

## Medical Princess 891

### Chapter 891 The Ambition of Becoming an Imperial Consort for Two Reigns

The peony in full bloom was like a gorgeous beauty!

It was rare to see such a scene outside the Palace. All the peonies in the courtyard were of high quality with their full blooms as posh as an emperor.

Even though peonies were not Shao Wanru's favorite flowers, she couldn't help staying a bit longer. She walked out of the pavilion and then around the garden with slow paces to appreciate the peonies. She felt very easy without anyone else around.

However, she lost such a sense of freedom as soon as she saw Shao Yanru.

It was unexpected for Shao Wanru to meet Shao Yanru here. It was said that Shao Yanru had been sent to a remote palace, because not only did the Empress dislike her, but also the Emperor did not want to see her. How surprising it was to see her appear here!

"Your Highness!" Shao Yanru seemed to be very surprised too. She had just entered the courtyard through the gate and was stunned for a few seconds when she saw Shao Wanru, but she hastened to salute her respectfully, behaving very naturally.

Shao Wanru noticed that Shao Yanru was plainly dressed. In the past, even her principal maid would never wear such clothes, let alone Shao Yanru as the Eldest Miss. But she wore it now, which made people feel pity for her.

It seemed that she didn't live a good life in the Palace. Her face was pale and lean but that made her look more pitiful. She was not gorgeous enough to be the first beauty, but she was so delicate that she still looked very charming.

Her clothes looked very simple, but she was neatly dressed. Her waist looked even slenderer when it was tightly tied now.

Shao Yanru had always been beautiful, so she looked more attractive than those ordinary imperial concubines even when she was simply dressed.

"Where are you going?" Shao Wanru gestured for her to stand up and asked lightly.

"I am going to see an imperial concubine, Your Highness!" Shao Yanru said vaguely with a gloomy face. She was no longer as dazzling as before, which made her even more abject.

"Would you please tell me which imperial consort has the honor of having your initiative visit?" Shao Wanru looked behind Shao Yanru and asked. Peony Garden was very close to Empress Dowager's Palace of Benevolent Peace so that it could be considered the center of the Palace. Therefore, it was naturally not comparable to the remote place where Shao Yanru lived now.

"It's Zhaoyi Di," Shao Yanru answered obediently.

Zhaoyi Di was the Miss of Duke Yong's Mansion. After entering the Palace, she was conferred the title of Zhaoyi. When Shao Wanru had just moved to the capital city, Di Fenglan used to take advantage of her status to bully Shao Wanru.

"But Zhaoyi Di wasn't inside!" Shao Wanru said.

"I know... I just come here to enjoy the peonies. I heard that we couldn't see such peonies anywhere else," Shao Yanru said gently, without any arrogance. It looked like she was convinced by the fact that she as a Secondary Consort could only be respectful to Shao Wanru, who was a princess now.

"This way, please!" Shao Wanru stepped aside and said with a smile.

Shao Yanru respectfully saluted Shao Wanru and then slowly walked into the garden. Her palace maid Han Dan closely followed behind her, so no one noticed that she was holding the handkerchief in her hand tightly. When she passed by Shao Wanru, she broke out in a cold sweat when she seemed to see a faint smile on Shao Wanru's face.

If there was someone she was most afraid of, it was this Princess Chen in front of her.

Shao Wanru didn't stay. She turned around and left with Yujie.

Hearing the footsteps behind her fading away, Shao Yanru stopped and then slowly turned around, with her soft eyes instantly filled with viciousness, jealousy, and hatred.

Han Dan also stopped. When she saw the dark and cold expression on Shao Yanru's face, she hurriedly reminded her, "Young mistress..."

"I know... I just can't accept this... Why can she, as a bastard, have such a high status while I am in dire straits now?"

Shao Yanru said that in a low voice. It seemed that she was talking to herself, but the viciousness in her words almost overflowed.

"Young mistress, we must hurry up. We will get into trouble if the Empress finds out that you have been out!" Han Dan reminded her again.

The Empress didn't like Secondary Consort Shao, and the Emperor had never come to see her. So few people in the Palace showed respect to Secondary Consort Shao, not to mention her as a palace maid.

Han Dan had intended to move up, but unexpectedly she was even worse off now than when she was in Chuxiu Palace. She regretted it.

But no matter how regretful she was, she had no choice but to follow Shao Yanru.

"Let's go!" Shao Yanru said a few seconds later. She turned around and walked into the garden. Indeed, she couldn't sigh with self-pity. If she couldn't save herself in the dark Palace, she would end up like this.

Today, she was not going to see Zhaoyi Di but to find out Consort Lan's whereabouts.

It was said that Consort Lan used to be one of the Emperor's most favored concubines, for whom the Emperor almost removed the Empress's title. But later, Empress Dowager intervened and suppressed it,

which also made Consort Lan imprisoned. Shao Yanru got all of these with the power of Duke Xing's Mansion.

It was said that even though Consort Lan was imprisoned, the Emperor was still fond of her. The Emperor had been going to Consort Lan's palace to see her, though he didn't go there a lot often because of the Empress Dowager's order. Moreover, it was said that Consort Lan didn't have to always stay in her palace and was allowed to go out from time to time.

Since the Emperor didn't want to remove the Empress from her position anymore, Empress Dowager turned a blind eye to it.

Before entering the Palace, Shao Yanru had analyzed and concluded that Consort Lan probably was the Emperor's favored consort and he had always been in love with her. Otherwise, Consort Lan could not have been living such a good life during her imprisonment. Even the Empress had to avoid offending her.

Any topic related to Consort Lan was not allowed to be mentioned in Phoenix Palace.

As for Consort Lan, she slowly became a taboo in the Palace, and no one was allowed to talk about her.

After Shao Yanru entered the Palace, she used to pretend to be ignorant of it and strolled to Consort Lan's palace, with the hope that she could see Consort Lan. Unexpectedly, she was scolded and asked to stay away from Consort Lan's residence by Chu Liuyue later.

She was exposed at the Empress's Phoenix Palace that day. No matter what she would do next, the Empress would not accept her again. Other consorts knew that she was not favored by the Empress, and none of them dared to help her. Even Zhaoyi Di took care of her in secret.

She had to have an anchor in the Palace. The Empress and Empress Dowager were unlikely choices, and the Emperor did not like her now. Therefore, Consort Lan was her only hope.

If she could win the heart of Consort Lan, who was favored by the Emperor, she would live a better life in the Palace.

Moreover, it was because of the Empress that Consort Lan ended up like that, and the two of them must be born to be at odds with each other. So Shao Yanru was confident that Consort Lan would be convinced to help her as long as she saw that Emperor's favored consort.

That was why Shao Yanru secretly came here with the excuse of visiting Zhaoyi Di. But she didn't expect to meet Shao Wanru, which made her become jealous and hateful.

But she knew that it was not the time to be jealous of Shao Wanru. She pacified herself and walked into Peony Garden in a hurry.

She didn't find Consort Lan after rooting around the garden. She only saw a kettle, a stove, and two teacups on the table in the pavilion. Consort Lan had left.

Standing in the pavilion, Shao Yanru silently looked at the stone table in front of her with a darkened face.

"Why don't you take a rest here, and I'll go to look for her again, young mistress? Maybe Consort Lan is hiding from others, for she doesn't want to see anyone," Han Dan suggested. She was very good at reading people's faces.

"No, she has left!" Shao Yanru shook her head and said.

"That's not necessarily the case! As it is for you, it is inconvenient for her to meet other people, young mistress. She might hide!" Han Dan did not give up, with the hope that Shao Yanru could stage a comeback.

Their current lives were too tough to handle. Not to mention Shao Yanru, even Han Dan had suffered a lot as she was oppressed wherever she went.

Shao Yanru walked to the stone table, picked up a teacup, and glanced at it. Then she said coldly with anger in her eyes, "Shao Wanru met Consort Lan just now!"

No matter how hard she tried, she couldn't see Consort Lan in the end. But Shao Wanru came across her soon after she entered the Palace!

It was the same as their status. She wanted to become Princess Yue, Princess Zhou, Princess Chen, or Princess Xin, but in the end, she became an imperial consort of the lowest rank, while Shao Wanru became Princess Chen! Why?

It was she who was the most favored eldest legitimate daughter in Duke Xing's Mansion. How could a bastard child like Shao Wanru compare with her?

Han Dan lowered her head and didn't dare to speak anymore. This was often the time when Secondary Consort Shao was in a bad mood, which could be told from the viciousness on her beautiful face.

She had better keep silent at this time as a servant.

It was quiet in the pavilion with only the sound of the wind. Shao Yanru heavily put down the teacup and ordered with the hatred on her face gradually fading, "Let's go back. Then you go to tell them that if there is news about Consort Lan next time, report it to me as soon as possible!"

"Yes, I'll pass on your order later!" Han Dan answered hurriedly with a sigh of relief.

"It has been late when we came out. Let's go back early!" Shao Yanru nodded, turned around, and walked out of the pavilion. She was not favored by the Emperor now, so she had to keep a low profile. Besides, she hadn't intended to sleep with the Emperor.

The Emperor had the greatest power, but he was old after all and no one knew when he would die. Those young royal men were more reliable. She didn't mind that she was an imperial consort of the lowest rank now. At least she was unobtrusive in the Palace temporarily. She had been too impatient before, and that was why she fell into such a dilemma.

Of course, it was just a temporary avoidance of losing her virgin but not her original ambition.

Since she had entered the Palace, she could not waste such a favorable condition. She would get back everything that belonged to her. It was not like it had never happened in history that a woman had been an imperial consort for two reigns...

## Chapter 892 Gentleness, My Everything Is Yours

When Shao Wanru returned to the Palace of Benevolent Peace, Empress Dowager hadn't woken up yet.

Chu Liuchen came back after she had been sitting around for a while in the side hall. He waved his hand to ask all the palace maids to leave, entered the side hall, and sat beside Shao Wanru. Then he reached out to draw her in his arms.

Shao Wanru instantly blushed with shyness, with her bright watery eyes becoming hazy. She struggled hard but failed to escape from his arms. Chu Liuchen was pretty strong, though he looked slim. Shao Wanru was tightly hugged to sit on his lap.

"Let go of me. If others catch us..." Shao Wanru said with a red face as she was twisting her body hard and trying to get rid of his arms. It was a very indecent scene, and what's more, they were in the Palace!

"What are you afraid of? We are husband and wife now, and we can do something more intimate, let alone this!" Chu Liuchen said naturally, still holding Shao Wanru tightly in his arms.

"We... we are in the Imperial Palace..." Shao Wanru said in a low voice with a red face.

"So what?" Chu Liuchen raised his handsome eyebrows with a confused face, as if he was indeed puzzled by her words. But his beautiful eyes were full of smiles, and it could be seen that he was pretending to be silly.

"Imperial Grandmother will know..." Shao Wanru pinched him and said. "How can he be so unabashed? How can he do such a shameless thing with such a handsome face? What's more annoying is that he pretends to know nothing about his blatant deeds."

"Are you afraid that Imperial Grandmother will catch us doing this? Don't worry, there are only the two of us here. No one will see us!" Chu Liuchen explained in a serious voice, but he failed to hide the smile on his face.

"..."

Shao Wanru wanted to pinch him again. "Do they need to catch us on the spot? A man and a woman stay in the same room after sending all the servants out. What else could they do?"

"Your Highness..." Shao Wanru tried to purse her lips to show her displeasure.

She thought that she looked serious, but she didn't expect that her delicate face looked cuter because of her bulging face.

She often looked elegant and charming, which was just perfectly beautiful. But at the moment, she had a girl's coquettish look, which made her lovelier.

Chu Liuchen felt that he could love her more. He turned his head to kiss her on the cheek and then on her pink, petal-like lips. He couldn't help but breathe faster.

"We are in the Palace of Benevolent Peace!" Shao Wanru was anxious and pushed him with strength.

"It will be fine that we just talk in secret. If we are... when Empress Dowager summons us... How can I face her?"

Seeing that she become annoyed from embarrassed, Chu Liuchen stopped making fun of her. He just held her slender waist with a smile without any other move.

As Chu Liuchen stopped, Shao Wanru breathed a sigh of relief. She didn't struggle anymore and stayed in his arms quietly. She changed her posture into a comfortable one, leaned against his chest, and then fiddled with a jade pendant hanging on his waist with one hand.

The jade pendant was the warm jade that was once given to her, but Empress Dowager asked her to give it back later.

"It was because of this jade pendant that Empress Dowager made up her mind to marry her to Chu Liuchen, wasn't it?" Thinking of this, Shao Wanru felt warm in her heart.

"What? Do you like it?" Chu Liuchen couldn't help laughing when he saw her nestling in his arms and fiddling with the jade pendant.

"No, I don't!" Shao Wanru stopped moving her hand with a blushed face.

"Tell me if you like it, just like saying it out if you like me. I won't blame you!" Chu Liuchen said with pride.

Shao Wanru felt that her knowledge of Prince Chen's bottom line was refreshed again.

"How could he be so natural when he said that?"

Shao Wanru pursed her lips and retorted in a low voice, "I don't like you, Your Highness! I only like this jade pendant. You gave it to me once, but who knew that it was your plot!"

She meant that Chu Liuchen didn't keep his promise.

What he had given to her was even asked back! Although he didn't ask her in person at that time, he had schemed that if he wore the jade pendant in front of Empress Dowager, she would ask Shao Wanru to give it back.

Her coquettish look pleased Chu Liuchen. He liked Shao Wanru's behaving in a spoiled manner in front of him because it was the indication that she sincerely considered him one of her own. Actually, she, as an indifferent person, didn't care about such a trivial thing at all! At this time, his handsome face became more and more cheerful. "Don't worry, I won't treat you unfairly. What is mine is also yours, so there is no distinction between what is yours and what is mine!"

"No, Your Highness. My belongings are always mine!" Shao Wanru said seriously. She blinked her watery eyes and raised the corners of her mouth.

"Okay, everything I have is yours, but everything you have is still yours!" Chu Liuchen said with a subtle smile.

Chu Liuchen had never been a rule-follower, especially at such a moment when his wife flirted with him. He couldn't help but want to get some benefits. He slowly moved one of his hands up, but before he touched her chest, his fidgety hand was stopped by Shao Wanru.

"Your Highness..." Shao Wanru said with a blush.

"Fine! I didn't intend to do anything. I just want to have a look..." Chu Liuchen looked at Shao Wanru's chest with regret and then sighed in a low voice. "When will you come of age? It's too slow! I can't wait for the coming of autumn!"

"How long do I have to wait?"

Chu Liuchen thought that he had to cherish the health of his beloved wife even though they had been married, but it was heart-wrenching for him not to eat the tasty food in front of him.

His words were so explicit that Shao Wanru could totally understand them. She couldn't help pinching his hand hard again.

"How unabashed he is! I can't believe he'd say something like that!"

"Your Highness Prince Chen, Empress Dowager is up. You are invited!" Xiao Xuanzi's voice suddenly came from outside the hall.

Shao Wanru hurriedly stood up and tidied up her dress, worrying that it had been messed up just now.

"Come here, let me help you!" Chu Liuchen stood up and said.

Though Shao Wanru's face was blushed, she went close to him as she was told. After all, she couldn't see whether she was disheveled.

Chu Liuchen first tucked a strand of her hair behind her head, then bent and gently smoothened the hem of her dress.

Shao Wanru's eyes fell on his dedicated face. He was bending and tidying up the dress for her with an elegant and gentle smile. She felt inexplicably warm in her heart.

"A man like him was even willing to bend down to do that for me!"

"Okay, let's go!" Chu Liuchen looked Shao Wanru up and down after finishing his tidying. Then he held her hand and walked out together with her.

Shao Wanru didn't shake off his hand though she was shy and very nervous. Even though she had married Chu Liuchen, she was embarrassed to hold his hand in front of Empress Dowager.

Fortunately, when they arrived at the door, he let go of her hand, which made her relieved.

Empress Dowager had been waiting for them in the main hall, and her attention was immediately caught by them when they walked in. She looked at the couple and felt more and more satisfied.

Empress Dowager had just got up and was in good spirits. After chatting with them for a while, she asked Chu Liuchen about his visit to the Imperial Study just now. Shao Wanru sat aside and listened to the conversation between the grandmother and grandson.

"What did your Uncle the Emperor say?" Empress Dowager asked, and the smile on her face was slowly fading.

"As for it... he said that he would send someone to Xu State..." Chu Liuchen answered gently.

"Whom will he send?" Empress Dowager suddenly sat up straight and felt uneasy. That also made Shao Wanru worried and uneasy.

"Imperial Grandmother!" Chu Liuchen said with a gentle and elegant smile.

"Is... is... is he going to send you there?" Empress Dowager's face changed a lot, and her voice trembled. She reached out to grab Chu Liuchen's sleeve and said, "How can he send you... Your... your health... You haven't recovered yet!"

It looked like a loving grandmother from an ordinary family was protecting her grandson.

Shao Wanru's expression also changed dramatically. Most of her memories of Chu Liuchen in her last life were learned from others, except for the last scene, which was engraved in her heart.

She married Chu Liuchen much earlier in this life than in the last life. She didn't know what happened to Chu Liuchen at the same time in the last life, but some things in the depths of her memory were recalled by what he had just said. It seemed that Prince Chen almost lost his life during his business trip.

"Since the time is very close... Could it be this trip to Xu State?"

Nan Jiang was remote. Although Xu State was a small state, there was something unknown there to the imperial power. But Shao Wanru did not want Chu Liuchen to take the risk.

Although she didn't say anything, she widened her eyes and looked at Chu Liuchen nervously, for fear that he would say he was going.

"Imperial Grandmother, don't worry. I'm not going to Xu State. I'm just going to see off the ambassadors on behalf of Uncle the Emperor! As a remote state, it keeps getting involved in the affairs of our country. Both Uncle the Emperor and I think there must be something wrong with it," Chu Liuchen comforted Empress Dowager with a smile and winked at Shao Wanru with his right eye.

They had to clean all the evil remnants of the previous dynasty as soon as possible, so a trip to Xu State was imperative!

His rascal behavior made Shao Wanru angry and annoyed, but she let out a sigh of relief in her heart.

Neither did she know what had happened to Chu Liuchen nor she couldn't persuade him in her last life. But in this life, she wouldn't let Chu Liuchen take risks again.

Empress Dowager nodded repeatedly and felt relieved, and she asked casually, "Well, as long as it isn't you... But who will be sent by your Uncle the Emperor?"

In fact, for Empress Dowager, as long as Chu Liuchen didn't go, she didn't care who would go at all.

"Commandery Prince Qing recommended himself!" Chu Liuchen said with a slight smile, a trace of coldness flashing in his narrowed eyes. "Of course, Chu Qing didn't mean to ask for permission. He just wanted to force me to go!" If it weren't for Shao Wanru, Chu Liuchen might be willing to go on this business. Anyway, it was good to travel far to broaden his horizon, and he didn't care whether it was dangerous or not.

But now, he had someone whom he wanted to protect, so he naturally could not go as Chu Qing wished!



## Chapter 893 Princess Chen Does Not Make Concessions

"Commandery Prince Qing? Is he of his own accord?" Empress Dowager frowned. She did not like Chu Qing, but every time she thought of his family background, she would feel a little pity for him. Of course, it could not be compared with that for Chu Liuchen.

"Yes, he is! Because of the previous affair involving Xu State, Uncle the Emperor had a special meeting with him. We found out things relevant to Xu State again and again, so we are afraid that it might have evil ambitions!" Chu Liuchen said implicitly.

Since the remaining evildoers of Xu State were the most difficult to deal with at this time, Chu Qing thought it was the best time for him to go there.

Shao Wanru cast a glance at him silently and breathed a sigh of relief. She had the same thought as Empress Dowager. She didn't care about it as long as Chu Liuchen didn't go to Xu State.

"Is he going there alone?" Empress Dowager asked.

"No. Ningyuan Army General is asked to go together to escort him." Chu Liuchen shook his head.

Ningyuan Army General? Shao Wanru blinked her eyes. She hadn't heard of this person for a long time. When she heard his name again, it seemed that it had been a life-long time since she heard it the last time.

"He can rest assured with Ningyuan Army General's help! Since your Uncle the Emperor has made up his mind, it will be fine that you just go to see them off at that time. However, you have always been in poor health. If you can't stand it, ask Prince Yue and Prince Zhou to do that on behalf of you!" Empress Dowager's words obviously showed that she was partial to Chu Liuchen.

"Empress Dowager treats Prince Chen in a much better way than she treats the other two princes!" Shao Wanru thought.

She smiled slightly. However, she was happy for Empress Dowager's partiality to her husband.

"Imperial Grandmother, I've told you many times that I've recovered and I'm very well now. I'm just a little weaker than other men, but it won't be life-threatening!" Chu Liuchen said.

"Okay, okay, my grandson has recovered and is healthy!" Empress Dowager smiled. Chu Liuchen's current condition made her relieved. "My boy is finally saved."

For so many years, Empress Dowager had always been worried that Chu Liuchen would die before she did in the end and that she would hear bad news from Prince Chen's Mansion. But the current situation could never be better.

Thinking of this, Empress Dowager turned to glance at Shao Wanru, who was obediently sitting there. The more she looked at Shao Wanru, the more satisfied she felt. "It seems that Chen'er has been getting better and better since he married this girl."

"This girl is Prince Chen's lucky star!" Thinking of it, she looked at Shao Wanru with increasing favor.

How could Shao Wanru not know that Empress Dowager had expressed such obvious fondness for her? She immediately decided to chat with Empress Dowager for a while before she returned to Prince Chen's Mansion with Chu Liuchen.

By the time they returned to the mansion, it was almost dinner time.

Shao Wanru was indeed hungry after walking in the Peony Garden for a while and then talking with Empress Dowager. When the dishes were presented, she found that most of them were her favorite, so she ate an extra half bowl of rice.

When they were done, the servant girls left.

"Shall we go out for a walk to help digestion?" Chu Liuchen asked with a smile.

"Yes!" Shao Wanru agreed happily. Even if Chu Liuchen didn't suggest so, she would do. It was good for their health. Although Chu Liuchen was not as weak as was thought, he still needed such a regimen.

Chu Liuchen never restrained himself in his own mansion. After standing up, he held Shao Wanru's hand.

Shao Wanru wanted to shake off his hand, but she failed because he held her so tightly. When she remembered that he bent down to help tidy her dressing without considering his noble status today, her heart was softened and she decided not to shake off his hand.

Chu Liuchen sensitively sensed Shao Wanru's indulgence towards him, so he tightened his hand and walked out of the courtyard with Shao Wanru, with a group of servant girls and eunuchs following far behind.

After walking for a moment, Chu Liuchen turned his head sideways to look at her and asked with a smile, "Why don't you talk? Didn't you have a lot of questions before?"

"Your Highness!" Shao Wanru said in a coquettish tone. She did have a lot of questions, but when she was allowed to ask, she didn't know which question to start.

Chu Liuchen raised the corner of his mouth and said lazily, "Then forget it if you don't ask."

"Why do we have to send people to Xu State?" Shao Wanru rolled her eyes at him and asked.

"Some affairs that happened before were figured out to be related to Xu State and Commandery Prince Qing. Now we are unable to find more information and all the evidence we found pointed at Xu State. Uncle the Emperor is worried, so he wants someone to have an investigation in Xu State!" Chu Liuchen answered casually.

There was more than one thing that was linked to Xu State. It seemed that someone from their country had secret contact with Xu State, but they couldn't dig the hidden traitor out. It was perfect that Chu Qing asked for permission to go there.

"Chu Qing was actually a man with lots of experiences!" There was a trace of vague sharpness in Chu Liuchen's eyes as he thought.

“Fortunately, you weren’t sent! I... I’ve heard of Xu State. It’s very a remote and small country, but there are many evil things there. Don’t go to that state if unnecessary!” As a small country in Nan Jiang, it was never considered a threat. But it had something that was beyond the understanding of the people in the Central Plains.

Shao Wanru had once read those strange things in a book.

They didn’t seem to be real, but more like legends of ghosts and monsters. But Shao Wanru felt that they were more than fictional legends. Anyway, Shao Wanru had a very bad impression on Xu State, which was certainly because she thought Chu Liuchen had almost died there in her last life.

“I know you are worried about me. But I certainly won’t go there. We are newly married. How can I be so cruel to let Zhuozhuo sleep alone every night?” Chu Liuchen said and raised his eyebrows with naughtiness, with a handsome and rascal look, which was quite different from his usual elegant and noble look.

“Your Highness!” Shao Wanru said with a blushed face and glared at him.

“How could he say such words in front of others!”

“Okay, I’ll say that when we are alone!” Chu Liuchen immediately understood Shao Wanru and coaxed her. The gentleness in his eyes was as clear as a spring.

Shao Wanru blushed again. How could he explain it like that? She couldn’t help stomping her feet with hatred with her heartbeats pounding faster.

He was becoming more and more unabashed, and Shao Wanru was refreshed again by the limit of his bottom line.

“Okay, okay, I have something important to tell you. I am going to the border with them in a few days!” Chu Liuchen knew that he had to stop teasing her anymore. Otherwise, she would become angry.

“Must you get to such a far place?” Shao Wanru was chilled up her spine. She had thought that Chu Liuchen would just see them off until he got to the place that was just ten miles far from the capital city.

“I must! It’s uncertain whether our ambassadors can come back safely or not. I have to stay at the border to keep an eye on them!” Chu Liuchen said indifferently.

“Is it a dangerous trip?” Shao Wanru was so astonished that she widened her watery eyes. The slight uneasiness in her heart had driven her annoyance away.

“Out of question it is dangerous, but it’s not necessarily fruitless. Xu State hasn’t offered sacrifices to us since many years ago, so they will not show a good attitude toward us. But it is hard to tell. At least, Xu State is still one of our subordinate countries, and it can’t make too much trouble!”

Chu Liuchen said with a trace of coldness in his watery eyes. Of course, he had to hide something from Shao Wanru.

Xu State had never been an obedient state, not to mention the current moment when the crown prince had not been decided yet. It seemed that the small country would interfere in the decision of the candidate for the future Emperor.

Another reason why Chu Liuchen had suspected Xu State early was that some old officials of the previous dynasty had fled to Xu State. Although Xu State's governors had once promised that they would find and arrest them, just few of those traitors had been intermittently caught for so many years.

It was said that there was a royal family in the previous dynasty, and they also fled to Xu State at that time.

It was uncertain whether the family had fallen or its members had colluded with Xu State. Chu Liuchen had thought of this early when he set the plot against them.

The journey to Xu State was the beginning of Chu Liuchen's plan. He turned his handsome eyes to look at Shao Wanru's concerned face, with a smile hidden in the raising corner of his mouth. Since he wanted to protect his Zhuozhuo, he couldn't be a fish on the chopping block. Now he could make use of something to which he didn't pay attention before.

Shao Wanru thought for a few seconds and understood Chu Liuchen's words. She asked in surprise, "Your Highness, you need to stay at the border with our armies and give pressure on Xu State so that they dare not act rashly, don't you?"

"Has Xu State been such a serious problem that we have to deploy troops to demonstrate our strength? When we were in the Palace, he revealed nothing to Empress Dowager."

Empress Dowager should think as she did before that Chu Liuchen would come back after he accompanied them out of the capital city. But who knew that Chu Liuchen wouldn't until he got to the border?

How could Empress Dowager agree with such a temperament?

"Yes, I must go this time. And you have to pay more attention to Imperial Grandmother. If I go to the border, she will ask you to go to the Palace from time to time. Don't go anywhere else except Imperial Grandmother's palace. I'm afraid that you will be in danger without me staying in the capital city."

Chu Liuchen stood still and looked down at Shao Wanru with his soft eyes which were filled with unhidden love.

Shao Wanru also stood still. She looked at Chu Liuchen, took the initiative to get closer to him, and said softly, "Be careful, Your Highness! I will take good care of our mansion. Don't worry. And I will be more careful when I am in the Imperial Palace! What's more, Imperial Grandmother is there."

It was to not only reassure Chu Liuchen but also to alert herself.

Chu Liuchen's trip might attract many people's secret attention. If he returned in triumph in the future, he could be awarded first-class merit. Therefore, there might be more people paying attention to him than before.

"If you can't solve some problems, leave them to me. I will settle them after I am back. Remember that you are Princess Chen and don't need to yield to others! In the Palace, you don't have to care about anyone except Imperial Grandmother!" Chu Liuchen snorted coldly and said with some displeasure.

"Okay. I won't ruin the reputation of Prince Chen's Mansion!" Shao Wanru couldn't help laughing. She knew that her excessive caution made him unhappy.

Prince Chen had always been arrogant in the Palace, and he couldn't bear to see himself timid and weak.

He was afraid that she would be bullied and even did not dare to tell others. Shao Wanru smiled in her heart. Since she had chosen him in this life, she would spend her whole life with him. No matter how many difficulties there would be in their life, she was willing to face them with him.

"Eh! Don't be bullied by them. Remember to strike back if someone sets you up. I'll arrange a secret guard for you. And don't be scared if you meet the Empress. Go and ask Imperial Grandmother for help!"

#### **Chapter 894 The First Visit to the Bride's Parents' Home**

Chu Liuchen said with his usual flamboyant and fierceness, "If you fail to deal with them, I'll seek revenge for you after I come back. I'll kill whoever bullies you!"

"Okay, okay, I see!" Shao Wanru slightly pummelled him and said with a smile.

Her gentle and playful move drove fierceness off his face, and he became relaxed again.

The two of them chatted as they walked. As it was getting late, they went back to the main courtyard. When they sat down in the room, Shao Wanru suddenly remembered something, so she stood up, went to the inner room, and then came out with a small jewelry box in her hands. Before she said anything, Chu Liuchen's expression had changed. He stood up, picked up the jewelry box that had just been put on the table, and threw it out of the room.

"Your Highness..." Shao Wanru was greatly shocked. Chu Liuchen had never been infuriated in front of her. There was not a trace of warmth in his handsome eyes.

"Ignore her if you come across her again!" Chu Liuchen said without showing any politeness to the person, and his cold face was full of disgust.

"Your Highness... do you know her?" Shao Wanru asked.

Chu Liuchen's reaction had told Shao Wanru that he knew the gift was from Consort Lan. But she didn't know why Chu Liuchen was so angry. Did the imperial consort, who was favored by the Emperor before, have any ulterior secret?

Otherwise, the two of them couldn't have connections because they were totally irrelevant in any aspect, let alone that Chu Liuchen hated her so much now.

It seemed that she had poked Chu Liuchen in his heart.

"Of course, I know her. She is nothing but a sycophant with evil intentions. Zhuozhuo, ignore her!" Chu Liuchen said with a sneer, with his eyes filled with coldness and hatred.

"Okay, I will avoid her when I am in the Palace!" Shao Wanru replied gently.

Shao Wanru's words made Chu Liuchen feel a little better. He nodded at once and said seriously, "Since she is in the Palace, you can't always avoid her as you wish. But you can pay no attention to her. Don't consider whatever she says serious!"

But Shao Wanru could just understand parts of his words, some of which were not clear to her.

After hearing Chu Liuchen's words, she started to think that her encounter with Consort Lan in the Peony Garden today might not be a coincidence. She felt that the palace maids she met along the way today were early arranged to lead her in the direction of Consort Lan.

Otherwise, a down-and-out consort wouldn't have had the ability to know her whereabouts, especially the one that she would come out from Empress Dowager's Palace of Benevolent Peace.

"She will meet you on purpose again in the future. If you don't want to talk with her, turn around and leave!" Chu Liuchen said again.

"Okay, I'll do as you say!" Shao Wanru nodded and said with a trace of doubt in her shimmery eyes. She felt more and more confused. However, it seemed that Chu Liuchen hated Consort Lan so much that he even did not want to talk about her.

Of course, Shao Wanru would not force Chu Liuchen to tell her more about that imperial consort. She would just stay away from Consort Lan.

"On the day when we return to your parents' home, I will take you to shop for jewelry on the street!" Chu Liuchen said with a relaxed face and reached out to hold Shao Wanru's hand, which had turned cold after she walked around the courtyard.

"Your Highness, are you going to take me to the street?" Shao Wanru said in surprise, regardless of her hand being held by Chu Liuchen.

Seeing that the couple were talking intimately, the servant girls and Xiao Xuanzi were tactful and quietly left the room.

"Yes, of course!" Chu Liuchen nodded and said with a smile on his face. He was now an elegant and gentle young man as if he was not the cold and gloomy person just now.

Shao Wanru had been used to his unstable emotions. And she did not care about Consort Lan now. In the past, she could usually go out of the mansion. But now she was Princess Chen and she was a newly married woman, so she couldn't go out at will.

But it was great that Chu Liuchen could take her out.

"Thank you, Your Highness!" Shao Wanru saluted Chu Liuchen with her hand getting off his holding.

Chu Liuchen changed into a good mood. He caught her in the hand and asked with a smile, "Isn't it too insincere to show your gratitude like this?"

Chu Liuchen had been tortured by the load on his mind for so many years. Every time he thought of it, he had never been happy. But at the moment when he saw Shao Wanru's teasing smile, he felt a trace of warmth in his heart. He had always known what he cared about and what he didn't.

Suddenly, the load was taken off his mind.

He was not alone now. He fell in love with a girl, who happened to be in love with him. So he didn't need to hide all his emotions anymore because he could share with her now.

"Then what do you want, Your Highness?" Shao Wanru looked up at his eyes and saw the overflowing affection in them. She felt shy and turned her eyes away with a blushed face.

Chu Liuchen leaned forward and whispered in Shao Wanru's ear, after which she became so angry that her face seemed to be burning. Not only her face but also her neck and ears were burning red. This person looked dignified, but in fact, he had no bottom line!

Shao Wanru snorted at him and then turned around to walk into the inner room. Chu Liuchen patted his sleeves leisurely. "I can't force her too hard. I should take it slow..."

The gifts for the returning visit to Marquis Xing's Mansion had been prepared early. Shao Wanru had checked the list in advance. The list was very detailed with abundant gifts. Different people would be given different gifts according to their identities. Even the most censorious person could not find anything wrong with the list.

The couple didn't get up early because there were no other masters in the mansion. After having breakfast, they got on the carriage of Prince Chen's Mansion together and went to Marquis Xing's Mansion.

They went around a big circle on their way before arriving at the gate of Marquis Xing's Mansion. Old Madam had been waiting there with all the family members.

Old Madam and Duke Xing didn't care too much about Chu Liuchen's identity as a prince, but they had to curry favor with him because he was the most favored and trusted third prince of the Emperor and Empress Dowager.

Moreover, Marquis Xing's Mansion was no longer favored by the Emperor as it had been in the past.

Chu Liuchen got out of the carriage first and then helped Shao Wanru get off. Shao Wanru was not tall, but the carriage of Prince Chen's Mansion was extremely big and tall.

When she got on the ground, Chu Liuchen tightly caught her sleeves. Obviously, he was afraid that she would fall over.

Old Madam and Shao Jing exchanged eye contact with each other secretly, and they understood what it meant.

It was true that Prince Chen treated Shao Wanru well!

Old Madam felt regretful at this time. If she had known that Prince Chen really cared about Shao Wanru, she should not have been indifferent to Shao Wanru before. And she didn't often stand up for her. Now it was not so easy to ask Shao Wanru to support Marquis Xing's Mansion.

"Your Highness!" But it was not the time for self-accusation. Old Madam restrained her thoughts, stepped forward with a smile, and was about to salute them.

Chu Liuchen said lightly, "Stand up!"

Although he looked gentle, there was no intimacy in his expression, which made Shao Jing frown secretly. He wanted to ask Prince Chen for help, but it seemed that it would not be easy for Prince Chen to agree.

Shao Wanru bowed deeply to Old Madam. Even though she was now Princess Chen, she was also a descendant of Old Madam. She had to salute, especially when she returned to the family today.

“Well, it’s windy, so don’t talk here. Let’s go in together!” Old Madam reached out with a smile, intending to hold Shao Wanru’s hand affectionately.

However, Shao Wanru stepped back to avoid Old Madam’s hand and then smiled slightly, as if she didn’t mean to do that.

Old Madam’s face darkened for a second, but then she showed a kind smile and walked in the front.

At this time, she couldn’t be angry with Shao Wanru.

Shao Wanru slightly widened her eyes for she was surprised by Old Madam’s endurance. Her behavior just now indeed made Old Madam lose face. She didn’t expect that Old Madam could be so calm with it. Shao Wanru fluttered her eyelashes and hid the darkness in her eyes. She was clear about Old Madam’s character now.

A person like Old Madam never endured when there were no benefits. But she remained humble in front of Shao Wanru. Then Old Madam must need her help. “Then, what will she ask me for?” Shao Wanru thought in her heart.

However, she was not eager to know. She would wait and see what Old Madam would say next!

Chu Liuchen was led by Shao Jing and Shao Hua’an to the outer court, while Shao Wanru followed Old Madam and a group of female members to Old Madam’s residence in the inner court.

As everyone sat down, Shao Wanru naturally sat in the first guest seat. Now she was called Princess Chen instead of Fifth Miss of Marquis Xing’s Mansion.

Once she was married, a woman’s status changed according to her husband’s.

Old Madam sat in the main seat, and Zhao Xiran sat beside her with a smile. On the other side were Third Madam who was struggling to sit up, Third Miss, and Fourth Miss. Second Miss Shao Jie’er sat next to Zhao Xiran with her head down. It seemed that Shao Jie’er had been lowering her head and well-behaved since Shao Wanru entered the mansion!

Had Shao Jie’er, who used to be the most disorderly, been tamed to be quiet after her imprisonment?

However, Shao Wanru didn’t believe it...

Shao Caihuan also lowered her head and occasionally looked up at Shao Wanru with a little shame in her eyes. While Shao Cailing was the happiest one. Now she got along well with Shao Wanru, so she was a little reluctant to face the fact that Shao Wanru had been married. But after all, it was the royal family’s affair and a little girl from an aristocratic family like her could never intervene in it.

“Wanru, how does Prince Chen treat you?” Old Madam looked at Shao Wanru and asked with a smile. Judging from Shao Wanru’s ruddy face and fair skin, she knew that Shao Wanru must live a good life in Prince Chen’s Mansion, so she just made a few polite remarks. On the other hand, the elders must ask such a question when the married daughters returned to their original families, which showed that the elders attached great importance to their girls or they were worried about their daughters!



"Very well!" Shao Wanru said softly with a faint smile. She was as shy as a newly married bride would do, looking very pleasant and charming.

Shao Jie'er cast a secret glance at Shao Wanru with jealousy in her eyes. "Why can Shao Wanru be so lucky to own everything instead of me? I am the one who was born and grew up in Marquis Xing's Mansion! She, as a bastard from another family, cannot compare at all!"

"Then I am relieved. You are married now. Among all the girls, you are the only one whose marital life can make me rest assured. If your other sisters can be the same as you, I will be without any remorse even when I am dying!" Old Madam sighed and said.

"As expected, she's been waiting for me!" Shao Wanru sneered in her heart and thought.

### **Chapter 895 Who Was Proposed?**

Shao Wanru took out a handkerchief and gently wiped her delicate cheeks. She looked up with a smile and said, "Sisters will marry a good husband, Grandmother. You don't have to worry about that."

"Fifth Sister is right, Grandma. Everything will be better in the future! Our Misses will marry into good families. You can rest assured!"

Zhao Xiran was always good at catching chances to flatter herself. On hearing what Old Madam said, Zhao Xiran hastened to comfort her with a smile. At the same time, she asked a servant girl to stand behind Old Madam and gently massaged Old Madam's back with the wooden hammer. Every step was extremely natural.

A trace of sharpness flashed in Shao Wanru's eyes when she saw the satisfaction in Old Madam's. Zhao Xiran was indeed very clever. She had changed Old Madam's impression on her within just a few days.

Zhao Xiran probably had something to do with Old Madam's friendly attitude towards Shao Wanru. Because Old Madam would never be good to people for no reason.

If Old Madam couldn't get any benefit, it was in vain no matter how she was flattered.

"They are right, Mother. How could you say that with such a healthy body? Your words scared me!" Third Madam said with a smile. The smile on her face was reluctant, but her words were on time.

At first, the third branch was still in safety after experiencing so many accidents. But now it was in danger because Zhao Xiran gradually took over the management of domestic affairs. It was obvious that Old Madam wanted to elevate Zhao Xiran.

Third Madam did not dare to query Old Madam. After all, the master of the inner court was Old Madam, so she could choose whomever she liked.

"Since I have been old, I only wish that all my grandchildren can support each other so that they will live a good life in the future. That's all I want!" Old Madam sighed again, massaged her forehead with her hand, and became sad. "The things about the Second Girl and the Third Girl before..."

At this point, Old Madam sighed again and could not continue. Apparently, something sorrowful came into her mind so she did not know what to say for a moment.

Shao Wanru didn't answer her but looked at the handkerchief in her hand calmly, as if she didn't understand Old Madam's words. Neither did she intend to make them clear nor she was curious about Old Madam's unfinished words.

She seemed to be in a daze.

Old Madam cast a secret glance at Shao Wanru, only to find her sitting there like a block of wood. She was so infuriated that she felt a pain in her chest. "As expected, Shao Wanru is not raised by me so she will not be considerate towards me! I have given such a conspicuous hint to her, who, however, doesn't even ask about it. If it were First Girl, she would definitely stand on my side."

Of course, Shao Yanru could do nothing for her grandma in the current affairs. She had secretly sent a letter from the Palace to Old Madam... so Old Madam couldn't trouble her with such a thing.

So Old Madam could only turn to Shao Wanru. However, since Shao Wanru didn't react to her, Old Madam felt ashamed to ask her in person.

Old Madam looked at Zhao Xiran who was standing beside her, and the latter immediately got the former's hint. Zhao Xiran looked at Shao Wanru with a smile and said, "Fifth Sister, our grandmother has a knot in her heart. Would you please help inquire about it and tell us the result of your investigation so that our grandmother can rest assured? She has had no appetite for food and can't sleep well at night for a long time because of the load on her mind."

Shao Wanru slowly raised her head to glance at Old Madam and saw her performance—It seemed that Old Madam wanted to stop Zhao Xiran but she failed. Then Shao Wanru said with a slight smile, "Sister Zhao, you're too polite. How could I be powerful enough to help grandma? Why don't you ask Second Uncle to help you instead of me, a girl who has just married, Grandmother?"

Her tone was both rude and tough.

Zhao Xiran was stunned and blushed with a red face. She didn't expect that Shao Wanru would treat Old Madam with no respect like that in front of so many people and disagree to help her grandmother.

After all, she had just married into Marquis Xing's Mansion. She felt awkward in front of so many people when she was retorted by Shao Wanru with an indifferent attitude.

"Fifth Girl, what do you mean?" Old Madam was the first to lose her temper. She put down the teacup on the table heavily. "You are also the daughter from Marquis Xing's Mansion! Well, you are married now, so are you going to abandon your parents' home?"

"Grandma, you sound like you want me to make a choice between my parents' home and my husband's family, don't you?" Shao Wanru looked up at her and said calmly. She had been used to Old Madam's sudden coldness.

Her retortion greatly infuriated Old Madam. "What did she mean by saying that to choose between her parents' home and her husband's family? Her husband's family is the royal family! Did she want me to say that I force her to take good care of her parents' family and ignore her husband's?"

If Empress Dowager heard it, Marquis Xing's Mansion would be severely punished by her.

"Fifth Sister, Grandma didn't mean that! She just wants you to pass a message for her!" Zhao Xiran hastened to disregard her embarrassment and make an explanation after she realized the deadlock between Old Madam and Shao Wanru.

"What if I don't agree?" Shao Wanru said coldly.

No one answered her. Shao Jie'er, who was sitting aside, moved her body. It seemed that she wanted to say something, but she didn't dare to do so in the end and lowered her head.

"Fifth Sister, it's not difficult! You just need to ask a question or ask Prince Chen to pass a message to Commandery Prince Qing!" Zhao Xiran had come to her senses and said with a smile, looking more amiable.

Old Madam had planned to teach Shao Wanru a lesson through the chance of her first visit to the mansion. Now it seemed that Princess Chen, who was once Fifth Miss Shao, was not afraid of her oppression at all. Zhao Xiran felt that it was better to importune Shao Wanru with family relations at this time.

After saying that, Zhao Xiran secretly squinted at Old Madam and sneered in her heart. She didn't know what was going on with Marquis Xing's Mansion. "Why do they want to plot against Princess Chen instead of flattering her? This Princess Chen can not be set up so easily. Otherwise, how could I fail to do that to her at that time?"

"Instead of promoting the relationship between Shao Wanru and her, Old Madam even wanted to teach her a lesson! No wonder Marquis Xing's Mansion was degraded. Its people couldn't see clearly what they should do and what they shouldn't. How could the mansion flourish?"

"What do you want to say to Commandery Prince Qing?" An idea came into being in Shao Wanru's mind and she suddenly understood what they want. But she still asked lightly, with her eyes turned to look at Shao Jie'er who was in the corner of the room.

"We want to know why Commandery Prince Qing doesn't come to propose. And he once promised that he would give our mansion an explanation for what happened in the Imperial Palace before. But he hasn't come to our mansion yet. Grandma was so anxious that she once wanted Father to go to talk with him. But we will lose our face as the bride's parents' family if we take the initiative in the marital matter. So we want to ask for the help of Prince Chen, who is Commandery Prince Qing's brother, Then we can deal with it in private!" Zhao Xiran said with a flattering smile.

She sounded polite and honest with telling Shao Wanru the inconvenience of the people from Marquis Xing's Mansion. It seemed that she didn't hide anything.

Zhao Xiran was indeed Minister Zhao's eldest legitimate daughter. Her words were so flawless and reasonable.

So if Shao Wanru still didn't agree, she would look petty in others' eyes. If Zhao Xiran's words were coupled with what Old Madam had said in anger just now, they would sound like an assault that Shao Wanru forgot her roots. Because the request was just a piece of cake for her with such an identity.

Chu Qing and Chu Liuchen were brothers, so it didn't take much effort for Chu Liuchen to send a message!

But the truth was more complicated than that. Although they were both the descendants of the former Emperor, the weight of their status was different. Chu Liuchen's status was far higher than Chu Qing's. If Chu Liuchen asked Chu Qing, the latter would have to show respect to Chu Liuchen and come to Marquis Xing's Mansion to propose, despite that he had other thoughts.

Old Madam was scheming, and so was Zhao Xiran!

Of course, compared with Old Madam, Zhao Xiran was much more friendly in attitude.

"Grandma, do you wish that Commandery Prince Qing will marry Second Sister? But I heard that Commandery Prince Qing is engaged, so I'm afraid that he can't take Second Sister as his legal wife!" Shao Wanru asked lightly after she heard Zhao Xiran's explanation.

"Don't worry about that, Fifth Sister. Father and Grandma will talk about it with Commandery Prince Qing. We just want Commandery Prince Qing to take the initiative to come to Marquis Qing's Mansion!" Zhao Xiran said vaguely, not mentioning whether it was Shao Jie'er or not.

But it indeed sounded like an easy task to ask Chu Qing to come to the mansion.

"I'm afraid I can't now. I heard from His Highness that Commandery Prince Qing seems to have an official assignment to deal with. I am afraid that he can't come to our mansion in the next few days. Anyway, we can't be rash in marital matters. After Commandery Prince Qing finishes his work, I'll ask His Highness to go to Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion!" Shao Wanru thought for a moment and said seriously.

...

If Chu Qing went to Xu State, he would probably not come back in one or two months. Old Madam was not in a hurry before, but now she was anxious, which aroused Shao Wanru's suspicion.

Hearing Shao Wanru's words, Old Madam couldn't help shouting, "No!"

"Why, Grandmother? Is it because... is it necessary?" Shao Wanru asked slowly with a confused face.

Old Madam swallowed and suppressed the anger in her heart to make her look kind. Shao Wanru's interruption made her realize that she was no longer the Fifth Miss of Marquis Xing's Mansion.

Even she, as Shao Wanru's elder, had to bow to Shao Wanru.

"Your sister has come of age. I'm afraid something bad will happen if we delay her marriage!" Old Madam forced a smile and tried to look amiable.

"What will happen if she waits a little longer? Commandery Prince Qing is concentrating on his work at this time, so he must have no intention of getting married," Shao Wanru said calmly. Old Madam's attitude had no impact on her at all.

Shao Wanru had long been disappointed with Marquis Xing's Mansion and Old Madam, so she would not have any expectations. She did not care what attitude they showed towards her.

"It is not a big deal. It's just... Fifth Sister, I don't take you as an outsider anymore. I will get straight to the point. Another mansion wants to build a martial relationship with us. Its conditions are not bad but

not as good as Commandery Prince Qing's. Grandma needs to make careful consideration. We have to know Commandery Prince Qing's thoughts before we refuse the other mansion. Otherwise, we might lose both the chances."

Zhao Xiran immediately thought of an excuse that was the most appropriate for the current situation and said it out with a smile.

"Another Proposal? Who are they?" Shao Wanru asked in surprise. She didn't expect such a reason! Was it Shao Caihuan or Shao Jie'er who was asked?

It was really strange for such a man to show up at such a time...

### **Chapter 896 Who's Behind Shao Jie'er's Unusual Behavior?**

"In fact, it's not a big deal. But considering the situation of the second sister and the third sister, it is best for them to choose a husband from the candidates of the Palace Examination. At least we know about these candidates. It's much better than knowing nothing!" Zhao Xiran smiled awkwardly and said.

Zhao Xiran's words were like saying nothing at all, but Shao Wanru suddenly came up with an idea.

Choose a husband from the candidates of the Palace Examination. In her last life, Shao Wanru had chosen her husband from the candidates of the Palace Examination. Now that the Examination was at the corner, had Zhao Xiran chosen that Childe Yan Xi again?

In the last life, Shao Wanru and Yan Xi had obviously been framed. Now, had Zhao Xiran chosen Yan Xi, or had she got other plans?

"This is not a simple matter in any way!" Shao Wanru thought to herself.

"Have you chosen any candidate for the Palace Examination?" Shao Wanru asked calmly and glanced at the faces of several people in the room with her watery eyes.

"It hasn't been decided yet. In fact, I have chosen a few families and they have taken a fancy to our family. But for us—the daughters of Marquises, we can't actually marry an imperial scholar. At least we will wait until he wins the first test of the Palace Examination. But now we need to hurry up and get an answer from Commandery Prince Qing's Mansion. If they really don't value us, we can give up the marriage!" Zhao Xiran said helplessly.

Shao Wanru understood what she meant.

Chu Qing had been keeping Marquis Xing's Mansion in suspense. He didn't say whether he would marry Marquis Xing's daughter or not. Before he gave a definite answer, Marquis Xing couldn't betroth his daughter with another man. No matter how inappropriate Chu Qing was, he was still a son of the imperial family. Moreover, he had relations with the Former Emperor, so Marquis Xing's Mansion had to be more careful sometimes.

Moreover, at that time the incident happened in the Palace, so many people knew about it. If Marquis Xing's Mansion wanted to pull it back, it would not be so easy. They had to wait for Chu Qing to express his attitude.

However, this statement was obviously different from what they had decided before. "Did something happen in the past few days and make Marquis Xing's Mansion change their attitude?" Shao Wanru wondered.

"Didn't Second Uncle have someone to ask about Commandery Prince Qing's attitude?" Shao Wanru asked. People said that the bridegroom should be reserved, but given Shao Jing's character, she did not believe that he hadn't taken the initiative to ask Commandery Prince Qing.

Now Shao Jing was behaving passively and wanted to take advantage of the situation and leverage Chu Liuchen's power to press Chu Qing quietly so that Chu Qing had to express his attitude to Marquis Xing's Mansion.

Compared with Chu Liuchen, Chu Qing, the son of the Former Emperor, was really unimpressive.

"Father had sent someone to ask about it before, but Commandery Prince Qing didn't give a definite answer. Grandmother had no choice but to seek help from you. If this matter is delayed any longer, your sister's marriage will be ruined. It's fine if they don't like the daughter of Marquis Xing's Mansion, but what should we do about their meaningless delay? It will take another three years for us if we miss this year's Palace Examination! Your sisters have grown up and can't wait for so long!" Zhao Xiran said earnestly.

For a sister-in-law that had just married Marquis Xing's son, Zhao Xiran had done a good job by standing on the side of Marquis Xing's Mansion wholeheartedly.

Shao Wanru blinked and looked at Shao Jie'er. Shao Jie'er had no reaction by now as if she was listening to someone else's business that had nothing to do with her. She still sat there with her head down.

Shao Caihuan reacted a little uneasily. She stole a glance at Shao Wanru, looked at Zhao Xiran, and then also lowered her head, but peeked at them from time to time.

So, the sister they were talking about was Shao Caihuan, not Shao Jie'er. Shao Jie'er should have been engaged!

Shao Wanru thought of what Shao Jie'er had said at the very beginning and there was a trace of darkness in her eyes. Shao Jing gave up Shao Jie'er's marriage with absolute certainty. It seemed that the two sides had agreed with each other.

Given Shao Jing's character, if he betrothed Shao Jie'er's ex-fiance to Shao Caihuan, Shao Jie'er's new fiance should be better than Commandery Prince Qing's son, so this person must also be from the imperial family.

Among the sons of the imperial family, there were only Prince Yue, Prince Zhou, and Prince Xin.

There was also a Prince Cheng. Shao Jie'er's fiance should be among them. Shao Wanru didn't know which one of them Shao Jing had contacted or had given him a reason and an opportunity to marry his daughter to that person.

Thinking about this, Shao Wanru didn't panic at all. After hearing Zhao Xiran's words, she said unhurriedly, "Since this matter is so urgent, I'll talk to Prince Chen later. But I don't know whether Prince

Chen is willing to pass the message or not. It seems that there is no contact between Prince Chen and Commandery Prince Qing!”

“It doesn’t matter whether the marriage can work or not. As long as Prince Chen can help us pass the message, it’ll be fine. Your sister’s marriage can’t be delayed. The youngest sister—the Fifth Sister is married first. The other sisters also need to get engaged as soon as possible. Otherwise, it’s inappropriate!” Zhao Xiran said with sincerity as if all her words were sincere.

Zhao Xiran positioned herself finely. She had considered herself a member of Marquis Xing’s Mansion after marrying Marquis Xing’s son. She talked about Marquis Xing’s Mansion every time she spoke, which satisfied Old Madam. Old Madam thought, “This granddaughter-in-law is not always annoying. These words are right. She is competent.”

Now there was no one in charge of the backyard of the Marquis Xing’s Mansion. Old Madam wanted to take charge of it, but she was too old to do so.

If it hadn’t been for the previous incident, Old Madam would have been fully satisfied with her granddaughter-in-law. But now, she was having second thoughts about her.

“Your sisters are in a special situation now. I can’t do anything about it. You are now Princess Chen but also the daughter of Marquis Xing. You are deeply connected. If your sisters have a nice marriage, you will be able to help each other in the future. It is good for both you and them,” Old Madam said to Shao Wanru gently.

“That’s right. Wanru, you are now Princess Chen. We haven’t congratulated you yet!” Zhao Xiran, who was very good at soft-soaping, said with a smile and bowed to Shao Wanru deliberately.

Shao Wanru slightly tilted to avoid her bow and said with a smile, “Sister Zhao, you are being over-courteous.”

“Well, enough with these dull words. Wanru, don’t take it to heart. I heard that you went to Empress Dowager’s palace before. What did she say?” Old Madam said with a smile, concerned about her little granddaughter.

This was a sign that the serious stuff was over and it was time for small talks!

Shao Wanru sneered in her heart, but she didn’t show it on her face. She talked about some things that happened in Empress Dowager’s palace at that time and chatted casually.

Since they were no longer talking about anything serious and everyone was talking lively, shortly someone came from outside to invite them to have a meal.

The seats were divided into men’s seats and women’s seats. They were placed in the same room but were separated by a screen. It livened up the atmosphere but also respected the etiquette between men and women.

Chu Liuchen didn’t drink. In addition, because of the previous fight between two princes, Marquis Xing’s Mansion didn’t dare to give drinks to Chu Liuchen, so they could only work on the dishes.

However, no matter how hard they tried on the dishes, they couldn’t liven up the atmosphere in front of Prince Chen, who looked gentle but was actually distant.

Even though Shao Jing was tactful and had been trying to get Chu Liuchen to talk on the outside, he only got a huge embarrassment. Prince Chen was obviously not interested in what Shao Jing said and had no intention of getting close to him.

Shao Wanru sat inside and ate very calmly. She was equally embarrassed. As a newlywed bride, Zhao Xiran was not in the position to say anything in this case.

They ate the meal in an incomparably peaceful way.

After the meal, Shao Wanru went back to her Piaoyun Courtyard to rest, while Chu Liuchen went to the guest room prepared for him by Marquis Xing's Mansion. Originally, Chu Liuchen was going to come to the Piaoyun Courtyard, but Shao Jing kept urging him to go to the guest room as if he had something to talk to Chu Liuchen in private. So, Shao Wanru returned to the Piaoyun Courtyard by herself.

When Shao Wanru arrived at the Piaoyun Courtyard, Qing'er came to report to her as soon as she sat down.

Qing'er said, "Princess, after you got on the bridal sedan chair that day, Second Miss did not go out. Instead, she went to the marquis's courtyard. The guards outside the courtyard were guarding, so I did not dare to get too close. But after staying there for about ten minutes, Second Miss left the marquis's courtyard in tears. After that, I stayed for a while and saw that the marquis also left!"

That was to say, Shao Jie'er's unusual behavior at that time was because of Shao Jing? Or did Shao Jing also notice Shao Jie'er's unusual behavior and go to ask about it on purpose?

"What happened next?" Shao Wanru picked up the teacup at hand, took a sip, and said unhurriedly. There should be a follow-up to this matter. Shao Jie'er didn't even dare to raise her head to look at her today. It was really strange.

"Later, I came back and continued following Second Miss. At that time, Second Miss had returned to her own yard. She seemed to be very quiet. I heard that she would continue to go back to the Buddha Hall. The servant girl was preparing some daily necessities for her. The yard was a little busy, and there were many people coming and going. I had been guarding. At night, I saw an old maid coming over. I remember that the old maid is from the outer yard!" Qing'er said.

Qing'er had been working in Marquis Xing's Mansion for a while. Moreover, she had a very good visual memory. Once she saw a person, she would always remember something about them. Although it was rare for her to see an old maid from the outer courtyard, she had at least seen her.

"I saw them talking in the main room, and Second Miss drove other people out of the room. They talked for a while before the old maid left. I felt that this old maid was strange, so I followed her on purpose. I didn't expect to see Wang Shengxue!" Qing'er said with disgust.

People from Piaoyun Courtyard disliked Wang Shengxue.

"Wang Shengxue?" Shao Wanru's heart skipped a beat. This was the connection.

"Yes, it's Wang Shengxue. He hid aside and talked with the old maid sneakily. He talked for a long time. Later, Wang Shengxue seemed to have left in a rage!" Qing'er reported and finally came to a conclusion. "The unusual behavior of the Second Miss that day should have something to do with Wang Shengxue!"



Shao Wanru nodded. Although Shao Jing was also very suspicious, in that case, if something happened, Shao Jing would also be ashamed. Wang Shengxue was indeed the most likely person to do something with Shao Jie'er...

### **Chapter 897 The Girl After Yan Xi**

"Is Wang Shengxue here today?" Shao Wanru asked coldly.

Shao Jing wanted to make use of Wang Shengxue, whom she couldn't tolerate.

"I've inquired about it this morning. It is said that Wang Shengxue would come, and it seemed that he was looking for Childe Yan. They seem to have had a quarrel before!" Qing'er reported. She knew that her master would definitely ask about Wang Shengxue, so she went to the outer courtyard earlier to inquire about it.

Today was the day when Shao Wanru returned to her parents' home after marriage. It was normal for the servant girl of the Piaoyun Courtyard to go to the door to see if her master had come.

"They had a quarrel?" Shao Wanru thought to herself. Her eyes narrowed and she immediately thought of what she had reminded Yan Xi of before. It seemed that Yan Xi had found something.

She didn't see Wang Shengxue at the dinner table just now, so she thought that Wang Shengxue was not here today. Now considering the situation between Wang Shengxue and Marquis Xing's Mansion, how could Marquis Xing's Mansion allow him to have dinner together that would arouse her suspicion? After all, what had happened to Wang Yishu at that time almost made Marquis Xing's Mansion and Wang Shengxue fall out with each other.

Now that Wang Shengxue could still come to Marquis Xing's Mansion, it could be construed it was just for the face. But if he was invited to have dinner together, it meant that they continued to be friends. It was impossible for her shrewd Second Uncle to do such a thing that would make her suspicious.

It seemed that Wang Shengxue and Shao Jie'er had intended to set her up this time. However, Shao Jie'er was scared at that time and did not dare to do it. Shao Jing knew about it and scolded her.

"Qing'er, keep an eye on Childe Yan. If Wang Shengxue leaves, inform me!" Shao Wanru said. She did want to see this Yan Xi, and her returning home today was an opportunity. It would be difficult to find such an opportunity again in the future. She didn't have much time, so she couldn't wait passively.

"If Wang Shengxue doesn't leave, think of a way to force him to leave!" Shao Wanru ordered.

"Yan, that day I did go to Miss Zhao's place to look for you. Since I saw Miss Zhao was sad, I sat down for a while to comfort her. It's really not what you think!" Wang Shengxue sat opposite Yan with a frown and a bitter face, looking like he had been wronged and had nothing to say.

Yan Xi, who was sitting opposite him, held a book in his hand and concentrated on reading. He nodded noncommittally at Wang Shengxue's words but didn't say anything else.

"Yan, are you listening to me?" Wang Shengxue got anxious. He reached out to grab Yan Xi's sleeve and pulled it hard.

Yan Xi's hand was pulled off the book. He frowned and had to look up at Wang Shengxue. "You really don't have to explain to me what you and Miss Zhao did. Miss Zhao and I just met by chance and shouldn't get too close to each other after that incident. After all, she is an unmarried Miss. It's normal for you to fall in love with Miss Zhao!" Yan Xi said with a calm expression.

"Xi, why don't you believe what I said? I do take a fancy to her, but Miss Zhao loves you. And I also regret it. If it had been me that saved Miss Zhao at that time, I would not have so many worries now. Unfortunately, Miss Zhao..." Wang Shengxue sighed and said with endless grievances, "A gentle and graceful woman is a gentleman's match!"

Yan Xi looked displeased. He knocked hard on the book placed on the table and said, "Wang, please watch your words. After all, Miss Zhao is an unmarried Miss. These words are too frivolous!"

The so-called love might be regarded as a "love affair" before two people get engaged. Yan Xi didn't think that he had any feelings for Miss Zhao, and he didn't want Wang Shengxue to get him and Miss Zhao together again and again.

Yan Xi also regretted saving Miss Zhao. If he had known that Miss Zhao was so lachrymose and sticky, he would not have helped her at that time.

It was not that he looked down on Miss Zhao, but he was very unhappy with Miss Zhao's attitude. He was born in a general's family, and the women he had seen in the past were more or less bright and brave. He had never seen such a delicate woman who would cry if he said something wrong. He could not bear her affectionate eyes.

Even though he became a civilian staff now, he still had the temper of a general in his bones, so he really didn't like Miss Zhao's behavior. Moreover, a woman should be dignified, decent, and graceful, but Miss Zhao looked inferior. She didn't look like a girl from a decent family.

What Fifth Miss Shao said that day made him think for a long time, and then he suddenly went to Miss Zhao's courtyard.

In the past, it was Wang Shengxue who came to look for him, and then they went to check on Miss Zhao's current situation together.

But this time, Yan Xi suddenly went over without inform, and he saw a surprising scene. Wang Shengxue was also there. Not only was he there, but he was also acting very intimate with Miss Zhao. They leaned over and talked with each other with laughter. It was quite different from what he used to see.

Yan Xi was not stupid, not to mention he had heard Shao Wanru's words. His face was downcast on the spot, and he left indignantly. Behind him, Miss Zhao cried and fell to the ground, but he ignored her.

Wang Shengxue didn't expect that Yan Xi suddenly came here and rushed in, so he didn't know how to react.

When Yan Xi went out, Wang Shengxue hurried out and tried to catch him, only to find that Yan Xi had already got on the carriage and left. In a hurry, Wang Shengxue left Miss Zhao inside, and also called a carriage to chase Yan Xi and came to Marquis Xing's Mansion.

Unfortunately, Yan Xi didn't want to listen to his explanation and ignored him. So these days, Wang Shengxue came to Marquis Xing's Mansion as soon as he was free to convince Yan Xi of his innocence.

"Xi, I know what I'm going to say is inappropriate, but since now there are only you and me, I'll tell you straightly. Miss Zhao only sees me as her elder brother, so she was joking with me. But the one she really cares about is you. You're so lucky to have such a confidante lady. If only I were so lucky!" Wang Shengxue sighed and said helplessly.

"Shengxue, don't mention it again in the future. Miss Zhao's matter has nothing to do with me in the future. If you want to be brother-and-sister with Miss Zhao, just go for it. It has nothing to do with me. You don't need to come to tell me. The Palace Examination is coming. I can't be distracted now. Please leave!" Yan Xi pointed at the book in front of him and asked Wang Shengxue to leave.

Thinking about Miss Zhao's behavior in the past, and the fact that she and Wang Shengxue had secretly met in the room with no servant girls around, Yan Xi concluded that Miss Zhao was extremely inappropriate. After thinking about this, he recalled the details of the past and felt that he had been set up.

This kind of feeling was very uncomfortable. Consequently, Yan Xi didn't want to get too close to Miss Zhao.

Whether Miss Zhao was good or bad, it had nothing to do with him. He'd better prepare for the Palace Examination.

Seeing that Yan Xi could not be convinced, Wang Shengxue also became a little angry. His face darkened, and he snorted, "Xi, how can you be so cruel? A few days ago, you and Miss Zhao were on good terms with each other. Why are you so cruel now?"

His words were extremely unpleasant to hear. He almost said to Yan Xi's face that Yan Xi had an affair with Miss Zhao.

Yan Xi didn't expect Wang Shengxue would say that. He was so angry that his face turned pale. He pounded the table hard and stood up at once. "Childe Wang, the door is open. You'd better leave. As for Miss Zhao, you can arrange for her to get close to anyone you want, but not me!"

Wang Shengxue thought that Yan Xi was about to fight with him and was scared, so he hurriedly stood up and stepped back. Unexpectedly, he flustered and kicked the leg of the chair, which hurt his feet and made him fall heavily to the ground. He immediately screamed in pain and fell into a mess.

Yan Xi looked coldly at Wang Shengxue in front of him with anger on his face. He reached out to pull Wang Shengxue up from the ground, pushed him directly out of the door, and slammed the door in Wang Shengxue's surprised gaze.

Wang Shengxue pulled back his foot, which almost got pinched.

"Hey... hey, you..." Wang Shengxue was so angry. He couldn't tolerate being pushed out like this. However, it was not a big deal. If this matter was not handled well, Shao Jing would not let him go.

He had thought that he could threaten Madam of Marquis Xing with the things left by his sister, but he hadn't expected that Madam of Marquis Xing also had an accident, so it was meaningless to bring it up.

He had to stoop to Shao Jing and listen to his orders. Otherwise, he could not even get into Marquis Xing's Mansion.

His boss had said that he must stay close to Marquis Xing's Mansion. Their relationship couldn't be broken so easily.

But now he failed to deal with Yan Xi, so Shao Jing would definitely get angry. Wang Shengxue also regretted it at this time. If he had known that Yan Xi had become suspicious, he would never have met Miss Zhao in private. Now he couldn't explain it. He could only blame himself for being careless.

He thought that Yan Xi was under his control and that he could make him see whatever he wanted him to see and make him hear whatever he wanted him to hear.

But at the moment, he was really not content. He stood up, patted the dust off, and knocked hard on Yan's door. "Xi, Xi, open the door. Let me explain it to you. It's really not what you think. You are mistaken about Miss Zhao and me!"

He believed that he could persuade Yan Xi to open his door.

"Childe Wang, our Fifth Miss came back to her parents' home today. Prince Chen is also here, and he just went to the guest yard to rest. It will be bad if you make a fuss here and disturb Prince Chen!" a young male servant came beside him and said to him calmly in a low voice.

Wang Shengxue put down his hands. When the carriage of Prince Chen's Mansion came over, he saw it clearly. Thinking of the reputation of Prince Chen and Shao Wanru, who was difficult to deal with, Wang Shengxue put down his hand. At this time, it was indeed inadvisable to alert others. Fifth Miss Shao was very troublesome before she got married, and now it was even more inappropriate to make any trouble.

"Xi, I'll leave today. Think about it carefully. It's really just a misunderstanding. Miss Zhao is such a decent girl. How could she do such indecent things? If she had done such indecent things, she would have gone with other people when they robbed her that day. How could she have ended up like this!" Wang Shengxue explained it at the door again and then left helplessly. He had to go back to discuss it with Miss Zhao and figure out how to take Yan Xi down.

### **Chapter 898 Wang Shengxue Must Have Ulterior Motives!**

When there was no sound at the door, Yan Xi opened it with a frown. Seeing a young servant standing there, he was on alert immediately.

The servant took one step forward and said respectfully, "Childe Yan, my master invites you for a meeting!"

"Who is your master?" Yan Xi asked. He looked the servant up and down and became more cautious when he found he did not know this servant.

"Our master was the Fifth Miss Shao and is Princess Chen now. She wants to ask you something. Childe Yan, please come with me!" the servant replied. He was Wang Feng, Nanny Yu's son. As Shao Wanru returned to Marquis Xing's Mansion, Wang Feng came with her. He usually worked in the outer court and inquired about some news there.

"Fifth Miss Shao?" Yan Xi frowned and said, "I think it's improper for a man and a woman to talk privately!"

"Don't worry, Childe Yan. You will just exchange a few words. No one will criticize that!" Wang Feng explained with a smile.

"So we will pretend to meet by chance?"

"Indeed, this will not arouse suspicion. Moreover, she has a servant girl accompanying her. It is because of this Fifth Miss Shao that I could find out about the affair between Miss Zhao and Wang Shengxue. Could it be that the Fifth Miss Shao wants to give me some advice again? Inexplicably, I think she is trustworthy."

Thinking of this, he nodded and followed Wang Feng to the garden of Marquis Xing's Mansion.

The garden of Marquis Xing's Mansion was in the inner court, and men outside were not allowed to enter. But Yan Xi was different. He had been living in Marquis Xing's Mansion. Old Madam had once said that if he was tired of learning, he could go for a walk in the garden. Therefore, it was not abrupt for him to go there. The old maid at Chuihua Gate smiled and let him enter.

Wang Feng did not enter the inner court. He only showed Yan Xi the way and then returned to the outer court.

It was normal for Yan Xi to enter the garden alone, but if he was accompanied by Wang Feng, servant of the Mansion, that would be strange.

Yan Xi entered the garden and walked forward casually. Not long after, he met Shao Wanru also strolling in the garden. He bowed to her respectfully.

He was indeed grateful to this Fifth Miss Shao.

"Childe Yan, you are too polite. Is there any reason that makes others plot against you?" Shao Wanru smiled and asked directly because they did not have much time together.

"When Wang Shengxue takes action, he must have ulterior motives!"

"I'm just an ordinary scholar and I don't think I have anything coveted by others!" Yan Xi shook his head and blurted out. In fact, he had been thinking about this question these days. He thought that he had nothing coveted by Wang Shengxue. Why did Wang Shengxue target him?

"Since it is not because of Childe Yan yourself, it must be your family. Wang Shengxue used to have a very bad relationship with my Second Uncle. Originally, Wang was not allowed to enter Marquis Xing's Mansion, but that day, I saw him enter the Mansion with no servant coming to stop him."

Shao Wanru told Yan Xi calmly and looked at his face. She could tell that Yan Xi was not the same kind of person as Wang Shengxue. When they met, Yan Xi did not look at her casually. He just glanced at her when bowing just now. He was well-behaved.

Shao Wanru could tell whether he was truly well-mannered or not at a glance.

“My family?” Yan Xi’s heart skipped a beat but he was also thinking about another thing. “Does Marquis Xing know what Wang Shengxue has done?”

Since Wang Shengxue had quarreled with Marquis Xing before, he should not be allowed to enter Marquis Xing’s Mansion anymore. However, no one stopped him now. Even though sometimes Yan Xi could tell that the servants in the Mansion looked down upon Wang, no one drove him away. He could come and go freely in Marquis Xing’s Mansion.

His heart twitched and his eyes widened suddenly. “Could it be possible that the affair between Wang Shengxue and Miss Zhao has something to do with Marquis Xing?”

Thinking that Marquis Xing, who had always been kind to him, was plotting against him in secret, Yan Xi felt inexplicably uncomfortable and could not believe it. “How could Marquis Xing be such kind of person? I must be wrong!”

However, things that he had never doubted in the past now became suspicious.

“Childe Yan, think about it carefully. Is there anyone who wants to plot against you or your family? Otherwise, Wang Shengxue will not target you. As for other things, you’d better check them out. The Palace Examination is incoming. At this time, you can’t make any mistakes. It’s very easy for imperial censors of the Censorate to hear some news, especially about reputation!”

Seeing that Yan Xi was deep in thought, Shao Wanru knew that it was enough. She gave him another suggestion, and then bowed slightly and turned to leave.

Yan Xi stepped aside and looked at Shao Wanru’s back. His face darkened. Had he really forgotten something?

“What makes Wang Shengxue plot against me?”

Money? It was impossible. Although he had given Miss Zhao some money, it was not that much. He didn’t bring a lot of money when he came to the capital city, so he didn’t have much spare money.

But if it wasn’t because of money, then what was the reason? Did it have anything to do with his incoming Palace Examination?

Yan Xi wanted to stop Fifth Miss Shao from leaving, but inexplicably he couldn’t open his mouth and could only see her back disappearing from view.

This matter was very strange. He had to find out more about it.

He turned around and decisively went to the outer court. Originally, he didn’t care about Wang Shengxue and Miss Zhao and didn’t want to inquire about anything. But now he felt that it was better to check it out; otherwise, the consequences would be grave.

Since Shao Wanru had given him suggestions before, he believed in her now.

The old maid guarding Chuihua Gate saw he left very soon, but she didn’t pay much attention to him and just bowed slightly. “The scholar is strange. As soon as he has inspiration, he must go back to study.”

The old maid was not a scholar. She did not understand where the inspiration came from and why it could happen at any time.

Arriving at the outer court, Yan Xi called his servant and a carriage from Marquis Xing's Mansion. He asked the coachman to head to Miss Zhao's courtyard situated at the city gate. This time, he must find out what was going on and what they were after.

The carriage forged ahead. After making a few turns, it arrived at the back door of Miss Zhao's courtyard.

Yan Xi and his servant jumped out of the carriage. He asked the carriage to return first and didn't need to wait for him since he still had something to do later.

The coachman just nodded and drove the carriage away. He didn't find anything strange.

Yan Xi looked around and saw the tree beside Shao Wanru's carriage that day. He immediately climbed up the tree and climbed over the wall with his servant.

He was born in a family of military officers. Therefore, although he didn't learn about kung fu, his physical fitness was much better than that of ordinary people.

The servant was also a nimble person. After entering, he lent Yan Xi a hand. The two sneaked in the courtyard quietly.

The yard was empty, and there were no outsiders. Only Miss Zhao and her servant girls lived here. In fact, this place was rented temporarily by Yan Xi because he pitied this Miss Zhao before.

The door of the main room was ajar. He heard voices coming from inside, not only a woman's voice but also a man's voice.

After getting closer, he could hear the man's voice clearly. That was Wang Shengxue. As expected, he came to Miss Zhao after leaving Marquis Xing's Mansion.

Yan Xi and his servant crept to the window and stood by it, listening to what was happening inside.

It was already Spring and the flowers were blooming. Two windows of the room were wide open and happened to block Yan Xi and his servant hiding by each side. They could listen to what was happening without being noticed by people inside.

The sobbing voice of the woman inside sounded quite touching and pitiful. It was Miss Zhao's voice. Normally, her voice sounded more graceful, but now it was delicate and sweet.

"Okay, okay, don't cry. My sweetie, don't be upset. Everything's gonna be okay!" Wang Shengxue comforted Miss Zhao. Yan Xi and the servant couldn't see what was happening inside, but judging from the sound, they could tell that the two must act improperly.

Wang Shengxue once said that he already had two concubines, but now he had an affair with Miss Zhao.

"What should we do now? If he doesn't take the bait... and doesn't come now, how can we continue our plan?" Miss Zhao sobbed. Her eyes were slightly red, which made Wang Shengxue's heart itch even more. He couldn't help kissing her fair face and red lips.

They moaned and whimpered. Even though Yan Xi didn't see it, he could imagine such a scene in his mind. He was so angry that his face turned pale. Of course, it was not because he cared about Miss Zhao, but because he heard what they said and knew that they joined forces to plot against him. He was in a rage.

If it weren't for hearing what they were talking about more clearly, he would have rushed in and beaten them.

After a while, they stopped kissing. Miss Zhao leaned against Wang Shengxue's arms as if she had no bones. She was breathless and her clothes became messy.

"This... this is not good. My sister will be angry!" Miss Zhao said gently with a hint of affection and anger in her watery eyes, which flustered Wang Shengxue. He reached into her clothes and said, "What's wrong with this? After this matter is over, you should also marry me. It's a good thing for both of you sisters to become my women!"

"But, my sister... won't agree. She... she will hit me..." Miss Zhao said softly with tears in her eyes.

"It doesn't matter if she disagrees. She is just a concubine. If she doesn't agree, I will let her go home. Now, I only like you, and I care about you the most!" Wang Shengxue coaxed her, which made Miss Zhao feel happy. She didn't stop his moving hands in her clothes. She just made eyes at and leaned against him shyly.

"But... but what should we do now? Yan Xi is not easy to be fooled!" Miss Zhao said worriedly.

Speaking of this matter, Wang Shengxue was no longer in the mood. He pulled his hand back and said angrily, "This Yan Xi doesn't know how to appreciate my kindness. He even didn't care about such a great beauty as you. Does he want a princess or a queen?"

## **Chapter 899 Malicious Scheme**

"What should we do now?" Miss Zhao asked in a sweet voice and held Wang Shengxue's hand. Suddenly, she looked out of the door. "Will he suddenly rush in like that day?"

"No, he won't. I'm regretting what I did. If I had known earlier, I wouldn't have come that day. How could I have happened to meet him? If I fail in our plan, Uncle Shao would be angry." Wang Shengxue was also quite worried.

Of course, he would not say that he had a bad relationship with Shao Jing, Marquis Xing. Now, they only took advantage of each other.

"Marquis wants him to sign a marriage contract, but it seems that he won't sign it. What should we do?" Miss Zhao became more anxious. She put her arms around Wang Shengxue's neck and said fondly, "If this matter is not done well and you are punished by your uncle, I will also be sad and worried!"

Seeing that the beauty cared so much about him, Wang Shengxue smiled again. He thought for a moment and said, "Since this way doesn't work, let's lie to him and ask him to sign it. As long as he signs it, he can't avoid the marriage. Anyway, many people know he often comes here. Moreover, this place is rented by him, and there are many witnesses!"



Wang Shengxue said triumphantly. At present, all he needed was a signature. Originally, he wanted Yan Xi to take a fancy to Miss Zhao and sign the marriage contract, or lured him into signing it to help Miss Zhao get through the difficulties. This can also ensure that Miss Zhao would not be taken away by other playboys.

However, this way didn't work. The only thing he could do now was to deceive Yan Xi into signing it by mixing the contract with other documents. Then he would age it, make the contract look like it was signed long before.

Thinking of this, he was not that worried anymore. He had a lot of friends, so he could find someone to deceive Yan Xi into signing it. Of course, involving other people in this plan was the last way he could use but there was no other way out. After all, the fewer people knew about this kind of thing, the better.

"Since you will cheat him, can you use another woman's name instead of mine?" Miss Zhao rolled her eyes and said.

"You don't want to be with him?" Wang Shengxue teased and gently pinched Miss Zhao's face, which made Miss Zhao moan sweetly.

"Of course, I don't want to be with him. That will make me feel ashamed. You can use the name of a servant girl. Anyway, she is just a servant girl, and you can even..." Miss Zhao paused and tilted her head meaningfully. "If this girl dies, he will not be able to explain it clearly!"

They were alone in the room. All servants were sent to guard the front door because Yan Xi had rushed in from the front door and caught them off guard that day.

"Kill her?" Wang Shengxue's eyes gleamed and his heart fluttered. If so, it was even more difficult for Yan Xi to explain.

"Yes, it's her name on the marriage contract. We can let her say something else, and there are witnesses from neighbors. In the end, she will not be able to bear the pressure and jump to death. Then we can say whatever we want!" Miss Zhao said in a sweet voice.

Outside the window, Yan Xi was simmering with rage when he heard this. He almost couldn't wait to rush in and beat the vicious couple. If it weren't for Fifth Miss Shao's suggestion, he would probably have fallen into their trap and been unable to defend himself.

If he passed the imperial examination this time, they would ruin his future. Even if his father was there to deal with it, he would definitely be in trouble!

Who was plotting against him? He had just arrived in the capital and only knew a few people from Marquis Xing's Mansion. Who would dislike him so much and make such a vicious plan? Before he met Wang Shengxue, he had already saved this Miss Zhao.

This was a premeditated move that not only aimed at him but also at his father! According to Wang Shengxue's words, was it really planned by Marquis Xing?

However, he couldn't understand why Marquis Xing, Shao Jing, would plot against him. Or maybe Wang Shengxue didn't tell the truth to this woman? Did he want to shift the blame?

He could not tell what was true for a moment, so he continued listening.

"Baby, you're right. We'd better do so. Yan Xi wanted to marry a daughter from a noble family and stay in the capital city. It's a daydream!" Wang Shengxue was overjoyed. He nodded repeatedly and kissed Miss Zhao on the face many times before he let go.

"Then, use the name of the servant girl!" Miss Zhao was also very happy. She was not willing to be with an unlucky person like Yan Xi, nor did she want to enter a marriage contract with him. It was so good that only a servant girl can finish all that stuff.

"Okay, it's settled. I'll think about it in detail after returning to my place. I will never let you suffer!" Wang Shengxue said with great satisfaction. If this plan succeeded, Shao Jing would give him a lot of benefits.

With such a beauty as a gift, it was a good thing. After finishing the plan in his mind, he felt burning with passion and cannot keep his hands off her.

"Childe Wang, don't be like this..." The woman gasped and moaned.

"Don't worry! There is no one here!" Wang Shengxue said, "Baby, come on, let me take good care of you!"

The passion grew deeper inside the room with indescribable sounds. Yan Xi turned around and walked out with a livid face. The servant followed him hurriedly and climbed over the wall. They went back by the same they came.

"Childe..." the servant said carefully, "we'd better go out a little more. It will be terrible if someone hears us!"

"Let's go outside!" Yan Xi nodded and walked out, feeling like a huge wave rolling in his heart. He began to contemplate everything that had happened after he arrived in the capital.

Everything showed that Shao Jing was willing to take care of him. Shao treated him very well. Yan Xi himself was also well-behaved and didn't conflict with Shao Jing.

Yan Xi couldn't tell whether Wang Shengxue's words were true or not at the moment, but it was inevitable that he would be on guard against Marquis Xing.

If it was true, was it because there was something between his father and Marquis Xing that made the latter target him?

Thinking of this, Yan Xi immediately stopped and wondered if he had neglected something.

Before he came to the capital, his father had called him to the study and told him with certainty that Marquis Xing would take care of him. Why was his father so sure?

They hadn't seen each other for many years. Although the two families had been in good relations for generations, his father had said that it was the former Heir of Duke Xing who was his friend instead of this current Marquis Xing.

Why was his father so sure? He said Marquis Xing would take care of him, and he only needed to focus on his studies. He didn't need to worry about anything else.

There was something wrong with it. He had to write a letter to ask his father whether his relationship with Marquis Xing was good or not, or there was an agreement between them in private...

Shao Wanru didn't know what Yan Xi had heard, but she knew that he had wandered on the street for a long time with a livid face. This was what Wang Feng reported to her the next day.

Wang Feng could go back with Shao Wanru on the day she returned to her parents' home. He was originally Shao Wanru's servant and had nothing to do with Marquis Xing's Mansion. But on that day, he kept an eye on Yan Xi and saw the whole process. He saw Yan Xi climb over the wall angrily and then came out with a livid face.

Then he wandered on the street like a ghost for a long time before returning to Marquis Xing's Mansion.

When Wang Feng arrived at Marquis Xing's Mansion, it was already very late, and Shao Wanru and Chu Liuchen had already returned to their place. So he packed up some things and left the Marquis Xing's Mansion for Prince Chen's Mansion the next day.

After hearing Wang Feng's words, Shao Wanru nodded and asked Nanny Yu to arrange Wang Feng's accommodation. As for his work, Xiao Xuanzi would deal with it next.

"Miss, does Childe Yan know something?" Yujie asked after Wang Feng left.

Shao Wanru nodded, "He must have heard or suspected something. That's good!"

That was indeed good. This matter was probably related to Shao Jing, but she didn't know how Shao Jing had been offended by Yan Xi and his family.

Since this had attracted the attention of Yan Xi, Shao Wanru didn't care about it anymore.

Originally, it had nothing to do with her. It was just because both of them ran into difficulties in the last life, she gave some advice to Yan Xi. What happened next would depend on himself.

Of course, this had nothing to do with her!

Shao Wanru didn't take it to heart, but she didn't expect that it would fall on her in the end. It was even closely related to her and became a very important link.

Of course, these were all things for later. Shao Wanru was not busy with this "other people's business" now!

In front of this pile of rewards, she asked servants to classify them. These were the rewards sent by the Empress today. However, the Empress had already sent rewards before, so there was nothing special about them now!

While she was thinking, she suddenly heard the servants' voices from outside. "Greetings, Your Highness!"

It was Chu Liuchen. She immediately stood up and went out to welcome him. Before she reached the door, Chu had already come in. He took her hand and went inside.

Although it had only been a few days, the servant girls were sharp-eyed and left the room. Of course, they were also full of joy. Prince Chen was very kind to their master, and they were happy to see that.

"What's wrong? Is there anything bothering you?" Chu Liuchen raised his eyes. He had seen a whole table of rewards and asked even though he already knew the answer.

"There's nothing to worry about. Just too many rewards and I'm wondering why!" Shao Wanru said resignedly, pointing at the things on the table, "When we entered the Palace before, the Empress had already rewarded us. Why does she reward us with these again?"

"It's about my diplomatic mission. Imperial Grandmother will probably reward us later!" Chu Liuchen said casually, "Just take them, don't worry about it!"

"Has your diplomatic mission been settled?" Shao Wanru said seriously and surprisingly. She thought that this mission had been only drafted and that there was still some time before the release of the official document. She did not expect it to be decided so quickly, which surprised her.

"The document has been released. I'll leave at the Palace Examination. But my beautiful wife will be alone. I'm really reluctant to leave!" Chu Liuchen held her hand and kissed her tenderly on her lips. Then he said seriously, "But don't worry. I'll come back as soon as possible. You don't have to live in the empty room at that time!"

### **Chapter 900 Reluctance to Say Goodbye and Gem Bracelets!**

Shao Wanru felt that she wanted to hit on the handsome face of Prince Chen. How could he be so thick-skinned! It sounded like she couldn't fall asleep without him.

In fact, it was really hard for Shao Wanru to fall asleep when lying with him because his body was very hot.

"You can take your time. I'm not in a hurry!" Shao Wanru gritted her teeth.

"I'm in a hurry. Alas, I can't wait!" Chu Liuchen looked at her and said. There was another meaning in his words. Shao Wanru didn't understand at first, but when she understood, she blushed again.

They were talking about something serious, but she didn't know why he can always change the subject to something indecent. She couldn't talk with this thick-skinned man.

She clenched Chu Liuchen's hands to make him feel her anger.

"OK, all right, just use what you like and put others in your storehouse. These are just some good-looking, fun, and delicious things!" Chu Liuchen said casually. He picked up a piece of black brocade and looked at Shao Wanru, "Remember to make a set of clothes for me. I didn't have a wife before, so I didn't pay much attention to my dressing."

Shao Wanru's eyes fell on his exquisite brocade robe and her mouth twitched. She didn't understand how he could say that he was just casually dressed.

If his clothes were worn casually, then other people's clothes were nothing.

"Of course, I'll make new clothes for you, Prince. I hope you won't mind!" Shao Wanru glared at him and said crossly.

"Of course not. Others don't have the clothes made by a beautiful wife, so I should show them off. From now on, my clothes will be in your charge, my Zhuozhuo!" Chu Liuchen said proudly.

Looking at him like this, Shao Wanru couldn't help laughing.

"Come on, I want to show you something!" Chu Liuchen smiled and pulled Shao Wanru to a table by the window. He took out a box from his sleeve and put it on the table.

"What... what is this?" Shao Wanru asked in surprise.

This box looked like a jewelry box, but it was not exactly. She cannot imagine what was inside.

"Open it and have a look!" Chu Liuchen said with a smile.

Shao Wanru opened the box. Seeing a pair of bracelets in the box, she was stunned for a moment. The bracelets were really exquisite. They were made of gold thread and each of them was inlaid with five blue gems.

Such a blue and flawless gem was hard to find, not to mention there were ten.

"This... is not an ordinary bracelet, is it?" Shao Wanru picked one up and looked at it in surprise. Then her eyes fell on the box again. It was a little far-fetched to call it a jewelry box. It was unusual. Instead of being decorated with exquisite accessories, it was very simple and plain.

It was hard to imagine that there was such a delicate pair of bracelets inside.

Chu Liuchen was very satisfied with Shao Wanru's keen mind. He picked up the other one and pressed one of the sapphires. Immediately, a few sharp needles shot heavily at the window.

"There is a sharp weapon inside!" Shao Wanru said in surprise. She loosened her grip, and the bracelet fell off. Chu Liuchen reached out to catch it and said, "Don't worry. It takes great force to activate it, and only one gem can be pressed. You can wear it as a normal accessory. It won't hurt you!"

As he said, he handed over the bracelet. Shao Wanru took it carefully. Under the guidance of Chu Liuchen, she could see the differences. Other sapphires were inlaid with rice-sized pearls, and the one that could be pressed was not.

"I'm leaving the capital city for the time being. Although you have Qing'er with you, I'm afraid that someone will plot against you since your identity is different now. Wearing this can help you protect yourself!" Chu Liuchen said softly. As he said that, he took another bracelet from his hand, put it on for Shao Wanru and then took off her old one.

Shao Wanru bit her lip. Seeing that Chu Liuchen carefully tied the bracelet for her, she smiled unconsciously.

After helping her wear the bracelet, he rolled down her sleeves to hide it inside. Everything was perfect.

"After I leave the capital, you must be careful," Chu Liuchen told her again. In fact, he had said this several times, but he still did it again and again. Even he couldn't help laughing at himself.

He had always been alone. He even put aside the word of caution given by Empress Dowager. But now he repeatedly cautioned another person!

"I will be careful, and so will you. Nanjiang has always been a strange place. If you act rashly, there will be trouble and even life-threatening danger. Although you won't go to Nanjiang, you will arrive at the border area, so you must be careful!" Shao Wanru said worriedly.

She couldn't remember what had happened in the last life clearly, so she couldn't give Chu Liuchen any better hints. What she could do was to remind Chu Liuchen over and over again that Xu State was dangerous and that he shouldn't take risks rashly.

Chu Liuchen's eyes became more gentle. He reached out to hold Shao Wanru in his arms, touched her head gently, and comforted her softly, "Don't worry, I'll be fine!"

His eyes became cold when Shao Wanru couldn't see them. Even if there was something wrong, it was none of his business. He just wanted to see who was scheming this time.

"As for Marquis Xing's Mansion, you can deal with it if you want. If you need help, I will always be there!"

Chu Liuchen said in a low voice, but it reached Shao Wanru's heart. She inexplicably felt bitter. Marquis Xing's Mansion was the source of her hatred in this life. Although Chu Liuchen did not say anything, he could understand her thoughts.

He didn't do anything and let her do whatever she wanted, because he wanted her to be happy. How could she not understand?

"I will solve it. If it doesn't work, I still have you!" Shao Wanru said with a slight blush. She said this with confidence, but when she thought about her words carefully, she couldn't help blushing. She had never said so in the past.

"Yes, you still have me!" Chu Liuchen smiled and hold her slender waist tightly, letting her lean in his arms. His heart was overflowing with happiness.

Neither of them spoke, but they didn't feel awkward or weird. Staying together already made them feel happy even if they said or did nothing.

"Master, Commandery Prince Qing is asking to see you!" Xiao Xuanzi summoned up his courage and said at the door.

"I don't want to see him!" Chu Liuchen said impatiently.

"Yes, I'll tell Commandery Prince Qing right away!" Xiao Xuanzi ran away quickly. Shao Wanru saw through the window that he was running as if someone was chasing him, so she couldn't help laughing.

"Is Commandery Prince Qing engaged?"

"Who knows!" Chu Liuchen put her raising head back on his chest. "I don't care. Anyway, he has the final say in the engagement, and nobody else has any say in it!"

Shao Wanru asked surprisingly, "Your Highness, do you mean that he has not been engaged yet?"

"Maybe! Anyway, that's what he says. When something had gone wrong in the palace before, I heard that he was going to marry the daughter of a concubine from your mansion. He said he has been engaged back then, but this time, his scheme backfires on him!" Chu Liuchen said with a sneer.

Chu Qing thought that he had concealed his thoughts very well, but he did not expect that many people were focusing on him. The so-called engaged woman was just the niece of a small official. If Chu Qing was a man of his word, he would not have rushed to the front of the stage and done all these things on his own.

"Is the Yuhui Nunnery the base of Commandery Prince Qing?" Shao Wanru suddenly remembered what had happened in the Yuhui Nunnery and couldn't help asking.

"No matter whose base it is, don't go to the Yuhui Nunnery!" Chu Liuchen said.

"Why not? I need to visit Mingqiu Nun!" Shao Wanru moved her head and said deliberately.

"You can go visit her after I come back. If you really miss her, you can invite Mingqiu Nun here in the name of treating you!" Chu Liuchen said meaningfully.

Shao Wanru understood his overtones and raised the corner of her mouth. It was not that Chu Liuchen didn't want her to go, but that he was afraid that she might get into trouble in the Yuhui Nunnery. This place was abnormal. After several accidents, the nunnery was now eerily calm. It was startling.

Chu Qing's case could be serious or minor, but in the end, it had no conclusion.

The Yuhui Nunnery was still there, as if nothing had happened before!

"But Madam Jiang is still there!" Shao Wanru said. After saying that, she immediately blushed. Her voice and tone sounded more like a spoiled child!

Chu Liuchen glanced at her and said in a low voice, "There is no rush for her business. Put it aside now. After I come back, I'll go with you!"

The two felt good, as if they should get along with each other like this, with the joy of tranquility.

Shao Wanru relaxed her body and let Chu Liuchen hold her tightly in his arms. She closed her eyes slowly. This was Chu Liuchen, not the person whom she could not rely on in her last life.

"You can take your time to handle your own business. If I mess up, I will come to you. But before that, Prince, you have to promise me not to intervene at will!" Shao Wanru said. She didn't hesitate to say what was on her mind.

Although Chu Liuchen was favored by Empress Dowager and Emperor, he cannot live a quiet life because of his identity as a prince. Every move he made would be noticed by someone with ulterior motives, and people would inquire about other things related to him. Shao Wanru wished to deal with her own affairs on her own and didn't want Chu Liuchen to be suspected.

Chu Liuchen was not surprised by Shao Wanru's words. As early as the first time he met Shao Wanru, he knew that this girl was not as delicate as she looked on the surface. She had her own plan in secret and acted decisively, which shocked Chu Liuchen, but also made him filled with pity.

If she hadn't been cornered by someone before, a girl wouldn't have been so alert and good at planning.

"Okay, I'll do as you say. But remember, you must ensure your safety. If you're in danger, I'll take action!" Chu Liuchen gently pushed Shao Wanru's face away, his eyes brimming with coldness.

However, in Shao Wanru's eyes, his reaction made her feel the sweetness of love. She nodded hard and said, "Don't worry. I won't let anyone hurt me!"

Thanks to her serious promise, the coldness on Chu Liuchen's face faded away. He turned back into that genteel and beautiful man as usual. He pinched Shao Wanru's nose softly and said with a smile, "Your life in Prince Chen's Mansion won't be hard. You can do whatever you want. Remember, you are Princess Chen!"

Shao Wanru smiled, held his hands, pulled down his fingers, and played with them. For a moment, the room became quiet again. Only the feeling of love between them was flowing. It was very peaceful and warm!

"Master, come and have a look. Commandery Prince Qing has fainted!" Xiao Xuanzi panted loudly to the main room as soon as he ran into the yard...