

Noble Wife 311

Chapter 311 Invitation to Go Out on the Qixi Festival

Xiao Hanyuan felt that Qu Xuexin was the best among the four young ladies of Qu Mansion. Although she was not as beautiful as Qu Qiuyan, her manner was decent and elegant. However, the one his parents chose for him was Qu Moying. Qu Moying's eye disease hadn't recovered yet. Besides, he thought she was too frivolous.

She had already known about the marriage proposal between him and her, but she still went on a blind date. Wasn't it because she looked down upon his family and was attracted by He Mansion's wealth? Moreover, He Mansion was related to Lord Jing.

Even if such a woman was gorgeous, Xiao Hanyuan did not like her.

When he heard from the servants that she went on a blind date, he didn't believe it at first. He specially went to have a look, and he found that the servants were right. Qu Moying did go on a blind date.

Now that something had happened to Third Young Master He, his proposed marriage with Qu Moying might still count. He felt so disgusted, as if he had eaten a fly. He couldn't accept the marriage arrangement.

He was not afraid of not being able to find a wife. But anyway, he would not marry Qu Moying.

He had expressed his intention to marry Qu Xuexin to his parents, but his parents had not responded yet. Thinking of this, Xiao Hanyuan frowned slightly. His parents would probably not agree with his idea, and he couldn't help but get angrier with Qu Moying.

He collected his thoughts and followed the lad servant into the inner room. He saw Qu Mingcheng in the inner room, and the two of them exchanged a few words before he sat down on a chair at the side.

"Mingcheng, why were you beaten so badly?" When Xiao Hanyuan heard that Qu Mingcheng had been beaten up, he thought that it was just a light beating. However, he was shocked when he saw Qu Mingcheng's injuries.

Qu Mingcheng let out a long sigh and said helplessly, "I don't want to mention it. It's all because of Moying."

"What does it have to do with Fourth Lady Qu?" Xiao Hanyuan frowned as well. He was displeased when he heard that Qu Moying was mentioned.

"I won't hide it from you, Cousin Brother. Previously, she had a marriage proposal with He Mansion. Because something happened to Third Young Master He, I wanted to ask Third Young Master He why he made a fool of her. I didn't expect West Prison to come to arrest him, and they also caught me. Although father bailed me out, he blamed me and beat me up!"

Qu Mingcheng sighed again with bitterness in his eyes.

Xiao Hanyuan's heart skipped a beat. "Did their marriage proposal come to an agreement?"

"Of course. He Mansion was supposed to send betrothal presents over in these two days. Unexpectedly, such a thing happened. Their proposed marriage naturally failed. Poor Moying. She was full of joy before, but now... She must be at a loss. Third Young Master He looks good, but he turned out to be such a person."

Qu Mingcheng said.

Xiao Hanyuan asked, "Did Fourth Lady Qu meet someone else for marriage before?"

"There should be. I heard that she was meeting somebody. But I don't know who the other party is. I just heard Grandmother mention it once. Previously, Moying thought Third Young Master He was better, and she wanted to marry into He Mansion. The other marriage proposal has yet to be made known to the public. It doesn't count."

Qu Mingcheng said indifferently.

Xiao Hanyuan was so angry that his face turned pale. His parents were serious about asking him to marry Qu Moying. They asked him to live in Qu Mansion to nurture his relationship with Qu Moying. But it seemed that he was just a plan B to Qu Moying. Thinking of this, Xiao Hanyuan, who had always been confident, couldn't hold back his anger and slapped heavily on the table.

Qu Mingcheng was frightened and asked anxiously with a pale face, "Cousin Brother, what's wrong?"

"Nothing!" Xiao Hanyuan tried hard to suppress his anger, but he could no longer sit still. He suddenly stood up with a cold face.

"Cousin Brother!" Qu Mingcheng was startled.

Xiao Hanyuan slowly sat down, suppressing the anger in his heart, and explained, "I suddenly thought of something just now. Sorry."

Qu Mingcheng said with a smile. "It's fine. I thought there was a big deal! Cousin Brother, what do you think of Eldest Sister? Compared with the other ladies in our mansion, Eldest Sister is the best."

"What do you mean?" Xiao Hanyuan's heart skipped a beat as he looked at Qu Mingcheng.

"Cousin Brother, don't hide it from me. Do you also think that Eldest Sister is good? If you think so, you have to hurry up." Qu Mingcheng teased with a smile. Perhaps his smile was too big that his wounds ached. He quickly shut his mouth with a bitter face.

"Eldest Cousin Sister is indeed good!" Seeing that Qu Mingcheng had found out about his feelings, Xiao Hanyuan nodded with a slightly red face.

"Cousin Brother, if our two mansions are bound by marriage, we will be closer to each other. If you marry Eldest Sister, that will be great!" Qu Mingcheng said with a smile, but he did not dare to smile too happily this time.

Xiao Hanyuan was silent and looked at Qu Mingcheng.

“Cousin Brother, are you worried you can’t make it a reality? Don’t worry. I have a way to make your dreams come true.” Qu Mingcheng waved at Xiao Hanyuan, who hesitated for a moment but still leaned over him...

Qu Moying went straight back to her yard. However, not long after she returned, Qu Xuexin came with a sewing box, which meant that she was going to do embroidery in Qu Moying’s place with the reason that Qu Moying’s qin cover could only be used here.

After inviting Qu Xuexin to come in and sit down, Qu Moying placed the qin cover in front of her and walked to the desk in front of the window. She asked Yu Chun to prepare a brush and ink for her and then picked up the brush to draw a picture to be the embroidery pattern.

Qu Xuexin exclaimed from behind, “Moying, the butterflies you drew are wonderful!”

Only then did Qu Moying notice that she had casually drawn a Love of Butterfly picture. Sure enough, Ji Hanyue’s memory was deeply engraved in her heart, and her casual drawing was the pattern she liked the most in the previous life.

Fortunately, this would not affect anything. She smiled slightly and said, “Eldest Sister, I want to learn embroidery from you. It’s too difficult to embroider a peony, so I drew two butterflies to embroider.”

Qu Xuexin said, “It’s so beautiful. Moying, can you give this picture to me? I can’t draw such a beautiful butterfly!”

Qu Moying said, “This one is too big. If you like it, I will draw a smaller one for you.”

Qu Xuexin applauded and said, “Moying, can you draw two pictures? One for me and one for yourself. Let’s embroider them on sachets.”

Qu Moying drew two small pictures as Qu Xuexin asked. Then, she asked a maid to get embroidery frames and two pieces of cloth for Qu Xuexin to choose from.

Qu Xuexin picked the peachy pink piece, and Qu Moying used the light lotus color piece that Qu Xuexin did not choose.

The two of them sat down and quietly did the embroidery. Qu Moying's embroidery skills were not as good as Qu Xuexin's, but she had embroidered butterflies many times, so she was quite skilled. Even if she was not as proficient as Qu Xuexin, she was not much worse.

Qu Xuexin looked at Qu Moying from time to time. Seeing that Qu Moying was more skilled than her and that her embroidery was quite good, she became more and more jealous. Couldn't she excel over even a blind person?

Thinking of this, she became more and more depressed. She was determined to win Qu Moying, so she embroidered even more seriously.

The room quieted down. Qu Moying was quietly embroidering, and she answered Qu Xuexin's words from time to time.

Yu Dong quietly walked in and reported. "Lady, Young Master Xiao is here!"

"Invite him in!" Qu Moying glanced at Qu Xuexin, who was sitting at the side, and put down the embroidery frame. Since he came here at such a time, she naturally had to meet him.

Xiao Hanyuan walked in and saw Qu Moying and Qu Xuexin sitting in the room. Qu Xuexin smiled gently at him with an embroidery frame in her hand. It was obvious that she was embroidering. Although he couldn't tell what the embroidery was, he thought it was a good one because of its beautiful color.

As for Qu Moying, her embroidery frame was put aside. He didn't understand why a blind person did embroidery. He didn't think she could embroider well, and he thought she was just imitating Qu Xuexin.

His heart was filled with disgust, but he didn't show it.

After bowing to each other, they each took a seat. The maids served them tea and stood aside.

Qu Moying looked up and asked, "Cousin Brother, is something the matter?"

Xiao Hanyuan said with a smile, "In a few days, it's the Qixi Festival. Mingcheng can't get up, so I want to invite you ladies to be my guides and show me around to see how people in the capital celebrate the Qixi Festival!"

The Qixi Festival was also known as the Qiqiao Festival, and it was young girls' favorite festival.

Qu Moying's gaze fell behind him and then turned to Qu Xuexin, who looked a little shy. Her eyes were unfathomable. Xiao Hanyuan came to her place to invite them to be his guides, but he clearly came to invite her alone. However, if he only invited her, she would definitely not agree.

After all, it was easy for people to misunderstand them if only the two of them spent the festival together.

Did Qu Xuexin come here for this?

As expected, seeing Qu Moying's hesitation, Qu Xuexin quickly agreed, "Cousin Xiao, it's true that we should show you around the capital. It's a big festival. When the time comes, the capital will be very lively. Moying, when you were in the village, would you come out for a walk in this festival?"

Qu Moying grew up in the village, and she rarely went out. She should not go out alone on such a festival. The meaning behind Qu Xuexin's words was really suspicious.

Fortunately, Qu Moying was prepared. She smiled faintly and said calmly, "No matter what festival it was, I never wanted to walk around. I didn't have a relative by my side but only some maids and old maids. I really didn't have the mood to walk around!"

"Since you haven't been out for a walk at such a festival, I'll take you around. It's a deal. Cousin Xiao, please wait at the outer yard on that day. We'll go out together after dinner." Qu Xuexin clapped her hands, but then she frowned, "Someone should tell Grandmother about this, right?"

She was asking everyone, but she was looking at Qu Moying. Of course, she meant for Qu Moying to say it. Qu Moying was the most suitable person. The Old Lady doted on Qu Moying, and everyone in the mansion knew it.

“Since both of you are interested, let’s go together. I’ll go and tell Grandmother. We can talk about it after Grandmother agrees.”

“That’s great. Thank you, Fourth Cousin Sister.” Xiao Hanyuan was very happy. He stood up and bowed deeply to Qu Moying. Qu Moying moved sideways to avoid him.

Qu Xuexin suggested, “Moying, when you ask for Grandmother’s approval, tell her that Eldest Brother and Qiuyan will go with us. Let’s go out together so that others will not gossip about us. We can have a good time together.”

Her words made sense, and Qu Moying naturally agreed.

Since the matter was settled, Xiao Hanyuan said goodbye to them. When he reached the door, he suddenly turned to look at Qu Moying. Qu Moying wore a faint smile on her face. Although her face could not be clearly seen, she still looked elegant and gentle. His eyes darkened, and he shook his head. Then, he turned around and left...

Chapter 312 The Missing Letter

Qu Xuexin spent another two hours doing embroidery in Qu Moying’s place. Only after East Mansion sent someone over to ask her back did she leave.

After Qu Xuexin left with all the things she had brought over, Qu Moying put down the embroidery frame in her hand, and she looked at Qu Xuexin through the window.

“Lady, please rest your eyes!” Yu Chun stepped forward to help her remove the eye veil.

Qu Moying leaned back and closed her eyes. Yu Chun gently rubbed the corners of her eyes to help her relax her eyes. Qu Moying had been embroidering for a long time just now. Once she was taking a rest, she did feel uncomfortable in her eyes.

After coming in and cleaning up the tea set, Yu Dong served Qu Moying a new cup of tea. "Lady, what are First Lady and Young Master Xiao trying to do?"

"They asked me to go out on the Qixi Festival!" Qu Moying said indifferently. She did not know what exactly they were going to do, but Qu Mingcheng and Qu Xuexin must have planned something. As for Xiao Hanyuan, he must have played a part as well!

She sneered silently, and her eyes turned cold.

In Qu Mansion, only the Old Lady treated her as a family member. As for the others, they had been plotting against her, so how could she treat them as a family?

Yu Chun understood something and said angrily, "Lady, they went too far!"

"It doesn't matter. It's just the law of the jungle!" The corners of Qu Moying's lips curled up. Her elegant and beautiful face was indifferent, but her eyes were gloomy. She clearly did not take this matter seriously.

After experiencing the betrayal of the family in her previous life, it was hard for her to trust people again!

In the future, there would definitely be more storms. She had never thought about what would happen in the future. Perhaps she would not have a future, so what else could she expect?

These things were trifles compared with her efforts to make Ji Hanyue's sufferings come to light!

Yu Dong was shocked. He already knew that Qu Moying was different, but he didn't expect her to be so different. As a weak unmarried lady, she was supposed to be shy and fragile. She looked really weak compared with other ladies. However, she was really tough inside.

At this moment, she gave off a sinister feeling. She was very much like Lord Yun. She was also extremely good-looking, cold, and gloomy. However, compared with Lord Yun, Qu Moying was more pitiful. It was admirable for her to accomplish what she had after experiencing so many hardships!

Which young lady else could do this?

“Lady...” Yu Dong wanted to say something but hesitated.

Qu Moying smiled elegantly, hiding her gloominess. “Let’s stop talking about this. We’ll see when the time comes. Yu Dong, get Granny Miao to keep an eye on Young Master Xiao and see if there’s anything unusual about him. As for Eldest Sister...” Qu Moying paused for a moment, then suddenly said, “The main thing is to keep an eye on her. She should make a move!”

She felt that Qu Xuexin would definitely do something although she might not be able to find out about her plan.

“Lady, I understand!” Yu Dong nodded. He had the same thoughts as Qu Moying. Qu Xuexin was ambitious, so how could she sit still?

Sure enough, in the evening, a maid of East Mansion went out of the gate. After walking around the street a few times, she went to the back door of Minister Liu’s House.

An old maid opened the door for her. After the elapse of about an hour or so, the maid came out fugitively. After coming out, she looked around before leaving carefully.

The maid thought that she was very careful, but in fact, her every movement had been seen by a secret guard. When Yu Dong entered Qu Mansion, Pei Yuanjun had specially assigned two secret guards to him to protect Qu Moying in secret. Right now, the one outside Minister Liu’s House was the secret guard sent by Yu Dong.

The maid wandered on the street for a while again. After casually buying something, she turned to go back to Qu Mansion. Although it was already night, it was only a short while past dinner time. The

streets were still bustling with people coming and going. When she was halfway, she was suddenly hit by someone and fell to the ground. She could not stand up for a while, and her leg was injured.

She looked up and saw a bully-like young master. He had a lad servant by his side. The lad servant grinned and said, "I'm sorry. Someone hit me just now, so I accidentally bumped into you. Are you okay?"

He didn't look like a good person. The maid did not dare to let him help her up. She hurriedly shook her hands.

The young master glanced at her. Seeing that she was just an ordinary-looking maid, he ignored her. He walked on, and the lad servant followed his master. They continued to walk forward and ignored the maid, who was still sitting on the ground.

A kind-hearted person on the side couldn't bear with it and helped the maid to a clinic on the street and asked the doctor to apply some ointment for her. Only after that did she limp back. When she was about to reach Qu Mansion, a person walked over and almost knocked her down. Fortunately, she was very careful this time. She took a few steps back to hold the corner of the wall and was only slightly scraped.

It was a man. She couldn't see him clearly in the dark, and they almost bumped into each other. The maid was about to start cursing, but the man had already disappeared. She could only return to the mansion.

After entering Qu Mansion, the maid went to East Mansion to Qu Xuexin's place. Seeing her limp, Qu Xuexin frowned and asked, "What happened? Why are you like this?"

"I was hit..." The maid felt wronged and wanted to say something but was interrupted.

"What did County Lady say?" Under the light, Qu Xuexin's face was not as gentle as usual but looked a little cold and fierce.

"County Lady agreed on your plan, saying that she would think about the details. County Lady also asked me to bring you a letter." As the maid spoke, she reached into her pocket to take out the letter, but she found nothing. Her face paled, and she cried out in alarm, "Lady, the letter is gone!"

“What?” Qu Xuexin’s face suddenly darkened. She stood up and shouted, “Check it carefully!”

The maid fumbled in her pocket for a while, but there was indeed nothing. She cried out in fear, “Lady, it’s really gone. Someone bumped into me just now. Maybe it was lost at that time.”

Qu Xuexin asked anxiously with a livid face, “Who bumped into you?”

The maid said timidly, “It’s... It’s a man. He looks like a young master from a rich family. He brought a few lad servants with him at that time.”

She did not dare to say that it was the lad servant who had bumped into her. Instead, she said it was the young master who had bumped into her.

Hearing that it was a young master from a rich family, Qu Xuexin breathed a sigh of relief. It was impossible for him to have anything to do with Qu Moying. It was really an accident.

“Didn’t you check the letter at that time?”

“I didn’t pay attention to it. There were so many people at that time.” The maid cried and complained. She suddenly remembered that she was almost knocked down before she entered the mansion. But she didn’t think her letter was missing at that time. She must have lost the letter when she was hit the first time. The second time when she was almost hit, the man only brushed past her. She could not have lost the letter at that time.

“Get out and look for the letter!” Qu Xuexin snapped, but she was not too flustered.

County Lady Jingyu had always been cautious. Even if she wrote something in the letter, she would not make it too clearly. This letter would be useless in the hands of others.

The maid did not dare to delay. She complied and found an old maid to look for the letter together with her.

However, when she went out to look for the letter, she asked a lot of people, but no one had seen it.

At this moment, the letter was already lying on the desk in front of Qu Moying, and it had already been opened. After reading it, Qu Moying put down the letter. She lowered her watery eyes. Her long eyelashes cast a shadow on her cheeks.

The letter was actually very simple, and there was no signature on it. The one who wrote it was very cautious.

Qu Xuexin's name wasn't mentioned in it, either. Liu Jingyu addressed Qu Xuexin with "you" in the letter. She was indeed cautious.

In the letter, she expressed her agreement with what Qu Xuexin was going to do, and she repeatedly promised that she would help cement a good marriage for Qu Xuexin. She would find someone better than Third Young Master He for Qu Xuexin.

To be able to be on par with Third Young Master He, who had Lord Jing as backing, the man must have a really powerful background. Qu Moying was truly surprised that Liu Jingyu actually dared to promise this.

But from this, it could be seen that Qu Xuexin had no intention of marrying Xiao Hanyuan. Qu Xuexin had been close to Xiao Hanyuan during this period of time, and it was really worth thinking about her intention.

Since Xiao Hanyuan was not Qu Xuexin's target, he must be her tool to deal with Qu Moying.

In order to marry somebody, Qu Xuexin really went all out. Was Qu Xuexin going to step on her to get a really "good marriage"?

Seeing that Qu Moying was silent, Yu Dong asked, "Lady, what's in the letter?"

The secret guard acted without being noticed by anyone. He first pushed the lad servant, causing the latter to bump into the maid. However, it was not a good time to act at that time. There were too many people around. It was just a trap to make the maid think that it was just an accident. The second time he almost hit the maid, and he made the real move to get the letter.

He had guessed that there should be a letter, but he did not expect there really was one.

Qu Moying pushed the letter in front of Yu Dong. Yu Dong took it and read it quickly. After reading it, he slowly put down the letter. After carefully thinking for a while, Yu Dong said, "Lady, they want to do something to you on the Qixi Festival, right?"

"Probably!" Qu Moying said with a faint smile. Under the light, she looked so indifferent as if it was none of her business, but she made people somehow feel dangerous...

"The seventh day of July. So it is Qixi Festival?" Pei Yuanjun swirled the wine glass in his hand. The glass reflected the light, looking bright and beautiful. Pei Yuanjun was leaning against the couch, lazily looking down at the prosperous capital.

Ji Hai suggested with a smile, "Yes. Your Highness, do you want to go take a look? You haven't seen how the Qixi Festival is celebrated in the capital, right? This is a rare opportunity. You can take a look."

Lord Yun Mansion was too lifeless. He hoped there could be a female Master as soon as possible. It would be even better if she gave birth to a young master.

Thinking of this, Ji Hai grinned happily.

"I will go. Since there is something interesting, I have to go and see." Pei Yuanjun said lazily. He closed his handsome eyes slightly as if he had collected the starlight in his eyes...

Chapter 313 When Are You Setting Off?

Putting down the chess piece in his hand, the emperor asked with a darkened face, "You want to marry Qu Mansion's lady as your Princess Consort?"

Li Quan carefully lowered his head, not daring to look at the emperor's angry face.

Pei Yuanjun stretched out his hand and said indifferently, "Your Majesty, I don't like any other women. How am I supposed to marry them?"

Li Quan stole a glance at him, speechless. Only Lord Yun dared to speak to the emperor like this. The others, including the Crown Prince, did not even dare to breathe heavily when the emperor was angry.

"That won't do. Your Princess Consort must have a noble status." The emperor didn't agree.

Pei Yuanjun also put down the chess piece in his hand, gracefully picked up the tea beside him, took a sip, and asked with a calm smile, "But how can I find a woman of noble status that I like? If I can't meet such a woman, I won't have a Princess Consort all my life, right?"

The emperor looked at his face carefully and found that he was indifferent. He calmed down and said, "You don't need to rush regarding your Princess Consort, but you have to choose carefully. The Crown Prince is going to choose his Princess Consort soon. When the time comes, I will ask the empress to choose a Princess Consort for you. You should have a Princess Consort, but she can't be blind. She could only be your Side Princess."

The emperor's words carried a bit of disdain. Even if Qu Moying was good in every aspect, he would not let her be Pei Yuanjun's Princess Consort. He agreed to let a blind like her enter Lord Yun Mansion with the position of Side Princess because it was the first time Pei Yuanjun wanted to marry someone in so many years. He was somewhat grateful to her because she made Pei Yuanjun finally want to get married.

Even if her eye disease could be cured, she was still inferior to normal people.

On that day, the emperor saw Pei Yuanjun admire the flowers with Qu Moying. He had accepted Qu Moying in his heart. Qu Moying looked delicate, timid, and pitiful. He heard that she had a miserable

past. Moreover, Qu Zhizhen was nice to his concubine but bad to his legitimate wife, and he treated Qu Moying, who was born by his legitimate wife, casually.

Since Pei Yuanjun wanted to marry Qu Moying, he accepted her.

However, he thought Qu Moying could at most be Pei Yuanjun's Side Princess.

Pei Yuanjun did not insist and said lazily, "I will listen to you, Your Majesty. But if I don't like the woman chosen for me, I won't marry her."

The emperor said confidently, "That's for sure. You should marry someone you like. I believe I can find you a noble lady who can make you fall in love with."

Li Quan looked at them speechlessly. Pei Yuanjun was so bold, and the emperor was actually easily persuaded. If it was another prince, there would be no room for negotiation. The ex-Crown Princess was chosen by the emperor, and the Crown Prince could only accept the arrangement with gratitude.

"Your Majesty, how is the matter with Duke Yu? It's time to reappoint him, right?" Pei Yuanjun smiled and changed the topic. It could be seen that he really did not care about the matter of getting married. He did not care about Qu Moying as much as the emperor had imagined.

Maybe he just thought she was a good girl, or he pitied her.

The emperor nodded in satisfaction. Although he didn't think Pei Yuanjun was likely to pity a woman, it might be the case right now. It seemed that Pei Yuanjun liked this kind of delicate beauty. He had sent women to Lord Yun Mansion, but they were the coquettish type. It turned out that he sent the wrong kind of women.

He decided to let the empress carefully pick a gentle noble lady. It would be better if the lady was fragile and weak. He took a look at Qu Moying from afar that day. Although he couldn't see her clearly, he could tell that she was a gorgeous beauty who was particularly weak.

The emperor thought he knew what kind of women Pei Yuanjun liked, and he breathed a sigh of relief. He was afraid that Pei Yuanjun wouldn't want to get married. Pei Yuanjun should have gotten married long ago. If he still didn't get married, he would have no descendants. The emperor was unwilling to see this happen.

"Yes. It's about time. One general is not enough." The emperor relieved his worries and nodded. He placed a chess piece on the chessboard and said meaningfully, "It's about time."

Pei Yuanjun raised his head and said seriously, "I still need to make a trip back to the North."

The emperor pressed his hand on the chess piece and looked at Pei Yuanjun with displeasure. "What are you going back for?"

"When I came back to the capital, I was in a hurry. There were some things that haven't been completely handled, so I have to go back and deal with them. The North is not stable, so I have to set up a backup plan. Someone from the North will also come over."

Pei Yuanjun said lazily and gracefully placed a chess piece in his hand on the chessboard, which destroyed the emperor's game design. The emperor nearly won the game, but Pei Yuanjun's move easily ruined his meticulous deployment.

The emperor's face immediately darkened. He glared at Pei Yuanjun and threw away the chess piece in his hand, messing up the chessboard. "That's it. I am tired. If you want to deal with the North's matter, hurry up. Don't delay it."

Pei Yuanjun stood up, bowed to the emperor, and said meaningfully, "Don't worry, Your Majesty. Everything will be done."

The emperor said worriedly, "Be careful. I will send another team of secret guards to you."

Pei Yuanjun refused, "Thank you, Your Majesty. But there's no need. I also have some secret guards to protect me."

The emperor thought for a while and nodded. "You still have to be careful. If anything goes wrong, come back to the capital first."

It was a matter of great importance, but he hadn't considered it before. After hearing Pei Yuanjun mention it, he began to pay attention to it. He had been hesitant before and was unwilling to send Pei Yuanjun over, but he knew that Pei Yuanjun was the most suitable person to deal with this matter.

Pei Yuanjun said calmly, "Don't worry, Your Majesty. I will be careful!"

The emperor was silent for a moment. His eyes fell on Pei Yuanjun with a bit of gloominess. After a while, he reached out and patted Pei Yuanjun's shoulder, "Be careful!"

Pei Yuanjun bowed to him respectfully. "Yes!"

The emperor asked again, "When are you setting off?"

"After the Qixi Festival. I have never celebrated it before. I heard that the capital is quite lively on this festival, and many noble ladies will come out on that day. People can have a good time because the rules will not be so strict that day. I should be able to see different beauties!"

Pei Yuanjun laughed.

There was a touch of satisfaction on his handsome face, which was exactly what a young man should look like. The emperor had never seen him like this. For a moment, all sorts of feelings welled up in his heart. He nodded repeatedly. "Yes, you should go and have a look. If you meet a noble lady you like, come to the palace and tell me. I'll send someone to propose a marriage for you."

"Thank you, Your Majesty!" Pei Yuanjun bowed and smiled. His pair of eyes were handsome.

With that, Pei Yuanjun left.

Seeing Pei Yuanjun leave, the emperor sighed heavily. He sat down powerlessly as if he had aged a lot all of a sudden.

Li Quan served the emperor a new cup of tea and comforted him in a low voice, "Your Majesty, Lord Yun is a capable person. He will be fine. Please don't worry."

The emperor sighed again and frowned. "I know he is capable, and I believe in him... However, he is so capable that I'm afraid the future emperor can't tolerate him. The latter emperors had never spared the former emperors' trusted confidants."

"Your Majesty, you have always been thinking for Lord Yun. Since Lord Yun has real power, even if... it won't be easy to deal with him."

Li Quan said in a low voice. His words were a little outrageous, but he had to say them at this time.

"Even if he acts as a regent, he will not end up well. The future emperor will ..." The emperor was distressed. There were some things that he could not handle properly. Although he did it for Pei Yuanjun's good, would it really be good for him?

The emperor did not know whether what he did was right or wrong.

Li Quan did not dare to speak anymore. If he continued, and if others spread it out, he would surely die. Women in the harem were not allowed to interfere in politics, and even high-ranking eunuchs like him weren't allowed, either.

The room quieted down, and only the emperor sighed heavily...

Qu Xuexin came to Qu Moying frequently these past few days. From time to time, she came to Qianyue House to do embroidery while Qu Moying accompanied her.

At first, Qu Moying embroidered quickly, but she was obviously much slower when it came to the difficult parts. Qu Xuexin gradually became faster, and her embroidery was also very outstanding.

When Qu Xuexin finished embroidering a sachet, Qu Moying had only finished half of her embroidery, far from completion.

Qu Moying was embarrassed. She said that her eyes were sore, and she could not calm down to make embroidery. Qu Xuexin comforted her, saying that her eye condition was more important than making a sachet. She even asked to help Qu Moying embroider the rest of the sachet, but Qu Moying refused. She said that she would embroider it slowly.

Qu Xuexin did not insist. She used Qu Moying's brush and ink to draw a few paintings of butterflies and flowers that Qu Moying had drawn before. However, they were not similar to Qu Moying's paintings. Qu Xuexin did not use any of them. She drew again, and she found that her last painting was quite similar to Qu Moying's. She asked Qu Moying to comment on the painting. Qu Moying also thought it was similar to her previous paintings, and it matched the sachet. Only then did Qu Xuexin feel satisfied.

Sometimes, Qu Xuexin would invite Qu Moying to see Qu Mingcheng after coming to Qu Moying's place. Qu Moying had never refused her, and she went with her every time.

However, she rarely met Qu Qiuyan. She heard from Qu Xuexin that Qu Qiuyan had been very obedient recently. She only went to greet the Old Lady and then took a look at Qu Mingcheng.

Qu Mansion seemed to be unprecedentedly peaceful.

Early in the morning, Qu Moying brought her maids out. Recently, Yue's Clothing Pavilion's matter had been settled. Qu Moying decided to start the business on the day before the Qixi Festival. The city would be especially lively on the Qixi Festival. All women, including noble ladies and ordinary women, would come out for fun. The business of the shop would be good.

If she started the business before the Qixi Festival, she could make a good start!

"Moying, where are you going?" A soft voice came from the side.

Qu Moying turned around and saw Qu Xuexin, who was out at least two hours earlier than usual. It seemed that she took Qu Moying's casual words yesterday to heart.

"Eldest Sister, I am going to the shop." Qu Moying said with a smile. She wore a light purple dress that made her skin look fair, and her lips look beautiful. Her long and light purple eye veil made her look even more beautiful, which could make people feel pity for her.

Chapter 314 Clothes from the South

Qu Xuexin asked with a smile, "Moying, it just so happens that I don't have anything else to do. Can I go out with you to take a look?"

Qu Moying hesitated for a moment and asked, "Does Auntie know?"

"Don't worry. I've told my mother that I might take a walk with you. I haven't taken you for a walk yet after you returned to the capital because I couldn't find the right time. Since you are going out, let me go with you." Qu Xuexin was in high spirits. She pointed the embroidery frame and the needle box in the maid's hand and said, "Moying, I'll put my sewing box in your place."

"Alright!" Qu Moying readily agreed.

Qu Xuexin's maid, Hong Mei, followed Yu Dong into the room. After putting down the things in her hands, she followed Yu Dong out.

The carriage had been waiting at the door for a long time. Qu Xuexin and Qu Moying got on the carriage together. The carriage was not small, so it was enough for the two maids to sit inside, too.

The carriage went all the way to Yue's Clothing Pavilion. After arriving at the shop, Qu Moying and Qu Xuexin got off the carriage together. Aunt Yang had already received the news and was waiting at the door.

"Moying, is that the ex-Crown Princess' dowry shop?" Qu Xuexin curiously looked at the shop next to Yue's Clothing Pavilion. It had not opened yet, and it should be in the process of reorganization. A few shop assistants walked past the shop and looked over curiously. However, they did not dare to casually talk about it and went on to work.

Qu Moying nodded and walked towards her own shop. "Yes, it is Earl Ling'an's Mansion's shop."

Qu Xuexin rolled her eyes and suddenly grabbed Qu Moying's sleeve. "Moying, why don't we go and take a look? I heard that the goods in that shop are the most fashionable ones. I've heard of this shop of the ex-Crown Princess when she was still alive, and people said it was a nice shop."

Qu Moying secretly sneered. When Qu Moying was still Ji Hanyue, Qu Xuexin couldn't even get close to her. Although she was in charge of Yue's Gold Pavilion, most people did not know about it, so how could Qu Xuexin know it?

Qu Moying shook her head. "It isn't open yet. It's inconvenient to go in."

"I just want to take a look. It's no big deal. Earl Ling'an Mansion's first branch's second wife is sort of your relative. I heard that she used to be a servant of your family. I believe she won't forget you. You are her former Master." Qu Xuexin said gently, smiling as if she was joking.

Qu Moying said with a faint smile, "Eldest Sister, you are wrong. She is Earl Ling'an's legitimate wife now. She has a noble status. Even if I used to be her Master, so what? Eldest Sister, please be careful with your words. If people hear you, they might write a report to censure my father and uncle."

Qu Xuexin's words just now were unpleasant to hear and full of contempt for Madam Duan.

Qu Xuexin didn't expect Qu Moying to defend a servant. She was angry, but she didn't show it on her face. She smiled and said, "It's my fault. I still thought she was a dowry concubine but not..."

"Eldest Sister, let's go. I still have some accounts to check." Qu Moying walked forward, not intending to waste time with Qu Xuexin.

"Alright!" Qu Xuexin said unhappily. Seeing that Qu Moying had already walked forward, she could only follow her.

The South's goods had already arrived. What surprised Qu Moying was that her maternal grandparents' family had really sent two embroideresses from the South, and they were extremely skilled.

Aunt Yang had already tested them. They were indeed skilled, and their embroidery skills were different from those popular in the capital. Their handling of details was especially skillful.

After Qu Moying sat down, Aunt Yang asked the two embroideresses to come to greet her.

The two embroideresses were about thirty years old. They looked smart. After asking them about their basic information, Qu Moying let them leave.

Qu Xuexin did not follow Qu Moying into the room. She said that she wanted to see the goods in the shop, so she took her maid downstairs to have a look at the goods.

After a quick glance over the account book sent from the South, Qu Moying put it down and asked, "Aunt Yang, how's your plan going?"

"It's almost done. But the matter of the theatrical troupe is a little tricky." Aunt Yang said. Previously, Qu Moying had discussed with her about setting up a stage for a theatrical troupe to perform on the opening day. They also planned some other activities that day to gather attention and customers.

Qu Moying looked up and asked, "What's wrong?"

"I have booked a theatrical troupe before. It is a nice one in the capital. But now, this troupe accepted the offer of someone who also has an event that they. They are invited to celebrate an old lady's birthday, and they will be paid twice the money we promised them, so they turned us down."

Aunt Yang said.

After thinking for a while, Qu Moying asked, "Isn't there any other theatrical troupe?"

"I've seen other theatrical troupes, but they are unavailable that day. Except those, there are indeed some available theatrical troupes, but they are small and unknown troupes. Even if we invited them, I don't think anyone would come to see their performance, and people might even look down on our shop!"

Aunt Yang said, feeling quite embarrassed.

The opening day of a shop was so important that it would affect the future business of the shop. If the shop was considered to be a cheap and low one, how could it attract noble ladies?

Qu Moying was silent for a moment. She frowned. It was really tricky because there was not much time left.

Yu Dong suggested, "Lady, since we can't invite a theatrical troupe, we can think of another way. A theatrical troupe is not a must for the opening ceremony."

Qu Moying asked casually, "Is there any other way?"

"I have no idea right now!" Yu Dong said awkwardly. Despite his suggestion, he really couldn't think of any good idea at this moment.

Qu Moying pursed her lips and asked, "When will the shop next door open?"

"In the next few days. Now they have almost finished the reorganization. They used to sell fine goods, and they just need to adjust the personnel. There is nothing else. I heard that Earl Ling'an's legitimate wife came over once, and she hired a new group of staff. The shop should be able to open in the next few days."

Aunt Yang said.

These past few days, she had been on good terms with the shopkeeper of the shop next door, who was also retained. After all, the shop was under the ex-Crown Princess before. Even if Ji Youran wanted to do

anything to the shop, she could only do it in the past few days. Therefore, she barely did anything to the shop, and the shop was easier to reorganize than Yue's Clothing Pavilion.

They were old acquaintances, so they could talk things out casually. They even sympathized each other.

Both shops almost became someone else's belongings, and they were nearly dismissed, or even if they were retained, they were expected to have a hard time doing their jobs.

Qu Moying asked, "What are their plan for their opening ceremony?"

"I heard that they have invited a theatrical troupe. But they are going to hold the opening ceremony one day earlier than us. Their business will start tomorrow. I have asked about their theatrical troupe. They are also unavailable the day after tomorrow."

Biting the corner of her lips, Qu Moying thought for a while and said, "If there is really no theatrical troupe, forget about it. But we still have to set up a stage. We can prepare some games or give away some small gifts to attract people."

"What... What exactly should we do?" Aunt Yang was puzzled. She had never heard of such a way for starting business.

"I will design some games tomorrow. We can set up games like the pitch-pot game, and we can give the participants some small gifts. The gifts could be embroidery handkerchiefs, sachets, fans, and so on..." Qu Moying paused for a moment and suddenly asked, "Are there any particularly exquisite clothes? The ready-made ones!"

Hearing Qu Moying's question, Aunt Yang suddenly thought of something. She patted her leg and said, "Yes... there are a few very beautiful ones sent from the South. They should have been made by the South's embroideresses. I've asked about them. Old Lady Yue specially sent them to you."

She turned around and ordered a shop assistant to fetch a box.

Two shop assistants quickly carried a wooden box over.

Aunt Yang took out a key from her pocket and said, "Fourth Lady, I asked someone to go to Qu Mansion to report to you before, but you didn't come here these days. These few days, I was so busy that I forgot about it. This was especially given to you by Old Lady Yue. She said that there were exquisite clothes inside. I have never opened it."

As she spoke, she presented the key.

Yu Dong went forward to take it. He walked to the box, opened it, and found that there were several brocade boxes in different sizes inside.

Aunt Yang helped take them out and placed them on the table one by one. She opened the brocade boxes, and a few exquisite embroidery items appeared in front of them.

Not only was Aunt Yang amazed as she stared at the clothes, but even a person like Yu Dong, who did not like embroidery, looked at them with a face full of surprise and appreciation.

These items were really too beautiful. In particular, there were two sets of gorgeous clothes inside. They weren't of the luxurious type. Their colors weren't gaudy, and the embroidery patterns weren't too stylish. However, they looked gorgeous and valuable. People would like them at first sight.

"Fourth Lady, when I went to the South that day, I deliberately placed your clothing measurements in the letter you gave to Old Lady Yue. As expected, she made two sets of beautiful clothes for you." Aunt Yang said with a smile. She knew that Old Lady Yue loved Little Yue very much, so she would definitely love Qu Moying, Little Yue's daughter.

Qu Moying and Old Lady Yue had not contacted each other for so many years only because Qu Moying had never contacted her. Now that they got in touch again, Aunt Yang felt that Old Lady Yue would definitely be extremely happy. That was why she took liberties to do such a thing. However, she still apologized to Qu Moying. No matter what, she didn't get Qu Moying's permission at that time.

Aunt Yang said, "Fourth Lady, I beg for your forgiveness! I promise I won't do it again. In the future, I will definitely follow your orders. If I act against your will, I am willing to be punished!"

Qu Moying was a little unhappy in the beginning. However, seeing Aunt Yang's sincere and panicked expression, she knew that Aunt Yang really knew that she was wrong. Only then did she look slightly better. She said indifferently, "Don't do it again!"

"Don't worry, Fourth Lady. This is the last time. If I do such a wrong thing again, I will punish myself even if you don't punish me!" Aunt Yang replied in all seriousness. She heaved a heavy sigh of relief. She was really worried that Qu Moying would be angry!

Chapter 315 Each with Her Own Axe to Grind

In addition to these two sets of clothes, the other small embroidery items were also excellent. They were embroidered in ways different from those in the capital. Thanks to the characteristics of the South, they were especially delicate and attractive compared with the embroidery items in the capital.

Qu Moying pointed at a purple peony embroidery piece and said, "Give this away as the top prize."

Aunt Yang said reluctantly, "Fourth Lady, such a beautiful embroidery item can be regarded as the most precious goods in ordinary stores!"

Unlike the normal peony embroidery works, this peony embroidery was big and the embroidered peony was the famous purple peony, which was far more beautiful and outstanding than ordinary ones.

Such a big piece of embroidery works could be made into a set of table screens.

Qu Moying pondered for a moment and said, "It doesn't matter. We need to have a good start. Since the prize is a peony embroidery item, the game should feature peony drawing. The one who draws the best peony could get this grand gift." The pitch-pot game was just for fun. They could prepare many small gifts like handkerchiefs and sachets, and the shop had quite a few of them, but there was only one big peony embroidery.

"Announce the winner of the top prize on the evening of the Qixi Festival. All the peony paintings submitted before five o'clock on the afternoon of the Qixi festival will be eligible for the competition. Let the customers choose the best painting on that day. The best painter will have this embroidery."

Since the opening day of Yue's Clothing Pavilion was only one day before the Qixi Festival, she decided to take advantage of the festival to give the shop a sensational start.

"Fourth Lady, this is a good idea!" Aunt Yang could be considered sort of a businesswoman with rich experience. Hearing Qu Moying's idea, she was surprised. She quickly understood what Qu Moying wanted to do and couldn't help but praise her.

If the sensation of the opening event could continue to the next day, their shop might become a very popular shop. After all, many people liked this kind of purple peony embroidery, so there must be many people coming to join in the fun.

"Make some beautiful lamps. It's best to hang some riddles under the lamps. Anyone who can answer ten riddles on the Qixi Festival could get small gifts like a handkerchief, sachet, and so on. Make them with the five-color brocade that we just got from the South. In the first three days after the opening, offer a 20 percent discount for all the items."

Qu Moying smiled faintly with a sense of confidence, which was quite reassuring. Aunt Yang had originally been in a mess because of the theatrical troupe. Now that she saw Qu Moying's smile, she immediately calmed down. She felt her heart filled with confidence in Qu Moying and composure despite her fragile look.

Qu Moying was more reassuring even than the previous madam to her.

Then, the two of them discussed the details. On the day of the shop's opening ceremony, more men than women might be attracted, but the purple peony embroidery would definitely attract the attention of many women. The day after the opening ceremony was the Qixi Festival. On this day, almost all the women would come out for fun at night, and needless to say, there would be men accompanying the women.

There must be a lot of people coming over, and the safety of personnel in front of the shop must be heeded.

Business in the first three days would definitely be great. Nevertheless, Aunt Yang knew the quality of the embroidery was the key to ensuring a booming business for the long term.

Fortunately, Aunt Yang had made a lot of preparations during this period of time. The embroideresses she hired were all very proficient. Moreover, there were two embroideresses from the South who mastered different embroidery skills, and they could cope with the upcoming orders. There was also plenty of five-color brocade. Aunt Yang had checked every piece of it before, and each piece was of high quality. It could be seen that Yue Family in the South had also spent a lot of effort.

With this batch of five-color brocade, plus the exquisite embroidery skills and the unique way to attract people, Aunt Yang believed that the business of this shop would definitely be better and more prosperous than before.

She unconsciously raised her voice because of excitement.

“Fourth Lady, I will get someone to make some handkerchiefs, sachets, and fan covers as prizes.” Aunt Yang said excitedly, feeling her whole body full of strength.

Qu Moying nodded with a smile as she watched Aunt Yang leave to handle the matters.

“Moying, the materials in your shop are really beautiful!” Qu Xuexin came down from upstairs, her eyes full of surprise. She originally thought that Qu Moying was ignorant and would at most sell some common materials, of which she didn’t even know how to judge their quality. Unexpectedly, the materials she saw upstairs were beautiful and exquisite. Even she had never seen them before. Those embroidery edges and sachets were also pleasing to the eye.

Qu Moying smiled and said, “They are all for the opening event. The shop depends on them to attract customers. Eldest Sister, if you like them, I will give a few of them to you after everything is settled.”

Qu Xuexin was rendered speechless. She did want to ask for the materials. Now that Qu Moying had said so, she could not say such words anymore.

“Moying, you must be joking. They are goods in your shop. How could I just casually take them? I saw a kind of extremely beautiful brocade here. I heard that it comes from the South, and it is rare even in the South. Can you sell some to me now? I want to make a set of clothes.”

Qu Xuexin said softly and politely, which lived up to her identity as First Lady Qu.

With an embarrassed look on her face, Qu Moying said, “Eldest Sister, I do want to give it to you, but these goods are not mine yet. Yue Family’s people still have to check the goods. Only after that will these goods belong to me, it won’t take long. After they check them, I will give you a piece first.”

The smile on Qu Xuexin’s face froze. It could be seen that she was very unhappy, but she still said gently, “If it is inconvenient for you, then forget it.”

There was already a hint of anger in her words.

Qu Xuexin thought Qu Moying should give in. It was just a piece of cloth, and it was not a big deal. It wouldn’t matter if Qu Moying gave it to her first because Qu Moying was the owner of the shop, and Yue Family was her maternal grandparents’ family.

“Thank you for your understanding, Eldest Sister!” Qu Moying smiled as if she did not sense the anger in Qu Xuexin’s words. Hearing that, Qu Xuexin felt even more annoyed, but she did not show it on her face. She still acted like a considerate sister. “We are sisters. You don’t have to thank me.”

But she uttered those words a lot more reluctantly and looked less enthusiastic.

Qu Moying stood up as if she did not notice the coldness in Qu Xuexin’s words at all. She pointed outside and said, “Eldest Sister, let’s go out for a walk!”

She had to go to the entrance of the shop to decide where to set up the stage.

Although Qu Xuexin was annoyed, she could not show it on her face. She nodded and followed Qu Moying outside. Standing in the middle of Yue’s Gold Pavilion and Yue’s Clothing Pavilion and looking around, Qu Moying suddenly thought of an idea. She immediately asked the shop assistant to call Aunt Yang over. She pointed at Yue’s Gold Pavilion and said, “Aunt Yang, we can jointly set up a stage with their shop.”

Aunt Yang was in a good mood today. Hearing Qu Moying's idea, she felt that Qu Moying was so intelligent. She laughed loudly and gave Qu Moying a thumbs up. "Fourth Lady, it's a good idea! Why didn't I think of it before?"

But then she thought of another problem and hurriedly said to Qu Moying, "Fourth Lady, I'm afraid that the shopkeeper of this shop can't make the decision. You have to talk to their boss."

Yue's Gold Pavilion belonged to Earl Ling'an's Mansion's first branch now.

Qu Moying nodded. "I will handle this matter."

She had long wanted to go to Earl Ling'an's Mansion to take a look, and now she got a good opportunity. Her eyes darkened. Since Ji Youran had suffered such a big loss, she would definitely not easily give in. Ji Youran had endured for so many years. Now that she had gained power, how could she let someone take away her fruit of victory?

Since Yue's Gold Pavilion and Yue's Clothing Pavilion were adjacent to each other, she and Earl Ling'an Mansion were even more closely connected, or rather, she and Ji Youran were even more closely connected.

In her last life, her family had all died at the hands of the Crown Prince and Ji Youran. In this life, her status was much lower than theirs, but now she had a chance.

"Moying, what are you talking about?" Qu Xuexin did not understand for a moment. She had not heard the discussion between Qu Moying and Aunt Yang before.

Qu Moying said to Qu Xuexin with a smile, "We are talking about the opening event. I might have to discuss with Earl Ling'an's Mansion later. Eldest Sister, I will go to Earl Ling'an's Mansion to see Madam Duan later. Please suit yourself."

Of course, she did not believe that Qu Xuexin really followed her out for a walk. If Qu Xuexin had any plans, she hoped that Qu Xuexin would make a move as soon as possible so that she could see through her. If Qu Xuexin made a move on the Qixi Festival, she might fall into her trap because she would be too busy to deal with her that day.

Qu Xuexin rolled her eyes and said gently, "I have nothing to do anyway. Let's go together!"

Qu Moying said in an embarrassed manner, "I don't think it's a good idea... It's already rash for me to go there alone. If you go with me, others will think Qu Mansion's ladies lack etiquette."

Qu Xuexin suggested, "Then... let's go tomorrow. Let's first submit our name cards to inform Madam Duan of our visit tomorrow."

"But it's about the opening of the shop, and I can't wait any longer!" Qu Moying said helplessly, "Eldest Sister, don't worry. I will be fine. Madam Duan has a good relationship with me, and she won't be displeased if I go there alone. She told me to visit her as often as I can when I'm free."

Qu Xuexin gripped the handkerchief in her hand tightly. She really wanted to slap Qu Moying. With those words, Qu Moying meant that it was impolite for her to go too.

However, she couldn't find a proper reason to retort.

She gritted her teeth and revealed a smile. "Okay, Moying, just go. I am not in a hurry to go back now. I will go to the street and see if there is anything to buy."

Since Qu Moying didn't want her to follow her, she would go and make her own arrangement now. County Lady Jingyu's people should be ready for action. She would ask her maid to send a message later.

That day, she sent a maid to ask about the letter. County Lady Jingyu said nothing serious was written in the letter, and she asked her to rest assured.

After agreeing on the place to meet, they parted happily. Qu Moying got on the carriage with Yu Dong and headed to Earl Ling'an's Mansion. Qu Xuexin went on the streets with her maid. She and Qu Moying had made an appointment to go home together later. They would meet in the biggest tea shop on Zhengyang Street. The one who arrived first would just wait there, and they would return home together.

Watching Qu Moying walk away, Qu Xuexin sneered and turned to leave. She skillfully turned to a street where there was a shop owned by Liu Jingyu...

Chapter 316 An Unexpected Encounter

Hearing that Qu Moying had come, Madam Duan immediately sent an old maid by her side out to welcome Qu Moying. She had established herself in Earl Ling'an's Mansion. Although she was not as powerful as the second branch's Xiao, she was no longer a mere concubine who was at the mercy of others. After all, her position had changed.

She was now the legitimate wife of the first branch, and the first branch had a legitimate heir, Ji Yuanhai. Moreover, the first branch had properties and businesses such as the dowry shops that once belonged to the ex-Crown Princess. In the past few days, they had been receiving the ex-Crown Princess' dowry shops from Crown Prince's Mansion. If all the ex-Crown Princess' belongings were returned, the first branch would definitely become wealthier than the second branch.

Originally, Earl Ling'an's Mansion's second branch was far inferior to the first branch, and it was actually dependent on the first branch. However, the first branch's ex-Madam passed away, and the second branch's Xiao took over the inner yard, which increased the second branch's power.

Although Xiao had been accumulating wealth by taking advantage of her position for so many years, the second branch was still far inferior to the first branch.

Qu Moying got off the carriage and followed the old maid. Along the way, she saw many familiar scenes, including pavilions, terraces, and gardens, all of which had appeared in her dreams. However, these were only a part of her previous life, and everything had changed whereas she had become a different person.

She was so familiar with everything in this mansion that she could even get to every specific thing here with her eyes closed. She slowly clenched her hands under her sleeves and then loosened her grips. Every time she came to Earl Ling'an's Mansion, she felt a heart-rending pain.

She squinted her eyes, which were filled with coldness, and took a deep breath to get rid of the bloody smell from her memory.

Every inch of this place must have been soaked with her father's blood!

"Fourth Lady, after another turn, we will arrive at Madam's place." The old maid introduced to her enthusiastically and pointed forward. Qu Moying knew that place. It used to be an empty yard, but now it seemed to be given to Madam Duan.

After taking a quick glance at the surroundings, Qu Moying asked with a smile, "This place is a little far from Old Lady Ji's place, isn't it?"

The old maid explained with a smile, "Yes, it is indeed a little far away, but our madam likes peace and quietness. She let us empty a room and make it into a little Buddha Hall. She placed the ex-Madam's and the Master's memorial tablets in the little Buddha Hall because she wanted to pay respect to them every day."

Qu Moying nodded. She was very grateful to Madam Duan. At present, she could no longer openly worship her previous life's parents as a daughter.

Qu Moying asked casually, "Where does Young Master Ji live?"

The old maid replied, "Young Master Ji lives outside now. It's our Madam's idea. She said that Young Master Ji is not young anymore and it's not good for him to always stay in the inner yard. A teacher is specially invited to teach Young Master Ji!"

Qu Moying nodded slightly. This was the best for Ji Yuanhai. In the past, he was not valued at all. At that time, she thought it was inappropriate for him to live in the inner yard, but Xiao said that the outer yard had not been properly arranged yet, so he couldn't move out. Now, Ji Yuanhai was the legitimate heir. Moreover, Xiao had to give in at such a time.

Madam Duan was already waiting in the room. Qu Moying entered the room, bowed to her, and sat down. Before they could say anything, a maid suddenly rushed in and said, "Madam, Princess Ji's people are coming from the Second Madam's place."

Qu Moying pursed her lips slightly. Ji Youran's people came here? What a coincidence!

She leaned back and turned to look at the door. She heard the sound of footsteps approaching. This was the yard where the madam of Ji Family's first branch lived, but Ji Youran's people directly came in. It turned out that they were still so arrogant!

Madam Duan said with a smile, "Let Princess Ji's people in!"

As soon as she finished speaking, the door curtain was lifted, and two maids appeared at the door, one behind the other. An unfathomable light flashed through Qu Moying's eyes as she saw the maid in the front, Xie Feng, who was her maid in her previous life. However, Xie Feng, who had betrayed her, had now become Ji Youran's private maid.

The other maid was holding a thin account book in a respectful manner with her head lowered so that her face could not be seen clearly. She should be a young maid who followed Xie Feng here.

"Greetings, Concubine Xiang." Xie Feng gracefully walked in. She used to be slim, and now she looked even more graceful than before. She didn't look like an ordinary maid.

A trace of ruthlessness flashed in Qu Moying's eyes. Xie Feng didn't dress like an ordinary maid, which made her appear different from the last time Qu Moying saw her. She dressed in a more exquisite and luxurious way this time.

There were even two hairpins decorated with jewels on her head. Such hairpins were not something that an ordinary maid could use. Moreover, Qu Moying found these two hairpins look familiar. They were clearly the jewelry on her makeup table back then.

She could remember them so clearly because the word "Yue" was on this pair of hairpins. They were her mother's dowry items and were given to her later. She didn't like them very much, so she casually placed them somewhere. Later, her mother died, and she put them in front of her mother's memorial tablet. However, they disappeared.

She had wanted to find this pair of hairpins back but failed. At that time, it was Ji Youran and Xie Feng who helped her look for them. She didn't expect that the two of them had colluded with each other long ago!

Or maybe, Xie Feng stole the hairpins and kept them for herself. After Ji Youran found out about it, Xie Feng chose to become an agent of Ji Youran as she stayed beside Ji Hanyue.

An old maid stepped forward and said proudly, "Our Madam is now Master's legitimate wife!"

"So what? She was Concubine Xiang when Master was alive. Even if she has been promoted now, she is still Concubine Xiang to Master."

Xie Feng looked at Concubine Xiang mockingly and said indifferently. Just now, she only slightly tilted her body and looked like she was bowing, but in fact, she did not bend her waist much.

The maids and the old maids in the room were annoyed and glared at Xie Feng, but they did not dare to reprimand her. Xie Feng was no longer the Ji Family's servant. She now worked in the Crown Prince's Mansion. Some observant old maids could even tell that Xie Feng was no longer an ordinary maid but the Crown Prince's bedroom maid.

With such an identity, not to mention these servants of the Ji Family, even Madam Duan could not afford to offend her.

Seeing that no one dared to speak, Xie Feng smiled complacently. She looked around and raised his head arrogantly. "What? Am I wrong?"

She believed that no one in this room would dare to do anything to her. She had just become the Crown Prince's bedroom maid, and she was doted on by the Crown Prince in the past few days. The Crown Prince had slept in her bedroom for these two days. Even Princess Ji became kinder to her, and she gave her a lot of rewards, making her feel as if she could immediately be on the same level as Princess Ji.

As long as she got a chance, she might be as noble as Princess Ji in the future. After all, the Crown Prince had said something to her that he might not tell Princess Ji.

While she was acting complacently, she heard a cold voice from the side, "Who are you?"

Xie Feng couldn't help but look over, only to see Qu Moying sitting there. She had actually seen Qu Moying when she came in, but she didn't take her seriously. Qu Moying was just a blind person, whereas she was the Crown Prince's person. How could she bow to Qu Moying?

Behind Xie Feng, the maid who had been bowing respectfully raised her head. Qu Moying looked over and smiled slightly. It was another familiar face. However, she was not surprised. She looked at Xie Feng again, whom she knew very well.

"Quickly greet our lady." Yu Dong stepped forward and glared coldly at Xie Feng.

His aura had always been stronger than that of ordinary maids. He glanced at Xie Feng from the corner of his eyes coldly. Xie Feng could not help but take a step back. Then, she realized that she was actually frightened by a mere maid. She was angry and annoyed. She glared back and said arrogantly, "Which mansion is she from? Is she from Crown Prince's Mansion or from Earl Ling'an's Mansion?"

She was clearly mocking Qu Moying for being nobody!

Qu Moying said coldly, "How dare a little maid be so rude! Slap her!"

Yu Dong did not say a word but directly stepped forward and gave Xie Feng two hard slaps on the face, causing Xie Feng's fair and tender face to swell up immediately.

Yu Dong would even dare to slap Princess Ji as long as Qu Moying gave an order, let alone a mere maid of Princess Ji.

The maid behind Xie Feng retreated quietly to avoid Xie Feng, who was falling backward. She was the only one who knew clearly that Qu Moying was not a weak person to be bullied by anyone. These days, Xie Feng had been on cloud nine in Eastern Palace and had forgotten her identity. Even if she was beaten, she deserved it.

Xie Feng steadied herself by holding a pillar. She covered her face with her hand and said angrily with a ferocious expression, "You... How dare you..."

Qu Moying didn't even look at her as she lazily asked Madam Duan, who was sitting in the middle. "Madam Duan, where did this maid come from? Why is she so rude? Are all the servants in your mansion like this? Who gave her the guts to disrespect her masters like this?"

Xie Feng was guilty of many things, so how could Qu Moying let her off? It was fantastic for Qu Moying that Xie Feng had come to her now.

After her rebirth, what she wanted to do most was to take revenge. She had planted people and made arrangements in Crown Prince's Mansion so that everything would come in handy at a critical moment.

A job well done was a job well planned!

Madam Duan immediately understood Qu Moying's meaning and echoed, "She was the ex-Crown Princess' dowry maid, and later she became Princess Ji's maid. I don't know why she is so arrogant now. I don't think Princess Ji asked her to act like this."

"Shame on you!" Qu Moying's expression turned cold. She picked up the teacup at hand and smashed it at Xie Feng. Xie Feng had wanted to retort, but she was frightened and took two steps back.

The teacup broke into pieces by her feet, and a piece of fragment even brushed against her leg, immediately causing her leg to ache...

Chapter 317 Got the Hairpins Back

Xie Feng looked up in shock. After she entered Eastern Palace, she behaved cautiously for a short period after the ex-Crown Princess died because she was afraid that Princess Ji would deal with her. But later, she found that Princess Ji treated her well, and she soon became cocky. Now that she had become the Crown Prince's bedroom maid, her complacency could be clearly seen in her eyes.

Even in Eastern Palace, nobody dared to treat her like this, let alone the people in the Ji Family.

She came here to send over some account books for Princess Ji, and she didn't expect that she would suffer such humiliation. When she looked up at Qu Moying, she found Qu Moying's aura imposing, which faintly resembled the image of the ex-Crown Princess in her memory. For a moment, she panicked, and her legs went soft.

She was one of the few who knew how the ex-Crown Princess died.

"Is the ex-Crown Princess here to take revenge?" Thinking of this, she trembled all over and looked a little dispirited.

Her reaction was so obvious that many people were looking at her.

Being stared at by people around, Xie Feng suddenly came to her senses and secretly cursed herself for being a coward. "She is just a lady from a Vice Minister's Mansion. How could she triumph over Crown Prince's Mansion?"

Thinking of this, she immediately stood up straight and shouted, "Fourth Lady Qu, I am from Crown Prince's Mansion!"

"So what?" Qu Moying said coldly. She could not stand Crown Prince's Mansion's people the most, including Pei Luo'an and Ji Youran.

"You used to be my cousin sister's maid, but now you are serving Princess Ji. Does that mean you had already been on good terms with Princess Ji when my cousin sister was still alive? Are you two enjoying intimate friendship now?" Qu Moying asked slowly, and every single word smashed into Xie Feng's heart.

Hearing her words, Xie Feng was immediately deflated, and her forehead was immediately covered in sweat. Although she had been a little carried away these days because of the Crown Prince's favor, she still knew that she'd better not get involved in such a matter. She had done something with Ji Youran privately back then, and even the Crown Prince did not know about their doing.

On the surface, the Crown Prince had been doting on her these days and spent two consecutive nights with her. However, she was the only one who knew that what the Crown Prince told her the most was

about the ex-Crown Princess. In the Crown Prince's eyes, she was a loyal maid who regarded the ex-Crown Princess as her only master although she was now serving Princess Ji.

Of course, she would not tell Princess Ji about this.

It could be said that this was mostly the reason why the Crown Prince favored her.

Xie Feng snapped, "Fourth Lady Qu, what nonsense are you spouting?"

Looking at her fierce expression, Qu Moying sneered in her heart.

Sure enough, her guess was right. Xie Feng began to collude with Ji Youran a long time ago. After her mother died, she believed in the people around her because they grew up with her, and she regarded them as her confidants. But it turned out that they weren't loyal as she thought.

"Yu Dong, pull out her hairpins!" Qu Moying said coldly.

Yu Dong took two steps forward and quickly pulled out the pair of hairpins from Xie Feng's hair under her astonished gaze.

Because of Yu Dong's great force, Xie Feng's hair fell down, and it was so messy that she looked as if she had not combed her hair.

"You... What right do you have to pull my hairpins?" Even though Xie Feng was flustered, she was furious at this moment. They were her most presentable hairpins.

Her purpose of coming to the Ji Family today was to show the Ji Family's people how well she was doing in Crown Prince's Mansion, so she put on this pair of treasured hairpins. Anyway, the ex-Crown Princess had died. No one would mention her hairpins, and no one would dare to mention them.

However, Xie Feng did not expect that she would meet Qu Moying and that the latter would let someone pull out her hairpins.

“You want the hairpins back? Ask Princess Ji to take them back for you!” Qu Moying said calmly as if she was not dealing with a favored maid of Princess Ji.

Earl Ling’an’s Mansion’s maids and old maids exchanged glances. Then, they lowered their heads and gasped. Qu Moying was really tough!

She was tougher than anyone else in Earl Ling’an’s Mansion.

Although Princess Ji was from Earl Ling’an’s Mansion, her current status was higher than anyone in Earl Ling’an’s Mansion. Even if she didn’t personally come, Earl Ling’an’s Mansion’s people would treat the people she sent over with much care. They would not dare to do like Qu Moying at all.

After all, Earl Ling’an’s Mansion had declined, and it could only rely on Princess Ji.

Hearing Qu Moying’s words, Yu Dong immediately understood what she meant. He raised his head and said arrogantly, “If you have something to say, just say it. If you don’t have anything to say, just go back!”

“You... you...” Xie Feng was angry and annoyed. She felt the taste of blood in her throat. She pointed at the person in front of her, but she did not dare to rush up.

Madam Duan coughed and asked, “Tell me, what did you come here for?”

“Princess Ji asked me to show you the list.” Xie Feng gritted her teeth so hard that they were about to shatter. However, she knew that she should not fight back at this time. Otherwise, she would be the one to suffer. The maid who pulled out her hairpins looked thin, but she was nervous and scared after taking a few looks at her.

It was obvious that the maid was not someone to be trifled with. The maid looked at Xie Feng as if she was looking at a dead person, which made Xie Feng even more panicked.

She didn’t know what trump card Qu Moying had!

Madam Duan said slowly, "OK. I will report to Princess Ji after reading it!"

An old maid went over and took the account book from the young maid behind Xie Feng.

Xie Feng looked at Madam Duan and then looked at Qu Moying, who was sitting there leisurely drinking tea and didn't take her seriously at all. She only felt angry. She gritted her teeth and looked at Qu Moying with hatred. Then, she turned and left.

She couldn't deal with Qu Moying now, but the Crown Prince could. She was going to cry to the Crown Prince in her current look.

She didn't think of complaining to Princess Ji. She was now in favor, and even Princess Ji had to give in to her sometimes. What was the point of crying to Princess Ji instead of the Crown Prince? She didn't want Princess Ji to see her in such a sorry state.

Thinking of this, Xie Feng even tore off a belt on her dress to make herself look messier. She sat on the carriage, resentfully heading back to Eastern Palace to find Pei Luo'an...

Seeing Xie Feng leave, Madam Duan waved her hand, and the rest of the servants left.

"Fourth Lady Qu, is there anything wrong?" Madam Duan asked with a face full of worry after all the servants left. Although she got Qu Moying's meaning just now and said those words in response, she was still very worried. After all, Xie Feng was now Ji Youran's person whom Earl Ling'an's Mansion could casually deal with.

Qu Moying shook her hand and smiled. "Nothing!"

Seeing Qu Moying so calm, Madam Duan breathed a sigh of relief. She picked up the account book beside her and smiled bitterly, "Fourth Lady Qu, please take a look. The dowry items that Princess Ji has returned are written on it. They said it is the ex-Crown Princess' dowry list."

Noticing that Madam Duan looked strange, Qu Moying took the account book and read it. There were only a few thin pages, but she could tell at a glance that this was not the dowry list she had in the past. At least half of the pages were missing.

As expected, Ji Youran was not reconciled at all.

She only returned the obvious things like shops because she had to. As for the rest, others did not know anything. Even if she kept something for herself, no one would know, and she was sure that Madam Duan would not dare to say anything. Moreover, Qu Moying knew that even if Madam Duan wanted to say something, there was no evidence.

Crown Prince's Mansion had a copy of the dowry list. Needless to say, it must be in Ji Youran's hands now. The other copy was left in Earl Ling'an's Mansion, and it must be in Xiao's hands now. Ji Youran could distort the truth in collaboration with her mother as they wanted. How could Madam Duan do anything?

"Madam, what are you going to do?" Qu Moying raised her head and asked with a smile. This was something she had expected. She had hinted at Madam Duan before so that the latter could be mentally prepared.

Madam Duan shook her head helplessly. "What else can I do? I want to put it off for a while!"

Madam Duan knew her family's affairs. She didn't want to sign on the list for the time being. She wanted to think of a way to ask for the rest of the dowry items after Ji Yuanhai grew up. After all, she had just been promoted to the position of legitimate wife from a concubine. She could rely on nobody except Ji Yuanhai in the mansion. She was weak. If not for Qu Moying's help, she would have died as a result of Xiao's scheme.

Qu Moying nodded, "Then don't sign it for the time being!"

Madam Duan frowned. "It's the only way now."

She couldn't make things too clear because she didn't want to implicate Qu Moying. These were Earl Ling'an's Mansion's family matters. Even though Qu Moying was intelligent, she was just a young lady

who had been growing up in the village. How could she understand the intricacies behind these matters?

Even if she didn't sign the list now, she couldn't put it off for long. Xiao and Ji Youran would not let her delay it for too long.

If she didn't sign the list, they wouldn't be at ease. Only when she signed the list on behalf of the first branch could it be considered that she had no objection. In the future, even if someone found something wrong with the dowry list, it would be her responsibility.

Therefore, Madam Duan decided to put it off for the time being. She would wait until she had to sign it. She was also angry. The dowry items belonged to Ji Hanyue. How could Ji Youran keep them for herself? Moreover, she could tell that the second branch had always been hypocritical to the first branch. Now that the first branch had fallen to this extent, the second branch pocketed all the benefits.

Madam Duan thought to herself, "If Second Lady's husband becomes First Lady's husband, Second Lady will definitely be sad in the underworld."

Although Madam Duan did not make it clear to Qu Moying, Qu Moying understood Madam Duan's concerns. However, she could not make it clear, either. She could only say vaguely, "You can delay this matter for now. Perhaps there will be a turn for the better." Fortunately, she also knew that Madam Duan would not be reconciled. Most of the dowry items were missing. Ji Youran was too vicious and greedy. Qu Moying regretted treating her as a sister before.

Only now did she know that Ji Youran was an ungrateful, vicious, and greedy person.

Madam Duan was now obedient to Qu Moying. She nodded to show that she would do her best.

"Fourth Lady Qu, I've investigated the matter of Third Lady..."

Madam Duan uttered those words after a short hesitation.

Qu Moying suddenly sat up straight and asked anxiously, "What did you find?"

"Third Lady seemed to have left on her own initiative with her maid on the night that the ex-Crown Princess entered Eastern Palace, and several servants saw it. They said in vivid detail, and it sounded to be true." Madam Duan frowned. She did not believe that Third Lady Ji would elope with someone.

Third Lady Ji was still a child!

She rarely went out. Every time she went out, she would follow Second Lady Ji. She depended on Second Lady Ji very much. How could she elope with someone?

Qu Moying asked thoughtfully, "Madam, are you sure?"

"I am basically sure. Some of Madam's maids and old maids also witnessed it. Some of them said that they tried to stop Third Lady but failed. Third Lady said that she had something to do, and then she left the mansion from the back door. At that time..." Madam Duan paused.

Qu Moying's heart skipped a beat. "Was there anything wrong?"

Madam Duan said, "At that time, someone went to find Master, but nobody was allowed to enter his room. Some guards were guarding the door and there was the sound of fighting in the room."

Qu Moying pressed her hand heavily on the corner of the table, letting the sharp corner of the table pierce into her tender palm. Her heart ached badly. It must be Pei Luo'an who sent someone to catch her father at that time!

She had never expected that Earl Ling'an's Mansion would turn into a sea of blood after she left the mansion in a red bridal sedan. Her family's blood was flowing there. Ji Youran's words echoed in her ears. She had dreamt of it many times, which caused her to wake up in the middle of the night and be unable to fall asleep again all night.

She felt so painful every time she thought of it as if her heart was torn into pieces.

The smile on her lips became bloodthirsty and cold. One day, she would let them pay back everything.

“What else did you find?” Qu Moying asked calmly as if she was an ignorant outsider. Under the eye veil, her eyes seemed to be filled with blood.

“I didn’t find anything else. The old maid who went to report was later taken away by Second Madam’s people. Later, Second Madam sent people to chase after Third Lady, but Third Lady disappeared without a trace. When the mansion was in a mess, the news came that there were assassins in Crown Prince’s Mansion and that Second Lady was seriously injured and unconscious after blocking a sword attack for the Crown Prince. Everyone in the mansion was in a daze. How could they bother to care about Third Lady?”

Madam Duan sighed.

Such a thing happened as soon as Ji Hanyue entered Eastern Palace. It was a big matter for the entire Ji Family. It was said that Ji Yongming and Ji Yong’an both went to Crown Prince’s Mansion.

Qu Moying tried to force a smile, but she couldn’t. Her fingers trembled slightly. At that time, her father should have been brought to Eastern Palace. According to Ji Youran, her father died before her, but now there was no need to verify it.

She only needed to know who the enemy was.

Qu Moying took a deep breath to get rid of the bloody taste in her throat and asked, “Did anyone investigate Third Cousin Sister after that?”

“After that, there was chaos for several days. Eldest Master was sick and was said to be unconscious. After that, Crown Prince’s Mansion sent someone to invite First Lady to enter Crown Prince’s Mansion with the title of Side Princess to take care of Second Lady. There was no ceremony because the time was urgent. But First Lady entered Eastern Palace with the title of Side Princess because it was good for both Second Lady and Earl Ling’an’s Mansion, and the Old Lady immediately agreed.”

It took Madam Duan quite some efforts to collect these messages, and some of them were from Ji Yuanhai, who went out to the outer yard to inquire about the event.

Madam Duan was very satisfied with Ji Yuanhai. Knowing that Ji Yuanhai wholeheartedly wanted to find Third Lady Ji, she was particularly gratified.

She and Ji Yuanhai were the only people in the mansion who really cared about Third Lady Ji.

Madam Duan said bluntly, "Some of the information was found out by me in the inner yard, and some was found out by Young Master Ji in the outer yard."

Qu Moying nodded. She knew that her younger sister had a good relationship with Ji Yuanhai. She was grateful that Ji Yuanhai was still looking for her younger sister at this time. Qu Moying thought to herself, "It is right to let him be the legitimate heir. Father could rest assured in the underworld. But I have to avenge father. Only after that could father start his next life without worry."

"What did the governor of the capital say?" Qu Moying asked again. Now that this matter had fallen into the charge of the governor of the capital, it could be considered a registered case. It was impossible for them not to investigate it for such a long time.

"Governor of the capital sent people to investigate, but what they found was almost the same as what we have found. Although they didn't know why Third Lady left or whether she eloped with someone, they seem to think that Third Lady eloped with someone." Madam Duan became angry. In her opinion, it was impossible for Third Lady to do such a thing.

She was furious to hear the conclusions made by the governor of the capital's people. However, there was nothing she could do. After all, the first branch was weak. With the Old Lady and Xiao in charge of the mansion, there was little she could do although she wanted to fight back. Only when Ji Yuanhai grew up would she be able to truly stand up against those people.

"Since the governor of the capital has taken over the case, they have to investigate it thoroughly. Madam, you can send people to ask them from time to time. We have to see her no matter whether she is dead or alive. She is Earl Ling'an's Mansion's Third Lady and the ex-Crown Princess' younger sister. She couldn't disappear without reason. Even for the sake of the ex-Crown Princess, she has to be found."

Qu Moying said coldly to Madam Duan.

Madam Duan understood what Qu Moying meant. Her eyes lit up and she nodded repeatedly. "Yes, I get it! I get it!"

Since it was something related to the ex-Crown Princess, it was not a small matter. Therefore, there was no need to mention that Third Lady Ji was from Earl Ling'an's Mansion. The governor of the capital's people would not dare to be negligent if they knew it was about the ex-Crown Princess' sister.

At this point, Qu Moying thought it was about time and directly said the purpose of her visit.

Hearing that Qu Moying wanted to jointly hold the opening event and set up a stage with her shop and that she wanted to give some performances and prizes to the audience, Madam Duan nodded repeatedly. She had helped Ji Hanyue's mother to manage the accounts before, and she also knew some business means, so she gave a few reasonable suggestions. After discussing the issue for a moment, they thought it was almost done.

Since the discussion was done, Qu Moying stood up. It was Aunt Yang and Yue's Gold Pavilion's shopkeeper's responsibility to implement the plan. Qu Moying and Madam Duan were the bosses. Although they had made the plan, the details still needed to be further worked through, and it was naturally the two shopkeepers' duty.

Madam Duan instructed an old maid to inform Yue's Gold Pavilion's shopkeeper.

At this time, Qu Moying took her leave.

Madam Duan personally sent Qu Moying to the door. After watching Qu Moying leave, she slowly turned around. "Perhaps it is because she is Second Lady's cousin sister. I actually saw Second Lady in her just now." Thinking of this, Madam Duan felt sad, and her eyes turned red.

"If Second Lady were still alive, there wouldn't be such a thing, and Earl Ling'an's Mansion wouldn't have been landed in this situation."

Madam Duan walked back to her yard sadly. Qu Moying got on the carriage, and the carriage drove towards the tea house where she had agreed to meet with Qu Xuexin before.

When the carriage turned to an intersection, a carriage suddenly came over from the opposite at high speed. Both carriages were turning at the same time, and it was hard for both of them to avoid the other. Just like that, the two carriages collided. In the carriage, Qu Moying's head bumped the carriage with a loud noise.

Yu Dong reacted quickly and hurriedly pulled Qu Moying back. Thanks to him, Qu Moying only hit the carriage once. Then, the carriage drove to an unknown place jerkily. It seemed that it might turn over at any time.

Yu Dong reacted quickly and threw the curtain to Qu Moying. Qu Moying also reacted quickly. She grabbed the curtain and stabilized her body.

She was much weaker than in her previous life, but she still got her instincts. She grabbed the curtain quickly.

Yu Dong was originally afraid that Qu Moying couldn't catch the curtain, but when he saw that Qu Moying had grabbed it, he heaved a sigh of relief.

The carriage finally stopped in the crowd's exclamations. The frightened horse had one of its legs cut off by someone with a sword, and the crowd who saw it immediately exclaimed loudly.

In the carriage, Qu Moying and Yu Dong almost rolled out together. Fortunately, both of them were holding the curtains tightly so that they were not thrown out. The carriage finally stopped. Yu Dong first lifted the curtain and then reached out to help Qu Moying quickly get down the carriage, which was now unstable.

The horse that ran the carriage had its leg cut off. In front of the carriage was a handsome young man dressed in a brocade robe embroidered with bamboo. There was a sword in his hand, and the tip of the sword was dripping with blood. It was obvious that he was the one who cut off the horse's leg. There were a few lad servants following behind him. It seemed that he was from either a rich or a powerful family.

On the other side of the carriage, there was another carriage that looked intact from the outside. It should be the carriage that collided with Qu Moying's carriage. The carriage was leaning against the wall, and a woman's anxious voice came from it, "Lady, Lady, wake up, wake up!"

It seemed that the young lady in the carriage must have been knocked unconscious.

Both parties suffered, and the road was blocked. Many passers-by saw the dangerous scene just now and still felt scared. Something terrible nearly happened to these two carriages.

Qu Moying's carriage could not dodge the other carriage in time, and the two carriages collided. The horse that pulled Qu Moying's carriage was frightened, and it ran towards the other carriage, hitting it aside. Fortunately, this young master drew his sword and cut off the horse's leg. Otherwise, it was hard to say where the horse would keep running and how many people would get injured or even die.

If the horse kept running forward, the weak young lady in the other carriage would probably die.

Seeing that the weak Qu Moying held her maid's hand and walked down the carriage safely, the onlookers couldn't help but sigh that she was quite lucky because she was actually safe and sound after such an accident.

"Go and see if anything is wrong with the young lady in that carriage." The young man said to a lad servant behind him.

The lad servant hurriedly nodded and went to the other carriage. He asked the people in the carriage, "How is the situation of the young lady inside? Can she come out?"

"Our young lady was knocked out..." A maid cried in the carriage.

The lad servant asked, "Can you help her down? There should be a clinic not far ahead. You can bring her to have a check-up."

Seeing that the young lady's eyes moved, the maid hurriedly said in surprise, "Okay, I'll bring our young lady out immediately!"

Chapter 319 Who Was the Guilty One?

There were two maids in the carriage, and they helped a young lady out together. Qu Moying looked over at the young lady and found that she knew her. It was Yan Yujiao from Earl Fengyang's Mansion.

Yan Yujiao was injured more seriously than Qu Moying. Blood flowed out of her forehead. One maid reached out to cover her forehead, and the other maid asked anxiously, "Where is the clinic?"

The lad servant said, "Come with me."

They hurriedly followed the lad servant and did not even bother to look at Qu Moying.

The handsome young master stepped forward, bowed to Qu Moying, and said softly, "Lady, you should also go to the clinic to have a check!"

At this point, Qu Moying should indeed go. It was not a bad idea to go to the clinic for a check. After all, before this matter was properly handled, she could not leave.

She nodded and walked forward with the support of Yu Dong.

She looked quite weak as she wore a long eye veil. After such an accident, she looked even more vulnerable. The onlookers said that she was quite lucky because she didn't lose her life. After all, the young lady who was injured looked much stronger than her.

If Yan Yujiao heard what these people said, she would probably be pissed off. In fact, she was also thin, but compared with Qu Moying, she was much stronger.

When they arrived at the clinic, someone was bandaging Yan Yujiao's wound. There did not seem to be much of a problem.

Hearing the noise at the door, she looked over and saw Qu Moying. She was furious and wanted to sit up. The maids on both sides hurriedly reach out to hold her down.

“Lady, the nursemaid is bandaging your wound. Please don’t move. Otherwise, you might be disfigured.”

“Lady, let’s deal with her after your wound is bandaged. She won’t be able to get away with it.” The two maids looked at Qu Moying angrily while comforting Yan Yujiao.

Qu Moying quietly sat down on a chair, waiting for the nursemaid to finish bandaging the wound for Yan Yujiao.

“What a small world! I actually ran into the Yan Family’s people. I have yet to get even with Madam Li about the matter of her trying to set me up with He Dayu. But I ran into her family now.”

She was fated to deal with Marquis Fengyang’s Mansion’s people again and again!

Of course, there weren’t many people who knew about it. It was impossible for Yan Yujiao to bump into her on purpose. After all, judging from her appearance, she was also seriously hit, and her forehead was grazed. A noble lady like her cared most about her face. She would not deliberately bump into her like this because she might be disfigured herself.

Was it really an accident? What if it was not?

Meanwhile, Yan Yujiao had a train of thought. “What a heroic and warm-hearted young master! He sort of saved my life just now. It seems that I have to repay his kindness! He is helping around, and he is quite polite to me. But he glances at me from time to time. It seems that he is interested in me.”

Qu Moying was so angry that she almost laughed. What was going on?

She raised her watery eyes, glanced at the young man who “saved” her, and then gave Yu Dong a hinted look.

Yu Dong understood what she meant and went forward to bow to the young master. “Young Master, may I have your name? Where do you live? When we return to our mansion, we will definitely ask our master to thank you.”

“It’s okay! There’s no need to bother!” The young master was very polite. He looked at Qu Moying with a smile. He had already sheathed his sword. Now he took the handkerchief from a lad servant’s hand and carefully wiped his hands.

“Our Young Master is...” One of the lad servants wanted to say something, his face full of pride.

“Alright, if there’s nothing else, I’ll be leaving first.” The young man interrupted the lad servant and bowed to Qu Moying with a gentle and composed expression. Then, he bowed to Yan Yujiao, who had just been bandaged.

His behaviors were all pleasing! He was a well-mannered young master of a noble family.

Yan Yujiao glared hatefully at Qu Moying. However, when she looked at the young master, her face showed a trace of shyness. She blushed slightly, held the maid’s hand, and stood up. She also bowed deeply to the young master and said, “Please tell me your name. I’m from Marquis Fengyang’s Mansion. My father will definitely go and thank you with a grand reward!”

“There’s no need for that. Since I saw such a thing happening, it was natural for me to help. But I’m really sorry for breaking this young lady’s carriage.” The young master smiled and looked at Qu Moying with tenderness and pity in his eyes from time to time.

Qu Moying narrowed her eyes and looked at him through the eye veil. She didn’t know him!

Where did he come from? He looked like a noble young master from an aristocratic family. He had quite many lad servants with him. Moreover, his clothes were simple yet gorgeous, which were not the clothes an ordinary family could afford.

Just now, the lad servant looked proud when he was about to say this young master’s name. It seemed that this young master was from a noble family.

It was just that his action was a bit too anxious!

Even if a noble young master had a crush on other women, he would not act so eagerly like him. Moreover, Qu Moying's face could not be seen because it was covered with an eye veil. If this young master wanted to show his kindness, he should care about the injured and good-looking Yan Yujiao!

"How interesting! Is he trying to act like a hero? But it seems that the one who should be grateful to him is not me, but Yan Yujiao! It is not easy for him to get Yan Yujiao and me together!"

Qu Moying stood quietly at the side and observed the scene in front of her carefully.

"How can you say that? If not for your help, I would probably have died today. Thank you!" Yan Yujiao said in a soft and touching voice and bowed again.

"It really is nothing!" The young master seemed to be embarrassed by her words. He waved his hand and cupped his hands towards Qu Moying. Then, he turned around and left.

Yan Yujiao wanted to chase after him, but she was too embarrassed to do so. She could only helplessly watch him leave with an indescribable feeling in her heart.

Seeing that he had gone far away, she turned to look at Qu Moying with a cold face. Her gentleness and decency disappeared right away. "Fourth Lady Qu, what are you up to? Why did you let your horse run casually on the streets? Did you intentionally bump into me?"

Qu Moying was so angry that she almost laughed. Yan Yujiao still had the nerve to say such things to her. At that time, it was clearly that Yan Yujiao's carriage drove too fast and bumped into her carriage. How dared she complain first?

Qu Moying's horse had one of its legs cut off, and she was the one who almost died.

Before today's incident, her impression of Yan Yujiao was neither good nor bad. But now, she no longer had a good impression of her at all. Earlier, Madam Li deliberately made a match between her and He Dayu just to push her into the firepit. Otherwise, Madam Li would not think of her.

Madam Li didn't have any interaction with Qu Mansion before, but she went to Qu Mansion and enthusiastically set Qu Moying and He Dayu up.

Qu Moying was never a doormat. Since Earl Fengyang's Mansion had plotted against her again and again, she would not hesitate to fight back. Moreover, she was in the biggest danger in today's accident. Yan Yujiao's carriage rushed over, and all the onlookers said that Yan Yujiao's carriage suddenly bumped into her carriage.

"Miss Yan, don't you think it's strange that the two of us bumped into each other? Miss Yan, may I know where you were going just now? Were you delayed by something for a while somewhere? Were you with someone just now? That person left at the right time, which was why everything happened later."

Qu Moying didn't give in but said indifferently, enlightening Yan Yujiao in just a few words.

She believed that there was someone behind this accident.

However, it should not be Yan Yujiao. She would never put herself in danger in order to deal with Qu Moying.

"What nonsense are you spouting?" Yan Yujiao blushed, ashamed and annoyed.

"You know I'm not speaking nonsense. What's wrong with you? You try to cover up for the person even at the risk of your life. Is this person so nice to you?"

Qu Moying sneered and then turned around to leave. "If you need compensation, you can come to my mansion. But please tell me who delayed your time and made you and I bump into each other. I came out from Earl Ling'an's Mansion and was going to meet my Eldest Sister. This was the street I had to pass. If someone wanted to do something, she could guess when I would be here."

Qu Moying was almost certain that Liu Jingyu was behind this matter, and she was also sure that Yan Yujiao would not give Liu Jingyu away at this time.

But that was enough. She had already planted the seeds of doubt in Yan Yujiao's heart.

As long as Yan Yujiao felt suspicious, something would happen later. She was not a fool. It was just that no one had made it clear to her before.

If someone had torn the mask off Ji Youran, Qu Moying believed that she would not have been fooled in her previous life. Unfortunately, the people around her, including Old Lady Ji, repeatedly praised Ji Youran in front of her. Old Lady Ji had said these words to her, "Hanyue, Youran is a good girl. She treated you well with her heart and soul. You fell once when you were little, and she rushed forward to protect you. Her legs were injured as a result, and it took her half a year to recover."

At that time, Xiao said with a gentle and caring smile, "The Crown Prince is deeply in love with Hanyue. After Hanyue marries the Crown Prince, her days will be very good. All the young ladies of the capital are envious of Hanyue!"

After saying that, she sighed, "But Youran is a silly girl. She doesn't want to get married. She said that she won't get married before Hanyue gets married. How stubborn she is!"

.....

They said all those nice words to fake a peaceful and harmonious family. They must have said the same words to her father!

But what happened in the end? The bloody facts exposed the so-called kinship. Qu Moying bit her lips hard and suppressed the hatred in her heart. The more pain she had suffered, the more resentful she now was.

Seeing Qu Moying turn around and leave, Yan Yujiao trembled, and her face turned purple with anger. She was not only ignored by Qu Moying, but also suppressed by her in terms of aura.

"Qu Moying, you..."

Qu Moying suddenly turned her head. Her face was cold, and she pursed her colorless lips. She said with a hint of hostility, "Miss Yan, I don't want to argue with you. I know what your mother has done to our mansion, but I don't understand why you keep provoking me. Do you really think that our Qu Mansion is easy to bully?"

"I..." Yan Yujiao was shocked by Qu Moying and could not help but take two steps back. She never thought that the seemingly weak Qu Moying would have such a fierce side.

The eyes of the onlookers at the entrance of the clinic lit up. Was there something that went on behind the scenes?

Originally, they thought it was an accident. But now it seemed that it wasn't the case. Was it a man-made accident? They all witnessed what had happened just now. Although Yan Yujiao was seriously injured, Qu Moying was the one in greater danger at that time. If not for that young master, Qu Moying might have died.

Everyone turned to look at Yan Yujiao. Compared with Qu Moying, Yan Yujiao was more suspicious!

Was it really a man-made accident?

Chapter 320 Indignant Qu Xuexin

Yan Yujiao gritted her teeth and looked at Qu Moying's back. She was exasperated, but she didn't chase after Qu Moying.

"Lady, Lady!" Seeing that Yan Yujiao had been silent, a maid called out anxiously. She was worried that Yan Yujiao might really be seriously injured in the collision just now.

"Let's go back." Yan Yujiao suddenly moved and walked out.

One of the maids went to pay the medical fee, while the other ran after Yan Yujiao and asked, "Lady, where are we going?"

Yan Yujiao said coldly, "Go back and find County Lady Jingyu."

The maid was stunned for a moment, but she did not dare to say anything and could only follow Yan Yujiao.

Yan Yujiao and Liu Jingyu came out for a walk early today. After walking for a while, they felt tired, so they went to a bookshop. They read books and admired paintings in the private room on the second floor of the bookshop and felt quite at ease.

When Yan Yujiao found that it was getting late, she said she wanted to go home first. Her mother asked her to go back home early when she came out today, saying there were guests in the mansion.

However, Liu Jingyu kept talking to her. When Yan Yujiao wanted to leave, Liu Jingyu said that it was rare for them to come out once and they should play to their hearts' content. She said they should go to Treasure Restaurant to have a meal together, and she asked Yan Yujiao not to leave so early.

Yan Yujiao felt that it was not bad, so she stayed. But just now, one of the Liu Family's old maids came over and said that Mrs. Liu had fainted. Liu Jingyu was so anxious that she apologized to Yan Yujiao and quickly left.

Yan Yujiao was tired after the walk. Since Liu Jingyu had left for home, she had nowhere to go, so she also decided to go back to her mansion. However, on her way back, her carriage bumped into Qu Moying's carriage.

When she got off the carriage just now, she saw one of the legs of Qu Moying's horse was cut off, and she was almost scared to the point of falling unconscious. Her heart was still beating fast now.

Yan Yujiao's carriage was alright, and it was waiting for her at the clinic's door now. Yan Yujiao got on the carriage, and it headed towards the bookshop she had just been to.

In the carriage, Yan Yujiao's face was gloomy. She twisted the handkerchief in her hands.

Looking at her gloomy face, the maid did not dare to say anything but sit quietly aside.

The carriage stopped at the bookshop. Yan Yujiao went up to the private room on the second floor with her maids. She called a shop assistant over, and the shop assistant was the one who served tea to her and Liu Jingyu before.

Yan Yujiao asked with a calm face, "Was the Liu Family's old maid worried when she entered the shop to report to County Lady Jingyu?"

She remembered seeing that old maid staggering into the private room at that time. She didn't doubt anything at that time because it was reasonable for a servant like her to be frightened if something happened to Mrs. Liu.

"I didn't pay attention to her, but..." The shop assistant said after thinking for a while. There were quite a few people at that time, and he did not find anything abnormal. That was why he hesitated.

"Go ahead!" Yan Yujiao glanced at the maid beside her, and the maid immediately walked forward and gave the shop assistant a money bag.

As soon as the shop assistant took the money bag, a smile appeared on his face. He slightly bowed and said, "Lady, it's just my guess. If this old maid did rush into our shop, I would definitely have noticed her. But I noticed nothing at that time, so there must be nothing unusual."

The shop assistant explained flatteringly.

Yan Yujiao's heart skipped a beat. She continued to ask, "When the old maid came in, did she ask other shop assistants where we were?"

The shop assistant said, "Please allow me to ask someone."

Yan Yujiao nodded, and the shop assistant walked out of the room. After a while, the shop assistant came in and said, "Lady, a shop assistant saw this old maid. After entering the shop, she asked someone about you two ladies. After knowing where the two of you were, she didn't ask the shop assistant to lead the way. She didn't seem to be worried, and she came to your room by herself."

Yan Yujiao's face was slightly pale. At this time, she was already very suspicious of Liu Jingyu. Did Liu Jingyu really set her up as Qu Moying said? But how did she know Qu Moying's whereabouts? And why did she want to deal with Qu Moying? The two of them barely had anything to do with each other.

Yan Yujiao wondered if Liu Jingyu was plotting against her. But she had been on good terms with Liu Jingyu, and she couldn't see why Liu Jingyu would want to plot against her.

Perhaps it was just a coincidence, but how to explain the old maid's action?

Was she confused by what Qu Moying said, or was she really set up by Liu Jingyu? Yan Yujiao couldn't figure it out, so she went downstairs to return home.

She had to ask for her mother's advice and discuss the issue with her...

Qu Xuexin had been waiting for Qu Moying for a long time at the said tea house. Along the way, she did not see anyone else. Only one old maid came over and whispered a few words to her. After that, she quietly waited for Qu Moying.

She had been waiting for a long time. It was so long that Hong Mei, who followed her here, went downstairs several times to see if Qu Moying was coming.

Lunchtime had already passed, but Qu Moying still did not show up.

Qu Xuexin was very calm, and there was even a faint smile on her face. She was not anxious at all. She asked the shop assistants to serve some pastries. She ate a few pieces of them in a good mood. After that, she calmly admired the scenery and continued to wait for Qu Moying.

Hong Mei stood at the window. Suddenly, her eyes lit up, and she pointed at a person below and said, "Lady, is the one over there Fourth Lady?"

Qu Xuexin stood up, walked to the window, and looked down. Sure enough, she saw Qu Moying and Yu Dong in the crowd.

The two of them came here on foot!

The corners of her lips curled up silently. "Hong Mei, go downstairs and pick up Fourth Lady. Tell her that I am here."

"Yes, Lady!" Hong Mei replied, turned around, and walked downstairs. She walked to the door of the tea house.

Just as she reached the door, Qu Moying also arrived with Yu Dong.

Hong Mei hurried forward and bowed. "Fourth Lady!"

"Where is your lady?" Qu Moying asked. Although she looked calm, her face was a bit pale. Yu Dong carefully protected her with a worried look on his face.

"Our lady is upstairs. Fourth Lady, please come this way!" Hong Mei said with a smile. She extended her hand and led the way.

Qu Moying followed her upstairs, but at the stairway, she met a large group of people coming down. The person in the front was Duke Qi's Mansion's Eldest Young Master, Qi Xiuran.

Qi Xiuran also saw Qu Moying because Qu Moying was dressed differently from ordinary people. After coming down the stairs, he walked up to Qu Moying and greeted her with a smile, "Fourth Lady Qu, I have finished reading the qin music score you lent me. I will send it back to you in a few days. Thank you!"

Qu Moying bowed sideways and smiled. "No worries!"

Qi Xiuran smiled warmly. "My grandmother mentioned you that day. If you are free, you can come to see her!"

Qu Moying smiled and nodded. "I will!"

After saying these few words, they separated. When Qu Moying went upstairs, she heard voices from below.

"Is she Fourth Lady of Vice Minister Qu's Mansion?"

"Yes, she is Fourth Lady Qu," said Qi Xiuran.

"She didn't seem to be neither talented nor beautiful. Although I couldn't see her face, she should be quite good-looking." Someone was commenting on Qu Moying's appearance.

Qi Xiuran said gently with his pleasing voice, "We'd better not comment on a young lady's appearance. As for talent, the qin music score she lent me is very good. Not many people can read it, so she should have a better understanding of music than most people."

It was surprising that Qi Xiuran, who was from a martial family like Duke Qi's Mansion, was actually so gentle and decent. He was indeed a nice person.

"However, that has nothing to do with me." Qu Moying thought as she walked up.

However, there was something she couldn't expect even if she was reborn. Although she thought that she had nothing to do with him, things might turn out to be quite the opposite...

Seeing Qu Moying come in, Qu Xuexin sized her up before standing up and asking with concern, "Moying, why are you so late?"

She took two steps forward and grabbed Qu Moying's hand. She happened to pinch the injured part of Qu Moying's hand. It hurt so much that Qu Moying could not help but frown, and her face turned even paler.

Yu Dong hurriedly supported her from the side.

"Moying, what happened? What happened to your hand?" Seeing Qu Moying like this, Qu Xuexin immediately understood. She carefully took Qu Moying's hand and saw the wound on her wrist. Her face immediately changed.

Yu Dong helped Qu Moying sit down on a chair at the side. Qu Moying's hand slipped from Qu Xuexin's hand. Then, she smiled slightly. "Eldest Sister, it's nothing. I just accidentally bumped into someone on the road."

"You bumped into someone? Have you seen the doctor? Did you get any other injuries?" Qu Xuexin anxiously asked. She wanted to reach out to grab Qu Moying's hand, but she was afraid of hurting her. She looked quite worried.

"First Lady, something big nearly happened. Our lady..." Yu Dong couldn't help but speak up, but Qu Moying gently interrupted him.

"Yu Dong, don't talk nonsense. It's nothing serious. It's over now."

"Lady..." Tears welled up in Yu Dong's eyes.

"Alright, forget it. I'm fine now!" A faint smile appeared on Qu Moying's face. She then said to Qu Xuexin, "Eldest Sister, the carriage is broken. I have asked the carriage driver to fix it. Let's order another carriage to go back home later."

"It's broken? What... what happened?" Qu Xuexin was so shocked that her hands trembled.

Qu Moying's eyes fell on the table in front of her. There were many pastries on the table, and a few pieces of pastries were still hot. Apparently, they were just served. Her lips curved slightly, and a smile flashed through her eyes. "Eldest Sister, don't worry. It's over. I just accidentally bumped into Miss Yan."

Qu Xuexin was getting angrier. "Miss Yan? Which family's lady is she? Why was she so careless?"

Qu Moying looked at Qu Xuexin and said slowly, "She is Yan Yujiao of Earl Fengyang's Mansion."

“Yan Yujiao?” Hearing Qu Moying’s answer, Qu Xuexin suddenly raised her head with an angry face, “So it is Earl Fengyang’s Mansion again? It was Madam Li who tried to set you up by being a matchmaker for you and Third Young Master He. What are they trying to do now? They have kept plotting against you. What do they mean? Moying, don’t be afraid. Let’s tell Grandmother when we return to the mansion. Grandmother will help us vent our anger!”