

Venomous Empress Reborn

Chapter 29: Preparation Before the Banquet

The chrysanthemum banquet of the 68th year of Ming Qi finally came.

The Guangwen Hall became a competition of talents. Any talented person could go on stage and challenge their classmates at will.

Therefore, both male and female students had to be on the same stage. In other words, they were not divided into male and female groups like before. If they liked, women could challenge the strategies and horsemanship that men were good at, and men could also challenge the Guqin, chess, calligraphy, and painting that women were good at. However, this kind of scene was rare.

Early in the morning, the Shen family was busy. In the west courtyard, Shuang Jiang carefully put a silver hairpin on Shen Miao's hair and smiled. "Miss, it's done."

Shuang Jiang was the best at combing hair. Previously, Shen Yue even wanted her to go over to comb her hair, but Shuang Jiang refused because she was loyal to Shen Miao. Shen Yue could do nothing about it.

"Miss, your dress is really beautiful." Bai Lu smiled, but then she said with some hesitation, "It's just that your hair is too plain."

Shen Miao's hair was black and thick, and it was combed into an exquisite bun by Shuang Jiang. She looked elegant and unique. Even after she reached the age of marriage, Shen Miao still looked like a girl. However, the style today made her look like she had grown up a lot. She finally had the aura of a young lady.

However, because there was only a silver hairpin on her head, Shen Miao made people feel like she was from a poor family.

Gu Yu couldn't help but get angry. The Shen family was rich and powerful, but Shen Miao didn't even have a single piece of jewelry to match her clothes. The entire Shen family was supported by Shen Xin, but they treated his daughter like she was an orphan.

Taking a look at Gu Yu, Shen Miao could tell what was on her mind. Ever since she was young, the second and third branches of the Shen family had been brainwashing Shen Miao, making her believe that silver and gold were the best. This way, they could tell the outside world that Shen Miao had a natural inclination for shiny gold jewelry, and that they didn't interfere with her choice at all.

Looking at Shen Miao with gold and silver jewelry, everyone thought that the fifth miss of the Shen family was greedy and vulgar.

Although gold was good, it was not for wearing.

Afraid that Shen Miao would be sad, Gu Yu quickly changed the topic and said, "But Mrs. Li is a really good tailor. Miss looks terrific in this dress."

Mrs. Li probably felt pity towards Shen Miao, so the dress she made for her was surprisingly exquisite. Mrs. Li thought that Shen Miao had a baby face, so the green color wouldn't look compatible, so she embroidered large beautiful and vivid begonia flowers at the hem of the dress.

"Let's go." Shen Miao stood up. "We can't wait too long."

When she walked out of the courtyard, she saw that most of the begonias in the garden were in full bloom. She stopped in her tracks and plucked a small one, putting it into her hair.

"Miss, you're really pretty," Gu Yu praised.

Nanny Gui had just come out of the kitchen with some snacks she brought for Shen Miao to eat on the way. When she came out, she was shocked by Shen Miao.

She had served Shen Miao for so many years, and Shen Miao was also raised by her. It could be said that she had watched Shen Miao grow up, but today, she felt that Shen Miao was a stranger to her. Her aura was calm and dignified, and with that noble lotus green color, it was not an exaggeration to say that she looked like a princess. Standing there rooted to the ground, Nanny Gui almost dropped the snacks in her hand.

Bai Lu said with a smile, "Nanny Gui, what are you looking at?"

Nanny Gui was stunned. Out of habit, she was about to say something nice when she suddenly remembered that today was the chrysanthemum banquet. Shen Miao was so outstanding that she would definitely suppress Shen Yue and Shen Qing. She swallowed the praise that was about to come out of her mouth and said with a worried expression, "Miss, the color of this dress is really too solemn. Miss is still young. Why do you have to wear such a color to look old? Why don't I go and get you the peach-

colored coat? It will make you look cute. Also, I remember that Second Madam gave you a lot of hairpins. With that hairpin you are wearing, people will say the girls in the General's Mansion are neglected."

Gu Yu pursed her lips. The peach-colored coat was a gift from Ren Wanyun. The color was tacky, and with the gold and silver jewelry, Shen Miao looked like a girl from a rich family in the countryside. If she went to the chrysanthemum banquet today dressed like that, Shen Miao would definitely be laughed at by everyone. Nanny Gui was obviously up to no good. Just as she was about to reprimand her on behalf of Shen Miao, she heard Shen Miao say softly, "Nowadays, the country is prosperous and the people are living and working in peace, but His Majesty advocates frugality. In the world, extravagance and waste are the worst. What's wrong with being a little plain? If people see us, they will only say that the General's family is upright and honest. As for clothes, you don't have to worry about it." Shen Miao smiled. "Today, people are competing with each other over talent. It has nothing to do with clothes."

Nanny Gui wondered when Shen Miao started to have so many thoughts of her own. Shen Miao usually did not like to study and was stupid. Now, hearing that, Nanny Gui suddenly found herself unable to refute and was lost for words.

Bai Lu couldn't help but laugh out loud. She quickly shut up and put on a straight face, but it was obvious that she was happy.

Nanny Gui stood there like a mute and was even laughed at by the maids. She was frustrated, but she couldn't figure out why she was at a disadvantage every time she talked to Shen Miao after she returned to the mansion recently.

Nanny Gui handed the snacks to Gu Yu and said, "This is for Miss to eat on the way. It's still quite a distance from the Chrysanthemum Banquet." She then said to Shen Miao, "If you'll excuse me, I have to take care of something in the courtyard."

"Go," Shen Miao replied flatly.

After Nanny Gui left, Gu Yu and Bai Lu couldn't help but put on a broad smile. The more domineering Shen Miao acted, the less the people in the Shen family dared to bully her.

When they walked to the door, they saw two carriages parked there. The first was ready to set off, but the second was empty.

Shen Qing's maid, Chun Tao, was standing in front of the first carriage.