

My System Is Three Thousand Years Early Chapter 11 - Chapter 9 The Coachman's Life Doesn't Count as a Life Chapter 11: Chapter 9 The Coachman's Life Doesn't Count as a Life

Wu Ling's appointment as Crown Prince immediately caused a huge commotion in the capital.

From royal family members and noblemen down to palace maids and eunuchs, everyone was shocked.

Who was Wu Ling?

Nobody had heard of her!

Upon inquiring further, the shock intensified!

A wild girl brought back to the palace by the Emperor a year ago, her status and position were inferior to that of the other princes and princesses—in the Imperial Palace, she had always been inconspicuous.

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Yet, it was this normally unremarkable, even mediocre person who had been firmly established by Emperor Zhou as the Crown Prince, despite numerous objections.

Given Emperor Zhou's long life, even as Crown Prince, it wasn't certain that she would eventually become the emperor.

However, behind the scenes, rumors spread that Wu Ling had a very good relationship with the Town-Nation Duke's Heir, and it seemed that she had received strong support from him.

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This was no small matter.

For a time, many people both inside and outside the palace became somewhat restless.

After the family banquet, Emperor Zhou left with a puzzled Wu Ling, and as everyone dispersed without engaging in idle chatter, Princess Yuemei took Cheng Guang home with a serious look on her face.

Upon returning to Duke's Mansion, Princess Yuemei hesitated before asking, "Guanger, do you like that Wu Ling?"

Cheng Guang was puzzled, "Mother, why do you ask?"

Princess Yuemei seemed somewhat helpless, "Today the Emperor questioned you, and you supported Wu Ling so strongly. If it's not because you like her, could it be that you truly think the child Wu Ling has the demeanor of an Empress?"

Cheng Guang coughed slightly, his face taking on a serious expression, "Mother, I'm not lying to you; I truly think that Wu Ling has the demeanor of an Empress."

Not only did she have the demeanor of an Empress, but he could already envision her future as the Empress.

Listening to Cheng Guang's words, Princess Yuemei was both angry and amused but ultimately said nothing further, instead tenderly stroking Cheng Guang's head.

"Alright, our Guanger has a unique perspective that Mother won't criticize further; just be careful not to express your favorability towards a prince or princess like that again in the future, even if asked by the Emperor, you must maintain impartiality."

"Our family's influence is too large, and you're the sole heir for our future. Your every word and action will be magnified countless times and can even affect the situation of certain matters, so you cannot state your position clearly, let alone get involved in the competition for the throne."

Princess Yuemei said, pinching Cheng Guang's cheeks as she spoke.

A wry smile flickered in Cheng Guang's eyes, "Alright, Mother, I'll be more careful next time.

Although he said this, Cheng Guang didn't really have a choice in that situation; after all, he was merely a stand-in for the Princely Heir.

If he hadn't spoken up, offending the Emperor, he likely wouldn't have left the Imperial Palace alive, even if his identity wasn't exposed on the spot.

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Cheng Guang had no other options.

Princess Yuemei nodded, and after instructing Cheng Guang not to go out for a while, she left thoughtfully, seemingly intending to talk to Cheng Zhihai.

After Princess Yuemei departed, Cheng Guang returned to his abode in Million Specie Garden.

In Million Specie Garden, Qing Luan sat by the lake, resting her chin in her hand, her gaze vacantly fixed on the water's surface.

Beneath the setting sun, her fair complexion, like jade, reflected an enchanting beauty as if made of crystal.

When Cheng Guang appeared, Qing Luan took notice, quickly turning her head toward him. She was initially startled, then seemed both surprised and relieved.

She ran over quickly, examined Cheng Guang from all sides, and then felt around on his body.

After affirming that it was the stand-in rather than the real Princely Heir, she exclaimed in amazement.

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"You... you actually got through it without being discovered?"

"Nothing happened, right?"

"I thought just now that you wouldn't be able to come back."

"I got through, but not completely undetected," Cheng Guang quickly walked to the pavilion and poured himself a cup of tea.

"What do you mean by that?" Qing Luan asked, puzzled.

"The Emperor knows about my identity, but he did not expose me on the spot."

Cheng Guang began to speak slowly, his face calm.

Qing Luan's body stiffened, standing frozen.

"The Emperor knows? Then, then..."

Even Qing Luan at this moment didn't know why the Emperor hadn't exposed Cheng Guang's identity as the stand-in. She was merely a servant of the Princely Heir; without instructions, she couldn't leave the mansion or learn about the news of Wu Ling being made Crown Prince swiftly.

If she had known about Wu Ling's appointment and the strong words Cheng Guang had spoken in support, she probably would have understood the reason.

At the moment, Cheng Guang calmed down and explained the whole situation to Qing Luan before saying:

"Sister Qing Luan, it seems my role as the stand-in is coming to an end. If I hadn't spoken up, I would have offended the Emperor, and it would have been a dead end. By speaking, I have also caused trouble for the Princely Heir."

"To continue playing this role might bring about new disasters. Sister Qing Luan, you should quickly get a message to the Princely Heir, and ask him to come back soon."

Qing Luan sighed, her eyelids drooping, "It's probably not possible now; I can't contact the Princely Heir at this moment."

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"Normally, the Princely Heir would take ample protective items and leave quietly on his own, and until he returns, there's no way for me to make contact with him."

As she spoke, Qing Luan's voice grew softer and less confident, "Actually, this time the Princely Heir left not only for enjoyment but also for..."

"For what reason?" Cheng Guang was stunned. Were there things here he didn't know about?

"To avoid the Family Head, which is the Princely Heir's father, Cheng Zhihai."

"Why avoid him?" Cheng Guang was puzzled this time.

"Since his childhood, the Princely Heir's constitution had been impaired; not to mention the immense pain from cultivation, even with a massive influx of resources, his highest realm couldn't break through the third rank of the Purple Mansion Realm."

"The Princely Heir had given up, but over the years, every time the Family Head returned, he often brought back extremely precious Spiritual Medicine from outside to treat the Princely Heir's body, trying to enable him to pursue the path of cultivation."

"It sounds like a good deed, but the process is extremely painful. One or two times might be bearable, but the Princely Heir has lived this way for over a decade, enduring great suffering without any improvement in his body."

"This time, the Princely Heir also sought to avoid the Family Head..."

As Qing Luan spoke, Cheng Guang's confusion deepened.

"Logically speaking, with the Princely Heir's status, even without practicing cultivation, he could still have a good life. With the lifespan-extending Spiritual Medicine, his life

span could even be said to be not much worse than that of Cultivators. Why then must he suffer so... "

Qing Luan shook her head, "You think too optimistically. Even for Duke Zhen's Mansion, its situation is worrying. In the Court, many officials feel that Duke Zhen's Mansion has too much power. The Bureau of the Lamp bears the duty of monitoring all officials, thus it is even more feared and ostracized by them."

"Outside the Court, due to the Bureau of the Lamp suppressing the Martial Sects, countless Sect members have started to view Duke Zhen's Mansion with hostility. They are unrestrained; the attack that the Princely Heir suffered in the past was the work of one such Martial Sect."

"Though the Sect involved was later annihilated down to its ancestral grave, the Princely Heir was still injured."

"Because both inside and outside the Court there are resentments against Duke Zhen's Mansion, it's inevitable that there would be attempts on the Princely Heir's life. This is why he seldom leaves home, being confined within the Mansion or the Capital city."

Listening to this, Cheng Guang twitched at the corner of his mouth, roughly understanding that while Duke Zhen himself was revered by all, his son's Bureau of the Lamp seemed to not do humans any favors, attracting a large amount of hatred...

No wonder Cheng Zhihai kept bringing back Spiritual Medicine from outside without sparing any effort to treat the Princely Heir's body, wishing to set him back on the path of cultivation.

Without cultivation, without strength, one could only remain trapped within the Mansion...

This was probably why his existence as a substitute was needed.

Cheng Guang's gaze flickered, suddenly thinking of something, and abruptly raised his head to look at Qing Luan.

"Wait, Sister Qing Luan, is my father coming back this time to deal with me?"

Qing Luan nodded her head unnaturally.

"Indeed, that is the case."

Cheng Guang was dumbfounded.

Dealing with Cheng Zhihai was basically an unsolvable situation.

Cheng Zhihai controlled the Bureau of the Lamp, which struck fear in countless people of the Great Zhou Dynasty; he was a cunning man, far beyond what a small potato like himself could compare with.

Even if he could temporarily prevent Cheng Zhihai from discovering that he was an imposter, as soon as Cheng Zhihai attempted to treat the Princely Heir's body as usual, the truth would inevitably be revealed.

The Princely Heir's body was impaired, but his wasn't!

Was he supposed to deliberately stab himself?

That was utterly impossible; there was no way to perfectly replicate the injury.

"I'm doomed..."

Cheng Guang looked ashen-faced, watching Qing Luan with despair, "Sister Qing Luan, what will happen to me if the Family Head finds out I'm just a substitute?"

Qing Luan's expression hesitated, and she turned her head away with reluctance...

She actually turned her head away, face me damn it!

Cheng Guang's heart crumbled, knowing that Qing Luan meant he would die if discovered.

If he had known it was a death sentence either way, why had he been so careful? Was he just fooling around?

It was merely a matter of being exposed sooner or later.

It's highly likely that the Princely Heir won't come back.

At least not voluntarily in the short term!

"Alright, the Family Head might not kill you directly. I didn't tell you just to keep your mentality a bit more stable..."

"You still need to hold on, try to keep it hidden as long as possible; maybe later the Princely Heir will plead for you."

"Right now, His Majesty the Emperor is aware of your existence. I don't know how much longer you can hide it, but you still need to maintain the Princely Heir's identity and delay for some time."

"If you're exposed before the Family Head returns and the Princely Heir is called back prematurely, that would mean an even more certain death."

Qing Luan reassured him quietly, feeling a bit of pity for Cheng Guang's situation, aware that he was almost certainly doomed.

Still, during this time, he enjoyed the identity and treatment of the Princely Heir, so Qing Luan thought that paying a price for it was only fair.

You have to understand that the fruit Spirit Food that Cheng Guang normally eats is something ordinary people never come into contact with in their lifetimes. Just for this alone, in Qing Luan's view, the Princely Heir had not treated Cheng Guang unfairly.

The life of a Coachman, in some sense, is not considered a life at all.

A word from a Nobleman is enough to decide his life or death.

Cheng Guang's face turned ugly, unable to accept the situation at hand.

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