

Three-Time 30

Chapter 30

[Yan Shiba] As the Crown Prince Bei Jingwang, there was no way he could sleep in the Firewood Room. Moreover, Xing Yusheng was more than happy to invite Su Liang over for a visit, and Ning Jing was just tagging along. When they were about to leave, they ran into Auntie Bai who asked when Su Liang would be back; Su Liang replied that they would be back in two or three days. Worried about someone breaking into their home, Ning Jing and Su Liang each brought a suitcase with them. As the carriage left Su Family Village, Xing Yusheng asked Ning Jing, "Did you send the people from Xunyang City away?" Ning Jing was engrossed in his book and did not answer, so Su Liang replied instead, "Yes, they left. I asked them for five thousand gold taels to release Ning Jing, but they only brought five thousand silver banknotes, so they went back to get more." Xing Yusheng's mouth twitched slightly, "It's almost like you've kidnapped Ning Jing. If they really brought the money, would you let them go?" "Since they didn't really intend to take Ning Jing back home, they wouldn't be willing to actually give so much money. Since it won't end well anyway, I might as well extort some money for spending," Su Liang said with a smile. Xing Yusheng coughed lightly, "If you need money, you can always tell me." "I am not short of money; extorting the Ning Family is just for fun," Su Liang said. Xing Yusheng glanced at the seemingly uninvolved Ning Jing, sighed deeply, and said, "You are really kind to him." Su Liang knew Xing Yusheng misunderstood her enmity towards Ning Family was because of Ning Jing being expelled from it, but in fact, it was Zhao Ming who had first intended to kill Ning Jing, and she merely counterattacked a little. No need for explanation. Ning Jing read his book all the way, while Xing Yusheng chatted with Su Liang about various topics. Xing Yusheng was surprised to learn that Su Liang had lost her memory and forgot everything about the capital city, "What about your medical skills..." "I haven't lost all my memory, I'm not a complete idiot," Su Liang replied. Xing Yusheng sighed softly, "If you want to know about your past, I can send someone to the capital city to investigate and tell you." "That would be great, thank you," Su Liang did not refuse his offer. This matter was important; although she didn't think of herself as the Original Master, no one apart from Ning Jing knew about it and she couldn't tell anyone else. She needed to learn as much as possible about the people and events related to her current identity in order to prevent unforeseen situations. Whatever could be found out was not a secret anyway. Qi Yan, who was driving the carriage, spoke up, "Master, shall I take a trip to the capital city to investigate Lady Su's past and inquire about Young Master Gu's whereabouts?" Su Liang was surprised by his words and instinctively looked at Ning Jing. Ning Jing's expression remained unchanged, still focusing on the book in his hands. Xing Yusheng's expression darkened abruptly, "We'll discuss it when we get back." Qi Jun frowned, signaling Qi Yan to shut up. Gu Ling was a wanted criminal by the court, so Qi Yan's careless mention of the matter made Xing Yusheng sound like an accomplice despite them not knowing each other. It was only due to a previous connection between the late Princess Bei Jingwang, from the Qin Family, and Gu Ling that Xing Yusheng started paying attention to Gu Ling's information. Although Su Liang had saved Xing Yusheng's life and he admired her and wanted to be her friend, it was far from absolute trust, and discussing deeper matters was inappropriate. Qi Yan usually had no filter, but he had realized his mistake and didn't dare to speak anymore. Xing Yusheng didn't want to make matters worse and didn't explain, pretending to be tired and closed his eyes to rest. The three words "Young Master Gu" left an impression on Su Liang; she had a feeling they were related to Ning Jing. As the carriage entered Qiuming Manor,

Xing Yusheng arranged for Su Liang and Ning Jing to stay in a secluded small courtyard with hot springs. Knowing that they had not consummated their marriage, he prepared two adjacent rooms for them. Elder Lady Xing was getting on in years, and Xing Yusheng's health was not good, so no one used the hot springs in the villa regularly. They needed to be cleaned before they could be used the next day. Taking a hot spring bath was just an excuse Su Liang used; she didn't really care about it. Seeing Su Liang again, Elder Lady Xing mistakenly thought she had come to change her mind and was very enthusiastic. When she learned that Su Liang was just there for a hot spring bath, she couldn't hide her disappointment, telling Su Liang to enjoy herself and not feel restrained. ... Qi Yan was kneeling in front of Xing Yusheng, being scolded by Qi Jun, "How many times has Father told you, calamity comes from loose lips? If you keep speaking carelessly and get caught when we return to the Prince Mansion, you'll only cause trouble for the Master!" "That's enough," Xing Yusheng frowned, "Since Su Liang agreed to let me look into her past, it means she trusts me. I also believe she won't do anything about your slip of the tongue today." "But, there is also Ning Jing..." Qi Yan looked worried. Xing Yusheng's expression was inscrutable, "I can't see through him, but Su Liang likes him so much that she should trust his character." Qi Yan weakly said, "What if Lady Su is just infatuated with Ning Jing's good looks..." "Didn't you say Ning Jing's looks were far inferior to mine?" Xing Yusheng snorted lightly. Qi Jun kicked Qi Yan, motioning him to shut up. "Whether it's Su Liang's matter or Gu Ling's news, we cannot let more people know. Which of you two..." Xing Yusheng looked at Qi Jun. Qi Jun hurriedly said, "Master, let my brother go! He's been to the capital city and is good at gathering information!" Qi Yan's expression changed, and he heard Qi Jun continuing, "I don't trust him to take care of the crown prince." Xing Yusheng, watching his two brothers arguing, sighed helplessly, "I'll deduct three months' allowance from both of you." ... "In response to the Old Madam's question, Young Master Ning is reading, while Madam Ning is writing," reported the maid who had served the tea. Old Madam Xing nodded, "It's good that they're ambitious. Yuyu, you've been in poor health these years and have not made many friends. Since Ning Jing plans to take the imperial examination, and Su Liang's medical skills are so impressive, they can help you." Xing Yusheng sighed lightly, "Grandmother, they saved my life first. I can't repay them enough, let alone take advantage of them." Old Madam Xing shook her head, "You're overthinking it. Ning Jing wants to succeed, and you can help him. In return, he'll help you in the future. It's a win-win." "Even so, I can't help Su Liang," said Xing Yusheng. Gossiping was a small matter. "If she's going to be with Ning Jing for the long term, they'll work as a team," explained Old Madam Xing. Xing Yusheng still disagreed, "Ning Jing can take the imperial examination far away all because of Su Liang's medical fee for saving my life. How can it be considered a favor from me? If he passes the examination, it'll be through his own efforts." "You're still too young, and like to argue about these details. In time, you'll see that your grandmother only wants what's best for you. I've already sent someone to the Prince's Mansion to retrieve all the precious medical books, to be gifted to Su Liang," said Old Madam Xing. Xing Yusheng knew that his grandmother had her own agenda, but he couldn't help but support the book-gifting idea, so he said no more. ... After dinner, Su Liang suggested that Ning Jing play a few rounds of chess with Xing Yusheng. Since she and Ning Jing both suspected someone might be planning to assassinate Xing Yusheng, the potential crisis might happen at night. However, their residence was a distance away from Xing Yusheng's, making it difficult for them to protect him. "Of course, it's a good idea," Xing Yusheng said, liking the proposal. However, Ning Jing shook his head, "I'm tired." Xing Yusheng, whose health truly required him to sleep early, had grown accustomed to Ning Jing's dismissive attitude... Declining Xing Yusheng's offer to have someone escort them, Ning Jing carried a lantern and walked back to their residence with Su Liang. "Do you

plan to go in secret?" Su Liang asked quietly. "Would you rather I play chess with him until midnight, then say I don't want to leave and sleep with him?" Ning Jing replied sarcastically. Su Liang imagined Ning Jing and Xing Yusheng sleeping together and couldn't help laughing, "Why not?" Ning Jing stopped in his tracks and frowned at Su Liang, whose face was full of amusement, "Stop whatever you're thinking right now." ... In the dead of night, a cold wind blew. A dark figure had just entered Qiuming Manor when someone stopped them. "Yan Shiba?" A cold, indifferent male voice. "And you are?" A slightly hoarse young woman's voice. "Ning Jing." Ning Jing stepped out of the shadows and into the moonlight. The figure dressed in black narrowed her eyes, "Impossible!" "Ning Yao must have offered the highest price for my life. You killed the wrong person, and according to the rules of Yanyun Building, your death is imminent," Ning Jing said, looking at the figure in black. "I'm no longer your target. Killing Xing Yusheng won't save you either. Run for your life." The figure sneered coldly, "It seems that Yanyun Building has a traitor. Otherwise, how could you conveniently escape and wait for me here! I won't kill you tonight, but I will capture you and redeem my sins by bringing you to my foster father!" Ning Jing leaped away, luring the figure in black out of the manor. ... Su Liang yawned and put down her pen. As the candlelight flickered, Ning Jing jumped in through the open window. "So soon? Have you resolved it?" Su Liang asked. "More or less," answered Ning Jing. "Where's the assassin?" Su Liang noticed that Ning Jing's clothes were torn but had no bloodstains. "She escaped," said Ning Jing. Su Liang frowned, "Won't she come back again?" Ning Jing began telling Su Liang about Yanyun Building and the infamous assassin Yan Shiba in recent years. Su Liang was stunned, "You mean the 'Iron Needle' who killed Yang Feng instead of you last time? She's a woman?" Ning Jing nodded, "Since her mission failed, the next person to come after me and Xing Yusheng will be the master of Yanyun Building, Yan Sui." Su Liang had a thought, "You deliberately let Yan Shiba go because Yan Sui would kill her, and it would be best if they both ended up injured? What if she can make Yan Sui spare her?" Ning Jing's expression was aloof, "Talking about emotions with a person who profits from the trade of human lives is as absurd as Old Madam Xing wanting someone like you to become a concubine." Su Liang coughed lightly, "This analogy is very fitting. If Yan Sui comes and you kill him, can you take his place as the leader of the assassins?" The candlelight flickered as Su Liang's fair face tilted up, her eyes smiling, not hiding her little expectation. Ning Jing turned away, "Go to sleep; you can have whatever you want in your dreams."