

Ghost 237

Chapter 237: Dresses for the Living... and the Dead

The afternoon sun spread a soft golden glow across the Empress's chamber. Outside the courtyard, winter wind rustled through the bare branches, but inside the room the atmosphere was warm and lively.

Lian An sat comfortably on a cushioned chair near the window. A blanket covered her legs, and the herbal medicine the healer had ordered rested on the small table beside her.

Across from her floated the three familiar figures who had refused to leave her side since she woke up.

Wei Rong leaned lazily against one of the pillars, arms crossed like a bored general watching soldiers drill.

Li Shen hovered beside the bookcase, pretending to read one of the scrolls but clearly listening to every word.

Fen Yu floated upside down from the ceiling beam, swinging her ghostly legs back and forth.

Lian An rubbed her temples.

"Why are you upside down?"

Fen Yu blinked innocently.

"It helps my blood flow."

"You don't even have blood."

Fen Yu paused.

"...That's not the point."

Wei Rong snorted.

Li Shen hid a smile behind his sleeve.

Lian An sighed.

Ever since she woke up, the three ghosts had refused to leave her alone even for a moment.

She had barely finished speaking when Fen Yu suddenly floated down closer to her face.

"So."

"What?"

Lian An asked suspiciously.

"When is the wedding?"

"Soon."

Lian An replied.

"My cousin Lian Rou is getting married in a few days."

Fen Yu clapped her hands excitedly.

"A wedding!"

Wei Rong raised an eyebrow.

"What's so exciting about that?"

Fen Yu glared at him.

"Food!"

Li Shen nodded thoughtfully.

"Weddings usually involve large banquets."

Fen Yu turned back to Lian An with shining eyes.

"You promised we could try new dishes."

Lian An shook her head with a small laugh.

"You ghosts only think about eating."

"Of course."

Fen Yu said proudly.

"We died young."

"We must enjoy the afterlife."

Wei Rong looked offended.

"I died in battle."

Li Shen coughed politely.

"And I died from overwork."

Fen Yu waved them away.

"That's not the point."

Lian An chuckled softly.

Her quiet moment with them was suddenly interrupted by a gentle knock on the door.

"Your Majesty?"

It was one of her maids.

"Come in," Lian An said.

The maid entered and bowed respectfully.

"Your Majesty, His Majesty has sent someone."

Lian An blinked.

"Someone?"

"Yes."

"A dressmaker."

Lian An frowned slightly.

"A dressmaker?"

The maid nodded.

"His Majesty said Your Majesty must attend the wedding properly."

"He instructed the dressmaker to prepare new garments suitable for the occasion."

Fen Yu gasped loudly.

"Oh!"

Wei Rong looked unimpressed.

Li Shen raised an eyebrow.

Lian An sighed.

"That man..."

She muttered softly.

"Fine."

She waved her hand lightly.

"Let them come in."

The maid bowed again and stepped outside.

Moments later, three women carrying wooden boxes entered the chamber.

They immediately knelt respectfully.

"This humble servant greets Your Majesty."

The eldest woman spoke carefully.

"His Majesty ordered us to prepare wedding garments for Your Majesty."

Lian An nodded politely.

"You may begin."

The women quickly opened their boxes.

Inside were beautiful fabrics in deep crimson, royal gold, and soft jade green.

Even Fen Yu's ghostly eyes widened.

"Wow."

"That is pretty."

Wei Rong leaned forward slightly.

Li Shen adjusted his sleeves thoughtfully.

The dressmakers carefully measured Lian An's shoulders and arms while discussing designs quietly among themselves.

But suddenly—

Fen Yu floated closer to Lian An's ear.

"We want dresses too."

Lian An blinked.

"...What?"

Fen Yu crossed her arms stubbornly.

"We want dresses."

Wei Rong nodded calmly.

"That seems reasonable."

Li Shen added politely,

"If we are attending a wedding banquet, it would be appropriate."

Lian An stared at them.

"You are ghosts."

Fen Yu looked offended.

"So?"

"You don't need clothes."

Fen Yu huffed.

"We can manifest physical forms now!"

Wei Rong nodded proudly.

"After our enlightenment, we gained stronger spiritual bodies."

Li Shen added thoughtfully,

"We can maintain temporary physical appearances if necessary."

Lian An narrowed her eyes.

"So you want wedding clothes."

"Yes."

All three answered together.

She rubbed her forehead.

"This is ridiculous."

Fen Yu pouted.

"You promised we are family."

Wei Rong coughed awkwardly.

Li Shen nodded seriously.

"It would be rude to appear poorly dressed at a wedding."

Lian An stared at them for several seconds.

Then she rolled her eyes.

"Fine."

Fen Yu cheered loudly.

"Yes!"

The dressmakers looked confused.

"Your Majesty?"

Lian An cleared her throat quickly.

"Ah... nothing."

She pointed toward three empty spaces beside her.

"Prepare three more outfits."

The dressmakers blinked.

"For...?"

Lian An quickly improvised.

"My... attendants."

The women nodded respectfully.

"Of course."

Fen Yu clapped excitedly.

"I want red!"

Wei Rong said calmly,

"Something dignified."

Li Shen spoke thoughtfully,

"Simple elegance would be best."

Lian An sighed dramatically.

"I cannot believe I am ordering wedding clothes for ghosts."

Fen Yu grinned.

"You love us."

Wei Rong smirked.

Li Shen bowed slightly.

The dressmakers continued working carefully, measuring invisible figures while politely pretending nothing unusual was happening.

Watching the scene, Lian An couldn't help but laugh softly.

A few days ago she had nearly died.

Now she was ordering wedding clothes for ghosts.

Life—

Or the afterlife—

Was certainly unpredictable.

The Empress's chamber slowly filled with color as the dressmakers opened one embroidered box after another.

Silk fabrics were spread across the long table—crimson, jade green, soft gold, pale peach, and deep midnight blue. Each cloth shimmered softly under the afternoon sunlight that streamed through the carved windows.

The room smelled faintly of fresh silk and sandalwood.

Lian An leaned slightly forward in her seat, her earlier weakness forgotten for a moment as she looked at the fabrics.

It had been a long time since she had done something as normal as choosing clothes.

The eldest dressmaker spoke respectfully.

"Your Majesty, these fabrics were personally selected from the imperial storage for the wedding."

She carefully unfolded a bolt of silk.

"This crimson brocade is woven with golden phoenix patterns. It would suit a formal wedding ceremony."

Fen Yu's eyes sparkled immediately.

"Red!"

She floated closer, nearly passing through the fabric.

"I told you red is perfect!"

Wei Rong sighed.

"Of course you would choose the loudest color."

Fen Yu glared at him.

"It's a wedding! Not a funeral!"

Li Shen calmly observed the patterns with scholarly interest.

"The embroidery is quite impressive."

Lian An chuckled softly at their bickering.

She reached forward and touched the crimson silk.

The material was soft and smooth under her fingers.

"It is beautiful," she admitted.

The dressmaker smiled.

"With golden hairpins and jade ornaments, this would make Your Majesty shine during the ceremony."

Lian An tilted her head slightly, imagining it.

But then she shook her head.

"Red is usually worn by the bride."

She glanced at the dressmaker.

"I don't want to overshadow my cousin's wife."

The dressmaker nodded respectfully.

"Your Majesty is thoughtful."

She quickly replaced the crimson silk with another.

This one was deep jade green, embroidered with delicate silver cranes flying among clouds.

Fen Yu floated closer again.

"Oh!"

"That one looks elegant."

Wei Rong nodded slightly.

"Yes, this one suits you better."

Li Shen adjusted his sleeves thoughtfully.

"Green symbolizes harmony and longevity."

Lian An smiled faintly.

"That sounds appropriate for a wedding."

The dressmaker seemed pleased.

"This color also complements Your Majesty's complexion."

Lian An ran her fingers lightly across the crane embroidery.

The silver threads glimmered softly.

"Yes," she said finally.

"This one."

The dressmakers quickly began discussing sleeve length, waist ribbons, and hair ornaments.

Meanwhile, Fen Yu suddenly clapped her hands.

"Now it's our turn!"

Lian An rubbed her forehead.

"Why did I agree to this again?"

Wei Rong raised an eyebrow.

"Because you are kind."

Fen Yu leaned closer with a mischievous grin.

"And because you love us."

Li Shen coughed politely.

Lian An sighed.

"Fine."

She turned toward the dressmaker.

"We also need three other outfits."

The dressmaker bowed slightly.

"Your Majesty's attendants?"

"Something like that."

Lian An muttered.

Fen Yu floated forward immediately.

"I want red!"

Wei Rong crossed his arms.

"That color will look ridiculous."

Fen Yu glared at him.

"You're just jealous!"

"I am not jealous."

Li Shen spoke calmly.

"Perhaps something slightly less... aggressive."

Fen Yu huffed.

"Fine."

She looked at the fabrics again.

Then suddenly pointed.

"That one!"

The cloth she chose was bright red silk embroidered with golden plum blossoms.

Lian An stared.

"That is even brighter than the first one."

Fen Yu grinned proudly.

"Exactly."

The dressmaker hesitated slightly but nodded.

"It will certainly stand out."

Fen Yu beamed.

Wei Rong stepped forward next.

He examined the fabrics like a commander inspecting armor.

Then he pointed toward a bolt of deep midnight blue silk embroidered with silver mountain patterns.

"This one."

Lian An nodded approvingly.

"That actually suits you."

Wei Rong shrugged.

"I was a general."

"Bright colors would look foolish."

Fen Yu rolled her eyes.

"You're boring."

Li Shen stepped forward last.

He studied the fabrics thoughtfully for several moments.

Then he gently touched a cloth of soft ivory silk embroidered with pale bamboo leaves.

"This design represents wisdom and integrity."

Fen Yu groaned.

"That's the most scholar choice possible."

Li Shen smiled calmly.

"I am a scholar."

Lian An laughed.

"Perfect."

The dressmaker quickly took notes.

"So we will prepare one jade green ceremonial robe for Your Majesty..."

"One crimson plum blossom dress..."

"One midnight blue embroidered robe..."

"And one ivory bamboo silk robe."

She bowed respectfully.

"They will be completed before the wedding."

Fen Yu floated excitedly around the room.

"We're going to a wedding!"

Wei Rong sighed.

"You're excited about food."

"Of course!"

Li Shen chuckled softly.

Lian An leaned back in her chair, watching them.

For the first time in days, her heart felt light.

Just days ago, she had stood between life and death.

Now—

She was choosing clothes with ghosts for a wedding.

She shook her head with a small smile.

Life in the palace was certainly strange.

But somehow—

It no longer felt lonely.