

Venomous 461

Chapter 461 Forced to Compete (5)

If Emperor Wen Hui continued to remain silent and let the people from the State of Qin openly humiliate Ming Qi, how could he maintain his prestige in the future? He immediately said to Shen Miao without looking at Shen Xin, "Since Princess Ming An is in mood to play a game, Shen Miao, play with her for a while."

As soon as the emperor said that, no matter how hard Shen Xin objected, it was useless. Shen Qiu clenched his fists, and Luo Tan and Feng Anning looked at each other uneasily.

Shen Miao said in a low voice, "Yes."

She did not panic, which stunned everyone. Princess Ming An turned to look at Shen Miao and met her gaze.

Shen Miao's eyes were extremely clear, as innocent as a child's. Originally, with such a pair of eyes, one could probably tell at a glance what was on her mind. However, when she looked at Princess Ming An, her gaze was like a pool of water that had been stagnating for a thousand years.

It was unfathomable.

Princess Ming An became frustrated for no reason. She smiled and asked her maid to get the bow and arrow. She stared at Shen Miao with a smile and said, "In the State of Qin, we play this way. One of us will hold a bow and arrow and be blindfolded, while another one will place the fruit on her body for the other party to shoot." She fixed her gaze at Shen Miao and said, "Miss Shen, do you understand?"

The surrounding people gasped. The last time at the test, Shen Miao and Cai Lin each had apples on their heads, but their eyes were still open. If they shot arrows blindfolded, wouldn't their lives be at risk? Just hearing it made them break out in cold sweat. Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan were already furious.

Shen Miao smiled, as if she was not frightened by Princess Ming An's words at all. She only said, "Thank you for your explanation, Princess."

The composure she displayed made more than half of the famous people present think highly of her. Huangfu Hao stared at her with a strange glint in his eyes.

Luo Tan tugged at the corner of Shen Miao's shirt. "Cousin Miao, how about I do it for you? I've practiced martial arts and know at least one or two things about archery."

Shen Miao shook her head and looked at Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan, who were about to stop her. She said in a low voice, "Don't worry. Since she said that, she's confident that she won't miss the mark and shoot me. If she does, they'll be in a lot of trouble. Huangfu Hao and Ming An are both smart people and won't do anything stupid. She's just trying to scare me and make a fool of me."

"But Sister." Shen Qiu held her shoulder worriedly. "No matter if she'll shoot you or not, how can we let you go alone?"

"I'm not afraid," Shen Miao replied gently. "Besides, if she hurts me, I'll have a chance to make her pay for it. How can I let her off easy?" When she said this, the corners of her lips curled up slightly. It was clearly a smile, but it made people feel a chill run down their spines.

Luo Ling patted Shen Miao's shoulder and said softly, "Be careful."

Shen Miao nodded and walked straight into the main hall.

She and Princess Ming An were actually walking into the main hall together. When the two of them walked side by side, it gave people a strange feeling. Princess Ming An was really born and raised in the royal family. She was beautiful and supposed to look noble. However, when she walked beside Shen Miao, she looked like a maid. Shen Miao had her hands placed in front of her and was standing straight. As she walked, she didn't look around, and her dignified and graceful aura overshadowed Princess Ming An.

Boos and hisses gradually sounded in the hall.

Huangfu Hao's expression also gradually turned ugly.

Chapter 462 Forced to Compete (6)

Shen Miao was only the daughter of a general. However, on the other hand, Princess Ming An was brought up in the palace since she was young, so why was she not as graceful as Shen Miao? People were puzzled.

They naturally did not know that Shen Miao had been the empress for many years. She was extremely demanding of herself to be suitable for Fu Xiuyi, and the hardship she experienced in the State of Qin enabled her to remain indifferent whether granted favors or subjected to humiliation. In her previous life, if not for the fact that Consort Mei set her up, she could actually be a very good empress to the people.

Princess Ming An did not notice the change of expressions on everyone's face. She only looked at Shen Miao with the shiny black bow in her hand. This bow was probably made of top-grade wood and had been soaked in special herbs, making it look extremely hard and cumbersome. Princess Ming An said to Shen Miao, "This is my bow. Let's each shoot an arrow, okay? I'll shoot you first, then it will be your turn."

Without being asked to, she took the initiative to request shooting first. The people on Ming Qi's side looked indignant again. Princess Ming An was obviously bullying Shen Miao.

However, Shen Miao only nodded indifferently, her expression unchanged.

The more she appeared indifferent, the more flustered Princess Ming An was. She glanced at Prince Rui and her eyes suddenly lit up. She said sweetly, "Why don't we let Prince Rui be the judge and check if there is anything wrong with the arrow and bow?" After saying that, she looked at Prince Rui affectionately.

The girls in Ming Qi all cursed Princess Ming An in their hearts for being shameless. She was obviously taking the opportunity to get close to Prince Rui. However, Prince Rui probably wouldn't agree to Princess Ming An's request.

Unexpectedly, when Prince Rui heard this, he thought for a moment and nodded. "Sure."

This was beyond everyone's expectations. Even Emperor Wen Hui and Huangfu Hao looked at Prince Rui. Prince Rui stood up lazily. His legs were long, and he walked to the center of the hall in two steps and stood beside Shen Miao and Princess Ming An.

Princess Ming An was overjoyed. She reached out and placed the bow in Prince Rui's hand with a smile. "Then I'll ask Prince Rui to check this bow first. Is there anything wrong?"

In the princes' section, Prince Zhou sneered and said in a low voice, "This Princess of the State of Qin is really wild. She's openly flirting with Prince Rui in front of so many people." His tone was filled with disdain.

"I'm more surprised by this Miss Shen." Prince Jing looked at Shen Miao, who was standing beside Princess Ming An. "She's so calm. Even if she's pretending, she's still brave."

"Speaking of which." Prince Zhou rubbed his chin. "This Miss Shen is getting more and more interesting." He looked at Fu Xiuyi, who was silent. "Ninth Brother, do you regret it?"

Fu Xiuyi said indifferently, "Fourth Brother, you must be joking."

Behind Fu Xiuyi, the man in green stood quietly. His gaze passed everyone and landed on the girl in purple. Pei Lang looked very calm, as if he was looking at a stranger he had just met for the first time. However, his hands were clenched into fists and were trembling.

In the past two years, this girl had become more and more charming. Just as she said, she was "invited" back by the royal family. As soon as she returned to the capital, trouble came knocking on her door one after another. Shen Miao did not do anything, but people wouldn't stop giving her a hard time.

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However, Pei Lang knew that Shen Miao would not put herself in a risky situation because she had a heart that was more cold-blooded than everyone else.

Prince Rui quickly returned the bow to Princess Ming An. Princess Ming An took it shyly and said to Shen Miao, "Miss Shen, please stand over there. And..." She picked up an apple from the maid's tray and handed it to Shen Miao with a smile. "Miss Shen, put this on your head."

Shen Qiu clenched his fists nervously.

"Yes," Shen Miao said with lowered eyes. She took the apple and walked to the other side.

Everyone watched her. Princess Ming An had already asked someone to tie black cloth around her eyes, and Prince Rui walked to Shen Miao's side.

Under everyone's gaze, he snatched the apple from Shen Miao's hand. Shen Miao was stunned. Prince Rui held the apple and gently placed it on her head.

Shen Miao looked up at him.

Because there was something on her head, Shen Miao was afraid that if she lifted her head too much, the apple would fall, so she could only roll her eyes upward at him without moving. The young man was

extremely tall. Even if Shen Miao had grown a few centimeters in the past two years, she could only reach his chest.

The silver mask revealed this man's good-looking chin and red lips. The corners of his lips were slightly curled, making people wonder if he had the same smile under the mask. His black eyes were like the stars, like autumn water. When he looked over, he seemed to be gentle, but also seemed to be teasing.

Teasing?

He placed the apple on the top of Shen Miao's head and stroked Shen Miao's hair with one finger, as if he was stroking a small beast in captivity. However, in just a moment, he retracted his finger. Because his body was turned to the side, from the angle of others, they would only see Prince Rui placing the apple for Shen Miao.

He turned around and walked to the side, crossing his arms as if he was watching a show.

Shen Miao's attention was attracted by Princess Ming An, who was slowly drawing her bow.

The bow seemed to be very heavy, and Princess Ming An was having a hard time pulling it. The harder she pulled, the heavier everyone's hearts were, especially Shen Xin and his family.

The more fully the bow was drawn, the more powerful the arrow would be. The more powerful the arrow was, the more dangerous Shen Miao would be. This game was no longer as unarmful as Princess Ming An claimed. It concerned the dignity of a country. If Shen Miao revealed a look of fear and begged, Ming Qi would be greatly humiliated. Everyone actually thought for certain that Princess Ming An would eventually win. They just hoped that Shen Miao would not make a fool of herself too much.

Shen Miao looked quietly at Princess Ming An, whose eyes were wrapped in black cloth. It was unknown if Princess Ming An was deliberately torturing Shen Miao, but she drew the bow more and more slowly. The soft sound of the bow being drawn cut everyone's hearts.

Shen Miao was in a trance, feeling as if she wasn't in a banquet at home but the State of Qin far far away. The princes and princesses of the State of Qin surrounded her as if she was a clown. She was wearing clothes that had been mended countless times and had a fruit on her head.

The person opposite her was arrogant and domineering. She was dressed gorgeously and exquisitely, and her eyes were tied with white cloth. She said to the men and women around her, "Look! Today, I'll use the empress of Ming Qi as a target. Later, all of you, look carefully and see if this empress will pee her pants in fear. Hahaha, you have to look carefully and tell me!"

She pulled the bow arrogantly, and the arrow shot over with a whoosh, missing a little. Shen Miao screamed in panic and held her head in her arms, but the mocking laughter from all directions became louder.

What a humiliating memory, but it coincided with the one in front of her.

Shen Miao slowly curled her lips, but no one knew if it was because of sadness or hatred. There seemed to be a layer of black fog slowly spreading to the bottom of her clear eyes, making them look unfathomable.

Prince Rui, who was at the side, clenched his fingers. He paused for a moment before quietly letting go.

She tilted her head slightly, almost unnoticeable.

Chapter 464 Scared You to Death (1)

Everyone present held their breaths and focused as the arrow shot at Shen Miao. Some timid women even covered their eyes, not daring to look at this scene. The officials knew very well that no matter how arrogant and vicious the princess of the State of Qin was, she would not shoot the general's daughter to death in front of so many people.

However, knowing it in their hearts was one thing, but what they saw was another. If even the bystanders felt their hearts racing, how would Shen Miao be feeling at this very moment?

Shen Miao did not even close her eyes. Instead, she stared at the arrow that was flying at her intently, as if she wanted to catch it. In everyone's eyes, she looked calm and composed.

The arrow whizzed past Shen Miao's head and missed the apple.

Shen Qiu heaved a sigh of relief. Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan opened their tightly clenched hands slightly. Feng Anning and Luo Tan patted their chests. Luo Ling picked up the teacup in front of him and took a sip to hide his worried expression.

The entire hall was silent. Huangfu Hao originally had a smile on his face, but gradually, it was replaced by a frown.

Princess Ming An waited for a while, but she did not hear any cheers for her or mockery for Shen Miao from the hall. She had a bad feeling. She tore off the black cloth that covered her eyes and saw that the apple above Shen Miao's head was still intact. As for the purple-clothed girl, she did not panic at all. She just looked at her indifferently and said, "Your Highness, I think my hand slipped just now, so the arrow missed the apple."

Shen Miao said it in a casual tone, but it was filled with obvious mockery.

After being stunned for a moment, Princess Ming An came back to her senses. She looked at Shen Miao and said angrily, "You must have moved just now. You moved! I've never missed my mark. If you didn't move, how could I miss?"

No one expected Princess Ming An to suddenly become unreasonable. Even Emperor Wen Hui looked unhappy and said, "Princess, are you saying that hundreds of people at the banquet are lying to you for Miss Shen?"

Shen Miao stood straight. From the beginning to the end, she did not even flinch. Although no one knew if she was pretending or not, if she wasn't, her courage was enough to amaze the people in the world. No matter how afraid Emperor Wen Hui was of the Shen family, the Shen family was still Ming Qi's people. How could he, the emperor of Ming Qi, let a princess of the State of Qin slander Shen Miao in front of him? If he allowed Princess Ming An to fool around today, tomorrow, the prestige of the emperor among the officials would plummet.

Princess Ming An felt aggrieved and looked at Huangfu Hao. When Huangfu Hao looked at her with a dark expression, Princess Ming An shuddered. She did not dare to look at Huangfu Hao anymore and turned to look at Prince Rui, who was standing at the side. She said sweetly, "Prince Rui, did Miss Shen

move?" As she said this, Princess Ming An stared at Prince Rui flirtatiously, making everyone present feel awkward.

Prince Rui smiled and said, "No."

Princess Ming An was stunned. "Prince Rui, are you saying that Shen Miao didn't move?"

"Are you questioning my eyes?" Prince Rui asked. He looked handsome and charming, but when his voice turned cold, it made people feel a chill and not dare to look at him directly.

Princess Ming An was taken aback. She saw Shen Miao standing opposite her and looking at her with a smile. "Your Highness, do you admit defeat? Or... are you a sore loser?"

Chapter 465 Scared You to Death (2)

"How dare you!" Princess Ming An screamed. She suddenly saw angry gazes directed at her from all directions and suddenly understood that she was in Ming Qi's territory. Screaming at Shen Miao had already angered everyone. She looked at Shen Miao and suddenly sneered. "I can afford to lose, but... don't be smug too early. Let's see if you can hit the mark."

Princess Ming An was angry. Her archery had already reached the point of perfection. This bow was the bow she had used since she was young. She had been shooting blindfolded for many years in the State of Qin and had never made a mistake. How could she miss at the critical moment? However, she couldn't question Shen Miao in front of everyone.

She was the one who proposed the competition with arrogance, but in the end, not only did she fail to make a fool out of Shen Miao, but she also missed the target. If the princesses and princes of the State of Qin heard this, they would laugh at her. At the thought of this, Princess Ming An hated Shen Miao even more.

Shen Miao looked at Princess Ming An with an unfathomable gaze. In her previous life, she stayed in the State of Qin for five years and lived with this princess for five years. Shen Miao knew Princess Ming An's personality better than anyone. Princess Ming An liked to make fun of her the most. She would propose to compete with Shen Miao on archery. When she shot, one arrow would shoot off Shen Miao's hairpin, causing her hair to fly in all directions, and the other would tear off her clothes. Occasionally, Princess Ming An would "accidentally" hurt her body. When Princess Ming An drew the bow, Shen Miao knew what she was up to. How could she not know?

Therefore, Shen Miao tilted her head slightly and let the arrow "coincidentally" whiz past her.

No one would believe Princess Ming An's words, just like back then, no one believed Shen Miao who was held hostage in a foreign land.

Of course, the game had just begun.

Shen Miao held the red apple and smiled. "Now, it's my turn. Princess, please bite this apple."

At first, everyone was whispering to each other under their breath. When they heard what Shen Miao was saying, they were instantly shocked into silence.

Princess Ming An widened her eyes and looked at Shen Miao in disbelief. "What did you say?" Her voice became sharper and hoarser.

Shen Miao smiled at her, her eyes curled into a crescent shape. "Didn't Your Highness just say that this is how the game is played in the State of Qin where the person who shoots the arrow has a right to decide where the apple is placed. You wanted the apple to be put on my head, and I did as I was told. Now..." She smiled gracefully. "If Your Highness is afraid, you can find someone else to do it."

As soon as she said that, Princess Ming An was so angry that she almost fell to the ground. If Princess Ming An found someone else to do it for her, wouldn't it mean that she, the princess of the State of Qin, was timid and couldn't afford to lose?

Yi Peilan gasped and said to Shen Yue, "Is she crazy? How dare she go against Princess Ming An?"

At the school test, Shen Miao dared to confront Cai Lin because Shen Xin's official position was not inferior to Lord Cai's. However, this time, her opponent was a princess of a country. It was really unexpected that Shen Miao dared to provoke Princess Ming An like this. Cai Lin and Lord Cai looked at each other. They originally thought that Shen Miao had a grudge against Cai Lin, but now it seemed that Shen Miao did not take him seriously.

Chapter 466 Scared You to Death (3)

In the princes' seats, Prince Li smiled meaningfully. "This Miss Shen is very unforgiving."

Princess Ming An glared at Shen Miao. Facing her sharp gaze, Shen Miao only smiled faintly. Helpless, Princess Ming An could only look to Huangfu Hao for help.

Huangfu Hao cleared his throat and was also a little angry at Shen Miao for pushing her luck. Princess Ming An represented the State of Qin, so he couldn't let her suffer humiliation. Therefore, he looked at Emperor Wen Hui and glanced at Shen Miao. "It's just a game. Why does Miss Shen have to push so hard?"

Emperor Wen Hui looked at the Shen family.

Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan drank their tea as if they did not hear anything. Shen Qiu and Luo Ling looked up calmly, but they did not say anything. Feng Anning and Luo Tan stared at Princess Ming An with indignant gazes.

The Shen family's attitude was very clear. They did not intend to let it go just like that. They were openly going against Princess Ming An. Shen Xin was also angry. Just now, Shen Miao was put in a dangerous situation by Princess Ming An and no one spoke up for her. Now, it was naturally Princess Ming An's turn to have a taste of this. When Princess Ming An schemed against others, she should be prepared to be retaliated. Since the Shen family was already at the center of the storm, and since the people of the State of Qin had been targeting the Shen family from the beginning, there was nothing to be afraid of. Shen Xin thought that he would kill Princess Ming An today if it was absolutely necessary.

Emperor Wen Hui looked at Shen Xin's attitude and understood. Shen Xin was protective of his children. Since Shen Xin wanted to take the brunt of offending the State of Qin, Emperor Wen Hui was happy to see it happen. Moreover, he did not like Princess Ming An's arrogant attitude. He planned to give

Princess Ming An a lesson, so he smiled and said to Huangfu Hao, "It's just a game between children. Crown Prince, why are you so worried? Since they're having fun, I naturally won't stop them."

Huangfu Hao did not expect the Shen family to be so stubborn, nor did he expect Emperor Wen Hui, this old fox, to want to sit back, do nothing, and watch the show. For a moment, he was helpless. Moreover, the officials of Ming Qi gradually showed dissatisfaction and started to whisper. If he really interfered to stop the competition, the State of Qin would be looked down upon. He glared at Princess Ming An warningly and said, "Ming An, since you're the one who proposed it, play to the end." He glanced at Shen Miao and said meaningfully, "Since Miss Shen is just having fun, she definitely won't hurt you."

In other words, if anything happened to Princess Ming An, Shen Miao would pay the price.

Hearing such a threat, Shen Miao only smiled. "Don't worry, Your Highness. I have no reason to hurt Princess."

The more she said that, the more uneasy Princess Ming An felt. However, now that she had no way to back down, she could only do as Shen Miao said. When she walked to the other side, Princess Ming An's gaze was like a knife that stabbed at Shen Miao. She suddenly thought of something, and her eyes lit up. She smiled and said, "But Miss Shen, not everyone can pull my bow. I'm afraid you..."

Before she could finish her sentence, Shen Miao had already drawn the bow.

Unlike Princess Ming An, who struggled to draw the bow, Shen Miao drew the bow extremely gracefully and easily, as if this bow had been with her for decades and she was very familiar with it. She smiled and looked at Princess Ming An. Facing Princess Ming An's disbelieving gaze, she said indifferently, "Good bow. I'm very used to it. Thank you."

Chapter 467 Scared You to Death (4)

She waved her hand and instructed the maid to tie a black cloth to her eyes. Just as the maid was about to move, she saw Prince Rui pick up the black cloth from the maid's tray and play with it with his fingers. Everyone looked at him in surprise. Prince Rui walked behind Shen Miao and held her chin with one hand, raising her head slightly. With the other hand, he wrapped the black cloth around Shen Miao's eyes.

Luo Tan's eyes widened. She pulled Feng Anning and said, "What... what does this mean?"

Luo Tan wasn't the one surprised by Prince Rui's action. Emperor Wen Hui, who was sitting on the throne, frowned slightly. Princess Ming An looked at Shen Miao jealously, her eyes filled with killing intent.

Shen Miao couldn't see anything with her eyes locked in place. She could only feel the gentle touch of the person behind her. His fingertips were cold. When they accidentally touched Shen Miao's face, it was like snowflakes landing on her skin, making her feel a faint chill.

When the person finished tying the black cloth, Shen Miao faced Princess Ming An and drew her bow.

Everyone held their breaths and watched her movements, feeling extremely nervous. Some people secretly blamed Shen Miao for doing this. Letting Princess Ming An bite the apple could indeed humiliate her. However, this also meant that if Shen Miao was not careful, she would injure Princess Ming An and

even kill her. If the princess of the State of Qin lost her life in Ming Qi, how could the State of Qin let the matter rest easily? Even if Shen Miao paid with her life, it would probably not be enough. She would also implicate the entire Ming Qi. If Shen Miao wanted Princess Ming An to not get hurt, she would have to deliberately miss the mark. However, this way, Ming Qi would also be mocked.

In order to make the best of both worlds, Shen Miao had to shoot the apple squarely in Princess Ming An's mouth. However, that was almost impossible.

Huangfu Hao stared at Shen Miao. Others might not know, but he knew very well how heavy Princess Ming An's bow was. Ordinary women could not draw that bow, and even those with martial arts skills would have to practice with it for a while. However, just now, Shen Miao casually drew the bow. That skillful posture, skillful gestures, and relaxed expression made people suspect that she had already used this bow countless times.

However, that was impossible. This was the first time Princess Ming An had been to Ming Qi, and it was also the first time Shen Miao had touched this bow. Huangfu Hao suddenly became interested and looked at Shen Miao curiously.

Shen Miao did not notice it at all. Her eyes were closed, and her hands were rubbing the patterns on the arrow and the heavy bow.

It was exactly the same one as in her previous life.

She had touched this bow countless times. After Princess Ming An humiliated her, she would generously hand the bow to her and say, "It's your turn." In fact, Shen Miao had practiced countless times in private. She could hit the mark, but every time, she would deliberately miss it, making the princesses and princes of the State of Qin laugh at her.

Because she was a hostage, she should keep her profile low and not be arrogant. Even if she could win, she had to lose. Only then would she have a chance to go back and see Fu Ming and Wanyu alive.

Those most difficult years were engraved in her heart like the ancient patterns on this bow. In her previous life, she endured it all, and now, she could finally perform her skill. She was no longer the empress of Ming Qi. She was free and could openly challenge Princess Ming An without any worries, just like what Princess Ming An did to her.

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She said, "Princess, please don't dodge."

After saying that, she let go of the bow and shot the arrow at Princess Ming An like a meteor!

Princess Ming An was so frightened that her vision blurred. The arrow came too quickly. She wanted to dodge, but it was too late. She felt a pain in her mouth and the arrow was right in front of her. She wanted to scream, but with the apple in her mouth, she couldn't. Her body went limp and she fell to the ground.

The palace maid behind her quickly helped her up. Huangfu Hao stood up immediately, his expression extremely dark. The hall was filled with wows. Shen Miao slowly took off the black cloth tied to her eyes and walked to the unconscious Princess Ming An to take out the apple from her mouth.

On the red apple, half of the arrowhead was inside, and the remaining half was outside. She wanted to show everyone that Princess Ming An was safe and sound.

And she hit the mark.

"It seems like I'm very lucky today." She smiled.

The officials of Ming Qi were stunned at first, then their faces turned red with joy and they began to clap. Someone said, "Like father, like daughter!"

It was Princess Ming An who suggested an archery competition. Shen Miao had no choice but to accept it. However, in the end, Princess Ming An failed while Shen Miao succeeded. Princess Ming An even fainted from fright. It was obvious who was the winner and who was the loser. Emperor Wen Hui was wary of the Shen family, but now that Shen Miao had made him proud. He was very happy. He looked at Shen Xin and said, "General Shen, you raised a good daughter!"

Shen Xin cupped his hands.

Shen Miao stood in the center of the hall. The wind blew past her, making the corners of her dress flutter like a blooming flower. She quietly stared at Princess Ming An, who was helped away by a maid. She restrained the emotions in her eyes and turned around to meet Prince Rui's gaze.

She couldn't see his expression under the mask, but the man's gaze was warm and cold, making her a little confused. She didn't know if he was smiling or not. He glanced at Shen Miao and walked back to his seat.

Huangfu Hao felt embarrassed, but he did not know how to salvage the situation. Today, it happened suddenly, and it was started by Princess Ming An. Looking at Shen Miao, Huangfu Hao snorted. "I didn't expect Miss Shen to be so skilled."

Shen Miao lowered her head and returned to her seat.

She always behaved so gently and harmlessly. When she shot the arrow, she did not hold back at all and was filled with hostility. However, at this moment, she went back to being an obedient girl, as if she was not the one who did those things.

"Shen Miao, you were really..." Feng Anning held her hand. "If you were a man, I would have married you."

"It's really satisfying to see the villain getting punished." Luo Tan added, "Cousin Miao, I knew you wouldn't let others bully you." When they were in Spring City, the Luo family gradually came to understand that Shen Miao wasn't someone who could take humiliation lying down.

Shen Miao lowered her eyes. Everyone thought that she held a grudge because Princess Ming An had made things difficult for her. Little did they know that she did it for herself in her previous life. Facing a scheming person like Fu Xiuyi, she naturally had to plan step by step. As for a person like Princess Ming An, if she did not return the humiliation she suffered in her previous life, she would be wasting the god-given rebirth.

She was careful, but at the same time, she still had her usual temper. With her family protecting her and a bargaining chip in hand, why wouldn't she dare to go against Princess Ming An? If it started all over again, she would still do so.

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Luo Ling handed her a cup of tea and asked gently, "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine," she replied with a faint smile. She was sensitive enough to sense that someone was looking at her, but when she looked around, she didn't see anyone.

Below the seat far away, the masked young man bent his finger and flicked the wine cup in front of him. A white jade ring on his finger emitted a faint jade-colored light.

...

No one expected such an occurrence to happen during the tribute banquet. Shen Xin, who had just returned to the capital, stole the show perfectly all thanks to his daughter. No matter what the outcome was, such a high-profile return made people a little afraid.

In the princes' section, Fu Xiuyi's expression had changed from that of a relaxed to serious. From time to time, he would throw glances at Shen Xin. Occasionally, his gaze would stop at the purple-clothed girl sitting quietly.

He was not the only one curious about Shen Miao. Many people present were sizing her up as well. Some young talents felt that Shen Miao was attractive and charming, Luo Tan noticed all the gazes and said, "Why are they looking at my little cousin? How can we eat in peace like this?"

Luo Ling smiled and said to Shen Miao, "Cousin, change seats with me."

Luo Ling sat a little further in. After Shen Miao changed seats with him, Luo Ling was tall and could block her from the gazes.

Until the banquet ended, nothing else happened.

Huangfu Hao left halfway, saying that he wanted to check Princess Ming An, who had fainted from shock. No one stopped him, but everyone knew that after today, Princess Ming An would probably hate Shen Miao. Although Shen Miao was protected by Shen Xin, it was very easy for Princess Ming An to find a reason to make things difficult for Shen Miao. Everyone looked at Shen Miao with sympathy.

Only Shen Yue and her female friends were happy that Shen Miao had made an enemy of Princess Ming An. Shen Wan wanted to get close to Shen Xin. Now that Shen Xin's official title had been reinstated and was "invited" back by Emperor Wen Hui, it was not a good thing if he fell out with Shen Xin. However, this time, Shen Xin made up his mind. When he walked past Shen Wan, he looked straight ahead and had no intention of greeting him. Everyone saw this and understood.

After being ignored, Shen Wan did not put in the effort to suck up to Shen Xin either. The two brothers were like strangers.

After the banquet, some of Shen Xin's former colleagues came over to greet him. Luo Xueyan brought Shen Miao outside to wait for the carriage to arrive.

Luo Tan bounced about in front. Feng Anning had already gone back with Mrs. Feng, and Luo Ling and Shen Qiu walked behind. After turning a corner, there was a carriage arranged by Shen Xin. Shen Miao turned around and saw a slender figure walking slowly towards her at the end of the long corridor in the palace.

She saw from afar that the half of the silver mask on his face looked a little dark and resplendent under the light of the lantern. The pattern embroidered on the corner of the robe with gold thread was especially dazzling in the night. As it fluttered in the wind, she could not see what texture it was made of, but she felt that it was surprisingly gorgeous.

Shen Miao looked carefully. When the young man was still a distance away from Shen Miao, he stopped and turned his head slightly, not knowing if he was looking over at her.

Shen Miao looked at him quietly.

In the darkness, the long corridor in the palace was deep. This person was covered in the light of the moon and was stepping on the shadow of the swaying trees. His expression could not be seen, but he gave people a feeling that he was an immortal demon that came straight out of a painting. He slowly reached out and knocked three times on the pillar at the entrance of the palace.

When Shen Qiu and Luo Ling realized that Shen Miao did not follow them, Shen Qiu walked up to Shen Miao and asked, "Sister, what are you looking at?"

"Nothing," Shen Miao said.

"Go and wait in the carriage first. It's windy outside. You will catch a cold," Luo Ling said gently.

Shen Miao nodded and was about to walk towards the carriage when she suddenly stopped and turned to look at the long corridor.

The moonlight in the corridor was like flowing water, and the flowers planted on both sides swayed gently as the breeze blew past. However, there was no one in the empty corridor. It was as if everything Shen Miao saw just now was an illusion.

Luo Tan urged from inside the carriage. Shen Miao turned around and got into the carriage.

Chapter 470 Meeting an Old Friend (1)

On the way back, Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan did not speak much. Although they tried their best to look relaxed, their faces betrayed their anxiety. Shen Qiu was also abnormal. Although Luo Tan was carefree and happy-go-lucky, she was sensitive enough to feel that the atmosphere was wrong and did not speak.

Today, they had offended Princess Ming An no matter what, which was equivalent to offending the crown prince of the State of Qin. As soon as the Shen family returned, they were pushed to the center of the storm. Although Shen Xin tried his best to avoid it, it was as if there was an invisible hand behind him that wanted to push the Shen family out. Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan were not afraid of any trouble that might arise. However, today, Shen Miao was the one who came forward. They were afraid that Princess Ming An would hold a grudge towards Shen Miao and use tricks to harm her.

However, since it had already happened, all they could do was protect Shen Miao better.

When they returned to the house, Shen Miao entered her courtyard to wash up. It was already a little late. She lit the oil lamp. Seeing that she had no intention of sleeping, Gu Yu said, "Miss, are you still worried about what happened at the banquet? It's fine. With Master and Madam around, you won't be in danger of retaliation."

Shen Miao shook her head. She knew Princess Ming An's personality better than anyone else. Princess Ming An was very selfish and stubborn. At the tribute banquet in her previous life, Princess Ming An also made things difficult for her. This was because Princess Ming An thought that someone as outstanding as Fu Xiuyi was too unlucky to marry a vulgar wife like Shen Miao. Now with Prince Rui around, the most outstanding person in Princess Ming An's eyes became Prince Rui, but she still did not let Shen Miao off. Perhaps this was what people meant by hatred was destined, no matter how many lifetimes passed.

"You can leave." Shen Miao said, "I'll play chess for a while before going to bed."

Gu Yu wanted to say something, but Jingzhe tugged at her sleeve. Jingzhe said, "Then we'll leave first. Miss, don't think too much. When you feel sleepy, rest early. Don't tire yourself out. It's cold at night, so don't stay up too late."

Shen Miao agreed, and Jingzhe and Gu Yu retreated.

On the table, the chessboard was empty. Shen Miao held a white piece in one hand and a black piece in the other, playing with herself seriously.

Time passed slowly as she played. The chessboard gradually changed from nothing at the beginning to being filled with black and white pieces, looking extremely complicated.

The courtyard outside was so quiet that she could not hear anything as the entire capital fell into a deep slumber.

Shen Miao looked at the chessboard and heaved a sigh of relief.

In the past two years, all the factions had taken turns to make a move, and the chess pieces that had been set up had reached the position where they should go. In some ways, even if she had the upper hand, she might not be able to win every time. This was a game between her and Fu Xiuyi, but now it seemed that she still thought too simply of some things.

Everything in this world was changing. She was changing, no longer the person she used to be in her previous life, so there would naturally be others who would change. The only thing that did not change was the change itself, and no one could predict what kind of changes these changes would bring to the chessboard.

She glanced at the chessboard on the table, stood up, walked to the window, and pushed it open. The autumn wind blew in from outside, making her feel a little cold. The shadow of the tree in front of the window swayed. She looked at it for a while in a daze and turned around to see that the oil lamp in the room had burned out.

With the lamp out, the moonlight flowed into the room like water, illuminating it brightly.

With a faint sound, a person sat in front of the chessboard. He held a black chess piece and casually placed it on the chessboard before looking up at Shen Miao.

