

HER GRACEFUL WAR SONG

Chapter 13

+25 BONUS

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Seeing everyone's distress, Barrett took the list of gifts.

After reviewing it, he asked Charlotte, "What's the issue here? They're asking for two thousand silver coins, two pairs of gold bracelets, two pairs of malachite bracelets, two sets of rose gold hair ornaments, and fifty rolls of brocade. That's all. The miscellaneous items aren't a lot either."

"That's all?" Charlotte sneered coldly. "Unfortunately, our household can't even scrape together a thousand coins right now."

"How's that possible? Who manages the finances? Do we not have money?" Barrett asked in

surprise.

"I manage the finances," Carissa said calmly.

"You manage the finances? Then, where's the money?" Barrett questioned.

"Yeah, where's the money?" Charlotte chuckled coldly. "Do you think our family is some wealthy noble family? Valor Estate was granted to your grandfather by the late king because he was a senior military commander.

"Your father and uncle's annual salaries plus stipends don't exceed two thousand silver coins. And you... you're just a fourth-rank general. Do you earn more than your father does?" "Well, shouldn't the estate left by my grandfather generate some income, no matter how little? *Barrett argued.

Charlotte replied, "Even if it does, can it sustain the expenses of such a large household? Just your mother's daily medicine costs three silver coins per dose. Then, there's the pill she needs to take once every three days, which costs five silver coins. All these things are paid for with Carissa's dowry money."

Barrett couldn't believe it. He felt that Charlotte was deliberately making things difficult for

him.

Disappointed, he set the gift list down. "In plain terms, you just don't want to use the money for this. Fine then, I'll figure out the betrothal gifts and money myself. I've earned military merits. I'm sure the king will reward me."

"Didn't you use military merits to ask for the edict to marry Aurora? Since you're in love, why bother with betrothal gifts? Go and discuss it with her. Tell her to ask for less," Charlotte said. Clearing her throat, Rebecca chimed in, "After all, it's a marriage granted by the king. We can't be disrespectful. It's not like we can't produce the gifts and money."

She looked at Carissa and smiled, motioning for her to come over. "Carissa, how about you front this money first? Once we're more financially stable, we'll pay you back. How does that

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sound?"

Serena scoffed. "Mom, we're all family here. Why talk about paying her back? I'm sure my sister-in-law is generous and wouldn't mind giving us ten thousand coins."

"Serena, you shouldn't speak about your sister-in-law like that. She's done a lot for our household this past year. You should appreciate her," said Rebecca, pretending to scold her daughter and emphasizing that everyone should remember Carissa's kindness.

After a pause, Rebecca looked at her daughter-in-law and added, "Alright, that's settled, then. Carissa, I know this is hard on you. Once Aurora arrives, you should set some rules for her to know you're the primary wife here."

Everyone's eyes, including Barrett's, turned to Carissa.

Since she had slapped him yesterday, he felt awkward and couldn't bring himself to ask her for help on this matter.

When Carissa remained silent, Charlotte asked, "Besides the money, should Carissa also provide the ornaments and jewelry?"

"Of course. She doesn't mind, right, Carissa?" Rebecca prompted gently.

Charlotte looked at Carissa and shook her head slightly, signaling for her not to agree. The latter knew that the former meant well by reminding her, but Carissa had never intended to

agree anyway.

So, she shook her head slowly and said, "It wouldn't be appropriate for me to pay for this. The household should cover the expenses for the marriage."

Rebecca's expression immediately darkened. 'Carissa, you're being unreasonable. Why differentiate between us? We're all family. Besides, isn't this just a loan? We'll repay you once things ease up.'" Carissa looked at Barrett. "What do you think?"

How could he possibly suggest that his wife use her dowry to pay for the gifts so that he could marry another wife?

As a man of honor, Barrett felt uneasy.

He was about to speak up when Rebecca quickly intervened, "Carissa, you should make the decisions. After all, you're his wife. His business is your business. A married couple should operate as one, right?" "You're right, Mother." Carissa turned to Barrett. In that case, just let me know if you want to borrow the money from me. I'm willing to lend it to you if you ask."