

Venomous 601

Chapter 601 Asking for A Kiss (6)

People always focused on what they were interested in. The men were talking about the woman, but no one thought that this was a case where three people were frozen to death.

Cai Lin stared at the three ice sculptures. He was originally a little afraid of corpses, but these ice sculptures did not make him feel afraid. Instead, he took delight in appreciating it. His friend said, "This woman is quite good-looking. Look, I don't think an ordinary family can raise such a beauty."

It was as if he was commenting on a new girl in a brothel.

As Cai Lin nodded in agreement, he stared at the woman's ice sculpture carefully. Even through the thin layer of ice on her face, he could vaguely see the woman's facial features. Her facial features were very beautiful and even familiar.

Familiar?

Cai Lin asked, "I think this girl looks a little familiar. Do you think she's a girl we've seen before?"

The friend sized the woman up carefully and shook his head. "That's impossible. I've been to all the places in the capital, from the brothel to the school, and I've seen all the girls, but I've never seen her." He said casually, "Look at the undergarments she's wearing. It's all inlaid with gold. She might be from a rich family or the palace."

Hearing that, Cai Lin was struck by the thought and was dumbfounded.

From the palace?

He looked up at the woman and shouted uncontrollably, "Princess Ming An!"

"What?" The friend was stunned. This friend of Cai Lin's was just from a rich merchant family and did not have the chance to come into contact with the officials and nobles in the palace, so he did not understand what Cai Lin was talking about.

Cai Lin's expression instantly changed. He finally understood why he felt that this female corpse was a little familiar. Previously, at the tribute banquet in Ming Qi, Shen Miao competed with Princess Ming An over archery. At that time, Cai Lin even felt sorry for Princess Ming An as both of them were humiliated by Shen Miao.

Who else could it be but Princess Ming An?

When the people around Cai Lin heard that, they asked, "Are you talking about Princess Ming An from the State of Qin?"

"Really? The woman inside is Princess Ming An?"

"How did a princess of a country end up like this... This can't be real."

"Speaking of which, this woman really looks like a princess."

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The news of this shocking discovery on Lake Wanli quickly spread across the capital, eventually reaching the palace. Naturally, the Shen family was also informed of it.

After Shen Miao finished talking to Xie Jingxing in the middle of the night last night, she couldn't fall asleep. It was only when the sky was slightly bright that she fell asleep, so she woke up quite late. Seeing that Shen Miao was sleeping soundly, Jingzhe and Gu Yu didn't wake her up. When Shen Miao went out to eat breakfast, it was already very late.

As she drank the porridge made in the kitchen and thought about what Xie Jingxing said last night, she saw Luo Tan whizzing in from outside.

Over the past few days, Luo Tan had mostly recovered from her injuries all thanks to Gao Yang. Although Gao Yang had repeatedly emphasized that Luo Tan had to rest well, Luo Tan was not someone who could remain calm. She still did what she wanted to do. Sometimes, it almost made people wonder if it was just an illusion that she almost died a few days ago.

"Cousin! Cousin!" Luo Tan rushed in and sat down opposite Shen Miao.

Shen Miao did not even look up as she ate the porridge. These days, Shen Xin did not allow Luo Tan and Shen Miao to go out again, in case they fell prey to evil people like last time. Therefore, Luo Tan had no choice but to stay in the mansion.

"Little cousin, don't eat yet. Let me tell you something big." Luo Tan sat up straight.

Shen Miao put down the spoon in her hand and said, "What happened?"

"Princess Ming An is dead!" Luo Tan said, "Her corpse was found at Lake Wanli this morning along with two men. They were... doing that kind of thing. However, for some reason, she froze into an ice cube. Everyone in the capital is talking about it!"

Chapter 602 You Have to Stay Away From Prince Rui (1)

Princess Ming An was dead!

Shen Miao was stunned. Luo Tan was incoherent, but Shen Miao understood most of it. Without a doubt, the death of Princess Ming An was definitely Xie Jingxing's doing. As for the two men mentioned, Shen Miao almost immediately thought of the Xie brothers. As she thought about it, she couldn't help but gasp. She had to admit that Xie Jingxing was indeed a ruthless person. Putting Princess Ming An and the Xie brothers together in such a scandalous way would divert the focus of the people from the fact that they were killed to the affair between Princess Ming An and the Xie brothers.

It was true that all of this might have been done by the murderer, but compared to a boring case, such a scandalous case was easier for the people to remember and talk about. No matter what, even if Huangfu Hao or Emperor Wen Hui used force to suppress the rumors or came forward to clarify, no one would believe it. As a princess of a country, Princess Ming An ended up like a brothel girl, naked in front of everyone. If this matter was spread to the State of Qin, the royal family would be humiliated.

Xie Jingxing was indeed not merciful.

As for the Xie brothers, Shen Miao lost in a deep thought. Perhaps Huangfu Hao would be furious, but he couldn't find evidence to prove that the Xie brothers really forced Princess Ming An to do anything,

because the Xie brothers were also dead. It was impossible for Huangfu Hao to take it out on the Marquis of Lin'an, because he had lost two sons in a row, which was tragic enough.

Seeing that Shen Miao was deep in thought, Luo Tan couldn't help but ask, "Cousin, did you guess something? Who do you think is behind this? Why is the murderer so bold?"

Shen Miao smiled. "I'm not a detective. If you want to know the outcome, wait until the judicial office solves the case."

"No matter what," Luo Tan was an outspoken person. She said, "I don't pity her at all. That princess is arrogant and domineering, and I heard that she's very vengeful. If she's still alive, she might find fault with you one day. I wonder which hero is helping the people get rid of evil." Luo Tan rubbed her palms together, as if she wanted to befriend that person.

"Speaking of which," Luo Tan continued, "When you were kidnapped previously, I went to ask Prince Rui for help. When you're free, don't forget to go and thank him."

Shen Miao nodded.

Luo Tan patted her shoulder and saw Jingzhe walk in. She smiled and said, "Miss Luo, Imperial Physician Gao is here to take your pulse."

Luo Tan's expression instantly changed. She immediately stood up and said to Shen Miao, "Cousin, I gotta go. Think about Princess Ming An's case. Tell me about it if you figure out anything!" With that, she ran away.

Shen Miao looked at Luo Tan's back and sighed, her eyes gradually darkening.

Xie Jingxing had caused such a huge commotion. The revenge was taken and the anger was vented. However, after all, she was the princess of a country, and many people were involved. Would this matter rest peacefully? Shen Miao didn't think so.

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The people of the government quickly chased away the commoners around Lake Wanli and put the three ice cubes down. As soon as Huangfu Hao saw Princess Ming An's corpse, he flew into a rage. Even Emperor Wen Hui was terrified by his anger.

Chapter 603 You Have to Stay Away From Prince Rui (2)

With an extremely dark face, Huangfu Hao sneered and said, "In the territory of Ming Qi, the princess of the State of Qin was actually humiliated to death like this. I can't help but wonder what Ming Qi is up to. Perhaps I should report this matter to my father and ask him to make a decision."

Emperor Wen Hui rubbed his forehead. Huangfu Hao's threatening words made him very displeased. However, this matter happened too suddenly, and even Emperor Wen Hui still didn't know what was going on. The Marquis of Lin'an, Xie Ding, knelt down and said with tears streaming down his face, "Your Majesty, please investigate this case thoroughly! I beg you to give my sons the justice they deserved!"

All the civil and military officials in the throne room sighed. How glorious was the Marquis of Lin'an back then? When he was young, he was so high-spirited and bold that he could even refuse to listen to the

emperor's orders while he was in battle. He even married the noble Princess Yuqing. However, ever since Princess Yuqing died, the Marquis of Lin'an seemed to have lost his vitality and gradually declined. Xie Jingxing, who was originally a rare talent, was buried on the battlefield under the mud. Emperor Wen Hui originally planned to deal with the Marquis of Lin'an. Later, when he saw that after Xie Jingxing died, the Marquis of Lin'an hit rock bottom, he decided to let the Marquis of Lin'an off. Now that with the remaining two sons of the Marquis of Lin'an gone tragically, Xie Ding would die without descendants and the Marquis of Lin'an would be forgotten by history. The stark contrast between now and then made everyone present feel sad.

Huangfu Hao stole a glance at Xie Ding, and there was a trace of malice in his eyes. No matter if the Xie brothers really did anything with Princess Ming An, there was no doubt that Princess Ming'an's innocence and dignity were ruined by the Xie brothers. Although the person behind the scenes was the most detestable, the Xie family could not be let off either. When did the royal family of the State of Qin ever suffer humiliation like this? Huangfu Hao looked at Xie Ding and made up his mind.

Emperor Wen Hui felt a headache coming on. He waved his hand to signal everyone to be quiet and said in a low voice, "This matter is very serious. Someone committed such a heinous crime under my nose. It's outrageous. I've already instructed the Judicial office to investigate this case thoroughly. They will definitely catch the person behind it and give everyone an explanation!"

Huangfu Hao was still not happy. He cupped his hands and said, "Your Majesty, please agree to let the people of the State of Qin be involved in the investigation of this case. Otherwise, when I return to the country, I won't be able to answer to my father."

In other words, he did not believe that Ming Qi would really investigate this matter thoroughly.

Emperor Wen Hui suppressed the anger in his heart and said, "Granted."

After Emperor Wen Hui left, most of the officials in the court were not familiar with Huangfu Hao, so they would not take the initiative to go up to him. However, the Marquis of Lin'an was a big family in Ming Qi after all. Everyone went forward to express condolences to him.

Unlike the others, someone actually walked to Huangfu Hao and said gently, "Your Highness, my condolences."

This person was Prince Ding, Fu Xiuyi.

When Huangfu Hao saw Fu Xiuyi, his angry expression did not soften. He cupped his hands and was about to leave when he heard Fu Xiuyi say softly behind him, "I have some thoughts about this murder case. I wonder if Your Highness is willing to hear them."

Huangfu Hao was stunned. At this moment, the officials were busy comforting the Marquis of Lin'an, so no one saw what the two of them were doing. Huangfu Hao sneered and asked, "Prince Ding, do you know who is behind it?"

"I just found something strange." Fu Xiuyi smiled indifferently. "If Your Highness is interested, I'm willing to discuss it with you."

Chapter 604 You Have to Stay Away From Prince Rui (3)

Huangfu Hao turned around to look at him. Fu Xiuyi smiled and left with a nod. Huangfu Hao stood rooted to the ground for a while before throwing a glance at Xie Ding, who was surrounded by everyone. He sneered and strode away.

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Because the princess of the State of Qin was the victim, the people of the Judicial office did not dare to take it lightly. However, for some reason, this time, they couldn't find any clues that pointed otherwise. After checking all kinds of scenes, what they concluded was that Princess Ming An actually had an affair with the Xie brothers. However, they naturally could not show this result to Emperor Wen Hui. Otherwise, not to mention Emperor Wen Hui, the crown prince of the State of Qin would be the first to flare up.

The case seemed to have fallen into a deadlock.

In the Shen family's mansion, Shen Qiu entered Shen Miao's study and sat down opposite her.

Shen Miao glanced at Shen Qiu. Seeing that he wanted to say something but hesitated, she asked, "Brother, do you have anything to say to me?"

"Sister." Shen Qiu hesitated for a moment, as if it was extremely difficult for him to speak. Shen Miao felt a little strange and asked him, "Brother, if you have anything to say, just say it."

Shen Qiu thought for a long time before asking, "Sister, were you the one who did it?"

Shen Miao was slightly stunned. She did not expect Shen Qiu to suspect her. However, she quickly smiled and said, "Brother, why do you say that? Do you think me alone can deal with Princess Ming An and the Xie brothers? You think too highly of me."

Shen Qiu looked at Shen Miao with a complicated gaze. A moment later, he sighed and said, "Sister, in the past, Father, Mother, and I couldn't protect you. All these years, we've let you live with those villains in the Shen mansion. I didn't understand what you experienced at first, but later, I understood. I know you know how to protect yourself and that you have some tricks up your sleeve, but... we're your family." He said seriously, "There are some things that you don't have to do on your own. Father, Mother, and I will do our best to protect you."

Shen Miao lowered her eyes and put away the thousands of emotions in her heart. She smiled and said, "Brother, you're right. We're family, but I didn't do anything to Princess Ming An. I don't have the ability or the guts to do so. Besides," she asked, "what does the Xie brothers have to do with me?"

Shen Qiu sighed and said, "You're still unwilling to tell me the truth."

Shen Miao did not say anything. In fact, Shen Miao had been revealing her information to Shen Qiu bit by bit. One day, if she really reached a point where she had to resort to her family, at least Shen Qiu would be able to understand why she did these things sooner. However, not everything in this world could be done overnight. She could not bring everything in the open now.

"Forget it. I just want to tell you that since I can guess that you're related to this matter, Father and Mother might be able to guess it too." Shen Qiu stared at Shen Miao with a serious expression. "You have to know that Princess Ming An doesn't have any grudges with anyone in Ming Qi other than you. If

we can figure this out, the crown prince of the State of Qin also can. No matter if you're really related to this matter or not, you are the first suspect. Sister, you're in a very dangerous situation now."

Shen Miao said, "But I have nothing to do with this matter. Even if they investigate, they won't be able to find out anything, right?" In fact, how could Shen Miao not have thought of what Shen Qiu said? Although Xie Jingxing could wipe out all the evidence, he couldn't stop Huangfu Hao from taking revenge.

Chapter 605 You Have to Stay Away From Prince Rui (4)

"Are you really that confident?" Shen Qiu asked.

Shen Miao said, "Don't worry, Brother. This really has nothing to do with me."

Only then did Shen Qiu heave a sigh of relief and say, "Don't go out for the next few days. The capital is not peaceful, and there are some people with ulterior motives. I've added more guards to patrol the mansion. I think it's safe."

Shen Miao nodded. Shen Qiu stood up. He still had military affairs to attend to and had to rush back. Just as he was about to leave, he suddenly thought of something and turned to look at Shen Miao, asking, "Sister, do you know anyone powerful?"

Shen Miao's heart skipped a beat, but her expression was calm. She shook her head and said, "No."

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Shen Qiu did not say anything else and turned to leave.

In fact, Shen Qiu's worry was right. That night, a special guest dropped in on Prince Ding. This distinguished guest was none other than the crown prince of the State of Qin, Huangfu Hao, who had been extremely angry because of his sister's tragic death.

In the throne room, Fu Xiuyi's casual words made the paranoid Huangfu Hao decide to make this trip. Before Huangfu Hao came, Fu Xiuyi asked Pei Lang to hide in the next room and listen to their conversation.

Huangfu Hao placed the teacup in his hand down heavily. He did not beat about the bush with Fu Xiuyi and went straight to the point. "Prince Ding, you said that you feel that there's something strange about my sister's death. Can you elaborate?"

"Crown Prince, don't be anxious." Fu Xiuyi smiled faintly. "I'm also deeply saddened by Princess Ming An's tragic death. However, the most urgent thing is not to catch the murderer."

Huangfu Hao frowned and looked at Fu Xiuyi with a cold smile. "Could it be that Prince Ding also thinks that I should let this matter rest? I don't know how people in Ming Qi do things, but in the State of Qin, the death of a princess is the top priority that needs to be attended to. Even if I let the matter rest today, when my father finds out about this in the future, he will be much harder to deal with than me. We came just to attend the tribute banquet, but Ming An died in humiliation. Do you think that's a small matter?"

His words were filled with threat.

Fu Xiuyi shook his head and said, "I won't beat around the bush with you. Generally speaking, there will always be a reason for a murder to happen. It seems that the Xie brothers and Princess Ming An were killed at the same time, and the corpses were deliberately arranged in an insulting way. The murderer clearly wants to ruin Princess Ming An's reputation. In other words, the murderer is targeting Princess Ming An."

Huangfu Hao sneered. "Of course I know. I wonder who is so bold as to do such a thing."

"Your Highness, think about it. Who in Ming Qi would have such a grudge with Princess Ming An?"

Huangfu Hao was stunned for a moment, then he frowned and fell into deep thought. Princess Ming An was arrogant and usually beat and scolded her servants. However, because her father told her not to kick up a fuss to anger Emperor Wen Hui, Princess Ming An had restrained her temper. Therefore, although Princess Ming An was impudent, she did not offend anyone in Ming Qi.

Unless... Huangfu Hao suddenly thought of something and his eyes lit up. Then, he asked in a low voice, "You mean Shen Miao?"

Fu Xiuyi smiled but did not say anything.

"That's impossible!" Huangfu Hao said, "Even if she has a grudge against Ming An and Ming An teased her, Shen Miao is just a woman. Ming An even has guards by her side. How can Shen Miao deal with the guards?"

Fu Xiuyi smiled and shook his head. "Shen Miao can't, but don't forget that she's Shen Xin's daughter. How much does Shen Xin love his daughter? I think you've seen it with your own eyes at the banquet."

Chapter 606 You Have to Stay Away From Prince Rui (5)

Huangfu Hao recalled that on the day of the tribute banquet, when Princess Ming An and Shen Miao were confronting, Shen Xin, as her father, had been on Shen Miao's side from the beginning to the end, even ignoring Emperor Wen Hui's stern reproach. If Shen Xin wanted to avenge his daughter, it was not impossible for him to get his subordinates to do it.

"Then what about the illegitimate sons of the Xie family?" Huangfu Hao said in a low voice, "Even if Shen Xin wants to avenge Shen Miao, he won't take two lives of the Xie family for no reason. Xie Ding is still an official in Ming Qi. Shen Xin won't put himself in such a risk."

Fu Xiuyi sighed and said, "Crown Prince, don't you understand? Back then, I asked the Xie brothers to be Princess Ming An's guides. You are Princess Ming An's sibling, so I think you know her temper well. Shen Miao and Princess Ming An have been at odds for a long time. It's not surprising that Princess Ming An wants to deal with Shen Miao. However, she is from the State of Qin after all, and Shen Miao is an official's daughter. It's not convenient for her to make a move. The Xie brothers came in handy and were tools she could use."

Huangfu Hao was stunned and said angrily, "Are you saying..."

"Crown Prince, don't be angry. I originally wanted to nurture the Xie brothers so that I could use them in the future, but these two are disappointing. You should understand what happened after that.

Something probably happened to the Xie brothers when they were trying to harm Shen Miao, so the two of them died in the end.”

Although Huangfu Hao still did not look convinced, he already started connecting the dots. First, Shen Miao was kidnapped for no reason. At that time, Huangfu Hao even suspected that it was done by Princess Ming An. Later, when he was told that Princess Ming An never left the mansion and did not know anyone in Ming Qi, he did not think too much about it. Later, Shen Miao was suddenly sent back to the Shen mansion by Princess Rong Xin. Then, something happened to Princess Ming An and the Xie brothers.

Fu Xiuyi was right. Princess Ming An was a very vengeful person. After being humiliated by Shen Miao, she indeed wasn't the kind of person who could take it lying down. During those days, the Xie brothers often visited her and they were indeed the pawns she could use. However, was Shen Miao really that capable? Huangfu Hao felt that something didn't feel right. Even if Shen Xin loved his daughter and had the ability to avenge her daughter, it was not a wise move to openly go against a princess. Especially since Shen Xin had just returned to the capital... Even if he did not think for himself, he had to think for the others in the Shen family. Was Shen Xin so stupid as to risk the many lives of his family for his daughter's dignity?

Huangfu Hao felt that what Fu Xiuyi said made sense, but he still had doubts. Seeing that Huangfu Hao was hot and bothered, Fu Xiuyi did not say anything else. After Huangfu Hao left, Pei Lang walked out.

“Your Highness,” Pei Lang asked, “Why did you lead him to suspect the Shen family?”

Fu Xiuyi glanced at Pei Lang and shook his head. “Sir, I don't know what you think, but I vaguely felt that Shen Miao is related to Prince Rui.”

Pei Lang's heart skipped a beat, but he maintained a calm expression and said, “Your Highness, are you still thinking about what happened at the crown prince's banquet. Prince Rui is from the Daliang Dynasty, and Shen Miao was away from the capital for two years. It's impossible for the two of them to know each other. It's too far-fetched to say that they get to know each other in a matter of just a few weeks.”

“I know you think this is unbelievable.” Fu Xiuyi said, “But I have a feeling that there's something fishy going on between Shen Miao and Prince Rui. Many coincidences have happened in a row these days. If Shen Miao and Prince Rui only got to know each other in a few weeks, that would be interesting. Prince Rui is proud and arrogant. Even my father can't get close to him. I wonder what Shen Miao did to win him over.”

Chapter 607 You Have to Stay Away From Prince Rui (6)

Fu Xiuyi smiled and looked at Pei Lang. “Sir, you think Shen Miao can't do this alone, and Shen Xin is not an impulsive person and will not kill people rashly, right?”

Pei Lang was enlightened. “So you think...”

“That's right.” Fu Xiuyi said, “I suspect that Prince Rui is behind this.”

Pei Lang stopped talking. Seeing that Pei Lang was silent, Fu Xiuyi took the initiative to mention it. He said, “Prince Rui is arrogant and the Daliang Dynasty has many talents. I think with Prince Rui's ability,

killing a princess is just a piece of cake. However, as you and I both know, Prince Rui has no grudge against Princess Ming An and the Xie family. He won't cause trouble for himself for no reason. However, if it's because of Shen Miao, everything makes sense." He smiled faintly. "It's not rare for men to take great risks just to win the heart of a beauty, but I don't think Prince Rui is one of them. There must be a special relationship between him and Shen Miao."

"So you wanted to get Huangfu Hao to make a move to pull the mastermind out from behind the scene?" Pei Lang asked.

"That's right." Fu Xiuyi smiled and said, "Huangfu Hao is paranoid by nature. Even if he doesn't believe me, he will still be suspicious. One day, he will try to test the waters and target the Shen family. If Prince Rui is really related to Shen Miao, he will step in to help. At that time, we will know their real relationship."

Pei Lang asked, "Then what if Prince Rui doesn't make a move?"

"It's fine if he doesn't." Fu Xiuyi said, "Letting Huangfu Hao deal with the Shen family is also a good thing for us."

"Your Highness, are you determined to get rid of the Shen family?" Pei Lang looked at him.

"If I can't use them, I won't keep them either." Fu Xiuyi smiled gently, but his tone was very cold. He turned to look at Pei Lang and said, "I'll need your advice in the future."

Pei Lang nodded.

After Fu Xiuyi left, Pei Lang returned to his room. He looked at the candle in front of him and couldn't help but sigh.

Two years ago, Shen Miao asked him to be a spy working for Fu Xiuyi. He had ability and real knowledge and was lucky enough to be valued by Fu Xiuyi. Now, Fu Xiuyi regarded Pei Lang as his trusted aide and didn't hide anything from him.

Perhaps Fu Xiuyi was really not guarded against Pei Lang. Of course, perhaps Fu Xiuyi was just testing him. If Pei Lang was not Shen Miao's spy, he thought he would dedicate his life to help Fu Xiuyi achieve what he wanted.

The more Pei Lang interacted with Fu Xiuyi, the more surprised he was. Fu Xiuyi was indeed a man of vision and wisdom. He had the means of an emperor. Pei Lang even felt that in a few years or more, the world would eventually fall into Fu Xiuyi's hands, and Fu Xiuyi would eventually ascend the throne.

However, of all the people, Shen Miao chose to go against Fu Xiuyi. It wasn't that Pei Lang had never thought of changing sides, but Shen Miao had a firm grip on his Achilles' heel, which was Liu Ying. Therefore, he could only put up with it. He glanced out of the window. Fu Xiuyi treated him extremely well. He was provided a spacious room and there were no spies planted by Fu Xiuyi around him. Pei Lang took a piece of paper from the table, picked up a pen, and started writing.

The night was as dark as ink. In Prince Rui's mansion, Xie Jingxing was playing with the white tiger under his feet. The white tiger had been eating a lot recently. After being fed by Ji Yushu five times a day, its body began to expand rapidly, like a ball of fur. It was not as agile as before and looked a little stupid.

A man who looked like a guard walked in from outside. He was much younger than Tie Yi. He took out a letter and handed it to Xie Jingxing. "This is a letter from Prince Ding's aide, Pei Lang. It's to be sent to Fifth Miss Shen of the Shen family."

Xie Jingxing raised his eyebrows and took the letter. He quickly glanced at it. When his eyes landed on the last line, he suddenly smiled. In the night, his face was as handsome as a painting, and his purple and gold robe was flowing with light. His smile was casual and faint, but Nan Qi shivered slightly. He was sensitive enough to sense that his master was in a bad mood again.

The last line said, "You have to stay away from Prince Rui."

Chapter 608 Forced Marriage (1)

The matter of Princess Ming An in the capital caused a huge sensation among the people. After a long time, the people of the Judicial office could not find anything. Emperor Wen Hui flared up every few days and punished a few officials, but apparently, it was about to become an unsolved case. The Crown Prince of the State of Qin, Huangfu Hao, was naturally displeased, but the people he sent out did not find anything either. After a while, with the passage of time, people's enthusiasm for this matter faded. After all, everyone had to eat and live.

In the cold winter in the capital, something big happened in the old Shen mansion.

Shen Yue was engaged and was about to get married.

The family Shen Yue would marry was the Wang family, which Shen Wan and Chen Ruoqiu found to be quite suitable. The Wang family only had two sons. The youngest son was less than ten years old now, and the eldest son was Wang Bi, the person who was engaged to Shen Yue. Wang Bi was 24 years old this year and had already become an official. He was knowledgeable and was a person with a bright future.

In Chen Ruoqiu's opinion, she thought that this marriage was well-matched. Wang Bi was the eldest son of the Wang family, and Shen Yue was very educated. If she could win his heart and give birth to a few children, her position in the Wang family would be stable.

Chen Ruoqiu agreed to the marriage without Shen Yue's knowing. When Shen Yue found out about this, she naturally caused a scene. However, this time, Chen Ruoqiu didn't back down and was bent on marrying her off, and Shen Wan, who had always doted on Shen Yue, did not soften his heart either. Old Madam Shen was even more happy to see this happen because more people in the mansion meant more expenses every day.

Shen Yue went overboard kicking up a fuss. Even though Shen Wan usually did not punish his daughter, this time, he felt that Shen Yue had gone too far. In a fit of anger, he locked Shen Yue up in the ancestral hall and asked her to reflect on herself.

That night, Shen Yue sat alone in the ancestral hall and cried silently.

There were traces of a fire in the ancestral hall. The last time, Shen Miao was locked up in this ancestral hall, and Ren Wanyun tried to force a marriage upon Shen Miao. Unexpectedly, a fire broke out for some reason, and Shen Xin happened to return from the border, so Shen Miao got away with it. Shen Yue looked at the tightly shut door of the ancestral hall. It seemed that from that moment on,

everything went smoothly for Shen Miao. Because Shen Xin, Ruo Xueyan, and Shen Qiu backed her up, Shen Miao was not afraid of anything. Shen Yue believed that if Shen Miao wanted to marry Fu Xiuyi one day, Shen Xin and his wife would definitely not stop her like Chen Ruoqiu and Shen Wan.

Shen Miao used to like Fu Xiuyi in the past. Would her old love rekindle? Now that Shen Xin was back and held a lot of power, would Fu Xiuyi reject Shen Miao? Moreover, Shen Miao was no longer the idiot that the entire capital made fun of two years ago.

At the thought that Shen Miao might be with Fu Xiuyi, Shen Yue felt especially uncomfortable. She wondered why the fire in the ancestral hall did not burn Shen Miao to death.

Just as she was thinking, she heard the sound of the doorknob moving outside. Shen Yue thought that Chen Ruoqiu had sent someone to deliver food to her and shouted angrily, "I don't want anything. Get lost."

The sound didn't stop. Shen Yue shouted angrily, "I told you to get lost!"

Chapter 609 Forced Marriage (2)

The door creaked open, and a head popped in. It was Shen Dongling.

The moment she saw Shen Dongling, Shen Yue was stunned. Shen Dongling looked outside and suddenly closed the door. She walked up to Shen Yue and thought for a moment before sitting down. She handed the basket in her hand to Shen Yue and said softly, "The old woman guarding the door outside is not around. I sneaked in. I know you haven't eaten for a day. I was afraid that you would be hungry, so I brought you something to eat. Second Sister, you have to keep your voice down."

Shen Yue saw Shen Dongling opening the bamboo basket and taking out stacks of snacks.

Shen Yue usually treated Shen Dongling insincerely, but at this moment, she was a little touched. She had not eaten for a day, but Chen Ruoqiu and Shen Wan did not care about it. She immediately softened her expression towards Shen Dongling. However, she had no appetite to eat those snacks no matter what.

She said, "Don't bother. I really can't eat."

Shen Dongling looked at her. "Second Sister, why don't you want to marry Young Master Wang? Young Master Wang is a good person. I heard that his family is rich. If Second Sister goes over, you will be the madam of the family. Is it because you don't want to leave the Shen family?"

Shen Yue glanced at Shen Dongling. Probably due to the fact that she didn't go out much, although Shen Dongling was about the same age as Shen Yue, she still looked innocent and naive like a child. Shen Yue was both jealous and disdainful. She looked down on Shen Dongling for being ignorant of the world outside, but at the same time, she was also jealous of her because Shen Dongling had a simple mind and life. Suddenly, Shen Yue had the urge to get it out of her chest. She forced a smile and said, "Whether he's a good person or not has nothing to do with me."

Shen Dongling widened her eyes and asked tentatively, "Second Sister, do you already have someone you like?"

“So what if I have?” Shen Yue snorted. “I was born in the Shen family and don’t even have the right to choose my future husband. My father only cares about his official career. Sometimes, I feel that I might as well die.”

Shen Dongling was shocked and quickly waved her hand. “Second Sister, don’t think that way. You have to know that in this world, dying is the easiest thing to do, but if you die, you will lose everything. Second Sister, why don’t you think differently? You have to know that the Wang family is not a bad family. Third Uncle and Third Aunt will never harm you. Perhaps that Young Master Wang is also adored by many girls. Perhaps many girls are envious of you. Take me as an example. If I can marry into the Wang family, my mother will probably go to the temple every day to thank Buddha for giving me such a good marriage.”

Shen Yue shook her head with a forced smile, feeling more and more that Shen Dongling was stupid. She could never be on the same page with Shen Dongling because Shen Dongling was, after all, an illegitimate daughter and was unpresentable. Naturally for her, marrying the son of Minister Counsellor was good enough.

Seeing that Shen Yue was still unhappy, Shen Dongling thought for a moment and said, “There will definitely be a way out when the time comes. Second Sister, why do you have to be sad and troubled over this now? It’s not worth it. Take Fifth Sister for example. Back then, after a marriage was forced upon her, she kicked up a scene and managed to escape the marriage.”

As Shen Dongling spoke, Shen Yue’s heart skipped a beat.

Back then, Shen Miao was about to get married, but she escaped because Shen Xin and his wife returned to the capital in time to stop it. At that time, Shen Yue had also eavesdropped on Chen Ruoqiu talking to the servants at the door and knew that Ren Wanyun was planning to swap Shen Qing and Shen Miao’s marriages.

Chapter 610 Forced Marriage (3)

Since Shen Qing and Shen Miao’s marriages could be swapped, why couldn’t hers?

Shen Yue became excited, and a thought gradually appeared in her mind. She turned to look at Shen Dongling.

As for who to swap with... there was a perfect candidate in front of her.

Shen Dongling was the daughter of a concubine. She was satisfied with that Young Master Wang, and she was weak and gullible... No one was more suitable than Shen Dongling.

Shen Yue looked at Shen Dongling and suddenly grabbed her hand. She said softly, “Third Sister, how do you think I’ve been treating you?”

Shen Dongling was stunned for a moment before lowering her head and saying with a blush, “Second Sister doesn’t mind my background and treats me very well. Among the sisters of the Shen family, only Second Sister is willing to talk to me.” Shen Yue had always pretended to be kind and generous. Even though she looked down on Shen Dongling, she did not show it on her face. Instead, she looked like she treated Shen Dongling well. Especially recently, Shen Yue had been going to see Shen Dongling and

talking to her every few days. From the looks of it, the relationship between the two of them was indeed not bad.

Hearing this, Shen Yue smiled and said, "Third Sister, now that I'm in trouble, are you willing to help me?"

Shen Dongling smiled innocently and said, "No problem. As long as I can do it, I will definitely help."

Shen Yue smiled and said, "I'm relieved to hear that." She held Shen Dongling's hand even tighter. "Can you... help me marry Wang Bi?"

Hearing this, Shen Dongling was stunned. After being stunned for a moment, she wanted to retract her hand from Shen Yue's hand and said in a panic, "That won't do. Second Sister, I can help you with anything... but I can't help you with this matter."

"You can do it!" Shen Yue did not let go of her hand. In a hurry, she said, "Don't you also think Young Master Wang is very good? Didn't you say that if you can marry him, your mother will be happy? Third Sister, I beg you!"

"That's true." Shen Dongling retreated. "But this is too risky. Once I'm discovered, I'll be beaten to death. Second Sister, you'll also be punished. This is too risky! Moreover, Second Sister, you don't have to take such a huge risk. Why can't you marry Young Master Wang?"

Shen Yue looked at Shen Dongling, and two streams of tears immediately flowed down her face. She was born with a delicate appearance, so when she cried, it made people unable to help but pity her. Shen Yue's voice was also filled with despair as she said, "For you, this is a good marriage, but for me, it's no different from hell. I already have someone I like and I'm determined to marry him. If I can't marry him, I might as well die. Third Sister, for the sake of us being sisters, help me! If you don't agree, I'll definitely end my life on the day of my marriage." Shen Yue looked at Shen Dongling for a while before suddenly standing up and kneeling down in front of her. She said, "For the sake of the fact that I'm the only one treating you kindly in the entire Shen family, I beg you to save my life!"

The moment Shen Dongling saw Shen Yue kneel down, she was stunned. Hearing Shen Yue's words, she panicked and did not know what to do. She pulled Shen Yue up and said, "Second Sister, don't be like this. Don't scare me!"

Shen Yue held Shen Dongling's hand. "Third Sister, I'm begging you this time and this time only. You don't want me to be a skeleton, do you?"

Shen Dongling bit her lip and looked at Shen Yue. Shen Yue's hair was disheveled and her eyes were blurry, clearly forced to a dead end. Helpless, she could only nod reluctantly and say, "I will help you. Second Sister, get up first."