

My System 65

Chapter 65: Could Something Unexpected Have Happened Inside the Mansion?

Cheng Guang had assumed that Song Yunqi and the other secret guards would report every single one of his actions to Cheng Zhihai, but to his surprise, they merely recorded his movements in a book and placed it in the Book Collection Pavilion.

Perhaps Cheng Zhihai would occasionally summon Song Yunqi and others to inquire about Cheng Guang's affairs, but for the most part, it seemed he relied on that journal to keep track of Cheng Guang's recent whereabouts.

This turned out to be an unexpected boon.

"Princely Heir, are you trying to keep the Director from knowing your whereabouts?"

As Song Yunqi finished speaking and saw Cheng Guang remained silent, deep in thought, a wave of unease rose in his heart.

Song Yunqi was a smart man; he knew that, after all, Cheng Guang was the Princely Heir. Even if his martial prowess was strong, his status and position were far beyond something he could compare with.

Even though the Director had assigned them to follow the Princely Heir for his safety, Song Yunqi believed the Princely Heir wouldn't want all his actions to be known by the Director.

No one likes to live under the surveillance of others.

Even more so for a noble and extraordinary Princely Heir.

Song Yunqi almost instantly understood the Princely Heir's reason for calling him out.

His delicate thoughts, contrasting with his rough and robust appearance, created a huge discrepancy.

"So, what do you plan to do?"

Cheng Guang raised his eyes to look at Song Yunqi. Without admitting or denying outright, he simply asked the question, putting great pressure on Song Yunqi.

In that moment, Song Yunqi felt as if he were facing Cheng Zhihai.

After a brief silence, Song Yunqi bowed deeply and responded:

"Princely Heir, though we serve as secret guards, we are also servants of Duke Zhen's Mansion. The responsibilities of the Bureau of the Lamp are indeed important, but we must still heed the Princely Heir's wishes."

“Regarding recording the Princely Heir’s actions and words, we will no longer keep a record. If the Director inquires, we will inform the Princely Heir in advance. However... for the Princely Heir’s safety, we cannot allow you to leave the Capital city. We hope for your understanding in this matter.”

Song Yunqi knew his place well; serving as a guard to the Princely Heir, the one person he absolutely couldn’t afford to offend was the Princely Heir himself.

Moreover, the Princely Heir was the sole heir to Duke Zhen’s Mansion. In the future, it’s possible that he would hold command over the million soldiers of the Northern Expedition Army and the Bureau of the Lamp.

Facing a nobleman with such immense power, Song Yunqi wouldn’t dream of offending him over such a trivial matter.

Cheng Guang nodded slightly. Things were progressing more smoothly than he had anticipated.

Initially, he had thought that the guards secretly protecting him were all stubborn blockheads.

He had expected that persuading them not to report his every move to Cheng Zhihai would take more effort.

But unexpectedly,

Song Yunqi was exceptionally compliant and didn't require much persuasion.

It seemed that his identity as the Princely Heir brought him significant conveniences.

The real Princely Heir, not yet initiated into practice, probably had no idea how many guards were hidden around him. Otherwise, he would have surely taken control of them long ago.

After all, no one wishes to live under someone else's constant watch.

Even if that someone is one's most loving parent.

Cheng Guang waved his hand dismissively, "That will do, you've done well. Now go."

Song Yunqi, as if granted amnesty, let out a sigh of relief, bowed again, and, in a flash, disappeared from the spot as if fleeing.

Once Song Yunqi had left, Cheng Guang sat on the stone bench, picking up his teacup and taking a gentle sip.

With his eyes closed, he allowed the tea's fragrance to spread through his mouth.

The plans he'd laid out these past few days were finally starting to bear fruit.

Next, he just had to find the real Princely Heir.

Cheng Guang's eyes nearly closed as he lightly rubbed his forehead, pondering every subsequent move he should make and how he would handle any unforeseen circumstances that might arise.

The more contingency plans, the better.

At the very least, should any emergency occur, Cheng Guang wouldn't be caught completely off guard.

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Outside the Capital city, not far from White Deer Manor, lay Tianping Village.

In one corner of the village fields, a beggar sat.

His clothes were worn to shreds, covered with patches, their color dull and lusterless. His long hair, having not been combed for a long time, was tangled into filthy ropes that lay across his shoulders.

His beard was as untidy as a clump of wild weeds, starkly contrasting with his ragged clothing.

Yet his eyes, they shone with a brightness unbecoming of a beggar, as if they harbored an indomitable air of nobility that he could not conceal.

“Old Deng, oh, Old Deng, why aren’t you back yet? If you don’t return soon, I’ll starve to death,”

he said, staring at the sky with eyes wide open, his lips chapped and his voice hoarse.

“Liunian, you rascal, making an old man like me steal sweet potatoes while you just sit here waiting to eat, huh?”

At that moment, an old man came running over at a brisk pace, almost hopping mad upon hearing the young man’s grumbling.

The elderly man’s clothes were torn and tattered, his face haggard, eyes sunken with crow’s feet densely packed at the corners, and his hair gray and disheveled, giving off an impression of neglect and filth.

His hands were bony and emaciated, holding several large sweet potatoes in his arms.

The young man, referred to by the old man as Liunian, immediately got up upon hearing the voice and snatched the sweet potatoes from the elder, starting a fire to roast them.

As he roasted them, he stared at the growing flames, swallowing his saliva.

“It’s not that I want to say this, Old Deng, but how could I, a distinguished Princely Heir of Duke Zhen’s Mansion, stoop to stealing sweet potatoes?”

“By helping me steal a few sweet potatoes now, I’ll grant you mountains of gold and silver in the future, and marry you to ten beautiful wives; you’ll have your fill of enjoyment,”

he said. Old Deng’s lips twisted involuntarily, and he scoffed, “You? The Town-Nation Duke’s Heir?”

“Tell me, what about you remotely resembles the Princely Heir of Duke Zhen’s Mansion?”

The young man’s lips twitched slightly, and his face promptly darkened. There was indeed nothing on him that could prove he was the Princely Heir.

At a loss for words, he turned his head away, refusing to speak further with the annoying old man.

Old Deng sat down beside the young man and tried to speak sensibly, “Look here, stop dreaming those impractical daydreams. If you’re the Town-Nation Duke’s Heir, then I might as well be the emperor.”

“You have no idea; just now I passed through a family in Tianping Village. That family seems to have someone working as a guard at Duke Zhen’s Mansion. I heard he’s caught the eye of the Town-Nation Duke’s Heir and has been promoted to be his personal guard.”

“That Town-Nation Duke’s Heir has caused quite a stir in the Capital city recently, writing timeless poems at Wanhua tower, assisting the Bureau of the Lamp in capturing a devil woman from the Devil Clan. Look at him, now that’s what a real Town-Nation Duke’s Heir looks like.”

As Old Deng finished speaking, the young man became completely dumbstruck, “Huh? That Princely Heir... did all of that?”

Old Deng picked up a nearby branch, broke it, threw the stick into the fire, and casually flipped the sweet potatoes a few times.

“Yes, that’s how it is. That Princely Heir lives a life of luxury every day, with Oirans for company, every move he makes catches the attention of the entire Capital city. Now that’s what you call a Princely Heir. And you?”

“Following this old man around, content with sneaking a few sweet potatoes from the fields.”

“If you call yourself a Princely Heir, it’s frankly rather pathetic.”

After Old Deng finished speaking, the young man’s face had turned exceedingly grim.

A surge of inexpressible anger spread across his brow.

His heart stirred with tempestuous waves because of Old Deng's words.

"Is it my coachman who did what Old Deng mentioned?"

"That shouldn't be right. How could that coachman possibly leave Duke Zhen's Mansion? Father would never allow me to leave Ducal authority."

"Moreover, when Father was treating my injuries, he would definitely have discovered my body double was a fake. Logically, Father should have already slapped that coachman to death and sent people to find me by now..."

"But... it's been so long, and there hasn't been any sign."

"Could it be there's been some accident within the mansion...?"

"To the point that... they still haven't discovered that coachman is my body double?"

The young man muttered to himself, his heart in turmoil.

He couldn't make sense of it.

What accident could have occurred to prevent the coachman from revealing his identity?

And how could it have been possible for his father to let the coachman leave Duke Zhen's Mansion?