

Three-Time 22

Chapter 22

[Return of the Stolen Item] In an instant, Huang Wanwan's face, which had been carefully adorned with blush and powder, lost all color as if struck by frost or lightning. She rushed over to grab Su Liang's arm, and her voice broke as she spoke, "Madam Ning, wait!" Su Liang pushed Huang Wanwan away, her expression indifferent. "What else does Miss Huang have to say?" "Those... those embroidery pieces from before are all at my house! I just liked them too much and, in my confusion, didn't want to return them to you! Though my father is the County Magistrate, I honestly didn't know about such laws! I'll go home now and get them for you! You don't need to compensate me for the money I spent!" Huang Wanwan said with a fawning expression, her face regaining a bit of color. Her apricot eyes rounded as she stared at Su Liang, waiting for her to nod in agreement. Instead, Su Liang laughed. "There's no need for Miss Huang to make another trip. We can go to the county government to retrieve them. Shall we go together?" "No!" Huang Wanwan's voice was shrill. "You...you wait here! I'll treat you to tea and snacks!" Su Liang scoffed, "As the old saying goes, people who are overly attentive for no reason are either thieves or swindlers. Miss Huang's sudden enthusiasm makes me feel uneasy. I'm afraid that once you leave, what we'll be waiting for is not the return of our item, but being thrown into jail instead. Your father went through a lot of trouble to frame us for the death of Mr. Huang from Feiyan Town, as we experienced firsthand last night." Huang Wanwan's face turned red as if someone had grabbed her throat, and she lunged at Su Liang again. "Nonsense! How dare you slander a court-appointed official!" Su Liang dodged Huang Wanwan and followed Ning Jing out the door. "Miss Huang, go home quickly and get those embroidery pieces. We'll wait for you at the county government." Huang Wanwan rushed out, screaming at the top of her voice, "Someone, come here! Arrest them! They killed someone!" All eyes in the tea house turned towards them, and the door to the neighboring room opened. Ning Jing's face was cold and indifferent, while Su Liang smiled calmly. "There were only the three of us in the room, and Miss Huang is fine. How could she say we killed someone? If there is another homicide case, that's perfect, since we're going to the county government anyway, waiting for Miss Huang to accuse us." Everyone knew that Huang Wanwan was the daughter of the County Magistrate, but she had no authority to make arrests or decide cases. Seeing that Su Liang and Ning Jing had an extraordinary bearing despite their ordinary attire, no one dared to rush forward and help Huang Wanwan. As Su Liang and Ning Jing came downstairs, the Osmanthus Cake was freshly baked. They bought a box of Osmanthus Cake before leaving the tea house. "Miss..." Liuliu helped Huang Wanwan. "Let's go home! Hurry!" Huang Wanwan, known as the number one beauty in Bei'an County, always dressed meticulously when she appeared in public. Today, despite her clothes being in order, she screamed and shouted in public, her expression disheveled, looking like a shrewish fishwife. After Huang Wanwan left, the Mingxiang Building was bustling with people trying to guess what had happened and wondering about the identities of Su Liang and Ning Jing. A man who had heard everything in the next room left the Mingxiang Building with his Osmanthus Cake and rode his horse towards Feiyan Town. ... There were always some idle onlookers gathered outside the county government. When they saw Su Liang and Ning Jing enter the Yamen, a crowd of people swarmed around them. In Qian Country, when someone reported a case, it was the duty of the master to receive and record it and then decide whether to "file it" as a case. The half-asleep master saw that there was work to be done. He gestured for Su Liang and Ning Jing to stand at the entrance and not to walk further inside. "Who are you, and who

do you want to accuse?" the master asked loudly. "My name is Su Liang, and this is...my husband. We live in Su Village in Feiyan Town. We accuse Miss Huang Wanwan, daughter of the County Magistrate, of buying stolen goods and demand the return of our property." Su Liang spoke loudly. The master was so startled that he almost fell off his chair. There was an uproar inside and outside the Yamen! "Stop talking nonsense!" The master's face turned angry. "If you can't produce evidence, it's slander!" Su Liang took out the double-sided Plum Blossom Screen embroidery and explained the whole story. When she finished, the master was sweating profusely, regretting that he shouldn't have given her a chance to speak in the first place. Now that the news had spread, there was no way to stop it! "Just now at the Mingxiang Building, the kind-hearted and reasonable Miss Huang promised to return the original item. We are waiting here to make the truth clear in front of everyone, so that my unscrupulous relatives don't have a handle to blackmail Miss Huang in the future." Su Liang said loudly. The onlookers chattered amongst themselves. "Why would Miss Huang buy someone else's embroidery?" "She didn't know about it. What's wrong with buying things?" "Exactly! Now that she knows, Miss Huang even said she would return it!" "Yes, we should all bear witness to this, so there are no misunderstandings in the future!" ... The Huang residence at the back of the county government was in chaos. Huang Jin never expected that Su Liang and Ning Jing would come not to sell the Plum Blossom Screen but to retaliate! He never thought they would be so bold, and their methods so ruthless! "Father, think of something quickly..." Huang Wanwan cried, gasping for breath. A voice came from outside, "That person named Su Liang is waiting outside the Yamen, and the master has asked for a decision from the County Magistrate on how to handle her." Huang Furen clenched her teeth in anger, "Rebels! Send someone to say they saw them kill that Huang person from Feiyan Town. Arrest them first, and we'll talk later!" Huang Jin's face was ashen. "It's too late! If we arrest them now, it will only make people suspect me of favoritism! I'm about to be transferred, so I can't give others any grounds to criticize me!" Huang Furen crushed her handkerchief in frustration. "You are the most powerful person in Bei'an County. Who dares to stand in your way?" Huang Jin said angrily, "The Crown Prince of Bei Jingwang is in Feiyan Town! If word reaches him..." Madam Huang's face stiffened, "This... he won't get involved, will he?" "He wouldn't have, but this fool had to use other people's embroidery to save face, and even gave it all to the Crown Prince!" Huang Jin glared at Huang Wanwan, wishing he could tear her apart. He completely forgot that not long ago, he had praised Huang Wanwan for her cleverness and hoped to climb higher through her marriage... "What are we waiting for? We must act quickly before the matter gets out of hand, arrest that troublemaker, and suppress the news!" Madam Huang's expression was anxious. Huang Jin stood up abruptly and rushed out of the door. ... More and more people gathered outside the County Magistrate's office, and the news of the County Magistrate's daughter being sued spread like a storm. At the same time, Huang Wanwan's accusations against Su Liang for murder at Mingxiang Building also spread. Connecting the two events only fueled people's imagination... Huang Jin appeared in court, sat up straight, and heavily struck the gavel. Su Liang frowned, worried that they would have to kneel. She hadn't considered this. If she was ultimately deemed guilty of "disrespecting court officials" because she refused to kneel, it would be a joke. Just as she was thinking this, a path opened up among the crowd outside the Yamen. Huang Jin's face changed dramatically, and Su Liang turned her head to see a tall man pushing a wheelchair into the Yamen. On the wheelchair was a young and handsome weak-looking man, and the pearls on his jade crown sparkled dazzlingly in the sunlight. Huang Jin hurriedly greeted him, bowing with his hands together, "Master should have just sent someone to give instructions, why did he come personally?" Su Liang thought, this must be the distinguished guest who is staying at Qiuming Manor in Feiyan Town. Xing Yusheng's gaze swept

over Su Liang's face, then looked at Huang Jin, and coldly said, "My grandmother heard that the embroidery gifted by your beloved is purchased and not personally stitched as she claims. She asked me to return it to the original owner." Everyone was shocked! If Huang Wanwan unknowingly bought stolen goods, it wouldn't matter whether she used them herself or gave them away. However, if she claimed that the embroidery she purchased was indeed her own work and gave it to others, then the problem would be much more significant! Huang Jin's face turned extremely ugly, "That wretched girl! How could she do such a disgraceful thing! I will personally bring her to apologize to the old lady!" "I heard that your beloved made unfounded accusations in Mingxiang Building, claiming someone to be a murderer without any evidence, and that she was even more domineering than Master Huang." Xing Yusheng said coldly. Huang Jin was sweating profusely, "She... she's been a bit crazy lately..." "If she's suffering from hysteria, then keep an eye on her and don't let her scare others." As Xing Yusheng spoke, he handed the brocade box on his lap to Su Liang, "Return it to the original owner." Su Liang took it and opened it to see several neckerchiefs, sachets, fan bags, and handkerchiefs, all for men, and all finely made. Apparently, Huang Wanwan used the embroidery originally stitched by the Original Master to please this young master. The purpose was clear as day. "Master Huang, Miss Huang's handkerchief was also stitched by me, please have her return it." Su Liang looked at Huang Jin. Huang Jin immediately sent someone to find Huang Wanwan, making it clear that he hadn't taught his daughter properly, but due to his busy schedule, he was completely unaware of her actions. Su Liang handed the embroidery and Plum Blossom Screen to Ning Jing, and returned the box to Xing Yusheng. "Miss, please keep it." Xing Yusheng shook his head. "This isn't mine." Su Liang insisted on returning it. The box seemed costly. Xing Yusheng sighed softly and let his attendant take it. Soon after, Liuliu returned with a bundle containing several handkerchiefs and two exquisitely embroidered skirts. "Please inform Miss Huang how much she has spent on these, and I will compensate her accordingly." Su Liang said. "No need!" Huang Jin quickly waved his hand. "Thank you, Master Huang." Su Liang nodded. She never really intended to pay. Xing Yusheng spoke again, "I heard that these two are suspects in a murder case? Master Huang, do you have any evidence?" Huang Jin's expression tightened, "Someone saw them having a public conflict with the young master from Feiyan Town, and he went missing the next day." "So, it's still unclear whether this young master Huang is dead or alive? Were these two the only ones he had offended in his life?" Xing Yusheng asked rhetorically. Huang Jin shook his head, "I am still investigating." "Once you find out, let me know." Xing Yusheng said. "Yes." Huang Jin nodded. Xing Yusheng turned his wheelchair around and looked at Su Liang again, "I wonder if the two of you are free today? My grandmother has invited you." Just as Su Liang was about to decline, Ning Jing whispered in her ear, "His complexion is dark..." "In that case, we must do as he insists." Su Liang nodded.