

Venomous 701

Chapter 701 Phoenix Life (4)

Gao Yang really couldn't stand Ji Yushu's nonsense and said, "The Shen family has already started to find a husband for Fifth Miss Shen. We don't have much time in Ming Qi. If you want to do it, do it as soon as possible."

As soon as he said that, Xie Jingxing's expression turned cold.

Ji Yushu did not notice it. Instead, an idea struck him as he said, "I have an idea!"

The few of them looked at him at the same time. Ji Yushu continued, "Third Brother, you are already a dead man in their eyes. Why don't you pretend to be a ghost at night and visit Su Mingfeng in his bedroom? Just tell him that Miss Shen is someone you like and you are going to marry her. Su Mingfeng will be frightened and won't dare to have any designs on Fifth Miss Shen... Hey, Third Brother, don't go. Let me finish!"

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Gao Yang shook his head and muttered, "Idiot."

Xie Jingxing returned to the study and sat down at the table. He frowned and was thinking about something. Tie Yi asked hesitantly, "Master, at the Putuo Temple today, what Master Guan Zhen said..."

Master Guan Zhen was a wandering monk. Some people said that he was from the Daliang Dynasty, some said that he was from the State of Qin, and some said that he was from Ming Qi. However, one thing was certain. Whenever Master Guan Zhen came to the temple, everyone treated him as an honored guest. Master Guan Zhen was a disciple of the Buddha. It was said that he could see people's past and future. This was naturally exaggerated, but Master Guan Zhen's prediction was extremely accurate. He had once predicted a flood in the Daliang Dynasty.

Emperor Yong Le had once asked him to stay as the state preceptor, but unfortunately, he was rejected by Master Guan Zhen. Two years ago, when Xie Jingxing returned to the Daliang Dynasty, Emperor Yong Le wanted to find Master Guan Zhen to read Xie Jingxing's face. Unfortunately, at that time, Master Guan Zhen had already left the Daliang Dynasty, and no one knew his whereabouts.

They did not expect that Master Guan Zhen would appear in Ming Qi.

When they arrived at the Putuo Temple in the day, before Xie Jingxing needed to introduce himself, Master Guan Zhen had already figured out his identity.

What Master Guan Zhen told Xie Jingxing was that he was a very important person, someone who could affect the overall situation. He was the dragon, the head of all things. Unfortunately, it was a ferocious dragon, fierce and cruel.

Xie Jingxing asked what tribulations he would encounter.

Master Guan Zhen shook his head and said that the ferocious dragon would encounter no tribulations as it was the one that created tribulations for others. However, He was destined to help someone overcome the tribulation.

When Xie Jingxing asked again, Master Guan Zhen said that the heavenly secrets could not be revealed and refused to say anything.

Tie Yi was a little discouraged. It was not easy to meet Master Guan Zhen, but he refused to say anything explicit. Prince Rui was someone who had always been indifferent to the sufferings of others. Helping someone overcome the tribulation? Who had the fortune to receive his help?

Xie Jingxing said, "Don't worry about that. Send this letter back to Daliang first."

His expression was a little stern.

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Shen Miao couldn't sleep in bed.

What Cong Yang said in the afternoon still lingered in her ears. She did not expect Mrs. Su to come to the Shen family to talk about marriage.

Chapter 702 Phoenix Life (5)

Why did Mrs. Su come to talk about marriage for her son? From what Cong Yang said, Su Mingfeng was deeply in love with Shen Miao. Shen Miao would never believe this. Not to mention that Su Mingfeng had only met her a few times, moreover, on the street that day, the way Su Mingfeng looked at her was by no means affectionate.

Could this be Su Mingfeng's scheme? Shen Miao thought that because Su Mingfeng wanted to find out the secret of the Tiger Head Bracelet, he decided to marry her. Or did he think that after she became his wife, she would tell him everything? Would Su Mingfeng really sacrifice his entire life just to find out the truth?

Gu Yu walked in with a stack of clothes in her hand. She smiled and said, "Miss, we're going to the Putuo Temple tomorrow. Madam said you should wear plain colors, so I brought some. Miss, wake up early tomorrow morning to pick one you like." As she spoke, she blew out the candle for Shen Miao and said, "Miss, you have to rest early today. I'm afraid the journey tomorrow will be long and tiring."

At night, Luo Xueyan came over and told Luo Tan and Shen Miao that she would bring the two of them to the Putuo Temple to offer incense tomorrow. Luo Tan had never been to the Putuo Temple, so she was naturally very happy, but Shen Miao was not enthusiastic.

Putuo Temple was a famous temple in the capital. It was located halfway up the mountain in the north of the city. It was said that the tree called "Fate Tree" was very effective. Young woman could exchange copper coins for some red strings from the monk in the temple and tie the red strings to a pouch before throwing it on the tree. If the pouch hung on the tree branch, it meant that the goddess of love had heard the woman's prayer and would bring her a good marriage.

Shen Miao had been to that "fate tree" in her previous life. In order to show that she was fated to marry Fu Xiuyi, she bought hundreds of red strings and tied them to pouches before throwing them up. Later, Shen Qing and Shen Yue "accidentally" revealed this matter, causing Shen Miao to be made fun of.

Therefore, Shen Miao did not like this tree very much.

If Shen Miao hadn't heard the conversation between Mrs. Su and Luo Xueyan from Cong Yang today, she would've thought that Luo Xueyan wanted to go to the temple to make some good wishes as it was almost the end of the year. However, after knowing what they said in the main hall, Shen Miao realized that Luo Xueyan brought her along because she wanted to make her throw a red string at the tree.

Shen Miao was extremely unwilling and even wondered if she should pretend to be sick. However, falling sick at this moment seemed too deliberate. Moreover, Luo Tan was in high spirits, and Shen Miao didn't want to ruin her fun. She thought that it wouldn't hurt to throw something on the tree, so she agreed.

However, she still felt a little uncomfortable.

That night, Shen Miao did not sleep well. She had a few dreams. In her dreams, she was the one standing under the tree and throwing red strings. Luo Xueyan bought her an entire bucket of red strings. Shen Miao's arms were sore from throwing, but the red strings that she had marked were all gone. There was nothing on the ground or on the tree. Just as she was puzzled, she saw a purple-robed young man sitting on the tree with a large handful of red strings in his hand. He smiled at her with a faint smile and asked, "Who do you want to marry?"

He had sharp eyebrows, a straight nose, and rosy lips. His eyes were as sharp as blades. It was Xie Jingxing's face.

Shen Miao suddenly woke up from her dream and couldn't fall asleep again.

When Jingzhe came in, she was shocked and asked, "Miss, did you not sleep well last night? You have dark circles under your eyes."

Chapter 703 Phoenix Life (6)

Shen Miao waved her hand. She felt that this dream was strange and embarrassing, so she didn't say anything. After eating and washing up, she went out. Luo Xueyan and the others were waiting in the hall. To Shen Miao's surprise, other than Luo Tan, Shen Qiu and Luo Ling were also there.

Luo Xueyan said, "Let's go together and pray for a safe and healthy year ahead."

Shen Xin said, "Then I'll go too."

"Why are you going with us?" Luo Xueyan gave him a look. "Stay at home."

Shen Qiu was puzzled as to why his father couldn't go, but Shen Miao understood why. It seemed like Luo Xueyan not only wanted her and Luo Tan to throw the red string, but also Shen Qiu and Luo Ling. After all, Shen Qiu and Luo Ling were already at the age where they could marry. However... wasn't the fate tree only for women? If the red strings they threw really hung on the tree, would Shen Qiu and Luo Ling marry a man in the future? Shen Miao couldn't help but shiver.

Soon, everyone set off. The Putuo Temple was some distance away from the capital. They set off in the morning, and when they arrived, it was almost noon. Along the way, Luo Tan was in high spirits and kept asking Luo Xueyan if the Putuo Temple was really that magical.

As Luo Xueyan spoke, she indeed led the conversation to the fate tree. When Luo Tan heard of the fate tree, she found it very interesting and said, "This is a little similar to a custom in the Spring City."

However, since Putuo Temple is a famous temple, this fate tree should be very effective.” She shook Shen Miao’s arm. “Cousin, can we go and throw the red strings together?”

“Aren’t you in no hurry to get married?” Shen Miao glanced at her.

Luo Tan coughed lightly. “No, I’m not. It’s just for fun.”

Luo Xueyan also said, “Jiaojiao, Tan, when we reach the Putuo Temple, the two of you can go and throw the red strings together. No matter if you want to get married or not, just take it as making a good wish, right?”

Luo Tan agreed excitedly. Shen Miao already knew her mother’s plan, so she had no choice but to obey.

In the ancient temple that had existed for hundreds of years in Ming Qi, a monk in his seventies was sitting in one of the meditation rooms.

This monk had a kind face and was really like a disciple of Buddha. He was wearing a red kasaya and holding a string of prayer beads in his hand. The young monk beside him asked, “Master, we’ve been waiting here for a few days. Will that person really come?”

“She will come. I came here especially for her,” the old monk said indifferently.

“But we’ve been waiting for a long time.” The young monk was only in his teens and was curious. He asked, “When will she come?”

The old monk did not speak and only silently spun the string of prayer beads in his hand. Suddenly, he stopped spinning the string of prayer beads and stroked a round prayer bead repeatedly with his fingers.

After a while, the old monk smiled.

“In no time,” he said.

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When Shen Miao and the others arrived at the Putuo Temple, it was not noon yet. Perhaps it was because the horses were running fast today, or because the coachman drove the carriage well, or because the road was much smoother, the journey that usually took four and a half hours was completed in less than four hours today.

The women got off the carriage, and Shen Qiu and Luo Ling also got off their horses. They saw an ancient temple sitting halfway up the mountain in the lush forest. Because of the layers of clouds, it looked like a paradise. Coupled with the chanting of scriptures coming from inside, people couldn’t help but feel a sense of awe.

Luo Tan sighed and said, “It really lives up to its name.”

Luo Xueyan instructed, “Qiu, Ling, take your horses to the stable first. I’ll bring Tan and Jiaojiao in.”

After Shen Qiu and Luo Ling left, the guards of the Shen family followed Shen Miao and the others. From afar, Luo Tan saw a tree with red strings hanging on it and said, “This is the fate tree, right? Aunt, come and see. It’s so big!”

Luo Xueyan smiled and said, "Let's go buy the red strings first."

Shen Miao followed behind the two of them, feeling quite helpless. Luo Tan and Luo Xueyan were excited and ran fast, leaving Shen Miao behind. However, with the guards of the Shen family and Cong Yang protecting her in the dark, Shen Miao was not worried.

When she followed Luo Xueyan and the others into a temple hall, someone suddenly grabbed the corner of Shen Miao's dress. She turned around and saw a person in a Daoist robe squatting by the door.

Why would a Daoist priest appear in a temple?

The Daoist priest's clothes were tattered. There was a bamboo tube in front of him and a horsetail whisk in his hand. For some reason, he looked a little comical. He was probably in his forties. He had a small beard and looked at Shen Miao with bright eyes.

"Miss, I see that your glabella is dark. I'm afraid you'll encounter a fatal disaster. Do you want me to read your fortune?"

"Where did this lunatic come from? He's full of nonsense!" Jingzhe was furious.

Shen Miao pulled the corner of her dress out from the Daoist and was about to walk forward.

The person said, "The phoenix has a good life but will be imprisoned forever. What a pity."

Chapter 704 Fortune-telling (1)

Shen Miao suddenly stopped in her tracks and frowned at the Daoist priest. "What did you say?"

The Daoist priest turned his head away smugly and started to hum a tune.

Jingzhe said, "Miss, don't take what he said to heart. Maybe he's just a swindler spouting nonsense."

Shen Miao looked ahead. Luo Xueyan and Luo Tan had already entered, and behind her, a few guards stopped there to wait for her to continue. She thought for a moment and sat down on the small wooden stool in front of the Daoist. "I want fortune-telling."

"My fortune-telling is very expensive."

Before he could finish speaking, Shen Miao took out a golden peanut from her bag. The pouch that Mrs. Su gave her previously was filled with golden peanuts.

Jingzhe and Gu Yu were anxious. Even the most expensive fortune teller on the street only cost a few taels of silver. Why would she take out a golden peanut? However, since Shen Miao had already decided, there was no way to change her mind. The two maids were anxious, but there was nothing they could do.

Shen Miao said, "If your fortune-telling is accurate, this golden peanut will be yours. If it's not, I'll get the government to arrest you in the name of swindling people."

The Daoist priest put the golden peanut into his pocket with a smile and took out a bamboo tube from behind him. He shook it and handed it to Shen Miao with a smile. "Miss, please draw two slips."

“Why two?” Gu Yu couldn’t help but ask, “Isn’t one usually enough? Could it be...” She was enlightened.” One for safety, and one for marriage?”

Ever since Luo Xueyan began to worry about Shen Miao’s marriage, she also reminded Shen Miao’s maids. Jingzhe and Gu Yu both knew that the most important thing for Shen Miao to come to the Putuo temple was to throw red strings on the fate tree. Now that they saw that the Daoist priest wanted Shen Miao to draw two slips, they naturally thought of this.

The Daoist priest shook his head. “For her lot.”

He looked at Shen Miao and stroked his beard. He smiled mysteriously and said, “Miss has a complicated lot and one is enough.”

Shen Miao’s heart skipped a beat. Seeing that the Daoist priest was confident, she took the bamboo tube and shook it. Then two slips fell to the ground.

The Daoist priest picked up the slips and looked at them. Jingzhe and Gu Yu were both a little nervous. The Daoist priest shook his head and said, “A caged phoenix facing a great calamity.” He said, “It’s the worst of ill fortune.”

As soon as he said that, Jingzhe and Gu Yu’s expressions changed. Jingzhe shouted angrily, “You fake Daoist priest full of nonsense. I think you’re a scammer. I’m going to report you to the officials!”

“Hey, hey, hey.” The Daoist priest said, “What’s the hurry? There’s still one slip left.”

Shen Miao’s heart began racing.

The Phoenix cage was the palace where she was trapped in her previous life. She struggled but to no avail. Even Wanyu and Fu Ming did not survive.

Chapter 705 Fortune-telling (2)

Shen Miao said, “Daoist priest, help me look at the other slip.”

Jingzhe and Gu Yu were a little anxious, not understanding why Shen Miao would trust this Daoist priest so much.

The Daoist priest chuckled and picked up the other slip. He glanced at Shen Miao and stroked his beard as usual. Then, he slowly said, “The purple aura comes from the east, an auspicious sign. It’s the best of the slips.”

Jingzhe and Gu Yu were originally afraid that the Daoist priest would say something inauspicious again. It was almost the end of the year, and everyone was afraid to hear unlucky things lest bad luck befall them. Seeing him say that, they heaved a sigh of relief. However, Jingzhe mocked him relentlessly, “I knew he was a liar. One slip bad luck and the other slip good luck. Then which is true?”

“Both are true,” the Daoist priest said. “If you don’t believe me, ask your miss if I’m lying.”

Shen Miao’s heart skipped a beat and she said, “Jingzhe, Gu Yu, go over there. I have something to say to the Daoist priest in private.”

Jingzhe wanted to say something. She felt that this Daoist priest was a charlatan. However, Gu Yu pulled her to the side, making room for Shen Miao and the Daoist priest to talk uninterrupted.

Shen Miao frowned at the Daoist priest. "Daoist priest, do you know something?"

As the Daoist priest put the slips into the bamboo tube, he said without looking up, "From reading your face, I can tell you are someone with a noble status. You should have a glorious life. Unfortunately... your fate was changed."

Shen Miao said, "What do you mean by my fate being changed?" Her voice betrayed anxiety.

The Daoist priest stopped what he was doing and looked at her. "Your fate is very strange. There will be a great tribulation in your life. After this tribulation, your life will be smooth-sailing. However, the first slip you drew says that you can't overcome the tribulation."

"What's my tribulation?" Shen Miao asked.

"A real phoenix and a fake phoenix. The fake phoenix stole the luck and fortune of the real phoenix, and the real phoenix was caged."

Shen Miao felt that her heart was about to jump out of her throat. Could it be that she was the real phoenix? As for the fake phoenix, could it be Consort Mei? Consort Mei gave birth to Fu Sheng, and Fu Xiuyi liked Fu Sheng dearly. In her previous life, Fu Ming died, and so did she. Fu Xiuyi must have made Consort Mei the empress. With Fu Xiuyi's favoritism towards Fu Sheng, he might pass the throne to Fu Sheng.

Didn't this mean that her fate had been snatched away?

Shen Miao said, "Daoist priest, you're talking about the first slip. Then, in the second slip, did I overcome the tribulation?"

"You alone can't." The Daoist priest shook his head and said, "But you are lucky to have the help of a benefactor in your life."

"Benefactor?" Shen Miao asked, "Who is my benefactor?"

"This benefactor is fated with you. He's the ferocious dragon, and you are the caged phoenix. He can free you. If you meet this person and rely on him, you can rectify your fate."

Shen Miao asked, "Where is this benefactor? How can I find him?"

The Daoist priest smiled. "He's around you."

Shen Miao knew that the Daoist priest didn't intend to be explicit about it. She asked, "There's another question. Normally, people can only draw one slip, but why do I have two? Is this also fate?"

Ever since her rebirth, every time she thought about living her life all over again, she felt that it was unreal. She was afraid that one day, when she woke up, she would still be in the lonely cold palace. All of this was just a dream. Since what this strange Daoist priest said was accurate, he might know something.

"The two slips you drew are asked for by someone."

Chapter 706 Fortune-telling (3)

"Someone asked it for me?" Shen Miao said in confusion, "Who is that person?"

"Someone who owes you a lot." The Daoist priest stood up from the ground and patted the dust off his clothes. "The secrets of the heavens can't be revealed. Miss, I've already revealed too much to you today. If I say anything else, I'll be punished. Don't ask anything else. Remember, the past is like a dream. Don't be entangled in it."

With that, he waved his horsetail whisk and strode away.

Shen Miao stood rooted to the ground in a daze until Jingzhe and Gu Yu walked to her side. Jingzhe said, "It's strange. I wonder where he came from. Does no one in Putuo Temple care about the presence of a Daoist priest?"

Shen Miao felt that she had seen through some secrets.

Just as she was thinking, Luo Xueyan and Luo Tan walked out.

Luo Tan was holding a small basket filled with pouches with red strings attached to them. She smiled and said, "Little cousin, let's go and throw the red strings. Why weren't you following us?"

Luo Xueyan also said, "I heard that a venerable master is giving a lecture on sutras in the meditation room just now, so I wanted to call you over to listen. When I turned around, I didn't see you. Do you still want to go in and listen now?"

Shen Miao's mind was still in a mess. She was in no mood to listen to the sutras, so she shook her head and said, "No, I'm not going."

"Then let's go hang the red strings first." Luo Tan was very excited. She grabbed Shen Miao's arm.

In the meditation room that Luo Xueyan passed by, the old monk stopped knocking on the wooden fish. The little monk asked, "Master, it's already noon. Didn't you say that she would come in no time? Is she coming or not?"

Master Guan Zhen stood up from the cushion and shook his head. "She's not coming."

"Not coming?" The little monk was stunned. "Why?"

"She met someone else."

The little monk was puzzled. "She met someone else so she didn't come? Aren't you specially waiting for her here? If she didn't come, wouldn't the wait these days be in vain?"

"It's fine." Master Guan Zhen put his hands together. "She's fated to meet that person."

Shen Miao and Luo Tan went out to the tree.

The fate tree was a huge osmanthus tree that was extremely thick. However, the branches could barely be seen clearly. They were all covered with the pouches hanging from the red strings.

Luo Tan took a handful of red strings and handed it to Shen Miao. She said, "Cousin, write your name on the pouch and throw it on the tree. If it's hung on it, it means that your prayer is heard and a good

marriage will be given to you.” With that, she stuffed another handful of red strings into Shen Miao’s hand and said, “Cousin, take more. The more you take, the higher the chance of hanging it.”

Shen Miao watched in silence as Luo Tang excitedly wrote her name on all the remaining pouches. However, girls probably believed in this. Luo Xueyan also said, “Jiaojiao, write your name too and throw them up. Don’t be afraid.”

Shen Miao looked at the basket of red strings. She couldn’t persuade Luo Tan and Luo Xueyan, so she chose one and wrote her name on the pouch.

Seeing this, Luo Tan said, “Little Cousin, one is not enough. It can not support the pouch. Take a few more.”

Luo Xueyan also said, “Jiaojiao, one is not enough.”

Shen Miao felt that she did not even want to throw any. Moreover, she was still thinking about what the Daoist priest said, so she was not in the mood to do this. She only took one and threw it casually.

Chapter 707 Fortune-telling (4)

“Why did you... Eh, it’s actually hung on it?” Luo Tan shouted in surprise.

Luo Xueyan was also extremely surprised. Generally speaking, the more red strings there were, the higher the chance of the pouch being thrown onto the branch. Without the red string, the pouch wouldn’t be able to hang on the branch no matter what. Unexpectedly, Shen Miao threw it casually and it actually hung on the branch.

“Cousin, you’re too lucky!” Luo Tan grabbed Shen Miao’s arm and said excitedly, “Look, look, that tree branch is almost on the top. It means that the person you’re going to marry must be the best among the men. The pouch is very steady, which means that this marriage is almost guaranteed. It’s a very good sign!”

Everyone liked to hear blessings. Luo Xueyan smiled and said, “Jiaojiao, you did it well. I was afraid you’d miss it.”

“But there are many twigs extending out of that branch.” Luo Tan rubbed her chin and explained seriously, “What does this mean? This means that my little cousin has many men liking her. Aunt, this is a good thing!” Luo Tan said with a smile.

Shen Miao retorted, “Nonsense.”

The day passed especially quickly. Later, Luo Tan also hung her pouch on the tree, and they went to offer incense to the Buddha. They donated some money and ate vegetarian food in the temple before returning. When they returned home, it was already evening. Everyone was tired from the day and went to rest early.

Shen Miao kept thinking about what the Daoist priest said during the day.

Who could her benefactor be? In other words, who prayed for her rebirth?

Before she died in her previous life, almost all of her family members were gone. Shen Miao thought that even after she died, there would probably be no one to collect her corpse. Who would be so close to her to pray for her to live again?

She did not expect such a person to exist.

Shen Miao suddenly thought of something and called out, "Cong Yang."

A man in black suddenly appeared in the room.

Shen Miao held her forehead. She was startled every time Cong Yang appeared out of thin air. She said, "Don't tell Xie Jingxing what the Daoist told me today." She added, "If you tell Xie Jingxing, I'll say that you molested me."

Cong Yang was speechless.

"Remember," Shen Miao threatened.

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Every day, there were countless people in the capital who were worried about trivial matters. The girls were worried about marriage, the young men were worried about careers, and the old were worried about death.

Some people were scheming for small profits, some were betting on wealth, and some were after fame.

In the Ming Qi Royal Family, as Emperor Wen Hui's health deteriorated day by day, the princes became more and more restless. Prince Zhou's faction and Prince Li's faction were eager to make a big move. They thought that their ninth brother was obedient and indifferent to power, but in the end, he turned out to be the most ambitious. At the end of the day, the crown prince became the weakest.

Chapter 708 Fortune-telling (5)

Perhaps because Emperor Wen Hui had been ill for a long time, his complexion had become extremely bad. Usually, when he flared up in the throne room, he had to exert all his strength to appear intimidating. After all, there were many people who were eyeing the throne. If he fell, the imperial court would probably be in chaos.

When the princes were young, he did not see them as a threat. When they were old, he realized that he was raising a group of wolves instead of sons. Now that the young wolves had grown up, they became uncontrollable.

"How's the Crown Prince doing recently?" Emperor Wen Hui asked Eunuch Su.

Eunuch Su quickly replied, "The empress met the crown princess yesterday. The crown princess said that the crown prince's condition has improved, and the imperial physician said that he will recover after recuperating for a while."

Emperor Wen Hui shook his head and said, "The crown prince's health is a problem." As the most rightful successor to the throne, the crown prince was sick. Although he had a group of supporters and could still hold the fort in the early years, as Prince Zhou's faction and Prince Li's faction gradually grew

stronger, the crown prince's power would gradually be chipped away. Emperor Wen Hui felt a headache coming on. Fortunately, although the crown prince was sick, he had a son early. This way, even if Emperor Wen Hui passed away and the crown prince was sick, as long as the crown prince could hold on until his son was old enough to succeed him, he could step down and give the throne to his son.

Imperial Physician Su looked down, deliberately avoiding to look at Emperor Wen Hui. However, he knew pretty much what was going on in the mind of the emperor. The person Emperor Wen Hui thought the most highly of now was probably the crown prince. The reason was that firstly, the crown prince had the right to inherit the throne, and secondly, the crown prince's health was not good, so he was the least of a threat to Emperor Wen Hui, unlike his other sons. Prince Zhou was arrogant and almost looked down on everyone. Prince Li looked kind, but he had many connections with many officials in private. Even Prince Ding, who seemed to be the least interested in power, became a wolf. How could Emperor Wen Hui trust them?

A cold wind blew in from the window, causing the paper on the table to roll up slightly. Seeing this, Imperial Physician Su quickly went to close the window, saying, "It's late. Your Majesty, you'd better sleep early."

At the same time, the crown prince was talking to someone. If anyone saw this, they would definitely be shocked. The person talking to the crown prince was none other than Prince Ding, Fu Xiuyi.

One of them was the rightful heir to the throne in Emperor Wen Hui's eyes, and the other was a wolf in sheep's clothing. At this moment, they were sitting on two sides of the table, talking while drinking plum wine.

The crown prince said, "Ninth Brother, don't take this matter to heart. Father misunderstood you because he believed the slander of a despicable person. When the misunderstanding is resolved, he will naturally treat you like before. Ninth Brother, why give up on yourself?"

Fu Xiuyi shook his head. "Brother, you don't know how sad I am to be wronged and accused of doing something I didn't do. I'm an idle person and don't have interest in fame or fortune. I just want to live a carefree life. In the past, I've never interfered in anything else. However, after the Shen family's incident, Father actually alienated me. This father-son relationship is too fragile."

"Ninth Brother, be careful with your words." The crown prince was shocked and quickly stopped Fu Xiuyi from finishing his sentence. "You're also Father's son. Father won't do anything to you. If you want to blame someone, blame those despicable people who set you up."

What they were talking about was the matter of the Shen family being executed a few days ago. Although Emperor Wen Hui hid it very well, the princes all had spies in the palace, so they knew the real reason why the Shen family was wiped out. It was precisely because of this that the princes looked at Fu Xiuyi differently. Originally, the princes were competing for the throne and fighting each other to the death. They thought that the Ninth Prince was not ambitious and just wanted to be an idle prince, so they did not deliberately target Fu Xiuyi. Unexpectedly, as soon as this matter was exposed, they realized that there was a wolf hiding in the dark. When fighting, the hidden enemy was the scariest. Especially when it came to the battle for the throne, it was a matter of life and death. Prince Ding had been watching the battle in the dark for a long time. Perhaps he wanted to benefit from it.

Chapter 709 Fortune-telling (6)

In the past, everyone was polite to Prince Ding. Now, everyone looked at Fu Xiuyi warily. In a short period of time, Fu Xiuyi had made too many enemies for himself.

After Fu Xiuyi became the common target of his brothers, the first person he looked for was the crown prince.

Whether Fu Xiuyi was sincere or not, the crown prince was a soft-hearted person. He was very kind and was the easiest to deceive.

Just like at this moment, he did not mock or hit Fu Xiuyi when he was down. Instead, he comforted him.

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Fu Xiuyi smiled and said, "Forget it, let's not talk about me. Let's talk about you."

"Me?" The crown prince was a little puzzled. "What about me?"

"Everyone is fighting to the death now. You are clearly the most rightful heir, but you are being overshadowed by them. It's not a good sign." Fu Xiuyi smiled bitterly. "Initially, I didn't want to participate in this competition and deliberately avoided it. I didn't expect to still be dragged into this mess. In that case, I might as well take the initiative to join. I plan to support you."

The crown prince was stunned, as if he did not expect Fu Xiuyi to say that. He smiled bitterly at first, then shook his head and said, "Ninth Brother, I know you said that out of kindness, so thank you. It's just that... you also know my situation. If I'm strong and healthy, I will naturally compete. However, with my health, whether I can live or not is already a problem. As for the throne... I'll leave it to fate." At the end of his sentence, he actually sounded hopeless.

"Brother, don't say that. You're the eldest among us. Logically speaking, you should be the future ruler of Ming Qi. If you give it away, I'm afraid people will laugh at Ming Qi for not following the rules."

"But I really don't have much ability." The crown prince was a little disheartened. "The officials don't want to side with me because they know I don't have long to live. There aren't many of my former followers left. You asked me to compete for the throne, but other than being the crown prince, what else do I have to compete with them?"

When Fu Xiuyi heard this, he poured a glass of wine for himself and the crown prince. He picked it up and took a sip. "So at this time, what you need is a powerful aide."

The crown prince shook his head. "Why would those capable people choose to work for me?"

"Actually, Brother, it's not as hard as you think." Fu Xiuyi said, "It's indeed very difficult to find many capable people. However, as long as you find one capable aide, there's no need to find another. Or rather, as long as you find one, a large group of capable people will swarm over to work for you."

"Ninth Brother, you mean..." The crown prince was suspicious.

"The mighty general, Shen Xin," Fu Xiuyi replied.

The crown prince paused.

“Shen Xin has military power. After leaving the capital for two years, his reputation among the people has not decreased. Even the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty have to show him some respect. With General Shen’s help, people will naturally come to join hands with you.”

After hearing Fu Xiuyi’s words, the crown prince smiled. “Ninth Brother, you are right. But Ninth Brother, you have to know that now that General Shen is powerful and influential, everyone wants to rope him in. Why would he choose me?”

“Because you’re the crown prince.” Fu Xiuyi said calmly, “The other princes will anger Father if they try to rope General Shen in, but you’re different. You’re the rightful heir to the throne and the son Father values the most. If General Shen pledges loyalty to you, Father will only be happy to see it. It’s a disaster for others, but it’s a blessing for you. You can’t let such a huge military power fall into the hands of others.”

The crown prince looked serious, because what Fu Xiuyi said made sense. Emperor Wen Hui was paranoid. For example, if Prince Zhou, Prince Li, or even Prince Ding, got Shen Xin’s support, it would be a disaster for them, because Emperor Wen Hui would look at them more warily. The crown prince was different. Emperor Wen Hui was unhappy with the crown prince being too weak and unable to keep the other princes in check. Moreover, the crown prince was the future ruler of Ming Qi, so Emperor Wen Hui naturally hoped that he would have a strong supporter.

“But why should General Shen choose me?” The crown prince still shook his head, as if he did not agree with Fu Xiuyi. He said, “General Shen doesn’t have to get involved in this mess. He can stay out of it and live very comfortably.”

Fu Xiuyi smiled and said, “General Shen doesn’t have to choose you, but Miss Shen can.”

The crown prince was stunned.

Fu Xiuyi continued casually, “She’s the fifth daughter of the Shen family and the apple of General Shen’s eye. She’s just at the right age to get engaged.”

Chapter 710 Grant a Marriage (1)

“Miss Shen?” The crown prince was stunned at first, then he cried out, “Shen Miao?”

Fu Xiuyi looked at him and smiled without saying anything.

“No.” The crown prince shook his head and said, “Miss Shen is the apple of General Shen’s eye. She’s not engaged yet. I’m afraid he values his daughter’s marriage very much and won’t be willing to see his daughter end up among a bunch of consorts. Besides,” the crown prince glanced at Fu Xiuyi mischievously and smiled, “Everyone in the capital knows that Miss Shen liked you back then. I can’t win her heart.”

Fu Xiuyi smiled and shook his head. “She doesn’t like me. Back then, she was just joking when she was young. Otherwise, look, all these years, she’s been treating me like an outsider.”

The crown prince thought about it carefully. Over the past two years, when Shen Miao saw Fu Xiuyi again, she did not seem to be as passionate towards Fu Xiuyi as before. The princes were also very

puzzled. However, the crown prince still said, "Maybe Miss Shen is angry with you because you treated her badly back then."

"Brother, don't tease me." Fu Xiuyi smiled and said, "Besides, the Shen family is too big a fish for me. I'm willing to find a wife with a less prominent status. Speaking of which," Fu Xiuyi said seriously, "Brother, why do you have to worry about what General Shen and Miss Shen will think? The best way is to leave this matter to Father."

"Father?"

"That's right." Fu Xiuyi saw that the wine glass in front of the crown prince was empty, so he filled it up and said unhurriedly, "Father dotes on you the most. Since Father wants to support you, he will definitely find a powerful aide for you. If you want to marry Miss Shen, Father will definitely be happy to see it happen. As long as he gives the word, the marriage will be settled."

"Ninth Brother, you're thinking too simply." The crown prince shook his head. "You have to know that if Miss Shen doesn't want to marry me, although she has no choice but to marry me because Father said so, she will always hold a grudge against me in the future. General Shen will also be angry with Father. If the marriage doesn't work out and they become my enemies, that will be terrible."

"Brother, why do you think that way?" Fu Xiuyi looked at him in surprise. "What all the women in the world want is a rich and stable future. Although she can't be the first consort after marrying you, her status as the crown prince's secondary consort is not low. In the future, when you ascend the throne, Miss Shen will naturally be promoted to a consort. Brother, you have a gentle personality. As long as you treat Miss Shen well, she will forget about the grudge. For example, when the crown princess married you back then, it was also Father who granted the marriage. Look at what happened now. She likes you wholeheartedly."

When the crown prince heard this, he felt that what Fu Xiuyi said made sense. Back then, the marriage between him and the crown princess was also granted by the emperor. Before that, they had only seen each other a few times. At first, the crown princess was resentful. Now, she was deeply in love with the crown prince and was always thinking for him.

"Women are all like this. As long as you treat her well, she will be loyal to you. Brother, you are the best among all men. All the women will fall for you."

The crown prince was a little embarrassed by Fu Xiuyi's praises. The two brothers had a heart to heart conversation and chatted harmoniously.

However, late at night, right after Fu Xiuyi left the Eastern Palace, the drunkenness on the crown prince's face disappeared, replaced by soberness.

The aide walked out from behind and looked at the crown prince, asking tentatively. "Your Highness, what the ninth prince said just now..."