

Venomous 521

Chapter 521 Nightmare (4)

Shen Miao said, "Tell the servants not to mention what happened today to anyone. Chang Zaiqing has never been here. Remember that."

The two maids nodded and left. Although they did not understand why Shen Miao paid so much attention to Chang Zaiqing, the maids knew that Shen Miao had a reason to do so and did not interfere.

After everyone left, Shen Miao sat at the table and looked at the bronze mirror in a daze.

Shen Miao got Chang Zaiqing to target Chen Ruoqiu instead because Chen Ruoqiu was really detestable, and Shen Miao was too busy to deal with her. In her previous life, Chen Ruoqiu "accidentally" discovered the marriage contract between Chang Zaiqing and Shen Xin. It was Chen Ruoqiu who kept saying that the Shen family must not let Chang Zaiqing down and wanted to seek justice for her. Shen Miao thought that Chang Zaiqing was probably instigated to marry Shen Xin because Chen Ruoqiu had been persuading her in private.

Since they were good friends, there was no harm in putting them together to see who could win Shen Wan's heart. Shen Miao's eyes turned cold. She could naturally save herself a lot of trouble by letting Chang Zaiqing deal with Chen Ruoqiu, but still, she wouldn't let Chang Zaiqing off easily either.

However... Shen Miao frowned. What exactly did Chang Zaiqing do in her previous life that caused Luo Xueyan to die in the end? Even now, it was still a mystery.

Because of Chang Zaiqing, Shen Miao had been absent-minded during family dinner. When everyone asked her what she was troubled with, Shen Miao said that she was a little tired. Luo Xueyan got someone to make some milk soup for Shen Miao and told her to rest early.

Jingzhe and Gu Yu tucked Shen Miao in and blew out the candlelight. Shen Miao closed her eyes.

The dark night gradually enveloped the entire capital, and Shen Miao started to feel that her body was getting lighter and lighter.

The sun suddenly shone brightly outside. She opened her eyes and felt that it was a little dazzling. The air in the room was stuffy and hot, feeling like summer.

It was early winter, so how could it be summer? Shen Miao sat up and felt a strange headache. She looked down and found herself sitting on the soft couch in a room, the sound of a woman talking could be heard. An extremely bitter herbal smell spread out.

The herbal smell was actually a little familiar.

Shen Miao stood up. There was not a single maid in the room, and the woman's voice became clearer. She thought for a moment and walked into the room to take a look.

In the spacious room, the windows were tightly shut. The weather was very hot to begin with, and with the windows tightly shut, the room was almost suffocating. Coupled with the annoying bitter herbal smell, Shen Miao felt as if there was something stuck in her chest.

Shen Miao took a few steps forward and was about to open the window when she heard someone say, "Go and open the window. I feel uncomfortable."

Shen Miao was stunned. The woman lying on the bed looked haggard. She was wearing a dark apricot-colored thin cotton robe. Her hair was soaked in sweat, and most of the clothes on her chest were wet from sweat. Her face was extremely pale, and her eyes were filled with death. Shen Miao widened her eyes. It was Luo Xueyan!

When had Luo Xueyan ever looked so haggard?

"Sister, lie down." The woman sitting by the bed comforted her. "It won't be good if you catch a cold in this weather."

Shen Miao turned to look at the woman. Her light green clothes were simple, but the material was expensive. She was dressed refreshingly and elegantly, making a sharp contrast with the lifeless Luo Xueyan. At this moment, Chang Zaiqing was holding Luo Xueyan's hand and saying, "Sister, you have to get better."

Chapter 522 Nightmare (5)

"I can't take it anymore." Luo Xueyan was almost at her last breath, and there was no more vitality in her eyes. "My child is gone, and there's nothing to look forward to. It doesn't make a difference if I live or not. It's wasteful to feed me these expensive herbs."

"Sister, don't say that." Chang Zaiqing said, "If Fifth Miss finds out that you think this way, she will be very sad."

"Jiaojiao..." Luo Xueyan's eyes hurt. Shen Miao took a step forward and wanted to hold Luo Xueyan's hand, but her hand went right through it.

It was as if she did not exist.

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"Jiaojiao hates me." Luo Xueyan closed her eyes. "But what can I do? The Shen family can't be tied to Prince Ding. Prince Ding can hide it from Jiaojiao, but he can't hide it from me. Jiaojiao even hates her father now. She doesn't even want to see me. What will Jiaojiao do in the future? There's no way out for me. I..." The more she spoke, the more heartbroken she became. She suddenly covered her mouth with a handkerchief and coughed violently. When she opened the handkerchief again, there was a pool of dark red blood on it.

"Sister, don't let these thoughts trouble you." Chang Zaiqing held her and comforted her. "Perhaps Prince Ding really likes Fifth Miss. Besides, there's no real hatred between parents and children. Fifth Miss will understand you in the future. This hatred is only temporary."

Shen Miao glared at Chang Zaiqing. Chang Zaiqing sounded like she was comforting Luo Xueyan, but in fact, she was adding fuel to the flames. In her previous life, when Shen Miao married Fu Xiuyi, although she also wanted the Shen family to help, Shen Xin refused, so she was quite angry. However, it wasn't so much as hatred. Now that Luo Xueyan was on the verge of death, how could she not be sad when she heard that Shen Miao hated her?

Shen Miao's eyes suddenly blurred. When her vision cleared, she saw a girl in autumn-colored clothes sitting on a chair opposite Chang Zaiqing, looking a little impatient. The girl was young. She had delicate facial features, but her makeup was extremely heavy, making her look a little strange. Shen Miao opened her mouth. Who else could this girl be but her?

Chang Zaiqing smiled and said, "Fifth Miss, don't be angry with your mother. It's just that military strength has always been very important. Your parents refused you probably because they have their own thoughts."

"We're all family. Since I married Prince Ding, he is considered half a member of the Shen family. Why do they still treat him as an outsider? I know that my parents have never liked me since I was young, so they abandoned me in the capital and left me alone."

Chang Zaiqing smiled again. "Fifth Miss, what are you talking about? Although your parents are not as close to you as Eldest Young Master, blood is thicker than water no matter what."

"I don't care." The young Shen Miao said arrogantly, "They all say that Auntie Chang is the smartest. Can you think of a way for me to get my parents to agree to lend the troops to Prince Ding?"

Chang Zaiqing seemed to be in a difficult position. A moment later, she said, "Fifth Miss, if you throw a tantrum, perhaps your mother will give in and agree. If not, just make a fuss like a child." She smiled and said, "But I'm just spouting nonsense. Fifth Miss, you have to consider it carefully."

Shen Miao, who was watching from the side, was so angry that her face turned ashen. Chang Zaiqing was clearly trying to sow discord!

Shen Miao remembered that in her previous life, Luo Xueyan did not tell anyone about her pregnancy. She wanted to wait until the pregnancy was stable before spreading the news, but something unexpected happened. Coincidentally, Prince Ding wanted to borrow troops from Shen Xin, but Shen Xin refused. Shen Miao went to consult with Chang Zaiqing, and Chang Zaiqing instigated her to kick up a fuss.

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Shen Miao did not know that Luo Xueyan had a miscarriage at that time. She went and had a quarrel with Luo Xueyan. When Luo Xueyan was at her most vulnerable, Shen Miao said some harsh words, which hurt like a knife. No mother wanted her child to hate her. At the same time, Shen Miao also said something that suggested that she was being treated badly by Prince Ding, which made Luo Xueyan worried.

In addition to the pain of having a miscarriage, Luo Xueyan was heartbroken and worried for Shen Miao. No matter how hard-hearted a person was, they would not be able to withstand this blow.

How Shen Miao wished she could rush up and tear apart Chang Zaiqing's hypocritical face.

In the blink of an eye, the scene changed and she was in a courtyard. The courtyard was very elegantly built. Chang Zaiqing was wearing an emerald green dress, and the maid beside her was slowly fanning her.

"I heard that Madam is about to die." The nanny beside Chang Zaiqing said, "The doctor said that it will probably be in the next few days."

"Get someone to serve her well." Chang Zaiqing said, "We need to keep the show going until the very end."

The nanny nodded and said, "You finally made it."

"That's right." Chang Zaiqing picked up the purple grape in the jar and ate it. "After so many years, I've finally made it."

"I wonder what General Shen..."

"General Shen loves his wife deeply, so he'll naturally be sad." Chang Zaiqing smiled. "But what does this have to do with me? I just need to grab the position of the first wife of the house. I don't care if General Shen acknowledges me or not as long as the servants do."

The nanny nodded and said, "You're right. I originally thought that Madam could last a little longer, but I didn't expect her to..."

"Her heart is broken and she's worried sick all day. She's already lived a long life." Chang Zaiqing said indifferently, "Luo Xueyan was very lucky. She married into such a good family and her husband only doted on her. Unfortunately, after giving birth to a daughter like Shen Miao, her good luck was all gone."

Shen Miao was stunned. Chang Zaiqing continued, "She listens to Prince Ding unconditionally. Prince Ding is really capable. He made Shen Miao fall head over heels for him and even abandoned her parents. However, if not for the fact that Shen Miao is stupid, how could I be where I am today?"

Shen Miao stood opposite Chang Zaiqing. It was a hot summer day, but her heart felt like it had fallen into an icehouse.

"Shen Miao asked someone to send food over from Prince Ding's mansion, but the food was all swapped. She was stupid, but Luo Xueyan doted on her a lot and ate all the food. She didn't know that the food was poisonous. That day, you saw it too. Shen Miao fed Luo Xueyan the food. Every bite was poisonous, but Luo Xueyan still had delightful smile on her face."

Shen Miao trembled and almost fell to the ground.

At that time, in order to help Fu Xiuyi convince Shen Xin and curry favor with Luo Xueyan, she ordered someone to buy some food for Luo Xueyan. Luo Xueyan had always felt that Shen Miao was cold to her, so she was naturally very happy. She ate all of them. It turned out that... the food had been swapped.

Shen Miao suddenly felt so cold, and her mind was in a mess.

She was vicious and stupid at that time. She did not even deserve to be forgiven. She was the one who pushed her mother to death. She was the most unfilial person!

"Luo Xueyan has been a tough woman her entire life, but she died in the hands of her daughter. Speaking of which, I have to thank Shen Miao." Chang Zaiqing smiled smugly. "From now on, I'll be in charge of the Shen family. Luo Xueyan didn't make a single mistake in this life. The only mistake she made was probably giving birth to Shen Miao. Shen Miao is indeed a jinx."

Suddenly, a maid ran over in a hurry. Her shadow was long under the summer sun, her voice was low, and her face was sweaty.

"Concubine Chang, Madam died just now."

"Madam is gone! Madam is gone!"

A thunderclap spread out from the horizon, illuminating the capital in the night. The sound of rain, thunder, and lightning covered the screams of the girl in the room.

Shen Miao's face was covered in tears. She screamed, "Mother, Mother, it's my fault! It's my fault! I shouldn't have liked Fu Xiuyi. I don't like him anymore! It's my fault, It's my fault! Mother!"

The lightning shone on Shen Miao's pale face, making her look as miserable and desperate as a ghost. The purple-robed young man stood by the bed and stared at Shen Miao with a complicated expression as she struggled in the nightmare.

A moment later, he finally sighed and reached out.

Chapter 524 Marriage (1)

It was an extremely terrifying dream, as if all her struggles were useless. She knew that the ending was extremely tragic, but she could not stop it from happening. She could only watch helplessly as it unfolded.

She was a murderer.

The thunder struck across the sky. Shen Miao sat up on her bed and panted heavily.

She subconsciously grabbed something with her hand and felt someone gently patting her back. She leaned into his arms and grabbed her neck. She felt that her face was covered in sweat and she was about to suffocate.

Shen Miao's body was trembling violently as she bit his shoulder. His body trembled, but he did not move. He only patted Shen Miao's head comfortingly.

After an unknown period of time, the thunder gradually subsided, and only the sound of rain could be heard from outside the window. Shen Miao gradually calmed down. She let go of her mouth and touched something cold with the tip of her nose. It was a golden button.

She slowly sat up from that person's arms.

The person stood up. A moment later, the candles in the room were lit. Someone held a candle and placed it on the table next to the bed. He walked to the bed and sat down. His eyes were deep and piercing, and he was as elegant and noble as ever. Who else could it be but Xie Jingxing? Under the light, his gaze was less playful than usual. It was more comforting and filled with concern.

Shen Miao's heart tightened.

She was too engrossed in the terrifying nightmare that she was in a daze. That dream was not just a dream. It felt as if it had really happened. She was shocked by the terrifying truth and lost her composure for a moment. When she touched something warm, she was like a drowning person holding

onto a life-saving straw and refused to let go. However, she forgot that in this late night, Xie Jingxing's arrival was something worth being wary about.

The secret that she had locked up inside her heart seemed to have cracked at this moment, and she was facing the smartest hunter. Xie Jingxing had sharp eyes. He would probably be able to guess something from just a few words.

"What did you dream about?" Xie Jingxing cut off the extra wick in the oil lamp. His silhouette under the lamp was pleasing to the eye.

"It's just a nightmare," Shen Miao said with her eyes lowered. However, her voice was unnatural for a moment.

Xie Jingxing paused and turned to look at her. "You'll be afraid too?"

Shen Miao was suddenly angry. She said, "I'm not Prince Rui. It's hard for me to survive in the world, so I naturally have times when I'm afraid."

Xie Jingxing looked at her. His eyes were very beautiful. Usually, he was sometimes frivolous and sometimes serious, making people unable to tell if he was sincere or not. However, now that he was looking at Shen Miao, his eyes were like the water in the autumn pool, like black jade, making it difficult for people to discern his emotions. He said, "Don't be afraid. It's just a dream."

Shen Miao felt a lump in her throat, and an incomparable sadness suddenly surged up within her. She thought ever since her rebirth, she had controlled her emotions very well. Sometimes, she couldn't hide her hatred and love, but after calming down, she would still be able to conceal it. However, tonight's dream was so terrifying that she found herself unable to face it alone. Perhaps the rain outside was too cold, or perhaps Xie Jingxing's gaze was too gentle, making her feel vulnerable. She really wanted to find a place to cry.

Chapter 525 Marriage (2)

She felt her vision blur and something was on her face. She looked up and saw Xie Jingxing wiping her tears with a handkerchief.

She cried in the end.

The young man's hand was slender and he lowered his head slightly. His movements were very gentle, and his eyes were very serious, as if he was doing the thing that required the most meticulous work. His long eyelashes were lowered, and he was already as handsome as a painting. He was no longer the indifferent and mischievous person in the day, but he was like the gentlest partner, like an elder brother, and also like a friend.

Shen Miao was a little lost in thought. When Xie Jingxing finished wiping, he saw her gaze and raised an eyebrow. "You're not crying anymore?"

She looked away. "Thank you." This time, the thank you was finally not as forced and mocking as before. It seemed to be the first time she had spoken in such a gentle tone.

Xie Jingxing also looked at her in surprise. Suddenly, he smiled and rubbed her head. "What did you dream about? You kept saying that it's my fault, Mrs. Shen."

Shen Miao was shocked and looked at Xie Jingxing, asking, "What did I say in my sleep?"

Xie Jingxing pondered for a moment and said, "You said it's your fault and you are sorry." He asked thoughtfully, "What did you do wrong in your dream? Is it that serious?"

When Shen Miao heard that, she heaved a sigh of relief and said, "It's nothing. It's just a dream." However, she did not know that Xie Jingxing noticed her sigh of relief.

"However." Shen Miao suddenly thought of something and looked at him. "It's already so late. What are you doing here?" Shen Miao did not notice that she was already used to Xie Jingxing barging into her room in the middle of the night. There was no anger in her voice when she asked that, as if it was something very usual.

Xie Jingxing took out a letter from his sleeve. "I wanted to give you a gift."

Shen Miao looked at him in confusion. She took the letter and opened it, only to be stunned.

The things written on the letter were none other than what happened to Chang Zaiqing in Liuzhou, including the fact that Chang Zaiqing had a husband and son who were abandoned by her. She was stunned for a moment, not because of the content of the letter, but because Xie Jing gave it to her.

"You don't seem surprised." Xie Jingxing tilted his head to look at her. "You already knew?"

"Thank you for your kindness, Prince Rui." Shen Miao put away the letter. "Prince Rui, don't interfere in this matter. I'll do it myself."

Xie Jingxing looked at her for a while and shook his head with a smile. "I guess I've stuck my nose into something I shouldn't again."

Shen Miao was silent for a while. For some reason, she felt that the room was a little cramped. She lowered her head and her gaze subconsciously landed on the corner of Xie Jingxing's robe. The material was very gorgeous, and the patterns embroidered with gold thread were exquisite. She seemed to be able to feel Xie Jingxing's probing gaze on her. Shen Miao looked up and tried her best to look at him calmly. "If there's nothing else, you can go back."

Xie Jingxing stared at her fixedly.

Shen Miao frowned slightly. She indeed should thank him for pulling her out of her nightmare. However, she knew what kind of person Xie Jingxing was. The longer she stayed with him, the more likely she would be eaten up. Shen Miao did not want her secret to be exposed to others yet, not to mention that Xie Jingxing's identity had become sensitive. Even if Xie Jingxing did not show any hostility to her now, Shen Miao did not dare to let down her guard.

Xie Jingxing said, "It's raining so heavily outside, and you want me to leave?"

The rain outside the window was accompanied by the sound of thunder, looking like it would not stop for the entire night. Shen Miao was so angry by his words that she almost forgot about the nightmare. She said, "Is Prince Rui going to stay here for the night?"

Chapter 526 Marriage (3)

Xie Jingxing frowned. "Good idea."

"Xie Jingxing!" Shen Miao shouted.

Xie Jingxing stuffed the handkerchief that was used to wipe Shen Miao's tears into her hand and said, "Go to sleep. I'll leave when the rain stops."

How could she fall asleep with a man in her bedroom? What kind of nonsense was this?

"I can't sleep with Prince Rui here." Shen Miao looked at him expressionlessly. After being interrupted by Xie Jingxing, the gloominess she felt because of Chang Zaiqing dissipated a lot, and even her expression relaxed a lot.

Xie Jingxing reached out and raised her chin, forcing Shen Miao to stare into his eyes. He said slowly, "Look carefully. I'm of the royal family and have the aura of a true dragon. If I stay in your room, no demons will dare to come. You won't have nightmares."

Shen Miao smiled and broke free from his hand. "In that case, should I thank Prince Rui?"

"That's right."

Shen Miao glared at Xie Jingxing, but her mood gradually improved. Xie Jingxing did not ask her anything else about her nightmare. Whether Xie Jingxing really did not care or pretended not to care, it made her feel like she had escaped a calamity. Now, she did not have the strength to deal with anyone else. Not to mention Xie Jingxing who was just helping her.

Xie Jing walked to the window and pulled it open to prevent the rain from drifting in. He walked to the table not far from the bed and sat down. He took a book and looked like he was going to read. Without looking back, he said, "I'll sit here. You can sleep without worry."

Shen Miao moved her lips, wanting to say something, but in the end, she did not say anything. The wind and rain outside were howling, and the lightning was terrifying. She wrapped herself in the blanket, revealing only her head, but her gaze subconsciously landed on the person at the table.

The young man looked slender and tall even when he was sitting. He casually flipped through the book, but his expression was very serious. His side profile looked really handsome. Under the yellow light, he looked gentler. Compared to a few years ago, his temperament had become more mature. His figure seemed to be able to block all the wind and rain. Even if he did not say anything, he still made people feel a sense of security.

He was unfathomable, cold, and ruthless. He deceived the world and was decisive. He fooled the royal family of Ming Qi and changed his identity. On the surface, he looked cynical, but he was capable of wreaking havoc. He was not a good person, but... he was not as bad as she thought.

Accompanied by the sound of the wind and rain outside, Shen Miao slowly closed her eyes and fell asleep.

The rain finally stopped after a long time. There was only a little oil lamp left on the table. The candle flame swayed slightly, looking like it was about to be extinguished.

The purple-clothed young man at the table closed the book in his hand, stood up, and walked to the bed.

On the bed, the girl slept peacefully, breathing evenly. Her long hair was spread on the pillow, and with her eyes closed, she was not as dignified as usual. Instead, she looked more childish.

She was actually only 16 years old and was still a little girl. In an ordinary family, a 16-year-old girl would probably be thinking about which young man was good-looking or which dress looked better.

Xie Jingxing had a complicated gaze.

From the first time he saw Shen Miao, what she exuded was a ruthlessness that was unbefitting of a girl her age. The situation the Shen family was facing was very complicated, but she never seemed to panic and was able to help the Shen family get over one hurdle after another as if she had long seen it coming.

Chapter 527 Marriage (4)

However, she was, after all, just a little girl who was forced to grow up. Just because she had never shown weakness did not mean that she was really not weak. For example, when she woke up from a nightmare just now, the despair in her eyes was enough to shock people.

She grabbed his collar, her entire body trembling, as if she had experienced a huge horror. However, in an instant, she returned to her usual dignified self. She was like an injured ferocious beast, but she had to show her strength at all times, because once her wound was discovered by the enemy, she would be killed without mercy.

Xie Jingxing was confused. He was not a kind person and had a ruthlessness that ordinary people did not have, but every time he was with Shen Miao, he would always hold back. From the first time he saw Shen Miao, he had actually been giving in to her.

However, he did not know why.

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He deliberately said that the rain had not stopped just to see her fall asleep. She was obviously very afraid, but she wanted to put on a brave front, so he could only pretend not to know.

When the rain stopped, he put down the gauze curtain and left the room.

On the bed, Shen Miao's eyelashes fluttered, but she did not open her eyes.

The house opposite the new Shen mansion had been bought by Prince Rui. Xie Jingxing walked out and Tie Yi and Nan Qi, who were waiting outside, quickly followed.

"Reply to the invitation from the palace, and tell them I'm going," Xie Jingxing said.

Tie Yi paused for a moment. "Master, didn't you weren't going?"

"I've changed my mind." Xie Jingxing glanced at him.

Tie Yi quickly nodded, but he was very puzzled. The invitation was sent by a few princes in the palace. Xie Jingxing did not want to get involved with the crown prince of the State of Qin and the princes of

Ming Qi, so he rejected it. Why did he suddenly change his mind now? Tie Yi carefully glanced at his master and felt that Xie Jingxing's eyes were cold, making him even more puzzled.

Xie Jingxing's gaze turned cold.

In Shen Miao's dream, not only did she call Luo Xueyan's name, but also Fu Xiuyi, Prince Ding.

He recalled what Shen Miao said in her sleep about how she used to like Fu Xiuyi, and a mocking smile suddenly appeared on his lips.

The fact that she liked someone made him feel uncomfortable.

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The unexpected rain made the capital extremely cold the next day. People were talking about the heavy rain last night and felt that it was a sign of something bad coming.

"I didn't expect the rain to come so suddenly. I forgot about the flowers and plants in the courtyard. When I came out this morning, a few pots were broken. Those flowers are expensive. What a pity." As Chen Ruoqiu helped Shen Wan put on his clothes, she talked about the heavy rain last night.

Chen Ruoqiu had always been particular about elegance. Even those flowers and plants were especially rare. Shen Wan listened absent-mindedly and did not look at Chen Ruoqiu.

Chen Ruoqiu noticed Shen Wan's abnormality and asked with a smile, "Master, is there something on your mind?"

Shen Wan came back to his senses and looked at Chen Ruoqiu. "I think Yue is already at the age of marriage."

Chen Ruoqiu's heart skipped a beat, but she smiled and said, "I know. I've always been looking for a suitable husband for Yue. However, we have to choose carefully. We can't let Yue suffer. Master, your heart will ache too, right?"

This time, Shen Wan didn't just stop at that. He said with a straight face, "It's been two years since Yue turned 16. Even if the girls of other families are not married, they've already been engaged. If this continues, it'll be difficult to find a suitable husband for her in the future. The families I told you about a few days ago are not bad. I've seen them. They're compatible. Yue won't suffer if she marries over."

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"That's true." Chen Ruoqiu forced a smile. "But I have to let Yue get to know them first."

"It's been two years. Every time we talk to her about her marriage, she throws a tantrum. You're too indulgent." Shen Wan said with a sharp gaze, "Although our family is not bad, Yue is aiming too high. If she has thoughts about someone she should never have, it will bring our family destruction."

Shen Wan's gaze was meaningful, and Chen Ruoqiu's heart skipped a beat. Shen Wan was not a fool. As a father, he could naturally tell what was on Shen Yue's mind. If Shen Yue fell in love with Fu Xiuyi, Shen Wan would be first to say no.

“Some people are beyond our reach.” There was a hidden meaning in Shen Wan’s words. “It’s better to let Yue be down-to-earth and give up on thoughts she shouldn’t have as soon as possible. Otherwise, it’ll be too late for her to come out of the quagmire.”

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Chen Ruoqiu broke out in cold sweat. After being husband and wife with Shen Wan for so many years, she was almost certain that Shen Wan knew what Shen Yue was thinking. However, Chen Ruoqiu knew Shen Yue’s temper very well. When Shen Miao was still around, Shen Yue was infatuated with Prince Ding. Now that Shen Miao was gone, Shen Yue would be less likely to give up.

“But Master.” Chen Ruoqiu still wanted to help Shen Yue. “Yue is still young. There are some things that can’t be rushed. You used to dote on her too. Can’t you understand this time?”

Shen Wan took a deep breath and looked at Chen Ruoqiu with a disappointed gaze. He said, “Madam, you’ve always been sensible. Why don’t you understand what’s going on now? Prince Ding is not as simple as he looks. In the past, when the first branch was still around, the Shen family had military power, so Prince Ding might be afraid. Now that the first branch has moved out, Second Brother and I are both civil servants, and our careers are not smooth-sailing, Prince Ding will not take us seriously. When Prince Ding marries, he will definitely marry a wife who is beneficial to him. Yue is not very valuable to him. Why would he marry Yue? At most, she will just be a concubine. Even if Yue is liked by him, how can a concubine fight with the first wife with a powerful background? At that time, Yue will still be the one who suffers.”

When Chen Ruoqiu heard this, she broke out in a cold sweat. She thought that Shen Wan did not agree with Shen Yue marrying Prince Ding because he did not think highly of Prince Ding in the competition for the throne. But now, it seemed that Shen Wan’s evaluation of Prince Ding was that he was not an ordinary man, but someone who weighed the pros and cons. It was very difficult for such a man to be sincere.

She said, “I see. I didn’t think it through. Master is always thinking about Yue, but I still blame you... It’s all my fault.”

“Don’t blame yourself.” Shen Wan sighed. “Yue is a little more arrogant and wilful than before. You have to lecture her well so that she won’t get herself into trouble in the future. I’ll get my subordinates to make a list of good families in the capital and send it over later. Choose a family and let Yue meet them another day.” After a pause, he said, “We can’t wait.”

This time, Chen Ruoqiu stood on the same side as Shen Wan and immediately agreed. After Shen Wan went to court, the list was sent back. Chen Ruoqiu carefully went through it. She really planned to let Shen Yue marry as soon as possible.

In the Autumn Water Garden, among the maids who were sweeping the courtyard outside, someone quietly put down her work and went out.

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The brush in Shen Yue's hand suddenly paused, and a long ink mark instantly appeared on the unfinished painting. However, she did not take it to heart at all. Instead, she asked the maid in front of her angrily.

"What did you say? Mother is going to choose a husband for me?"

"Second Miss." The maid lowered her head and said carefully, "Madam has already selected a few families from the list and sent someone to send an invitation. She is planning to bring you to visit them in a few days."

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"Bastard!" Shen Yue slammed the brush on the desk in exasperation. No one knew who she was scolding, but her gentle and elegant aura was all gone. The surrounding maids did not even dare to breathe loudly.

Shen Yue looked frustrated.

She was already 18 years old. In the capital, it was the age where girls should get married. Even if she was not married, she should be engaged. However, she was still unmarried. She was a talented girl and was good-looking. She was gentle and smart, and there were countless men who liked her. However, she only wanted to marry one person, and that was Fu Xiuyi.

Prince Ding, Fu Xiuyi, was the youngest among the princes and the one who had yet to marry a consort. Back then, Shen Miao fell in love with Fu Xiuyi at first sight and was bewitched by his charm. Very few knew that Shen Yue was the same. Perhaps such a man was born to dazzle and infatuate women. He did not have the strange temper of a prince. He was young and handsome, and he was probably the most noble man in Ming Qi other than the emperor. Shen Yue had always felt that only she was worthy of Fu Xiuyi. Therefore, when Shen Miao shamelessly revealed that she liked Fu Xiuyi to the public, Shen Yue felt that Shen Miao was humiliating her sweetheart.

Fortunately, Fu Xiuyi treated Shen Miao extremely coldly. Now, Shen Miao and Fu Xiuyi had nothing to do with each other, which made Shen Yue feel relieved. Back then, she eavesdropped on Shen Wan and Shen Gui's conversation where they said that in order to obtain Shen Xin's military power, it was possible for Fu Xiuyi to marry Shen Miao. She had been uneasy for a long time, wishing that Shen Miao did not exist in the world. Fortunately, Shen Miao gave up later.

Now that Shen Miao was gone, why were her parents getting in her way?

"I'm going to tell my mother that I'm not getting married! I'm not getting married!" Shen Yue stood up and swept everything off the desk. The surrounding maids quickly knelt on the ground, but no one dared to persuade her.

On the other side, someone in Rosy Cloud Garden also heard the commotion.

Compared to two years ago, Rosy Cloud Garden was much more deserted. Ever since Ren Wanyun died and Shen Gui became infertile, Old Madam Shen was furious and did not allow Shen Gui to bring back any more random women. Shen Gui knew that he would never be able to have a child with a woman again in his life. When he returned to the mansion and looked at the empty courtyard, he felt annoyed,

so he simply stayed at the brothel every day. Other than the servants, there were only Concubine Wan and Shen Dongling left in Rosy Cloud Garden.

Shen Gui once had two sons. Unfortunately, now, he only had an illegitimate daughter. No matter what, Shen Dongling was the only child of Shen Gui now, so the servants treated Shen Dongling and Concubine Wan with respect.

“What’s going on outside?” Concubine Wan, who was doing needlework, looked up. She had been doing well for the past two years and looked much plumper than before.

The maid at the door said, “Concubine, Second Miss is throwing a tantrum because Third Madam wants to choose a husband for her. She’s rushing towards the Autumn Water Garden.”

Concubine Wan laughed out loud and shook her head. “Second Miss is really pampered. She even gets angry about this.” She suddenly thought of something and her eyes darkened. “She really doesn’t know how lucky she is.”

Shen Dongling was also a daughter of the Shen family and was about the same age as Shen Yue. However, Old Madam Shen did not like the daughter of a concubine, and Shen Gui did not care about the matters at home at all. Shen Dongling’s status was not high. After so long, very few people came to propose marriage. Even if there were people who came to propose marriage, they were all from strange families. It was obvious that they were not good people.

As she was thinking, she saw Shen Dongling stand up from behind the screen. Shen Dongling had grown a lot. She was slender and had sharp eyebrows, looking very much like Concubine Wan.

“Where are you going?” Concubine Wan asked casually.

Shen Dongling said, “Mother, aren’t you worried about my marriage?”

Concubine Wan was stunned, not knowing what she meant.

“I’ve waited for two years. Now, this opportunity has come,” Shen Dongling said.

Chapter 530 I Want It (1)

Shen Yue caused a commotion in the Autumn Water Garden for a while. Unfortunately, this time, Chen Ruoqiu seemed to have made up her mind. No matter how Shen Yue begged, Chen Ruoqiu was unmoved. She was so angry that she wanted to lock Shen Yue up. Shen Yue panicked, but Chen Ruoqiu ignored her. When she left the Autumn Water Garden, she was angry and anxious.

A few people walked out of Rosy Cloud Garden. When the blue-clothed girl in the lead saw Shen Yue, she went forward and said, “Second Sister.”

Shen Yue glanced at the woman and nodded, but her attitude was cold.

This woman was none other than the illegitimate daughter of the second branch, Shen Dongling. In the past, Shen Dongling was suppressed by Ren Wanyun and did not leave the courtyard all year round. There were even servants in the Shen family who did not recognize her. Ever since the children in the second branch died, Shen Dongling became the only child. However, even so, on the surface, Shen Yue treated her gently, but in fact, she looked down on Shen Dongling because of her background. Even if

she was the only child of the second branch now, it still did not change the fact that Shen Dongling was an illegitimate daughter.

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However, Shen Dongling did not seem to notice her cold gaze. She continued with a smile, "I plan to get a few pieces of silk to make silk cloth. A few days ago, I heard my mother talking about some new embroidery patterns, so I wanted to make one. Second Sister, do you want some?"

"No need," Shen Yue said.

Being treated coldly like this, Shen Dongling still said good-naturedly, "Nevermind then. I originally wanted to make a few for Second Sister."

Shen Yue was a little annoyed. At this moment, she was so worried about having to marry someone that she couldn't care less about anything else. She saw that Shen Dongling had her head lowered, revealing a fair neck, and a thought struck her. She turned around and carefully sized up Shen Dongling.

Shen Dongling and Shen Yue were only half a year apart in age. Among the legitimate daughters of the Shen family, Shen Qing was generous, Shen Yue was elegant, and Shen Miao was delicate. The three of them still had the temperament unique to legitimate daughters, but Shen Dongling had the charm of a concubine's daughter. Back then, Concubine Wan was an actress in a troupe and was considered gorgeous. Shen Dongling did not look like Shen Gui, but she looked almost the same as the young Concubine Wan. Her eyes were big, and her chin was sharp, making her look like an outstanding concubine. However, compared to those ambitious concubines who wanted to climb up, Shen Dongling was more docile.

Shen Yue's heart suddenly skipped a beat. She took the initiative to hold Shen Dongling's hand and said with a smile, "I don't want you to do it for me because I'm afraid I'll tire you out. You're a proper young lady of the Shen family, not an embroiderer in the embroidery shop. Why do you have to do this kind of needlework every day?"

Shen Dongling was stunned, as if she was surprised by Shen Yue's sudden friendliness. Her face turned slightly red and she said, "Second Sister, you're too kind. I usually don't have anything else to do. My mother asked me to do needlework, so I did some. It's fine." Concubine Wan seemed to have lost her personality after being suppressed by Ren Wanyun for so long. Even now, with Ren Wanyun gone, her favorite thing to do was embroider in her room.

Seeing that Shen Dongling was so obedient, the smile in Shen Yue's eyes deepened. "It's time for you to change your personality. It's good that you like to do embroidery, but what kind of rich young lady does embroidery all day long? I'm going to the jewelry shop to pick some jewelry tomorrow. Come with me. There are some new styles this year. Perhaps there's something you like. If you like something, I'll buy it for you."