees to hide in at the tea garden, so Su Liang knew Gu Ling hadn't been there and couldn't have heard her conversation with Lian Shun.

"His intention is obvious." Gu Ling said.

"That's true." Su Liang nodded. Back in the capital city, Lian Shun had already vaguely expressed his feelings for Su Liang. But at that time, she had "Ning Jing" as a shield, so she didn't even have to reject Lian Shun; he retreated on his own.

"Did you agree?" Gu Ling asked.

Su Liang shook her head, "Of course not."

"Why not?" Gu Ling asked, "What's wrong with him?"

"Lian Shun is quite nice, has a cheerful personality, and is upright, kind-hearted, and proficient in both literature and martial arts," Su Liang said earnestly, "But I'm not yet sixteen years old, I need to study hard, not get involved in relationships too early."

Gu Ling's hand paused slightly, but Su Liang didn't notice.

Su Liang laughed at herself, "I'm just kidding. In fact, I don't know what it feels like to like someone either, I never experienced it in my previous life. Today, when Lian Ershan confessed, I honestly felt it. My heart didn't accelerate, it actually slowed down a bit. At that time, I was thinking, isn't it nice to just be friends? There are still many things I want to do and learn, and I don't want to establish an intimate and mutually responsible relationship with someone right now. Marriage is a big event, but it isn't mandatory, so one should be cautious about it."

A moment later, Gu Ling asked, "So, you don't plan to get married?" Su Liang shook her head, "Of course not. Lian Ershan just isn't the one who would make me want to get married. Perhaps such a person doesn't exist, or maybe one day I'll meet him, or maybe, one day my feelings for Lian Ershan will change. Who knows?"

People like Xing Yusheng, Lin family siblings, and Qin family siblings all followed the traditional ideas of love and marriage in this world, and they all chose to get married at the right age under the influence of their elders. Marrying someone they like is already luckier and happier than most people in this world.

Although Su Liang appeared to be adapting to the rules of this world on the surface, she still embraced freedom in her bones. As long as her survival was ensured, she would insist on doing what she wanted, without being bound.

Gu Ling's opinion on this is, "Very good."

Then, Su Liang mentioned that the wife of the steward in the tea garden cooked delicious meals, and she had learned the recipes and would give them a try when she had time.

"Great God, are you waiting for Yan Shiba to arrive before you leave? If she's far away, who knows when she'll be here. And if the news didn't reach her, it's also possible that she won't come." Su Liang said.

"In three days." Gu Ling said.

"Whether Yan Shiba comes or not, you'll leave in three days? By then, the peach preserves should be ready, and I'll try making the Red Tea Cake too, as well as the Green Tea Cake I learned today!" Su Liang said.

After dinner, Su Liang was about to return to her room when she suddenly remembered something and went to Gu Ling to ask, "Great God, do you think my dream of defeating you is a pipe dream? A night dream? Or just a foolish dream?"

Gu Ling remained calm, "You saw it. I used the provocation strategy. Keep up the good work, and I hope you'll defeat me someday."

Su Liang: ...I really want to hit him, but I can't...

So, Su Liang said solemnly, "No matter what strategy, Great God, you can tell me directly."

Gu Ling nodded, "You wanting to defeat me is a pipe dream, a delusion. Do you want to hit me very much? That's right, keep practicing hard."

Su Liang kicked Gu Ling and ran away...

For the next two days, Su Liang didn't leave the house. Besides going to treat Peng Qian every day, she was either practicing martial arts or reading books.

The dish she learned from the steward's wife turned out to be a success, earning Gu Ling's approval.

For three consecutive sunny days, the peach preserves were successfully dried in the sun.

Su Liang tasted them, finding them soft and tender. With the addition of wild berry juice, they tasted sweet and sour, delicious.

As agreed, half belonged to Zhengzheng, and the other half was for Gu Ling.

Not knowing when she could see Zhengzheng again, and fearing the preserves would spoil, Su Liang learned from the old housekeeper that there was an ice cellar in Ning Mansion, so she wrapped up Gu Ling's share and kept the rest chilled and stored there.

Three days passed quickly as promised.

That evening after dinner, Su Liang made red tea cakes and green tea cakes to take with Gu Ling on the road.

"Yan Shiba hasn't arrived yet, so you should go. I can live without you guys." Su Liang said, "Besides, Peng Fan is here, and his strength is not weak. If I encounter any trouble, he will definitely help."

Gu Ling packed up her luggage and prepared to leave.

"Although I think your strength is unparalleled, you should still be cautious in your actions." Su Liang reminded, and then laughed, "These are all nonsense, hurry up and go."

"Okay." Gu Ling nodded, her gaze falling on Su Liang's forehead, "There will be no problems within three days."

Ling's special ability. In other words, as long as Yan Shiba appears within the next three days, it is still within Gu Ling's plan.

Seeing Gu Ling standing still, Su Liang asked, "Anything else?" "Goodbye." Gu Ling said.

Su Liang immediately understood and stepped forward to hug Gu Ling farewell, "Take care."

The two separated, and Gu Ling, with her baggage in hand, disappeared before Su Liang's eyes.

Su Liang sat alone in the study, watching the swaying shadows of the trees outside the window and thinking about the arrangements for the next few days. Given Peng Qian's current physical condition, it would be about ten days before father and son Peng could leave for Liang Country, and by that time, Su Liang should have returned to the capital city.

Gu Ling goes to the capital city this time to assassinate Duanmu Cheng, and if successful, she can return in ten days.

After Duanmu Cheng is killed, Su Liang is bound to be suspected, and at the same time, her secret treatment of Liang Country's General's son, Peng Qian, cannot be concealed from Duanmu Yi.

For the latter, Su Liang does not need to hide it because she was just practicing medicine. Even if Duanmu Yi doesn't ask, she will take the initiative to explain that Peng Qian is not a very important person.

And the existence of Peng Qian can provide Su Liang with a reasonable alibi to clear her suspicion of killing Duanmu Cheng and explain her month-long stay in Xunyang City.

As for whether Yan Shiba will really come, Su Liang does not know, and she has an attitude of letting things take their course.

After Gu Ling left, Su Liang's life was very busy. She went to the Ning family's tea-making workshop, learned the craft of tea-making, and made a few jars of tea herself to give to her friends.

Peng Qian has already been able to speak fluently, and on sunny days, Peng Fan would push Peng Qian in a wheelchair to the Ning Mansion garden to bask in the sun.

In between, Peng Fan asked if their coming to Qian Country would cause Su Liang any trouble.

Su Liang said she has a plan in mind and not to worry.

After three days, Yan Shiba still did not show up, and Su Liang's "safe period" confirmed by Gu Ling was also considered over.

People in Xunyang city know that if there is any urgent illness, they can go to Ning Mansion, where Su Liang will definitely help with treatment.

In these days, several people have come to seek medical treatment, and Su Liang has not refused, taking consultation fees as appropriate.

That day, Su Liang was practicing her sword in the garden, and father and son Peng passed by and stopped to watch.

Although Peng Qian's face was still pale and weak, his spirit had improved a lot. He couldn't help but sigh while watching the agile young girl not far away, "She is a genius and so diligent, truly rare."

Peng Fan nodded, "Compared to General Su, I am ashamed."

"You should learn more from General Su." Peng Qian said.

The old housekeeper hurried over and called out to Su Liang, saying that a critically injured person had arrived at the door.

Upon hearing the news, Su Liang immediately put away her sword and rushed to save the person.

Peng Fan also pushed Peng Qian to go back, "I don't know who General Su learned from, her medical skills are so amazing."

Peng Qian shook his head slightly, "Just remember that she is a benefactor of our Peng family, and if she doesn't say anything, don't be so curious."

"Yes, Father." Peng Fan nodded.

The person had suffered a severe knife wound, with his internal organs exposed and barely alive.

"General Su, please save my grandson!" The blood-covered old man knelt on the ground, banging his head against the floor, "He stood up for justice, but was injured by a bully like this..."

Su Liang ignored the old man's words, she could not be distracted, she had to race against the clock to save a life.

Seeing Su Liang's bloodied hands, the old housekeeper felt dizzy, his heart jumping up into his throat.

He observed Su Liang's calm and focused gaze, even though she was busy, she was not flustered. The old housekeeper's admiration for her reached a peak.

Asi heard that Su Liang was saving someone whose intestines had fallen out, so he came to sneak a peek. Fearing his grandfather's scolding, he quietly jumped through the window of the front hall and hid behind the gauze curtains, only showing his wide-eyed gaze, watching Su Liang save a life.

He had grown up in the Ning Mansion since he was a child and knew every corner of it; he moved cautiously without attracting anyone's attention.

The thick smell of blood seemed to make the air stagnate.

The old housekeeper could not bear the sight and left to instruct the servants to prepare some hot water for Su Liang to bathe after her operation and to cook a pot of chicken soup for her to recover her strength.

After a subordinate told Peng Fan about the patient's situation today, he also wanted to go and see for himself, but remembering Peng Qian's advice, he hesitated and did not go. Instead, he stayed to watch over Peng Qian, who had taken his medicine and fallen asleep.

Su Liang didn't know how much time had passed, but she finally controlled the patient's bleeding, treated his wound, and administered medicine to him.

Her nerves tense, Su Liang took a deep breath after examining the patient once more. She raised her bloodstained hands and wiped the sweat from her forehead with her sleeve before preparing to sit down and rest for a moment.

"Miss, be careful!"

A cold light flashed behind Su Liang, and as she reacted to Asi's warning and turned around, she saw the old man who had brought in the patient thrust a knife into Asi's heart!

Su Liang didn't even know that Asi was nearby. He had noticed the danger and had rushed out to take the knife for her. Su Liang's blood seemed to freeze for a

moment. As she came to her senses, she held Asi to one side and removed the knife from his chest. Instead of attacking the old man, she pressed the blade to the throat of the wounded person she had just saved. Her cold eyes narrowed, "Since you waited for me to treat his wounds before taking action, I assume he might really be your grandson! Drop the knife or I'll send him to face the Yama King! "

The old man's face was filled with horror; the knife in his hand paused mid-air, "Please, don't, it has nothing to do with him!"

"Drop the knife!" Su Liang said in a stern voice.

With a sullen face, the old man relented and threw down his knife. Clenching his fists, he spoke, "I was forced by others to kill you. I didn't expect them to go so far as to inflict serious injuries on my grandson, making me wait until you were exhausted before taking any action. If I don't kill you, my entire family will die! My grandson knows nothing about this! He really knows nothing!"

Su Liang rushed over and quickly chopped off the old man's right hand with a knife, then stabbed through his left leg. Watching him collapse to the ground in pain, Su Liang said nothing, threw down the knife, and returned to check on Asi.

Guards who were rushing into the room were dumbfounded when they saw the situation, but they quickly detained the old man.

When the old housekeeper received the news, he fainted when he heard about Asi's critical injury.

By the time Peng Fan arrived, he found blood everywhere with Su Liang on her knees, trying her best to treat Asi's injuries, her brows knitted together worriedly.

After several days of sunshine, a heavy rain fell that afternoon.

Su Liang stepped out of Asi's room with a cold face, her clothes stained with blood, and walked into the rain without an umbrella.

Peng Fan was holding an umbrella in the courtyard, and when he noticed Su Liang, he hurried to shield her from the rain.

"No need!" Su Liang avoided his umbrella.

Peng Fan put away his umbrella and walked beside Su Liang, "How is Asi now?" "He won't die." Su Liang replied coldly.

Peng Fan let out a sigh of relief, "That's good. I should have gone there earlier today..."

"It's not your fault!" Su Liang cut off Peng Fan.

"You shouldn't blame yourself too much either. Who could have known that someone would be so insane as to wager their own grandson's life?" Peng Fan frowned.

"You just go, I'll come to treat your father with acupuncture in half an hour." After saying this, Su Liang strode away without Peng Fan, heading towards her courtyard.

Peng Fan sighed and had no choice but to turn around and leave.

Su Liang didn't even take a bath, she changed out of her drenched clothes and sat quietly in her room.

A servant brought along the chicken soup that the old housekeeper had instructed them to cook earlier, but even after it had cooled down, Su Liang didn't touch it.

On the fourth day after Gu Ling's departure, on the first day without his protection, such an incident occurred. Su Liang deeply realized that all her peace and good fortune since she arrived in this world were inseparable from

Gu Ling's protection....

Chapter 220: 220. Twisted neck

It had rained the entire night, and Su Liang had been watching over Asi without sleep.

Only when the wind and rain outside the window had subsided, and the sky gradually brightened, she confirmed that Asi had no fever and his pulse was stable before she let out a long sigh of relief.

Asi's mother came over and persuaded Su Liang to get some sleep. She didn't insist any longer and left after reminding her of some things to pay attention to.

The morning breeze after the rain was cool, and Su Liang sneezed. Rubbing her tired brow, she slowly headed to her residence.

A bowl of cold chicken soup on the table in the room had a layer of grease on top.

Su Liang went straight to the bed, and without changing her clothes, took off her shoes and lay down. She pulled over the quilt, closed her eyes, and fell asleep quickly as the feeling of drowsiness overwhelmed her.

She slept deeply, and in her dreams, she traveled back to her previous world, realizing that everything here was just a dream...

Approaching noon, Su Liang woke up and sat on the bed, looking around, with a sigh in her heart. It was not a dream, and she couldn't go back.

Before this, Su Liang had never dreamed of returning to her original world, because there were no DeoDle she cared about there, and she had no worries.

However, yesterday's events had given Su Liang an inexplicable fear deep in her heart, and for the first time, she felt the greatest difference between the two worlds.

In her previous life, the society was built on law and order. Most people, as long as they abided by the law and were not extremely unlucky, would never have anything to do with "murder."

But it was different here. Although there were laws, they served the rulers and did not have a complete system in place. Ordinary people who killed other ordinary people would pay with their lives, while the powerful often avoided consequences for killing ordinary people. In other words, it was simply the survival of the fittest.

Su Liang understood this. Even after crossing worlds, she had killed people herself and could now cut off a person's hand without changing her expression, which was unimaginable in her previous life.

What frightened Su Liang was the realization that she was being assimilated by the rules of this world and was striving to become a strong person in this brutal hierarchy. And after yesterday's near-death experience and almost harming those close to her, she realized that though she had been working on improving her skills, it was far from enough. The frightening thing was that even if she improved her martial arts skills more, she might not be able to avoid what happened yesterday completely.

Because strength and weakness were relative, people were mortals with flesh and blood. They didn't have extra limbs and could die when killed. And no amount of martial arts could make a person invulnerable.

Of course, she might have avoided yesterday's incident if she had been a little more cautious, or if she had not practiced medicine. However, it is meaningless to make these assumptions afterward. Enemies can always find the most effective means to deal with you.

Last night, Su Liang thought maybe she should go back to Su Village or some other place to live an ordinary life, far away from power struggles.

But after waking up refreshed, she soberly realized that avoiding problems wouldn't solve anything. She was already involved in them, and it wouldn't be easy to escape.

Feeling somewhat lost, Su Liang wanted to talk to Gu Ling, but he was not around.

After washing and eating something simple, Su Liang went to see Asi.

He was out of danger but still unconscious. Facing his worried family, Su Liang assured them that he would recover.

The old housekeeper had been scared yesterday and was still pale. Initially, he wanted his granddaughter to serve Su Liang as a maid, but Su Liang had refused. Seeing that Su Liang got along well with Asi, he thought of suggesting that she keep him by her side if she needed help.

After the incident, the old housekeeper dismissed this idea. But even if he had proposed it, Su Liang would not have accepted.

After seeing Asi, Su Liang went to give Peng Qian acupuncture.

Peng Fan saw that her complexion was still good, but she was quieter than yesterday, so he didn't dare to ask anything.

"In another five or six days, you will be able to start your journey home," Su Liang said.

The father and son from the Peng Family thanked her again. With their sensitive identities, they could not stay here for long.

After Su Liang left, Peng Fan said to Peng Qian, "Actually, I really wanted to suggest to her to hire a master to protect herself, or at least have a servant by her side, rather than always being alone."

Peng Qian shook his head, "That's crossing the line. Just because you can't see someone by her side doesn't mean there isn't anyone. Even if there isn't, it's her own choice, not because she can't think of what you said. What you should see is that she has only taken over the Ning Family for few days, yet she already has loyal servants who would sacrifice themselves for her, this is also her ability, not just luck."

Peng Fan looked slightly startled, "Father's lesson is correct. I was too self-righteous."

Peng Qian sighed deeply, "It was only after going through the Wei Family incident did I realize how naive I was. People's hearts are the most difficult thing to fathom in this world. That's why I admire Su Liang, although she's just a young girl at the moment, she has the resources to rely on others and there are people who want to win her over, she hasn't stopped improving her own strength.

Remember, at any time, entrusting your safety to others carries risks. Even for us, father and son, there's no risk of trust, but now that I have to rely on you for protection, it's a burden for you, which is not what I want."

Su Liang didn't know that Peng Fan and his son were talking about her, she went to the place where the assassin from last night was being held, and the assassin's grandson was still alive.

As soon as the old man saw Su Liang, he struggled to his feet, and with his injured leg, he knelt down, continuously kowtowing, begging Su Liang to spare his grandson's life.

"Who sent you?" Su Liang asked coldly.

The old man grimaced, "It was... someone from the Eldest Prince..."

Su Liang wasn't surprised, "Why you?"

"I had done some things for the Eldest Prince before. This time he sent someone to find me, saying that the plan was to assassinate you. But I never expected that

someone secretly captured my grandson, brought him along to Xunyang City, severely wounded him, and forced me to use this method to get close to you and gain your trust..." The old man cried out, "I didn't want to do this, it really wasn't my idea! How could I disregard my own grandson's life?" Su Liang expressionless, "How much money did he give you?"

The old man's face stiffened, and he said in a low voice, "Five thousand taels of silver."

Su Liang's eyes were ice-cold, "You are just a mercenary who has done undercover work for Duanmu Cheng before, and this time you came to kill me for five thousand taels. Duanmu Cheng has tried to kill me on multiple occasions, even using Death Soldiers, but all those attempts failed. This time he chose you, the plan was meticulous. After all, how could I have expected an assassin to come to me in broad daylight, carrying his dying grandson and seeking medical help?"

The old man continued to kowtow, "I was forced, I really was forced! If I didn't do as they said, not only my grandson, but my whole family would die!"

Su Liang coldly retorted, "So, am I indebted to you? I saved your grandson, but instead of being grateful, you try to take advantage of my exhaustion and take my life to save your family. You were forced? Did I dig up your ancestral grave in my previous life so that I deserve this treatment now?"

"I was wrong... I was really wrong... General Su, have mercy and spare me, I won't dare to do it again, and my grandson, he's innocent, he didn't know anything!" The old man's head was bleeding from kowtowing.

Su Liang took a deep breath, "I can't bear to see death and not save someone, but I didn't expect this to become my biggest weakness in your eyes. I admit, this move was indeed very clever. This time, I am defeated."

The old man looked at Su Liang with earnest eyes, "As long as you spare me, I will serve you like a horse in the future! I swear!"

"Although the law can't stop you from trying to kill me, now that you're in my hands, whatever grievances and difficulties you have, take them to the Government Office." Su Liang finished and called for a guard to come in.

The old man turned pale; he had thought that Su Liang might kill him, but he never expected Su Liang would hand him over to the Government Office! If he didn't expose the mastermind, he would definitely die! If he did, he would just die faster!

"Take him and his grandson to the Government Office. Be honest and tell the governor the whole story about yesterday's incident. If I need to testify, just let me know." Su Liang finished speaking and turned to leave.

"General Su! Have mercy and let my grandson go! He didn't do anything wrong!" The old man shouted desperately.

Su Liane's face was cold. "MV servant. Asi. did nothing wrong either. I don't

think I have an obligation to protect a tool that tried to kill me. You are a beast, yet you still expect me to be a Bodhisattva? How ridiculous!”

The guards escorted the assassins, the grandfather, and the grandson, to the Xunyang City Government Office to file a complaint, and the governor took the matter very seriously when he learned that someone had tried to kill Su Liang.

When the story spread, everyone in Xunyang City despised the shameless and despicable grandfather and grandson.

Su Liang had saved the governor’s daughter-in-law and his grandson, and she was now the head of Xunyang City’s largest merchant of the Ning Family, as well as a court-appointed official and a favored person in front of the emperor. With all these factors combined, the governor held court and tried the case on the same day.

The old man clenched his teeth and said that he had a feud with Su Liang’s grandfather, not daring to tell the truth. He thought by doing so, he could at least save the other members of his family. Little did he know, before he and his grandson set foot in Xunyang City, his entire family had already been killed by Duanmu Cheng’s people to silence them. As for his grandson, whether or not Su Liang would spare him, there was only death in store. Unless Su Liang took him in and protected him personally, but she could not find a reason to do so.

The master went to Ning Mansion specifically to inform Su Liang of the outcome of the case. Both the grandfather and grandson had committed murder and would be executed at an appointed date.

Su Liang also didn’t mention the mastermind behind the scenes to the government office. The Royal Family wanted to save face, and she wouldn’t make a fuss about it, as it wouldn’t benefit her. But as long as Duanmu Yi learned of this matter, he should be able to deduce that it was the work of one of his good sons.

At night, Su Liang sat alone in the study room eating dinner, with rain falling outside the window, adding a sense of desolation.

Thinking about the time, she figured that Gu Ling should have almost reached the capital city. Capital city of Qian Country.

It was the end of summer, and thunderstorms had been frequent lately.

Gu Ling entered the city at dusk and secretly returned to Su Mansion, where there was no one inside.

Both Xing Yusheng and Lin Xueqing had been eagerly looking forward to moving in next door to Su Liang and Ning Jing after their wedding. But since Ning Jing had an accident, and Su Liang was not in the capital, they were now living in Marquis Zhong Xin’s Mansion accompanying Lady Xing, planning to move after Su Liang returned to the capital.

Gu Ling went to Su Liang’s room, picked up a couple of books she hadn’t read yet, and went to the back garden to check on the pomegranate tree he and Su Liang had planted before they left.

Though no one had watered it, it had survived since it was planted near the lake, and there had been recent rains. It had lost many leaves and looked sparse, but new leaves had grown, with red pomegranate flowers scattered among them.

It was impossible to enjoy pomegranates from the newly planted tree this year; they would have to wait until next year.

On the way to the Imperial Palace, Gu Ling passed by the Wan Family's residence, secretly entered, saw that Wan Hui and Zhengzheng hadn't returned to the capital yet, and quietly left.

The sound of wind and rain provided good cover for Gu Ling as he sneaked into the Imperial Palace, only to find that Duanmu Cheng, who had previously been imprisoned in the cold palace, was not there.

So he left the palace and went to the Eldest Prince's Mansion.

Not long after "Ning Jing" died, Duanmu Cheng, who had been imprisoned in the cold palace for some time, left the palace and returned to his Eldest

Prince's Mansion. Although he kept a low profile, his life behind closed doors was full of feasting and merry-making.

That night, Duanmu Cheng rested in his favorite concubine's room, and after a round of drinking and revelry, he had fallen asleep.

The tightly closed window suddenly opened, swaying and colliding in the wind and rain.

The maid hurried to close the window but couldn't close it because of the strong wind.

The noise woke Duanmu Cheng from his sleep. He sat up straight on the bed, eyes wide open, covered in cold sweat, "Who? Who's there? Come here! Quick, somebody come!"

Seeing Duanmu Cheng like a frightened bird, the concubine also shrank in fear and dared not move.

The guard outside rushed in and reported to Duanmu Cheng that it was just the window blown open by the wind, and there was no abnormal situation.

Duanmu Cheng, his face ashen, got out of bed, hastily put on his clothes, and walked out. The guard quickly held up an umbrella and accompanied him to the outer study room.

Two little maids knelt on the floor, wiping the rainwater that had splashed in, whispering to each other.

"I wonder what's wrong with His Highness?"

"My mother overheard the head chef, Old Madam Qian, saying that His Highness has been having nightmares lately, shouting 'Su Liang, don't kill me'."

"Su Liang? That Martial Arts Champion... how would she dare to kill His Highness?"

When Duanmu Cheng arrived at the outer study room, he quickly called two trusted subordinates, both middle-aged men, one tall and one short.

The tall one cautiously asked, "Your Highness, did you have another nightmare?"

Upon hearing this, Duanmu Cheng gnashed his teeth and said angrily, "As long as that bitch is alive, I won't have peace for a day!"

“This subordinate still believes that Su Liang wouldn’t dare to lay a hand on His Highness, unless she no longer wants to live. The Emperor is protecting you.” The short one said.

Duanmu Cheng snapped, “I don’t care! I want her dead! I don’t want to see her again! She’s here to harm me! I lost my position as crown prince, my second brother’s death, and the Wan Family lost their military power, all because of that bitch! Have you made any progress on what I asked you to do?”

The expression on the tall one’s face stiffened. “Reporting to Your Highness, I just received the news tonight that all the Death Soldiers sent to assassinate Su Liang in Xunyang City have failed.”

Duanmu Cheng grabbed a paperweight and hurled it at him, “Useless!”

The tall one didn’t dare to dodge and took the hit to his chest with a muffled grunt. He bent down to pick up the paperweight and respectfully placed it back on the table.

The short one was quickly questioned as well. He appeared much calmer and more confident. “Your Highness, the person this subordinate sent was late, and there has been no news yet, but I have planned meticulously this time, and Su Liang won’t be able to escape!”

Gu Ling, who was under the rear window, narrowed his eyes when he heard this!

“Hurry up! Otherwise, once she returns to the capital, there will be no chance to act!” Duanmu Cheng ordered sharply.

The short one respectfully nodded, “This subordinate understands. According to the plan, my people took action yesterday. Perhaps Su Liang is already dead, but the news has not arrived yet.”

Duanmu Cheng sneered upon hearing this, “If it’s as you say, that would be great!”

Just then, the rear window suddenly opened, startling Duanmu Cheng. His body trembled, and he yelled for his subordinates to close the window properly. The tall one ran over immediately.

Hearing a thud behind him, Duanmu Cheng turned his head to see the tall one on the ground, his face changing drastically. Before he could make any sound, a white silk scarf wrapped around his neck!

The short one saw Gu Ling, who appeared like a ghost behind Duanmu Cheng, and was about to call for help when he saw Gu Ling holding up a finger, signaling him to be quiet, or he would kill Duanmu Cheng immediately.

The short one’s face changed constantly, not daring to breathe.

“What is the plan you mentioned?” Gu Ling asked the short one. He wore a mask and a straw cloak, his voice low.

After hesitating for a moment, the short one saw Duanmu Cheng’s eyes rolling back in his head due to the tight strangulation and had no choice but to disclose that he had hired a master to go to Xunyang City with a carefully planned assassination of Su Liang.

After listening to the short one's plan, Gu Ling's eyes became icy cold. Not waiting for the short one to plead for mercy or giving Duanmu Cheng a chance to speak another word, he twisted Duanmu Cheng's neck!

Seeing Duanmu Cheng's head twisted to one side, the short man's face showed horror, "Who... who are you?" Regaining his wits, he tried to escape out of the door.

As soon as the short one stepped over, he was grabbed by the neck and yanked back. With a cracking sound, his neck twisted, and he stopped breathing.

In the heavy wind and rain, the window of the outer study room of the Eldest Prince's Mansion was open, and the corpses of two men with twisted necks lay inside, Duanmu Cheng nowhere to be seen.

Gu Ling carried Duanmu Cheng's body out of the city, throwing it into the torrential river, and then rushed in the direction of Xunyang City as quickly as he could....