

Three-Time 291

Chapter 291: 291. Returning Home, Two Masters

No one in Yao City expected that Gu Ling and Su Liang, who were granted marriage by order and had a splendid wedding, would break up not long after the ceremony began and right after paying their respects at the hall.

The reason quickly spread: it had always been Su Liang's unrequited love, and

Gu Ling agreed to the imperial marriage only to ask Emperor Liang for the Thousand-year Snow Lotus. He never truly intended to marry her, and even worse, he planned to give the Snow Lotus to another woman!

Those who heard the news were shocked and deeply sympathized with Su Liang's plight, while also condemning Gu Ling's cold and selfish behavior. They also admired Su Liang's decisiveness in separating from Gu Ling after learning the truth.

For a time, the whole of Yao City was abuzz with discussion about this matter.

The festivities at Prince Ning's mansion had long ended, but the bright red wedding decorations hung at the gate made all who saw them sigh.

Su Liang went to the palace, and Ren Dong arranged for the two guards who accompanied Nian Jincheng to eat and rest.

Nian Jincheng also went to bed. He had seen Gu Ling and Su Liang, and the development of the situation was beyond his control. He left it to them. Situ Xie, who hadn't left yet, saw Gu Ling taking off his wedding clothes and packing his luggage, and sighed deeply, 'You two had planned this fake marriage beforehand, hadn't you?'

Gu Ling's expression was indifferent, "No." In fact, he felt a bit regretful. This marriage had ended too quickly, and he hadn't even had the chance to properly see Su Liang in her wedding dress.

Situ Xie shook his head, "Forget it. As long as you know what you're doing, with Su Liang's intelligence, she should be able to get through Emperor Liang's questioning. When she leaves the palace, you two should hurry back to Qian Country to avoid any further complications."

As Situ Xie was about to leave, he turned back at the door, "Did Emperor Qian send Su Liang here for the Mu Family's secret scroll? How will you explain yourselves if you return empty-handed?"

Gu Ling countered, "Will you give the secret scroll to me?"

Situ Xie's expression stiffened, "The secret scroll is with the emperor, and even if I had it, giving it to you would be detrimental to Liang Country. Ling'er, I hope you remember that Emperor Qian will only use and be suspicious of you, never truly trusting you. But Liang Country will always accept you."

Gu Ling no longer spoke, and Situ Xie sighed repeatedly, "Take care in the future. If you ever need my help, just let me know." With that, he left.

Gu Ling stared at Situ Xie's retreating figure, momentarily puzzled about what his real intentions were.

Liang Country's Imperial Palace.

Having heard Su Liang's reasons for wanting to annul her marriage with Gu Ling, Situ Han couldn't reproach her. After all, he knew about Gu Ling's demand for the Thousand-year Snow Lotus in exchange for the marriage, but he never told Su Liang.

Su Liang was not an ordinary woman. She was famous for winning the Martial Arts Champion title and had gained Emperor Qian's favor afterwards. Given her temperament, her reaction to being deceived was only natural.

Situ Han tried to console Su Liang, "As you spend more time together, Ling'er will naturally grow fond of you."

Su Liang's eyes dimmed, "Does Your Majesty think I chose to give up?"

Situ Han furrowed his brows, only to see Su Liang's bitter smile, "Today he revealed the truth because he is unwilling to continue with me. After all, he has already obtained the Snow Lotus and fulfilled his promise to you by completing the wedding ceremony with me. However, he is determined not to truly be my husband. In that case, insisting on it would mean losing my self-respect."

At this point, Su Liang was seen as a victim of a deceitful marriage, and Situ Han, as Gu Ling's accomplice, couldn't say more.

However, at this moment, Situ Han doubted whether Su Liang made this decision because Nian Jincheng had brought Duanmu Yi's intentions.

"I heard that General Nian was sent to deliver Emperor Qian's edict to you, but something happened?" asked Situ Han.

Su Liang nodded, "The emperor is unwell and ordered me to return to the country as soon as possible. Emperor Liang has fully recovered, and I should have already returned."

Situ Han understood that his goal of letting Su Liang and Gu Ling marry had only been half accomplished, and he could only leave it at that. He guessed that Duanmu Yi's real purpose in sending Nian Jincheng was for the secret scroll, so he asked Su Liang when she planned to set out.

"Today," sighed Su Liang, "I can't delay any longer."

Situ Han was surprised. She was leaving today? Was Su Liang not planning to steal the secret scroll? Or was she planning to pretend to leave and then secretly return?

After a series of polite refusals and Situ Han watching Su Liang leave, he sent someone to summon Situ Xie to the palace.

When Su Liang returned to Prince Ning's mansion, Ren Dong saw her calm appearance and thought she was upset but didn't want to show it. She could barely contain her indignation, "Marquis Chang Xin is too much! The master has been so good to him, but he deliberately deceived her!"

Su Liang took Ren Dong into her room, and while packing her luggage, she said, "Don't get agitated. He didn't deceive me."

Ren Dong was stunned, and Su Liang smiled, "I knew from the beginning that he agreed to the imperial marriage just for the Snow Lotus. I also planned with him to stay in Yao City to search for

the secret scroll by prolonging our time here. Now that the emperor has ordered us to return, it's time to stop pretending."

Ren Dong was dumbfounded, "Didn't the master really want to marry Marquis Gil?"

Su Liang shrugged, "I did before, but in the future, it depends on my mood. As for now, I just want to go home as soon as possible."

Ren Dong: ... Can you really control your emotions so easily? So carefree! I just knew it, my master could never be trapped by feelings!

Seeing Ren Dong's admiring face, Su Liang told her not to think about those random things and quickly prepare for departure.

Although their marriage had been annulled on the wedding day, Su Liang and Gu Ling, both being subjects of Qian Country, left Yao City together under the watchful eyes of the people. As before, Su Liang rode a horse and Gu Ling sat in the carriage.

As for the many gifts and rewards Su Liang had received, she asked Situ Xie to help send them to Qian Country later, and Situ Xie happily agreed.

Peng Wei and Peng Fan escorted them to the city gate.

"Are you alright?" said Peng Wei. He glared at the carriage carrying Gu Ling, clearly believing that Su Liang had been badly hurt.

Su Liang shook her head, "I'm fine. Don't worry, Uncle Peng."

"You're so good, it's that brat's problem! There are plenty of people who like you, right, Peng Fan?" Peng Wei intentionally spoke loudly.

Peng Fan, suddenly mentioned, hesitated for a moment. He admired Su Liang and had once been moved by her, but his father had extinguished that tiny spark in his heart. Upon returning, his grandfather had told him he was unworthy of Su Liang and should give up early; however, to comfort Su Liang today, he had to make his position clear...

Nevertheless, Peng Fan said solemnly, "Yes, I am one of Miss Suls admirers."

Gu Ling in the carriage: ... Su Liang will definitely say thank you.

Su Liang suddenly laughed, "Oh, thank you, Young Master Peng."

Peng Fan: ... Not at all, not surprising...

Nian Jincheng cleared his throat, "It's getting late."

Su Liang saluted, "Uncle Peng, hurry back! Farewell, everyone!"

It was not only the Peng family members, but also Situ Jing and Situ Yao who came to see her off. Su Liang had already said goodbye.

Watching them leave, Situ Yao sighed, "The happiest day has turned out like this."

Situ Jing shook his head, "Little sister, don't think too much about it. They don't seem to care much."

After leaving Yao City, Su Liang knew that Situ Han or Situ Xie would definitely send someone to monitor their movements, suspecting that they would sneak back to steal the secret scroll.

As for this, Su Liang didn't care. Let them watch, she wouldn't return to Yao City to steal the secret scroll, there was no need.

That night, they rested in another city closest to Yao City.

The guards arranged by Duanmu Yi for Nian Jincheng found it strange that Su Liang and Gu Ling could eat at the same table as if nothing had happened, but their only duty was to report back to Duanmu Yi everything they saw and heard, without thinking too much.

When they set out the next day, Gu Ling also rode a horse.

Without the carriage, the speed of the team was much faster. In fact, neither Gu Ling nor Su Liang needed to rush back day and night; it was all for Nian Jincheng to reunite with his newlywed wife as soon as possible. As there were spies watching, they decided to hurry up and discuss things after returning home.

All the rests were decided by Gu Ling. He had the highest status and the biggest temper, and everyone listened to him.

And Nian Jincheng knew very well that the decision to rest or not, and for how long, actually depended on whether Su Liang was hungry, cold, or tired. Gu Ling did everything to make Su Liang less tired.

Thus, by the fifteenth day of the first lunar month, the Lantern Festival, they had left Liang Country and returned to Xuanbei City in Qian Country.

By the time they arrived in Xuanbei City, it was already late afternoon. Su Liang and Gu Ling decided to stay here for the night.

"Did Lian Shun go home?" Su Liang asked Xing Ji.

Xing Ji nodded with a smile, "After he went to Liang Country, the Lian family in Jiaye City sent a letter asking him to go home for the New Year. He insisted on leaving after reading the letter, and I didn't stop him."

"Both successors the righteous father wants to train have all gone south. What should we do?" Su Liang chuckled.

Xing Ji sighed, "Yes, but if you could help me, I wouldn't care about those brats at all."

Su Liang nodded, "I'd be happy to, but the emperor thinks I'm more suitable as an Imperial Physician for now." Although she had voluntarily resigned as a general, being a general in the capital city didn't hold much significance. "What about you?" Xing Ji asked with a smile, "What do you like to do?"

Su Liang thought seriously, "Comparatively speaking, rather than going to battle and killing enemies, I prefer to practice medicine and save lives. It's not as thrilling and heart-stirring, and it suits me as a weak girl."

Xing Ji burst into laughter, "If you are a weak girl, then wouldn't Yu Sheng be ashamed to death?"

As for Xing Ji's habit of teasing his own son while praising her, Su Liang had long become accustomed to it and once again promised to convey his words to Xing Yusheng.

Seeing Su Liang always put Xing Ji in a good mood. After exchanging pleasantries, they got to the main point.

Su Liang told Xing Ji that she planned to return to the capital city and explain everything to Duanmu Yi. She and Gu Ling agreed to Emperor Liang's forced marriage just to obtain the secret scroll.

"If that's the case, the emperor shouldn't blame you." Xing Ji, knowing that Gu Ling hadn't intentionally deceived Su Liang, felt relieved. He was also worried that Su Liang would be hurt by loving Gu Ling too much without getting a response.

"As for that secret scroll, it was originally obtained by Situ Xie and then deliberately put up for sale to lure out the head of the Mu Family. The emperor of Liang Country got it unexpectedly." Su Liang said.

Xing Ji's expression became serious, "So that's how it was. But even if it's only a half-scroll that's unusable as you said, the emperor will still want it."

Su Liang had already made a plan for it, "I will explain it to the emperor."

Xing Ji nodded, "In that case, I can rest assured." He didn't ask further how she planned to explain things to Duanmu Yi.

When Su Liang was about to leave, Xing Ji asked about her real relationship with Gu Ling.

"Not bad, but for now, we're just friends." Su Liang said.

"Do you think it could go further?" Xing Ji asked with a smile.

Su Liang clasped her hands together, "Fate is predetermined by the heavens, you should ask the old man under the moon."

Xing Ji: ...

When they set out early the next day, Qi Jun also joined the team heading back to the capital city. Su Liang thought he could have a good career in the army, but Qi Jiang didn't want his son to become a military commander. Although Qi Jun had such an ambition, he preferred to follow Su Liang at this stage.

"If only I could go with my master to Liang Country." Qi Jun said with some regret.

Su Liang called Ren Dong, "You tell Qi Jun how cold Liang Country is."

Ren Dong thought for a moment and said, "I'm not afraid of the cold."

Qi Jun looked baffled, only to hear Ren Dong say, "Because my name is Ren Dong."

Qi Jun snorted a laugh, "Ren Dong, you've become humorous after going to Liang Country."

Ren Dong: ...That cold joke was told by Su Liang...

Then Su Liang silently rode forward to catch up with Gu Ling, "I'm afraid of the cold. You guys chat."

Qi Jun asked about some people he knew, such as King Yue Situ Xie, Princess Yaoguang, and the Emperor of Liang Country. Ren Dong only talked about her impressions of those people, summing up her evaluation in two words:

"hypocritical."

Once again passing by Bei'an County's Feiyan Town, Su Liang proposed to visit her old home and asked for half a day's time.

Gu Ling didn't express his opinion but implicitly agreed. They found an inn, and he went to his room, ordering not to be disturbed.

Nian Jincheng knew that Gu Ling would probably secretly return to Su Village, so he took the two guards to drink alcohol.

Su Liang brought Ren Dong and Qi Jun on horseback to Su Village. The mountains in the village were still covered with un-melted snow. Someone recognized Su Liang and shouted excitedly, "Miss Su is back!"

Soon, Su Liang saw many familiar faces. She greeted them and returned to her home in the village.

Little Tiger and Zhuzi were both at school. Bai Dame hurried over and was overjoyed to see Su Liang, "Liang girl, why did you come back? Are you leaving again?"

Su Liang didn't need to ask and already knew everything in the village was fine. She explained to Bai Dame that this was just a stop on her way back from Liang Country on an official business and would leave soon.

"Little Tiger and Zhuzi always talk about you." Bai Dame held Su Liang's hand and wanted her to come over to eat.

"I came back to find a book, and I'll be there later." Su Liang said with a smile.

Bai Dame nodded repeatedly, "Alright, I'll go cook for you now!" And then she hurriedly left.

Su Liang instructed Ren Dong and Qi Jun to go to the school and check the situation, and to report back to her afterward. The two left together. By the time Su Liang pushed open the door of the room Gu Ling had been staying in, he was already standing inside.

"Great God, how does it feel to be back home?" Su Liang lightly laughed.

Gu Ling turned around and nodded slightly, "It's nice."

"That's a pretty high compliment from you. Your go-to comment is 'it's alright.'" Su Liang sat down at the table. "Unfortunately, there are no pumpkins or eggplants in the backyard during this season. I'm going to Bai Auntie's house for dinner later, and you can't go."

This was because the Bai Family knew "Ning Jing," not Gu Ling.

Gu Ling thought to himself that the next time he could eat at the Bai's house, it would probably be after he and Su Liang got married.

In between, Su Bai visited and chatted with Su Liang for a while. He talked about the situation at the school and some things happening in the village. He also asked about Su Liang's recent situation.

In this remote village, news wasn't very up-to-date. Su Liang and Gu Ling's marriage and separation in Liang Country hadn't reached them yet.

Su Liang simply said that everything was fine for her.

After Su Bai left, Su Liang went to visit Su Dakuan. He couldn't help but mention "Ning Jing" and Su Liang comforted him with a few words.

Aunt Bai prepared the most sumptuous peasant meal for Su Liang, Qi Jun, and Ren Dong. Little Tiger and Zhuzi also specially ran back from the school to see Su Liang. They had grown taller since the last time they met.

Su Liang couldn't stay long, so she left after dinner.

Aunt Bai steamed a basket of steamed buns for her to eat on the road, and Uncle Bai roasted a bunch of small sweet potatoes.

When Su Liang returned to Feiyan Town, it was only then that Nian Jincheng went to knock on Gu Ling's door, calling him out, saying it was time to leave.

Of those steamed buns and roasted sweet potatoes, Su Liang only gave one to each of the others, saying the rest were all hers, but in reality, she secretly gave them all to Gu Ling.

Qian Country's capital city.

News of Gu Ling and Su Liang receiving Emperor Liang's conferment and marriage, but breaking up on the day of their wedding in Liang Country, had already spread far and wide.

Su Liang's friends had cursed Gu Ling countless times.

Every time Old Master Qin saw Lin Shuzhi, he would sigh. That young master from the Gu Family, even though he looked so pretty and had big eyes, also had a huge and terrible heart! He dared to bully such a good girl like Su Liang! It was unbearable!

Lin Shuzhi, who knew that everything was plotted by Su Liang and Gu Ling, could only cooperate with Old Master Qin, ridicule Gu Ling together, and show pity for Su Liang.

Finally, in the late lunar month, Su Liang and Gu Ling returned to the capital city.

Not long after entering the city, Su Liang saw a familiar hunchbacked old man fall by the roadside. Recognizing it was Old Mu, she hurriedly dismounted and lent him a hand.

"Thank you...Thank you, Dr. Su..." The old man spoke weakly, but there was a sharp glint in his eyes. He stuffed something into Su Liang's sleeve and whispered, "Take this to finish the task."

"Master is really kind." Su Liang whispered while helping Old Mu up, "You should go home now."

By the time Su Liang headed towards the Imperial Palace, the hunchbacked old man had disappeared into the crowd.

Su Mansion.

By the lakeside, there was a pile of alcohol jars lying around, and a man was lying among them. If you didn't look closely, you might think it was all just a pile of rags.

Old Mu walked over, and after kicking the "pile of rags" once, the figure moved. He kicked again, "Drunken fool, you better get up! I told the girl I'd find her a good master, but where am I supposed to put my old face when you're half-dead like this?"

"What master...apprentice...I...want...to drink..." the "pile of rags" muttered unclearly.

Old Mu huffed angrily, "Drink, drink, drink! You'll drink yourself to death one of these days! Let's see how your apprentice treats you when she comes back!"

"App...appr...apprentice...what apprentice...no...none! I don't have any!" The "pile of rags" giggled foolishly.

Old Mu sat by the lake and sighed, "I carried you back with so much effort, thinking I could please my apprentice and live with her later. But with the way you are now, not even saying a coherent sentence, I don't even know if you really know poison techniques. We both might be kicked out soon. Guess we'll have to live at my other disciple's house.. That boy, even if you drink yourself to death, he can still revive you with his anger!"

Chapter 292: 292. Impossible

Qian Country Imperial Palace.

Duanmu Chen looked at Su Liang, who walked alone into the Imperial Study, and couldn't help but feel worried for her. Ever since he learned about Su Liang and Gu Ling accepting Emperor Liang's marriage earlier this year, Duanmu Yi's mood had been visibly bad.

Duanmu Chen didn't know Su Liang's intentions and was unable to speak up for her.

At this moment, it was only Duanmu Yi and Duanmu Chen, father and son, as well as Su Liang. Nian Jincheng and Gu Ling waited outside, not allowed to enter.

Looking at Su Liang, who had saluted gracefully, Duanmu Yi let her rise and coldly said, "I sent you to Liang Country to handle important matters, but you neglected everything for Gu Ling! Give me an explanation!"

Su Liang slightly bowed, "In response to Your Majesty, I do want to marry Marquis Chang Xin, but there are hidden secrets regarding Emperor Liang's marriage decree. "

Duanmu Chen couldn't help but ask, "I heard it was because Gu Ling deceived you to get the Thousand-year Snow Lotus?"

Su Liang shook her head, "No. Lord Gu indeed needs the Thousand -Year Snow

Lotus to repay a favor, but I knew this from the start. Earlier this year, Emperor Liang's illness had almost been cured, and if I didn't agree to the marriage and conferment, we would have to leave Yao City and wouldn't be able to complete the important tasks the emperor assigned."

Duanmu Chen's expression became serious, "So you are saying that you two pretended to get married in advance to buy time to find the secret scroll?"

"Yes," Su Liang nodded, "Although Marquis Chang Xin doesn't like to associate with people, he isn't the kind of person who would deceive others for his own benefit."

Duanmu Chen nodded, "So that's how it is. Father, it seems that we misunderstood Su Liang and Gu Ling. They only pretended to agree to Emperor Liang's terms."

Duanmu Yi's expression relaxed slightly, "Did you get the secret scroll?"

Duanmu Chen thought that it would be best if Su Liang had really obtained it, otherwise, no matter how much explanation, it would be meaningless.

He saw Su Liang take out a cloth-wrapped object from her sleeve, "Your Majesty, this is the half copy of the secret scroll that the royal family of Liang acquired."

Duanmu Yi and Duanmu Chen's eyes lit up! Because from start to finish, the information they had received was that Su Liang not only maintained a good relationship with the royal family of Liang but was even extremely harmonious. If she had stolen or snatched the secret scroll, it wouldn't have been so peaceful. They didn't expect that she had actually obtained it!

Su Liang stepped forward, opened the cloth wrap, and placed the half-secret scroll in front of Duanmu Yi. The object Mu Lao gave her was exactly the same as the one Mu Yu handed to Situ Xie.

Duanmu Yi flipped through it from beginning to end but frowned, "There isn't a single complete blueprint!"

Su Liang nodded, "Yes. That is also the reason for the auction of the secret scroll in Yao City."

Then, Su Liang explained that the dark weapon folding fan that first appeared in Yao City's Treasure Pavilion was actually hers.

"Yours? Where did you get it?" Duanmu Yi looked astonished.

Su Liang respectfully said, "It was left behind by Ning Jing."

Duanmu Yi and Duanmu Chen were both stunned. After "Ning Jing" died, Su Liang received all her inheritance.

"She bought it, but I don't know where she got it from," Su Liang said, "I only brought it for self-defense, but I never used it, so no one knew about it. When I got to Liang Country and stayed in King Yue's Mansion, I couldn't find any leads, so I discussed a plan with Marquis Chang Xin to 'beat the grass to scare the snake'. He used a trip to Yao City's Qingjing Temple to play chess with an old monk as a cover and secretly disguised himself, then sold my folding fan to the Treasure Pavilion."

Duanmu Yi and Duanmu Chen had already received news about the folding fan, but they didn't expect it to be a ploy by Su Liang and Gu Ling.

Duanmu Yi's face had lost its anger, "Was it useful?"

Su Liang nodded, "Yes, I asked General Peng to buy the fan publicly and give it to me, then I took it apart."

Duanmu Yi was well aware of the great favor Su Liang had done for the Peng Family.

"After I disassembled the fan, a craftsman named Zhao Yu appeared by Situ Xie's side and said he could help me repair the fan," Su Liang said, "That man should be the descendant of the Mu Family who had pledged allegiance to Situ Xie."

Duanmu Chen frowned, "Why would Situ Xie want the descendant of the Mu Family to repair that fan?"

"At first, we couldn't find a breakthrough, so we used the fan as bait. It wasn't until the auction that I roughly understood the situation," Su Liang said.

Then Su Liang told Duanmu Yi and Duanmu Chen that she had found out that the auction was actually designed by Situ Xie. He had only obtained a half-secret scroll that was useless, so he dared to sell it. His purpose was to severely exploit Su Liang and make her a target of public criticism.

"Zhao Yu is very young and shouldn't be the main person in the Mu Family. Situ Xie had him fix the fan to confirm whether it was really from the Mu Family. The other purpose of the auction was to draw out the person who had the other half of the secret scroll," Su Liang said, "I didn't buy the scroll publicly because

I knew there was deception."

"Then how did you obtain the secret scroll?" Duanmu Yi asked with a frown.

"Marquis Chang Xin secretly infiltrated the palace and copied it. We had the opportunity to shake off the spies only after moving into the Ning Wang Mansion granted by Emperor Liang," Su Liang said. The copy that Old Mu gave her was obviously new, with no words, only diagrams.

Duanmu Yi looked at the secret scroll and fell silent.

Duanmu Chen gave Su Liang an approving look. The complicated ins and outs of the situation were not something they could deduce from the information they had obtained.

It was clear that Su Liang and Gu Ling had been working hard and diligently to carry out Duanmu Yi's instructions from beginning to end. As for titles and marriages, coronations, and the like, they were all meant to appease the Liang royal family and deceive Situ Han.

Even the nullification of the marriage between Su Liang and Gu Ling had a perfect reason: Su Liang discovered deception.

In reality, the one who was truly deceived was Situ Han.

"If we don't get the other half of the secret scroll, it is just waste paper," sighed

Duanmu Yi.

Su Liang nodded, "For the Liang royal family, it is the same. I believe that the Mu family has not appeared because the person in charge does not want to participate in the power struggle and has only produced a traitor in this generation. In the following days, the real master of the Mu family will not have to do anything, nor will the Mu family's secret scroll have a chance to be truly discovered. That's why I don't think this mission is considered successful, but I don't expect any further gains from Liang Country at this point."

"Father Emperor, I agree with Su Liang," Duanmu Chen said. "This half of the secret scroll is only temporarily useless; it is hard to say how things will go in the future."

"Hmm," Duanmu Yi nodded, looking at Su Liang, his expression softened considerably, "You have worked hard."

"The idea was mine. Most of the tasks were taken at risk by Marquis Chang Xin. Without his help, I would not have been able to bring the secret scroll back," Su Liang said.

Duanmu Chen smiled, "Su Liang, do you regret that your marriage to Chang Xin is fake?" He asked this deliberately in front of Duanmu Yi.

Su Liang nodded, "To tell the truth, yes. The rumors outside were only to deceive Emperor Liang. In fact, Chang Xin never lied to me."

"So you still haven't given up on him?" Duanmu Chen continued to ask.

"Of course not," Su Liang replied seriously. "After our time together in Liang Country, I came to like Chang Xin even more. He might seem cold, but he is actually very reasonable and has such great strength!"

"Father Emperor, Su Liang and Gu Ling worked together seamlessly on this mission. Since their marriage in Liang Country was fake, why not grant them a real marriage?" Duanmu Chen proposed earnestly.

Su Liang also looked expectantly at Duanmu Yi.

Duanmu Yi's face was calm, "I would really like to grant your wish, but I can't force Gu Ling into it. As you've just returned, rest well for now. I don't want to embarrass Emperor Liang too much, so we can discuss this later. Also, be careful not to have too much contact with Gu Ling, as after all, you broke off with him in Liang Country publicly by claiming deception."

Su Liang couldn't hide her disappointment. However, it was all an act; she was still insisting on liking Gu Ling only to avoid Duanmu Yi's arrangements for her marriage and had no intention of asking for another marriage grant.

After leaving the Imperial Study, Su Liang went out of the palace alone.

Nian Jincheng and Gu Ling were summoned together. Regarding the matter of the secret scroll, Gu Ling had quietly communicated with Su Liang when they entered the palace. As for Nian Jincheng, he claimed to be merely a messenger who didn't contribute much and knew nothing.

Duanmu Yi did not ask Gu Ling if he had changed his opinion of Su Liang and started to like her. He simply asked about the main issue and then brought up the matter of the Thousand-year Snow Lotus.

Gu Ling said that he had obtained two pieces of it and had indeed given one to a young woman. He did this because she had once helped him, and he wanted to repay her kindness.

As for the two guards who accompanied Nian Jincheng to Liang Country and returned with Su Liang, they didn't notice anything unusual. Nian Jincheng didn't dawdle on the way, and there were no intimate actions or conflicts between Su Liang and Gu Ling during their return journey. They mainly focused on hurrying back.

After everyone left, Duanmu Chen sighed, "Father Emperor, anyone else sent on this mission would not have been able to accomplish it. Su Liang is truly intelligent, decisive, and calculative, while Gu Ling is undeniably loyal and competent."

"Do you really wish for them to be together?" Duanmu Yi countered.

Duanmu Chen nodded, "I think they are a perfect match."

"I never regarded Su Liang as a woman. They are both too outstanding and too individualistic. If they were to join forces, do you really think you'd be able to sleep at night?" Duanmu Yi asked coldly.

Duanmu Chen's expression grew serious. Was Duanmu Yi wary of Su Liang and Gu Ling? As an emperor, it was indeed prudent to use smart and powerful subordinates with caution.

Duanmu Chen knew that if the ruler of Qian Country's royal family had no talent and virtues, Su Liang or Gu Ling might rebel for the sake of the nation's stability and the welfare of the common people, because their loyalty did not include fear of imperial power.

In short, the problem was not that Su Liang and Gu Ling were too powerful, but that their courage was too great.

Such people could be used, and if used correctly, they would be excellent aides. At the same time, caution was necessary.

Actually, this was what Duanmu Chen had always done. He dared not make mistakes because he knew that once some errors occurred, he would lose Su Liang as his ally.

"Father Emperor, I understand," Duanmu Chen said respectfully. He had initially thought that Duanmu Yi wanted Su Liang due to the Heavenly Edict, but his consideration had been too simplistic.

After leaving the palace, Nian Jincheng asked Gu Ling how he would like to eat and whether he would like to stay at his house. Gu Ling nodded, "Alright."

Nian Jincheng was taken aback, "Are you really going?"

“You knew I wouldn’t go, so you asked.” Gu Ling’s expression was indifferent, “Let’s sever our friendship.”

Nian Jincheng: ... He was sincere in inviting him, but he did believe that Gu Ling would surely not agree...

Of course, Gu Ling only wanted to live with Su Liang and would not bother newlyweds Nian Jincheng and Yang Yu. The two quickly parted ways.

Nian Jincheng hurried home on horseback, thinking he could see his beloved wife right away and ease his longing. But as soon as he entered the door, he heard his housekeeper say that Yang Yu had left for Su Mansion upon hearing that Su Liang was back in the capital...

Nian Jincheng felt so bitter in his heart that he immediately mounted his horse and went to Su Liang’s house to find his wife.

Only Gu Ling returned to Marquis Chang Xin’s Mansion alone. No one was waiting for him, and he couldn’t go to find Su Liang. The mansion was not as empty as when he left, though, because the trees he and Situ Xie requested from King Yue’s Garden had been transported and planted. However, the weather had not warmed up yet, so there were not many hints of green.

Su Mansion.

Knowing that Old Master Mu was here, Su Liang let Qi Jun go to reunite with Qi Yan and sent Ren Dong to Lin Family to report their safety.

When Su Liang returned to the mansion from the palace, Qi Jun and Ren Dong had not yet returned. She approached Yuanming Pavilion and saw empty wine jars strewn about by the lake, knowing that Old Master Mu must have brought back his drinking buddy.

Su Liang entered Yuanming Pavilion, and Yang Yu greeted her with joy, “You’re finally back! ”

Old Master Mu glanced up and continued to happily eat the desserts and fruits Yang Yu brought for Su Liang. There was a pile of “rags” next to him.

“What’s going on with you?” Su Liang frowned.

Yang Yu was puzzled for a moment, “What’s wrong?”

“Why didn’t you wait for your husband at home? What are you doing here?” Su Liang pushed Yang Yu, “Hurry back, or Xiao Nian will be heartbroken.”

“He should know I’d come to find you and go home with you...” Yang Yu explained. But she didn’t expect Su Liang and Nian Jincheng to leave the palace separately.

“Why would you come to my house on such an important day? Hurry back,” Su Liang said.

Yang Yu was confused, “What important day?”

“Rekindled love is even better than newlywed bliss. You two should have some quality time together,” Su Liang chuckled.

Yang Yu blushed, "What are you talking about..." But she still listened to Su Liang and decided to rush back.

As soon as she left Su Mansion, she saw Nian Jincheng riding his horse over. Yang Yu stood at the gate and laughed, "I knew you'd definitely come here." Nian Jincheng had an unhappy face, scooped Yang Yu up with one arm, and gently placed her in front of him, "Let's go home!"

Su Liang sat opposite Old Master Mu, letting out a sigh of relief, "I finally made it back home. Master, what do you think of my place?"

"Not bad!" Old Master Mu nodded, "What about that Gu kid?"

Su Liang smiled, "He went back to Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion. He's the only one there. Master, would you like to go and live with him?"

Old Master Mu shook his head repeatedly, "No, no! You, this girl, promised to cook something delicious for me, but now you want to drive me away as soon as we meet? How unfilial! "

Su Liang promptly reflected, "Yes, it's my fault. Please do stay, Master. But where is the Poison Master you found for me? Are those wine jars his doing?"

Has he gone out?"

"He's right here!" Old Master Mu said.

Su Liang was stunned, looking around, but there was no one.

Old Master Mu pointed at that pile of "rags," "I brought Lao Bai back for you! As for the other matters, you'll have to handle them yourself!"

Su Liang walked over and smelled a strong whiff of alcohol. Pulling apart the broken fabric, she finally saw the person's face. He was very thin, with even messier hair and beard than old man Mu. His body was filthy, and he was much shorter than old man Mu.

"Master, are you sure this is a poison master?" Su Liang was a bit doubtful.

Mu Old Man's eyes flashed as he ate his dessert. "Of course... I'm not sure. I just said I'd help you find Old Bai. I don't know if Old Bai is a poison master or not!" Su Liang sighed, "First, let him sober up from his alcohol."

"Be careful, this drunkard goes crazy when he can't drink, and it's terrifying. He's not as easy to talk to as me!" Old man Mu said.

Su Liang took out her needle pack, removed a silver needle, and used it to help Old Bai sober up.

Old man Mu squatted nearby, curiously watching while eating his dessert, "Will this work?"

Soon, Old Bai started to move and opened his eyes to look at Su Liang.

Old man Mu immediately hid, "Be careful! This drunkard will go crazy the moment he opens his eyes!"

However, the next moment Bai Old Man suddenly grabbed Su Liang's hand and burst into tears, "Little junior sister... I was wrong... Don't leave... Don't leave me..."

Su Liang was dumbfounded, what the hell...

Mu Old Man frowned, threw away the dessert box, charged over and kicked Bai Old Man into the corner, ‘You old bastard! Old pervert! You’re buried in the yellow earth, and you still dare to take advantage of my little disciple! I really misjudged you! Little girl, he is definitely not a poison master, not even a master at all! I’m going to throw him out! ’

Mu Old Man bent down to lift Bai Old Man onto his shoulder and charged outside.

Unexpectedly, Bai Old Man suddenly struck Mu Old Man’s back with his palm. His foot wobbled, and Bai Old Man had already rolled to the ground. In a flash, he jumped up and roared, “You’re stealing my little junior sister! Looking for death!”

Su Liang watched, dumbfounded, as the two old men began to fight outside Yuanming Pavilion; a whirlwind of dust and debris followed, and soon the alcohol jars by the lake were smashed into shards.

Bai Old Man kept cursing Mu Old Man for stealing his little junior sister, while Mu Old Man angrily denounced Bai Old Man as mentally ill.

Qi Jun and Ren Dong returned to the mansion, rushed over when they heard the commotion, and saw Su Liang was unharmed before they relaxed. They quickly avoided the battlefield and joined her side.

“Master. who are these two people?” Ren Dona asked with a furrowed brow.

“Two old seniors.” Su Liang watched the two men fight intently, noticing that Bai Old Man’s steps were unsteady, but the speed of his hands was incredibly fast. Comparatively, Mu Old Man seemed weaker.

Qi Jun asked, “Why are they fighting?”

“To fight over... me?” Su Liang seemed puzzled. Was Bai Old Man’s little junior sister a blurry memory from his drunken stupor, or did she really resemble his little junior sister? Either way, Bai Old Man hadn’t sobered up yet, but the fighting strength he had displayed was already incredible. Even if he wasn’t a poison master, Su Liang still wanted to learn martial arts from him.

Ren Dong guessed, “Did they start fighting because they wanted to compete to be Master’s teacher?”

Su Liang shook her head, “Not exactly.” She hadn’t even properly greeted Old Bai yet.

“What should we do now?” Qi Jun asked Su Liang if they should break up their fight.

“Let’s not interfere with the masters’ fight. They’re both quite irritable, so it’s good for them to exhaust some energy. Maybe they’ll sober up a bit after they’re tired.” Su Liang was very calm.

Qi Jun suddenly laughed, “Master, your friend Crown Prince Xing said that one day Gu Meiren would discover that he had fallen in love with Master, but Master would firmly reject him.”

At the same time Su Liang turned around and shook her head, “That’s impossible. Keep an eye on them, and if anything seems off, call for me.” With that, she returned to Yuanming Pavilion.

Ren Dong had a strange expression, “Qi Jun, when Master said it’s impossible, did she mean that Gu Meiren would never fall in love with her, or that she would never reject Gu Meiren?”

Qi Jun hesitated for a moment, “As for Gu Meiren not being able to fall in love with Master, I don’t believe that.”

“I don’t believe it either.” Ren Dong nodded.

“Then it must be that Master wouldn’t reject Gu Meiren,” Qi Jun analyzed. Ren Dong shook his head, “What’s impossible about that?”

Qi Jun shrugged, “Then what do you think is impossible when Master said it’s impossible?”

Ren Dong thought about it from different angles and still felt that none of it made sense. Just as he was about to go and ask Su Liang for clarification, he saw Mu Old Man get slapped by Bai Old Man into the lake....

Chapter 293: 293. I am sleepwalking

Su Liang had just changed her clothes and opened the window when she saw Old Bai slapping Old Mu forcefully into the water.

Old Bai was too fierce, so Qi Jun and Ren Dong didn’t dare to do anything rashly, and they called out to Su Liang for help.

As soon as they called out, Su Liang had already leaped down from the second floor of Yuanming Pavilion, lightly tapping her feet on the shore of the lake. Seeing Old Mu struggling in the water, she immediately jumped in, swam over to grab him, and dragged him to the shore.

Qi Jun and Ren Dong hurried over, with one pulling Old Mu up and the other helping Su Liang.

Old Mu couldn’t swim, and his face was pale as Qi Jun patted him on the back, coughing nonstop.

Other than being completely soaked, Su Liang was okay. After standing still, she looked at Old Bai.

Old Bai had a dazed expression on his face as he sat among the shards of his broken liquor bottles, looking up at Su Liang and mumbling “Junior sister...”

Seeing Su Liang approaching, Ren Dong subconsciously grabbed her, worried that Old Bai’s unstable mental state might cause him to attack Su Liang.

“It’s okay.” Su Liang brushed off Ren Dong and walked to Old Bai’s side. When she saw his bare, bleeding feet on the broken porcelain, she pushed the shards aside and reached out to help him.

However, Old Bai moved back as if suddenly frightened, “Junior sister is dead...

You are not... Who are you... ”

“Senior, my name is Su Liang. This is my home, and you were brought here by Old... Old Jin,” Su Liang said softly.

Old Bai grabbed his messy hair, “Old Jin... Old Jin... That bastard tricked me into finding a well-behaved disciple... Good wine... Where is the well-behaved disciple...”

Su Liang pointed at herself, her smile blooming like a flower, “That’s me!”

Seeing Su Liang’s smile, Old Bai’s expression turned blank again. He allowed her to pull him up. Despite his impressive fighting abilities, he was barely able to stand steadily on the ground.

Not far away, Old Mu, who was watching Su Liang supporting Old Bai, was furious, “Damn it! Whose disciple are you? Why don’t you come and help me?”

Qi Jun and Ren Dong both hurriedly tried to help Old Mu, but he pushed them away, “If that stinky girl doesn’t come over, I won’t get up!”

Su Liang called Qi Jun over and tried to hand Old Bai over to him. “You take this senior to get cleaned up.”

However, as soon as Qi Jun reached out, the supposedly unstable Old Bai slapped him away...

Ren Dong managed to pull Qi Jun back just before he fell into the lake.

Qi Jun exclaimed in astonishment, “That senior’s strength is incredible!”

Left with no other choice, Su Liang had to leave Old Mu for the time being and help Old Bai into the Yuanming Pavilion. She sat him down and poured him a cup of warm water to drink.

Old Bai was very obedient to Su Liang’s words; as a result, as soon as he drank a cup of water, he passed out...

Su Liang couldn’t help it. This man was like a volcano that could erupt at any moment; she had to let him “slumber” before making a long-term plan.

Then Su Liang went out and asked Qi Jun to take Old Bai away, clean him up, dress his wounds, and change his clothes.

By the time Su Liang went to help Old Mu, she couldn’t lift him up, so she sat down next to him- “We’re already soaked through. We can just dry off and go back later,” Su Liang said nonchalantly.

Old Mu glared at Su Liang, “Is it because his martial arts skills are better than mine that you dislike me?”

Su Liang shook her head, “Old Bai’s martial arts skills are high, but he is short.”

Old Mu suddenly had a sense of superiority and couldn’t hold back his laughter, “Hahaha! That’s right! That drunkard is indeed short compared to me!” “Master, aren’t you friends with him?” Su Liang asked.

Old Mu wrung the water out of his hair, grumbling, “I’m terrified of water! I’m going to break off my friendship with him today!”

Su Liang laughed lightly, “His mind is not clear right now. Master, you should be more generous and not hold it against him.”

Old Mu snorted, "He doesn't even know who you are, and yet you treat him so well?"

Su Liang said seriously, "If Master is unhappy, we can just throw him out."

Old Mu rolled his eyes at Su Liang, "Stop pretending with me!"

"Master, do you know who his 'Junior sister' is?" Su Liang asked.

Old Mu shook his head, "We're just drinking buddies. How would I know? Even if she were alive, she'd probably be an old lady by now."

Su Liang felt that "Junior sister" must be a very important person to Old Bai and that he wouldn't randomly mistake her for someone else. Maybe she really did look like Old Bai's junior sister when she was younger. When he wakes up, she'll have to ask him clearly.

"Didn't you say you were going to make me something delicious?" Old Mu asked, still worrying about it.

Su Liang pulled him up, "Master, you already ate all the desserts Yang Yu brought, are you still hungry?"

"Desserts are not a meal!" Old Mu shook his head, "You have no idea how tiring it was to carry that drunkard back home, and I had to keep finding alcohol for him along the way. Who am I doing this for! "

"For me, thank you, Master." Su Liang called Ren Dong over, "You take my master to wash up, change clothes, and rest for a while. I'll go cook. Master, what do you like to eat?"

"Meat!" Old Mu's voice was loud and clear.

"Alright then!" Su Liang said it was no problem.

Old Mu and Old Bai were both arranged to stay at Qi Jun's courtyard, not far from Yuanming Pavilion.

After Qi Jun had bathed Old Bai and Old Mu had soaked in a bath himself, Ren

Dong had already left the Mansion and returned from Yang Family's Embroidery Workshop with two large bundles. They were clothes bought for the two old men, from head to toe, there was everything they needed.

When Old Mu changed into his new clothes and went to see Old Bai, he found him lying quietly on the bed, neatly dressed. His hair and beard were all neatly groomed by Qi Jun, making him almost unrecognizable from before.

"You lad, comb my hair too." Old Mu scratched his messy head and looked at Qi

Jun, "Comb it nice, better looking than him!"

Qi Jun smiled and nodded, "No problem. Please sit down, senior."

Before long, Old Mu picked up a brass mirror and looked at himself from left to right, feeling somewhat incredulous, "How did I suddenly become younger?"

With his hair tied up and his beard shaved, dressed in well-tailored and high-quality new clothes, the tall and thin Old Mu seemed to have his charisma upgraded by a few notches, looking fresh and neat.

Qi Jun complimented him a few times, and Old Mu asked, “Who looks better between me and Old Bai?”

Since Old Bai was asleep and couldn’t hear anything, Qi Jun naturally said that Old Mu looked better.

Old Mu looked satisfied. Not long after, when Qi Jun was chased and beaten by

Old Bai, he finally realized an important life lesson: some multiple-choice questions have no correct answer...

Su Liang carefully prepared a table full of dishes for Old Mu: braised fish, spicy chicken, eight-treasure duck, sweet and sour spare ribs, and meat. The main dish was Thousand Layer Meat Cake.

Ren Dong came to tell Su Liang that Old Mu was having Qi Jun shave his beard and would be coming over soon.

Su Liang took a plate of each dish and two freshly cooked pieces of meat cake and put them in a food box, handing it to Ren Dong, “Send it to Marquis Chang Xin’s Mansion.”

Ren Dong was stunned, “Master, are you still sending meals to Marquis Chang Xin?” It was said they’d severed ties...

Su Liang went to fry the remaining meat buns, “Hurry up and hurry back, try not to be seen.”

“Oh.” Ren Dong had no choice but to take the food box, climb over the wall, and secretly deliver the meal to Marquis Chang Xin’s Mansion.

Su Liang carried the prepared dishes into Yuanming Pavilion and saw Old Mu, looking completely refreshed and dignified, sitting inside.

“Is this my master? Where did this dashing uncle come from?” Su Liang pretended to be surprised.

Old Mu’s face instantly blossomed into a smile, “These clothes are not bad,”

Su Liang smiled as she served the food, “As long as Master likes it, in the future you can buy whatever you want, but don’t ever try to save money for me.”

Upon hearing this, Old Mu felt extremely comfortable in his heart! When he started eating Su Liang’s cooking, he became even more delighted, “My dear apprentice, your cooking skills are really awesome!”

Su Liang had a little meal with Old Mu, even using tea to replace alcohol, and officially became his disciple.

The more Old Mu looked at Su Liang, the more he liked her, completely forgetting the talented successor he was supposed to take in.

At this time, Gu Ling also had a taste of the all-meat feast Su Liang made, which were all his favorite dishes. More importantly, Su Liang still remembered his meals, which instantly brightened his mood.

It should be noted that since meeting Su Liang until now, he was no longer used to living alone... Old Mu ate and drank his fill, then went to bed.

Su Liang told Qi Jun and Ren Dong that Old Mu's last name was Jin, so they could call him Old Jin or Jin Lao. He was a master she had acknowledged before, and they would live together in the future.

While Old Bai was in a daze, Su Liang checked his pulse. Due to excessive drinking and an extremely irregular lifestyle, his martial power was very high, but his body had many issues and was on the verge of collapse.

Su Liang planned to treat and recuperate him first, making sure he quit alcohol. After getting a preliminary understanding of his situation, she would discuss the matter of becoming his disciple.

In the afternoon, Xing Yusheng and Lin Xueqing came to visit Su Liang. They were still as lovey-dovey as ever. Su Liang explained that she wasn't deceived by Gu Ling and their fake marriage was a joint plan. Xing Yusheng then took back his curse on Gu Ling...

After sending them off, Su Liang made a special trip to the Lin Family to see Lin Shuzhi, discussed with him about her trip to Liang Country, and examined the health of her two sisters-in-law. Lin Boyan's wife was about to give birth, and Su Liang said she would be there to help deliver the baby when the time came, and asked her not to worry too much.

When it was time to leave in the evening, Su Liang said she needed to go, as there were guests at home. Lin Bojun chased after her and handed her a letter, "Lian Shun asked me to give this to you personally."

Su Liang felt it was strange. Lian Shun could have left the letter in Xuanbei City and had Xing Ji or Qi Jun pass it on, so she would receive it more quickly – and he also asked Lin Bojun to give it to her personally...

"I'll read it when I get home." Su Liang took the letter, "Second Brother, don't bother sending me off. You should go back."

Upon returning home, it was already getting dark.

Su Liang opened Lian Shun's letter, which contained two pages. The first page had only one sentence, "There's one thing, that after thinking long and hard, I decided to tell you...", then, on the last line of the second page, there was another sentence, "Su Xiaoliang, see you again someday! Haha!"

Su Liang could almost see Lian Shun laughing sinisterly while writing this cryptic letter...

Dinner was bought by Qi Jun from the Wan Family Restaurant. Wan Hui and Lu Yu had gone back to Qingyang City after the New Year's celebration, accompanying their elders and Zhengzheng, so they weren't in the capital city.

Su Liang wrote a sheet, allowing Qi Jun to hand it to the manager of Wan Family Restaurant. It was the meal orders for Su Mansion and Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion. For a total of seven days, detailed meal orders listed what dishes were to be sent at each mealtime, and in how much quantity.

The Wan Family Restaurant had never taken on such a "private customization" order before, but since it was Su Liang's request, they naturally didn't refuse.

Upon finding out that Su Liang had no time to cook every day, Old Mu was quite unhappy, as he had only eaten her cooking once.

Su Liang laughed and said that she would cook when she had time, but she had some things to do in the meantime.

"What are you busy with?" Old Mu asked.

"Curing Old White's illness. Once he's healed, and if he's willing to accept me as his disciple, there will be many things to learn from him." Su Liang replied with a serious expression.

"I'm also your master, but you never thought about learning something from me?" Old Mu grumbled.

Su Liang smiled, "I'm not cut out for that. Master should teach Gu Ling instead. But let's take it easy for the next few days, since someone is keeping an eye on him. Once that person's surveillance is gone, then we can continue. For now, Master can give him some blueprints to study."

Old Mu sighed deeply, "No delicious food and I still have to rush to meet that annoying kid! "

"Master, the dishes I ordered from my sister's Wan Family Restaurant are very delicious, not worse than what I cook." Su Liang said.

"It's just not the same." Old Mu snorted, "But okay, it's not good to always make a delicate girl like you go to such lengths to cook. We'll do it your way."

Regarding this matter, although Old Mu wanted to eat Su Liang's homemade meals, he appreciated her straightforward attitude – if she had no time, she wouldn't cook. On one hand, he liked her eagerness to learn, wanting to grasp any opportunity to learn poison techniques. On the other hand, he felt that Su Liang treated him as family rather than a guest. It was like indulging one's own child, so how could he refuse her?

Su Liang instructed that even if it was late at night, if Old White showed any signs of waking up, she should be called immediately.

Therefore, that night, Qi Jun stayed by Old White's side without sleep, and Su Liang, who was sorting out the books she brought back from Liang Country, didn't sleep either.

Hearing Qi Jun calling her from downstairs, Su Liang hurried down.

"He just moved his hand a bit, but hasn't opened his eyes yet," Qi Jun said.

"Thank you for your hard work." Su Liang replied.

Qi Jun smiled, "Master, don't be so polite all the time."

“Oh, I’m just trying to win people’s hearts.” Su Liang said seriously.

Qi Jun: ...His Master was best at spouting nonsense with a straight face.

By the time Su Liang saw Old White, he had just opened his eyes.

Su Liang gestured for Qi Jun to leave the room first, and she sat down by the bedside, “Senior, do you remember me? I’m Su Liang, and this is my home. You’ve been invited here by my master, Old Jin.”

Old White’s gaze was initially bewildered, but as it fell on Su Liang, it gradually became clearer. He opened his mouth, his voice hoarse, “Good... apprentice?” Su Liang couldn’t help but laugh, “Yes. I am the obedient apprentice Old Jin wanted you to come to meet.”

“Little girl... how old are you... who is your mother...” Old White asked weakly.

“I just turned sixteen. My grandfather is Su Yuanzhou, and as for my mother, I don’t know.” Su Liang shook her head. She felt as if Old White was looking through her at someone else, his eyes filled with deep affection and regret. He was probably thinking of his “Junior Sister” again. Su Liang smiled, “Do I look a bit like your Junior Sister, Senior?”

Old White, however, shook his head slightly.

Just as Su Liang was puzzled, she heard him whisper, “It’s not... just a bit similar... it’s too similar...”

“My mother was married to my father while he was away doing business and were both killed before returning home. Maybe I have some connection with your Junior Sister.” Su Liang analyzed, “If you could tell us the identity of that Junior Sister, I could do some investigation.”

Old White, however, remained silent. His gaze still fixed on Su Liang’s face, it took a long time for him to speak again, “No... it’s not possible...”

Su Liang nodded, “Alright then.” It seemed that Old White didn’t want to talk about his Junior Sister, and didn’t want her to investigate anything.

“Senior, you have been drinking excessively for many years, and your body is at its limit. You must quit alcohol and focus on recuperation from now on.” Su Liang said.

“Why...” Old White looked at Su Liang and asked.

Su Liang asked back, “What?”

“Why are you treating me so well?” Old White said in a deep voice.

Su Liang replied earnestly, “Here’s the deal: Old Jin is my master, and I want to learn poison techniques. He said you seem to be a Poison Master, so I asked him to invite you here.”

“Poison...” Old White frowned slightly, “Why do you want to learn that?”

Su Liang mentioned the incident when someone tried to poison her, and her friends were almost harmed too. "I don't want to harm people, I just want to protect myself and my loved ones. I don't need to use it, but I have to know how. "

Old White shook his head, "I won't take disciples."

"I see..." Su Liang felt disappointed. It seemed that Old White was indeed a Poison Master, but he didn't want to take any disciples.

"But I can teach you." Old White continued.

Su Liang's eyes lit up, "Really?"

Old White's gaze became somewhat distant again, "Whatever you want to learn, I'll teach it to you... but I won't take disciples, and you mustn't call me Master..."

Su Liang felt that there must be a reason for this, so she asked directly. Old White sighed, "There's a crazy woman who always causes me trouble... if she finds out you're my disciple, you'll never have peace..."

"So that's why." Su Liang felt that Old Bai was so kind to her because of her face, otherwise things wouldn't have gone so smoothly.

But regardless, her goal had been achieved.

"Senior, are you hungry?" Su Liang asked.

From outside the door, Old Mu's sour voice came, "I'm hungry!" He had heard the movement inside and came to check on Old Bai.

Su Liang stood up with a smile, "Senior, you rest first, I'll go prepare something to eat and come back."

Old Bai's gaze followed Su Liang's figure until it disappeared, and only then did he sigh deeply, his eyes shimmering with unshed tears.

As Su Liang stepped out, she saw Old Mu yawning outside.

"Did he wake up? No longer mad? Has he agreed to accept you as his disciple?" Old Mu asked three questions in a row.

Su Liang nodded, "He's sober now. But won't accept disciples."

Old Mu frowned, "He doesn't know poison techniques? Or does he just dislike you?"

Su Liang shook her head, "He knows, it's not that he dislikes me, it's just that being his disciple would cause trouble. He said he could teach me but without the master-disciple relationship."

Old Mu was stunned for a moment, "Why did the drunk suddenly become so serious?"

Su Liang laughed, "I'm going to make some white porridge for Old Bai, do you want any, Master?"

Old Mu made a disgusted face, "No, no!" After saying that, he went back to his room to sleep.

When Su Liang finished cooking the white porridge and brought it over, Old Bai was still awake. He didn't let her feed him but sat up and slowly drank the bowl of porridge before taking the medicine Su Liang gave him.

"How should I address you, Senior?" Su Liang asked.

"Just call me Old Bai..." Old Bai looked tired, "Your name is Su Liang?"

Su Liang smiled, "Yes."

"Hmm," Old Bai nodded slightly, "Then I'll call you Little Bai."

Su Liang: ...Little Bai it is, as long as he's happy...

"Why did you worship Old Jin as your master? Do you want to be a carpenter?" Old Bai asked, puzzled.

Su Liang shook her head, "I have a friend who wants to be a carpenter, so I took the opportunity to worship him as well."

"What's the use of having so many useless masters?" Old Bai asked.

With a serious expression, Su Liang replied, "If someone bullies me, I can ask my master for support."

Old Bai nodded, "Old Jin won't do, I'll back you up."

With a beaming smile, Su Liang asked, "So Senior, are you really a master of poison techniques?"

Old Bai shook his head, "No."

Su Liang raised an eyebrow, only to hear Old Bai say, "Not a master, but a Poison Master. "

Su Liang: ...I can see it now, this old man has a bit of pride hidden in his bones...

After taking the medicine, Old Bai soon fell into a deep sleep. Su Liang told Qi

Jun to get some rest too, as there was no need to keep watch. She had probably

"conquered" this powerful drunk with her face, and the "danger" was now gone.

Su Liang returned to Yuanming Pavilion and entered her room, only to find someone sitting by the window, and her unsorted books had all been neatly placed on a nearby shelf.

"Great God, are you sleepwalking?" Su Liang asked jokingly.

Gu Ling looked at her, "What happened?"

Su Liang sat down and recounted what happened after she met Old Mu and Old Bai today. Finally, she said, "My background might be related to Old Bai's junior sister, but he's not willing to say more about it. Maybe it's just a coincidence. Great God, weren't you being watched?"

Gu Ling shook his head, "I have sleepwalking disorder." When Duanmu Yi asked about it, Gu Ling would say he was sleepwalking and didn't know where he went at night. As for the watcher, he had already shaken them off to the outskirts of the city.

Su Liang paused for a moment before responding with a thumbs up, "Very good."

Gu Ling had heard of the Poison Master title, an almost legendary figure who hadn't appeared for many years. It was said that he had already died.

"He's just living a life of drunkenness and dreams, not really dead." Su Liang was in a good mood.

"You learn from him, then teach me." Gu Ling said.

Su Liang nodded, "No problem. He's Old Bai and calls me Little Bai, so you'll have to be called Little Little Bai. It sounds weird, like you're my son." Gu Ling raised his hand and gently tapped Su Liang's forehead.

Su Liang frowned, "Great God, why are you hitting me?"

"I'm sleepwalking. What hitting? I don't remember it. You taught me." With that, Gu Ling leaped out of the open window, like a piece of ink feather, disappearing into the night..

Chapter 294: 294. Great God was frightened.

Old Mu bet with Su Liang that Old Bai would definitely not be able to resist drinking alcohol.

But in just three days, under Su Liang's meticulous care, Old Bai's spirit improved significantly, and he didn't even mention the word "alcohol."

Old Mu seriously doubted whether the drunkard who had tormented him before was the same person as the Old Bai now.

Su Liang hadn't gone out for three days, and every night, Gu Ling would "sleepwalk" over to talk to her, just chatting for a while about what happened during the day, with her talking and him listening.

Old Bai really liked sitting in the pavilion by the lake, sitting for half a day, watching the lake quietly without saying a word.

On the other hand, Old Mu, who had lived a simple and semi-reclusive life all his life, was now indulging his true nature and going wherever the hustle and bustle was, whether it be tea houses, taverns or gambling dens, having a blast.

This evening, Su Liang accompanied Old Bai in having dinner in the garden.

Lanterns hung from the four corners of the pavilion, casting a hazy light on Su Liang's face, making her look even softer, causing Old Bai to be somewhat lost in thought again.

"Master! Save me!" Qi Jun shouted, breaking the silence.

Su Liang looked up to see Qi Jun running towards them with Old Mu chasing him and Ren Dong following leisurely behind.

"What's going on?" Su Liang asked, puzzled.

Both of them rushed into the pavilion, and Old Mu grabbed Qi Jun first, “Apprentice, didn’t you say that this kid will accompany me to play and listen to everything I say?”

Su Liang nodded, “I did say that.”

Qi Jun frowned, “Master, Senior Jin wants to go to a brothel, and I don’t want to go, but he insists that I go!”

Su Liang: ...

Old Mu coughed lightly, “What’s the big deal about going to a brothel? I’ve never been to one in my life; I just want to see what it’s like! What are you afraid of, kid? Are you afraid that someone will eat you up?”

Qi Jun kept shaking his head, “I’m not going! I’d rather die than go!”

“If Master wants to go, just go himself, ask for money from Ren Dong if you need it. Don’t force Qi Jun; he’s a good kid.” Su Liang said seriously.

Qi Jun nodded in agreement, asserting that he was indeed a pure and good child.

Old Mu became unhappy. “Just because I want to take a look. does it mean I’m bad?”

Su Liang shook her head, “That’s not what I meant. Master, if you want to go, just go; don’t force Qi Jun.”

“But if I go alone, it’s so awkward!” Old Mu still clung to Qi Jun unwilling to let him go.

Old Bai couldn’t take it any longer, “Old Jin, it’s not something to be proud of, just stop making a fuss.”

Old Mu became angry immediately, “You actually say I have no shame? You all heard him, right? He’s cursing at me!”

Old Bai shook his head, “I’m not cursing at you, I’m just telling the truth.”

Seeing that both old men were about to fight over their disagreement, Qi Jun quickly hugged Old Mu to calm him down, “Senior Jin, cool down.”

“Then you go with me to the brothel!” Old Mu still insisted on going.

Qi Jun’s face stiffened, “I really can’t do that!” If his father found out, he would definitely be beaten. Besides, he didn’t want to go to a place like that either.

Old Bai frowned in disgust, “Xiao Bai, hurry up and let Old Jin find his true disciple. Don’t let him hang around your house, wasting your money on eating, drinking, and merrymaking. He’s useless.”

“You ungrateful person! Who brought you here? If it wasn’t for me, you would have been dead drunk long ago! You’re just trying to break off our relationship after crossing the river!” Old Mu was genuinely angry when he heard Old Bai suggesting that Su Liang should let him go.

Qi Jun couldn't hold him back, but Su Liang stepped in between the two old men in time, catching Old Mu's attacking hand. She smiled sweetly, "Master, I'll go with you."

Old Mu's face instantly brightened, and he laughed heartily, "My good apprentice! I won't argue with Old Bai. He's not your master. He's just a guest in our house!"

Emphasizing the words "a guest in our house" made Old Bai's face turn black.

"Old Jin, if you have the guts, let's compete, and whoever loses leaves!"

Old Mu snorted lightly, "Who wants to fight with you? I'm going out to have fun with my good apprentice! Hahaha! Xiao Liang, let's go!"

Su Liang turned around and smiled at Old Bai, "We're just going for a drink and watch the pretty girls sing and dance, that's all."

"You're a girl yourself, why do you need to look at other girls? Who can be prettier than you? Don't you like his apprentice?" Old Bai frowned.

"Unfortunately, he's not interested." Su Liang sighed.

Old Bai snorted, "I'll have a talk with him." It sounded like he would beat Gu Ling until he agreed...

Su Liang finally pacified the two elderly men and had Ren Dong take Old Bai back to rest.

Then, Su Liang changed into a man's clothes, without disguising herself, and really accompanied Old Mu out of the mansion to visit the brothel.

Duanmu Yi already knew that there were two old men in Su Liang's house; Ren Dong had reported to him that they were Su Yuanzhou's friends and had helped Su Liang during her difficult times.

Su Liang and Old Mu walked on the streets of the capital city at night, with many shops still open. Old Mu looked at the beautiful night scene and couldn't help but sigh, "I was stupid in the past, life is short, and I should have enjoyed myself more! I wasted more than half my life, and now I have nothing in the end!"

Su Liang chuckled, "Let's not dwell on the past; the present and the future are more important."

Old Mu nodded, "You must be sent by heaven to pity me and save me, haha!"

The master and apprentice walked leisurely until they reached Xunhua Building, the largest brothel in the capital city.

Two seductive girls were standing at the entrance, soliciting customers. Seeing Su Liang's face, they were first stunned, then they greeted her with a charming smile, "Isn't this Su Liang?"

Su Liang's every move was that of a handsome and elegant young man.

Old Mu curiously peeked into Xunhua Building, with one hand subconsciously grabbing Su Liang's sleeve. He followed her closely, and because he was too tall, he unconsciously hunched over when he was nervous, resembling a little kid.

Just as Su Liang was laughing and greeting the girls, about to step inside, horse hooves sounded from behind, "Xiaoliang!"

Su Liang was startled and turned around, seeing Lin Bojun galloping over. “Who is it?” Old Mu scratched his head, feeling that his brothel trip might be ruined.

“Second Brother, what happened?” Su Liang saw that Lin Bojun looked anxious and quickly ran over.

Lin Bojun dismounted, “Big Sister-in-law is about to give birth!”

Su Liang’s face changed, and by the time Old Mu realized what was happening, she had already mounted Lin Bojun’s horse and galloped away.

Lin Bojun soon left as well, not noticing Old Mu at all.

Seeing that Su Liang brought Old Mu to Xunhua Building, the madam of the brothel thought he must be an important person. She swayed seductively towards Old Mu, attached herself to his body, grabbed his arm, and said, “Sir, please come in quickly!”

Old Mu was depressed at being stood up by Su Liang. When he finally realized what was happening, for the first time in his life, he was scared of being close to a woman. He screamed and jumped up, running away without a trace...

That night, Gu Ling “sleepwalked” to find Su Liang again, only to see that Yuanming Pavilion was empty. He didn’t know where Su Liang had gone. He prowled around the mansion first, making sure she wasn’t there, and guessing that she might be at the Lin Family since Su Liang had mentioned that Lin Boyan’s wife was about to give birth. So, he went over secretly.

It wasn’t until the sky began to lighten and the Lin Family heard the loud cry of a newborn that Gu Ling, who had been listening to Su Liang delivering the baby by the wall, quietly left.

Lin Boyan’s son looked a lot like him. Lin Shuzhi had already chosen a name for him – Lin Jingyun.

By the time Su Liang returned home, it was approaching noon. It was only when Qi Jun told her that Old Mu was in a bad mood that she remembered she had left him alone at the entrance of the brothel the night before.

When Su Liang found Old Mu, he was sitting by the lake fishing.

From the back, he looked very professional. However, when Su Liang approached, she noticed that his fishing hook hadn’t even been cast into the water and was hanging from a dry waterweed...

Old Bai was sitting in the pavilion, lost in thought. Su Liang waved to him from a distance and then sat down beside Old Mu, “Master, I’m sorry for what happened last night. A friend needed help with childbirth, and I had to go.”

“Oh, it’s all right.” Old Mu’s voice was muffled.

Su Liang felt something was off, “Master, are you mad at me?”

“Why would I be mad at you for doing the right thing? Do you think I’m that petty?” Old Mu retorted.

Su Liang quickly shook her head, “Of course not. So why is Master unhappy?”

Were you bullied at Xunhua Building last night?”

Old Mu immediately denied it, “Nonsense! Nothing of the sort! I didn’t even go in! ”

“Master, don’t get agitated. Just tell me, what’s wrong?” Su Liang asked.

Old Mu sighed, “My dear disciple, am I sick? I’ve never touched a woman in my life, so I just wanted to go and take a look, have a drink, and listen to some music. But when the madam of the building leaned against me, I...” “What happened?” Su Liang looked puzzled.

Old Mu’s face was embarrassed, “I got scared and ran away...”

Su Liang: ...I want to laugh, but I can’t, got to hold it in... I can’t help it, I really want to laugh, can’t hold it in anymore...

Old Mu couldn’t help but laugh at Su Liang’s demeanor, threw down his fishing rod, and got up to leave in a huff.

Su Liang hurried after him, “Master, don’t be mad, I wasn’t making fun of you.” “You were making fun of me!” Old Mu glared at Su Liang.

Su Liang swore that she really wasn’t, only that she found Old Mu quite adorable.

Then, Old Mu voiced his “worries”. It wasn’t because of Su Liang, but because he couldn’t help himself last night and went to seek comfort from Old Bai. After dawn, the more he thought about it, the more he regretted...

“Good disciple, can I kill Old Bai to silence him? Otherwise, that old bastard will definitely ridicule me for the rest of my life.” Old Mu was a little frantic.

Su Liang patted Old Mu’s shoulder, “Master, don’t worry about it, it’s not something to be ashamed of, it shows that the master is very... innocent.”

Old Mu looked downcast, “I’m so old, being praised for innocence by a little girl like you, it always sounds like sarcasm... Forget it, I’m going to get some alcohol!”

With the addition of two very different old men, the Su Mansion had become much livelier than before.

In the daytime, Su Liang, who had just sworn to Old Mu that she would never tell anyone about his embarrassing incident, couldn’t help but share it with Gu Ling when she saw him again that night.

“Great God, if you were to go to a brothel and suddenly be approached by a girl, would you react the same way as Old Mu?” Su Liang asked with a smile.

Gu Ling shook his head, “I’m not afraid of women.”

“Really? I don’t believe it.” Su Liang shook her head.

“Aren’t you a woman?” Gu Ling asked back.

“I am, but not to you, so our interactions don’t count,” Su Liang replied. Gu Ling thought for a moment and said, “People’s thoughts can change.”

Su Liang nodded, “Indeed, Old Mu didn’t want to get married when he was young, but now I think he really wants a family. Unfortunately, he’s too old, and can only make do with living with us.”

Gu Ling: ... He was talking about himself, not Old Mu!

“Old Bai seems like a love-stricken man. There must be a story behind it, but unfortunately, he doesn’t want to talk about it,” Su Liang sighed softly, “His recovery is going well, and in a few days, I’ll start learning poison techniques from him. As for Old Mu teaching you, we’ll see after he’s had his fill of fun. It’s not very convenient on your side.”

When it was time for Gu Ling to leave, Su Liang said earnestly, “Great God, look at Old Mu, I think you should also change your mindset, and don’t wait until you’re old to want to get married.”

Su Liang’s words stirred Gu Ling’s heart, and he nodded calmly, “Thank you for your advice, I will consider it.”

“I wonder which fairy will catch the eye of the Great God like you?” Su Liang joked.

Gu Ling glanced at Su Liang and silently floated away.

Yao City, Liang Country.

Situ Xie and Situ Han both had been in a bad mood lately.

They thought that Su Liang and Gu Ling would definitely try to steal the secret scroll after leaving, but instead, they kept getting news of where Su Liang had gone until she left Liang Country and returned to Qian Country. The imperial palace hadn’t seen any thieves or assassins, and it was even more peaceful than before.

Now that Su Liang and Gu Ling have safely returned to the capital of Qian Country, Situ Xie and Situ Han each hold half of the identical secret scrolls, and the more they think about it, the more they feel that something is wrong, very wrong!

The drawings on the secret scroll were incomplete, and as was the news released by the royal family of Liang Country. People who hadn’t seen the secret scroll should have doubted that they had lied about its use.

But no matter how hard the royals of Liang Country thought, they couldn’t figure out what was going on.

After the first month, Liang Country sent a delegation to Qian Country to marry off the crown prince, Situ Chao, to the princess of Qian Country. The leader of the delegation was Situ Xie’s grandson, Situ Jing.

When it was time for the Qian Country princess to get married, the people sent from Qian Country to Liang Country would marry off Situ Yao to Duanmu Chen. This had been decided last year.

The reason Su Liang entered the palace again was to return the books she had borrowed from the library. When she met Duanmu Yi, she found that Crown Prince Duanmu Chen, Duke Qin Kang, and Prime Minister Xiao were all present. Most strangely, Xing’s old lady and Xing Yusheng were also present.

Su Liang didn’t know what had happened, but considering this lineup, it must have something to do with Marquis Zhong Xin’s Mansion, otherwise, the Xing family’s grandmother and grandson wouldn’t have appeared here.

"I heard you've acknowledged Marquis Zhong Xin as your adoptive father? It's just as well that you're here, you can also listen to what's going on today." Duanmu Yi pointed to the seat next to Xing's old lady and ordered Su Liang to sit down.

After sitting down, Su Liang quickly learned the whole story.

The marriage partner chosen last year was the Sixth Princess Duanmu Qianqian, but she was killed by Duanmu Che. The royal family had no other adult princess or even a princess.

Before going to Liang Country, Su Liang had thought about this matter, and she believed that Duanmu Yi would choose an eligible lady as his adoptive daughter to marry into Liang Country.

However, Su Liang didn't expect the person chosen by Duanmu Yi was Xing Yuyan, the daughter of Xing Ji and Miao Family.

Today, when the Xing family went to the palace, they were informed about this "grace".

When Madame Xing received the decree, she didn't show any reluctance. Xing Yusheng just accompanied her throughout, saying nothing.

Su Liang could only listen. She knew that Xing Ji must be unwilling to let his daughter marry, and Madame Xing also didn't want her granddaughter to marry far away. She didn't want not to help, but firstly, she couldn't help with this kind of thing. Secondly, if she tried to turn down Xing Yuyan's marriage, there would inevitably be another lady who would have to marry far away.

Even if Xing Ji were present, he couldn't refuse. Duanmu Yi was willing to let his own daughter marry into Liang Country. As a servant, why would Xing Ji be unwilling? If Duanmu Qianqian hadn't died, this would not have happened to others.

When they left the palace, Su Liang supported Madame Xing, and Xing Yusheng followed behind.

As they stepped out of the palace gate, Madam Xing patted Su Liang's hand, "Don't worry. I'm fine. This is her fate, the fate of being born into the Xing family."

Madame Xing came from a noble family in the capital city, but there were not many people left in her maternal family. She married the former Bei Jingwang, and later her son inherited the throne. Last year, the Bei Jingwang Mansion was nearly abolished in the turmoil of cutting down the nobility. They barely survived and had the current stable days. She had experienced many ups and downs and didn't need any consolation or intend to push away her granddaughter's marriage. The reason was simple: the overall situation and the family's interests were paramount.

When they parted ways, Madam Xing said solemnly to Su Liang, "Liang girl, no matter how capable you are, you will have to marry sooner or later. While the emperor values you so much and you can still speak for yourself, if you really like Marquis Chang Xin, let him marry you as soon as possible to avoid any trouble." "I'll do as you say."

When Su Liang returned home, she saw both Elder Mu and Elder Bai sitting in the Yuanming Pavilion.

"Xiaobai, I'll teach you poison techniques starting tomorrow," said Elder Bai.

Elder Mu scoffed, "My dear disciple, I'll teach you your senior starting tomorrow."

Su Liang smiled lightly, "That's great. Is there anything I need to prepare?"

Elder Bai gave Su Liang a piece of paper, "Send someone to this place to find something."

Su Liang's eyes lit up, "Is that where you keep your treasures?"

Elder Bai nodded, "Yes, if it wasn't found and robbed by that crazy woman." Su Liang: ...So, it's possible to find the place but find nothing there? Fine...

Elder Mu mocked Elder Bai, "You can't even take care of your own things!" He then took out a book from his embrace and casually tossed it to Su Liang, "Take

Su Liang saw that it was the complete secret scroll of the organics that the royal families of the Three Kingdoms had been longing for.

Su Liang was overjoyed, "Thank you, master. I'll give it to my senior."

Upon hearing Gu Ling's name, Elder Bai frowned, "What's wrong with that kid? Is he incapable or planning to become a monk? Let him give you a definite answer, or just accept you earlier!"

Su Liang laughed, "Alright, I'll ask him."

That night, Gu Ling appeared in the Yuanming Pavilion as scheduled. Su Liang handed him the secret scroll of the mechanics, "My master gave this to me.

Now you won't be bored."

Gu Ling took it and began to flip through it.

As Su Liang watched him, she recalled the conversation with Madam Xing earlier that day. She didn't take Elder Bai's sarcasm to heart.

Over a year since her transmigration, most of the women Su Liang knew were already married. Su Liang didn't agree with the view that women must be married, which was possible in her previous life and not impossible here, but difficult. Especially as she was getting closer to the whirlpool of power struggle, it would not be easy to extricate herself and absolutely impossible to stay out of it.

Moreover, Su Liang knew that Duanmu Yi had obtained a giant meteorite related to her. Although he had not done anything out of line for now, there was no guarantee that he would not in the future.

Previously, Lin Xueqing was almost forced to marry Duanmu Chen. If Qin Yujin hadn't settled on marrying Lin Bojun earlier, she would have been among Duanmu Chen's choices for crown princess as well.

Today, the sudden arrangement for Xing Ji's daughter to become the marrying princess and soon be married to the Liang Country as crown princess reminded Su Liang again that she had to be careful when dealing with the Royal Family and never be overly confident.

What if she were the one arranged for the marriage today... Su Liang thought. Of course, she could say that she liked Gu Ling and didn't want to marry someone else. However, Duanmu Yi would definitely say that Gu Ling didn't accept her, and as a servant of Qian Country, she should put the overall situation first and refusing would be going against the emperor's will.

Although Su Liang believed that she would not be sent for a political marriage, as she was a talent in Duanmu Yi's eyes, this does not mean she would not be arranged for one.

After thinking it through, Su Liang felt that her marriage would sooner or later become a hidden danger she couldn't overlook.

So, Su Liang looked at Gu Ling and said, “Great God, let’s get married, after all!”

The secret scroll in Gu Ling’s hands fell to the ground.. He bent down to pick it up, closed it, put it on the table, and then looked at Su Liang with a calm face,

“What did you just say?”

Chapter 295: 295. Get married first, and then talk about it

The candles flickered.

Su Liang looked serious, “Great God, shall we get married?”

Gu Ling didn’t see any affection or shyness in Su Liang’s eyes, just her typical businesslike manner.

This made the wave of emotion that had just surged in Gu Ling’s heart quickly recede. He was well aware that this was yet another marriage proposal with ulterior motives.

Therefore, Gu Ling asked calmly, “Why?” instead of asking whether Su Liang had developed feelings for him.

Su Liang then explained that after Xing Yuyan was honored and about to marry into Liang Country, the old lady Xing gave her some advice that she found sensible.

“The emperor and the crown prince’s cunning strategies should not be underestimated. I know very well what their trust in me is based on, but this trust is unreliable,” Su Liang sighed slightly.

Duanmu Yi and his son Duanmu Chen believe that Su Liang would only do what she thought was right. Thus, she would unconditionally defend her home and country when enemies attack. She would help when someone is sick. Of course, she would protect Qian Country, because she is a citizen of Qian Country, and this is where her home is.

On the other hand, Duanmu Chen assumed that if he overstepped and did something Su Liang disagreed with, he would lose her support. In such a case, when he needs to use Su Liang, he will restrain his actions. This is the premise of their cooperation. But when Su Liang is not of much use to him, their relationship is bound to change.

Regarding all this, Su Liang has a clear understanding and she would always adhere to her principles.

Of course, Gu Ling understood what she was saying. Their journey till now had often been propelled by people and events, being a servant wasn’t their choice or goal, and getting out wasn’t easy, so they needed to be more careful.

As two lone individuals, the possibility of their marriage being arranged by the royal family is very high, even inevitable, it’s just a matter of sooner or later.

This is why Su Liang publicly pursued Gu Ling, making everyone believe that she’s devoted to someone.

But as long as the marriage isn’t set, there’s room for others to intervene.

Seeing that Gu Ling was silent, Su Liang frowned slightly, "Great God, you don't like this idea? Then never mind."

Gu Ling shook his head, "Not at all, I was just thinking about something else."

For a moment, Gu Ling was wondering, was this the opportune moment to confess his feelings towards Su Liang?

But he quickly dismissed that thought.

Su Liang's proposal of marriage tonight was a pleasant surprise for Gu Ling. Even though she didn't really want to be his wife, at least they could have the title of husband and wife. They could live together publicly, without giving any third person a chance to interfere.

Comparatively, Gu Ling could only see Su Liang during his "sleepwalks", otherwise he was alone. This was much better.

But Gu Ling understood Su Liang. She didn't have romantic feelings towards him yet, at least for now she didn't want to change their tacit and natural friend relationship. In such a situation, if Gu Ling rashly confessed, he might be pushed away by Su Liang.

Therefore, his rational mind told him: don't rush, get married first and then

See.

Gu Ling looked indifferent, "Are you sure about this? It's not the same as when we were living in the Su family village, or in Liang Country. Once this happens, the whole world will know that we are husband and wife."

Su Liang chuckled, "I don't mind at all, as long as you don't mind me blocking your romantic pursuits. If I ever fall for someone else in the future, he must be someone who trusts me."

I absolutely trust you... Gu Ling thought to himself.

"Okay. I don't mind either. Living like this will be much more convenient for me, it's a good thing," Gu Ling not only appeared very calm, but also gave a very rational and realistic reason. Regardless of how their feelings developed, he wanted to live with Su Liang.

Su Liang knew this, and laughed in response to his words, "Very well, deal!"

The two of them clapped hands, reaching a new agreement. But this time, they only talked about getting married, they didn't discuss the conditions under which they would separate. Su Liang felt that it wasn't necessary to talk, and they understood each other without saying. Gu Ling also felt it was unnecessary, if she married him for the third time and he still couldn't keep her, then he might as well become a monk...

"Then next, Great God you..." Su Liang planned to discuss the upcoming play with Gu Ling.

However, Gu Ling interrupted her, "I'll handle this. You just wait and see."

Su Liang blinked, "Oh, alright, I'll leave it to you. In the meantime, I have to learn poison techniques from Old Bai quickly, and I have to send someone to retrieve treasured items from Old Bai's secret hideout, I hope they are still there."

But this was not easy. Su Liang had only two subordinates. She always regarded Qi Jun as someone to help her, she didn't want to send him to do risky things. Ren Dong was an informant sent by Duanmu Yi, although he was loyal to her, she didn't want the royal family to know that she was learning poison techniques if she let Ren Dong leave the capital city.

"Let Old Mu go." Gu Ling guessed what Su Liang was worrying about, and gave his suggestion.

Su Liang's eyes brighten up, "That's an idea, I forgot about my master. I will ask him tomorrow, if he's not willing, I'll find another way."

Old Mu was strong and familiar with the area where Old Bai was active. He was the best choice.

Having finished discussing their matters, Su Liang brought up the issue of Xing Yuyan's marriage.

"I never thought the emperor would arrange for my foster-father's daughter to marry. He is commanding soldiers in the north. If his daughter married and became the crown princess of Liang Country, wouldn't the emperor fear that my foster-father would collude with the Liang royal family? But today, it really happened. "

Su Liang sighed slightly, then continued, "The emperor is very clever, suspicious, but also resolute. My foster-father's family is all in the capital city, the possibility of him taking the risk of rebelling for his married daughter is almost non-existent. Moreover, after the incidents, the emperor understands my foster-father's character well, knows that he values friendship and has no ambitions. Only the daughter of the former Bei Jingwang would be qualified enough to marry, this represents Qian Country's founding meritorious service nobility. Presumably, Liang Country is satisfied with this and must have expectations of my foster-father. If there really is action in Liang Country, my foster-father only needs to follow the plan, this would be very beneficial for

Qian Country."

No matter how, Duanmu Yi let Xing Ji's daughter go to marry, indeed there was an existing risk, but if he bet right, the benefit would be greater.

After all, a marriage on the surface is just the beginning of the game, and the princess who is married is just a pawn.

From Su Liang's angle, she could see at once what this marriage would bring to Xing Ji, and how he would choose. Duanmu Yi certainly understands this too. Gu Ling agreed with Su Liang's viewpoint. From Duanmu Yi's perspective, this

move was undoubtedly a good one.

As she woke up early, Su Liang opened her eyes, remembering the matter she discussed with Gu Ling last night, rubbed her face and muttered to herself, "Maybe I was a bit impulsive... It's okay, it's the Great God after all..."

Su Liang is a person who likes to think through all possible consequences for any matter. But what she didn't realize is that her absolute trust in Gu Ling had reached the point where she didn't need to consider the consequences for things between them, because she knew that Gu Ling would always make the best choices for her.

Gu Ling said before he left last night, regarding the marriage, don't mention it to anyone in advance, and don't let a third person know it's fake.

Su Liang agreed with this. Since it's a secret, the fewer people know the better.

When she met Old Mu again, she asked him if he wanted to go back to the brothel.

Old Mu said righteously, "What do you mean go back? I've never been there. Don't aim to tarnish my innocence."

Su Liang couldn't help but laugh, "Yes, yes, master is right."

"No, it's not interesting." Old Mu shook his head. The moment he ran away from the old woman who was clinging on him, he decided he would never enter a brothel again, let alone drink there.

"I have a favor to ask of master." Su Liang spoke sweetly.

Old Mu nodded readily, "Why be so formal with me? I'm not like Old Bai, who doesn't even dare to be your master, who told you he would give you things, but turned out to be empty words, I don't even know if they are true!"

Old Bai appeared at the door, looking at Old Mu, his eyes full of hostility. "You, come out, we need to settle scores."

Old Mu said to Su Liang with due solemnity, "Did you see that, my obedient apprentice? Old Bai is a brute with a simple mind and strong limbs who only knows how to fight. I don't like to fight at all!"

Su Liang: ... to put the blatant fear of a sure loss and unwillingness to fight in such a sophisticated way is indeed unparalleled...

But of course, she would not intervene, because she still wanted Old Mu's help in finding treasures.

Su Liang invited Old Bai into the room and together they sat for some tea.

"My good apprentice, you mentioned earlier that you need my help with something? Speak up!" Old Mu, in Old Bai's presence, liked to show off how good his relationship with Su Liang was, and seemed very pleased. Su Liang said earnestly, "I would like my master to help me find Old Bai's treasure."

Immediately Old Mu shook his head, "No! The gift he gives you, and I have to retrieve it? Why doesn't he fetch it himself? If he's fit enough to fight then he should stop playing sick! I'm not going to be his runner!"

Su Liang hurried to explain, "Master, the situation is that I want to start studying the poison techniques from Old Bai sooner, he is not as healthy as you and I thought it would be more suitable

for you, my master who is not only strongest but also the most secure person around me, to retrieve it. Qi Jun and Ren Dong won't cut it."

This remark pleased Old Mu, "That's true after all, those two are too young, they don't have any experience in the world, and their actions are not reliable. If it's only Donable if I'm the one going, I'll do it then!"

"Thank you, Master." Su Liang was overjoyed.

Then Old Bai chimed in, "At least you're of some use running errands."

Su Liang covered her face and listened as the two old men started arguing with each other again. Not going to mediate. Letting out emotions on the spot was not such a bad thing, arguing is healthier. They were friends even before they met Su Liang, so this was their unique way of interaction.

By the end of their quarrel, Old Bai had clearly stated all the places he needed to remind Old Mu of, and warned him to run immediately if he saw any old women.

"Look how scared you have become, what did the crazy old lady do to you?" Old Mu huffed.

"If you want to come back alive, remember what I said," Old Bai said coldly.

"I get it, I get it, stop talking such nonsense!" Old Mu looked impatient and turned to Su Liang with a smile on his face, "My dear apprentice, your master is going on a long journey, he needs a good meal!"

Su Liang nodded, "No problem. I will prepare a feast for the master today." "Can I eat meat and have Old Bai eat veggies?" Old Mu asked. Su Liang shook her head, "It's best to have a balanced meal with both." The lunch was cooked by Su Liang herself, which was very abundant.

Old Mu had a good meal, packed his bag, and decided to go and find the treasure for Su Liang. Actually, Old Bai always said that being Su Liang's master was taking advantage of her, and he was not of much use to her. Although Old Mu was angry, he knew Old Bai was right. Su Liang was too good to him and he didn't have much to teach her.

Therefore, whenever Su Liang needed his help, he was actually happy. As for Gu Ling, he has given him the secret scroll, let him study on his own.

Su Liang walked Old Mu to the gate, where he hesitated for a moment before asking her, "Girl, when you were in Liang Country, did you ever tell Situ Han that Mu Yu was siding with Situ Xie?"

Su Liang shook her head, "No."

Old Mu sighed with relief, "That's good." After all, Mu Yu was a disciple raised by Old Mu. He chose to let go, but he still hoped Mu Yu could survive. If Situ Han found out that Situ Xie had Mu's heir and hid it from him, thus the conflict between Emperor Liang and King Yue would escalate, and Mu Yu, caught in the middle, could become cannon fodder and quickly reach the dead end.

Old Mu knew that even if Su Liang used Mu Yu to sow discord between Situ Xie and Situ Han, it was not her fault, as she had her own standpoint. But he was relieved to know that Su Liang did not do so.

The reason Su Liang gave up on exploiting the chance to stir up trouble was exactly because she knew that Old Mu did not want to see Mu Yu end up in a tragic situation. In fact, the strife between Situ Xie and Situ Han was already out in the open, regardless of Mu Yu's existence, the dispute was doomed to be irreconcilable.

After sending away Old Mu, Su Liang was still thinking on her way back to Yuanming Pavilion, wondering how Gu Ling planned to get them to the point of marriage. Will he start courting her openly? She was quite curious.

What Su Liang didn't know was that Gu Ling was on his way to Duke Qin's mansion at the moment.

Today Old Master Qin was at home. When he heard the servant say that Marquis Chang Xin had come to visit, he was stunned for a moment, then said irritably, "What does that young fella want with me?"

The steward asked if he should show him away, Old Master Qin frowned,

"Bring him here! I want to see what he's up to!"

About whether Gu Ling had deceived Su Liang or not, Lin Shuzhi was aware of it but did not tell Old Master Qin about it, because he wasn't supposed to know at the time.

After Xing Yusheng found out, he didn't think to specifically notify his grandfather either.

And in respect of Situ Han's dignity, Duanmu Yi did not publicize the truth, so outsiders still thought Gu Ling was a person of poor character, including Old Master Qin.

By the time Gu Ling was invited to Old Master Qin's study, he hadn't even prepared any tea, and his demeanor was not warm, "Marquis Chang Xin, what brings you here?"

After paying his respects, Gu Ling took a seat, "I have a favor to ask of Old Master Qin."

"Marquis Chang Xin jests, you are the emperor's favorite, and at my age I have no part in affairs, and can't help you with anything." Old Master Qin said lightly.

Gu Ling remained unchanged, "I wish to ask Old Master Qin to accompany me to the Su Mansion to ask for Su Liang's hand in marriage."

Old Master Qin was dumbfounded, suspecting there was something wrong with his ears, "You... what did you say?"

Gu Ling repeated his request.

Old Master Qin was annoyed, "Young man, make up your mind, what is going on? Speak clearly!"

Gu Ling looked calm, "Regarding the previous marriage in Liang Country, it was a temporary strategy, a joint conspiracy by Su Liang and me to cope with Emperor Liang, not an intentional deception."

Old Master Qin was instantly stunned, “Really?”

Gu Ling nodded, “Yes.”

Old Master Qin frowned, “Then why do you want to marry her now?”

Gu Ling’s eyes were clear, “After spending time together in Liang Country, I have grown fond of Miss Su Liang.”

Old Master Qin relaxed, “Well, that’s more like it! Su Liang is such a good girl, it would be strange if you didn’t like her! However, about this, from the emperor’s side...”

Gu Ling shook his head, “Neither she nor I are married, nor do we have elders in our family restraining us, so we can make our own decisions. If we love each other and marry openly, it doesn’t concern anyone else.”

Old Master Qin nodded, “If that’s the case, I’ll act as the matchmaker for you. When would you like me to propose to her?”

“Today,” said Gu Ling.

Old Master Qin glared at him, “What have you been doing until now? Really! Let me go change clothes!”

Chapter 296: 296. Handsome men and talented women

After seeing off Old Bai, Su Liang went to the Lin Mansion to visit Lin Minshi, who had just given birth, and the little Lin Jingyun. After sitting for a short while, she returned home.

When she saw Old Bai again, he was still sitting by the lakeside pavilion, staring intently at the calm lake, as if he were a sculpture.

Su Liang walked over, sat down across from him, and Old Bai came back to his senses. His gaze fell on her face, shimmered slightly, and he asked her a question, “Who did you learn your medical skills from?”

Su Liang had intended to say, “My grandfather was a famous doctor,” but that would be a lie. The real source of her medical skills couldn’t be revealed, so she shook her head and said, “My master, he is a secret.”

Old Bai frowned slightly, and when Su Liang thought he was displeased, she heard him say, “Good, secrets that have been promised to others should be kept. ”

Su Liang couldn’t help but feel that Old Bai’s words were more like a reminder to himself, because she hadn’t said, “I promised my master to keep it a secret.”

Then, Old Bai orally listed the ingredients needed for the poison techniques he would teach Su Liang, and she recorded them diligently.

Just as she had filled a page, Ren Dong appeared nearby, “Master, Old Master

Qin from Duke Qin’s Mansion is here.”

“Let’s stop here for now.” As his words fell, Old Bai returned to his previous demeanor, gazing at the lake.

Su Liang used a paperweight to hold down the list of ingredients and leaped across the lake. Qi Jun had already brought Old Master Qin over.

“This place is not bad, very quiet.” Old Master Qin said cheerfully, looking in Old Bai’s direction, “That person is...”

“An old senior.” Su Liang smiled.

Old Master Qin did not inquire further, withdrew his gaze, and followed Su Liang into Yuanming Pavilion.

Ren Dong served tea, and Su Liang laughed, “I was planning to visit Grandfather Qin at Duke’s Mansion in a few days, but Grandfather Qin came to see me first.”

“You have many things to do, don’t worry about this old man, my body is in good shape.” Old Master Qin laughed, “In the blink of an eye, Bo Yan has become a father, time really flies. I still remember when you first came to the capital city, you were just a skinny little girl, and today, you’ve grown taller.”

Su Liang nodded, “Compared to last year, Grandfather Qin looks much younger.”

Old Master Qin laughed heartily, “It’s all thanks to you. Last time I was playing chess with Xueqing’s father, I said that with you, a divine doctor, around, we are at ease and enjoying our blessings.”

Just when Su Liang thought that Old Master Qin was simply visiting out of boredom, he took a sip of tea and asked with a smile, “How did you and Gu Family’s youngster get along when you went to Liang Country?”

Even at this point, Su Liang still hadn’t realized that it was Gu Ling who had asked Old Master Qin to come. She simply thought it was an elders’ concern and laughed, “I think we got along well. That time we got married in Liang Country was just a tactic to deal with Emperor Liang. We conspired and there was no deceit.”

Old Master Qin nodded knowingly, “Old man had already known about this.” Su Liang thought it was Xing Yusheng who had told him.

“Since you two get along well and have mutual intentions, it’s better to get married sooner!” Old Master Qin said with a smile.

Su Liang was stunned, and then heard Old Master Qin continued, “Is it because that boy hasn’t been enthusiastic about you? He’s pretending. He came to visit me and asked me to propose marriage on his behalf, insisting that it has to be done today, not even tomorrow would work! Haha! I told him long ago, how could he not like you?”

Su Liang: ...Is this what the Great God meant when he said that she shouldn’t do anything, and he would arrange everything?

Instead of chasing her, Gu Ling went straight to the proposal, beginning the necessary procedures before getting married.

Simple, straightforward, and very good.

“Why aren’t you saying anything, Liang girl? Don’t tell me you don’t want to marry him again?” Old Master Qin frowned slightly.

It was as if Su Liang had just come back to her senses, and she showed a bright smile, “I’m so happy! Really? Really? Grandfather Qin, you must not deceive me!”

Old Master Qin glared at Su Liang, “Be reserved! Or Gu Ling might get too cocky. I’ve long seen that he liked you but pretended not to, and he’s been holding you back!”

“No, Gu Ling is a gentleman.” Su Liang said seriously.

Old Master Qin looked at Su Liang, who seemed to be completely smitten with Gu Ling, and advised her earnestly, “Even after you two are married, don’t let yourself be wronged for his sake. If there are any conflicts, work it out together. You can’t always give in to him just because you like him. If he dares to bully you, come to me for support!”

Su Liang’s heart warmed. These were words that Old Master Qin would say to his own daughter, even though he was here, in name, to propose marriage on Gu Ling’s behalf.

“Don’t worry, Grandpa Qin, I won’t let anyone bully me.” Su Liang said with a smile.

“Gu Ling doesn’t like to talk, and you shouldn’t imitate him. No matter what the problem is, you have to be open and honest about it. It’s exhausting for a couple to live together if they keep guessing!” Old Master Qin had already begun to pass on the lessons of married life to Su Liang.

Su Liang nodded, “I understand.”

“You’re such a good-natured person, if there’s any problem, it must be because of Gu Ling. I need to have another good talk with him.” Old Master Qin said.

Upon hearing Su Liang asking if the wedding date had been set, Old Master Qin held his forehead, “You two are really... That boy invited me to propose the marriage and set the date for the fifteenth of next month. I said it was too hasty and you haven’t even agreed yet, but you seem impatient too.”

Today was the last day of the first month, and the fifteenth of the next month would be in half a month. It was rare even for commoners to get married only half a month after the engagement had been set, let alone among noble families.

“Then let it be on the fifteenth of the second month.” Su Liang said. Since the decision had been made, the sooner the better, so as to avoid any complications.

Old Master Qin looked helpless, “If you say so, then let’s settle it. Neither of you have elders to take charge, and since I am here to propose the marriage on his behalf, why not let Granny Xing Ji, who now is your godfather, handle the arrangements for you?”

Su Liang shook her head, "The Marquis Zhong Xin's daughter is getting engaged, and the Old Dowager has to worry about her granddaughter so let's not bother her."

"Then I'll talk to Qingqing's father!" Old Master Qin thought Lin Shuzhi should represent Su Liang's side of the family.

Su Liang didn't really mind, but since Old Master Qin insisted, she let him do as he pleased.

"Oh dear! Time is too short, and there are so many things to do. I'll go to Lin's house and check on Bo Yan's son while I'm at it." Old Master Qin hurriedly left after drinking a cup of tea, heading to discuss Su Liang's marriage with Lin Shuzhi on Gu Ling's behalf. At this point, Lin Shuzhi wasn't even aware of their impending nuptials.

Old Master Qin didn't ask Su Liang what they would do if the emperor objected because he had already asked Gu Ling about it. If there were any obstacles, it would be up to Gu Ling to resolve them.

After bidding farewell to Old Master Qin, Su Liang turned around to see Ren Dong and Qi Jun both looking at her in astonishment.

"What's wrong?" Su Liang asked.

"You're getting married to Marquis Chang Xin?" Qi Jun asked, wide-eyed.

Su Liang smiled and nodded, "Yes."

Ren Dong frowned, "Is it for real this time?"

"Of course it is. Grandpa Qin came at Gu Ling's invitation to propose." Su Liang smiled.

"But didn't Marquis Gu not like you?" Qi Jun scratched his head. On the way back, he didn't see any hints of a close relationship between Gu Ling and Su Liang.

With a faint voice, Ren Dong said, "Just because we didn't see it doesn't mean it isn't there."

"That's right." Su Liang walked between Ren Dong and Qi Jun, patting their shoulders, "You have work to do. I'm getting married on the fifteenth of next month, so start preparing."

Qi Jun looked confused, "What should we... prepare?"

Ren Dong, who also lacked experience in this area, asked, "Prepare dowry for our lady?"

Looking at Su Liang's retreating figure, Qi Jun asked, "Will our lady marry into his family, or will Marquis Chang Xin join ours?" "Either way works for me." Su Liang replied.

"Either way works for me." Su Liang replied.

Ren Dong frowned, "But Marquis Chang Xin's mansion only has one dilapidated courtyard."

"Oh, I'll ask him about it next time." Su Liang said casually, already stepping away.

Then, Qi Jun and Ren Dong began to discuss how to prepare for Su Liang's marriage.

When Su Liang met Old White again, she mentioned their wedding happening in half a month. Old White snorted, “Did that boy get his eyes treated? Are you sure you want to be with him?” Su Liang nodded, “Sure.”

“What if he changes his heart?” Old Bai asked.

Su Liang thought for a while and said, “Close the door, let the Master go?” Old Bai:...

The list of medicinal materials hadn’t been completed when Xing Yusheng and Lin Xueqing came over in response to the news.

“Sister Su, you’re getting married?!” Lin Xueqing held Su Liang’s arm and twirled her around excitedly, “I knew it! You’re definitely able to conquer Gu Ling!”

Xing Yusheng calmly summarized, “I’m not surprised at all that Gu Ling would fall in love with you.”

“Sister Su, when you and Sister-in-law Gu have children, let’s arrange a marriage between our families!” Lin Xueqing said earnestly.

Xing Yusheng immediately agreed, “That would be great.”

But Su Liang refused, “It’s better not to. It’s better to let things happen naturally.”

Lin Xueqing didn’t expect Su Liang to be unwilling, “Sister Su, are you afraid that our baby will not grow up beautiful?”

Su Liang hurriedly swore that it was absolutely not the case.

“Let’s wait until we all have children.” Xing Yusheng thought it was a bit premature. He and Lin Xueqing hadn’t had children yet, and Su Liang had just gotten engaged today.

By evening, news of Gu Ling asking Old Master Qin to propose for Su Liang at Su Mansion quickly spread throughout the capital city, and everyone was surprised.

They had just been married in Liang Country on the sixth day of the first month, but the marriage was annulled that day because Gu Ling deceived Su Liang.

Not even a month had passed, and now Gu Ling was willingly proposing to marry Su Liang again. It left people puzzled.

The most widely spread version of the story was: On their way back from Liang Country, Gu Ling had fallen in love with Su Liang after spending days and nights together. So, just a few days after returning to the country, he proposed marriage on his own initiative.

Some people thought that Gu Ling was too fickle and had a problem with his character.

But many more people felt that the match was perfect, with both the man and the woman being attractive and talented.

When the news reached the palace, Duanmu Yi was having dinner with Imperial Concubine Xiao, and Duanmu Chen was also present. They were getting along well and looked like a normal family of three.

Upon hearing the eunuch's report that Gu Ling had proposed to Su Liang, and that they were engaged today with a wedding scheduled for the fifteenth of the second month, Duanmu Chen watched Duanmu Yi's face instantly darken. He slammed down his chopsticks and got up to leave.

Imperial Concubine Xiao was somewhat baffled, and Duanmu Chen reassured her, "It's fine. Father must be unhappy because Gu Ling said before that he didn't like Su Liang, and now he's proposing to her today." He then followed

Duanmu Yi out.

In the Imperial Study, Duanmu Chen cautiously spoke, "Father, I'm not really surprised that Gu Ling has changed his attitude towards Su Liang and grown to like her. After all, they spent some time together in Liang Country. The fake marriage was for official business and shouldn't count."

When Su Liang and Gu Ling returned to the capital and had an audience with the Emperor, Su Liang had made it clear that she hadn't given up on Gu Ling. Gu Ling hadn't said anything because Duanmu Yi didn't ask him about his relationship with Su Liang.

As for today's events, Duanmu Chen could understand why Duanmu Yi was angry. It wasn't for the reason that he had told Imperial Concubine Xiao, but because Duanmu Yi didn't want Su Liang to marry Gu Ling at all.

Duanmu Chen himself was also surprised. But looking at the development of their relationship from the beginning to the present, including today's sudden engagement, there was nothing wrong with it. Su Liang had never hidden her admiration for Gu Ling, and Gu Ling had said that he didn't like Su Liang months ago when they "first met". Naturally, this could change. So, there was no deception of the emperor.

Nor could it be said that they had acted arbitrarily. Marriage has always been arranged according to the will of parents and matchmakers. Su Liang and Gu Ling didn't have any parents or elders, and they weren't princes or princesses, so they didn't need to ask for Duanmu Yi's permission to get married.

"If We don't want them to get married, do you have any good ideas?" Duanmu Yi asked coldly.

Duanmu Chen sighed, "I'm not speaking for Su Liang, but I've been thinking, what if that falling giant rock was meant to mislead us? Some people in Liang or Yin Country may have meticulously planned it to deceive us without error." "Mislead what?" Duanmu Yi frowned.

This was something that Duanmu Chen had thought about long ago, and now he finally had the chance to say it, "People from both Liang and Yin countries know that Father appreciates Su Liang, who is an exceptional and rare talent. If someone thought that Father would forcibly marry Su Liang into the palace after seeing that rock, but Su Liang would never agree to it, thus causing irreconcilable conflicts, wouldn't that be an excellent scheme to sow discord?"

"What if it was not man-made, but truly the will of heaven?" Duanmu Yi asked coldly, "If Su Liang is really the Phoenix Maiden reincarnated, and she marries

Gu Ling, does it signify that Gu Ling will overthrow Qian Country?"

Duanmu Chen thought it was normal for Duanmu Yi to have such thoughts. After all, Gu Ling ended up as a lone wolf because his father rebelled, a "dark history" for his family.

As for this, Duanmu Chen was well-prepared and chose his words carefully, "Father, Su Liang will marry someone sooner or later. With her character, she would never be willing to enter the Imperial Harem and become a mere concubine. Her skills lie on the battlefield, in her strategizing, and medical skills. If we clip her wings and trap her, are we gaining her or losing her? If she is truly the Heavenly Phoenix Maiden, the 'gain' in the Heavenly Edict might not necessarily mean possession between men and women. Now, Qian Country has already gained Su Liang, hasn't it?"

This is Duanmu Chen's true thought as the Crown Prince of Qian Country and not merely to protect Su Liang. If the stone was man-made and they had a conflict with Su Liang because of it, they'd be falling right into the trap. If the stone was truly the will of heaven, Duanmu Chen would never believe Qian Country's fate depended on whoever could possess Su Liang. This would be too ridiculous, completely negating everything he had worked for since childhood.

His experience of becoming the Crown Prince made Duanmu Chen already believe that "whoever gains Su Liang gains the world," but it had nothing to do with the stone. The "gain" he considered should not be the physical aspect between men and women; that would be too shallow.

Duanmu Yi fell silent, and after a long while, he finally asked, "If you were in my position, would you still think the same way?"

Duanmu Chen replied respectfully, "This humble son does not know whether I would change my mind in the future, but at present, I can't find a reason to prevent Su Liang from marrying Gu Ling. Even without Gu Ling, Su Liang would eventually find another man. If Father wishes to have Su Liang enter the Imperial Harem, this humble son will definitely discourage it, as there are no benefits to it."

Duanmu Yi rubbed his forehead, "My son, you have become more and more prudent. Comparatively, my thoughts on this matter are indeed narrow-minded."

Duanmu Chen heaved a sigh of relief.

"In that case, let her go this time." Duanmu Yi sighed, "I hope my leniency and generosity towards Su Liang will not be in vain."

Duanmu Chen knew this was only temporary, and no one could predict what would happen in the future. Including himself, he and Su Liang weren't true friends in the real sense, as their relationship was defined by their status. Both parties were well aware of this unspoken understanding. No matter how well they got along now, conflicts of interest might arise in the future. He was simply doing what he believed was right at this moment.

By the time Duanmu Chen left the palace, it was already late.

Chang'an was still driving, and halfway through, he couldn't help but bring up the topic of Su Liang and Gu Ling's marriage, "Does Master approve of their marriage?"

Duanmu Chen snorted lightly, "They are a match made in heaven, a perfect pair. It doesn't matter whether I object or not."

His master had started using odd sarcasm again... Chang'an weakly said, "They have already set the marriage today; there shouldn't be any more changes, right?"

Only after a moment did Duanmu Chen reply, "Unless Gu Ling does something unforgivable to Su Liang, no one can stop her once she sets her mind to it."

Su Mansion, Yuanming Pavilion.

When Gu Ling arrived, Su Liang was sorting out the list of medicinal materials dictated to her by Old Bai during the day. "The emperor didn't summon me," Su Liang said.

Gu Ling nodded, "Same here."

"It's a good opportunity to see if the emperor is rational enough. If he interferes, we'll disappear and find a place to hide," Su Liang said calmly.

This coincided with Gu Ling's thoughts.

"However, I don't want to hide for now. It's not free, and people will try to kill us. It's good as it is now," Su Liang said, "Because of that broken stone, my marriage will sooner or later become a conflict between me and the emperor. It's better to resolve it as soon as possible. After tomorrow, we'll know the emperor's attitude."

Gu Ling saw that Su Liang was checking off names of medicinal materials not found at home. He took an unsorted list, found a pen, and started working with Su Liang.

With Gu Ling's help, the list was quickly sorted, and she planned to arrange for someone to find the medicinal materials the next day.

"If the emperor doesn't interfere, then there's only one issue left," Su Liang looked at Gu Ling seriously and asked.

"What?" As Gu Ling spoke, he arranged two randomly placed books neatly on the table. Seeing that one of them had a folded corner, he picked it up and pressed it flat with his thumb.

Su Liang chuckled, "You have no place to live. If you come to live with me after the marriage, people will say you've married into my family. I, of course, don't mind. Having the beautiful Gu Ling marrying into my family would be such an honor!"

Gu Ling looked at the laughter in Su Liang's eyes, and the waves in his heart surged again. He lowered his eyes, continuing to press the corner with his finger, and spoke calmly, "I will give you this honor."

Chapter 297: 297. Thirst for knowledge

The first day of February.

Su Liang was awakened on time by her biological clock, and the first thought that crossed her mind upon opening her eyes was: today she would definitely be summoned by the emperor, and perhaps the old eunuch carrying the imperial decree had already arrived at her doorstep.

She washed up, practiced martial arts, bathed, changed clothes, and had breakfast.

As the sunlight was cast upon the calm lake, scattering golden specks, Su Liang had already completed her morning routine that she had been adhering to since living in Su Family Village.

She had done many things, but the day had just begun.

The old eunuch hadn't arrived yet, but he should be coming soon, at least before noon... With this thought in mind, Su Liang entered the lakeside pavilion. Qi Jun had already left with the list of medicinal herbs that she and Gu Ling had sorted out the night before, seeking Song Qi. Before Su Liang returned to the capital, Song Qi had come back from Xunyang City. He didn't disappoint Su Liang; Ning Family's business was growing steadily.

Old Bai's gaze passed over Su Liang's profile, and then over the lake surface he was always staring at, finally falling on a pile of boxes outside Yuanming Pavilion.

That was the first step Qi Jun and Ren Dong had taken to prepare for Su Liang's wedding after consulting each other: the dowry boxes. Now they were all empty, but they should be filled up by sunset.

Old Bai withdrew his gaze from the boxes and returned it to Su Liang's face, focusing on her brows and eyes. He always looked at her with a melancholic and nostalgic expression, occasionally tinged with a touch of incomprehensible remorse.

"February 15th? Why the haste? Are you pregnant?" Old Bai spoke, shocking everyone.

Although he had been dissatisfied with Gu Ling's reluctance to be with Su Liang before, when they really decided to get married and did so in such a hurry, he suddenly had a new gripe.

It was the typical mindset of a person seeing their "daughter" getting married. Is that brat blind for not seeing how precious my girl is? He must be wanting to become a monk! Is that brat really going to take my girl away? She's still young; why rush to get married!

Su Liang softly coughed, "I'm not pregnant, Master. Don't talk nonsense."

"Really not pregnant?" Old Bai's eyes were filled with doubt, as if saying, "Since you like that guy so much, maybe you couldn't resist being intimate with him."

Su Liang raised her hand, not to swear, but to place it on the table in front of Old Bai, palm up, calmly saying, "Master, you'll know the truth by taking my pulse."

Old Bai really took Su Liang's pulse, muttering, "If that guy dares to hurt you, I'll slaughter him."

Su Liang could only smile. The image of Gu Ling's consistently aloof demeanor appeared in her mind, imagining Gu Ling turning into a playboy, having that kind of desire for her, Su Liang couldn't help but shake her head. It was too bizarre, simply terrifying, and utterly impossible.

"You're not pregnant." Old Bai let go of Su Liang's wrist, "Why can't you get married next year? Let's see if that guy can hold on for that long. What if he falls for someone else within a month?"

“Master, he won’t,” Su Liang said earnestly, surprised by Old Bai’s anxiety. It must still be related to that “little junior sister,” Su Liang thought...

As Qi Jun returned after finishing the tasks Su Liang had assigned him, the sun had already risen high, and the golden specks on the lake had turned into a large golden foil, gently shimmering and glittering. Old Bai had put Gu Ling aside and was discussing poison techniques with Su Liang.

At noon, the Wan Family Restaurant delivered the food that Su Liang had pre-ordered.

She glanced in the direction of the gate; the old eunuch still hadn’t arrived...

In the afternoon, Qi Jun and Ren Dong were packing things into the boxes, moving them from the warehouse one trip at a time – porcelain, fabrics, gold, silver, and jewelry. Su Mansion’s warehouse was full of these items, some bestowed by the Qian Country’s Royal Family and Liang Country’s Royal Family, and some sent by relatives and friends. Many treasures were the same ones mentioned in the contract Su Liang and “Ning Jing” had made with Duanmu Chen back in Bei’an County; they had been kept in the warehouse since they moved in.

At this moment, people on the streets of the capital were still discussing Su Liang and Gu Ling’s upcoming marriage.

Unlike their instinctive judgment of the goodness and badness of this marriage when they learned about it yesterday, new rumors had emerged overnight. One of them was similar to Old Bai’s “concern”: the marriage was so rushed because Su Liang and Gu Ling had already consummated their relationship, and they were afraid it would be too late if she got pregnant—perhaps she was already pregnant...

Since ancient times, people have always had their own conjectures about things they deemed “abnormal.”

Nothing sparks gossip and rumors more than affairs between men and women: such high social status, even without parents and elders in the family, the marriage should have been conducted through three matchmakers and six formal visits, with all the rites and rituals in place. Why was it that from the time they were betrothed to their wedding ceremony, only half a month had passed? There must be something unspeakable going on.

When Su Liang found out about the criticism directed at her, she was a bit surprised, as her way of thinking wouldn’t lead her to those conjectures. But she didn’t care about it.

What Su Liang cared about was that the sun had set, a whole day had gone by, and there had been no eunuch to pass on Duanmu Yi’s decree for her to enter the palace for questioning?

“Ren Dong.”

Upon hearing Su Liang’s voice, Ren Dong put down the valuable blue porcelain vase in his hand and ran into the Yuanming Pavilion in haste.

“You go secretly to Marquis Chang Xin’s Mansion, see if Gu Ling is at home, and ask if he has been to the palace today.” Su Liang ordered.

Ren Dong nodded his head in agreement and turned around to leave.

Su Liang was a bit annoyed. She and Gu Ling thought that Duanmu Yi would intervene, and although they didn't want that to happen, when the anticipated event didn't occur, it made her uneasy.

Ren Dong came back quickly, "Master, Marquis Chang Xin is at home and didn't go out today, only Old Master Qin went to see him."

Su Liang frowned, "I see. You all stop tidying up, take a break, we'll talk about it tomorrow."

The day felt a bit long for Su Liang because the development of events was beyond her plan, and she didn't like that feeling.

Not until Gu Ling appeared again in the Yuanming Pavilion at night did Su

Liang hear her own sigh of relief, "His Majesty didn't come to us at all?"

"What are you worried about?" Gu Ling saw Su Liang's slightly furrowed eyebrows and really wanted to reach out to smooth them, but he held back.

Su Liang sighed, "Isn't it obvious? Would His Majesty really be happy about or indifferent to our marriage? It's impossible. If he doesn't confront us openly, then he must be planning to do something behind our backs."

As a matter of habit, Gu Ling helped Su Liang tidy up her somewhat messy desk. She hadn't read any books today but had picked up a few and put them back down. He asked, "What do you think His Majesty will do?"

Su Liang looked at Gu Ling, her expression difficult to read, "The most likely, kill you?"

Gu Ling blurted out, "Are you worried about my safety?" Realizing his words were somewhat ambiguous.

But Su Liang didn't think too much about it, immediately nodding, "Of course. You are the son of a rebel, with half of the Liang Country's royal blood flowing in your veins. Your top-notch abilities and mysterious actions make you hard to see through; His Majesty can't possibly trust you. You're about to marry me, and I might be what His Majesty thinks of as the Daughter of Fate or something similar. His Majesty probably doesn't want to end up on bad terms with me, so the simplest solution is... to kill you."

Gu Ling nodded lightly, "That makes sense."

Su Liang frowned, "But if that's the case, what can we do about it? His Majesty has an unknown number of assassins like Ren Dong at his disposal, and your martial arts prowess will be hard-pressed against them."

However, the possibility of Gu Ling being assassinated by Duanmu Yi was only Su Liang's conjecture, something that had not yet happened and perhaps would not happen, making it impossible to prevent, obstruct, or counterattack.

Last night, Su Liang thought that either she or he would be summoned by

Duanmu Yi to the palace to find a reason to prevent or delay their marriage. Today's tranquility made Su Liang start to feel that Gu Ling was in danger.

Gu Ling continued to tidy up the desk without speaking. Although Su Liang's conjecture made sense, he wasn't afraid, only curious: how would Su Liang respond to the danger she perceived?

Su Liang was pondering over this matter. She paced back and forth in her room, her eyebrows sometimes relaxed and sometimes furrowed. In the middle, she said, "It was me who wanted to marry you to avoid future troubles.

I can't let this bring you big trouble."

Gu Ling picked up a book and knew it was the one Su Liang had just read. The corner of one page was folded. It wasn't folded deliberately, as she used bookmarks to mark the pages she had read. The reason was that Su Liang had a habit. Before putting down a book, she would linger on the paused page for a while, quickly recalling the previous content, then insert the bookmark and close the book. During the recollection, her right thumb and index finger always pinched the upper right corner of the page.

As a result, the corner of the book was often bent and folded into the book when she closed it.

This was an unconscious small habit of Su Liang that Gu Ling had discovered long ago. But he never pointed it out, nor reminded Su Liang not to do this, or told her she could do it, but she had to smooth the folded corner.

Gu Ling liked these "little things" that belonged only to him and Su Liang. He always silently smoothed the folded corners of her books, imagining her expression while reading.

At this moment, when Gu Ling pressed Su Liang's folded corner flat with his right thumb again, she suddenly stopped, turned around, and slapped the table. Because she had found a solution to the problem, she said excitedly, "I know! "

Gu Ling nodded, his finger smoothing the corner of the book again, and was somewhat curious about how Su Liang would solve the issue of him possibly being assassinated.

"You can come and stay here at night!" Su Liang sat down and said to Gu Ling with a serious look.

Gu Ling closed the book in his hand, and the waves in his heart slowly surged. It was another unexpected joy, just like that night when Su Liang suddenly said she wanted to marry him.

"Okay," Gu Ling nodded quietly. Very well, that was exactly what he wanted.

Su Liang snorted lightly, "If the emperor is going to send someone to kill you, he won't do it in broad daylight. You can come at night, and even if the emperor thinks we've slept together before we got married, it doesn't matter. If he sends someone to Su Mansion to kill you, just stand behind me and see if he would dare to kill me too."

As Su Liang finished speaking, Gu Ling glanced out the window.

"Has he already come?" Su Liang's expression changed, and she heard a familiar voice from outside, 'Miss Su?'

Su Liang was surprised to see Chang'an.

After exchanging glances with Gu Ling, she opened the window and flew down.

Chang'an bowed with a smile on his face that always appeared when he saw Su Liang, "Miss Su hasn't slept yet? That's great."

Su Liang's expression was cold, "What does the crown prince have to say?" She wondered if Duanmu Chen knew about Duanmu Yi's plans and came to warn her?

"My Master only asked me to come and congratulate Miss Su on her great joy,"

Chang'an said, taking out a long wooden box from his sleeve. "This is my Master's gift to Miss Su."

Su Liang took it and said, "Please convey my gratitude."

"I will. Goodbye." Chang'an left as soon as he finished speaking.

Su Liang entered the Yuanming Pavilion and climbed the stairs while opening the box. Inside it was a jade hairpin. The jade was of good quality, but there was nothing special about it.

"Duanmu Chen gave me a hairpin." Su Liang picked it up and showed it to Gu Ling, finding it quite baffling.

Putting down the hairpin, Su Liang tore off the silk lining inside the box and saw a folded paper hidden underneath.

She wasn't surprised by this, finding it more normal.

Opening the paper and reading its content, Su Liang's face relaxed, and she handed it to Gu Ling after reading it. The corner of her mouth lifted slightly, "So that's it!"

It was a conversation between Duanmu Chen and Duanmu Yi about the marriage between Su Liang and Gu Ling. Although his true purpose wasn't to defend Su Liang, it did achieve such an effect in the end.

And for such a thing, it would be strange if Duanmu Chen didn't "seek credit" from Su Liang. He didn't allow Chang'an to come last night or today, because he was also watching to see if Duanmu Yi would do anything today. By tonight, it could be confirmed that his persuasion had worked last night.

"Only Duanmu Chen could say such words," Su Liang sighed. "He is more clever and rational than I thought, and that's good."

It is good, as it greatly reduces the possibility of intervention from Duanmu Yi... Gu Ling thought. But at the moment, what he cared more about was whether Su Liang would let him stay the night.

"However," Su Liang spoke again, "Duanmu Chen, like us, only knows that the emperor is not going to do anything openly, but he may still try to kill you in secret. Great God, you should stay here just in case."

Gu Ling: I can listen to stories before going to bed again, perfect.

"If everything really goes smoothly, I'll acknowledge Duanmu Chen's favor," Su Liang rolled up and burned the paper Gu Ling had finished reading.

Next door was Gu Ling's room. Su Liang went to the warehouse and retrieved the bedding Gu Ling had used before.

As Gu Ling made the bed, Su Liang leaned against the door watching, feeling much more relaxed than during the day and began to joke, "Qi Jun and Ren Dong have been helping me prepare my dowry, isn't it inappropriate for you, Great God, to not have any betrothal gifts?"

Gu Ling didn't look back, "I'm marrying into your family, you should prepare the betrothal gifts. I can bring a tree as a dowry."

Su Liang laughed, "Right. I like your dowry. But don't you feel like this undermines your dignity as a man, Great God?"

"Is a man's dignity about not being able to give birth, yet demanding that the child takes his surname? I don't need that," Gu Ling said indifferently.

Su Liang raised an eyebrow, "So, Great God, you're willing to have our future children take their mother's surname? Of course, if possible, you'd rather

experience giving birth yourself. Speaking of which, Xueqing even thought about arranging a marriage for our two families' children. But of course, I refused. The funniest part is that Xueqing thinks I'm unwilling because I'm afraid their baby won't be good-looking enough. She must be thinking that if the two of us have a child, it would be the most beautiful baby in the world."

Gu Ling knew Su Liang was just joking, but he liked the assumption that "if the two of us have a child". The important point was that Su Liang would think about such things.

These two days, Gu Ling had an uncertain feeling that Su Liang might like him, but she wasn't aware of it yet.

At least, she felt that marrying Gu Ling, living together, and even talking casually about their children's appearance was no big deal.

At least Gu Ling was sure about one thing; if the events that happened between them involved someone other than him, Su Liang would never accept it.

Getting married first, then falling in love, also sounds good... Gu Ling was thinking at the moment, even starting to look forward to it.

Tonight Su Liang was in a good mood, and she made another joke, "Great God, now some people outside actually suspect that I'm pregnant, and that's why we're in such a hurry to get married. Once we get married and don't have a child for a long time, you might be suspected of having physical problems. Will you mind?"

Hearing this, Gu Ling put down the pillow, turned around to look at Su Liang, his beautiful eyebrows slightly furrowed, this was his most serious expression, "I've never thought about it, nor do I know if I have any problems in that aspect. You're a doctor, do you have a way to confirm it?"

Su Liang was stunned, her gaze involuntarily moved downward, landing at Gu Ling's waist area. Suddenly realizing, she coughed awkwardly, "Great God, you definitely have no problems! Let's go to bed early!" After saying that, she closed the door and returned to her room.

The waves in Gu Ling's heart spread to his eyes, gradually bringing out a smile. Was Su Liang shy just now? So cute. He wasn't teasing her; he was just curious, as he always had been.

Although there were no stories to listen to tonight, Gu Ling's mood was unprecedentedly joyful when he lay down. He counted the days—fourteen days from now, he could call Su Liang his wife with pride....

Chapter 298: 298. Storm and Heavy Rain

Early in the morning, when Su Liang got up for exercise, she saw that Gu Ling's room door was open, the quilt was neatly folded, and he was already gone.

At the same time, Duanmu Yi received a message that the spy monitoring Gu Ling had confirmed that he had left Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion at night and went to Su Mansion, where he spent the night and returned at dawn.

This led Duanmu Yi to believe that Gu Ling's "sleepwalking" in the past few days was to meet Su Liang.

The fact was indeed the case, confirming the point that "the two were set for life due to the feelings that arose during the trip to Liang Country."

"I originally thought he was a gentleman." Duanmu Yi snorted coldly. He hadn't even gotten married yet, and he went to Su Liang's place to sleep? It made him see another side of Gu Ling.

However, one thing Su Liang overthought was that Duanmu Yi really did not intend to interfere with her marriage and had no plan to send someone to get rid of Gu Ling, at least for now.

As an emperor, Duanmu Yi has always been very restrained in terms of women. Even if he had the idea of letting Su Liang enter the palace, it was only because of the falling boulder, not because he had any lustful intentions towards Su Liang. This was also one of the reasons why Duanmu Chen's words could persuade him.

Today, Nian Jincheng took a break and specifically went to the Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion to find Gu Ling. When he saw Gu Ling, he was holding a pair of specially made flower shears, trimming the trees brought from Yao City.

In the early spring season, grass and trees sprouted, and the gloomy Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion gained some spots of green.

"Aling, I wanted to come and see you yesterday." Nian Jincheng walked over with big strides and got straight to the point, "This time you're really getting married to Su Liang, right?" There was no place to hide around, so there was no need to worry about being overheard.

Nian Jincheng asked this because the first time he saw Su Liang, it was on the night of her marriage to Gu Ling in Su Family Village. And he had witnessed Su Liang and Gu Ling's second fake marriage in Yao City of Liang Country.

Three times! If it's another show, Nian Jincheng would probably not be able to resist punching Gu Ling to make him sober up.

Under Nian Jincheng's eager gaze, Gu Ling snipped off a tree branch, bent down to pick it up, and said, "Here, this is for you."

Nian Jincheng speechlessly took the leafless tree branch, "What do I need this

"Take it back to Yang Yu. If she wants to hit you, she can use it." Gu Ling walked toward another tree with a faint expression on his face.

Nian Jincheng followed with a dark face, wanting to throw the tree branch in Gu Ling's face, "Don't try to change the subject! Answer my question! Are you really sincere about getting married to Su Liang?"

Gu Ling nodded slightly, "Yes."

Nian Jincheng's face relaxed, "You are really getting married? When did you decide?"

"The night before the engagement. Su Liang proposed it." Gu Ling said.

Nian Jincheng was somewhat surprised, "So Su Liang actively proposed to get married to you?"

Gu Ling nodded, "Yes."

Nian Jincheng laughed, "Are you very happy?"

Gu Ling did not speak, and Nian Jincheng took it as an acknowledgment.

"That's great. Your matter with Su Liang is finally settled, and we can rest assured."

Nian Jincheng patted Gu Ling's shoulder as if he had accomplished something significant, "Yang Yu said that when our two families have children, we will set up a marriage between them. You will not refuse, right?"

Gu Ling pointed the scissors at Nian Jincheng and said three words expressionlessly, "Impossible."

Nian Jincheng frowned, "Why not?"

"My child, whether or not they want to marry, and who they want to marry, they will choose for themselves." Gu Ling's expression was faint. And whether he would have children depended entirely on Su Liang.

"Well then." Nian Jincheng could only give up. He glanced at the only courtyard of Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion, "You might as well marry into the Su family. If the emperor has any objections, you can remove the plaque of Marquis Changxin Mansion and hang it on the gate of Su Mansion. This place will be just a garden. After you marry Su Liang, if you don't want to be disturbed, you can come and live here occasionally."

Gu Ling thought Nian Jincheng's suggestion was not bad. Nowadays, more and more people were in Su Mansion, and he still missed the days when he and Su Liang lived as a couple.

From beginning to end, Gu Ling did not tell a single lie to Nian Jincheng, but he perfectly covered the secret between him and Su Liang.

Nian Jincheng didn't even have a chance to drink tea and went home to report to Yang Yu with a tree branch.

When Gu Ling arrived at Yuanming Pavilion that night, Su Liang was fiddling with a pile of medicinal materials. She glanced up at him and continued to be busy with her work, "Today, Yang Yu came and asked whether our wedding is real."

Gu Ling washed his hands, rolled up his sleeves, and naturally began to sort the residues of the medicinal materials that Su Liang had processed, "How did you answer?"

"If I dared say it was fake, Yang Yu would have definitely hit me." Su Liang said with a light smile, "In a way, it is indeed true. We are getting married for the sake of getting married, not for any other purpose."

She and Gu Ling used marriage to become married, so as to avoid the possibility of their marriage being interfered with.

Gu Ling nodded in agreement.

"Yang Yu was very happy. She said that there was too little time and I didn't have any. She would be in charge of the wedding dress, new bedding and the like." Su Liang said, "She asked me what kind of wedding dress I like so that the embroiderer can make it. I only had one request, to keep it simple. In Yao City, I was almost crushed by the phoenix crown and the sunset clothes."

Gu Ling thought that he had originally planned to make a wedding dress for Su Liang himself, but now there was really not enough time. Besides, this time it was true for him, not for Su Liang. He had to do everything according to her, and it was secondary to establish their status first.

Su Liang raised his head at Gu Ling and smiled. "Great God, when we get married, would you like to wear a wedding dress for me to take a look? I won't let anyone else see and I swear I won't tell anyone. I'm just curious how beautiful you would look in women's clothing."

Gu Ling shook his head, "No."

"Alright," Su Liang expressed his regret. "I'll find an opportunity to get you to agree in the future."

Gu Ling: ...perhaps, after they really become husband and wife...

Duanmu Yi thought that Gu Ling and Su Liang had become intimate before their marriage, but in reality, there was nothing ambiguous about their nightly rendezvous. Su Liang would teach Gu Ling what she had learned from Laobai about poison techniques during the day, and at the same time, she could consolidate her memory, achieving two goals at once.

Su Liang and Gu Ling's marriage preparations were proceeding in an orderly manner. Both their close friends and family were busy preparing, but the two of them didn't worry about it themselves.

It was well known that their wedding would take place in the Su Mansion, and after the wedding, Gu Ling would move into the Su Mansion. This was clearly a case of Gu Ling marrying into Su Liang's family.

However, the special aspect was that both Su Liang and Gu Ling were people without families. Consequently, their actions had nothing to do with their families and no one could interfere, particularly when it came to financial matters. With no elderly or younger members or siblings in their families, they naturally had the freedom to do as they pleased.

The time quickly approached February 12th, and in three more days, it would be their wedding day.

As for their wedding ceremony, Old Master Qin and Lin Shuzhi had already completed the formalities on behalf of Gu Ling and Su Liang.

Several tens of boxes were filled with gifts from both Qi Jun and Ren Dong, but no one could determine the purpose of them, whether they were betrothal gifts or dowry, just as Su Liang had said. In the end, they brought them back to the warehouse.

That evening, Su Liang and Gu Ling discussed the process of their wedding day.

“I don’t mind marrying into the Marquis Chang Xin Mansion. But there isn’t even a proper place for the wedding there. So, it’s not convenient to entertain guests,” Su Liang said. There was only one courtyard suitable for living in at Gu Ling’s place, and the rest of the buildings had been leveled. It was now full of flowers, plants, and trees, making it a truly amazing garden.

“Wait for me, I’ll come over,” Gu Ling said.

“So, you’ll just ride a horse to my door by yourself?” Su Liang laughed as she said this, “It’s like you’re the one marrying me. Or should I be the one to pick you up?”

Gu Ling shook his head, “Not alone.”

Curious, Su Liang wondered who else would be coming.

It turned out that Nian Jincheng insisted on accompanying Gu Ling.

Su Liang smiled, “You two have been brothers for many years. It’s fitting. As for betrothal gifts and dowry, let’s not bother with that. After all, what’s yours is mine, and what’s mine is yours.”

Gu Ling nodded, and although this fact had always been true, hearing Su Liang say it still made him happy.

“Then let’s settle on this. I’ll take care of everything on my side, and you just need to show up on time,” Su Liang said. She didn’t care if people criticized them for not following traditions. They would set their own rules for their affair.

As for their bridal chamber, it had already been arranged in another courtyard in the mansion.

Originally, Su Liang wanted to use the courtyard where she and Gu Ling had previously lived, but “Ning Jing” had “died” there. In order to avoid others overthinking, they chose another courtyard.

Yuanming Pavilion could certainly be used as the bridal chamber, but since Su Liang was going to live there anyway, the bridal chamber would just serve a fleeting purpose for her.

“Hopefully, there won’t be any accidents in the next three days.” Gu Ling said this. As the wedding day approached, he felt unexplainably anxious and couldn’t wait for the

day to arrive so he could complete the wedding ceremony with Su Liang and put his mind at ease.

Su Liang shook her head with a smile, "What kind of accidents could there be? Unless an enemy country invades and I'd have to go fight in a war. Even if such a thing happened, it wouldn't be solely up to me."

However, Gu Ling was thinking that if there really was a war, Duanmu Yi would definitely send Su Liang to fight.

The next day, early in the morning, Gu Ling left the Su Mansion and returned to the Marquis Chang Xin Mansion. After spending some time there, he went out alone, riding a horse to Huguo Temple.

Throughout his life, Gu Ling had spent a lot of time living in Huguo Temple. In the past, he would always calmly bypass the busy front hall and go to the back mountain to watch the sunrise or sunset, or to play against Master Pu Hui.

But today, Gu Ling unusually ventured into the front hall and lit three incense sticks, bowing before the Buddha, praying for his and Su Liang's safe and smooth wedding.

When he met Master Pu Hui, Gu Ling asked him a question, "Master, have you observed any astrological signs recently? Are there any signs of unrest in the world?"

Master Pu Hui was quite surprised upon hearing this, "Why does Benefactor Xiaogu ask this?" They were well acquainted, and in Master Pu Hui's impression, Gu Ling had never been concerned about such issues.

"Just asking." Gu Ling's expression was indifferent.

Master Pu Hui shook his head, "This humble monk doesn't possess such knowledge and wouldn't dare to speculate."

Gu Ling didn't inquire further, but played a few rounds of chess with Master Pu Hui before bidding him farewell.

When the large rock had first appeared in the back mountain of Huguo Temple, this elderly monk had witnessed its appearance and immediately informed Duanmu Yi, sealing off the news. Now, knowing that Su Liang was getting married to Gu Ling, he didn't mention anything about the stone to him.

Therefore, Gu Ling believed that Master Pu Hui was an appropriate choice as the temple's abbot. He showed loyalty to both Qian Country and Duanmu Yi. As a monk, especially a high-ranking one, it was hard to say whether he had truly achieved enlightenment. However, being aware of current affairs wasn't wrong; after all, monks were people first.

Upon leaving Huguo Temple, Gu Ling ran into Little Monk Cheng Yun.

Last time they met was last year. Cheng Yun has grown taller, but he still has rosy lips and white teeth, and his beauty cannot be hidden by his ashy monk robe.

"Benefactor Gu." Cheng Yun is more familiar with "Ning Jing" than Gu Ling, so he just stops and greets him before continuing on.

However, Gu Ling knew that Su Liang had just met Cheng Yun yesterday. It was Cheng Yun who learned that Su Liang was getting married and came down the mountain specifically to congratulate her. The little monk with a pure Buddhist heart genuinely considered Su Liang as his friend. When Su Liang asked about Yan Shiba, Cheng Yun said that the female benefactor had not reappeared. However, he received a letter from Ping'an Temple, and his master uncle returned to the temple after completing his roaming. He plans to leave Huguo Temple and return to Ping'an Temple in March.

Gu Ling returns to the mansion from the mountain and sees that Nian Jincheng has arrived. He brought the completed wedding robe for Gu Ling to try on. "Xiaoyu went to deliver Su Liang's wedding clothes." Nian Jincheng said. Gu Ling then asked, "Have you seen the wedding dress?"

Nian Jincheng snorted lightly, "What? If I see it before you do, will you hit me?" "I will." Gu Ling nodded.

Nian Jincheng was speechless but immediately smiled again, "I knew it, you were just pretending before. You clearly like Su Liang a lot, but you refused to admit it! I didn't see the wedding dress, Xiaoyu said that it's for you to see! But don't sneak a peek today, you have to wait until the wedding day."

Gu Ling commented that Yang Yu is quite reliable.

He tried on the wedding robe, which fit perfectly. He took it off and put it away, thinking that the wedding was just the day after tomorrow, and nothing should go wrong...

"Aling, what's wrong with you?" Nian Jincheng noticed that Gu Ling seemed a little distracted.

Gu Ling shook his head slightly, "It's nothing." But he felt anxious these days, an anxiety that he had never experienced in his life, perhaps due to concern leading to chaos and focusing too much on the matter at hand.

"Did you secretly go find Su Liang these past few days?" Nian Jincheng asked. Gu Ling countered, "What's wrong with that?"

"You can't see each other within three days before the wedding, or else it's bad luck. Xiaoyu said that this is very important." Nian Jincheng, who had experienced this before, shared his experience.

Gu Ling frowned slightly, "Why didn't you tell me earlier?" It has to be calculated from yesterday, but he went to see Su Liang last night. Nian Jincheng was taken aback, "I thought you wouldn't believe this."

He used not to believe in such things, but now Gu Ling was willing to do anything to ensure that he and Su Liang would successfully get married the day after tomorrow.

That night, Gu Ling hesitated several times and decided not to find Su Liang. Within the three days before the wedding, if he counted the current day, then he still hadn't broken any rules.

As a result, just as Gu Ling was preparing to go to bed, he heard Su Liang's voice coming from outside, "Great God, are you alright?"

Gu Ling: ... He didn't go, but Su Liang actually came over. He was touched but a little conflicted whether they should meet or not.

"Great God?" Su Liang knocked on the door again, "If you don't say anything, I'm coming in."

"Don't." Gu Ling said and felt something was odd.

Su Liang outside the door also sensed the strangeness, "Great God, what's wrong? Are you sick? Or is there a girl hiding in your room? If it's the latter, it's okay; I don't mind."

Gu Ling's face darkened, what girl? Is Su Liang really not bothered by it?

"I'm taking a bath," Gu Ling said.

"Ah? Oh." Su Liang was a bit speechless, "Then you wash up and go to bed. I thought something had happened to you. I'm leaving now!"

Gu Ling listened to the footsteps quickly disappearing, and he silently slipped out the back window, following Su Liang all the way. Only after confirming that she had safely returned home did he turn around and leave.

Not having seen each other face-to-face doesn't count as meeting... Gu Ling thought.

February 14th.

Qi Jun and Ren Dong are busy preparing for tomorrow's banquet. Luckily, Song Qi helps to manage everything, or else it would be a chaotic mess. Time is tight, and Su Liang doesn't care about anything, focusing solely on learning poison techniques from Old Bai.

"What a pity! My master won't be back tomorrow." Su Liang felt that when the old master returns, he would definitely be annoyed that they "behind his back" got married.

Old Bai nodded, "It's inappropriate, You two should get married next year instead."

Su Liang coughed lightly, "At this point, there can be no going back."

Then Old Bai said, "Well, have a baby next year, and I'll help you two look after it."

Su Liang: ... What the hell? Doesn't want her to get married, but wants a grandchild?

In the evening, while Su Liang was having dinner with Old Bai, they suddenly heard a crisp voice from outside, "Aunt."

Her eyes lit up with joy, and she put down her chopsticks and went out, only to see Zhengzheng running towards her.

Su Liang smiled and bent down, picking up Zhengzheng, "You've grown heavier."

Zhengzheng giggled and said, "Grandpa says I've grown taller!"

Wan Hui walked over, looked at Su Liang's expression, and smiled, "When we heard about your upcoming wedding, we hurried over and managed to arrive just in time."

“Aunt is getting married to Uncle Gu, who is Uncle Ning getting married to?” Zhengzheng couldn’t help but ask, even though he had been told not to by Wan Hui. Children just couldn’t keep secrets.

“Zhengzheng.” Wan Hui frowned.

Su Liang, who had been prepared, didn’t change her expression, and smiled,

“You’ll find out when you see Uncle Ning.”

Zhengzheng sighed softly, “I wish Uncle Ning would come home soon!” He then whispered to Su Liang, asking if Uncle Gu was good.

Su Liang nodded, “He’s as good as Uncle Ning; you’ll like him.”

That night, Yang Yu and Lin Xueqing both came to sleep with Su Liang, planning to do her makeup and dress her up the next day.

Su Liang couldn’t refuse them, so she let them be. She originally wanted to inform Gu Ling not to come but, considering he didn’t come last night, maybe he won’t come today, and even if he did, knowing someone was with her, he would leave.

So under the arrangement of her two best friends, Su Liang went to bed unusually early.

Lin Xueqing and Yang Yu originally wanted to share some wedding experiences with Su Liang, but they didn’t expect that she wasn’t nervous or anxious at all and fell asleep quickly after closing her eyes...

February 15th.

The weather was gloomy in the morning, looking like it was going to rain.

When Nian Jincheng saw Gu Ling, he was already dressed neatly in a bright red wedding robe, even wearing a jade-encrusted gold crown. The usually cold, celestial-like person seemed to have fallen into the mortal world, emitting a sense of warmth all around him.

“We’ll set off in half an hour.” Nian Jincheng said, sitting down in Gu Ling’s room, pouring a cup of tea, realizing it was cold, and putting it down again.

Seeing Gu Ling standing by the window, Nian Jincheng called out to him, “There’s still time; don’t stand.”

Gu Ling ignored him. Sitting down would wrinkle the wedding robe.

“It looks like it’s going to rain today. But as long as it’s not a storm, it’s nothing serious.” Nian Jincheng said.

Gu Ling still didn’t respond. A storm was nothing to him; it wouldn’t stop him from marrying Su Liang.

Nian Jincheng finally realized where the problem was. He stood up, walked over, and looked at Gu Ling’s expression, “Are you nervous?”

Gu Ling shook his head, “No.”

In hindsight, Gu Ling couldn't remember what he did while waiting to leave that morning, probably because he didn't do anything.

Finally, he heard Nian Jincheng say, "It's about time; let's go!"

The tense string in Gu Ling's heart loosened a bit. He walked out from under the eaves, and though the sky was covered with dark clouds, it didn't rain.

As Gu Ling rode away from Marquis Chang Xin's mansion, many people lined the streets to watch. Gu Ling dressed in the wedding robe was so beautiful that it was hard to describe. No matter how many rumors there were about Gu Ling and Su Liang before, when they saw such a handsome man dressed up and riding a horse to marry Su Liang, everyone thought Su Liang had won big!

Halfway there, Gu Ling thought to himself that it was almost time, and he couldn't wait to see Su Liang in her wedding dress. This time, it was a proper marriage, different from the previous two times.

"Su Liang?" Nian Jincheng's voice suddenly sounded in Gu Ling's ear.

Gu Ling was startled and saw a flash of red entering his field of vision, quickly approaching and enlarging.

It was Su Liang... but Gu Ling furrowed his eyebrows. She should be at home waiting for him; why was she outside?

Su Liang was dressed in red, riding her horse towards him. They met face to face in the bustling market.

"Why are you here?" Nian Jincheng asked, puzzled.

The onlookers praised the stunning beauty of the newlyweds, but they were also very confused: What was going on?

Gu Ling knew something must have happened. He looked at Su Liang, only to see a rare solemnity on her face, devoid of any joy. "The Yin Country army has invaded, captured Jiaye City, captured Lian Shun's family, and Che Yun is severely injured. The emperor has summoned me to the palace, and today we may have to head south."

Nian Jincheng tried to say that he could go instead but swallowed his words when they reached his lips. A general was severely injured; Su Liang had to go.

Gu Ling had always been unwilling to admit that he had a bad feeling about this wedding, but when his premonition came true at this moment...

"Alright." Gu Ling took off the red silk flower tied to his horse's head and held it in his hand. He didn't know why he did this, or perhaps there was no reason at all. He just needed to do something to calm the storm inside his heart. "I'll accompany you.."

Chapter 299: 299. Son-in-law of the Su Family

Qian Country, sandwiched between Liang and Yin Countries, struggled to deal with the concerted attack of the two countries despite having the strongest national power.

Luckily, the past alliances between Liang and Yin Countries were far from being united. Most of the time, Yin Country instigated Liang Country to send troops and then chose to stand by and watch, in hopes of gaining from others' misfortunes after both sides were weakened.

Last year, Liang Country, which had been badly fooled by Yin Country, chose to appease Qian Country by agreeing to a royal marriage between the two countries after once again failing.

Duanmu Yi had expected that Yin Country would not sit idly by. However, it was beyond his expectation that Yin Country, known for its scheming and despicable behaviors, would directly target Qian Country.

Qian Country was not unprepared, but it couldn't just move its northern border troops to the south because of the alliance with Liang Country. If Yin Country launched a full-scale attack, it would be very tricky.

Even at this moment, they could not rashly transfer troops from the north. Despite the approaching wedding, they still needed to guard against Liang Country at all times.

Therefore, when Duanmu Yi saw Su Liang dressed in wedding attire, he didn't even bother to ask if she had already worshipped with Gu Ling. Instead, he bluntly said, "You head south first, and Nian Jincheng will bring reinforcements later. No matter what, you must defend the south!"

Duanmu Chen looked worried, "Father, let Gu Ling escort Su Liang. They can go together, which might be safer."

Duanmu Yi nodded and then waited for Su Liang to express her opinion.

With a respectful expression, Su Liang asked, "I wonder, will I go as an Imperial Physician, Military Doctor, or General?"

"Your position as a General is restored and promoted to the second rank. Do everything that you can and do not disappoint my trust in you!" Duanmu Yi said coldly.

A second-ranked Military Commander was equal in rank to Xing Ji, making her the highest-ranking position in the south. There was no first-ranked General in Qian Country's army who could command the whole army.

"Yes, Your Majesty, I accept the order." Su Liang said respectfully. She had known this would be the outcome when she received the news. But even if she didn't regain her position as a General, she would still go to the south because her friend Lian Shun was captured, and Che Yun was seriously injured. She had to go and save them.

When Su Liang left the palace, Duanmu Yi summoned the young commanders he highly valued, Nian Jincheng and Lin Bojun.

However, Qin Yujin didn't need to worry about Lin Bojun going to the battlefield because Duanmu Yi had already decided to let Nian Jincheng lead the reinforcements to the south, while Lin Bojun stayed in the capital city.

As Su Liang walked out of the palace gate, she saw a flash of red. Gu Ling was waiting for her, holding a large red silk flower in his hand, like he was coming to receive her for the wedding ceremony.

But at this moment, Su Liang had already put the wedding out of her mind.

While walking, she said, “The Emperor has agreed. We will go together, and Nian Jincheng will bring reinforcements later.”

“Good,” Gu Ling nodded. In fact, while waiting for Su Liang, he had been thinking about whether to discuss with her to worship the hall before taking off the wedding gown, which wouldn’t be too time-consuming.

However, when he saw Su Liang’s solemn expression and hurried pace, he knew why she was acting that way, and he couldn’t say what was on his mind. If he mentioned it, Su Liang might get upset, thinking he couldn’t tell the difference between priorities.

Gu Ling knew that going to the south was crucial, and time was of the essence. He also cared about Lian Shun’s safety. However, when his long-awaited wish was about to be fulfilled only to be disrupted, reason told him it was nothing— after solving the trouble, they could get married. But there was a feeling that if he didn’t settle the marriage that day, he would regret it...

As Su Liang got on her horse, she saw Gu Ling still standing beside her and asked with a frown, ‘What’s the matter?’

Gu Ling shook his head, “Nothing.” He mounted his horse as well, still holding the red silk flower in his hand.

The two rode forward without any further conversation.

Halfway, Su Liang asked Gu Ling if he would return to the Marquis Chang Xin Mansion, but he said no.

A few days earlier, he had already moved the things he needed to Yuanming Pavilion. He should be worshipping the hall with Su Liang right now, and then staying at Su Mansion.

The disappointment in his heart surged like waves, receding and then returning. Gu Ling began to struggle with whether to pull Su Liang into the hall of worship or not...

The Su Mansion was decorated with festive colors, and the guests were still there at this time.

When Su Liang received the Imperial Edict and left in her wedding dress, everyone knew that something had happened. They all thought that she would go to the south to save people after seeing the Emperor, and perhaps even lead an army into battle.

Qi Jun and Ren Dong didn’t know how to handle this situation, so they asked Old Master Qin and Lin Shuzhi for advice.

Lin Shuzhi asked Old Master Qin if it was time to let the guests go first.

However, Old Master Qin suggested waiting for a bit. “What’s the rush? They are all here for the wedding banquet. Since there’s nothing important happening, let’s at least wait for Miss Liang to return and assess the situation.”

Old Lady Xing asked Xing Yusheng to call Old Master Qin and Lin Shuzhi over for a conversation. All three families were related by marriage. Their relationships were now harmonious and close, thanks to Su Liang's efforts.

"Ah, Miss Liang is indeed capable, even relying on her in such a big matter. But it's such a pity that it has to be today," Old Lady Xing sighed. "However, choosing an auspicious day and then changing it is considered unlucky. Besides, it wasn't easy for the two children to be together. In my opinion, even if there are urgent matters, we should let them complete the ceremony first. Everything is ready and it won't take too long."

Old Master Qin nodded repeatedly, "This is exactly what I was thinking! Only after the ceremony can their marriage be considered official. So that even if something happens later, they can better support each other."

Lin Shuzhi frowned, "I understand your feelings, and I also hope their marriage can be settled today. However, when Xiaoliang returns, she will likely bring the Imperial Edict and they'll have to leave immediately. The Emperor might have other plans for Gu Ling and might not let him go with her. If we go to Marquis Chang Xin's Mansion to call him over for the ceremony, it will really delay the time." Considering the rescue situation involved, Lin Shuzhi's concern was quite realistic.

Old Master Qin frowned, "If Miss Liang is going to the south, how could that young man not go with her?"

Old Lady Xing made the decision, "In that case, if Miss Liang returns with Gu Ling, then they must complete the ceremony no matter what. If Miss Liang returns alone, we'll have to let it go today. We can't afford to delay important matters!"

Both Old Master Qin and Lin Shuzhi agreed.

Old Lady Xing called Xing Yusheng and Lin Xueqing over and gave them some instructions. Xing Yusheng then informed Qi Jun and Ren Dong to prepare.

As Su Liang and Gu Ling entered the door, they hurried inside.

"The guests must have left by now," Su Liang said. "We'll change our clothes and set off. Should we bring Qi Jun and Ren Dong with us?"

Gu Ling shook his head, "No, we don't need them." The two of them could take care of each other, and having a third person around would make conversation less convenient.

Su Liang nodded, "That's true. They wouldn't be much help anyway, so it's better to let them stay behind and take care of Old Bai."

As they spoke, the front hall came into view.

Su Liang was stunned. There were so many people still there, watching them. Why hadn't they left?

Gu Ling's eyes suddenly lit up, perhaps...

The next moment, as Su Liang was about to greet the guests and ask them to make themselves comfortable, Xing Yusheng and Lin Xueqing ran over.

“What are you guys...” Before Su Liang could finish her question, Lin Xueqing covered her head with a wedding veil and pulled her forward. “It’s just in time, without missing the auspicious moment! Su Liang, don’t speak, and don’t object; that will only delay us more!”

Su Liang: ... How could she not have expected this situation? It seemed as if they were afraid she wouldn’t be able to get married if they didn’t hurry up with the ceremony.

Xing Yusheng dragged Gu Ling forward quickly, “Time is of the essence. Hurry up with the ceremony. If you dare to refuse, I’ll curse you to be lonely and unmarried for the rest of your life!”

Gu Ling: ... Refuse? That’s impossible!

Su Liang and Gu Ling were pulled into the wedding hall, with smiles once again appearing on the faces of the guests. No matter how stormy it was outside, fate ordained that they should become husband and wife today, and no one could stop it.

Originally, Lin Shuzhi was supposed to officiate the ceremony, but Old Master Qin took the initiative and “bullied the old to sell the old”, taking over the role instead.

Seeing that the couple was in place, Old Master Qin cleared his throat and announced, “The auspicious time has come!”

Su Liang could only see a small area of red, lit up by the wedding veil. When Lin Xueqing guided her to turn and bow to Gu Ling, Su Liang saw a pair of embroidered cloud-patterned boots and the hem of Gu Ling’s wedding robe, adorned with delicate patterns embroidered in gold thread.

Su Liang had requested her wedding dress be as simple as possible, without any gold or silver threads. As a result, Yang Yu had arranged all the festive and auspicious patterns designed by the embroiderer onto Gu Ling’s wedding robe. Su Liang only noticed it now.

Very beautiful... Su Liang thought. It was a pity that Gu Ling, who was rarely dressed so gorgeously, deserved to be appreciated and praised. If she didn’t, it would be disrespectful to Gu Ling’s beauty.

“The ceremony is complete!” Old Master Qin announced with great energy. “Guests, please take your seats! The bride and groom can go and attend to their business. As for entering the bridal chamber, you can decide for yourselves!”

Qi Jun lit the firecrackers, and red paper flakes burst and fluttered like fireworks, while Su Liang smelled the faint scent of gunpowder.

She could actually lift the veil by herself, but she didn’t realize it at the moment.

So, Xing Yusheng and Lin Xueqing, the married couple, each grabbed Gu Ling and Su Liang’s hands, bringing them together.

“Alright, brother-in-law, take sister Su away quickly! Go wherever you need to go!” Lin Xueqing gently pushed Su Liang.

“Okay, thank you.”

Su Liang heard Gu Ling's voice, much gentler than usual, perhaps it was her illusion. Why say "thank you"? Yes, their friends had put a lot of effort into their marriage, so it was appropriate.

Su Liang still hadn't thought about lifting the veil, and then she heard Zheng'er's voice, "Auntie, Uncle Gu is so beautiful!"

Someone laughed, and then Zheng'er said with a grin, "I'm wrong, I'm wrong, it's uncle-in-law!"

Everyone laughed.

As the laughter gradually faded away like the wind, Su Liang finally realized that she was still wearing the veil. What for?

Just as Su Liang raised her hand to lift the veil, she suddenly felt enlightened, and the piece of red cloth had already fallen into Gu Ling's hands.

In fact, Gu Ling had been staring at Su Liang's hand, and when he saw her hand move, he lifted the veil first. He had already seen Su Liang without the veil, but he wanted to look at her with it on for a while longer, being led by him as they walked forward, inexplicably well-behaved and adorable.

"I was really dazed by their act," Su Liang said as she released Gu Ling's hand, took a deep breath, and didn't stop walking, "It was just as well, and didn't waste much time."

She was originally going to greet the guests, and this counted as an alternative greeting.

"Mmm," Gu Ling nodded. If Su Liang turned around at this moment, she could see the laughter hidden in his eyes. Good, very good, extremely good, and many thanks to those who insisted on them getting married today.

While talking, the two had arrived at Yuanming Pavilion. As they went upstairs, Su Liang was in front, and Gu Ling was behind. In one hand, he was still holding the red silk flower, and in the other, Su Liang's veil, watching her long skirt sway like ripples, dancing in front of him.

"Fifteen minutes." Su Liang entered her room.

"Okay." Gu Ling entered his room next door. He put down the silk flower and veil, took off his wedding robe, and tried to calm himself down from the joy of getting married before joining Su Liang in handling the serious business.

In exactly fifteen minutes, they both opened their doors, having changed into lighter travel clothes, each carrying a bundle. Gu Ling reached out, and Su Liang handed over her medicine box. Everything seemed natural and well-coordinated as if they had practiced countless times before.

As they walked out of Yuanming Pavilion and went downstairs, they saw Ren Dong waiting outside. "The Master and his wife are going together?" In-law? Gu Ling liked this title.

Su Liang nodded. Ren Dong quickly asked, "Are we and Qi Jun going too?"

Su Liang shook her head, "You stay at home and take good care of Old White."

Ren Dong was not surprised. Su Liang now had someone to accompany her side, it was her favorite Gu Ling. As they were newlyweds, of course, they didn't want her and Qi Jun to be in the way.

“The horses are ready.” Ren Dong said. While the couple was paying their respects in the hall, she and Qi Jun had gone to feed Gu Ling and Su Liang’s horses. Qi Jun was now preparing dried food for their trip.

Su Liang nodded, “Thanks for your hard work.”

Ren Dong saw Gu Ling carrying Su Liang’s medicine box silently walking beside her, finding it particularly pleasing to her eyes, thinking that Gu Ling must really like her young master.

Once again, as they passed the front hall, Su Liang and Gu Ling didn’t stop. Old Master Qin wanted to say a few things to them, but he felt that both of them were smart, and he didn’t have to say anything.

Qi Jun was waiting at the gate, with dried food and water already placed on the horse’s back.

“Take care, Master!” Qi Jun watched Su Liang mount her horse and, together with Ren Dong, saw them out.

“Take good care of the young master, my in-law!” Qi Jun shouted at Gu Ling. Gu Ling hummed and felt that Qi Jun and Ren Dong hadn’t heard, so he turned back to look at them and said, “I will.”

It wasn’t until Su Liang and Gu Ling’s figures disappeared from sight that Qi Jun and Ren Dong turned around and headed home at the same time.

“Master won’t need us anymore in the future.” Ren Dong sighed softly.

Qi Jun chuckled, “It’s great that Master can be with the one she loves! We are not important.”

Ren Dong agreed, but sighed again, “I don’t know how the situation is in the south. Talent is often overworked, but they shouldn’t push people like this. Whenever there’s trouble, they ask Master to go.”

Qi Jun looked helpless, “There’s no way out. Qian Country has Imperial Physicians and Military Commanders, but only Master can hold both roles at once, and nobody can replace her. After all, she’s going there to save people. Even if the emperor didn’t order her, Master would definitely rush there, since the person in trouble is her friend.”

Ren Dong knew this, but was just worried that Su Liang would never have a peaceful life, and her marriage had almost been ruined. It was because both Old Master Qin and Madam Xing had received Su Liang’s great kindness that they could genuinely make arrangements for her marriage.

When Duanmu Yi saw Nian Jincheng, he asked whether Su Liang and Gu Ling had completed their wedding ceremony, but Nian Jincheng said they hadn’t.

Soon after Nian Jincheng left to deploy troops, Duanmu Yi received a report: Su Liang and Gu Ling had completed their ceremony at home before setting off.

At that time, Duanmu Chen was also present, and he thought Duanmu Yi might get angry. However, he felt that such a matter was actually not a big deal. How much time would it take to complete a wedding ceremony? It was just a matter of talking to people for a moment or two. Su Liang was definitely not a person who didn’t know priorities.

As a result, Duanmu Yi just snorted coldly, “Maybe they really were husband and wife early on, fearing that Su Liang getting pregnant would be difficult to deal with.”

Duanmu Chen: It was he who thought too much, but whether Duanmu Yi’s guess was overthinking or not was hard to say ...

After Su Liang and Gu Ling left the capital city for ten miles, the gloomy morning suddenly cleared up.

The two of them had been on the road for half a day without having lunch. When they passed a river, they stopped to rest.

The sky was as clear as a wash, the breeze brushed their faces, and the willow trees by the river had already sprouted, a beautiful green color.

“Great God, you really know how to pick days.” Su Liang handed Gu Ling some dessert. She thought about what had happened today and felt it was quite magical.

Gu Ling took a bite of the dessert, and it tasted extra sweet, “You’re now the wife of Marquis Chang Xin.”

Su Liang looked up with squinted eyes at the sky, the sunlight making her face gleam white, “No, you’re Su Family’s son-in-law.”

Gu Ling nodded slightly, “Miss Su, please take care of me in the future.”

Su Liang laughed softly, “Of course. But I have to remind you, your only brother, Xiao Nian, is now on my side too. Given our current relationship, if you dare to treat me badly, many people will scold you.”

Gu Ling then asked Su Liang, “I don’t know what to do, should I learn from Nian Jincheng and Xing Yusheng?”

As Su Liang ate the dessert, she laughed and said, “You can try one, let’s see.” Those two were both crazy about their wives, so she was curious what Gu Ling had observed?

The next moment, she saw Gu Ling wipe his hands with a handkerchief, then grabbed her arm, gently shook it, and frowned slightly, “Xiao Liang, am I really the most important thing in your heart?”

Su Lianz choked on the dessert she had just put into her mouth, coughing. Gu Ling patted her back while unscrewing the water flask and handing it to her.

Su Liang took two sips of water while holding Gu Ling’s hand, shook her head to signal she was fine, and only when Gu Ling was screwing the flask closed did she realize he had used his own flask instead of hers, because of his hurry .

Su Liang didn’t notice this, and Gu Ling silently put the water flask down, pretending nothing had happened.

The rest ended there, and Su Liang got up and walked towards the horse, saying “Great God, was that your impression of Xing Yusheng just now? That was terrifying.”

Gu Ling followed her with both water flasks, “Nian Jincheng is like that too.” And it was because of Su Liang that both men felt they weren’t the most important thing in their wives’ hearts.

Su Liang gave a light cough, “Great God, just be yourself..”

Chapter 300: 300. It should be a good thing

The matter of marrying Gu Ling, for the time being, had virtually no impact on Su Liang. During the journey, she would occasionally think of it as an amusing scenario, even treating it as a joke when brought up.

On the surface, it appeared the same for Gu Ling.

They had already had a strong understanding when they were together, and it remained so now.

In his heart, however, Gu Ling experienced an indescribable sense of satisfaction and joy. Even if Su Liang was his wife in name only, and they had yet to consummate their marriage, it didn’t matter to him. What mattered was that he now had a legitimate reason to stay by Su Liang’s side. Everything else could take its own course.

In the past, Gu Ling found it hard to understand the changes in his friends when they got married. Now, he understood, and it was wonderful.

To avoid assassination, they changed their appearances the day after they left the capital city, so much so that they looked like a pair of brothers.

The journey was tough, they traveled day and night, only resting when tired and eating when hungry. The irregularity distressed Su Liang’s ordered life, and they often had to sleep in the wilderness or caves.

However, because they were together and looked after each other, many problems that would have been difficult alone became manageable.

Five days after leaving the capital city, they encountered a heavy rainstorm.

The skies darkened suddenly after noon while they were riding their horses in the wilderness. The skies, which had been clear, quickly turned ominously dark, with strong, exciting winds.

The horses began to neigh nervously. Su Liang and Gu Ling decided to find a shelter to avoid the bad weather, for it was unwise to compete with nature.

By the time a mountain appeared in their view, the thunder and lightning were crackling, and the heavy rain fell on their bodies so thickly that it blurred their vision.

Although they wore raincoats, the wind and rain were too strong for them to withstand, and they became thoroughly soaked.

They entered a valley in the storm and led their horses a distance over the muddy terrain, where Gu Ling found a section that looked like a cave. He led Su Liang there, pushed aside the half-dry, half-new green weeds and shrubs of early spring, and indeed found the entrance to a cave.

Su Liang went in first, while Gu Ling tied the horses to a rock in a nearby wind-sheltered corner.

Fortunately, both had experience surviving in the wild, so other than their soaked clothes, their other belongings and medical boxes remained dry.

The rain grew increasingly heavy.

By the time Gu Ling returned, Su Liang had moved some stones to block the entrance of the cave and filled the gaps with dirt to prevent water from seeping in.

The cave was about the size of a room, but not very high. Su Liang could barely stand straight, while Gu Ling had to bend over to enter.

After wiping his face with a clean handkerchief from his bundle, Gu Ling saw Su Liang all soaked and took the raincoat that was better than nothing, "I'll go find some firewood."

"Don't go too far, be careful of falling rocks." Su Liang's voice was faint, carried away by the wind.

Finding dry firewood at such a time was not easy, but it wasn't impossible either.

Gu Ling placed the firewood under his raincoat to keep it from getting wet.

When he returned to the cave, Su Liang had changed her clothes and was drying her hair. She used sticks she found to make a simple frame, hung her wet clothes on it as a screen, and created a private space behind it.

"I'll get the fire started. Great God, go change your clothes first." Su Liang said as she wrapped her wet hair with a cloth to prevent it from getting her clothes wet again.

Gu Ling put down the firewood, placed the raincoat on a rock at the entrance, glanced at Su Liang's jade-like profile, and went behind the "screen".

Su Liang soon started a fire at the entrance of the cave. She sat down beside it, tilted her head, removed her hair cloth and let her hair hang down. She combed it with her fingers and tried to dry it more quickly using the heat from the fire.

The sound of the wind and rain outside was so loud that Su Liang only noticed someone approaching when she could see their silhouettes not far away.

She quickly tied her half-dried hair into a ponytail and noticed two people outside the cave. Gu Ling was still changing clothes inside and hadn't come out yet.

They were an old man and a young man. The young man, who seemed to be only seventeen or eighteen, was carrying an older man with white hair and beard on his back. They were both drenched and looked miserable. The old man was half-awake and coughing continually.

"Miss!" The man's gaze fell on Su Liang's face, widening in an undisguised amazement, "I am journeying to seek medical attention for my old father, and our ox cart has broken down, leaving us unable to move. May we seek shelter from the wind and rain at your place?"

"Alright." Su Liang nodded slightly, "Come in."

The man's face lit up, "Father, we've met a kind-hearted person! Just like a fairy!"

Despite such a direct compliment, Su Liang remained calm. She pointed to a spot, indicating that the father and son duo could rest there.

The light was dim in the cave, with only the front part illuminated. The inner section was very dark, just barely revealing Su Liang's clothes hanging on a wooden rack. Fearful of water, she kept her luggage and medicine box inside, weapons included.

So, the Su Liang who now appeared before others looked like a harmless lady who had escaped from a big family. She was breathtakingly beautiful.

The man settled the old man down. He sat down and swept his gaze over the clothes that Su Liang had hung up inside, finally resting on the fire. He wiped the rain off his face with his sleeve. His complexion was fair, and he had a

refined appearance, displaying a scholarly aura.

"My surname is Ling, and my name is Ling Yun." The man opened his mouth in a smile, "Miss, you are truly amazing to be able to find dry firewood and start a fire in such weather!"

Though it seemed like sincere praise, it made Su Liang more cautious. However, she did not show it on her face. She simply replied blandly, "I took shelter here when I noticed the weather worsening. I also used the rain to wash my dirty clothes."

Ling Yun nodded, "I see. With the rain getting stronger, I wonder if it will stop before it gets dark."

Su Liang glanced outside. The rain showed no sign of stopping, and Gu Ling didn't seem to have any intention of showing up. Was he sleeping inside?

The old man started coughing again. Ling Yun hurriedly patted his back, wiped his face, and hands. He seemed quite dutiful.

However, Su Liang felt that the age gap between this father and son was a little large. It looked more like a grandfather and grandson.

Of course, she didn't rule out that the old man could have had his son late in life. But whenever Su Liang met strangers, she maintained an attitude of suspicion by habit.

Until her eyes fell on Ling Yun's neck..

A patch of red, which could be mistaken for blood. The red birthmark on his neck immediately reminded Su Liang of Che Yun's long-lost younger brother, Che Xiao. The age also seemed to match.

"Father!" Ling Yun suddenly cried out. Su Liang saw the pale-faced old man cough out blood.

Ling Yun's eyes instantly reddened, looking worried, "Father, don't scare me! I still have to take you to the capital to find a divine doctor!"

A divine doctor in the capital... Su Liang guessed he might be referring to her.

"I know a little about medical skills. Let me take a look." Saying so, Su Liang got up and walked over.

Ling Yun instinctively moved aside and Su Liang checked the old man's pulse. He had tuberculosis, and it was a severe case. He was almost beyond saving — there was little she could do.

"Yun'er..." The old man struggled to open his eyes, staring directly at Ling Yun. His skinny hand tried to reach for him, but instead, grabbed Su Liang's arm.

Su Liang stepped aside, allowing Ling Yun to grab the old man's hand. She heard the man say in a muddled voice, "Go to... Xuanbei City..."

Su Liang's eyes narrowed. Xuanbei City? The Che Family was in Xuanbei City!

"Jade pendant..." The old man said, coughing up more blood, growing paler, and was clearly at his limit, "Find... relatives..." With that, his head tilted to the side, falling onto Ling Yun's lap, and he drew his last breath.

Ling Yun held the old man and broke into sobs. Su Liang saw Gu Ling walking out from the inner section of the cave. He had already changed into dry clothes and had tied up his hair.

Gu Ling sat down next to Su Liang. They watched the father and son and spoke softly to each other.

"Could he be the one from the Che family..." Su Liang left her sentence unfinished.

Gu Ling nodded slightly, "Perhaps." But Che Yun had been searching for so many years, and Su Liang had been helping for a long time without any news, and now they'd randomly bumped into him here? It was an extreme coincidence, but not impossible.

Su Liang felt the same. Age, birthmark, and going to Xuanbei City to find relatives all matched Che Xiao's characteristics. As for his looks, Che Yun had said that Che Xiao looked very much like him. But since Che Yun had always kept a thick beard, Su Liang was not very clear about what Che Yun actually looked like. However, recalling the parents of Che Yun, Ling Yun did indeed look like their son.

Ling Yun was immersed in grief, he did not even notice Gu Ling's presence, he just held the old man and wept continuously.

Upon seeing this, Su Liang sighed softly. If the person they encountered today was indeed Che Yun's brother, then the old man who just passed away is most likely the person who abducted Che Xiao all those years ago.

Only after Gu Ling and Su Liang had untied their hair, dried it, and neatly tied it up again, did Ling Yun finally turn around, his eyes filled with tears as he looked at them.

"You..." Ling Yun looked at Gu Ling, his expression shocked.

"He is my husband," Su Liang said calmly. "Try to restrain your grief."

Ling Yun choked back a sob, "My father has been sick for a long time, I planned to take him to the capital city for treatment, but I never thought... as soon as the rain stops, I will take my father home for burial."

Su Liang asked, "Where's your home?"

Ling Yun said it was in Qianhu City.

Su Liang had heard of the place, a famous scenic area in the southern part of

Qian Country, filled with lakes of all sizes. If it wasn't for the rain, she and Gu Ling would have made it to Qianhu City tonight. Therefore, Ling Yun and his father must have set off from there early in the morning.

"I heard your father say earlier that you should seek refuge with relatives in Xuanbei City?" Su Liang asked.

"Yes." Ling Yun confirmed, but was unwilling to say more, repeating, "As soon as the rain stops, I will take my father home..."

"Okay." Su Liang did not pursue further, she stood up and moved the rack with the wet clothes to the fire.

Gu Ling dried his clothes on the fire, while Su Liang leaned against the stone wall and pretended to rest, occasionally hearing Ling Yun's choked sobs.

As the sky gradually brightened, the rain subsided. Only after the sun came out for a moment did the rain outside the cave finally stop completely.

By this time, Ling Yun had placed the old man flat on the ground and tidied his clothes, kneeling by his side in silence.

Seeing that Su Liang had fallen asleep, Gu Ling didn't wake her. He folded the dried clothes and put them back into their bundle. He put out the fire and then lightly tugged at Su Liang's sleeve.

Su Liang opened her eyes and looked outside, the fog was thick, "The rain has stopped? Let's get going then." As she said this, she remembered the other person present.

Ling Yun, with red eyes, started to speak, "Thank you both for your help." "How are you going to get back?" Su Liang asked.

"You go ahead, don't worry about me. I'll carry my father back later," Ling Yun said in a stifled voice.

Seeing Gu Ling shake his head slightly, Su Liang said, "Right. We'll part ways here."

Once their things were gathered, Su Liang and Gu Ling left the cave, found their horses, returned to the main road, and continued their journey to Qianhu City.

"Could he be Che Xiao?" Su Liang asked.

"Perhaps." Gu Ling replied.

"If he is, that would be great. There's a branch of the Ning Family in Qianhu City, isn't there?" Su Liang asked.

Gu Ling said there was, he had been there before. This area was prosperous in trade, and people from nearby cities loved to come here for leisure. The tea house business was booming.

Su Liang noticed that Ling Yun was also wary of them, including the few questions he asked in the middle. They seemed innocent, but in actuality, they were subtly probing. But that didn't necessarily mean anything, maybe he was just cautious while out and about. Su Liang was as well.

In her heart, Su Liang had basically decided that Ling Yun was Che Xiao, because the characteristics matched too well, too many coincidences couldn't be possible. But she was in a hurry and couldn't be delayed. Additionally, it seemed that Ling Yun wasn't in any imminent danger, so she planned to meet with Che Yun first and let him decide what to do.

By the evening, Su Liang and Gu Ling had arrived in Qianhu City and went directly to the Ning Family's branch to meet the manager.

The manager was surprised and anxious to suddenly meet his bosses. While Su Liang and Gu Ling took the time to eat and rest, she asked the manager to investigate if there were any families in the city with the surname Ling, how many members there were, their background, occupation – the more detailed, the better.

"If you find out, do not alert the members of the Ling family. Assign someone to monitor the movements of Master Ling Yun. If he runs into any trouble, do your best to assist," instructed Su Liang.

The manager took note diligently.

Without lingering, Su Liang had her meal and continued on her journey with Gu Ling, leaving Qianhu City.

Quickly after the outbreak of the war between Yin Country and Qian Country, Yin Country broke through Jiaye City at the southern border of Qian Country.

The whole Lin Family was arrested. The veteran Yuan Ye, who had been defending Jiaye City, died in battle. Che Yun was entrusted with the urgent task, leading the army of Qian Country to retreat to Nanshan City, and on the way, he was hit by a poisoned arrow while trying to protect the only grandson of Yuan Ye.

Outside Nanshan City, there was a large river serving as a natural trench. Yin Country's army had shown rapid momentum. They had attempted for several days to cross the river but were repelled each time. Yet during the most recent attempt, soldiers from Yin Country were nearly successful in reaching the shore.

The situation was highly unfavorable for Qian Country.

The spring in Nanshan City was rainy. On this particular cloudy morning, the army of Yin Country was making hostile noises on the opposite side of the river.

With a pale face, Che Yun was discussing the next steps with two generals when he received the news that Yin Country's army was holding Lian Shun hostage and demanding that a representative of Qian Country negotiate.

"General Che cannot allow the barbarians of Yin Country to cross the river for anyone's sake!" exclaimed a middle-aged general, his face ominous.

Che Yun stood up, gripping the table, and walked out with an unsteady gait, "I know. "

As soon as Che Yun, in his armor, led a cavalry out of the military camp, he heard a loud shout, “General Su is here! It’s Divine Doctor Su!”

A commotion rippled through the crowd, Che Yun paused for a moment, then saw a familiar figure on horseback approaching. He heard someone say,

“Thank goodness! The Divine Doctor Su is here, General Che will be saved!”

Watching Su Liang approach, a smile appeared on Che Yun’s face. Then, he heard another voice, “Isn’t that Miss Gu? I heard that Divine Doctor Su and Miss Gu have gotten married! I didn’t expect Miss Gu to come as well!”

The light in Che Yun’s eyes disappeared instantly. He closed his eyes and clutched his chest as he stumbled, being caught by the person next to him.

As the hoofbeats drew closer, Che Yun opened his eyes again to see Su Liang dismounting her horse and quickly walking toward him. Behind her was a tall figure that no one could ignore.

Upon witnessing Che Yun’s complexion, Su Liang frowned slightly. It was apparent that he’d been poisoned.

Che Yun’s gaze passed over Su Liang’s shoulder to land on Gu Ling’s face. He nodded in greeting, “Marquis Changxin.”

“Hmm.” Gu Ling responded indifferently, “Where are you heading?” Che Yun’s gaze hardened briefly, “Lian Shun... They captured Lian Shun. He’s on the other side of the river. I need to go and negotiate.”

Su Liang’s face hardened, “In your state, what can you possibly negotiate? Let me check your injuries first. Great... Sir, your rank is the highest here, you should go negotiate with the scoundrels from Yin Country.”

Realizing her mistake, Su Liang reflexively corrected herself after nearly calling Gu Ling ‘Great God’ out of habit.

Gu Ling nodded, “Alright.” Without another word, he mounted his horse and rode towards the city gate.

“You come back with me,” Su Liang commanded Che Yun, “I’m in charge now.”

Che Yun sighed softly, “Sounds good.”

As they walked back, Su Liang asked him, “How are your parents doing?”

Che Yun nodded, “They are here and safe. Unfortunately, I missed your wedding to Marquis Changxin.”

“Once we manage to rescue Lian Ershan, we’ll have another celebration and you’ll be invited, enough to your heart’s content,” Su Liang said, “How come Jiaye City fell to Yin Country so easily? How did they capture the Lin Family? I received the Imperial Edict and came here in a hurry. I’m unclear about what happened. Tell me. After you’re done, I have some good news to share with

you.”