

Three-Time 40

Chapter 40

[Pretending to be Noble] “It smells so good!” Bai Xiaohu and Zhuzi stared at the freshly baked mooncakes, swallowing their saliva non-stop. Both Aunt Bai and Mrs. Liu praised Su Liang for her clever hands and dexterity, as the mooncakes she made looked so beautiful that people couldn’t bear to eat them. “The one with clever hands and dexterity is Ning Jing, who carved the mold.” Su Liang said, putting two mooncakes into a plate and handing it to Bai Xiaohu, “Be careful, it’s hot. Wait a while before eating.” “Okay!” Bai Xiaohu led Zhuzi out, and Ning Jing appeared at the kitchen door. Su Liang held another plate with a mooncake and handed it to him, “Be careful, it’s hot. Wait a while before eating.” Upon hearing this, Ning Jing’s outstretched hand paused in midair for a moment, and he suddenly recalled Su Liang’s previous statement that “for a moment you reminded me of my son.” No matter how he heard it, it now sounded like coaxing a child... Ning Jing sat down beside the stone table in the yard, facing two brothers with tiger-head faces who squeezed together, grinning at him with wide smiles. “Will Brother Ning be able to become a top scholar in the future?” Bai Xiaohu asked. Ning Jing nodded, “I’ll try.” “Since sister Su Liang is not Brother Ning’s wife, can she marry me? I will grow up quickly! Then we can have delicious food every day!” Zhuzi’s little face was incredibly serious. Ning Jing nodded, “You can ask her.” Zhuzi really wanted to run over to ask Su Liang, but he was held back by Bai Xiaohu, “Little brother, it won’t work. By the time you grow up, Sister Su Liang will have grown old!” Su Liang, who came to serve tea: ... Bai Xiaohu continued, “Brother Ning, if Sister Su Liang marries someone else, you won’t have any more delicious food!” Ning Jing’s eyebrows furrowed slightly, and the two little fellows had already buried their heads in the plate, starting to gnaw at the mooncakes. ... Half of the finished mooncakes were given to Aunt Bai, and after they were sent away, Su Liang asked Ning Jing, “What do you think about Su Xingzhe’s case? Who is framing you?” Ning Jing shook his head, “I don’t know.” “We can’t even live peacefully here. I think the killers from Yanyun Building and this framing are just the beginning. I really need to consider going to find Yang Yu.” Su Liang sighed softly. Ning Jing was silent for a moment, “Leave the recipes before you go.” “No problem.” Su Liang nodded briskly, “You have to teach me the light body skill first. Half of the silver will be yours at that time.” “Alright.” Ning Jing nodded slightly. It wasn’t that she was scared, but Su Liang felt that Ning Jing was too troublesome, as his suspected double identity would inevitably bring double trouble. Just one thing was certain. Both Ning Jing and Gu Ling were being targeted by hired killers from Yanyun Building. There may come a day when Yan Sui would strike in the middle of the night. Although Ning Jing was highly skilled in martial arts, Su Liang had enough self-awareness to know that she had no chance of winning against the real masters of this world. Even martial arts training required time to accumulate. Su Liang chose Ning Jing over Yan Shiba, but in fact, she didn’t necessarily need companions. As Ning Jing had said earlier, Su Liang was wealthy, and she had already learned a lot about the Qian Country. She could very well move elsewhere and live by herself. Her mention of going to find Yang Yu was just one possibility. There was noise outside, and Su Liang put down her teacup, “That family is coming to make trouble.” Su Xingzhe claimed in public that Ning Jing had framed him. Though the claim was baseless, his family would not let it go easily. Su Liang opened the door to see Old Mrs. Niu being supported by her two sons, wailing as they approached. Upon seeing Su Liang, Old Mrs. Niu’s eyes became murderous, she pushed her sons away and lunged forward, cursing, “You damn slut! It’s all because of you that my son is ruined!” Su Liang dodged and coldly said, “Throwing a tantrum and making a scene in the

village won't do you any good. If you think you have been wronged, go to the county government and beat the drums for justice!" With that, she slammed the door shut. Su Bai, who had rushed to the scene, scolded Su Xingzhe's brothers and hurriedly pulled their mother away, sighing deeply, "Before the Court Examination, was Xingzhe really at home all the time?" "He was at home!" Old Mrs. Niu bulged her eyes and swore to the sky, "If I am lying, may I be struck by thunder and lightning, and my descendants be cut off!" Even Su Bai was frightened by Old Mrs. Niu's fierce oath, and he couldn't help but feel suspicious. It seemed there was really something fishy about it. Moreover, even the villagers who disliked Su Xingzhe, including Su Bai, felt that he didn't have the courage or the ability to steal the chief examiner's test papers. Though Su Bai sympathized with Su Xingzhe for his years of hard study leading to such an end, he saw that his family was relentless and said, "What's the use of causing a scene here? That day, Xingzhe didn't leave home, and neither did Young Master Ning and Liang. I saw it with my own eyes. Don't bite people indiscriminately! If you want to go to the county government, just insist that Xingzhe was at home that day!" Old Mrs. Niu suddenly grabbed Su Bai's arm, "You go and testify! Say that you saw my son at home that day!" But Su Bai hadn't actually seen Su Xingzhe that day, and he refused to lie or get involved in the messy situation. After a lot of pulling and tugging, Old Mrs. Niu's family finally left. Just as Su Bai was about to leave, the door opened again, and Su Liang handed him two pounds of mooncakes. This made Su Bai, who was originally going to ask Ning Jing for help in "inquiring" about Su Xingzhe's situation, unable to say the words in the end. ... Early the next morning, the two of them left the village by carriage. As they passed by the village entrance, they heard someone say that Su Xingzhe's family was going to the county government to beat the drums for justice today. Su Liang drove the carriage, dressed in the men's clothing she had bought from the county town last time, looking like a handsome young man. Although she had mentioned leaving the day before, she didn't plan on leaving so soon, as she wanted to learn some more martial arts from Ning Jing. As for the recipes that Ning Jing wanted, she was already writing them. The carriage arrived at the county town, where they went to the house they had bought the day before the Court Examination. The house was still very clean, having only been left for a few days. After a simple tidying up, they picked a large basket of pomegranates to take back to the village. "There's so many... Do you want to try pomegranate juice?" Su Liang suddenly suggested. It was rare for Su Liang to ask for Ning Jing's opinion before making food, so of course, he wouldn't refuse. Without seeing how Su Liang made it, Ning Jing waited for a while, and she brought a bowl of rose-red liquid, "No additives, try it!" "Thank you." Ning Jing picked it up, took a sip, and despite his cold and calm demeanor, his face involuntarily twisted from the sourness. He put it down and pushed it towards Su Liang, "You haven't tasted it?" Su Liang laughed happily, "I've had it before in Turkey!" Ning Jing drank a glass of water, still feeling the sourness in his throat, "You did it on purpose." "You like experiencing life, don't you? It would have been better with honey." Su Liang knew that honey existed in this world, but it was rare, expensive, and not available in small places. Almost time, Ning Jing left the house and went to the restaurant where the County Magistrate was hosting a banquet. As soon as Ning Jing entered the restaurant, someone came up to greet him. "Young Master Ning, we've been waiting for you!" Ning Jing followed the man upstairs and saw all the scholars from Bei'an County and the newly appointed County Magistrate, Mai Fei. Everyone's eyes fell on Ning Jing, and he bowed his hand to Mai Fei. "Sir." "Young Master Ning is both talented and handsome, no wonder you caught the eye of Crown Prince Bei Jingwang." Mai Fei's lips were tinged with a faint smile. The gazes on Ning Jing, who should have been the only top scholar of Bei'an County, were filled with subtle hostility. Ning Jing took his seat and the banquet began. After trying a few dishes, Mai Fei put down his chopsticks. He sipped his tea, frowned, and wiped his mouth with a handkerchief

before spitting it out. At first, he made some polite conversation, but his expression gradually faded. The banquet ended quickly. Ning Jing also felt that the food in the restaurant was not good. Fortunately, he had told Su Liang earlier to save some food for him, so he could eat when he got home. Just as Ning Jing was about to leave, the man who led him upstairs stopped him again, saying that Mai Fei had invited him to Mingxiang Building for tea. ... Ning Jing entered the elegant room of Mingxiang Building, where Mai Fei had already changed into a brocade robe. The air was filled with the refreshing and pleasant fragrance of tea, not the most expensive tea of Mingxiang Building, but brought by Mai Fei himself. "Young Master Ning, please sit." Mai Fei waved his hand to dismiss the servant. Ning Jing took a seat but didn't touch the tea in front of him. "What do you want, Sir Mai?" "No need to be nervous, Young Master Ning. I admire you and am curious about your relationship with Crown Prince Bei Jingwang." "We just know each other. Crown Prince Xing gave me a helping hand." Ning Jing said. "Hehe." Mai Fei changed the subject. "I heard that your sister is a doctor?" "Are you asking about the eighth young lady of the Ning family?" Ning Jing countered. Mai Fei shook his head. "Su Liang, Miss Su." "She is a doctor." Ning Jing answered. "Do you know her past?" Mai Fei asked. "She doesn't even know it herself." Ning Jing said. Mai Fei's eyes narrowed slightly. "What do you mean?" "Before I met her, she had been seriously injured and lost her memory." Ning Jing said. Mai Fei snorted lightly. "She can still practice medicine after losing her memory?" "She only forgot her past, not become a fool." This was what Su Liang had said to Xing Yusheng back then. "Do you believe that?" Mai Fei asked with a smile. Ning Jing nodded. "I do." "So, you know nothing about her time in the capital city? It's also a good thing that her sins won't implicate you." Mai Fei said, observing Ning Jing's expression, which remained unchanged. "What sins?" Ning Jing asked. "Her grandfather Su Yuanzhou treated the second prince's wife and ended up killing her. Fearing punishment, he took his family and committed suicide by hanging, but I didn't expect there to be a cowardly granddaughter who secretly ran away." Mai Fei sneered. Ning Jing shook his head. "It wasn't her fault. There was no trial, no conviction, no sentencing. She just refused to be forced to commit suicide, and I don't see anything wrong with that. Does Sir Mai think that Su Yuanzhou's offenses should involve nine generations of his family?" Mai Fei's face darkened slightly. "She was the second prince's wife and the eldest granddaughter of Prime Minister Xiao. She died at the hands of Su Yuanzhou! So what if it implicates nine generations?" "If there is an Imperial Decree to punish nine generations, Su Liang would be a fugitive, that's one argument. But now there is no judgment, Sir Mai, what do you want to do?" Ning Jing countered. "Young Master Ning, as long as Su Liang is discovered by certain people in the capital city, she will undoubtedly die, and it will affect your future. Do you still want to continue defending her?" Mai Fei looked intently at Ning Jing as he asked. Ning Jing shook his head. "I'm not defending her. It's just that Sir Mai asked, so I answered. But I still don't know, Sir Mai, what do you want to do?" Mai Fei laughed. "I have some distant relatives in Prime Minister Xiao's mansion, so I am aware of the inside information and want to give you a friendly reminder. Don't publicize this matter. This is a sedative. As long as you hand Su Liang over to me, I can help you smooth things out and make your path smoother in the future." "Alright," Ning Jing nodded in agreement. Mai Fei watched Ning Jing leave with a mocking expression on his face. "Faking being high-minded." When Ning Jing returned home, Su Liang was practicing swordsmanship under the pomegranate tree. After completing a set of swordsmanship smoothly, Su Liang asked Ning Jing, "How was it?" Ning Jing shook his head. "Too slow." "Yeah!" Su Liang agreed and felt that she needed more practice. "How about the new County Magistrate?" Ning Jing took out the sedative Mai Fei had given him. "This is his gift for you." Su Liang was puzzled. "What is it?" "He asked me to drug you and send you to the capital city to be executed." Ning Jing said. Su Liang was

stunned for a moment. “Did I kill his entire family in the past?” After listening to Ning Jing’s explanation of what had happened, Su Liang felt something was wrong. “Assuming everything he said is true, how could someone so concerned about Prime Minister’s matters end up a mere County Magistrate? Is he really a special envoy from the capital city?” Ning Jing’s thin lips opened slightly. “The fourth prince, Duanmu Chen.” Su Liang was very surprised. “Duanmu Si? Mai Fei? You know him?” Ning Jing shook his head. “Prime Minister Xiao is his maternal grandfather, and the wife of the second prince is his first cousin.” “No wonder. He probably thought no one would recognize him in this small place. But if he’s here to investigate the smuggling of the Iron Mine, he shouldn’t be targeting someone as insignificant as me.” Su Liang said. “Are you still leaving?” Ning Jing asked. Su Liang sighed. “I thought you were an annoyance, but I didn’t expect my troubles to be bigger. What should we do about this sedative?” “No rush. He has a dark complexion and is likely to encounter a bloody disaster in three days. If he dies, he won’t bother you anymore.” Ning Jing said.