

Little Girl 291

Chapter 291: Like Mother, Like Son

Today, Third Prince Long Qingchen was wearing a black and white lan shirt, a golden silk jade python belt around his waist, and wielding a golden bone fan in his hand, looking quite dashing and suave.

"I heard that Young Master Jin was injured and is being treated here?"

Long Qingchen had been awaiting news of Jin Chen's victorious return, but out of nowhere, he received a report that Jin Chen had lost the Zixiao Palace Exam and had even been seriously injured.

Upon hearing this, Long Qingchen was extremely surprised.

His mother had sworn just yesterday that she could ensure Jin Chen would win first place in the Imperial Examination. Failing to win was acceptable, but how could he have been beaten up by someone else?

Who was so audacious and daring to bully the son of Grandmaster Jin?

After hearing the news, Long Qingchen hurried over.

Upon entering the Medical Hall, he scanned around but did not see Jin Chen anywhere, making him wonder.

"Reporting to Third Prince, Young Master Jin has been arranged to be treated in another Medical Hall. The one being treated here is a commoner examinee."

Doctor Lu responded anxiously.

Although the Emperor had decreed early on to treat all examinees of the Zixiao Palace Exam equally, the Imperial Hospital had spontaneously categorized the examinees differently.

Someone of high status like Jin Chen was naturally sent to a major medical establishment with more advanced staff and facilities provided by the Imperial Hospital.

For a commoner with no backing like Little Xinzhuo, they simply assigned a medical judge to treat him.

After listening, Long Qingchen raised his eyebrows and looked over at Little Xinzhuo, who was lying on the bed.

"What is this child's surname and name, and how serious are his injuries?"

Since he was also a participant in the Zixiao Palace Exam, his results must have been very good during the examination, perhaps he could be worth befriending.

"Reporting to Third Prince, this child is named Xin Zhuo, he is... the examinee who competed against Young Master Jin earlier, and was brought here after his defeat. His injuries are quite severe, but fortunately, he is young and recovers well. After resting for ten days to half a month, he should be able to heal completely."

Doctor Lu answered truthfully.

"Xin Zhuo? Is he the child who ranked fourth in the written examination? And his sister is the one named Xin Lin?"

Long Qingchen, who was about to leave, stopped in his tracks upon hearing this.

This pair of siblings, though commoners with no family background, had made a remarkable impression in this year's Zixiao Palace Exam, as had the one named Murong Ziyue.

The written examination paper of Xin Zhuo was so highly spoken of by the Emperor that he praised the literary grace, claiming it was not inferior to that of several Royal Princes.

Deep down, Long Qingchen was displeased and his gaze towards Little Xinzhuo grew dark and gloomy.

Long Qingchen, who had hastened over, was still unaware of the matter of Xin Lin recognizing her father Chu Beiqing.

"Indeed."

Doctor Lu was oblivious to Long Qingchen's thoughts.

"Show me the prescription."

Long Qingchen reached out and snatched the prescription from Doctor Lu's hands.

After glancing at it, he snorted coldly.

"Just a minor injury, why need so many precious herbs? Remove these few ingredients from the medication. Someone, go and prepare the medicine according to this prescription."

With a big flourish, Long Qingchen crossed out several main ingredients and added a few others.

"Third Prince, this cannot be done, changing the prescription is not good for the patient's condition."

Doctor Lu became anxious.

The Emperor had ordered that these ten Imperial Examination examinees were all pillars of the nation, and it was uncertain which one might become a significant figure in Longteng in the future.

"Are you trying to defy an order from this Prince?"

Long Qingchen sneered.

It was one thing for his brother, the Crown Prince, but beyond him, Long Qingchen would not allow anyone else to take his father's favor away.

A commoner is but a commoner, no matter how talented. With just a flick of his fingers, Long Qingchen could make him unable to live or die.

Chapter 292: Who Dares Touch Her Brother!

Long Qingchen said that, then with a wave of his sleeve, he intended to leave.

Just a few steps away, a small figure nearly crashed headfirst into Long Qingchen's embrace.

Fortunately, the person leapt nimbly to one side, avoiding Long Qingchen.

The visitor entered the Medical Hall without paying any attention to the arrogant Long Qingchen, and immediately looked toward little Xinzhuo on the bed.

"Ah Zhuo? Are you alright?"

Xin Lin had rushed over after she found out the location of the Medical Hall where Little Xinzhuo was.

"Which blind fool dares to bump into the Third Prince!"

Two little eunuchs beside Long Qingchen, relying on someone's power to bully others, aimed a slap at Xin Lin.

Xin Lin's pupils contracted, the Third Prince Long Qingchen, wasn't that Jin Chen's close buddy?

She snorted lightly, slapped back with the back of her hand, and with a cracking sound, the eunuch's wrist was broken.

His face turned white as he wailed.

"Rebellion, rebellion! Third Prince, this lowlife is rebelling, intending to assassinate Your Highness!"

Hearing that someone intended to assassinate the Third Prince, the guards outside rushed in.

The sound of dozens of steel blades unsheathed, they all pointed at Xin Lin.

Xin Lin's expression was solemn as she glanced at the Third Prince.

"Where does this lowlife come from, daring to act wildly before me, seize her, break both her arms and legs!"

Long Qingchen looked proud, he glanced at the newcomer, although she looked quite soft and adorable, her eyes were too sharp.

Looking at her attire, it was clear she was of commoner origin, truly bold and audacious, daring to lay hands on his people.

The guards, hearing the order, looked fierce and evil and were about to move forward to capture her.

But who knew that the young girl before them snorted coldly, her figure suddenly vanished, leaving the guards startled.

Then came several screams; fist winds struck from behind several guards, and before they could see the figure, their wrists all simultaneously throbbed in pain, collapsing to the ground.

Spirit Master!

With such an age and such skill, seeing the person's ability, Long Qingchen's face lost some of its pride.

This girl was also a contestant in the Zixiao Palace Exam!

Among the top ten in the Zixiao Palace Exam, there were only two contestants.

One was Xin Zhuo laying on the bed, and the other...

Long Qingchen wasn't foolish; after a little thought, he had guessed Xin Lin's identity.

If she was just a mere lowlife, no matter if he crippled or killed her, he would only receive a few words of reproach from the Emperor.

But if she was a contestant, then it was different.

Father had already said that this year's contestants in the Imperial Examination, he intended to focus on cultivating them. If any were to be harmed, the consequences wouldn't be as simple as reproach.

"You are Xin Lin."

Long Qingchen waved his hand, and his guards retreated to one side, yet still vigilantly surrounded the Medical Hall thoroughly.

Xin Lin did not deny it, which amounted to admitting her identity.

Since she was Xin Lin, it was she who had beaten up Young Master Jin.

"I heard you gave Young Master Jin a beating, you are quite capable indeed. Do you think that because you performed well in the examination, you can defy your superiors, and disrespect Royal authority!"

Long Qingchen was just looking for methods to deal with Xin Lin.

She actually delivered herself to his doorstep.

Just the charge of confronting the Third Prince and disrespecting the law was enough for her to suffer greatly.

"So it's the Third Prince, the common girl did not know of the Third Prince's identity. The common girl was merely worried about her brother's injury. Seeing that someone intended to harm my brother, I lost my composure."

Xin Lin lightly and indifferently shifted the blame away from the Third Prince completely, her tone changed, and her eyes stared directly at the Third Prince.

Long Qingchen's expression changed.

"Xin Lin, how audacious of you, who do you say is harming your brother!"

Chapter 293: Testing the Waters with Medical Skill

After Little Xinzhuo was taken away, Xin Lin entrusted Captain Yang to immediately inform her of any suspicious activities.

After all, this was still under the watchful eye of Empress Feng, and Xin Lin feared that the Empress would secretly interfere.

She was only halfway there when she received news that Long Qingchen had gone to the Medical Hall, so Xin Lin used the Ghost Escape Technique and hurried over.

Just approaching the Medical Hall, she saw an apprentice grabbing medicine with a prescription, and Xin Lin knew something was wrong with just one glance at it.

"You say I am plotting against Xinzhuo, but which eye of yours saw me do it? I just instructed Doctor Lu to take good care of him."

Long Qingchen's face was full of anger.

He admitted to having changed the prescription, and he had learned some pharmacology at Qingtian Academy. The ingredients in the prescription were merely replaced, none of them harmful.

He didn't believe that Xin Lin could figure out what was wrong.

"Whether the prescription is correct should be confirmed by Doctor Lu. Polygonum multiflorum was replaced with Ophiopogon, ginseng was replaced with Crane Grass, and the medical properties changed from nourishing blood to stopping blood. Not to mention, the quantities of Blood River Sword Grass and Panax notoginseng were also reduced. The prescription looks fine, but Little Xinzhuo suffered light internal injuries, his organ's stagnant blood needs to be expelled, but you replaced a tonic with an astringent, which will only worsen the blood stagnation and aggravate his condition! Doctor Lu, am I right?"

Doctor Lu, standing nearby, was also shocked.

He had diagnosed Little Xinzhuo several times before daring to prescribe any medicine.

But now, this young girl, without even feeling his pulse, saw the details of Little Xinzhuo's injuries clearly!

The several medicines she mentioned were indeed altered previously by the Third Prince.

"This... this... Perhaps I, Doctor Lu, have seen it wrong. The prescription might need further reconsideration."

Doctor Lu, too, found himself in a difficult position. If he admitted, wouldn't that offend the Third Prince, potentially endangering his position as a medical official?

He hurriedly wrote a new prescription and sent someone to get the medicine.

Long Qingchen's face couldn't hide the embarrassment. If he let her go just like that, Long Qingchen's face would be at stake.

At this hour, the Imperial Examination should still be ongoing.

If he detained Xin Lin, causing her to miss the time for the Imperial Examination, let's see how she can still show off her skills.

"The error in the prescription lies with Doctor Lu, and you dare to slander me, which is also a serious crime. Guards, take her and her lowly brother down!"

"Dare to touch a single hair on Xinzhuo and see what happens, thinking you can be lawless just because you're a prince."

Furious, Xin Lin's face turned red, and her small fists creaked.

Little Xinzhuo has yet to wake up, and all this is due to Jin Chen and his people!

"Let me meet this so-called second-place of the Martial Arts Examination, the prowess of an Advanced Spirit Master."

Long Qingchen snapped open the Golden Bone Fan in his hand.

Xin Lin was an Advanced Spirit Master; her movement technique just now was like vanishing and appearing at will; Long Qingchen had his apprehensions. His gaze shifted, landing on the unconscious Little Xinzhuo.

Capture the younger one first, the older one will surely surrender obediently!

From the Golden Bone Fan, several steel blades protruded, shimmering coldly. Long Qingchen infused the fan with True Qi, causing it to move on its own, spinning and striking toward the bed where Little Xinzhuo lay!

Xin Lin's eyes narrowed as she channeled Fu Xi's Energy into her right fist, swinging fiercely without fear of the Golden Bone Fan. With a loud bang, her fist's wind smoothly redirected, striking with precision and power, forcefully deflecting the trajectory of the Golden Bone Fan.

The Golden Bone Fan plunged into the nearby wall with a 'puff', embedding itself as easily as into tofu.

Chapter 294: Hit Hard, Hit Ruthlessly

The Golden Bone Fan hadn't even come close when it was blasted away by Xin Lin's force?!

Such great strength, isn't she said to be an Advanced Spirit Master, how could her force be this astonishing!

And what was that punch move just now?

No wonder Jin Chen, a Xuanwu Triple, was beaten and seriously injured, it's said his injuries were far worse than Little Xinzhuo's.

Long Qingchen's lips trembled.

This Golden Bone Fan of his was made using a small portion of the rare Golden Luminous Iron, far surpassing ordinary metals; although it seems like a mere small fan, it weighs at least a hundred pounds.

Only a Martial Artist of Xuanwu Eighth Layer like him could wield it, yet surprisingly, a girl just blasted it away with one punch.

Long Qingchen gestured, and the Golden Bone Fan spun up and returned to his hand.

"Good for you, Xin Lin! You dare defy orders, seize her! Dead or alive!"

Long Qingchen gritted his teeth.

He quickly stirred up the True Qi inside his body, he didn't believe that today he couldn't handle a mere Xin Lin.

Xin Lin scanned her surroundings, there were dozens of guards, and with Long Qingchen, if they really charged at her, she could use the Ghost Escape Technique to flee, but that would put Little Xinzhuo in trouble.

(Mommy, woo woo woo, I can flatten these foolish eggs)

Inside the Sealing Spirit Talisman, the Overlord Egg was itching to zoom out and wreak havoc.

Xin Lin hesitated, looked at Little Xinzhuo, then at the overbearing Long Qingchen.

At this moment, her ears twitched, hearing familiar footsteps.

Xin Lin's eyes suddenly changed, the sharpness in her eyes vanished.

She pouted her lips and started bawling.

"Wuu wuu waa waa waa, Daddy, someone is bullying me!"

A moment ago as agile as a leopard, Xin Lin who with one punch had repelled the attack of the Third Prince, the next second, she plopped down on the ground, wiping her tears.

"!!!"

Long Qingchen was stunned.

Dozens of guards were also stunned.

What on earth is this act?

Only the sound of panting was heard as Chu Beiqing ran in from outside.

As soon as Silly Chu entered the door, he was not pleased. Through the eyes of a fool, all he could see was Long Qingchen and a bunch of people bullying his precious daughter!

"You... you... bullying... let you bully..."

He snatched the Golden Bone Fan and aimed it at Long Qingchen's forehead, banging it several times.

"Bullying... hitting you... my baby cannot be bullied..."

Long Qingchen's vision went dark, and when he came back to his senses, his forehead was throbbing with pain and was bloody.

He covered his forehead; blood was gushing through his fingers.

"Chu Beiqing! You dare hit me! I am Long Qingchen, the Third Prince Long Qingchen!"

Blood, there was actually blood!

"It's you... hitting... hitting your head..."

Chu Beiqing didn't care about any Third Prince. He grew up with Emperor Longteng, and even Emperor Longteng has been beaten by him, let alone some prince's son.

Anyway, in the simple mind of the fool, this kid looked somewhat familiar.

Seems he had seen him before, and had to greet him when they met—that means he's eligible for a beating!

The sense of right and wrong of Silly Chu was very simple, those who bully his treasure must be hit!

Hit, hit, hit!

Whoever bullies his precious daughter, beat them all to death.

"Hold... hold him back..."

Long Qingchen tried to struggle, but Chu Beiqing's strength was astonishing.

A few guards who just approached were kicked and knocked away by him.

"Good job! Daddy, hit him hard! If he ends up crippled, it's on me!"

Xin Lin watched from the side with gleeful amusement.

She had figured out the pattern.

Silly Chu might look easy to bully, but dragons have their reverse scales, touch it and you die.

She was Silly Chu's reverse scale!

Chapter 295: The Art of Raising a Loyal Dog Dad

Men always need to be disciplined.

So does Silly Chu.

When Xin Lin had previously examined Silly Chu's body, she had discovered that although he was foolish and suffering from severe poisoning, this did not mean he was useless.

Even Chu Tianyi had failed to notice this.

Within Chu Beiqing's body resided a terrifying True Qi, lying dormant.

He did not retaliate when others bullied him, not because he could not, but because he did not know how to.

All it took was a bit of provocation for him to react.

As long as one could utilize this reaction...

Xin Lin smiled knowingly and watched her foolish father go on a rampage, watching Long Qingchen get beaten bloody, his blood pooling over and over again.

Doctor Lu by her side was already scared stiff.

The guards who saw Chu Beiqing also dared not move.

Everyone knew that Chu Beiqing was a fool.

But everyone also knew that this fool was extraordinary.

He was the sworn brother of Emperor Longteng, the uncrowned king of Longteng Country; Emperor Longteng favored him excessively, his partiality reaching the heavens.

It didn't matter that it was Long Qingchen being beaten today; even the Crown Prince himself, if present, would only have the lot of being beaten.

Perhaps after the beating, Emperor Longteng would still come forward to ask, "Bei Qing, does your hand hurt?"

"What's going on?"

Captain Yang rushed in from the outside.

Upon witnessing the scene, he was stunned.

How did they start fighting!

"Hurry and make your father stop; if he keeps going, someone could be killed."

Captain Yang had witnessed Chu Beiqing's previous fight with Grandmaster Jin, where Jin almost ended up bald-headed; how could he dare to get close to Chu Beiqing?

He was clever, knowing that Chu Beiqing only listened to Xin Lin, and quickly made eye signals to her.

Xin Lin waved her hand at her father.

Chu Beiqing immediately hopped over like a rabbit, running to his daughter's side.

"You... you all wait for me..."

Long Qingchen was propped up by others, his hand covering his forehead, the blood on his forehead still streaming merrily, daring not to stay any longer, he hastily fled.

"Daddy, did you steal the thing I asked you to?"

Xin Lin asked in a low voice.

Chu Beiqing nodded obediently and handed a small porcelain bottle to Xin Lin.

Xin Lin shook the small vial in her hand, hearing the sound of the liquid inside, her little face beaming with smiles.

"Sister..."

On the bed, Little Xinzhuo, who was startled awake by the sound of fighting, woke up.

He saw the chaos in the Medical Hall, was shocked as well, and struggled to sit up.

"Ah Zhuo, don't worry. Sister has avenged you."

Xin Lin blinked and told Little Xinzhuo the results of the Imperial Examination after he had fainted.

"Ziyue actually came out even. Sister, you must be careful, I feel there's something unusual about this."

Little Xinzhuo looked worried.

Xin Lin had severely beaten Jin Chen, Grandmaster Jin would certainly not let things go this time.

"Young lady, you should head back as well. The final round of the competition is about to start."

Captain Yang checked the time, the match between Zhang Zhiqing and Chen Nian was about to end.

"No rush, I'll take Ah Zhuo with me."

After drinking the new medicine prescribed by Doctor Lu, Little Xinzhuo had completely awakened.

The siblings immediately rushed back to North Square.

In North Square, the match results were in.

Using her Xuanwu Eighth Layer cultivation, Zhang Zhiqing made Chen Nian retreat step by step, ultimately forcing her to concede defeat.

Thus, the final round of the Imperial Examination would commence between Xin Lin and Zhang Zhiqing.

"Father Emperor, Mother, you must seek justice for your son!"

Just as the judges announced that the competition was about to begin, Third Prince Long Qingchen, enraged, stormed into North Square.

Chapter 296: Strife Among Women!

Clothes tattered and torn, head bloodied, and face scratched by claw marks, Third Prince Long Qingchen had never been in such a pitiful state since he was born.

Seeing his appearance, Empress Feng's heart tightened, and she stood up abruptly.

"My son, how did you end up like this?"

Empress Feng was heartbroken, quickly ordering Grand Doctor Chu to check on Long Qingchen.

"It was them, it was Chu Beiqing and Xin Lin who ganged up to beat your son!"

Long Qingchen's eyes were red with fury, pointing behind him.

On his way here, he had just heard from his subordinates that Xin Lin was actually the idiot's daughter.

No wonder she was so fearless, daring to strike even a prince.

But she really thinks that by recognizing her father, she can turn into a phoenix and ascend the branches, to live her grand dreams.

She doesn't see that Longteng Country bears the surname Long, not Chu!

His father is the Emperor, his mother is the Empress, and she is just an idiot's daughter, her mother a village girl!

Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo, Chu Beiqing, Captain Yang, and others just happened to walk in.

Empress Feng's gaze was like lightning, falling on Chu Beiqing and his daughter.

Empress Feng's gaze dimmed, she choked up and knelt down, her eyes brimming with tears, a picture of pity.

"Your Majesty, please stand up for my son. Although Qingchen is incompetent, he is still a royal descendant, how can he be bullied by others indiscriminately. He is the son I bore after ten months of pregnancy; when he is hurt, the pain is in his mother."

Xin Lin saw this and silently applauded Empress Feng in her heart.

A true character! If soft tactics don't work, she switches to hard.

Empress Feng must have seen that Emperor Longteng is utterly biased towards Chu Beiqing.

Without employing some act of self-victimization or playing the beauty card, Emperor Longteng would certainly not pursue the matter.

Emperor Longteng saw Empress Feng crying pitifully, tears streaming down like pear blossoms in the rain.

However... crying pitifully, right? But she's not the only one who can do that.

"Your Majesty, this humble girl has something to say."

Xin Lin's nose was red, her large eyes misted with a layer of tears, looking like a little white rabbit.

Seeing her like that, Long Qingchen ground his teeth in frustration.

Could she act any more hypocritically? She's a fierce tigress in front of me, but in front of my father, she plays the little white rabbit!

Emperor Longteng waved his hand, indicating for Xin Lin to continue.

"Your Majesty must first pardon this humble girl of the crime of deceiving the emperor before I dare speak."

Xin Lin sobbed heavily.

In the midst of speaking, Xin Lin's "little claws" swiftly pinched her foolish father's waist.

Chu Beiqing grimaced in pain, his eyes reddened, and tears began to fall.

"Pain...my daughter...it hurts..."

Chu Beiqing looked tearfully at his own daughter, not understanding why she would pinch him.

"I pardon you, you may speak," said the Emperor.

Emperor Longteng looked from Chu Beiqing to Xin Lin.

He suddenly felt a surge of sorrow, feeling pity for Bei Qing who hadn't seen his own daughter in fourteen years.

This meeting, even the fool feels guilty, feeling heartache is natural.

He's a fool, how could he understand anything about princes?

Such is the heart of a parent under Heaven!

Empress Feng's mouth twitched.

Had she met her match?

Word fight against word fight?

It appeared she was losing.

She knew it, Xin Lin was no good sort.

"Your Majesty, it was the Third Prince who started it. He... he tried to harm the critically injured Little Xinzhuo!"

Xin Lin wiped her tears and gave Little Xinzhuo a significant look.

Little Xinzhuo, born from the Protect Sister Demon Sect, knelt before Emperor Longteng.

"Nonsense! Why would I harm an insignificant commoner!"

Long Qingchen was infuriated, flatly denying it.

"That's because you discovered his true identity!"

Xin Lin exclaimed loudly.

Chapter 297: The Imposter Prince

"Ridiculous, what status could he possibly have, he's likely nothing but a base-born peasant without a father's upbringing."

Xin Lin said nothing at first, but when she did, Long Qingchen burst out laughing.

Xin Lin is Chu Beiqing's daughter, but clearly Little Xinzhuo is not; surely just a country bumpkin kid.

"How audacious!"

Xin Lin leaped forward in one swift motion, jumped up, and with a smack, she slapped Long Qingchen across the face.

Long Qingchen's ears rang with the sound of the slap, and blood gushed from his nose.

"You wretch, how dare you hit me! I'll kill you!"

He was about to rush forward when Chu Beiqing slammed into him, and they started wrestling.

"This is outrageous! Emperor, look at this, she even dares to hit the Prince! She clearly has no respect for the Emperor."

Empress Feng saw this, her beautiful eyes filled with anger. If not for the dignity of the Mother of the Country, she would have stepped forward and severely reprimanded Xin Lin herself.

Emperor Longteng also frowned deeply.

"Xin Lin, I have let you off time and again for the sake of Bei Qing. But you have assaulted the Third Prince, committing a crime of lèse-majesté. If you do not clarify this matter to me satisfactorily today, nobody can save you."

This slap of Xin Lin's was a slap to the Royal's face.

"Emperor, this slap was not for me, but for you. It was to discipline the Third Prince for his impudent and insubordinate words!"

Xin Lin's declaration was resonant and assertive.

Inside North Square, the ministers and exam candidates were all silent.

Even General Zuo secretly broke into a sweat for Xin Lin.

This young girl was daring and completely unpredictable.

General Zuo did not understand what play Xin Lin was putting on.

Could it be that she intended to publicly reveal the Seventh Prince's identity?

Her actions were too reckless; if the Emperor was provoked, he might very well execute both the Seventh Prince and her on the spot.

Unable to decide, General Zuo could only watch coldly to see what Xin Lin would do next.

Chu Tianyi beside her rejoiced over the disaster awaiting her, thinking that she was doomed this time.

Good job, Xin Lin!

You even dare to accuse the Third Prince of insubordination?

Am I foolish, or is the younger one acting foolishly?

Clap clap clap—

A loud round of applause erupted in North Square.

Emperor Longteng's brows raised as he saw Silly Chu grinning broadly, clapping vigorously.

Upon seeing Chu Beiqing, Emperor Longteng's rising anger subsided once again.

"Then explain, how exactly is the Third Prince guilty of insubordination?"

Emperor Longteng said sternly.

"He said Xin Zhuo was born by a mother but not raised by a father. This is clearly an insult to you! Xin Zhuo is the Seventh Prince, your own flesh and blood!"

Xin Lin's voice suddenly raised a few notches.

Seventh Prince!

The square erupted in murmurs once again.

Emperor Longteng's expression shifted slightly.

He turned to look at Little Xinzhuo.

"I am the commoner Xin Zhuo, son of Shi Ying. This is my mother's keepsake."

Little Xinzhuo knelt on the ground, pulling out Noble Lady Shi's ring and held it over his head.

The white jade ring clearly engraved with Shi Ying's name startled Third Prince Long Qingchen.

This lad, the Seventh Prince?

Noble Lady Shi and her son's affair, Long Qingchen had also heard about.

But wasn't Noble Lady Shi driven out of the palace ages ago, without any word since?

He stealthily glanced at his own mother, Empress Feng, whose gaze was usual and her face delicate as if wearing an exquisite mask.

"Fetch someone to check this ring."

Empress Feng commanded someone to step forward and examine the ring.

"Reporting back, the ring gifted by the Emperor has no issues. However, this child is not of Royal bloodline. Impersonating the Royal bloodline is a capital offense!"

Empress Feng's eyes hardened, and with a flick of her sleeve, several Imperial Guards stepped forward, preparing to seize Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo.

Chapter 298: Blood Test, Reaffirming Kinship

The Imperial Guard was about to arrest someone.

Xin Lin hastily pulled Little Xin Zhuo into an embrace, while Chu, the Silly Chu, reacted even quicker, seizing Long Qingchen's throat.

"...Who dares... bully... my treasure... bully..."

Chu Beiqing's grip was no laughing matter, turning the face of Long Qingchen, a Martial Artist of the Xuanwu Eighth Layer, the color of a liver.

"Fool! How dare you hurt me! Father, he wants to kill someone!"

Long Qingchen was so enraged that his eyes rolled back.

"Silence! Who allowed you to call Beiqing a fool at every turn!"

Emperor Longteng glanced at Little Xin Zhuo, and then at Long Qingchen.

Both were princes, yet Little Xin Zhuo appeared frail and delicate, while Long Qingchen was pampered and nurtured in luxury. Just moments ago, Little Xin Zhuo, ever so humble, had repeatedly referred to himself as a commoner—a mature and sensible child.

Little Xin Zhuo looked like his mother, and Emperor Longteng couldn't help but recall when Noble Lady Shi had first entered the palace, her eyes as clear and lovely as his, like a jasmine flower in bloom, pitiful yet endearing.

Empress Feng signaled the Imperial Guard with a glance, and they dared not act rashly, fearing that Chu Beiqing might lose his wits and strangle the Third Prince to death.

"Xin Lin, I will spare you the crime of deceiving your ruler, in consideration of you being Beiqing's daughter. Since you address Xin Zhuo as a sibling, then surely you know why Noble Lady Shi and her son were expelled from the palace. Back then, it was your father who personally verified that the bloodline of the Seventh Prince was impure. Unless you have other evidence to prove the lineage of the Seventh Prince, not only will he face death, but so will you."

Although Emperor Longteng cherished old times, he valued the purity of the royal bloodline greatly.

He had indeed considered bringing back Noble Lady Shi and her son on the advice of the Minister of Imperial Sacrificial Worship some time ago.

However, it was never his intention to do so in this manner, knowing full well that the treatment of Noble Lady Shi and her son mattered greatly to the loyalty of General Shi's lineage.

By revealing Xin Zhuo's identity during the Imperial Examination, Xin Lin left only two possible outcomes: either she and Xin Zhuo would die,

or she had compelling evidence that could prove Chu Beiqing's judgment was mistaken in the past.

"Your Majesty, I dare say I have evidence to prove it. The bloodline verification done back then was not accurate."

Xin Lin bowed slightly.

"How audacious! Xin Lin, you're spouting nonsense. The ancient ritual of blood verification has been used since time immemorial to determine kinship, and you dare claim it is inaccurate!"

Chu Tianyi rebuked her.

"If I say it's inaccurate, it means it is. If you don't believe me, I can demonstrate it right here before everyone."

Xin Lin spoke and took out a vial.

All eyes focused on the vial in Xin Lin's hand.

"Inside here is Xin Zhuo's blood, I humbly request a drop of Dragon Blood from Your Majesty."

Xin Lin bowed again.

"Your Majesty, with a body as precious as gold and jade, how could we allow her to..."

Empress Feng was irate.

"No matter, just bring a bowl of clean water."

Emperor Longteng glanced at Xin Lin, seeing her young face full of confidence.

This reminded him of the young Chu Beiqing, who, in the face of any endeavor, exuded complete confidence. Yet he himself was a timid prince at the time, just like Little Xin Zhuo.

The affair of Noble Lady Shi remained a lingering knot in Emperor Longteng's heart.

Today's blood test would be the last chance he offered to Noble Lady Shi and her son.

A bowl of clean water was brought forth, and Emperor Longteng let a drop of his blood fall into it.

Xin Lin took the bowl and opened the vial of blood in her hand, adding a drop into the water.

Ripples echoed out upon the surface as the two drops of blood moved about in the clean water. Everyone held their breath, eyes fixed on the bowl.

After a moment, the two drops of blood...

Chapter 299: The Great Reversal

In the delicate jade bowl, two drops of blood rolled in the water, drawing ever closer.

Gulp—

Beside them, the Third Prince Long Qingchen couldn't help but swallow.

It must not merge; how could that little ghost possibly have royal blood.

Empress Feng only lightly mentioned it, glancing at the bowl as if completely unconcerned whether the blood in it would merge.

After a moment, the blood did not merge.

Emperor Longteng's brows furrowed.

The corners of Empress Feng's lips curled almost imperceptibly, clearly having anticipated this result.

"See? They did not merge. How could he be a Prince? He is simply a bastard! How dare he impersonate a member of the royal lineage. Seize this bastard and Xin Lin!"

Long Qingchen breathed a sigh of relief, his face animated with excitement, even forgetting his own injuries.

The Imperial Guards glanced at each other, then back at Emperor Longteng, waiting for his command.

Emperor Longteng's expression was not pleased.

Xin Lin's actions were too presumptuous.

Such a scandal in the royal family, spoken so brazenly, also made Emperor Longteng feel dishonored.

"Xin Lin, do you have anything else to say..."

Emperor Longteng said angrily.

"I'm sorry, I just realized, I actually grabbed the wrong bottle, this one here contains Ah Zhuo's blood."

Xin Lin playfully stuck out her tongue, pulling out another bottle from her bosom.

The two bottles looked exactly alike.

"What does it matter which bottle? A bastard is still a bastard, let him drop a few more drops of blood and then we'll know. Father Emperor, you must not be lenient again, this time, they must be punished."

Long Qingchen added fuel to the fire.

"What's the rush, of course taking new blood is not a problem. But still, I repeat, blood testing for kinship is inaccurate, because... the blood in the first bottle was your blood."

Xin Lin blinked at the Third Prince.

"What's wrong with my blood... how could you possibly have my blood?"

Long Qingchen suddenly fell silent; he bled a lot when Chu Beiqing injured him; could it be from then?

But even so, why would his blood not merge with Emperor's?

Could it be... Long Qingchen sneakily glanced at his own mother.

Empress Feng's body trembled, her phoenix eyes suddenly turned towards Xin Lin.

Under the splendid phoenix robe, ten beautiful jade-like fingers trembled with anger!

What a cunning Xin Lin!

"You wretched girl, stop talking nonsense, what do you mean, are you saying I'm not my father Emperor's... you... seize her!"

Long Qingchen was so angry he stuttered.

"This is absurd."

Emperor Longteng exclaimed sternly.

"Emperor, Xin Lin has gone too far! She slanders me, slanders the Third Prince, so malicious at such a young age. If you continue to indulge her, I... I would rather die!"

Empress Feng covered her face and cried in grief, her temples shaking, and tears flowed down that gorgeous face, truly like a peony shedding tears, pitiable and endearing to behold.

"Emperor, I meant no slander. Empress upholds maternal virtues globally, virtuous and kind, how could she commit an indecent act (hardly). The Third Prince excels in both civil and military skills, a true paragon (pah). Emperor, you said evidence was needed, and I provide evidence. Blood testing for kinship is an ancient method, and if it's not reliable, it should be abolished. I only provided proof that this method is unreliable. Therefore, the accused crime of the Seventh Prince not being the rightful Imperial Heir, was baseless, Noble Lady Shi and her son were wrongly accused!"

Every word from Xin Lin struck the ears of Emperor Longteng and the court officials.

"I don't believe it, that definitely wasn't my blood."

Long Qingchen, unwilling to accept this, stepped forward and dropped a drop of blood into the bowl.

Chapter 300: Seventh Prince Longteng

Three drops of blood, still refusing to blend.

Even Long Qingchen was taken aback at this moment.

Divine assistance!

Xin Lin felt a secret delight and quickly knelt down with a bow.

"May the Emperor discern the truth and grant justice to Little Xinzhuo and Noble Lady Shi."

Beside her, Silly Chu hurriedly followed suit, dropping to his knees alongside his beloved daughter.

"Discern... justice..."

Silly Chu muttered indistinctly.

"May the Emperor discern the truth and grant justice to Noble Lady Shi and her son."

Then, General Zuo flipped open his official robe, knelt on both knees, and spoke with a grave voice.

As soon as he knelt, other military generals from the court also followed, kneeling one after another.

"May the Emperor discern the truth and grant justice to Noble Lady Shi and her son."

Three hundred Imperial Guards, led by Captain Yang, knelt down one by one.

Grandmaster Jin and Chu Tianyi wore faces of gloom, and the rest of the courtiers exchanged looks of confusion.

"Mother..."

Long Qingchen glanced at Empress Feng, hoping she would say something, only to be met with a fierce glare from her, forcing him to wait on the side with a bitter face.

"What a demand for justice. Xin Lin, now I truly believe that you are the daughter of Bei Qing. Rise."

Emperor Longteng pondered for a moment, paced forward to Xin Lin and her father, and with his right hand on Chu Bei, and the left on Xin Lin, helped them both to their feet.

At last, Emperor Longteng spoke again.

"Seventh Prince, you may rise as well. Everybody, please stand."

Little Xinzhuo's body on the ground slightly trembled.

"Seventh Prince, the Emperor has asked you to stand. Please get up."

General Zuo hurriedly came forward to pull Little Xinzhuo up.

Little Xinzhuo had a look of confusion in his eyes, looking at Xin Lin and then at Emperor Longteng, a long-missed smile finally appearing on his young face.

"Thank you... thank you, Father Emperor."

This address of 'Father Emperor' was now rightful and proper.

The identities of Noble Lady Shi and Little Xinzhuo seemed to have been tacitly acknowledged.

"Father Emperor, what about my injuries?"

Long Qingchen was still covered in blood, and seeing Xin Lin and her father in high spirits with the Emperor, his heart burned with resentment.

"Bei Qing is my sworn brother, which makes him your Imperial Uncle! She's his daughter, and you even struck her. A grown man unable to best a little girl, do you have no shame?"

Emperor Longteng reprimanded.

Long Qingchen was scolded until he was drenched with proverbial blood yet had no right to talk back.

Empress Feng forced a cheerful smile.

"Your Majesty, please don't be angry. This is all a misunderstanding. Perhaps the Third Prince assumed someone was impersonating the Imperial Heir, and acted that way for the sake of our family's dignity. Upon returning, I'll have him face the wall for a few days to reflect."

Empress Feng pulled Long Qingchen over, fearing he might cause further trouble.

"Your Majesty, look, dusk approaches, and the final stage of the Imperial Examination is upon us."

Grandmaster Jin also hurriedly came forward to smooth things over.

"We narrowly missed the main event; the Imperial Examination must go on. Xin Lin has been startled, let her rest for a moment."

The Emperor waved his hand, and everyone returned to their respective places.

Xin Lin and her brother stood to the side, with Little Xinzhuo still partly in a daze.

"Sister..."

He had barely spoken when Xin Lin hushed him with a low voice, telling him they would talk after returning.

The North Square was still Empress Feng's territory, and judging from that bowl of water earlier, Empress Feng's methods seemed even more formidable than those of Emperor Longteng.

"How did you do it?"

"I told you, we'll talk when we go back."

Xin Lin came back to her senses, realizing it wasn't Little Xinzhuo who asked her.

"Pride Corpse, it seems there's finally something you don't know."

Xin Lin realized that the one questioning her wasn't someone else, but was Pride Corpse.

This fellow hadn't paid her any attention for hours, and now it seemed he had "risen from the dead".