

## **Venomous 981**

### **Chapter 981 Fate (1)**

Prince Rui's mansion was especially unusual tonight.

The servants coming and going in the courtyard all had solemn expressions, as if the dynasty was on the verge of collapse. Even the wind at night seemed to be especially cold, making people shiver.

Tie Yi walked up to the young man and said in a low voice, "Master, we can't find him."

Xie Jingxing glanced at him. The calmer his expression was, the fiercer the storm brewing in his eyes, as if it was about to engulf Tie Yi in the next moment.

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Tie Yi shuddered. Just as he was about to speak, he saw Gao Yang walk out. Gao Yang still smelled of alcohol. It was obvious that he had been called over from the banquet. Fortunately, he was still sober. He walked straight over and said, "Princess Consort is fine. The stab is not fatal. She's already been bandaged. She probably fainted from shock. She's taken some calming medicine and will wake up tomorrow morning."

Xie Jingxing's tense body relaxed a little, and Tie Yi heaved a sigh of relief. Gao Yang continued, "However, Pei Lang's injury is very serious. The knife wound was too deep, and he bled a lot. I've done everything I can. Whether he can survive or not depends on him."

"It seems like Mr. Pei took the blow for Madam," Tie Yi said carefully.

"That's not a good thing." Gao Yang glanced at Xie Jingxing, who had a cold expression, and said, "If he really dies... With Princess Consort's personality, she will feel guilty for the rest of her life."

Shen Miao hated owing people favors the most. If she owed anyone anything, she would definitely repay them. No one could imagine what would happen to Shen Miao if Pei Lang did not survive.

"Is the city gate sealed?" Xie Jingxing asked.

"It's sealed." Tie Yi said, "Everyone from the Black Feather Army has been mobilized. Madam didn't even have time to call for help. That person must be a trained killer."

Xie Jingxing said, "Capture him alive and beat him to death."

"Then what about the person behind the scene?"

"Investigate!"

After Tie Yi left, Xie Jingxing looked at Gao Yang and said, "Stay here tonight."

Gao Yang said, "I know." He glanced at Xie Jingxing again. "You should rest first."

Not far from Bixiao Restaurant, Princess Consort Rui was attacked. This person was really too bold. Not only that, but he probably did not even care about Prince Rui. The only person in the capital who was so bold was probably the Lu family. However, the Lu family would not target Shen Miao, so this incident became very puzzling.

No matter what, this was a signal. The force hiding in the dark finally couldn't hold back anymore and began to make a move, and the first person they chose to get rid of in Prince Rui's mansion was Shen Miao.

However, Xie Jingxing was not in the mood to think about this. He walked into the room and saw Shen Miao lying on the bed. Her face was pale, and her eyes were closed. Her eyelashes were lowered, making her look very weak.

He sighed and sat down by Shen Miao's bed.

There was also a food basket on the table in the room. Inside was the noodles that Shen Miao instructed the kitchen to specially make for him. However, now, the noodles were probably too sticky to eat.

## Chapter 982 Fate (2)

Xie Jingxing thought for a moment and reached out to open the food basket to take out the bowl.

The noodles in the bowl had already become pasty. When it was just cooked, it must have smelled fragrant. Now that it was cold, it did not taste good.

Xie Jingxing took a pair of chopsticks and started eating.

Ba Jiao and Hui Xiang said that Shen Miao asked Gu Yu to buy many fireworks and food this morning. In a pavilion not far from Bixiao Restaurant, watching fireworks by the lake was the best. She even specially instructed someone to cook noodles at the right time. Obviously, she intended to apologize.

The two of them had a cold war for a while. In the end, Shen Miao backed down first. Ba Jiao said that Shen Miao had not been doing well these days, so Xie Jingxing also planned to reconcile with her. He was a man and had to be more magnanimous. Unexpectedly, before Shen Miao could apologize, she was harmed.

It was hard to describe his feelings at that moment. It was like even though he was in midsummer, he would still shiver with cold.

Fortunately, she was fine.

Xie Jingxing finished the bowl of noodles. He placed the empty bowl on the table and held Shen Miao's hand, full of remorse.

If not for the fact that he wanted to be angry with Shen Miao, Shen Miao would not have wanted to apologize to him. If she did not go to the pavilion, this might not have happened.

Outside, Luo Tan had received the news and was rushing over. When she saw Gao Yang, she asked him, "What happened to my little cousin?"

"She's fine." Gao Yang said, "Pei Lang took a knife for her."

"Mr. Pei?" Luo Tan was stunned. "Then how is Mr. Pei?"

"Not good." Gao Yang shook his head.

"Can't you save him?" Luo Tan asked.

Gao Yang smiled bitterly. "I'm a doctor, not a Bodhisattva. I can't save people from the jaws of death."

Luo Tan said, "I only found out today that my little cousin quarreled with my brother-in-law and said that it's because my little cousin didn't visit him when he was sick. Those madams in Bixiao Restaurant all said that my little cousin is cold and heartless. What do they know? When my little cousin went to find the herb for my brother-in-law from the strange Daoist priest, did any of them see it? How infuriating!"

"A strange Daoist priest?" Gao Yang asked, "What strange Daoist priest? What's going on.?"

Luo Tan was stunned, annoyed that she had said something she shouldn't say. Remembering that Shen Miao had told her not to say it, she said, "It's nothing. I was talking nonsense. I'll go and see my little cousin first." With that, she walked towards the room where Shen Miao was resting.

Gao Yang grabbed her and said, "Don't enter. Xie Jingxing is inside."

"Ah?" Luo Tan lowered her head and suddenly thought of something. "Are you going to stay here tonight?"

"I need to stay here to watch over Pei Lang." Gao Yang said, "You can go back first."

Luo Tan shook her head. "I'm not going back. I'll stay here and wait for Little Cousin to wake up."

Gao Yang knew that Luo Tan was stubborn, so he did not persuade her.

This night was especially long for everyone.

The assassination of Shen Miao and Pei Lang was kept a secret. The people in Bixiao Restaurant did not know. They only knew that Xie Jingxing left the banquet early. That night, even the servants were waiting anxiously for the result.

In summer, the day was long, and the night was short. When the birds in the courtyard started to chirp, the two rooms were still silent.

### Chapter 983 Fate (3)

Xie Jingxing looked at Gao Yang and asked, "What happened?"

Gao Yang frowned. He took Shen Miao's pulse and Pei Lang's pulse. In front of everyone in the room, he shook his head.

"That's strange. Pei Lang is seriously injured. He should have shown signs of death by now, but there is nothing as if he's just asleep. Princess Consort didn't get badly hurt and should have woken up after resting for a night, but she hasn't woken up yet."

"So?" Xie Jingxing's face was as dark as he stared at Gao Yang aggressively.

"This... is a little strange."

Uncle Tang said carefully, "Are they poisoned?"

"That's impossible." Gao Yang denied flatly. "The pulse of the two of them is not that of poisoned people. Instead, it's faint. I can't see anything wrong with them, but they just won't wake up." woken up yet."

"Then what should we do?" Luo Tan was a little anxious. "My little cousin can't sleep like this forever. There has to be a reason."

Gao Yang glanced at Xie Jingxing and said hesitantly, "Let's wait for another half a day."

Xie Jingxing had been by Shen Miao's bed without leaving her side. However, Shen Miao still did not wake up. It was the same for Pei Lang.

Uncle Tang asked Gao Yang, "Young Master Gao, what exactly is going on? Even if Madam and Young Master Pei don't wake up, there has to be a reason. Don't you know the reason?"

Gao Yang was stumped. Shen Miao and Pei Lang were not showing any symptoms and were just in a state of sleep. They were like ordinary people sleeping. How could he know what was going on?

However, facing Xie Jingxing's increasingly cold and sharp gaze, Gao Yang felt pressured.

Luo Tan couldn't help but be so anxious that she was about to cry. She said, "Are we haunted by some kind of jinx? First, it's my brother-in-law who was injured, and now it's my little cousin. If anything should happen to my little cousin, how am I going to explain it to my aunt and uncle?" She sniffled. "I swore to protect my little cousin. Who knew that my little cousin would end up like this? I'm really useless!"

Gao Yang patted her shoulder. "It's not your fault."

"If I were by her side, at least I could take the knife for her." After saying that, she thought of something and said angrily, "And Brother-in-law too. If not for the fact that he was angry with my little cousin, she wouldn't have been in such a state."

Gao Yang was helpless. It was really not her place to interfere in the matters between Xie Jingxing and Shen Miao.

"If my little cousin doesn't wake up, I'll make him regret it!" Luo Tan said angrily, "Those madams are outsiders who follow the herd, but he is not an outsider. When everyone points a finger at her, he should be by her side." She thought for a moment and clenched her fists. "After thinking about it carefully, I think I need to tell my brother-in-law about this. My little cousin has sacrificed so much for him, but in the end, her effort was in vain."

"What are you going to tell him?" Ji Yushu asked curiously.

Luo Tan glared at him. "A secret!"

Luo Tan angrily went to look for Xie Jingxing angrily. Gao Yang was afraid that she would cause trouble, so he quickly followed behind. When he reached the door, he saw Xie Jingxing coming out of the house with a dark expression. Ever since Shen Miao was in danger, Xie Jingxing had been pulling a long face.

Chapter 984 Fate (4)

Luo Tan shouted, "Prince Rui!" She did not call him "brother-in-law" anymore.

Xie Jingxing glanced at her. He was frustrated that Shen Miao was not awake, and he had no patience for others.

However, Luo Tan had a reckless personality. Once her temper flared up, she was not afraid at all. She said aggressively, "Little Cousin refused to let me tell you this before. Now that she's lying on the sick bed, if she doesn't tell you, I'll tell you. I don't have any scruples."

Uncle Tang, Tie Yi, and the others, who had rushed over after hearing the news, were also standing at the side. When they heard this, they looked at Luo Tan in surprise.

"Those madams all said that when you were bedridden, my little cousin didn't go to see you much. You felt neglected and that my little cousin was a heartless person, so you were unhappy and angry with her, right?" Luo Tan stared at him and said, "But you don't know that she didn't go to see you those days not because she didn't want to, but because she went out of the city to find a herb for you."

Hearing that, Xie Jingxing turned to look at Tie Yi. Tie Yi lowered his head and did not dare to look Xie Jingxing in the eyes.

At first, Shen Miao asked them to hide it. Later, after she returned, she started to have a cold war with Xie Jingxing. Once Xie Jingxing was in a bad mood, no one around him would dare to add fuel to the flame. They wanted to wait a few days, but they did not expect this to happen.

"Make yourself clear!" Xie Jingxing took a step forward.

Luo Tan said, "You don't know, right? It's said that there's an expert in Phoenix Head Village who can change one's fate." She glanced at Gao Yang. "At that time, Gao Yang was making the antidote for you. Little Cousin gave you all three Guiyuan Pills, but they can only keep you alive for a moment. If the antidote couldn't be made within ten days, your life would be in danger. However, on the fourth day, your situation suddenly worsened. The imperial physician said that you wouldn't be able to live past the seventh day. When my little cousin heard the legend of that expert in Phoenix Head Village, she brought me and a few guards to seek that expert."

Xie Jingxing's eyes widened.

What kind of person was Shen Miao? She was rational and would not believe in supernatural things. If not for the fact she was really desperate, she wouldn't have taken this journey to seek that expert.

"The Phoenix Head Village is not far from Long Ye, but the place where that expert lives is extremely difficult to find. That day, we rushed over overnight and almost lost our way in the forest. There was also the wolf pack lurking around. Little Cousin was not afraid at all and insisted on going deeper into the forest, afraid that we would not be able to make it in time to come back and save you."

"The next day, we found that expert. He brought only me and my little cousin, who don't have any martial arts, into the valley. He said that there's a spirit herb that can cure all poisons, but he wanted my little cousin to pay the price. The price is actually not difficult. He doesn't want money. He only wants her to pick out the insects one by one on the flowers and fertilize them."

Gao Yang and Ji Yushu both looked surprised, and Uncle Tang and Tie Yi were even more shocked.

Uncle Tang was enlightened. No wonder Shen Miao was in such a sorry state on the day she returned to the mansion. At that time, he did not know the reason, but now that he heard the ins and outs, he understood. It turned out that Shen Miao did not sleep that night. Instead, she was busy getting the herb for Xie Jingxing.

#### Chapter 985 Fate (5)

Luo Tan seemed to have found it especially satisfying to share this secret. She continued, "It doesn't sound like a big deal, right? But she's been pampered since she was young. Cleaning an entire mountain of flowers is not something a weak willed person can do. She immediately started working for the entire night. I'm afraid you people have never even seen fertilizer with animal waste in it. Why should her efforts go to waste simply because that pair of siblings beat her to it?" Luo Tan looked at Xie Jingxing and said, "It's true that the Ye siblings saved you, but my little cousin also saved you."

"They said that she's not by your side, but go and ask the servants in your mansion. Before she left the mansion, how many days did she stay by your bed? Did she leave? Did she take care of you day and night? After all she has done for you, is she still not as good as the siblings of the Ye family?"

"Now that my little cousin is in such a state, I feel bad for her. When Prince Rui married her from Ming Qi to the Daliang Dynasty, what did you promise? However, you can't even give her your trust. Although she is not perfect, her sincerity is unquestionable!"

After Luo Tan finished speaking, her face was red, and she felt much better. She looked at Xie Jingxing's expression. He was neither sad nor happy, and his expression was calm. However, the calmer he was, the more terrifying he made people feel. It was as if there was an endless storm brewing under the calmness.

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"Are you done?" he asked slowly.

His tone was so cold that Luo Tan couldn't help but shrink her neck.

Gao Yang quickly stood up and said, "Now is not the time to pursue this matter. The most important thing now is to think about how to wake the two of them up."

Xie Jingxing sneered. "That's simple. Just kidnap the Ye siblings."

Ji Yushu was stunned. "Third Brother, what do you want to do?"

"Since she's acting abnormally because of the Ye siblings, there must be something wrong with them. Regardless of whether they were behind it or not, there's no reason to let them off." Xie Jingxing turned around and was about to leave when he was grabbed by Gao Yang who said, "No! They're no longer powerless. They are now the children of the Ye family. What will happen if the Ye family finds out?"

"Let go," Xie Jingxing said coldly.

"Calm down!" Gao Yang said, "If Princess Consort really hates the Ye siblings, she must have come up with a plan to deal with them. If you do something rashly, you'll ruin her plan."

"That's right, Third Brother." Ji Yushu chimed in, "The Ye family is not a small family in Long Ye. If you do this, I'm afraid you'll cause trouble for His Majesty."

"She can tolerate them, but I can't." Xie Jingxing said, "The Ye family has crossed the line."

"Third Brother..." Ji Yushu was about to persuade him when Ba Jiao's voice suddenly came from outside the courtyard. The girl, who had always been smiling, looked a little flustered as she said, "Master, someone is here!"

Tie Yi frowned slightly, as if he was displeased with Ba Jiao's loss of composure. He asked, "Who is it?"

"It's... the Daoist priest we saw at Phoenix Head Village that day," Ba Jiao said hesitantly.

"What?" Luo Tan widened her eyes.

Ji Yushu, who was holding Xie Jingxing's sleeve, couldn't help but let go and look at Ba Jiao. "Daoist priest?"

Ba Jiao nodded.

In the hall, the strange Daoist priest in tattered clothes was touching this and looking at that, his eyes filled with curiosity, as if this was the first time he had entered a mansion. Hui Xiang and Cong Yang stood at the side awkwardly.

#### Chapter 986 Fate (6)

When Xie Jingxing and the others arrived at the hall, Daoist Priest Chi Yan was about to take out the jewel eye on the slot on a vase. He asked Hui Xiang, "Can I take this away?"

"Daoist Priest Chi Yan!" Luo Tan shouted when she saw him.

When Chi Yan saw her, he smiled and said, "Miss Luo, long time no see."

Luo Tan immediately said, "Did you come because you know that something happened to my little cousin?" Although Luo Tan felt that Daoist Priest Chi Yan was an annoying person, he seemed to be quite capable. Otherwise, Shen Miao wouldn't have trusted him so much.

Daoist Priest Chi Yan looked at the silent Xie Jingxing behind Luo Tan and smiled. "I can't change her fate. I can only read fortunes. Young man, what do you think?"

"I don't believe in the Heavenly Dao," Xie Jingxing said.

"The Heavenly Dao is not a belief. Why should people insist on seeking answers from the Heavenly Dao?" Daoist Priest Chi Yan shook his head and said, "This madam's fate is strange. Others can't fathom it. It's all up to her choice. You and I can't do anything to help."

Luo Tan did not understand what Daoist Priest Chi Yan was talking about and hurriedly asked, "Daoist priest, what should my little cousin do now?"

"Do you still have the spirit herb I gave her back then?" Daoist Priest Chi Yan asked.

"Eh?" Luo Tan was puzzled. "Back then, when we came back, Prince Rui's poison had already been removed, so the herb was naturally useless. I didn't know where my little cousin put it."

"I think I know!" Jingzhe said and then brought everyone to Shen Miao's room. She really found a dusty box under the dressing table. She opened it and saw an ordinary-looking herb lying inside.

Luo Tan pointed at it and said, "That's it!"

"Chuck it away." Chi Yan stroked his beard.

"Wait." Xie Jingxing looked at the strange Daoist priest. "Why should I believe you?"

"You can choose not to believe me, but you have no other choice." Chi Yan sighed and said, "This herb was obtained by your wife, but when she got it back then, I told her that her efforts were in vain. Even without this herb, you would still be safe and sound. Your fate doesn't end with this calamity. What she did was useless."

Everyone was stunned.

"However, it's not for nothing." The strange Daoist priest looked relieved again. "The person who gives love will be reciprocated, and the person who saves will likewise be saved. If she had been half-hearted and perfunctory in the valley back then, she wouldn't have obtained this spirit herb, and we wouldn't meet here today. This spirit herb was obtained to save you, but little did she know that she did it to save herself."

At this moment, Luo Tan vaguely understood something. She asked, "What you mean is that you already knew that this spirit herb would not be used on Prince Rui, but on my little cousin. You predicted that my little cousin would suffer such a life and death tribulation, so you asked her to do something to trade for this herb."

The strange Daoist priest looked at Luo Tan and smiled. "You are quick on the uptake."

Xie Jingxing stared at him. "You asked her to work in the field?"

There was killing intent in his eyes. The Daoist priest took a step back and hid behind Gao Yang. He cleared his throat and said, "This calamity is preordained to happen in her life. I've already minimized the effect of this calamity. Compared to her life, working in the field was not worth mentioning."

"But why isn't she awake yet?" Gao Yang was puzzled. "I'm also a doctor. I checked her condition, but I couldn't find the reason why she couldn't wake up. She looks fine. She should have woken up today, but she hasn't woken up for a long time. What's the reason?"

The Daoist priest said, "I said that this is a calamity destined for her."

"What do you mean by calamity? I don't understand." Luo Tan said, "Why don't you tell us when my little cousin will wake up after eating that herb?"

Chi Yan smiled. "That herb is not for her, but for another injured person."

Could the other injured person be Pei Lang?

Xie Jingxing said in a low voice, "If you dare to play tricks, I'll kill you."

Chi Yan shook his head. "That person is entangled with Madam in some sense. With this herb, Madam can disentangle with him."

"Then what about my sister-in-law?" Ji Yushu asked.

The strange Daoist priest looked at Shen Miao, who was lying on the bed. Her expression was calm, as if she was asleep.

"This calamity is both a blessing and a misfortune for her."

"I'm fated to see her three times, and this is the third time. I came here to end this fate."

"Things in the world are never perfect. There are regrets and indignation. She wanted an answer, but no one could give her one." The strange Daoist priest narrowed his eyes.

"Now, she has found a way. The answer she's pursuing is right in front of her. No one can help her. You can't, she can't, and neither can I."

"So, just wait patiently." The Daoist priest looked at Xie Jingxing.

"That's what you can do."

#### Chapter 987 Previous Life (1)

The desert was endless, and the wind was blowing.

The guards were slacking off and did not show much respect to the person in the carriage.

A girl who looked like a maid walked over from behind the carriage and jumped into the carriage. She handed a bowl of porridge to the person inside and said, "Your Majesty, the porridge is a little cold, but it's still edible. There's no restaurant nearby. Please make do with it."

The woman in the carriage was still young, but her face was very haggard, and her clothes were not exquisite and did not even fit her because she was emaciated. She lifted the curtain of the carriage and asked, "Where are we now?"

Bai Lu smiled and said, "I've asked around. We'll definitely be able to reach the capital in five days."

Shuang Jiang also smiled. "When we reach the palace, Your Majesty, your suffering will come to an end."

"Suffering will come to an end." Shen Miao smiled bitterly. "But the dead can't come back to life."

She was talking about Jingzhe and Gu Yu. Hearing this, Bai Lu and Shuang Jiang also looked sad and stopped talking.

In order to rope in a powerful official, Jingzhe was willing to be his concubine. In the first year after Shen Miao went to the State of Qin, there was news that Jingzhe was killed by the wife of a powerful official. As for Gu Yu... Shen Miao clenched her fists. She died at the hands of Huangfu Hao while protecting Shen Miao.

Five years, a full five years. In the five years in the State of Qin, her arrogance had all been worn off. She gritted her teeth and endured it because she wanted to return to her homeland one day and reunite with her children. However, the heavy price she paid was not something that outsiders could imagine.

How difficult was this journey? There were not many guards escorting her. Who would have thought that this was the escort team of the empress of a country? The people she brought to the State of Qin had either died or run away in the past five years. If not for Mo Qing protecting her, she would definitely not have been able to return alive.

Shen Miao sighed. Fortunately, all the hardships were not in vain. Five years had finally passed.

When it was time for the carriage to continue setting off, not only did it not set off, but there was also a commotion outside.

She frowned slightly, lifted the curtain of the carriage, and asked, "What happened?"

Mo Qing walked over from the front and said, "We met a strange person who came to ask for water." Before he could finish his sentence, an old man in gray appeared behind him. He looked at Shen Miao and smiled. "Madam, I'm about to die of thirst. Give me some water to drink."

This old man was dressed strangely and smelled bad. It was not that he did not want to give her water, but Shen Miao's identity was special. Mo Qing ordered someone to take this old man away and not let him get close to Shen Miao. Shen Miao said with a smile, "There's a drought along the way. A bowl of water can perhaps save his life. Give it to him. I... I can't drink that much water anyway."

Since Shen Miao had said so, Mo Qing ordered someone to get a bowl of water for the old man. The old man gulped it down and patted his stomach. He stood up, bowed to Shen Miao, and said, "Madam, you're kind and saved my life. I have to repay you for this bowl of water."

Shen Miao asked, "Are you a Daoist priest?"

"My name is Chi Yan." The strange old man looked at Shen Miao and shook his head. "Madam, you have an extremely noble face, but your life is too short for this noble life."

Chapter 988 Previous Life (2)

"What nonsense are you talking about?" Bai Lu frowned and looked at Shen Miao. "Mother... Madam, he might be a charlatan. Don't listen to his nonsense."

Mo Qing was about to chase this strange old man away.

"Wait." Shen Miao said, "It's been quite boring along the way. Let's listen to what he has to say."

The old man bowed again and said, "Madam, there's black aura around you. I'm afraid it's not an auspicious sign. At the end of this journey, there is a calamity in store for you. If you turn your horse around, you can avoid this calamity. Madam, I have to mind you. This journey is towards the Netherworld. Don't take it. If you take it, you won't be able to turn back."

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"You're getting more and more ridiculous!" Shuang Jiang was so angry that her face was ashen. "Are you cursing us?"

Shen Miao, on the other hand, had a good temper. After staying in the State of Qin for a long time, she found everyone from her motherland pleasing to the eyes. Even if this old man was talking nonsense,

she was not angry. She only smiled and said, "Thank you for your reminder, Daoist priest, but I have to walk this path. My children are on this path. I have to go home."

The strange Daoist priest took a deep breath and said, "As expected." He looked at Shen Miao. "We met by chance, so I'll give you a gift." With that, he took out a red string from his sleeve and was about to hand it to Shen Miao when he was stopped by Mo Qing. He could only hand the red string to Mo Qing. Mo Qing looked at it carefully and saw that there was nothing strange about the red string before handing it to Shen Miao.

"This red string is a gift from me to you for giving me a bowl of water. Madam, tie it to your wrist." He said seriously, "Madam, remember, the Heavenly Dao is changeable, and everything depends on individuals. I can predict your fate, but I can't change it. The person who can change your fate is not me. The heavens are merciful. When there is a calamity, there will also be a way to solve the calamity. This red string is a question. One day, you will find your answer."

With that, he laughed out loud and turned to leave.

Bai Lu and Shuang Jiang were a little unhappy with what the Daoist priest said. Bai Lu said, "Your Majesty, don't take what that strange person said to heart. He's probably not in his right mind."

"Don't wear this either." Shuang Jiang also said, "It might bring bad luck."

Shen Miao looked at the red string and felt that it was quite cute. For some reason, she liked it and tied it to her wrist. She said with a smile, "We're fated to meet by chance. I'll wear it. If it's all nonsense, it's fine. If isn't not, isn't that better?"

Since Shen Miao had already said so, Bai Lu and Shuang Jiang could not say anything else. Mo Qing told the escort team to continue the journey.

When she returned to Ming Qi, it was nowhere near the end of her suffering.

The world was changing at all times. The situation would change, and so would the people.

Apart from her status as the empress, there was nothing special about her anymore. Sometimes, when she thought about it, she felt that she was no better than when she was humiliated in the State of Qin. When she was in the State of Qin, she was humiliated openly, but in Ming Qi, she was humiliated secretly.

Shen Miao sat in the Palace of Earthly Tranquility and looked at the withered Red Sleeve Flower on the table, looking a little tired.

The Red Sleeved Flower was sent to her by Mo Qing. It was said to be a very rare spiritual herb and was very good-looking. It looked like the sleeve of a woman's dress swaying in the wind, so it was called the Red Sleeve Flower. However, it had been a little withered recently because Shen Miao had no intention of taking care of it.

She had been back in Ming Qi for a few years. In the past few years, she had not been doing well.

Chapter 989 Previous Life (3)

Consort Mei was slowly replacing her in the harem. She was beautiful and smart, charming and gentle, making people subconsciously want to follow her.

In the beginning, Shen Miao was heartbroken. The man she used to love took a fancy to another woman. She thought that he was equally cold to everyone, but later, she realized that was not the case. He was only cold to her because he never liked her.

After being heartbroken for a long time, she gradually became numb. The pain and dispiritedness gradually turned into hatred and indignation towards Fu Sheng.

Fu Sheng stole too much of Fu Xiuyi's attention from her child, Fu Ming. Fu Ming was clearly the crown prince. He was talented and hardworking, but in the end, he was neglected. Fu Xiuyi taught Fu Sheng how to write and discussed politics with him, but he never showed concern for Fu Ming.

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When being asked, he would say that Fu Ming was the crown prince and had to be mature and learn to teach himself.

However, every time Shen Miao looked at Fu Ming's disappointed eyes, she felt like a knife was twisting in her heart.

The Shen family was not doing well either. Luo Xueyan was getting sicker and sicker, and Jing Chuchu was scheming against Shen Qiu. The Shen family's reputation was getting worse and worse, and Shen Xin had aged a lot.

Fu Xiuyi seemed to be suppressing the Shen family. Shen Miao vaguely sensed this, but she had no way of getting to know what was going on in the imperial court. The only way she could know one thing or two was through Pei Lang, but Pei Lang was loyal to Fu Xiuyi. Although Pei Lang was on good terms with her, he would never reveal too much.

Shen Miao's love towards Fu Xiuyi had been fading away ever since he had Consort Mei. However, she couldn't abandon her position as the empress. She had to stabilize her position and fight for some opportunities for Fu Ming and Wanyu.

There had been news of the Xiongnu's invasion recently. Consort Mei seemed to be urging Fu Xiuyi to marry Wanyu to the Xiongnu to build a marriage alliance.

This was what Shen Miao could not tolerate the most.

However, Consort Mei was urging harder and harder. Everyone knew how much Fu Xiuyi doted on Fu Sheng. The Shen family was getting worse day by day, and there were too many people standing on Consort Mei's side. In addition, Consort Mei's brother, Li Ke, had recently helped Fu Xiuyi settle a few important matters, and Consort Mei's status in the harem was rising steadily.

Shen Miao knew what the officials were thinking. They were thinking about when to change the crown prince and when to depose the empress.

Guarding against everyone around her, Shen Miao was already exhausted. If not for her children, she sometimes felt that it was better to burn this palace to the ground.

Bai Lu walked in and said, "Your Majesty, the clothes for the palace banquet have been prepared. We have to comb your hair early."

Shen Miao nodded.

Shuang Jiang died a year ago. Consort Mei was really scheming. She did not even let her maids off. At this moment, Bai Lu was the only one left.

Tonight was Ming Qi's palace banquet. The new year was coming, and Fu Xiuyi was holding a banquet to reward the officials. Of course, the most important thing was to bid farewell to the young marquis of the Marquis of Lin'an, Xie Jingxing. The Marquis of Lin'an, Xie Ding, had died on the battlefield in the northern border, and now, his son was going to war in his place.

Shen Miao and Xie Jingxing did not have much interaction because of the subtle relationship between the Shen family and the Xie family. However, the two families were both on decline.

#### **Chapter 990 Previous Life (4)**

She said, "Comb my hair."

This palace banquet was especially lively.

It had been a long time since Fu Xiuyi was so happy. His usually cold expression softened a lot, and he was smiling from ear to ear. Shen Miao watched coldly as Fu Sheng went to toast him. The father and son drank as they chatted happily.

Fu Ming and Wanyu sat at the side obediently. Those officials always praised the crown prince and the princess for being extremely sensible at such a young age. Not everyone was born with such a natural temperament.

Wanyu and Fu Ming had also tried their best to get close to Fu Xiuyi. Children were the most sensitive. They could feel Fu Xiuyi's coldness, so they gradually became distant.

Shen Miao sat beside Fu Xiuyi and watched as Fu Xiuyi exchanged glances with Consort Mei from time to time. Consort Mei was smiling happily. Fu Xiuyi also smiled.

Shen Miao thought to herself that the two of them must be sincerely happy.

But what about the protagonist of this palace banquet?

Shen Miao couldn't help but look at the man on the left row of the seats.

The young man was handsome and had a lazy posture. He sat diagonally. His dark purple robe was a little loose, but it could not hide his lean figure. He smiled and slowly drank, as if the lively banquet had nothing to do with him.

Shen Miao smiled bitterly. She felt that this young marquis of Lin'an was a little similar to her. The hall was filled with happy laughter, but they were not very happy. Xie Jingxing was walking down a path that led him to a future filled with uncertainties, and Shen Miao did not know what would happen to her from now on either.

She also poured herself a glass of wine to drink in a restrained manner.

As the empress, she naturally had to mind her demeanor, unlike the consorts who could be themselves.

After the banquet ended, everyone dispersed in twos and threes. She sat in her seat and heard Consort Mei say, "Your Majesty, I prepared good wine tonight. Your Majesty, let's watch the fireworks together as we drink. Sheng even said that he wants to play chess with you."

Fu Xiuyi laughed and rubbed Consort Mei's nose. "His competitive personality is really like you."

Shen Miao wanted to say that Wanyu and Fu Ming also wanted to spend time with their father, but she swallowed the words.

When she turned around, the sadness in the two children's eyes made her heart ache.

However, she endured the pain and pretended to be calm.

This new year was destined to be a sad one for her.

She put the two children to sleep. She felt that her two children were not very enthusiastic about the new year. The sound of fireworks sounded in the palace. It was late at night. On such a night, Consort Mei's palace was the best place to watch fireworks. The three of them must be having a good time.

Shen Miao put on her cloak and asked Bai Lu to take a jar of wine and a bowl before going to the garden.

From a corner of the garden, one could see the reflection of the fireworks. However, it was still garden.

From a corner of the garden, one could see the reflection of the fireworks. However, it was still extremely dazzling, almost illuminating the entire sky. One could imagine what kind of scenery it would be on the other side.

She took out a bowl. Bai Lu felt bad. Shen Miao waved her hand, telling her not to speak.