

## **My Crown 551**

### **Chapter 551: I Shouldn't Be Angry?**

This person was obviously suppressing a bellyful of anger, but he didn't say anything. It was irritating looking at him!

"If you have something to say, spit it out!" Qiao Mu threw down her chopsticks and said angrily, "Not eating anymore."

The two royal maids waiting on them felt their eyes protruding from their sockets. They had never seen anyone who dared to be so unbridled in front of the crown prince.

"Rest if you don't want to eat." Mo Lian stood up and tossed his chopsticks aside before scooping up her small hand into his.

The little stoic flared up and wanted to fling his hand aside, but she was unsuccessful and became furious. "You're being ridiculous."

Crown Prince Mo gazed silently at her.

The more he was like this, the more upset the little stoic got, and she turned around to run out of the bedchamber.

Mo Lian's figure flashed, and he instantly blocked her path.

The little fellow ran without heeding anything else and rammed into his embrace.

"Where are you going? You still want to return to the Qin Estate? You're that unwilling to part with that Second Qin?" Mo Lian instantly burst in fury. He hugged her and used his hand to turn her small face towards him.

Why are you mentioning Second Qin without rhyme or reason?

Qiao Mu squirmed to move her small hands and feet, but how could she struggle free? She was so angry that she beat him with her fist.

"Let me tell you. The Qin Estate has already been surrounded. So many officials' family members have been injured by the collapsing building. In addition, a level-four zombie, such a dangerous creature, had also appeared in the estate. Right now, they are in an observation period, so none of them can come out!" The crown prince gripped her small chin and stared straight at her bright, black eyes. He yelled angrily, "We encountered assassins in their Qin Estate, and Mo Jiao also got his head smashed up. It's an unforgivable crime to attack the royal family. His Qin Family will definitely undergo a search and seizure!"

"Go ahead and do it! What are you yelling at me for??" Our dear Qiao Mu was extremely furious and kicked his leg.

His Highness was already accustomed to this signature kick of hers, so he didn't mind at all. Instead, it alarmed the surrounding royal maids and eunuchs into simultaneously dropping on all fours with lowered gazes.

"You're not worried?" Mo Lian's expression eased slightly.

"What could I be worried about? You've been speaking sardonically the entire time. Release your anger if you have it! Don't stifle it!" Qiao Mu huffed and kicked him several more times in a row. His formal attire now had an extra row of small footprints.

Mo Lian was instantly angered into laughter. He pulled apart the curtains and carried this little one into the inner room. His cold voice travelled outwards. "You're all dismissed."

"Don't tell me that I shouldn't be angry?" He threw her onto the soft brocade on the edge of the bed. He closed in, and his presence completely enveloped her.

"You didn't leave a spoken nor written word and disappeared for more than two years. Yet when we met again, you were inside the Qin Estate..." That damned Second Qin had also assumed himself to be her guardian angel. Was he even worthy?

"I-I..." Qiao Mu immediately wilted a bit.

The little fellow knew that she was in the wrong, but she couldn't help saying, "Even so, don't be so snarky."

Mo Lian was angered into laughter. "How am I snarky?"

"You're obviously so angry that you're itching to beat me up, yet you insist on wearing a breezy expression." *Isn't stifling it painful?*

"Oh, so you mean that you want me to beat you. Fine then, let's do it!" He suddenly pressed her down onto a pair of long legs.

Darling Qiao was instantly stupefied!

What the hey?

This wicked devil, how could you be so duplicitous?

Seeing his palm swinging down, Qiao Mu was about to be angered to death inside.

Why was she so dumb. Wasn't this asking to be beaten up?

And then in the next second, he flipped her over into a hug, his gentle fingers caressing her small face lightly.

How could he bear to beat up his treasure...

## **Chapter 552: Reconciling**

"Your coming-of-age hairpin ceremony is in three months, right." He had changed the subject too quickly, and Darling Qiao couldn't react quickly enough.

She gave a low "mhm," her cheeks still puffed out while in his embrace.

"Actually, I'm not angry at you." Mo Lian lifted up her small face. He closed in on her forehead and nuzzled gently. "I'm angry at myself for not protecting you well."

"You don't know how agonizing and regretful I felt when I saw those withered vines and snapped branches on the snowy peaks..." He murmured next to her ear, "But this is all in the past now. I don't want to know anything nor do I want to think about anything more. I just want you to stay by my side. From this moment on, don't leave me."

Qiao Mu actually didn't want to argue with him, but when she saw him wearing a mask of gentleness earlier, she felt irked for some reason.

After getting it off her chest, this little fellow's mood eased. However, upon hearing him saying this, she was flooded by boundless guilt. She timidly looked at him and said, "I-I'm sorry."

Coming to think of it, she had always been willful and reckless, not to mention acting spoiled, in front of him. She really couldn't suffer any bit of grievance from him.

His lukewarm attitude just now made her feel aggrieved and depressed.

Qiao Mu's eyes slightly reddened, and her small hands unconsciously circled his neck as she said pitifully, "Mo Lian, I didn't disappear on purpose. It was only that that period of time was so agonizing that I didn't want to think about anything at all."

"Murong Xun died, Mo Lian. She had promised that she would attend my hairpin ceremony, but she died. She's a big fat liar."

Mo Lian patted her back gently. When he thought about how helpless she was, all alone, at that time, his heart involuntarily ached.

"The sect master died, Aunt-Master also died. The ferule you gifted me broke, Big Treasure also died, they all died. I was the only one left in the end."

"Don't talk such nonsense, how are you the only one left? No matter what happens, I will always be by your side, do you understand? Qiaoqiao, you have to believe in me more, okay?"

Seeing his focused and expectant gaze, it was difficult for Qiao Mu to not nod her head.

Mo Lian's lips turned up slightly, and he stroked her small head in satisfaction.

"You don't know, I didn't dare say anything to your parents after relocating them to the capital. I only lied to them and said that you were cultivating in the Holy Water Sect. Do you know how much they've missed you?"

"But I only bring disaster to others."

"You're spouting nonsense." Mo Lian abruptly covered her small mouth with his hand. "How could what happened to the Holy Water Sect be blamed on you? That's because public morality is not what it used to be, leading to covetous thoughts. It was never your fault in the first place."

"Rest assured, we will definitely settle this account no matter what." Mo Lian gently swayed her small body while hugging her. "Promise me, darling. Don't let your imagination run wild, okay?"

"I'll send you home tomorrow, okay?" He cupped her small face and gazed at her. "Your parents and family all miss you very much."

How could she reject him when he was like this?

Qiao Mu nodded sullenly.

"I'll also have Royal Father send along a betrothal edict to your family." While hugging this darling, Crown Prince Mo closed in with a grin and asked, "How about it?"

Faced with his gentle but enticing tone, as well as his handsome and picturesque features, a certain someone continued to sullenly nod her head without contemplating carefully.

She abruptly widened her eyes immediately afterwards. "Betrothal? Who?"

Holding in his laughter, Mo Lian tapped her small nose, then pointed at himself. "You, and me!"

### **Chapter 553: A Crown Prince Consort from Out of the Blue**

The little stoic's expression suddenly became rich. She was momentarily astonished, her mouth slightly agape.

"You can't back out now. You yourself nodded just now, nodding even three times in a row! I counted." Mo Lian's eyes deepened slightly as his lustrous finger poked her soft lips.

*I really want to kiss.* Just as this tumultuous thought surfaced from the bottom of his heart, he vigorously kept it in check: *Darling is still young, don't scare her now. If you scare her into fleeing again, that wouldn't be good...*

"Look. How to say it, we've already known each other for seven to eight years. We should at least confirm each other's status, right." Crown Prince Mo said as he rocked her small body.

"Don't be afraid, darling. We're only confirming our status and nothing else." He couldn't resist lowering his head to kiss her dumbstruck face.

So soft and glutinous, such nice texture!

"In the time that you haven't been here, I've been visiting Father-in-Law and Mother-in-Law practically every day to do my filial duty. They especially like me." Mo Lian suppressed his laughter and proclaimed seriously, "Rest assured, Father-in-Law and Mother-in-Law won't object for sure."

Stop stop stop stop! Qiao Mu felt that she increasingly couldn't keep up with the crown prince's thoughts.

"You? Didn't you say before? That we were friends?" Those words were still ringing in her ears!

"But didn't you say that you don't have friends!" Mo Lian gazed at her quite seriously and said solemnly, "After thinking it over, I concluded, so be it if you don't have friends. We just won't be friends then. I think the designation of husband and wife is quite good, what do you think?"

*What else can I say? You've already decided on a betrothal edict!* It looks as if he's asking for her opinion, but in actuality, he's already made his decision!

A certain darling remained dumbfounded and couldn't collect her wits even after half a day.

Mo Lian was already rolling on the floor laughing on the inside, but he still maintained his serious demeanor on the outside. He scooped up the little lady's chin and rubbed it with his fingers. "Darling? My suggestion is pretty good, right. It's a deal. Tomorrow I'll have the betrothal edict sent back along with you, okay?"

Why did she keep feeling that something was amiss?

Qiao Mu blinked, wanting to say something.

But Crown Prince Mo continued to say, "Don't worry, we're just confirming our marriage before your hairpin ceremony. It won't affect anything else. You see, you're already grown up. When a boy grows up he takes a wife, and when a girl grows up she takes a husband. Getting married isn't scary, so be good now."

"But, is issuing an edict just this simple?" Qiao Mu asked hot-headedly.

Mo Lian's eyes smiled, and he suddenly lowered his head to kiss her again while she was still bewildered. "Rest assured, darling. It's naturally no problem when it comes to me."

If his old man dared to stop him from marrying a wife...

That night, Mo Lian made a trip to the royal study and left with a royal edict after talking with the old king for more than two hours.

This episode immediately caused the princes and consorts who received the news to feel unsettled, and they all sent people to make inquiries about the crown prince and the king's private discussion.

Unfortunately, the information was tightly guarded, and everyone ended up empty-handed.

After the crown prince went to the royal study to request for the edict, Qiao Mu paced back and forth inside the bedchamber without stopping.

She kept feeling that she had been duped by a certain someone! What do you mean, just simply confirming our status, and nothing else?

The status given by a kingdom's heir apparent, isn't it?

The Crown Prince Consort?

Wasn't this betrothal edict too careless?

She was a nameless woman from the small Qiao Clan that suddenly rose up to become the crown prince consort. This would definitely raise a huge wave across the entire capital, no doubt.

Qiao Mu massaged her temples. She heard the royal servants' greetings, and she saw that person dressed in pearl-white casual wear, his features picturesque, grinning while walking towards her.

Qiao Mu felt all of her worries vanishing all of a sudden. Whatever, we'll cross that bridge when we get there!

**Chapter 554: When a Man Achieves the Dao...**

Early the next morning, when the sky was just brightening with the first glimmer of light, a betrothal edict was issued to the Qiao Estate, and it instantly shocked the entire family, as well as everyone in the capital, into passing out!

The entire Qiao Family, from the elderly lady to the servants, all kneeled in the main hall to receive the edict.

When they heard the edict state, "The Qiao Estate's Eldest Miss is refined, graceful, virtuous, dignified, and gentle in nature, and is especially ordained as Crown Prince Consort," some of the servants who hadn't seen a certain child before didn't have much to say and were only dumbfounded.

But the elderly lady couldn't resist twitching her lips uncontrollably.

This description? Who was it talking about exactly? Could Qiao Mu that lass measure up to those eight words? Gentle in nature and whatnot, don't kid me, alright?

The end of the royal edict also mentioned Qiao Zhongbang and Wei Ziqin. The king commended the couple for being meritorious in raising the crown prince consort. Thus, he especially promoted Qiao Zhongbang to be the Marquis of Jiayuan<sup>[1]</sup>, and conferred his Madam née Wei with a third-rank imperial mandate. He bestowed them with a marquis's estate, jewelry and precious stones, brocade and grains, etc., etc.

The couple exchanged glances in bewilderment and were at a total loss.

It was rather Second Uncle Qiao who immediately jabbed his eldest brother and sent him a look to quickly receive the edict.

The Qiao Family's eldest couple hastily kowtowed in thanks for the king's favor and respectfully received the royal edict. Second Uncle Qiao also smilingly handed the edict-issuing eunuch five feet of cloth, which was a very generous gift.

Presently, gifting cloth and grains was more fitting than gifting precious metals and stones.

As ramie fiber was almost out of production at present, cloth prices spiked up by the day.

The Mo Kingdom capital was still considered alright, as its stock was still copious. Inside some other fortifications, though, commoners basically hadn't replaced their clothing in these few years. After all, they could last two years more after some patching and mending.

This piece of five-foot cloth that Second Uncle Qiao gave could be exchanged for three liters of rice, which was enough to feed a normal family sparingly for half a month.

Hence, this was considered a generous gift, so the edict-issuing eunuch was all smiles while accepting it. His attitude towards the Qiao Family improved greatly, and he praised them again and again.

The crown prince had gifted this residence when the Qiao family first entered the capital. However, the crown prince had never revealed his identity when he was chumming up to his parents-in-law, so the couple was still in the dark at this time.

After receiving the edict, the entire Qiao Estate hurriedly packed up and moved the whole family to the Marquis of Jiayuan's Estate.

The Marquis of Jiayuan's Estate was located on Minshun Boulevard. Its scale was extremely grand, and there were a great many courtyards inside. Just the gardens themselves were split into five and six of various sizes, complete with gazebos, pavilions, and creeks. The scenery was exceptional.

Everyone naturally kept the largest Nanzhu Garden for the crown prince consort, while the others picked the court that they liked.

The Qiao Family was small, so more than half of the entire marquis's estate was still empty after they moved in.

The elderly lady was getting on in years and was not as vigorous as she used to be, so she hastily went to rest after moving into Longevity Court. The remaining arrangements for the family and servants, including inventorying the royally-bestowed gifts, fell upon Wei Ziqin.

After an hour, the news of the crown prince consort's betrothal edict had already circulated throughout the entire capital.

When Queen Zhao heard that the king had ordained this unheard-of family as her treasured son's in-laws, how could she sit still? She immediately brought her personal nanny to the king's royal study in haste.

The entire Mo Kingdom capital had already exploded into a stew.

Everyone, from the nobles to even a trash-picking commoner, would ask, "Did you hear? The king issued a betrothal edict for His Highness the Crown Prince."

### **Chapter 555: Internal Strife**

The crown prince consort had already gotten famous among all levels of Northern Mo society before even making an appearance!

The talisman patrician family.

Mu Qianqian had flown into a terrible rage inside her room, smashing everything that she could into smithereens.

When Madam Mu entered and saw the mess on the ground, her brows knitted in intense heartache.

Due to the current circumstances, they could only use grains to replace the items that got smashed. However, the family couldn't afford having her daughter squander their surplus grain like this.

Hence, each piece smashed meant one piece less. If this continued, then this Miss Mu's room was immediately about to be stripped bare.

"Alright, what can you do by throwing a tantrum." Madam Mu snapped. "You're just making a scene for the second and third branches to laugh at."

"Who dares to laugh at me?" Mu Qianqian arched her eyebrows in anger, her resentfulness undisguised. "What Marquis of Jiayuan's Estate, I've never even heard of it before! Who knows where this little b\*tch came from, stealing away the man's soul! Really, what a shameless b\*tch!"

“My! Listen to what Eldest Miss is saying! The other party is the crown prince consort formally ordained by the king himself! It’s nothing much if Eldest Miss says this at home! But if word were to get outside, it would be undeniable that the young ladies nurtured by our Mu Family lack discipline and only know how to spout obscenities! It’s fine if you, Eldest Miss, don’t know shame, but don’t drag the many unmarried young ladies in the estate along with you to lose face too.” A middle-aged woman dressed in extravagant clothing chortled as she walked inside. She was followed by a young girl, about the same age as Mu Qianqian, who was covering her mouth in a snicker.

Upon seeing this woman, Madam Mu was filled with anger, and she yelled at the maidservants. “Are you all dead? You don’t know to announce that the second branch’s missus has come?”

“Oh my my my my, Eldest Sister-in-Law, don’t recklessly blame the servants. Our arrival was announced! It’s just that Eldest Miss’s, mhm, hissy fit and smashing sounds blotted out the announcement. You must not say that our second branch doesn’t know etiquette.”

Her sister-in-law’s sardonic words were so acerbic that Madam Mu felt her stomach hurting, and she waved her hand in irritation. “Alright, alright. Madam née Liu, who doesn’t know that you came here today to witness our eldest branch’s joke. Since you’ve already seen it, you can go now. This madam won’t send you off!”

“Aiyo, listen to Sister-in-Law’s words, I didn’t come to witness a joke.” Second Branch’s Madam née Liu pulled over her own daughter Mu Zhilan with a chortle. “I just wanted to tell Sister-in-Law that Her Majesty the Queen is hosting a palace banquet tomorrow and has invited the three dukes and five marquis! Oh my, that’s not right. My mouth really doesn’t know how to speak.”

Madam née Liu giggled as she lightly slapped her own mouth. “It should be the six marquis’s estates now. The three dukes’, six marquis’, and all the large patrician families’ misses will be attending the banquet at that time. Our family’s Eldest Miss naturally would be unwilling to shirk this responsibility, but it couldn’t be helped that Eldest Miss’s mood is poor! I feared that this would muck up the entire banquet, Sister-in-Law, so I took it upon myself to mention this to the family head. Family Head agreed for our Zhilan to attend the banquet tomorrow in Eldest Miss’s stead.”

“I really am sorry, Eldest Sister.” Mu Zhilan giggled softly.

Mu Qianqian couldn’t suppress the rage that flared up at that instant, and she immediately chucked a bright-yellow-colored talisman at Mu Zhilan! “B\*tches, you’re all b\*tches!”

Mu Zhilan’s eyes narrowed slightly. She wasn’t someone to be trifled with either.

She also threw out a talisman with a flick of her fingers, and the talismans collided in mid-air before they both burst apart.

## **Chapter 556: Seeing Her True Appearance**

Of course, Qiao Mu had no idea how racuous the entire Mo Kingdom capital had become.

She slept well into the morning and only realized that it was almost high noon when she opened her eyes.



The crown prince grinned at her while supporting his chin on the edge of the bed. When their eyes met, Qiao Mu instantly retracted her head into her brocade quilt-cocoon.

What was going on? That fellow's slightly uplifted phoenix eyes were so alluring that she felt like her heart had skipped a beat when she met his gaze by accident. It was so baffling.

As she hid inside the quilt, she calmly took her own pulse.

It was quite normal! Her body was very healthy.

Suddenly, the entire quilt was lifted into the air, and the little fellow hastily poked her head out. "What are you doing?"

"Get up and change, then eat a little something. We still need to go out to visit your family. If you don't get moving, we won't even make it for lunch! We have to at least go back and eat a reunion meal, right."

A reunion meal again...

The little fellow grumpily pursed her lips.

"You don't need to work in the southern study today?"

"I've finished already." The crown prince beamed as he wiped the little fellow's face with a clean and damp face cloth. "Look at how efficient I am. I especially finished my work early so that we can stay with your family for the entire day today."

Shaoyao, who was holding a change of clothes on the side, chuckled while covering her mouth.

"I'll do it myself, I'll do it myself!" Qiao Mu reached for the clothes, but the crown prince evaded her, insisting on helping her wear them.

Today, the little one changed into a light yellow lined gown with wide sleeves, which promptly embellished her delicate figure.

She then draped an extremely rare pearl white ice-thread sable cloak on the outside, its furry collar contrasting against her glossy and rosy face.

After Shaoyao braided her hair and adorned it with beaded flowers, the little fellow sat down in front of the dressing table and took out some medicinal powder, massaging it into her face.

The crown prince raised an eyebrow and smirked while observing her.

This little one was willing to reveal her true appearance after all.

While our dear Qiao Mu sat there fiddling with her face, she still felt a bit defiant. "Let me ask you, how did you and Duan Yue, as well as Situ Yi, recognize me with a single glance?"

Mo Lian replied with a smile, "Duan Yue and Situ Yi, those two guys, most definitely made a wild guess!"

"As for me, it's naturally because," the crown prince said as he walked towards her back, "Qiaoqiao's every frown and smile has been imprinted deep within my heart. Even if I were blindfolded, I could still recognize you..."

Mo Lian stared blankly, his voice pausing before involuntarily finishing with “with a single glance.”

The little fellow had turned around to look at him. That small, barefaced face that was colder than snow and more frigid than frost overlapped with the her in his memory.

No, she was even more beautiful than what he had imagined the grown-up her to look like.

Shaoyao widened her eyes abruptly and exclaimed excitedly, “Little Miss, you’ve become so pretty! That’s right, I was saying, how is it possible for the miss that was so fair and adorable as a child to be that ordinary-looking when grown up? I didn’t even dare to say anything about it these two days.”

She was scared that she might jab Miss’s sore spot, and she had originally concluded that girls that were pretty when younger would become ordinary-looking when grown up...

Qiao Mu glanced at her speechlessly.

The crown prince involuntarily broke out into laughter, and he pulled the little lady to his side. “Let’s go, we’ll be riding a carriage over.”

“That’s right, you might not know yet. Your father has been ennobled as the Marquis of Jiayuan, and the entire Qiao Family has now moved into the Marquis of Jiayuan’s Estate, neighboring Minister Song’s family, on Minshun Boulevard.”

## **Chapter 557: The Relatives Have Come**

Needless to say, the people who lived on Minshun Boulevard were definitely influential bigwigs.

As the neighbors of the marquis’s estate were most likely high officials of the royal court, the entire estate’s standing was immediately boosted.

The crown prince’s carriage exited unimpeded from the northernmost Huabei Gate. They would arrive at Minshun Boulevard after making a turn off Anshun Boulevard, which was located on the central axis.

This showed just how excellent Minshun Boulevard’s location was. Only high officials’ and nobles’ carriages would come to and fro this area, and few commoners dared to set up stalls or cause trouble here.

This time around, the crown prince travelled low-key and didn’t bring too many people with him. He had only brought twenty royal guards, under He Tian’s lead, for protection.

At present, He Tian had been promoted by exception from a small centurion to become the royal guard’s deputy commander.

This of course was also because of the crown prince’s trust. Reportedly, his father He Qizheng should probably also get promoted within this year. As long as nothing strange happened, the position of the Minister of Works was basically his.

Just as Qiao Mu was going back with a certain crown prince to the Marquis of Jiayuan’s Estate while feeling unsettled, a beat-up donkey cart showed up at the Mo Kingdom capital’s western city gate. It carried six to seven fatigued people and lined up at the end of the queue to enter the city.

A family of three, clothed in rags and so emaciated that they barely looked human, also followed behind the donkey cart.

Because a level-four zombie had appeared in the Qin Estate, the Mo Kingdom capital was currently under a complete lockdown and had shut the northern and southern city gates.

Hence, people could only enter and exit from the western and eastern city gates.

However, according to the regulations, commoners, small merchants, and peddlers could only use the western city gate. Thus, the queue to enter the city was still very long even at this time when it was nearing high noon.

In consideration for the commoners, people didn't need to pay a fee to enter or exit the Mo Kingdom capital, but the special circumstances these two days resulted in an extraordinarily slow inspection speed.

The Mo Kingdom capital was Northern Mo's largest city. The city guards' integrity was extremely high, and nothing unpleasant had occurred. Although the queue was long, it was very orderly.

The people on the donkey cart had been constantly peering towards the city gate entrance, their eyes filled with longing.

They were all messy-haired and dirty-faced, not much better off than the family of three in rags behind them.

"Aunt Niu, is what you said true? I can find Mother-in-law and the rest in the Mo Kingdom capital?" The small woman who spoke had a weathered and dark face. She had a very skinny figure and was holding on to her scrawny twelve-year-old son, whose face was so gaunt that his cheeks had sunken in.

"Aiyo, you're still not believing what I tell you. I'm telling you, Xu Jiao, your mother-in-law and the eldest branch are living fabulously! Previously, they had already gotten along prosperously in Xijiu City, but they had suddenly moved out two years ago without a word. I had spent much time and energy before hearing that they had come to the Mo Kingdom capital." The old woman that spoke had envy in her eyes. Her mouth stuck out and her old, dark face had the protruding chin of an ape's. She revealed a mouth of crude and black teeth whenever she opened her mouth.

Xu Jiao was precisely the old Qiao Family's daughter-in-law. From the day the zombie outbreak happened, the Qiao Family's third branch, this family of three, started out on the path of utter misfortune.

When they didn't manage to ride on the eldest branch's coattails that day, they were left behind in the village and had to flee for their lives.

If not for her family's Qiao Zhongheng erupting with a superpower at the critical moment, how would the mother and son have been able to escape from the tiger's den? Perhaps they would have long been fed to the humongous pile of zombies.

Because they had left in a rush, they had practically left everything behind. The Qiao Family of three didn't want to look back on their past misery at all.

## **Chapter 558: Scheming Together**

The people sitting on the donkey cart were precisely Granny Niu and her family from the Wei Clan Village.

They originally had a large family of around a dozen people, but many of them had died in these past years. Only seven of them, including Granny Niu, had survived until the present.

The donkey had also wasted away and simply wasn't fit to pull along seven people long-distance. Hence, it had been simultaneously flayed and beaten while floundering on the way here.

When mentioning the Qiao Family, Granny Niu had a bellyful of anger that she couldn't release. At that time in Xijiu City, Granny Niu and her family alleged that Qiao Wenjuan had caused their Third Junior Wei's death, and they would frequently find the Qiao Family to demand compensation.

In the beginning, the Qiao Family would still give them some grains and cloth.

However, once it dragged on, even the Qiao Family's most good-natured Qiao Zhongbang became annoyed, and he instructed the city lord to strictly guard against their family and immediately drive them far away once they appeared.

As a result, they were simply unable to approach the Qiao Family in Pear Blossom Alley later on. As they were beset by cold and hunger every day, quite a few of their family members had starved to death.

"The people from your Old Qiao's family's eldest branch are simply not human!" Granny Niu ranted, "I'm telling you, Xu Jiao, you need to find Elderly Lady for this matter. As long as Elderly Lady agrees, we might even be able to move in."

"It's no use to find the eldest branch! Those two's hearts are as hard as iron! Back then when my family's young grandson was about to die from illness, they weren't even willing to dole out a mouthful of hot soup."

"That's right, that's right." Granny Niu's eldest daughter-in-law, Madam née Bo, tugged Xu Jiao's hand and persuaded earnestly, "Look at how our family's fourth branch of three have all starved to death. This goes to show how harsh and merciless your Old Qiao's family's eldest branch are."

"They didn't tell us at all when they moved out from Xijiu City back then."

"Bah, how would they tell us. They were especially avoiding us when they directly moved out from Xijiu City!" Granny Niu spat out. She turned her head aside and said reprovingly, "I'm telling you, Xu Jiao, your Old Qiao's family's eldest branch are living well! They must have secured better prospects, that's why they moved to the Mo Kingdom capital. Otherwise, how would they have been able to move here? Isn't this the logic?"

"Aunt's words are very reasonable." Xu Jiao stated with a darkened face.

"Sister-in-Law, look at how starved your family's Xiao Long is. They're both the grandsons of Old Qiao's family. What's with the differential treatment, isn't that right?" Madam née Bo continued to instigate while blinking at the second branch's Madam née Sun.

Madam née Sun hastily put in her two cents too, but she had always been clumsy in speech and couldn't say much.

Seeing this, Madam née Bo glared irritably at her own sister-in-law and then pulled Xu Jiao's hand while advising patiently, "Sister-in-Law, I'm only saying this because I treat you as one of us. Our family was bullied tragically by your eldest branch! Not only did our fourth branch's family of three all starve to death, our second branch too, go ask my sister-in-law, her two daughters also starved to death too."

When her two daughters that had starved to death were mentioned, Madam née Sun hastily wiped her tears.

Back then, since the family didn't have enough food, it was definitely first reserved for the Wei Family's eldest branch's three sons. She had given birth to three daughters, so they weren't allocated much food. In the end, two of her daughters had starved to death.

Granny Niu waved her hand and concluded, "In short, we have to first contact your mother-in-law before saying anything else."

"The Mo Kingdom capital is so big, who knows where to find them." Xu Jiao was so infuriated that her stomach hurt. Once she thought about how their family of three was suffering while the eldest branch's family was eating and drinking well all these years, she felt indignant from the unfairness of it all.

"Humph, I don't believe that we won't be able to find your Old Qiao's family with so many of us."

### **Chapter 559: The Little Tyrant**

Let's not talk about the drama of Xu Jiao and company entering the city with evil intentions and doggedly inquiring after the Qiao Family's whereabouts for now.

At this time, the crown prince's carriage had already entered Minshun Boulevard. However, when they were around a dozen meters away from the Marquis of Jiayuan's Estate, they saw a gang of half-grown boys crowded boisterously together, punching and kicking something.

"Young Master, do you think it's good enough yet? This brat dared to be impertinent towards Young Master, so he deserves to be beaten to death!"

"Continue beating!" A small boy's clear and crisp voice rang out. He gave a humph and remarked, "Daring to scold me time and time again? Beat him until he's dead!"

"Hehe, Xiao Sen, I heard that this fellow is the youngest son of the Deputy Minister of Ceremonies. If we were to beat him to death, would there be trouble?"

"What trouble could there be! I have Big Bro!" The small boy raised his head up high and put his hands on his waist as he humphed belligerently. "Let's see if he dares to oppose me again in the academy in the future! I'll beat up whomever I want to! Beat him up! Use more strength, did you not eat earlier!"

"Haha, that's right! We were able to beat him up without consequence in the past, not to mention now! Right now, your dad is the Marquis of Jiayuan conferred by the king! You are the only son of a marquis, so who would dare to offend you?"

"Gao Fang, stop babbling. Hurry up and use more strength! I'm telling you guys, if you can't beat him into a cripple today, none of you should dream of having it easy!"

"Young Master, is it okay to beat him into a cripple?"

“How is it not okay! My Big Bro will take care of anything that happens! Just go ahead and beat him up! Beat him up ruthlessly!” The small boy directed his gang of lackeys, who rushed at the boy that had shrunk into a ball in the center of the circle, to punch and kick him ferociously.

“Alrighty, Young Master can rest and watch my efforts!”

Inside the carriage, Qiao Mu’s pair of tiny fists had clenched tightly.

The crown prince stifled a cough and was about to say something when the little one’s chilly but charming gaze shot over. His heart instantly sank, and he shouted “crap” in his mind.

“The ‘Big Bro’ he’s talking about is you.” Qiao Mu’s mouth curled up, but her voice was frigid.

“Qiaoqiao, listen to me.” The crown prince scolded his little brother-in-law for being a troublemaker in his mind. “Uh, Xiao Sen is still young, let’s teach him slowly...”

Qiao Mu didn’t want to bother with him anymore and lifted up the curtain with a swish. She jumped down abruptly before the carriage could even come to a full stop, giving the carriage driver a bad scare.

“What are you guys doing? Why aren’t you stopping!” Qiao Mu hollered.

The seven to eight half-grown boys, who were currently ganging up on and beating someone else, stopped simultaneously before turning around for a look.

When they saw the young older sister stare at them icily with her charming eyes, they quivered uncontrollably and huddled together in terror of her horrifying aura.

Qiao Mu’s gaze landed on the small, seven to eight-year-old boy in the front center row.

Draped in a thick deer fur-lined cloak lined over a robe embroidered with gold thread, the small boy had rosy lips, pearly teeth, and bright eyes. His small face was chapped red from the cold wind, and he looked adorable.

When she saw the lively and animated child in front of her, Qiao Mu’s icy gaze softened slightly.

“You, who are you! T-To mind this young master’s business!” Seeing Qiao Mu, the small boy inexplicably felt afraid. His mouth gaped, but he still stiffened his spine to chastise her.

The crown prince immediately thought “sh\*t” upon hearing this, and he hastily lifted up the curtain to alight from the carriage. He was just about to speak.

When he heard Qiao Mu sneer, “You’re so young, yet you don’t learn the good and rather have the prodigal act down pat. You’re not releasing him?”

Her bellow frightened the servants that were holding down the badly battered small boy into retracting their hands, and they subconsciously trembled.

## **Chapter 560: Offending Sister**

The small boy also became enraged, and he went up to kick the bloody-nosed and swollen-faced boy. He put his hands on his waist and roared fearlessly, “Who is he to you? Even if you want to stick up for him, you should first figure out who I am!”

“Let me tell you! In this Mo Kingdom capital, no one dares to provoke me, Little Tyrant Qiao Sen!”

The crown prince felt sweat pouring down his forehead while listening on the side. Goodness, you’ve already self-proclaimed yourself to be a Little Tyrant. What else could the crown prince say? The crown prince wished for nothing more than to muffle that kid’s mouth. He facepalmed and called out, “Qiaoqiao.”

He thought about how he should speak up for his little brother-in-law and let this matter blow over.

Really, this child hit the jackpot today. The kid was clearly very obedient in front of the elders normally, so how was he so unfortunate today...

Qiao Mu turned around furiously and glared at the crown prince. The rage in her heart flared up at once from the darkest corner of her heart.

She rushed forward, taking two steps in place of three, and hoisted up her younger brother with one hand. She smacked his back twice without room for objection.

These two smacks weren’t light either. As our dear Qiao Sen had never suffered this kind of grievance while growing up, he started bawling at once.

The two lackey boy servants were agitated, and they rolled up their sleeves, wanting to scuffle with Qiao Mu, as they swore, “What you doing, what you doing? You don’t want your life anymore? You dare to provoke even our youngest young master of the Marquis of Jiayuan’s Estate??”

Seeing that things were getting out of hand, the crown prince hastily bellowed, “Stop!”

As our dear Qiao Sen hadn’t noticed this lord at the beginning, he turned his head to look upon hearing the familiar voice. He instantly looked as if he had finally seen a relative that he hadn’t seen for 800 years, and he thrashed his small arms and legs about, wailing as he tried to escape from Qiao Mu’s grasp. He raised his arms in Crown Prince Mo’s direction and shouted continuously, “Big Bro, Big Bro! Big Bro, save me, Big Bro!”

However, his Big Bro couldn’t save him today...

Not only could he not save him, but Big Bro was also fretting inside. It was very possible that he would be utterly implicated by this pig teammate of a brother-in-law...

*He was done for!* The crown prince peeked at the little fellow’s expression. *He really was done for.* The little lass was ballistic, and that stoic face had already been completely flooded with anger while her eyes burned in fury.

“Come with me! Immediately come with me to his family to apologize!” Qiao Mu reprimanded furiously.

“You want me to apologize to him?” Qiao Sen hopped up like a small beast that was bristling in anger. He exclaimed indignantly as two rows of tears hung from his cheeks, “I’m not going! I am the youngest young master of a marquis’s estate! Who is he? His dad is only a trivial minor official! I’m not going to apologize to him!”

The crown prince had run over, wanting to muffle his little brother-in-law’s mouth, but it was already too late.

Qiao Mu had already gotten so livid that she gave her younger brother a good stomp. She gauged it precisely and actually didn't put much strength into it. It only caused our dear Qiao Sen to sprawl on the ground, making him feel terribly ashamed, so he opened his mouth and started bawling.

The crown prince hastily strode forth, taking two steps in place of three, and carried his little brother-in-law up.

Qiao Mu didn't pay attention to him. She stretched out her hand and pulled the small boy that had been ganged up on and beaten up to her side. She patted his small, dirty robe and said gently while holding his hand, "Don't be afraid. You are a good kid. Sister will definitely make those bad kids apologize to you."

That small boy was also one tough cookie. Although he looked to be about Qiao Sen's age, he didn't utter a sound nor shed a tear even when he was beaten up into this state.

Qiao Sen had settled into the crown prince's embrace, but when he heard Qiao Mu calling him a bad kid, he immediately refused to go along with it. He wailed loudly, "I'm not a bad kid, I'm not a bad kid! Big Bro, she's scolding me! Big Bro."