

Three-Time 24

Chapter 24

[Consultation Fee] Su Liang asked Ning Jing to write a new prescription for her, and she took the medicine she had prepared for Zhuzi to the Bai Family. "This medicine must not be cheap, right?" Madam Bai looked worried. Su Liang told them the actual price, and the Bai Family members sighed with relief. "Doctor Feng's prescription was damaged, but I memorized it. I asked Ning Jing to rewrite it. Keep it safe, and when you go to the town to get the medicine, you can be sure it's right if the price matches." Su Liang handed over the prescription she had prepared for Zhuzi to Bai Peng. Whether Dr. Feng intended to harm Xing Yusheng was still uncertain. If Su Liang directly said she didn't approve of Dr. Feng's prescription and insisted that Zhuzi take her medicine, the Bai Family might not agree. After all, Dr. Feng was a famous doctor in the capital city, while Su Liang's medical skills were unknown to others. As long as Zhuzi's health improved, there was no need for further explanation. After explaining to Mrs. Liu how to decoct the medicine, Su Liang beckoned Bai Xiaohu to come over, "I have a task for you." Bai Xiaohu's eyes lit up, "Are we going hunting for wild boar tomorrow?" Su Liang shook her head, "I won't be free tomorrow, but I'll call you when I am. Right now, there's something more important." Bai Xiaohu puffed out his chest, "No matter what Sister Su Liang asks me to do, I can handle it!" Su Liang chuckled, "You're going to help Zhuzi exercise." Bai Xiaohu froze, "But my brother can't be exposed to the cold air!" Seeing the confused looks on the Bai Family members' faces, Su Liang explained that Zhuzi's body was weak and needed gradual exercise. It wasn't good for him to always be cooped up at home. Old Mr. Bai tapped his dry tobacco pipe, "That makes sense! If we keep raising him like this, he'll become like a little girl and more susceptible to illness. As the old saying goes, children grow tougher with each fall!" Bai He also agreed with Su Liang's opinion. "So, what am I supposed to do?" Bai Xiaohu asked Su Liang. Su Liang took Bai Xiaohu and Zhuzi outside, pointed to a flat open space, and told him to take Zhuzi jogging every day. On the first day, they would run one lap; on the second day, they would run a little more. Gradually increase the intensity. If Zhuzi couldn't keep up, he could walk instead. "Sister, I can do it!" Zhuzi said with a serious expression. Su Liang cautioned him, "Don't force yourself. If you're tired, rest." "I'll watch my little brother and make sure he doesn't slack off or get too tired!" Bai Xiaohu patted his chest, promising to complete the task. Madam Bai gave the medicine money to Su Liang, who accepted it. ... When Su Liang returned home, she heard a noise in the backyard and went to see Ning Jing washing clothes by the well. "Did you collect the medicine fee?" Ning Jing asked, looking up. Su Liang nodded, "Yes." Helping the needy but not the poor is important. It's good to help others, but one must know their limits. Ning Jing continued washing the clothes, and Su Liang went back to her room to practice her calligraphy. Dinner was red date millet porridge, minced meat with eggplant, and wild vegetable pancakes. "So, you plan to live here for the long term, occasionally helping others with their medical needs?" Su Liang asked Ning Jing. Ning Jing nodded but then said, "I want to take the Imperial Examination." Su Liang was taken aback, "A sudden decision?" "You could say that." Ning Jing replied. "When are you taking the exam?" Su Liang felt it strange. This man seemed as carefree as Xianxian, so why did he suddenly want to take the Imperial Examination? "In half a month." Ning Jing replied. Su Liang was puzzled, "Are you going back to Xunyang City? Or can you take the Imperial Examination anywhere in Qian Country?" To her knowledge, from ancient Imperial Examinations to modern college entrance exams, all were related to household registration. Otherwise, it would create chaos. Ning Jing had mentioned before that Su Liang's household

registration was not in Su Family Village but still in the capital city. This was confirmed by Uncle Liang and Su Daqiang's family before the marriage. As a result, when Su Xu's family took Su Liang's property, it was an encroachment. When Ning Jing told Su Liang about this, he also mentioned that household registration management in Qian Country was very strict and did not allow random migration. At the time, Su Liang casually asked and learned that Ning Jing's household registration was not in Bei'an County either. "You can't take the exam elsewhere. However, if the Crown Prince Bei Jingwang recommends you, there will be no restrictions on household registration." Ning Jing said. Su Liang raised her eyebrows, "Is this your plan for the 'consultation fee' you will collect from Xing Yusheng?" After Ning Jing briefly explained, Su Liang understood. The Imperial Examination in Qian Country was based on choosing candidates from different provinces, with the court strictly limiting the number of admissions from each region. Examining students from other regions took up quota space, which was unfair to local students and prohibited by law. Faking household registration for the Imperial Examination was considered cheating. If discovered, the penalty would be decapitation. However, there were exceptions. The court always encouraged nobles to participate in the Imperial Examination to prove their talent, without being restricted by household registration. However, due to their inherent privileges and even hereditary positions, they didn't need to seek an official post through this route. As a result, as long as they participated, they would increase the number of extra admissions for local candidates without taking up channels intended for commoners to succeed. If they passed, their rankings were separate and did not affect the placement of other candidates. However, examinations were fair despite the differences in background. The Qian Country's Imperial Examination system was very strict, making cheating difficult. Some noble candidates failed at the Court Examination and couldn't even become scholars. Due to the loss of face, fewer and fewer noble families started participating in the exam, and "eligibility transfer" occurred. That is, noble sons and daughters would recommend friends or subordinates to use their special qualifications to take the Imperial Examination, which the court had no objections to. Once they passed, the recommender would be known as someone with a keen eye for talent. Of course, Crown Prince Bei Jingwang had this privilege. He was almost dead, and the possibility of him participating in the imperial examination in person was almost non-existent. As long as Xing Yusheng recommended him, Ning Jing could take the exam anywhere. "Do you want to be an official?" Su Liang was still puzzled. Ning Jing thought for a moment and replied, "Let's see how it goes." Su Liang: ...Deciding to participate in the imperial examination on a whim, and whether or not he would be an official if he got in, would be up to him at the time? This person was very indifferent, seeming to not want to do anything, but also seemingly able to do anything... "You've been copying Buddhist scriptures, are you confident?" Su Liang asked. Ning Jing shook his head slightly. Su Liang instantly understood: also up to fate... "Alright, the person you wanted to save was originally someone you saw that wouldn't live much longer. This request is not excessive," Su Liang said. After finishing the main topic, Ning Jing cleaned up the dishes, and Su Liang was about to return to her room when she suddenly remembered another matter, "Our household registrations are not here, so is our marriage legally protected?" Ning Jing's expression was indifferent, "Qian Country values filial piety, and unauthorized marriages without parents' orders and registration are not recognized if the parents do not approve." Su Liang coughed lightly, "What do we count as then? Elopement?" Ning Jing spoke two words, "Secret Marriage." Su Liang knew he was speaking seriously, but still felt a hint of inexplicable embarrassment... There was no conversation that night. On the next day, Qi Jun came to pick them up, and Su Liang and Ning Jing went to Qiuming Manor again. The beautiful scenery in the manor remained the same. But the tranquility and peace of yesterday had turned into an

invisible tension today. There were fewer servants, their heads hung even lower, and their steps became lighter. When they saw the old lady Xing, she couldn't hide her exhaustion, and the tall and thin nanny beside her had disappeared. "Doctor Feng returned to the capital overnight," the old lady Xing said. Su Liang did not inquire about the twists and turns behind this. Xing Yusheng was carefully dressed today, sitting in a wheelchair pushed over. He was dressed in jade and luxurious clothes, but his complexion was still very poor. Su Liang gave him acupuncture first. The medicine was prepared and sent over by the maid, and the old lady Xing signaled for Su Liang to check it first. She checked it, and it was alright, so she gave it to Xing Yusheng to drink. During the process of picking up the people, Qi Jun had conveyed the old lady Xing's invitation to them, wishing for them to stay in Qiuming Manor. However, Su Liang declined the invitation. Both she and Ning Jing harbored secrets, and it was inconvenient for them to get too close to outsiders. While having tea, the old lady Xing asked with a smile, "When does Master Ning plan to take Miss Su back to Xunyang City to meet her elders?" Su Liang understood it in her heart. Having discussed the matter last night, only with the approval of Ning Jing's parents could Su Liang indeed become his legitimate wife. The old lady Xing knew that Ning Jing was banished from his family, yet she still asked this question, showing her concern for Su Liang. In the eyes of outsiders, as the only legitimate son of the Ning family, Ning Jing would likely be welcomed back by the family as long as he wanted to return. "In a few days," Ning Jing said. The old lady Xing held Su Liang's hand and sighed repeatedly, "You are also pitiful. At the end of the year, you've barely come of age, and you've been married off by those conscienceless relatives. You two... haven't consummated the marriage yet, have you?" Su Liang saw the old lady Xing staring at a certain place on her face, could she tell? Or was it because she was too young and felt that Ning Jing wasn't so cruel? Xing Yusheng was stunned for a moment, looking at Su Liang with a slightly condensed gaze. Su Liang told the truth, "No." Old Lady Xing's eyes brightened a bit and looked at Ning Jing, "May I ask why Master Ning wanted to get married here?" Ning Jing looked at Xing Yusheng and said, "She wanted to marry me." The old lady Xing frowned, and Xing Yusheng closed his eyes. Ning Jing's statement was true, and Su Liang did not deny it. The relationship between them was complicated, and the details could not be shared with outsiders, nor was there any need to explain to outsiders. She could feel that the old lady Xing seemed to have some intention of "breaking up" her and Ning Jing, although it was not malicious. In some ways, Ning Jing was indeed not a good match. As expected, the old lady Xing soon proposed to recognize Su Liang as her goddaughter, and asked whether Su Liang would like to go and live with her at Bei Jingwang Mansion. If the original master was sitting beside the old lady Xing at this moment, it would be a great opportunity to fall from the sky, a perfect chance to leave her miseries behind and embrace a bright future. But today's Su Liang was only here to treat people and didn't need to be rescued by anyone. "I appreciate the kindness of the old lady, but I am doing well now and I don't want to leave temporarily," Su Liang tactfully declined, "I will do my best to treat the crown prince, and also ask the crown prince for help in another matter." Xing Yusheng immediately asked, "What is it?" Su Liang explained Ning Jing's desire to participate in the imperial examination in Bei'an County. "I didn't expect Master Ning to have such ambition. I will arrange this matter," Xing Yusheng said with a frown, looking at Ning Jing, "But I have a question I want to ask Master Ning to clarify." Ning Jing nodded, and heard Xing Yusheng ask, "If you hadn't met me, would you not have taken the exam?" At this point, it was too late to rush back to Xunyang City to take the exam. "That's right," Ning Jing replied. "Hiding in a small village, will your brothers let you go? If you encounter troubles in the future, how will you protect her?" Xing Yusheng didn't know why he was upset. It turned out that Su Liang suddenly cared about his illness yesterday because of Ning Jing... Ning Jing's expression was calm,

“You don’t need to worry about it, Crown Prince.” The old lady Xing sighed deeply, “Miss Liang, think it over carefully, and don’t rush to answer. We will arrange for Master Ning’s examination as soon as possible.” Su Liang smiled, “Then consider this as the medical fee for treating the crown prince.” This was the first time Xing Yusheng saw someone who actively wanted to get close, but always politely kept their distance. Su Liang was just short of saying directly: I am treating the illness, and you are helping me as a reward. There’s no debt between us. It’s just a transaction and there’s no need to talk about feelings. After Su Liang and Ning Jing left, the old lady Xing looked regretful, “How nice it would have been if I hadn’t recognized the wrong owner of the handkerchief in the beginning!” Xing Yusheng sighed softly, “She must really like Ning Jing.”