

Reborn as a Landlord

Chapter 16: Chapter 9 Sleepless Night (Part 2)_1

Lian Manman slept in a daze, unable to open her eyes, only aware of someone taking her wrist to check her pulse, and heard Lian Shouxin and Lady Zhang talking, with a stranger's voice in between.

"...Her pulse is quite even, there should be no serious issues. Take a few doses of heat-clearing and mind-calming medicine, rest well for a few days and then we'll see," Imperial Doctor Wang wrote a prescription, and seeing the anxious look on the faces of Lian Shouxin and his wife, like their souls had left their bodies, added, "These are all common medicines, I happened to bring some, why don't you follow me back, and I will prepare two doses right away for the child."

Lian Shouxin and Lady Zhang both nodded eagerly in agreement and followed Imperial Doctor Wang out of the West Wing Room, only to see that the lights were still on in the Main House, and they faintly heard Lady Zhou's moans.

Lady Zhang and Lian Shouxin exchanged a glance.

"Imperial Physician, my mother's illness, is it serious, should she also take some medicines?" Lian Shouxin asked, bowing to Imperial Doctor Wang.

"Your grandmother's condition is nothing serious... well, if she needs medicine..."

Lian Manman only faintly heard snippets of conversation from inside the room, thinking to herself, so the couple knew that Lady Zhou was feigning illness but still called the doctor, who had already seen Lady Zhou before. They really are unfailingly dutiful.

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Lian Family Main House Western Room

By now, Lian Duo had fallen asleep on the bed, while Lian Shouren and Lady Gu sat on the bed whispering about something, when suddenly the door creaked open and Lian Huahua came in from outside, stretching out her hands, heading straight for Lian Duo.

"Huahua, what are you doing?" Lady Gu saw Lian Huahua's expression wasn't good and got up quickly to stop her.

Lian Huahua's hand, which had been reaching for Lian Duo, was intercepted by Lady Gu, failing to grab Lian Duo.

"Mother, don't stop me. If I don't crush her mouth this time, she'll never learn her lesson. A smooth-sailing matter was almost completely ruined because of her," Lian Huahua said bitterly.

Lady Gu was also blaming Lian Duo in her heart for nearly spoiling Lian Huahua's matter, but after all, one's own children, whether the palm or the back of the hand, are both flesh of one's flesh.

"Alright, haven't you already taught her a lesson? If you hit her again, and it becomes apparent to others, it won't be good," Lady Gu persuaded her daughter.

"Let her off for now, wait until we return to the town..." Lian Huahua, finding her mother's advice sensible, could only suppress her anger and said.

"Duo is your own sister after all..."

"If she weren't my own sister, I would have beaten her to death a long time ago," Lian Huahua said angrily.

"Right," Lady Gu suddenly thought of something she wanted to ask Lian Huahua but then closed her mouth abruptly, pointing eastward, "Everyone's asleep?"

Lian Huahua nodded.

"I had Uncle Four and Si Shen serve her the medicine just now, after a night of fuss, they are exhausted, when I came out, they were all dead asleep," Lian Huahua explained.

Lady Gu leaned out the window to look outside, saw no one there, then pulled Lian Huahua close.

"Manman actually survived, she didn't hear those words, did she?" Lady Gu asked in a low voice.

"She shouldn't have, otherwise, she would have spoken out already," Lian Huahua thought for a moment and said, "Looking at how she spoke and behaved today, I really misjudged her."

"About Yingzi, there are no issues, right?" Lady Gu asked again.

"She's shallow, a few sweet words and I had her wrapped around my finger, and that bracelet, she even thinks it's made of gold, really has no experience in life," Lian Huahua spoke with a hint of disdain, "As long as this is kept secret until I am married, there is nothing to fear."

"Indeed," Lady Gu nodded.

"Mother, do we have anything to eat?" Lian Huahua sat on the bed and said, "I'm starving to death."

"Mother knew you came looking for food," Lady Gu said with a smile as she took a box of pastries from her bag, "Gui Xiang Zhai's osmanthus cakes from the town, your favorite."

Lian Huahua took pastries from the box to eat.

"Mother, do we really have to stay here until I get married? Why not, let's return to the town tomorrow. Their food, I really can't swallow it, millet rice and steamed buns for every meal, so dry it hurts my throat, but I can't not eat at all. Aunt Xiuxiu even gave me meat, that fat meat, it's only good for feeding dogs, and she thought it was something special. Ridiculously, it even caused a disturbance at dinner time," she said.

By the time Lian Huahua finished, she couldn't help but laugh.

"Just bear with it for now, if we don't stay here, relying on your father, how will your dowry be prepared," Lady Gu said, glancing over at Lian Shouren beside her.

"I think grandfather and grandmother are also poor, and they're unwilling to sell the land, what kind of dowry can they prepare. Tomorrow, when we have money, we might as well go back to the town, it's so much more convenient," Lian Huahua said.

"I think the same, Great Uncle, what do you think, should we all go back to the town tomorrow?" Lady Gu asked Lian Shouren with a smile.

"I told father and mother we'd stay until Huahua is married, and she would leave from the old house for her wedding," Lian Shouren said.

"Now that we have money, let's follow what the Sun Family suggested, that it's more convenient to have the wedding from the town," Lady Gu suggested.

Lian Shouren hesitated a bit.

"It's feasible to think that way, but if mother and father find out that I no longer have my place in town and want us to stay here through the New Year, leaving tomorrow would hurt their feelings. Handling affairs afterward would become troublesome" Lian Shouren said, "Tomorrow, I'll go back while you stay here. I'll send the eldest back as well. Autumn harvest is approaching, it would be good for you to stay and watch over things here, to gather some crops to exchange for rice and flour in town, enough to last us through the next year."

"Father is right, this task can be left to my older brother and his wife; they've got the hang of it. Mother and I will go back to town with dad to deal with the dowry," Lian Huahua said.

"Is the master intending to do something that requires leaving us women behind?" Lady Gu smiled slyly at Lian Shouren.

"Nonsense, then first thing tomorrow morning, I'll talk to mother and father and take you all back with me," Lian Shouren hurriedly said.

Lady Gu and Lian Huahua exchanged a smiling glance.

"Father, mother, you've decided on my dowry, haven't you?" Lian Huahua asked again.

"The Young Master Sun has already said he doesn't want a dowry; he's marrying you, not your possessions," Lian Shouren replied hastily, "You see, our family is hardly in a position to provide a dowry."

"If father is going to say that, then your future matters will also become difficult to manage," Lian Huahua said as she wiped away pastry crumbs from the corner of her mouth with a handkerchief.

"What kind of talk is that, girl? Are you trying to bully your father?" Lian Shouren got annoyed.

Lady Gu quickly intervened to mediate, "You father and daughter can discuss this matter properly."

"Father, don't forget that I'm the one repaying the money we borrow tomorrow. Out of the five hundred and forty taels we get, three hundred go to Yang Chengfeng, and of the two hundred and forty taels left, forty are for father's use; and I need two hundred taels for a presentable dowry," Lian Huahua said, evidently having thought it through.

"What, you want two hundred taels for a dowry?" Lian Shouren felt panicked, "In our village, a dowry of twenty or thirty silver taels is already quite respectable. But since you are marrying into the Sun family, I'll give you..." He paused before continuing resolutely, "One hundred taels, and the remainder is necessary for the family's expenses. It was with some difficulty that we'd saved up twenty taels and because of your business, they have now been given back to your grandparents. Taking that into account, your dowry amounts to one hundred and twenty taels."

Seeing Lian Shouren say so, Lian Huahua quickly gave Lady Gu a meaningful look.

"Master, Lian Huahua makes a good point. The Sun family is wealthy, and having a substantial dowry for Lian Huahua will give us face. It will also make it easier to communicate with our in-laws in the future. Besides, it's only a matter for the next two or three months. Once Huahua marries there and the Young Master Sun becomes our son-in-law, need we worry about lacking silver?" Lady Gu said.

After much persuasion, evoking even Lian Shouren's prospects, he finally reluctantly nodded.

"Huahua, for your sake, your father's practically bankrupted himself."

"Don't worry, father, I understand," Lian Huahua smiled, "I'll make sure Sun Lang takes your affairs seriously. When you become an official, I'll rise along with you at the Sun's family."

"Our Huahua is indeed wise," Lian Shouren smiled.

After the three of them had come to an agreement, Lian Huahua finally went back to the east room to sleep contentedly.

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The candle in the Eastern Wing Room had long been extinguished when Lady He suddenly woke up in the middle of the night. Thinking of something, she kicked Lian Shouyi who was lying next to her.

"Husband..." Lady He said.

"What is it," Lian Shouyi muttered without even opening his eyes.

"The eldest must be cooking the books again. You go with him to town tomorrow and find a way to skim a few silver taels for yourself," Lady He said.

"As if I needed you to tell me." Lian Shouyi quickly became alert at the mention of silver, "Father is obsessed with the eldest becoming an official so he can play the grand nobleman. No one else's opinion gets through. Over the years, our family's assets were emptied by the eldest. They might fool father, mother, Old Three and Old Fourth, but they can't fool me."

"So what's the deal this time? The Sun family is wealthy, and I heard they're related to the Shen family in Prefecture City. Securing a government position for our eldest shouldn't be too hard, right?" Lady He pressed her leg onto Lian Shouyi's.

"It seems there's real hope this time," Lian Shouyi pulled away Lady He's leg and said.

"So can we go too?" Lady He sounded delighted.

"Of course, we haven't split the family. If father and mother are going, we all will," Lian Shouyi assured her, "Headman Li from the county said that our County Magistrate had brought several brothers and nephews into the Yamen, and everyone who saw them had to call them 'lord', and they're collecting so much silver their hands are going numb. We can't end up any worse than that."

Lady He was elated for a while but then thought that taking advantage of someone else's success wouldn't compare to being the master and mistress themselves. The thought made her suddenly dissatisfied, "Husband, if you continued your studies, wouldn't this good fortune be yours?"

"Forget studying; I get a headache just thinking about it. We don't have a daughter like Huahua. We've supported the eldest for years; it's only right that we follow him to enjoy the benefits," Lian Shouyi kicked Lady He.

"Husband, the eldest has always been ruthless. This time Manman is lucky to have survived," Lady He suddenly said, "That wretched Lady Gu, cunning as a fox – will she really take care of us when the time comes?"

"There's still father and mother to keep her in line; she wouldn't dare neglect us," Lian Shouyi snorted, "Besides, I'm not as foolish as Old Fourth. All these years, I've got enough dirt on the eldest to not be afraid of him."

"What dirt?" Lady He immediately sat up, eyes wide with curiosity.

