

## **Venomous 381**

### **Chapter 381: Requesting to Go to War (4)**

After dinner, Luo Xueyan instructed Shen Miao to rest early, then pulled Shen Qiu and Shen Xin back to the room to discuss what happened today. Shen Miao did not follow. She had already learned many things from Luo Xueyan. What she could not understand now was what Shen Yuan gave to Fu Xiuyi.

In front of the oil lamp, Shen Miao sat at the table and was deep in thought. Jingzhe and Gu Yu were careful not to disturb her. Outside the window, it began to drizzle. This was the first rain since the new year, indicating that spring was coming.

When spring came, everything would be revived, bringing along with it new hope, but what was the hope for the Shen family?

Shen Miao closed her eyes.

That night, when Xie Jingxing passed by the courtyard, he happened to meet Xie Changwu and Xie Changchao. When the two of them saw him, they immediately stopped and bowed respectfully to him. "Brother."

Xie Jingxing had always ignored these two people. It was the same today. Just as he was about to walk past them, he was stopped by Xie Changchao. Xie Changchao said smugly, "I haven't seen you in a long time. I wonder what you're busy with. I wanted to go with you to hunt a few days ago, but Father asked us to go to Lord Liu's official banquet, so I had to postpone this plan."

Xie Ding had been bringing Xie Changwu and Xie Changchao to the banquet of his colleagues these days. Everyone knew that Xie Ding was going to guide his two sons into officialdom.

Speaking of which, Xie Changwu and Xie Changchao were the sons of a concubine, and they weren't as talented as Xie Jingxing. If not for the fact that Xie Jingxing was cynical and refused to become an official, everyone knew that it would not be the two brother's turn. However, Xie Jingxing had been at odds with Xie Ding for many years because of what happened to Princess Yuqing. The relationship between father and son was awkward, so how could it be fixed?

Xie Changwu was a little more humble than Xie Changchao. Even so, he could not hide the smugness in his eyes. He said, "Brother, when will you go with us? With your talent in both civil and military, you will definitely be favored by everyone. It will be much easier for you to become an official."

Xie Changchao and Xie Changwu had figured out Xie Jingxing's temper and knew that he was arrogant by nature. The more he said that, the more impossible it was for Xie Jingxing to become an official. In terms of background and talents, they were destined to be inferior to Xie Jingxing. Now that they finally had something that Xie Jingxing didn't have, they naturally couldn't wait to show off.

When Xie Jingxing heard this, he looked at them with a faint smile and suddenly asked, "Are you very smug?"

Xie Changchao and Xie Changwu were stunned, but Xie Jingxing had already walked away. The disdain in the corners of his eyes was seen by the two of them.

Looking at Xie Jingxing's departing figure, Xie Changchao said hatefully, "Smart ass, who does he think he is?"

Xie Changwu's expression was sinister. "One day, I will trample him under my feet!"

When Xie Jingxing returned to the house, there were already two people waiting there. One was middle-aged and had a beard, and the other was young and had straight eyebrows.

The bearded middle-aged man asked, "Master, are you really going to..."

Xie Jingxing sat down at the table and waved his hand.

"Xie Changchao and Xie Changwu..." The younger one said, "Do you want us to..." At the end of his sentence, there was a trace of killing intent.

"No need. If we do it now, we'll cause more trouble." Xie Jingxing interrupted him. "With me around, Xie Changwu and Xie Changchao won't do anything to Xie Ding. As for Concubine Fang..." He sneered. "Just keep her."

The two of them nodded. Xie Jingxing took out a letter from his sleeve. It was a copy of the letter he sent to the emperor to request to go to war.

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In the end, he still had to make this move.

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The first ray of sunlight shone through the carved window on the table. Shen Miao sat at the table and did not move.

Jingzhe came in with a silver basin. As soon as she entered, she was shocked and said, "Miss, why are you up so early today?"

Shen Miao didn't speak. Jingzhe walked over. The oil lamp on the table had already burned out, and there was a faint greenish-black color under Shen Miao's eyes. Jingzhe was stunned for a moment before exclaiming, "Miss, did you not sleep all night?"

Shen Miao shook her head and rubbed her forehead tiredly.

She sat here for the entire night.

Xie Jingxing's hint puzzled her and made her even more confused. She did not know what Shen Yuan had given Fu Xiuyi, but she knew that it must be detrimental to the Shen family.

Jingzhe said with some heartache, "Miss, no matter how worried you are, don't torture your body like this. Master and Madam will be heartbroken to see this. Miss, you should eat something and rest first. You really don't look good. What if you fall sick?"

Shen Miao also felt a little hungry. After thinking for the entire night, she felt a little dizzy and said, "Bring me some porridge. I'll sleep for a while after eating. Don't tell anyone about this."

Jingzhe sighed and turned to run towards the kitchen to get the porridge for Shen Miao. Shen Miao stood up, wanting to wash her face. Halfway through, she suddenly heard footsteps outside the door and saw Jingzhe running back.

“Why so fast?” Shen Miao was a little surprised. It was still a distance from the kitchen to here. Even if Jingzhe jogged over, it would still take some time.

“Miss, something’s wrong.” Jingzhe said in a panic, “Someone from the palace is here. Master, Madam, and Eldest Young Master are summoned to the palace!”

The handkerchief in Shen Miao’s hand fell into the basin. She calmed herself down and said, “I’ll go and take a look.”

In the courtyard, the eunuchs from the palace were delivering the edict to Shen Xin. These people were usually very respectful to the mighty general, but today, their attitudes were unclear. Sometimes, one could tell the emperor’s attitude from the attitudes of the eunuchs. Clearly, entering the palace this time was not necessarily a good thing.

When Shen Miao came out, not only were Shen Xin, Luo Xueyan, and Shen Qiu there, but even Old Madam Shen brought Shen Yuanbai out. However, Old Madam Shen didn’t look concerned at all. Instead, she was gloating.

On the other hand, Shen Wan said to the eunuch, “May I ask why His Majesty summoned Brother to the palace?”

The eunuch looked up at the sky. “I’m just following His Majesty’s orders. I don’t know what His Majesty is thinking. Lord, please follow me into the palace.” He urged Shen Xin impatiently.

When Shen Qiu saw Shen Miao walking over, he was a little nervous. He quickly held Shen Miao’s hand and said, “Sister, why are you here?” Seeing that Shen Miao was looking at the eunuch, he quickly comforted her, “Sister, don’t worry. His Majesty just summoned us to the palace to discuss some military matters. We’ll be back soon. When I come back, I’ll bring you snacks.”

He was afraid of scaring Shen Miao, but he did not know that in Shen Miao’s eyes, his behavior would only make her more worried. Shen Xin, Luo Xueyan, and Shen Qiu were all summoned to the palace except Shen Miao. The three of them were leading figures of the Shen army. This matter must be related to the Shen army. Now that the Shen family’s military power was on the rise, they had to be extra cautious.

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At this moment, not only would Shen Miao not be able to help, but she would also make Luo Xueyan and the others feel more burdened. Therefore, Shen Miao smiled and said, “Is that so? Brother, you have to keep your word.”

Seeing Shen Miao like this, Shen Qiu heaved a sigh of relief. Shen Qiu knew that Shen Miao was smart, but he did not want her to be involved in the matters of the imperial court. Moreover, the affairs of the

imperial court were never about one person. There were casualties at every turn and countless people were implicated. It was not that easy to explain.

Luo Xueyan and Shen Xin also comforted Shen Miao. "Jiaojiao, stay in the mansion and don't go anywhere. When Father and Mother come back, we'll go to shop for new clothes together."

Shen Miao nodded and watched as the eunuch left the mansion with Shen Xin and the others.

Chen Ruoqiu held Shen Wan's hand and said worriedly, "Why are they suddenly summoned to the palace? Did something happen?"

Shen Wan shook his head. Shen Gui said, "Brother is in the limelight to begin with. He doesn't know how to behave himself in the imperial court. I'm afraid if something really happens, no one will stand up for him." What Shen Gui meant was that if something really happened to Shen Xin, the two brothers, Shen Gui and Shen Wan, would not help him.

Shen Miao sneered in her heart. Shen Yue said timidly, "If something happens to First Uncle, it should be a very serious matter, right? Will we be implicated?"

"Of course you won't be implicated." Shen Gui smiled and said, "If someone should be implicated, it should be Shen Miao."

After losing his son and daughter in a row, Shen Gui became resentful. His career was not going smoothly, and he was jealous that Shen Xin's official rank was higher than him and had more prestige than him. Now that he saw that Shen Xin was in trouble, he was naturally overjoyed. He even hoped that Shen Xin's family would be wiped out.

A trace of gloating flashed across Shen Yue's eyes. She looked at Shen Miao sympathetically. "Isn't Fifth Sister very pitiful?"

Shen Miao smiled instead of being angry and said indifferently, "Even the eunuch instructed by His Majesty to come doesn't know what this summoning is about, but Second Uncle has already figured it all out." She looked at Shen Gui and said, "Second Uncle is really foresighted, I think when His Majesty hears about this, he will appreciate your wisdom and promote you."

As soon as she said that, Shen Wan and Shen Gui's expressions changed slightly. What was the biggest taboo for an emperor? It was the courtiers making wild guesses. Wasn't Shen Miao trying to say that Shen Gui and Shen Wan knew what Emperor Wen Hui was up to?

No emperors would like a courtier who could see through him. If the courtier was too smart, the emperor would feel a sense of danger.

This was what the royal family was like. They were the most paranoid.

Shen Miao's words made Shen Gui and Shen Wan's expressions change, but they did not dare to refute. They were afraid that if Emperor Wen Hui heard this, they would be in deep trouble. The two of them were secretly shocked. They did not know when Shen Miao became so eloquent.

Shen Miao did not really want to argue with them here. The most important thing now was to think of a way to resolve this matter.

Old Madam Shen had seen enough of the show. She snorted and said, "All he knows is causing the Shen family trouble!" She was still thinking about how Shen Xin wanted to split up from the family. However, with the first branch up the creek, the splitting of the family would be postponed. Old Madam Shen even thought that if something serious happened to Shen Xin, wouldn't all the assets of the first branch belong to her? At the thought of this, her eyes were filled with greed.

Shen Miao was extremely disgusted. The people in this room had fully displayed what it meant to hit someone when they were down. The Shen family were definitely among the most despicable people in this world.

Concubine Wan held Shen Dongling's hand and hid behind the crowd. She did not dare to say a word at such an occasion. Although Ren Wanyun had become sane, she did not want to leave Rosy Cloud Garden, so she did not appear today. Shen Dongling whispered, "But what could happen to Eldest Uncle? Eldest Uncle is not in the capital all year round. Could it be that His Majesty wants to reward him more for winning the war?" Shen Dongling probably wanted to ease the atmosphere. Shen Yue was a little unhappy with what she said, and Old Madam Shen also looked unhappy. Only Shen Miao was slightly stunned.

Not in the capital all year round?

That's right. Shen Xin, Luo Xueyan, and Shen Qiu had been fighting in the bitter cold land in the northwest all year round. They had just returned to the capital. The emperor couldn't possibly accuse them of lingering in the capital for long, could he? Yesterday, Consort Xu and Consort Dong were both asking about daily life in Spring City. Shen Miao did not believe that the noble ladies in the palace were really interested in the remote northwest.

There must be a connection. What kind of accusations would be thrown at Shen Xin for not being in the capital all year round?

#### **Chapter 384: Indirect Kiss (1)**

Shen Miao was uncertain and stopped standing here to argue with the Shen family. Instead, she quickly returned to her room without looking back. Outside, Shen Gui and the others had had enough of the show and wanted to ask their colleagues if they knew anything about this, so they dispersed in twos and threes. Shen Yue followed behind Chen Ruoqiu with a trace of joy on her face. Yesterday, when she heard that Consort Dong met Shen Miao and Luo Xueyan, Shen Yue felt very uneasy. After all, Consort Dong was the mother of Prince Ding. What if Shen Miao caught the eye of Consort Dong and Consort Dong wanted to matchmake her? Fortunately, today, it seemed that the first branch was unlucky.

At the thought of this, Shen Yue felt relieved.

On the other hand, Shen Dongling, who was held by Concubine Wan, looked at the courtyard thoughtfully and went back.

The huge west courtyard became empty in the blink of an eye. Even Ah Zhi returned to the barracks of the Shen army with Shen Xin's guards. Emperor Wen Hui suddenly summoned Shen Xin to the palace, so

naturally the Shen army had to be under watch. Fortunately, Mo Qing was still around, because he was not in the Shen army yet.

In the room, Jingzhe, Gu Yu, Bai Lu, and Shuang Jiang all stood behind Shen Miao. Mo Qing stood by the door with his head lowered, his face solemn. Although Shen Dongling said that Emperor Wen Hui might continue to reward Shen Xin, everyone knew that it was unlikely.

Shen Miao sat at the table with a frown, which comforted Mo Qing a little. He was originally worried that Shen Miao would be nervous and flustered when she found out about this. Now, although Shen Miao looked gloomy, she was not nervous at all.

Shen Miao looked at the letter in front of her. In her previous life, the Shen family was wiped out by Fu Xiuyi. At that time, she had tried to stop him, but Fu Xiuyi accused the Shen family of their wrong doings one by one in front of the entire court. Although she knew that the accusations were all fabricated, there was nothing she could do to save her family.

She could still remember vividly what happened that day in the throne room when the denunciation against Shen Xin was said out loud. Now, it was the 69th year of Ming Qi, and she was reborn in the 68th year of Ming Qi. The things Shen Yuan told Fu Xiuyi must be prior to the 68th year.

What crimes did the Shen family commit prior to the 68th year of Ming Qi?

Shen Miao closed her eyes, and some scenes flashed across her mind.

She was wearing the empress's court dress with a disheveled appearance. The civil and military officials were excited as Fu Xiuyi angrily threw the evidence at her face.

A civil official read, "In the 68th year of Ming Qi, the soldiers of the Shen army disobeyed the emperor's order, released the bandits, and deceived the emperor..."

Releasing the bandits and deceiving the emperor!

Shen Miao suddenly opened her eyes!

She suddenly remembered that in the 68th year of Ming Qi, something big had indeed happened. The Shen army fought with the Xirong and defeated them, winning three cities. Emperor Wen Hui ordered that everyone in the cities be killed without mercy.

To a general, massacring a city was the hardest thing. In the city of Xirong, other than the soldiers, most of the people were old, weak, women, and children. These old, weak, women, and children were as harmless as the people of Ming Qi. The ones who were in the wrong were the soldiers of Xirong. Shen Xin was not someone who took delight in killing, so he secretly spared the lives of those women and children.

Other than the Shen army, no one else should know about this. The people of the Shen army were all trained by Shen Xin, so it was impossible for them to betray him. Shen Yuan should have played a part in this. Perhaps a long time ago, Shen Yuan had already planted a hidden chess piece in the Shen army.

However, compared to all the accusations in her previous life, the accusation of "deceiving the emperor" did not seem to be that important. For Fu Xiuyi, who was always patient and calm, to make a move this early, it could only mean that the current situation made Fu Xiuyi feel threatened. The Shen

family had already become a variable. In this life, because Shen Miao and Fu Xiuyi had nothing to do with each other, Fu Xiuyi did not stop Emperor Wen Hui from letting the Shen family off for a few more years. In the end, the royal family still targeted the Shen family.

## **Chapter 385: Indirect Kiss (2)**

Therefore, the evidence that Shen Yuan gave Fu Xiuyi should be about Shen Xin not following Emperor Wen Hui's order to massacre the city.

This matter could be said to be big or small. However, in the current situation, the royal family wanted to take back the Shen family's military power, so how could they let go of this opportunity?

Things had become extremely tricky.

Shen Miao clenched her fists and slowly calmed herself down. Now was not the worst time. Although the royal family wanted to deal with the Shen family, it was only because they wanted to regain their military power. If they targeted the Shen family at this time, it would inevitably arouse the dissatisfaction of the other big families. The royal family was too cunning to take the risk.

What should she do now?

The few people in the room looked at Shen Miao's changing expression and were puzzled. Shen Miao suddenly stood up and said, "I'm going out for a while."

"Ah?" Gu Yu was stunned. "Miss, leaving the mansion at this time will attract a lot of attention."

"I'm in a bad mood and want to find my friend to talk to." Shen Miao's eyes turned cold. "What's wrong with that? Let's go."

Mo Qing naturally had no objections to Shen Miao's decision. Moreover, in his heart, he was absolutely convinced by Shen Miao. He knew that Shen Miao had her own way of doing things. Seeing Shen Miao like this, he felt a little relieved and said, "I'll make the arrangements."

Seeing Mo Qing like this, Jingzhe and Gu Yu did not say anything else. They asked Bai Lu and Shuang Jiang to stay in the mansion and wait for news while they went out with Shen Miao.

Shen Miao's going out naturally puzzled the people in the Shen family. When someone came to ask, the maids only told them that Shen Miao was going to find Feng Anning. Feng Anning and Shen Miao were considered friends, so it was understandable that Shen Miao wanted to talk to her. Therefore, no one was suspicious.

After leaving the mansion, Mo Qing drove towards the Feng family. After driving past the alley and confirming that no one was following them, Shen Miao said, "To the Su family."

"The Su family?" Gu Yu was stunned. "Which Su family?"

"Su Yu, the Earl of Pinan."

Mo Qing was very familiar with the roads in the capital and knew where the mansions of the nobles were. Without even asking for directions, he drove to another direction.

Jingzhe and Gu Yu wanted to ask something, but they did not dare to. On one hand, they knew that Shen Miao had an idea, but on other hand, even as servants, they knew that in the imperial court, the Shen family was enemies with the Xie family, and the Su family, the Earl of Pingnan, were in the same boat with the Xie family. The Su family and the Shen family were naturally incompatible. Why would they help the Shen family?

At this moment, there was another person sitting in Su Mingfeng's room. That person was dressed in a purple and gold robe and had a casual and lazy smile on his face. Su Mingfeng said anxiously, "What's going on? Why did you request to go to war?"

"The capital is too boring. I want to go to the northern border to have fun," Xie Jingxing said.

"Have fun?" Su Mingfeng looked at him, his usually gentle face showing anger. "Do you know what kind of place the Northern border is? Now that no one dares to fight the Xiongnu head-on, why are you going to join in the fun?" Seeing that Xie Jingxing did not take his words to heart, Su Mingfang softened her tone. "I know you're unhappy that your father helped Xie Changchao and Xie Changwu become an official, but you don't have to express your displeasure like this. This matter is not trivial. Although you're skilled in martial arts, the terrain of the North border is complicated. You've never been there before... Jingxing, you can't go."

"Su Mingfeng." Xie Jingxing said with a smile, "His Majesty has already granted me this chance. Do you think I can go back on my words now?"

Su Mingfeng was stunned for a moment, and then a look of despair appeared on his face. It was true that this matter was already a done deal, and there was no room for negotiation even if Xie Jingxing had a change of mind.

### **Chapter 386: Indirect Kiss (3)**

Seeing Su Mingfeng like this, Xie Jingxing said, "Are you implying that I won't be able to return in one piece?"

"You little bastard!" Su Mingfeng cursed angrily. "Why didn't you discuss this with me beforehand?"

"Is there a point in discussing it with you?" Xie Jingxing took a teapot and poured himself a cup of tea. "It won't make a difference."

"You!" Su Mingfeng was angry, but at the same time, he was helpless. He knew that Xie Jingxing had always been a rebellious person, and no matter what he decided, he would never change his mind. Although the two of them were childhood friends, now it seemed that Xie Jingxing had been holding back more stuff from him than before. Even if Xie Jingxing decided to tell him, it was more like a "notification".

For example, at this moment, Xie Jingxing was just here to "notify" him and tell him when he'd set off.

"Why do you have to go to the northern border?" Su Mingfeng paced back and forth in the room. "Do you want to die? Do you know that if you win, it'll naturally be good, but if you lose— Your two half-brothers will be the first to clap and cheer!" Su Mingfeng suddenly clapped his hands in front of Xie



Jingxing and said, "Are you not afraid of what your father will say?" At this point, he suddenly paused and looked at Xie Jingxing. "Does your father know about this?"

Xie Jingxing shook his head.

"I knew it!" Su Mingfeng said, "Marquis Xie will definitely be furious when he finds out that you're so willful. At that time, he will give your two half-brothers what is supposed to be yours. Who knows what the situation will be like when you return from the Northern border? Xie Jingxing, are you really alright with that?" Su Mingfeng treated Xie Jingxing as a true friend and was genuinely thinking for him.

Xie Jingxing smiled, not wanting to talk about this anymore. He said, "When I leave the capital, help me take care of the princess's mansion."

In the capital, other than the Su family, Xie Jingxing had the most interactions with Princess Rong Xin. At this moment, if he went to the northern border, he would be gone for at least a year and a half. If Princess Rong Xin found out, she would be sad.

Su Mingfeng wanted to reprimand Xie Jingxing again, but when he saw that Xie Jingxing's expression was a little dark, he did not say anything else. Xie Jingxing continued, "In two years, it's best if the Su family avoids the limelight and not attract too much attention. As for you, don't become an official. Just pretend that you're sick."

"Eh?" Su Mingfeng found it strange. "What does this have to do with me?"

"Do as I tell you." Xie Jingxing glanced at him and stood up. "I'm leaving."

"Hey." Su Mingfeng shouted, "You, you're leaving just like that? What exactly are you coming here for today?"

"To say goodbye." Xie Jingxing shrugged, but he suddenly heard a thud at the door. Su Mingfeng was shocked and opened the door. A chubby meatball rolled in.

Su Mingfeng helped him up and patted the dust off his clothes before saying, "Minglang, what are you doing here?"

The chubby ball was none other than the second young master of the Su family, Su Minglang. When he saw that there was someone else in the room, and this person was Xie Jingxing, he was first frightened and trembled. Then, he hid behind Su Mingfeng and held the corner of his shirt. "Brother, Sister Shen is here."

"What?" Su Mingfeng had yet to figure out what was going on when his servant ran over and said, "Young Master, a girl is looking for you at the entrance of the mansion."

As soon as the servant said that, Su Mingfeng was stunned for a moment before looking at Xie Jingxing. Xie Jingxing looked at him with a faint smile. Su Mingfeng cleared his throat and said, "Nonsense! I don't know any girls."

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"It's true!" The servant said anxiously, "She said that she's the daughter of the mighty general and wants to discuss something with you."

"The daughter of the mighty general..." Su Mingfeng was still trying to figure out who the girl was when Su Minglang jumped up. "It's Sister Shen Miao! Brother, it's Sister Shen Miao who's looking for you!"

Shen Miao? Su Mingfeng was dumbfounded for a moment. Xie Jingxing frowned.

Putting aside the Shen family and the Xie family, the Shen family and the Su family had never had much to do with each other. In private, Su Mingfeng and Shen Miao did not have much of a relationship. Su Mingfeng was also confused by Shen Miao's sudden visit. He asked Xie Jingxing, "Could it be... she's here to look for you?"

"Sister Shen Miao must be looking for me!" Su Minglang held his face happily. "Brother, let's go see Sister Shen Miao!"

"This..." Su Mingfeng hesitated.

"Just go," Xie Jingxing suddenly said with a meaningful gaze. "Bring her here to talk."

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When Shen Miao brought Mo Qing into Su Mingfeng's room, she happened to see Su Mingfeng's servant bringing Su Minglang out. The meatball tried to struggle away but to no avail. When he saw Shen Miao, his eyes lit up and he waved his short hands excitedly. "Sister Shen!"

Shen Miao stopped beside him and smiled. She rubbed his head. "Why are you here?"

"My brother won't let me in..." Su Minglang looked like he was about to cry. "Sister Shen, are you here to see me?"

The servant cleared his throat and smiled apologetically at Shen Miao. "I'm sorry, Miss Shen. Young Master is waiting for you inside."

Su Minglang was obviously very displeased. He looked at Shen Miao, who smiled and said, "I'm here to talk to your brother about something. I'll come and see you next time and bring you candy."

Hearing this, Su Minglang immediately became happy and stopped struggling. He carefully reminded Shen Miao not to forget the agreement before leaving with the servant without kicking up a fuss.

Mo Qing, who was following behind, was a little surprised. Shen Miao had never been a patient and friendly person to strangers. Just now, she treated Su Minglang with rare patience. Those who did not know better would think that Su Minglang was her son. Just as this strange guess appeared, Mo Qing suppressed it. Not to mention that the age difference between Shen Miao and Su Minglang was not that big, Shen Miao was also a little girl now.

Shen Miao pushed open the door and walked in. In the room, only Su Mingfeng was sitting in front of the table. After Shen Miao entered with Mo Qing, the servant quickly closed the door.

Mo Qing stood in front of the door and did not move, in case anything happened.

Shen Miao walked straight to Su Mingfeng and sat down opposite him. She did all this extremely naturally, as if she was in her own mansion. Before this, she had never even interacted with Su Mingfeng. Facing a stranger who was so calm, Su Mingfeng couldn't help but be curious.

Shen Miao was also sizing up Su Mingfeng.

In all fairness, Su Mingfeng was a handsome young man. However, compared to Xie Jingxing, who was as dazzling as the sun, Su Mingfeng was more or less overshadowed. In fact, Shen Miao knew that Su Mingfeng was not just a rich young master from a prestigious family. He had some real ability.

Unfortunately, in the end, the entire Su family was wiped out because they sold war horses and weapons. Su Mingfeng was also implicated and executed. In the end, Xie Jingxing was the one who collected the corpses of the Su father and son. The relationship between the Su family and the Xie family was obvious.

### **Chapter 388: Indirect Kiss (5)**

It was precisely because of this that the Su family had never had much contact with the Shen family.

Su Mingfeng felt a little uncomfortable under Shen Miao's gaze. He coughed slightly and said, "Miss Shen, why brought you here?"

"My parents and brother were summoned to the palace by His Majesty. Young Master Su, do you know why?" Shen Miao asked.

Su Mingfeng didn't understand this question. The news of the Shen family had spread throughout the entire capital early in the morning, and everyone in the government was on tenterhooks. After all, they were officials in the imperial court. If anything happened to the Shen family, some of them might be implicated. However, what did it have to do with the Su family?

"I don't know," Su Mingfeng replied. He really did not know why Shen Xin was summoned to the palace. Everyone guessed that Emperor Wen Hui wanted to punish the Shen family, but no one knew what the crime was.

"When my father wiped out Xirong in the northwest and took back the city, His Majesty ordered a massacre. My father didn't comply with the order," Shen Miao said. "So I think His Majesty will punish my father for disobeying the military order."

Su Mingfeng was shocked. It was not because of the crime Shen Miao mentioned, but because Shen Miao told him about it so easily. This secret could be used by anyone to bring down Shen Xin. Should it happen to anyone, they wouldn't reveal it even if a knife was put at their throat, but Shen Miao actually told him so casually. Even Su Mingfeng, who had been smart since he was young, did not know how to answer. He could only force a smile and say perfunctorily, "Ah, that's troublesome."

"That's why I want to ask you for help," Shen Miao said.

Su Mingfeng was stunned again. No matter how he thought about it, he could not figure out what kind of relationship he had with Shen Miao or what kind of relationship the Shen family had with the Su family that was worthy of the Su family's help now.

"Miss Shen, you must be joking." He quickly retracted his gaze and looked at Shen Miao with a gentle and polite smile. "But how can I help? Miss Shen probably thinks too highly of me... Moreover, forgive me for being rude, but this matter is complicated. If I help rashly, I'm afraid I'll get myself into trouble. I... really can't find a reason to take the risk."

Su Mingfeng rejected Shen Miao in the most polite manner. Knowing that Shen Miao was a straightforward person, he didn't bother to beat about the bush and said bluntly, "No."

Hearing this, Shen Miao smiled faintly. When she smiled, her eyes were curved into a crescent shape, making her look a little naive. However, the next moment, her smile turned cold. She said, "Young Master Su, although you're not an official, your father is still in charge of the war horses, right?"

Su Mingfeng frowned slightly and said, "That's right."

"Did your father tell you that there seems to be a problem with the horses?" Shen Miao asked.

At this moment, Su Mingfeng frowned even more. He stared at Shen Miao and said, "Miss Shen, what do you mean?"

Shen Miao smiled. "I heard that there's been a small problem with the horses recently. A few of the horses are sick, and the medicine isn't effective."

Su Mingfeng clenched his teacup tightly.

Shen Miao was right. Su Yu had been busy with this matter these days. Other than a few of Su Yu's subordinates and Su Mingfeng, no one else knew about it. However, it was impossible for the subordinates to reveal this to Shen Miao, because if word got out, everyone would be punished by Emperor Wen Hui.

However, how did Shen Miao know?

Su Mingfeng cleared his throat and said, "Miss Shen... where did you hear these untruths?"

### **Chapter 389: Indirect Kiss (6)**

"Untruths?" Shen Miao sighed, but her eyes seemed to be smiling. She approached Su Mingfeng and said in a low voice, "Young Master Su, aren't you afraid that this horse disease will eventually become a horse plague?"

Su Mingfeng's pupils suddenly widened!

Horse Plague!

"The Earl of Pingnan has always been a cautious person and in charge of war horses for his entire life. How can he not suspect this?" Shen Miao pretended to be surprised. "Why? Didn't he tell you about this?"

Su Mingfeng gritted his teeth and did not speak.

Didn't Su Yu tell him? Su Yu had naturally told him. The horse disease was a precursor to the horse plague. Raising a war horse needed a lot of money. Once the horse plague broke out, the horses would suffer heavy casualties. Not only would they lose money, but on the battlefield, without enough war horses, the army wouldn't be able to fight. If the royal family pinned the blame on them, they would lose their heads.

However, this horse disease was strange and tricky. They had found many veterinarians, but they were all helpless. Recently, they had to quarantine the sick horses, but the horses continued to die regardless. If it eventually became a horse plague... it would probably be a huge disaster for Ming Qi.

"Miss Shen, what do you think?" Su Mingfeng said sadly. As he spoke, he glanced at the partition.

At this moment, Shen Miao was not in a hurry. She picked up an empty teacup on the table and poured a cup of tea for herself.

Seeing this, Su Mingfeng wanted to say something, but after thinking for a moment, he swallowed it and pretended to be all ears.

"I have a way to help you out," Shen Miao said.

Su Mingfeng was stunned. "Are you serious?"

"I was lucky enough to have acquainted myself with a vet with outstanding skills. I heard that he once cured the same horse disease. If he intervenes, the war horses can all be saved."

Su Mingfeng remained silent.

Shen Miao picked up the teacup and took another sip. She said indifferently, "It's not too late to make up for it. Young Master Su, when the horse disease spreads and you can't hide it anymore, the horses won't be the only ones who will suffer."

Su Mingfeng gritted his teeth and looked at Shen Miao. "Miss Shen, you don't come to just show me a way out today, do you?"

His eyes flickered. "Do you want my family to help your family? Please tell me."

"You are indeed straightforward," Shen Miao praised.

Su Mingfeng smiled bitterly. He was not being straightforward. It was clearly Shen Miao who was cunning. Previously, he said that the Su family was not obliged to get involved in this mess to help Shen Xin, so Shen Miao put her bargaining chip on the table. It had to be said that Shen Miao was extremely good at finding people's weaknesses. She was using the war horse disease that the Su family had been most worried about recently. This matter had not spread yet, and even he and Su Yu only talked about it in private. He did not know how Shen Miao found out. No matter what, he could not reject this deal.

"I know that the Earl of Pingnan is acquainted with many people in the imperial court. Compared to my parents who are in the northwest all year round, Earl of Pingnan is more influential in the capital. I want to ask him to gather all his close colleagues and write a letter to His Majesty for my father."

"A Letter?" Su Mingfeng frowned. "A letter to plead for mercy for General Shen?"

Shen Miao shook her head. "No, to impeach my father for his wrong doing."

Su Mingfeng was stunned.

"I don't think the Earl of Pingnan wants to get involved in this mess." Shen Miao smiled. "So I'll leave it to you to persuade him. However, Young Master Su, you must not tell the Earl of Pingnan about the war horses, and don't mention me. Otherwise, this deal will be over."

Su Mingfeng did not understand. He looked up and saw that the girl in front of him was without a question a little girl. Her eyes were round and delicate, and when she smiled, they were clear and betrayed naivety. However, when she did not smile, her eyes were cold, adding a hint of dignity. That pressure was something Su Mingfeng had never felt before.

"I can't stay for long. If you've thought it through, please send someone to deliver a message to my mansion. After this is done, I'll tell you where the vet lives." She stood up and bowed slightly to Su Mingfeng before saying, "Thank you."

Su Mingfeng quickly stood up and said, "Of course."

Shen Miao glanced at the partition before turning around and walking out of the room with Mo Qing. After Shen Miao left, Su Mingfeng heaved a sigh of relief. Someone walked out from behind the partition. It was Xie Jingxing.

"You heard it all." Su Mingfeng said, "This Miss from the Shen family is even more unpredictable than I thought."

Xie Jingxing raised his eyebrows and did not speak. Su Mingfeng's gaze landed on the table. The teacup that Shen Miao had drunk from was still there.

"Speaking of which, you drank from that cup..." Su Mingfeng said, "You..."

Xie Jingxing elbowed him to stop him from continuing.

### **Chapter 390: Disdain and Hatred (1)**

"Aiyo." Su Mingfeng exclaimed, "Why did you elbow me? I wanted to remind her just now, but she drank so quickly. What can I do?" Su Mingfeng sized up Xie Jingxing. "Besides, she's the one who's taken advantage, not you. What's there to be angry about?"

Xie Jingxing ignored him and sat down at the table. He asked with a deep gaze, "Is what she said about the war horse true?"

Hearing this, Su Mingfeng's expression turned ugly. Under Xie Jingxing's sharp gaze, he said with difficulty, "It's true."

"Why did you hide it from me?" Xie Jingxing asked aggressively. Su Mingfeng shook his head and smiled bitterly. "Only my father and I have discussed this in private. I didn't tell anyone, and nor did my father. I wanted to tell you after we figured out a way... But how did Miss Shen know about this? Could it be that she knows someone in the war horse stable? But the people there are all very loyal to my father."

Xie Jingxing glanced at Su Mingfeng. Although Su Mingfeng was also a talented person, he had been protected by the Su family since he was young and had never experienced any storms. Speaking of which, Shen Miao had countless trump cards in her hands, which exceeded his expectations time and time again. Xie Jingxing gave Shen Miao a strategy to “retreat”, but he did not expect Shen Miao to not use his strategy at all. Working with the Su family and other ministers who were close to the Su family could indeed save Shen Xin. However, the emperor was unpredictable. This time, even if he let Shen Xin off, given how powerful the Shen army was, he would sooner or later get rid of the thorn in his side.

However... had Shen Miao really not thought of this? Xie Jingxing did not think so.

Seeing that Xie Jingxing did not speak, Su Mingfeng became nervous. He knew that although his good friend was usually indifferent to politics, he knew the situation in the imperial court better than anyone. Su Mingfeng asked, “Why? Is there a problem?”

Xie Jingxing shook his head. “What are you planning to do?”

“It’s indeed very likely that the horse disease will eventually become a plague. This is a serious matter. My father is the commander in charge of war horses. If anything happens, the Su family will be the first to bear the brunt.” Su Mingfeng said, “If Miss Shen really isn’t lying to me, I think I’ll give it a try. Although it’s a little difficult to convince my father,... I’ll do my best.” After a pause, Su Mingfeng looked at Xie Jingxing. “What do you think of this deal?”

Xie Jingxing raised an eyebrow. “You’re definitely not the biggest winner in the deal, but you won’t suffer a loss either.” He glanced at Su Mingfeng. “Do as she says.”

Su Mingfeng lowered his head and was a little hesitant. “But... if the ministers join forces to impeach Shen Xin, won’t it give the emperor a good reason to punish him?”

“Didn’t you notice?” Xie Jingxing said with a faint smile, “She knows the emperor’s thoughts better than you.”

Su Mingfeng did not say anything. When he saw Xie Jingxing stand up, he asked, “Where are you going?”

Xie Jingxing returned to his usual lazy self. “I have to tell the Marquis of Lin’an of my upcoming departure to war.”

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Outside the door of the Su mansion, Shen Miao put on her bamboo hat and asked Mo Qing, “Did you notice the presence of someone else in Su Mingfeng’s room just now?”

Mo Qing was stunned. “I didn’t notice anyone else’s presence. Miss, did you find anything?”

Shen Miao shook her head. Mo Qing’s martial arts were outstanding. If he did not notice anyone in the room, there should be no one. However... Shen Miao found it a little strange that Su Mingfeng kept glancing at the partition. Although she did not have any martial arts skills, she was very good at reading people’s expressions.