

Noble Wife 391

Chapter 391 Possible Grudges Between the Elders

Granny Yan looked at Qu Moying in surprise, “She was hostile to you the first time she saw you? And she directly made a move against you this time?”

Granny Yan was just a palace maid when she first saw Qu Moying, but even she disdained Qu Moying at that time. Why did an exceptionally noble person like Liu Jingyu have such a strong hostility to Qu Moying?

Qu Moying wore an eye veil, so her beautiful face could not be seen completely, which would not cause other women to be so jealous of her. Moreover, she had an eye disease, and she looked a little weak. Different from ordinary women’s coquettishness, Qu Moying’s fragility was in her bone. However, others couldn’t help but pity her because of her fragility coupled with her eye disease.

Even if Liu Jingyu didn’t like the frailty of women, she did not need to hurt Qu Moying.

After all, the two of them had nothing to do with each other!

Only if the two of them had something to do with each other or if their families had a grudge would Liu Jingyu directly make a move against Qu Moying disregarding her identity.

Granny Yan guessed, “Lady, if there is no conflict of interest between you and County Lady Jingyu, the reason why she is so hostile to you might be a grudge between your parents.”

Her guess was similar to Qu Moying’s guess.

“But I have never heard of any grudge between our mansion and the Liu Family.” Qu Moying gently pursed her lips. She had never heard of any grudge between Qu Mansion and the Liu Family, and she had even heard that as Qu Zhizhen’s immediate superior, Minister Liu treated Qu Zhizhen quite well. Although the relationship between Qu Mansion and the Liu Family was not that deep-rooted, they were still on good terms.

Granny Yan looked at Qu Moying and reminded her, "If it's not related to Qu Mansion, then it might be related to the deceased Madam."

Qu Moying lowered her head and forced a smile, "My mother passed away not long after giving birth to me!"

Granny Yan knew that this Madam Qu was indeed a woman with a poor destiny. She sighed in her heart and continued to guess, "I guess there must be something wrong between Madam and Mrs. Liu."

This was the only reason that Granny Yan could think of. She couldn't think of any other reason for now, and this reason was the most plausible one.

"I heard that my maternal grandparents wanted to engage my mother to Minister Liu at first, but Duke Qi went to the palace to ask for a marriage to be granted to his daughter." Qu Moying spoke out what she had hidden in her heart. She looked up with a gleam in her usual cold eyes, which were so dark that they were almost unfathomable.

Granny Yan was stunned. She really did not know about this matter. She pinched her handkerchief hard and asked, "Could it be that Mrs. Liu hated the Madam before and then switched her hatred towards you?"

Qu Moying said slowly, "But ever since my mother married into the capital, they had nothing to do with each other. Moreover, she was the one who foiled my mother's marriage."

This was the most puzzling point. Mrs. Liu successfully snatched Minister Liu away from Qu Moying's mother. How could she still be so jealous of Qu Moying's mother? Moreover, Qu Moying's mother had passed away. Was Mrs. Liu going to switch the hatred from Qu Moying's mother to Qu Moying?

Why was her hatred so overwhelming?

After a moment of silence, Granny Yan continued to guess based on Qu Moying's train of thought, "Lady, if this is really the reason, I am afraid that Mrs. Liu is not living a happy life!"

Hearing this, Qu Moying was also silent for a while before she said, "I heard that Minister Liu treats Mrs. Liu very well. Although Mrs. Liu only gave birth to a daughter, he did not really mind. They were a loving couple. Minister Liu has only one son who was concubine-born, and that concubine used to serve Mrs. Liu. There are not many other women in the mansion."

Since she knew something in the past, Qu Moying began to pay attention to Minister Liu's House.

"Lady, what an aristocratic family show in front of outsiders could be fake. A loving couple might not get along well with each other at all. Someone with a good reputation might not deserve it, but someone with an ill reputation might be a nice person. There are too many rumors. Moreover, there are too many shady things in such a big mansion. If they don't want others to know about their scandals, they always have ways to gloss things over."

Granny Yan analyzed.

Qu Moying agreed with this point. In her previous life, Earl Ling'an's Mansion was such kind of a family.

After that big accident, Earl Ling'an's Mansion covered the shocking truth and continued to be friendly with Crown Prince's Mansion as if things happened on that bloody night had never taken place.

"Granny Yan, do you think Mrs. Liu hates my mother because she doesn't live a happy life? She and Minister Liu were not a loving couple known to outsiders, so she vented her anger on my mother? But since my mother has passed away, I became a new object of her hatred?"

Qu Moying told Granny Yan her whole guess. She could only consult Granny Yan about this kind of thing. Compared with Granny Miao and Granny Zhou, Granny Yan was more experienced in this aspect, so she had a better chance to help Qu Moying find out the truth. However, even Qu Moying found her own guess too wild.

The death of a person was supposed to write off all past grudges. Moreover, the one who died was the victim. Anyway, Mrs. Liu should not have acted like this.

After thinking for a long while, Granny Yan finally said with a frown, "Lady, I think your guess is reasonable. Perhaps Mrs. Liu really lives an unhappy life, and she might have been complaining in front

of County Lady Jingyu ever since the latter was a child, which made County Lady Jingyu hate you, and that was why she was hostile to you the first time she saw you and kept making a move against you whenever there was a chance.”

This was the only reason Granny Yan could think of.

Her other guess was that there was a stake between Qu Moying and Liu Jingyu, but now she thought that the first guess was more likely to be the real reason.

Qu Moying nodded. “I think so too! Granny Yan, do you think it is possible to find out what happened back then?”

This was what she really wanted to ask. Things happened so many years ago, so it was not simple and almost impossible to find out what happened back then.

Granny Yan said, “Lady, I’m afraid it will be very difficult to investigate it now. Have you asked Granny Zhou about it?”

“Yes. She only knew about the engagement. After my mother married my father in a hurry, she had nothing to do with Mrs. Liu. Granny Yan, was it possible that Mrs. Liu had been holding a grudge against my mother before snatching Minister Liu away from my mother?”

Qu Moying continued to ask.

“This... might not be the case!” Granny Yan said hesitantly. “I heard that -Madam grew up in the South, but Mrs. Liu grew up in Duke Qi’s Mansion in the capital. The two of them must have never seen each other before, right?”

“Yes. But they probably knew about each other. Duke Qi has a good relationship with my maternal grandfather. Although their daughters didn’t have any contact with each other, they must know each other. Despite that, Mrs. Liu still snatched my mother’s marriage. Was it an accident? Or did she do it intentionally?”

Qu Moying frowned.

This was what she suspected most. She thought the relationship between her mother and Mrs. Liu was not so simple. Mrs. Liu was also from a noble family, so she should be well-educated. Moreover, the two families had a long-term good relationship. Even if Mrs. Liu really lived an unhappy life, she shouldn't have hated Qu Moying's mother. Even if she hated Qu Moying's mother, the one who was hated had already died. Why didn't she let Qu Moying off?

Qu Moying felt that Mrs. Liu really did not intend to let her off!

Qu Moying asked tentatively, "Granny Yan, could it be that Mrs. Liu can't tolerate my existence because of my mother?"

Although she was intelligent, she had to rely on Granny Yan to verify her guess at this time.

Granny Yan asked in shock, "Why... why can't she tolerate your existence?"

Qu Moying shook her head in confusion. "I don't know. That's my guess. Otherwise, how could County Lady Jingyu be so keen on dealing with me?"

Granny Yan did not think this guess was convincing, but seeing Qu Moying's look, she felt confused. She thought for a while and hesitated, "If... if this is really the reason, Mrs. Liu wouldn't stop before getting rid of you. Lady, you have to be more careful!"

Granny Yan was not afraid that Qu Moying would be at a disadvantage against Mrs. Liu. County Lady Jingyu would marry into Eastern Palace, but Qu Moying also had a strong background. Pei Luo'an's position as the Crown Prince was not that stable. It was said that Lord Jing was the Emperor's favorite son.

However, if Mrs. Liu harbored such a deep grudge, no one could expect what she would do. Granny Yan thought Qu Moying should be more careful lest she should accidentally make a mistake and end up in big trouble.

“Granny Yan, what reason do you think she has to get rid of me? Is my existence so intolerable to her? What harm do I do to her?” Qu Moying kept throwing out questions. The last question confused her the most. “It has been so many years. She has never made a move on me before.”

In fact, Mrs. Liu had made a move on her before, but she was still a little girl at that time, and the one who carried out the move was Liu Jingyu. It was hard to explain the matter, so Qu Moying hid it from Granny Yan.

Although Qu Moying had experienced other accidents, they were all done by Yu, and they were few in number.

Qu Moying suddenly pressed her hand against the corner of the table. She suddenly froze. Perhaps she was wrong. Among those who wanted to kill her, there might be someone who was instigated by Mrs. Liu. However, Qu Moying had never suspected Mrs. Liu before, and she thought there was no one other than Yu who wanted to hurt her.

Granny Yan guessed according to Qu Moying’s thoughts and made the most reasonable explanation, “Lady, if Mrs. Liu really wanted to kill you but didn’t make a move before, it was probably because she thought you couldn’t pose a threat to her in the village.”

Granny Yan was now very clear about Qu Moying’s experience. It actually confirmed the previous rumors to some extent. Qu Moying used to be a nobody even in Qu Mansion, not to mention in the capital. Her mother had passed away, and her father didn’t like her. Moreover, her stepmother was hostile to her, so how could she make her way?

It wasn’t that Mrs. Liu hadn’t made a move in the past, but it was probably that she didn’t take Qu Moying seriously, and she didn’t mind even if her schemes failed or succeeded. Qu Moying narrowed her eyes, revealing a trace of coldness. She felt like her heart was pressed so hard that she couldn’t breathe. Her hand that was pressing the corner of the table slowly relaxed.

Qu Moying was unwilling to give up, and she continued to ask, “Granny Yan, if I want to investigate the matter between Mrs. Liu and my mother, whom could I consult?”

"If something really happened between Madam and Mrs. Liu, I'm afraid only the elders knew about it. Old Lady Qu might not know, but what about the Old Lady of the Yue Family of the South?" After thinking for a moment, Granny Yan gave a possible guess, "Old Lady Yue may know, and Duchess Qi may also know."

Old Lady Yue was far away in the South, so it was quite difficult to inquire her about the matter. It was hard to explain the matter clearly by having someone deliver messages or letters. Moreover, Old Lady Yue might not tell the truth, and Qu Moying needed to further observe and investigate the situation.

It seemed that the only one she could ask was Duchess Qi. Qu Moying thought that Duchess Qi treated her quite well and that she was kind.

Qu Moying preferred Duchess Qi to Duke Qi. After all, it was because of Duke Qi that Minister Liu was snatched away from Qu Moying's mother. If Duke Qi hadn't intervened by asking for an imperial edict granting his daughter a marriage, Qu Moying's mother might not have married Qu Zhizhen in a hurry.

It was obvious that Qu Zhizhen was not a good person. He had a lot to do with Qu Moying's mother's early death.

He doted on his concubines but treated his wife badly!

Qu Moying asked Granny Yan to go back to rest. Then, she began to ponder her talk with Granny Yan. Now, she was almost sure that the one who had a grudge against her was not Liu Jingyu but Mrs. Liu, who pulled the strings behind Liu Jingyu.

"Mrs. Liu had a grudge against my mother, and perhaps my mother didn't notice it herself, but Mrs. Liu hated my mother for an unknown reason."

"She even switched her hatred to me."

"My mother died because of difficult labor. But did Mrs. Liu do anything behind it?" Thinking of this, Qu Moying felt the blood all over her body rushing up to her head. She had never thought of this before.

"If Mrs. Liu hated my mother so much, how could she not make a move? Or rather, she made use of Yu to plot against my mother."

"At that time, Yu was only a concubine. Although she was a noble concubine, she was still a concubine. How could she dare to make a move against my mother on her own?"

At that time, Elder Yue was also around. She was the Madam of Earl Ling'an's Mansion. Because of this, it was unlikely for Yu to make such a big move.

Qu Moying clenched her fists, and her face turned cold. If her guess was right, she would not let go of this mighty Mrs. Liu.

"Right now, the only person I can consult is Duchess Qi. It seemed that Duchess Qi was willing to get close to me. Also, from Qi Xiangyu's reaction upon seeing my mother's qin today, I could see that the qin might have something to do with Duke Qi's Mansion."

"Everything points to Duke Qi's Mansion."

"Since this is the case, I will sound out people in Duke Qi's mansion."

Taking a deep breath, Qu Moying suppressed the throb in her heart and said, "Yu Dong, bring me the qin music score that was returned last time and also the two copies that I wrote according to the qin music score!"

"Lady, I will go get them now." Yu Dong knew that Qu Moying was talking about the incomplete music score sent back by the Eldest Young Master of Duke Qi's Mansion, so he went to fetch it.

Qu Moying tried to complete the music score once, but she was not satisfied with her work, so she tried for a second time.

She took the qin music scores from Yu Dong. After taking a look at them, she walked to the desk by the window.

Yu Chun hurried forward to grind the ink for her.

Qu Moying picked up a writing brush, thought for a moment, and wrote another copy according to the music scores. This time, she had some ideas, so she finished writing in one go.

After she finished writing, she put down the brush in her hand and waited for the ink to dry. After thinking for a while, she handed this new qin music score in her hand to Yu Dong, "Put it away for now and send it to Duke Qi's Mansion along with grandmother's gifts tomorrow."

Yu Dong took it and asked in confusion, "Is the Old Lady going to send gifts to Duke Qi's Mansion?"

Qu Moying nodded slightly and looked out of the window thoughtfully. Although the trees outside were tall and lush, there were already fallen leaves. It was almost autumn. Time passed quickly.

Qu Moying remembered that her mother sent gifts to Duke Qi's Mansion when she was alive. Of course, Duke Qi's Mansion also reciprocated by sending gifts to her mother...

She hoped that Qi Xiangyu could add fuel to what was happening now...

Qi Xiangyu hurried to her mother's yard. Along the way, the maids and the old maids bowed to her.

Second Madam Qi was calm and had a good family background. When she saw her daughter rushing in, she raised her head and asked, "Xiangyu, what happened?"

"Mother, did our mansion have an ancient qin in the past?" Qi Xiangyu asked as soon as she entered the room. But she paused when she saw the group of maids and old maids around.

Second Madam Qi waved her hand, and the group of maids and old maids all left.

Seeing that the servants had all left, Qi Xiangyu anxiously asked, "Mother, did our mansion have an ancient qin in the past? I heard you mention it before. Was it called Feng Yu?"

"Sit down first." Second Madam Qi glared at her daughter in dissatisfaction. She didn't think it was a matter that Qi Xiangyu should fuss about.

Qi Xiangyu sat down and looked at her mother with a bitter face. "Mother, tell me quickly. This matter is really important."

"There was indeed an ancient qin, but it was long gone. I don't know if it was sent to others or destroyed." Second Madam Qi picked up the teacup, took a sip and then slowly put it down. "I heard it from your grandmother by chance."

Second Madam Qi's husband was a concubine-born son. She was not that close to Duchess Qi, but Duchess Qi was quite nice, and she treated Duchess Qi carefully, so there was no conflict between the two of them. They even looked like harmonious companions sometimes.

The second branch didn't covet the right to inherit the title of Duke Qi, so it had a good relationship with the first branch. Moreover, Second Madam Qi was a wise person.

Qi Xiangyu asked, "Was it called Feng Yu?"

"It seems to be the name!" Second Madam Qi said after thinking for a while. If her daughter hadn't asked, she would have long forgotten about this qin. The reason why she remembered this matter was that Duchess Qi had mentioned it before, and when Second Madam Qi sorted out the warehouse with her sister-in-law, she saw a note in the account book saying that the qin Feng Yu couldn't be found.

At that time, she heard some rumors about Feng Yu from First Madam Qi. It was said that the qin had gone through chaotic times, so it was really precious.

In particular, the name of the qin was different from the ordinary ones, so Second Madam Qi kept it in mind and told her daughter about it with pity.

But she did not think there was anything else about the qin that was worth mentioning!

The qin had been lost or destroyed. The ex-Duke Qi had a close relationship with Lord Qin, who played a big part in the rebellion of the three Lords. The qin might have been destroyed when Duke Qi's Mansion was searched. After all, the entire Duke Qi's Mansion was close to being exterminated at that time.

Fortunately, the current Duke Qi was a capable person. He managed to survive that kind of situation and even succeeded in saving his entire family. Moreover, the Emperor allowed him to inherit the title of Duke Qi.

Second Madam Qi was scared just thinking about it. At that time, no one would have thought that Duke Qi's Mansion could be saved!

At that time, it was normal for people of the mansion to be killed, let alone confiscate their property.

Second Madam Qi was surprised that her daughter was making such a fuss. She felt that she had spoiled her daughter too much that her daughter lost her composure in the face of such a trifle.

But in the next moment, Qi Xiangyu's words shocked her.

Qi Xiangyu said with her eyes wide open, "Mother, I saw a qin named Feng Yu today!"

Second Madam Qi was about to lash out at her daughter, but she was stunned after hearing her daughter's words. She didn't know what to say and only asked after a while, "Are you saying that you saw the qin named Feng Yu?"

"Yes, mother, I saw... I saw it, but I don't know if it is the one from our ancestors!" Qi Xiangyu nodded. When she came all the way here, she had thought that Qu Moying's qin might not be the one that used to belong to her mansion. Although the name of Qu Moying's qin was also Feng Yu, they might not be the same one.

After all, this Feng Yu qin was not extremely famous. If it was, there might be counterfeits made based on it.

Therefore, Qi Xiangyu really could not judge whether Qu Moying's qin had anything to do with her mansion.

"Is it really the ancient qin Feng Yu?" Second Madam Qi frowned and asked suspiciously. She still thought it was impossible.

"Yes, it should be. Mother, I think it is very likely to be the one that used to belong to our mansion." Qi Xiangyu thought for a while and still felt that the two qins were probably the same one. "Could it be that it wasn't destroyed back then but was accidentally lost and obtained by someone?"

Hearing Qi Xiangyu's words, Second Madam Qi nodded. She also felt that it was possible. At that time, Duke Qi's Mansion was almost doomed. It was possible that some items were taken by others.

Second Madam Qi asked, "Who owns it now?"

She thought if it really was the qin that used to belong to her mansion, she should try to get it back because it would be a great disrespect to the ancestors if she didn't try to get back the things that were left behind by them.

Qi Xiangyu said, "Fourth Lady Qu!"

"Fourth Lady Qu? Which Fourth Lady Qu?" Second Madam Qi did not pay much attention to things that happened outside. She did not know who Qi Xiangyu was talking about.

Qi Xiangyu explained in more detail, "It's the Fourth Lady of Vice Minister Qu's Mansion. She has an eye disease and was previously raised in the village. You used to say that she was quite wretched."

"Oh, oh, are you talking about the lady who was abandoned in the village after her mother died?" Second Madam Qi remembered and nodded. "I know. Are you saying that the qin is in her hands?"

"Yes, it's her. She also went to Grand Princess Changyu's mansion today. I saw that her qin bore the name 'Feng Yu' on it. Later, I specially took a closer look at it and confirmed it was indeed Feng Yu. It seemed to be an ancient qin, so I came to ask you!"

Qi Xiangyu told Second Madam Qi everything about Qu Moying playing the qin today. Of course, she also told her everything that happened in Grand Princess Changyu's mansion today.

After Qi Xiangyu finished speaking, the relaxed expression on Second Madam Qi's face disappeared...

Chapter 393 Borrow the Buddhist Scriptures

Second Madam Qi straightened her body and asked her daughter seriously, "Do you think Jingyu is dealing with Fourth Lady Qu?"

"Yes. I guess not only me but also many young ladies thought the same. You didn't see how aggressive Cousin Jingyu was! She seemed to be threatening Fourth Lady Qu, and she almost quarreled with East Mansion's Princess Ji." Qi Xiangyu sneered.

There was no outsider in the room, so she did not need to hide her feelings.

She did not like Liu Jingyu.

As the only daughter of Duke Qi's only son, she felt displeased that it was actually Liu Jingyu but not her who got the title of County Lady. Every time she heard someone call Liu Jingyu "County Lady", she felt angry and aggrieved.

Therefore, the harmony between Liu Jingyu and her was only for show.

However, Liu Jingyu was very smart. Every time she came to Duke Qi's Mansion, she could make Duchess Qi and even Duke Qi happy. In this respect, Qi Xiangyu admitted to being inferior to her.

Qi Xiangyu's father was not Duchess Qi's biological son. Even if Qi Xiangyu tried to please Duchess Qi, the latter might not be impressed. In terms of pleasing Duchess Qi, Qi Xiangyu was inferior to Liu Jingyu.

It was also because of this that Qi Xiangyu and Liu Jingyu did not really get along with each other.

After careful observation, Qi Xiangyu found that Liu Jingyu was actually very good at pretending. In front of the elders in the mansion, Liu Jingyu seemed to be gentle, but she was just pretending. She pretended to be magnanimous, decent, and elegant just to please Duke Qi and Duchess Qi.

“Mother, do you remember that Fourth Lady Qu almost had an accident in our mansion last time she came here? I later investigated it and found that it had something to do with Cousin Jingyu!” Qi Xiangyu suddenly remembered something. She didn’t think much of that thing at that time, but she felt something unusual after witnessing the things that happened today.

“Do you mean that Jingyu has always been dealing with Fourth Lady Qu and doesn’t like her?” Second Madam Qi asked in surprise and then shook her head. “No way. Even if Jingyu is a two-faced person, there is no way she can’t tolerate a mere lady from Vice Minister’s Mansion, who is not a threat to her.”

Qi Xiangyu lowered her voice and said meaningfully, “Mother, she might be a threat to Liu Jingyu.”

Second Madam Qi asked, “What did you see?”

Qi Xiangyu said, “Mother, I saw the Crown Prince stop Fourth Lady Qu today. The two of them chatted for a while. I was walking around at that time and saw it!”

She did see the Crown Prince from afar and saw him catch up to Qu Moying in a hurry. At that time, there was no one else around them.

Qu Moying and the Crown Prince acted in line with etiquette, and they didn’t do anything that crossed the boundary. Although Qi Xiangyu didn’t know what they were talking about, she knew that the matter was not simple when she saw the Crown Prince send a eunuch to stop Qu Moying.

Second Madam Qi couldn’t believe what she had heard and asked, “The Crown Prince sent someone to stop Fourth Lady Qu?”

“Yes, but it might be...” Qi Xiangyu hesitated, “It might be for some other reason. Eastern Palace’s Princess Ji said that the ex-Crown Princess was Fourth Lady Qu’s cousin sister.”

“This is also possible...” Second Madam Qi said with a serious face. Of course, she knew that Liu Jingyu was going to marry into Eastern Palace. It would be announced when the right time came. But what did the Crown Prince mean? Could it be that the person he liked was not Liu Jingyu but Qu Moying?

If this was the case, it made sense for Liu Jingyu to deal with Qu Moying.

Was it because Liu Jingyu had discovered something long ago that she had been dealing with Qu Moying?

“Xiangyu, don’t get involved in this kind of thing.” Second Madam Qi thought for a while and warned her daughter. This was not something that Qi Xiangyu could interfere with.

Qi Xiangyu asked, “Mother, what about the qin?”

Second Madam Qi shook her hand and said, “It’s no rush. I will ask Fourth Lady Qu about it in detail when I meet her.”

She was afraid that her daughter wouldn’t be able to figure it out and therefore got into trouble.

“Mother, I heard from Fourth Lady Qu that this qin was one of her mother’s dowry items. I think it might be our qin. I heard that our mansion and Fourth Lady Qu’s maternal grandparents’ family had a good relationship in the past.” Qi Xiangyu wanted to investigate this matter. She had an intuition that this matter was not simple.

The Yue Family of the South used to have a good relationship with Duke Qi’s Mansion. They used to be in close touch, but later they contacted less, and their relationship was not as good as before. They might have contacted each other by letters occasionally. If Duchess Qi didn’t mention this when Qu Moying came to Duke Qi’s Mansion last time, Qi Xiangyu really wouldn’t have known about this.

She suspected that the qin was sent to the Yue Family of the South by Duchess Qi!

But she denied her own guess on second thought, "If it was sent out as a gift, why was 'couldn't be found' written on the record? It meant that the qin disappeared or was destroyed, and our mansion was not clear about its whereabouts."

"Don't worry. This matter can't be rushed. I will investigate it slowly. Don't say anything to your grandmother about this, or your grandmother will get angry and think that you quarreled with Jingyu again." Seeing her daughter's expression, Second Madam Qi worriedly reminded her again. Duchess Qi was extremely biased towards Liu Jingyu.

After all, Liu Jingyu was her biological granddaughter.

"Mother, don't worry. I won't talk nonsense." Qi Xiangyu pouted and said unhappily. Of course, she also knew that her grandmother liked Liu Jingyu, and she couldn't compare with Liu Jingyu in her grandmother's heart.

She was not aware of it when she was a child, but how could she still be unaware of it now?

The next morning, Qu Moying went to Old Lady Qu to pay her respects and said that she wanted to send gifts to Duchess Qi.

"Grandmother, I heard that my mother occasionally sent gifts to Duchess Qi when she was alive. I heard from Duchess Qi that Duke Qi's Mansion used to have a good relationship with my maternal grandparents' family, so I wanted to send a gift over on behalf of my mother."

Qu Moying said softly.

Because of Little Yue's death, the connection between the two families was cut off. Now that Qu Moying had returned, it was reasonable for her to send gifts to show that her family was willing to get along well with Duke Qi's Mansion again. Moreover, the Old Lady felt that it was right for them to be friends with Duke Qi's Mansion, and she sighed heavily.

"Indeed, you should send a gift over. After all, you are..."

The Old Lady paused. She seemed to be worded in her heart, but she shook her head and looked at Qu Moying with a smile. "I also want to prepare some gifts for them. Yours could be sent over together with mine."

After all, Qu Moying was a junior. Old Lady Qu meant to send the gifts over in her own name, but there were actually gifts prepared by Qu Moying.

"I get it, grandmother." Qu Moying nodded and told the Old Lady what she had prepared.

The Old Lady listened carefully and nodded repeatedly. She thought Qu Moying dealt with matters appropriately. How could a lady who was abandoned to the village by her father be able to act so sensibly? It showed that Qu Moying was gifted and blessed. Otherwise, it was impossible for her to develop such a good character in that kind of environment.

Qu Moying's manner and bearing were no different from that of a well-bred lady from an aristocratic family!

As the two were talking, an old maid suddenly came to report, "Your Ladyship, Third Lady wants to see you!"

"Let her in!" The Old Lady stopped smiling and looked at Qu Moying's calm face. She sighed secretly in her heart. She could only blame her son for making the situation like this.

Thinking of Qu Zhizhen, the Old Lady could only sigh. He had his own ideas, and she could not control him. Otherwise, things would not have come to this point, causing her grandchildren to be estranged from each other!

Qu Qiuyan walked in slowly and bowed to the Old Lady, "Greetings, Grandmother!"

The Old Lady said, "Get up!"

Qu Qiuyan had been obedient these days. Although the Old Lady gave the invitation card to Qu Moying, she didn't make a fuss. She had been staying in the mansion. The Old Lady heard that she was cultivating her spirit by copying Buddhist scriptures. The Old Lady was satisfied with this, and her expression softened a lot.

Qu Qiuyan stood up and smiled when she saw Qu Moying. "Moying, you're also here. What a coincidence. I happen to have something to ask you."

Qu Moying looked up at Qu Qiuyan. "Third Sister, what do you want to ask me?"

Qu Qiuyan asked, "It's nothing special. I heard that you have a few Buddhist scriptures. Can you lend them to me?"

The Buddhist scriptures Qu Qiuyan mentioned were not ordinary Buddhist scriptures. They used to belong to Qu Moying's mother, Little Yue, and these few Buddhist scriptures were said to be blessed by monks. Little Yue brought them over as dowry items from the Yue Family of the South.

Previously, these Buddhist scriptures had fallen into Yu's hands, but Yu did not like them, so they were put on the shelf. Later, these Buddhist scriptures returned to Qu Moying's hands.

"I'm not sure about my mother's items. If there are such Buddhist scriptures, I can lend them to you. Third Sister, are you going to copy them?" Qu Moying asked with a smile as a hint of darkness flashed through her eyes. She didn't think that Qu Qiuyan could calm down and copy the Buddhist scriptures. Moreover, the fact that Qu Qiuyan wanted to borrow Buddhist scriptures from her was really strange.

Qu Qiuyan said earnestly, "Yes, can I borrow them? I want to pray for Grandmother and father by using them."

Since she had said so, how could Qu Moying refuse?

"So, Qu Qiuyan came here just to meet me and say these words in front of the Old Lady?"

Qu Moying nodded and agreed. "I will ask Yu Dong to send them to you later!"

“Thank you, Moying!”

Qu Qiuyan was overjoyed and was about to bow to Qu Moying, but Qu Moying turned sideways to avoid Qu Qiuyan’s bow and said coldly, “You’re welcome, Third Sister!”

Anyone with a discerning eye could see that Qu Moying and Qu Qiuyan were only in harmony on the surface. The Old Lady sighed in her heart, but she knew that the two of them could not get any closer even if she tried to mediate between them, and it was already good enough for the two of them to be on speaking terms.

After leaving the Old Lady’s yard, Qu Moying went back to her own yard.

Qu Moying had prepared the gifts for Duke Qi’s Mansion last night. Except for the qin music score, the other gifts were prepared by Granny Yan. The gifts were not luxurious, but they could show Qu Moying’s sincerity.

At this time, Qu Moying asked Yu Chun to sort out the gifts again and send them all to the Old Lady’s yard. The Old Lady would send them out together with her own gifts.

As Yu Chun left with the gifts, Qu Moying asked Granny Zhou on the side, “Granny, are there some Buddhist scriptures in my mother’s dowry?”

As soon as she finished asking, she saw Granny Zhou’s face change...

Chapter 394 Madam Duan Was in a Dilemma

Granny Zhou asked anxiously, “Lady, why do you want Madam’s Buddhist scriptures?”

Surprised, Qu Moying looked at Granny Zhou, who was overreacting, and asked, “Granny Zhou, is there anything wrong with my mother’s Buddhist scriptures?”

"No... no!" Granny Zhou shook her head in panic and explained, "It's just that those Buddhist scriptures were Madam's dowry. Old Lady Yue specially asked a renowned monk in the South to bless those scriptures for Madam."

"Third Sister said that she wanted to copy Buddhist scriptures to pray for my grandmother and father and wanted to borrow the Buddhist scriptures. She might know that there were Buddhist scriptures in my mother's dowry."

Qu Moying smiled.

Granny Zhou asked, "How many of them does she want?"

"How many Buddhist scriptures are there in total?"

"There are a set of five copies in total." Granny Zhou answered after thinking for a moment. She still remembered it clearly because she watched Old Lady Yue place those Buddhist scriptures into Little Yue's dowry boxes. After that, Little Yue always brought these Buddhist scriptures with her. Even on the day she passed away, these Buddhist scriptures were by her bedside.

Thinking of Little Yue's death, Granny Zhou could not help but feel sad. Her eyes turned red. She was really unwilling to lend the Buddhist scriptures to Qu Qiuyan. As long as she thought of how Qu Qiuyan's mother caused Little Yue to fall into a miserable situation, Granny Zhou could not calm down.

If not for Yu, Little Yue wouldn't have been forced to that point, and what happened later on wouldn't have happened. Everything was caused by Yu.

Now that Yu's daughter wanted to borrow these Buddhist scriptures that were intended as a blessing for Little Yue, Granny Zhou was really reluctant to lend them to her.

"Lady, the Buddhist scriptures were a blessing for Madam. Even when Madam was giving birth to you, she still took these scriptures with her. When I sorted out the things later, I brought these scriptures back to the mansion..." Granny Zhou couldn't help but choke, and she couldn't continue for a moment.

She turned around, wiped her eyes with a handkerchief, and said, "I think if Madam knows about it in the underworld, she... she is also unwilling to lend them!"

Qu Qiuyan was the daughter of Little Yue's enemy. Granny Zhou thought that even if Little Yue was gentle and kind, she would not be able to endure it.

Qu Moying didn't know there were such things about the Buddhist scriptures. Knowing that her mother brought these Buddhist scriptures with her when she had a difficult labor, Qu Moying also felt sad. She bit her lips and suppressed the bitterness in her heart. If not for Yu, Little Yue wouldn't have been forced to leave the mansion and go to a small convent to give birth, thus avoiding death due to the difficult labor.

It could be said that Little Yue's death was mostly attributed to Yu.

Qu Moying pursed her lips and made up her mind. "Granny Zhou, I won't lend them!"

Yu Dong said, "Lady, you have just promised Third Lady in front of the Old Lady!"

"It's fine. Yu Dong, go outside and buy a few copies of Buddhist scriptures. Then send them to Third Lady. Tell her that I can't find my Buddhist scriptures for now and let her copy the Buddhist scriptures you buy first. When I find mine, I will send them over!" Qu Moying said indifferently. Since she did not intend to lend them, she had to make an excuse.

She wouldn't say that she didn't want to lend them out, but she would say that she couldn't find them for the time being.

It was a good excuse because it was hard to figure out whether Qu Moying found the Buddhist scriptures or not in a short time. After all, the Buddhist scriptures had been passed from Little Yue, then acquired by Yu, who later returned them to Qu Moying. They had passed through many people's hands, so it was normal that they couldn't be found for a while. Moreover, they didn't seem to be something important in the first place.

"Yes, I understand!" Yu Dong smiled and was about to leave.

“Yu Dong, wait a moment.” Granny Zhou suddenly called out to Yu Dong and then said to Qu Moying, “Lady, please ask Yu Dong to go to Earl Ling’an’s Mansion to borrow a few Buddhist scriptures from Madam Duan. When the ex-Crown Princess was still in Earl Ling’an’s Mansion, she had some Buddhist scriptures. It’s better to use hers than to buy new ones!”

Granny Zhou’s words brought back Qu Moying’s memories. Her eyes dimmed, and her eyelashes lowered slightly, covering the trace of coldness in her eyes.

Although those Buddhist scriptures were obtained by Ji Hanyue from Dabei Temple, they were actually for Ji Hanyue’s younger sister, Ji Yanyue. Ji Yanyue was quiet and well-behaved. Every time she thought of her mother, she would sit down and copy Buddhist scriptures. She was calmer than Ji Hanyue, who personally went to the temple to obtain the Buddhist scriptures. After copying them, Ji Yanyue would offer them in front of her mother’s memorial tablet.

However, the cute and well-behaved Ji Yanyue had passed away!

The coldness in Qu Moying’s eyes turned to sadness. Ji Yanyue’s death was blamed on Ji Hanyue, but the truth about Ji Hanyue would be brought into daylight one day, and the real culprits would have to pay for Ji Yanyue’s sufferings.

Qu Moying exhaled hard. Originally, she did not want to lend the Buddhist scriptures to Qu Qiuyan, but now, she would like to use them to trigger something...

Not long after Yu Dong went to Madam Duan’s place, he returned. He brought back not only a Buddhist scripture but also a contract, which was the title deed of Yue’s Gold Pavilion.

“Lady, Madam Duan said that the deed will be left with you. As for the money, you don’t need to worry about it, and you also don’t need to write an IOU. She wanted to go to the Yamen with you to get the certificate, but Old Lady Ji didn’t allow her to go out, so she couldn’t do it for the time being.”

Yu Dong handed the deed of the store and land to Qu Moying and said, “I saw two old maids guarding outside Madam Duan’s yard. They didn’t seem to be Madam Duan’s servants. They should be guarding there to prevent Madam Duan from going out.”

When Yu Dong was about to enter Madam Duan's yard, the two old maids sized him up from head to toe as if he was a thief, which made him very angry.

Later, he left the yard. After walking far away, he turned back and still saw the two old maids staring at him, which made him really uncomfortable. When he was in Madam Duan's room just now, Madam Duan asked someone to guard in front of the window before giving him the stuff, which showed that she really had no freedom of action.

"The second branch of the Ji Family must have done something behind it!" Qu Moying said with a sneer. She glanced at the deed and placed it aside.

"Lady, you are not able to go through the process because Madam Duan is not allowed to come out, so I'm afraid you are not able to deal with the matters legitimately." Yu Dong said. He had been thinking along the way, but there was something he couldn't figure out. He wanted to hear Qu Moying explain to her.

With a smile, Qu Moying gently patted the Buddhist scripture on the table and said meaningfully, "Look at this. Isn't this a good reason?"

She had already realized Madam Duan's situation when she asked the shopkeeper of Yue's Gold Pavilion. She had asked the shopkeeper of Yue's Gold Pavilion to ask Madam Duan just to see how Madam Duan's situation was. However, she hadn't heard from Madam Duan, so she guessed that Old Lady Ji had strictly restricted Madam Duan so that the latter could not take the initiative to send the deed to her!

The second branch of the Ji Family must have played an important part in it. If the benefits weren't great enough, the second branch wouldn't have worked so hard to almost keep Madam Duan under house arrest. Qu Moying was sure that Xiao must have intervened, but she was not sure whether Ji Youran had intervened or not. But since Xiao had intervened, Ji Youran was also to blame!

The thing that Qu Qiuyan brought out was actually a coincidence!

Before asking Yu Dong to borrow the Buddhist scripture from Madam Duan, Qu Moying had figured out what to do next...

“Lady, you asked me to borrow a Buddhist scripture, but I don’t know which one to borrow, so I randomly took one. But how can Madam Duan come out due to this Buddhist scripture?” Yu Dong asked. This was what confused him most. “Other than you, who else will talk to Madam Duan about the Buddhist scripture?”

When he went out, Qu Moying repeatedly told him to borrow only one Buddhist scripture and told him to tell Madam Duan that if anyone came to her and mentioned the Buddhist scripture, she should try to go out with that person, and Qu Moying would go to meet her and settle the handover of the shop with her.

“Give the Buddhist scripture to Third Lady later. Tell her that I haven’t found my mother’s Buddhist scriptures yet and that she can copy this Buddhist scripture that I borrowed from somewhere else. After I find the Buddhist scriptures, I’ll send them over.” Qu Moying did not answer him directly. She patted the Buddhist scripture on the table and narrowed her eyes.

“Lady, I will go now!” Yu Dong nodded but did not leave immediately. Based on his experience, Qu Moying must have more to say.

As he expected, Qu Moying sat down and continued, “If Third Lady makes a fuss and throws the Buddhist scripture away, you should tell her that this Buddhist scripture is borrowed from Earl Ling’an’s Mansion and used to belong to the ex-Crown Princess and that it should be sent back to the Ji Family in three days. If it is broken, there will be great trouble!”

Qu Moying flipped open a page of the Buddhist scripture and randomly tore half of it. Then, she placed the page properly and closed the book again.

It looked exactly the same as before.

Yu Dong’s eyes widened as he watched Qu Moying act. He admired her more and more. Even if Qu Qiuyan didn’t do anything, the book had already been damaged.

It was a great disrespect to the ex-Crown Princess.

“After that, you can come back. Before leaving, tell her that you will go to fetch the Buddhist scripture in three days. You don’t need to say anything else. Third Lady will think of a way to remedy it!” Qu Moying said softly. She tapped her finger lightly on the Buddhist scripture. Since Qu Qiuyan had come to her, she would make use of her. It happened that it was not easy for Madam Duan to go out. By making use of Qu Qiuyan, Madam Duan would be able to get out of her mansion.

Yu Dong’s eyes lit up. He vaguely understood. “This Buddhist scripture is borrowed from Earl Ling’an’s Mansion. If Third Lady wants to solve the problem, she has to go to Earl Ling’an’s Mansion. Third Lady will think of a way to find Madam Duan.”

“Madam Duan is grounded. If it was in the past, the Ji Family wouldn’t have cared about Third Lady, who was only a lady of Vice Minister Qu’s Mansion. But now, the Ji Family is on the decline, and Third Lady is not an ordinary young lady. She has Lord Jing behind her, so she will definitely meet Madam Duan. Madam Duan can take advantage of this to go out with Third Lady.”

Yu Dong connected things together and slowly analyzed the situation. After he finished his analysis, he looked at Qu Moying with his bright eyes.

Qu Moying smiled slightly. She blinked twice to hide the ridicule in her eyes.

Not as powerful as it used to be, Earl Ling’an’s Mansion would not dare to neglect Qu Qiuyan, who had Lord Jing behind her. If Qu Qiuyan wanted to take Madam Duan out, Old Lady would not dare to stop her. Xiao would not dare to stop her as well because she was afraid of causing conflict between the Crown Prince and Lord Jing although everyone knew that the relationship between the Crown Prince and Lord Jing was not good.

Although their disharmonious relationship was known to all, they were still polite to each other when they met. It didn’t matter if they made trouble for each other in private, but they had to pretend to be good friends for show, or it could be said that they must pretend to be harmonious in front of the Emperor.

Chapter 395 She Was Hoisted by Her Own Petard

“Third Lady, our Lady said that our Madam’s things are too messy and haven’t been sorted out yet. Many things have been lost. It’s difficult to find out the few Buddhist scriptures, so our Lady let me borrow a Buddhist scripture from others for you. Third Lady, you can copy this one first. After our Lady finds our Madam’s Buddhist scriptures, she will send them to you.”

Yu Dong said with a cheeky smile and handed over the Buddhist scripture in his hand. Although his words were polite, he looked quite disrespectful.

After he finished speaking, he even raised his eyes and stole a glance at Qu Qiuyan’s reaction.

Qu Qiuyan happened to see his disrespectful action, and her face turned pale with anger. She pressed her hand on the railing of the chair and suppressed her anger.

“I’m not in a hurry. I can wait for your Lady to find them.”

“How can you not be in a hurry? Our Lady said that you are going to pray for the Old Lady and Second Master out of filial piety. This cannot be delayed, so she specially asked me to go out and borrow this Buddhist scripture.”

Yu Dong stressed the word “borrow” again, which enraged Qu Qiuyan.

Qu Qiuyan knew that Qu Moying was deliberately humiliating her. Of course, she borrowed those Buddhist scriptures from Qu Moying for another purpose. She knew that Noble Consort He liked Buddhist scriptures now, and she was doing this to please Noble Consort He.

Of course, she had never planned to return them. If Qu Moying wanted to get them back, she could only go to the palace to ask Noble Consort He for them!

Qu Qiuyan had heard from Yu that there was a set of Buddhist scriptures in Qu Moying’s mother’s dowry. They were obtained from a Buddhist master in the South and blessed in a famous temple.

There were many temples in the South, and Buddhism flourished there. Some monks in the South were even more famous than the monks of the Dabei Temple in the capital. Therefore, the value of these

Buddhist scriptures was really high. Although Yu did not talk about this set of Buddhist scriptures in detail, Qu Qiuyan set her heart on them after hearing from Lord Jing that Noble Consort He was interested in Buddhist scriptures recently.

She wanted to “borrow” the Buddhist scriptures from Qu Moying.

But what was this Buddhist scripture in front of her? She could tell it from the cover that it was not a precious one. It looked ordinary, and it seemed to be casually bought outside. Qu Qiuyan thought, “I don’t think Qu Moying borrowed it from someone. She must have bought it randomly, and it shouldn’t be worth much.”

She didn’t get the Buddhist scriptures she wanted to please Noble Consort He, and she even had to spend a lot of effort to copy such a scripture. Moreover, she felt she was looked down upon by a maid. She thought Yu Dong’s smile was contemptuous!

She tried hard to hold back her anger but failed. She suddenly stood up and reached out to pick up the Buddhist scripture in front of her. Then, she fiercely threw it on the ground and said coldly, “It’s fine if Moying doesn’t want to lend the Buddhist scriptures to me. There is no need for such a hypocritical show. I will go to Grandmother and ask her for a better set of Buddhist scriptures.”

After saying that, she turned around and walked inside. She thought to herself angrily, “Since Qu Moying doesn’t want to lend me the Buddhist scriptures, I will go to Grandmother again. Anyway, I’m praying for Grandmother and Father. I believe I can get the set of Buddhist scriptures from Qu Moying!”

“I will definitely get them, and I will let her personally send them over!”

“Third... Lady, how... how could you throw the Buddhist scripture!” Yu Dong’s panicked voice came from behind her. He sounded to be astonished.

Qu Qiuyan sneered, ignored him, and continued to walk inside.

Sure enough, she heard the voice of her maid. “What’s the big deal? If Fourth Lady likes it, our Lady will buy a few sets for her and send them over!”

Yu Dong panicked. "It's not something you can buy. Our Lady borrowed it from someone. This is a big problem!"

Qu Qiuyan sneered in her heart, "Qu Moying's maid is just like her. How ridiculous this maid is! Does she think that our mansion can't even afford a Buddhist scripture?"

"What problem can it be? Don't make a fuss. Don't scare our Lady." Qu Qiuyan's maid spoke up for Qu Qiuyan, and Qu Qiuyan was very satisfied.

"This is... This is the ex-Crown Princess' Buddhist scripture... What... What should we do? It... it's broken." Yu Dong pointed at the half piece of paper that had fallen to the side, and his expression changed greatly.

The maid was a little flustered and scolded, "The ex-Crown Princess? What nonsense are you spouting?"

"It's true. Our Lady borrowed this from Earl Ling'an's Mansion. The ex-Crown Princess used to copy it in the past. You... You..." Yu Dong stuttered as if he was really scared, "It... it should be returned to Earl Ling'an's Mansion in three days!"

Qu Qiuyan suddenly stopped. She felt that something was wrong. After a pause, she turned around, gritted her teeth, and asked, "What did you say?"

"Third Lady, our Lady sent me to Earl Ling'an's Mansion to borrow it. She can only keep it for three days. Originally, she wanted to find our Madam's Buddhist scriptures within three days, but she was afraid that you would be anxious, so she specially borrowed this copy for you. But... but now, how... how can it be returned? If Earl Ling'an's Mansion makes a big deal out of it, we will be severely punished for being disrespectful..."

Yu Dong did not beat around the bush. Instead, he explained the whole matter clearly. After he finished speaking, he looked at Qu Qiuyan in a panic as if the problem was really big.

Qu Qiuyan's gaze fell on the Buddhist scripture that she had thrown to the ground. There was half a page lying on the ground. Apparently, one page of the scripture was broken.

Qu Qiuyan's hand holding the handkerchief trembled, and her face was pale. She knew what this meant. It was disrespectful to the ex-Crown Princess. Moreover, the Crown Prince was said to be really affectionate to the ex-Crown Princess.

More importantly, the Crown Prince had never been on good terms with Lord Jing. If the Crown Prince took advantage of this to deal with Lord Jing, Lord Jing might have a chance to get away with it, but Qu Qiuyan would be doomed.

"Third Lady, what... what should we do now? It should be returned... in three days!" Yu Dong was still stuttering. He was putting on a good show!

"You can go back first. I will handle this matter. There is no need to bother your Lady. I will send it back myself!" Qu Qiuyan was nervous. She thought that it was better for her to deal with the matter as soon as possible. She didn't want to wait for three days. She wanted to deal with it right away.

She could not let anyone find out about this mistake. Otherwise, she would really be done.

Qu Qiuyan was not an ignorant fool. She knew that this matter could be played down or escalate into a really big deal. If she was accused of blasphemy against the ex-Crown Princess, she would end up miserably. She might not even be able to save her life, not to mention enter Lord Jing Mansion.

Yu Dong seemed to want to say something else. "Third Lady..."

"Go away!" However, Qu Qiuyan could not maintain her calmness. She was now thinking about how to settle this matter. How could she bother to pay attention to a maid?

Yu Dong seemed to want to say something, but Qing Mei came over and pulled him away. He took advantage of the situation and turned to leave. When he turned around, he took a glance at Qu Qiuyan. He saw Qu Qiuyan's extremely fearful and nervous look for the first time. Her face was as pale as snow as if she was about to faint.

Qu Qiuyan had been bullying and scheming against Qu Moying, and now it was her turn to suffer!

After pulling Yu Dong outside, Qing Mei, who used to like talking to Yu Dong, had no interest in talking with him at this time. She pushed Yu Dong outside the yard and hurried back. It seemed that both this scheming maid and her Master worried about this thing.

Yu Dong turned around and left in satisfaction.

It was silent in the main room. When Qing Mei came in, she saw Qu Qiuyan squatting on the ground, carefully picking up the Buddhist scripture and then picking up the piece of paper, looking extremely pale.

The maids around stood motionless, and their faces were also as pale as snow.

If something happened to Qu Qiuyan, every one of them would be implicated.

Qing Mei was different from ordinary maids. She took two steps forward to help Qu Qiuyan up and said in a low voice, "Lady, let's think of another way. Maybe we can stick it together."

Qu Qiuyan stood up, staggered, and almost fell. Another maid hurriedly supported her and helped her to the chair together with Qing Mei.

Qu Qiuyan's fingers trembled. The pages in her hands rustled. She closed her eyes and calmed herself down. Finally, she stopped trembling and placed the Buddhist scripture on the table in front of her.

Qing Mei went forward to open the Buddhist scripture. She immediately flipped to the broken page. It was greatly damaged, and it was obvious that it couldn't be fixed by sticking.

Qing Mei said in a low voice, "Lady, it seems that it can't be fixed by sticking."

"I know!" Qu Qiuyan said in a low voice. She tried her best to calm down. She looked up coldly in the direction of Qianyue House and gritted her teeth. "Qu Moying, I will make your life worse than death one day!"

All of this was naturally Qu Moying's scheme. If Qu Qiuyan had known that it was the ex-Crown Princess' Buddhist scripture, she wouldn't have broken it. How could Qu Qiuyan not know that this was Qu Moying's scheme? She was schemed against by Qu Moying, and she would not let Qu Moying get what she wanted.

She made up her mind that she would deal with Qu Moying as soon as she entered Lord Jing Mansion. She would let Qu Moying end up in the dirtiest place and live a miserable life.

But she could only deal with Qu Moying after she obtained power. Now, she had to deal with the broken Buddhist scripture first.

There could be a solution to this matter. After all, the other party was Earl Ling'an's Mansion but not Qu Moying.

"Prepare valuable gifts. I'm going to Earl Ling'an's Mansion!" Qu Qiuyan finally calmed down and said coldly. She had to personally go to Earl Ling'an's Mansion to deal with this matter. She needed to settle this matter before others discovered it. As long as Earl Ling'an's Mansion's people said that this scripture was not the ex-Crown Princess' Buddhist scripture, or if there was another Buddhist scripture, this matter would be considered settled.

Since the matter was related to Earl Ling'an's Mansion, it was better to ask Earl Ling'an's Mansion to solve it.

The maids all knew how serious the matter was, and they made preparations in a panic. This time, Qu Qiuyan was quite generous with the gifts because she must let Earl Ling'an's Mansion help her. The gifts were intended to save her own life, so how could she be petty?

Not long after, Qu Qiuyan left Qu Mansion with her maids and headed for Earl Ling'an's Mansion.

When this news reached Qu Moying, she was playing the qin. Her fingers gently pressed on the strings of the qin, and the music stopped. The surroundings were silent. She smiled coldly. Her smile gave off a chilling feeling in this hot summer.

Whoever saw her smile would feel a chill from their bone...

“Get the carriage ready. Let’s go out and take a look!”

Chapter 396 Madam Duan’s Request

Old Lady Ji asked in surprise, “Are you saying that the Third Lady of Vice Minister Qu’s Mansion is here to visit Madam Duan?”

She was afraid of Qu Moying, but she did not know Qu Qiuyan well. She didn’t think Qu Qiuyan had anything to do with her family.

However, she did not dare to reject Qu Qiuyan because she had heard that Qu Qiuyan had something to do with Lord Jing.

She had thought that her eldest granddaughter would definitely be the Crown Princess, but she heard from Xiao that the Crown Prince might marry Minister Liu’s daughter, County Lady Jingyu, so Old Lady Ji became more and more low-key.

It seemed that she couldn’t afford to offend anyone. Thinking of this, she felt inexplicably sad. She wiped her eyes with a handkerchief and tears fell.

She thought that if her eldest son and second granddaughter were still alive, she would not have to worry.

Old Lady Ji choked with sobs. “Let her in!”

The old maid who came to report Qu Qiuyan’s arrival quickly retreated.

Seeing Old Lady Ji’s reaction, Granny Wu, Old Lady Ji’s personal maid, comforted her, “Your Ladyship, are you thinking of Eldest Master again? Eldest Master and the Crown Princess were no longer around. If

they were still alive, they would not want to see you so sad. You are getting old. Please take care of yourself!”

“I... I know...” Old Lady Ji said as she covered her chest, “But I couldn’t help thinking of them. If they were here, I would not have to fear a young lady from a Vice Minister’s Mansion.”

In the past, even Minister Liu’s daughter, County Lady Jingyu, had to bow to Old Lady Ji from afar, not to mention a lady from Vice Minister Qu’s Mansion. Even the other old ladies in the capital had to come up to greet her when they saw her. Old Lady Ji compared the previous situation with the current situation and felt so desolate.

Granny Wu comforted her, “Your Ladyship, don’t be sad. You still have Princess Ji and Young Master Ji with you.”

Tears streamed down Old Lady Ji’s face. “How is that comparable? Youran was said to be the future Crown Princess, but...”

Old Lady Ji realized that she had made a slip of the tongue and immediately stopped. She felt more and more bitter in her heart. If possible, she would not be willing to fall into such a state. But she thought she could face Ji Yongming’s family now.

At the very least, she had revived the first branch. She had found her eldest son a legitimate wife and adopted a son for him. She thought she could face her son with no shame in the netherworld in the future!

“Greetings, Madam Duan!” Qu Qiuyan bowed to Madam Duan in her capacity as a junior and said gently. In front of others, she was still the decent wife-born daughter of Vice Minister Qu’s Mansion.

On the way here, Qu Qiuyan had been thinking about it. She thought that the Buddhist scripture was most likely lent to Qu Moying by Madam Duan, who used to be a maid before being the legitimate wife.

She heard that Qu Moying had a good relationship with Madam Duan.

Therefore, she came to visit Madam Duan first. This matter was most likely related to Madam Duan. Qu Qiuyan felt that it was not a problem to deal with a Madam who used to be a maid.

At this moment, Qu Qiuyan had returned to normal.

She didn't really take a Madam, who used to be a maid, seriously.

"Third Lady Qu, please save the formalities!" Madam Duan stood up and smiled gently. Although she was the legitimate wife of the deceased Earl Ling'an, she didn't really have the honorary title mandated by the government. Moreover, she used to be a maid.

The two of them took their seats politely. A maid served them tea. Qu Qiuyan took a sip of the tea and put it down. Then, she explained her purpose.

"Madam Duan, did you lend a Buddhist scripture to Moying?"

Madam Duan nodded. "Yes, I lent it to her not long ago!"

Qu Qiuyan smiled and took a look at Qing Mei beside her. Qing Mei understood what she meant. She took two steps forward and placed a gift box on the table together with another maid. Then, she opened the box. The gifts inside the box immediately caught everyone's attention. There was not only brocade but also ornaments in the box.

This gift was very valuable, but Qu Qiuyan and Madam Duan had never seen each other before.

Qu Qiuyan said, "Madam Duan, this is a token of my appreciation."

Madam Duan asked in surprise, "Third Lady Qu, is something the matter?"

"Yes. I do have something to ask you for help. The matter is only a lift of finger for you." Qu Qiuyan smiled, and her heart became calmer.

She couldn't deal with Qu Moying for the time being, but she could easily deal with a concubine who was promoted from a maid!

She believed that Madam Duan had never used such good stuff. Madam Duan was promoted by Old Lady Ji after Earl Ling'an died, so how could she have the chance to use good stuff?

Madam Duan asked cautiously, "What's the matter, Third Lady Qu? Please make it clear to me."

Qu Qiuyan said with a smile, "Madam Duan, can you tell Moying that you lent her the wrong Buddhist scripture? The one you lent her is not the one that belonged to the ex-Crown Princess but a very ordinary one!"

Her request could lead to a win-win situation, and it would not take Madam Duan any effort. As for the ex-Crown Princess, Qu Qiuyan thought that she didn't matter that much since she had passed away. Earl Ling'an's Mansion would not deal with her for somebody who was already gone.

Of course, it would be different if there was Qu Moying stirring up the trouble.

This matter could either escalate into a big deal or be played down as a trifle. Qu Qiuyan needed to deal with it before it was revealed.

Madam Duan did not seem to understand what Qu Qiuyan meant. She frowned and said, "The Buddhist scripture? That indeed belonged to the ex-Crown Princess before!"

Qu Qiuyan looked at the servants in the room.

Madam Duan understood and waved her hand. The other servants all left, leaving only her trusted maid behind her. She then said to Qu Qiuyan, "Third Lady Qu, please make it clear to me."

Qu Qiuyan said tactfully, "That book was accidentally damaged by Moying and me. Moying was still thinking of ways to remedy it. I think I'd better ask you for help, so I came here myself."

She meant that Qu Moying damaged the book together with her, and they were both to blame.

“Oh, I see!” Madam Duan understood that Qu Qiuyan wanted to eliminate the problem from the root.

“I can do it, but...” Madam Duan frowned and seemed to have no idea where to start. She moved her hands on her knees.

Qu Qiuyan asked, “Is there any problem?”

Madam Duan said awkwardly, “I might have to go out of the mansion to solve this problem.”

“Why?” Qu Qiuyan’s face darkened with displeasure. She felt that Madam Duan was deliberately making things difficult for her.

Madam Duan explained, “Third Lady Qu, when Fourth Lady Qu came to borrow the Buddhist scripture from me, there happened to be a visitor in my mansion, so I got someone else to take the Buddhist scripture. Since we are going to say that the Buddhist scripture is not the one that belonged to the ex-Crown Princess, I have to explain to that person as well, in case there will be any rumor.”

“Who was this visitor?” Qu Qiuyan’s face became serious. She did not expect that there was someone else involved in this matter.

“It was a madam. She happened to come over to have a chat.” Madam Duan frowned and looked up at Qu Qiuyan. “It will be solved easily if I go out and talk to this madam, but...”

“What’s the problem?” Qu Qiuyan asked impatiently. She did not expect that there was someone else involved in this matter. It wasn’t a big deal at first, but because she was involved, she became annoyed.

Madam Duan said tactfully, “These few days, Old Lady Ji asked me to stay in the mansion and have a good rest. I’m afraid it’s inconvenient for me to go out.”

Qu Qiuyan understood what it meant to rest in the mansion. She had been “resting” in the mansion every day before, and she had just regained a little freedom. Madam Duan said that she was asked to rest in the mansion, which meant that Old Lady Ji didn’t like her and punished her in this way.

“Madam, you can go to talk to Old Lady Ji about this. My maid can also speak for you.” Qu Qiuyan pointed at Qing Mei beside her.

Although Qing Mei hadn’t been Qu Qiuyan’s maid for a long time, she was the cleverest among Qu Qiuyan’s maids. Qu Qiuyan valued her.

Madam Duan hesitated. “Well...”

“Madam, you don’t have to think so much. If Old Lady Ji blames you, you can say that it’s all my fault.” Qu Qiuyan said. Even if Old Lady Ji blamed her or was dissatisfied with her, Qu Qiuyan had to take Madam Duan out to avoid future trouble.

Since Qu Qiuyan had said so, Madam Duan could only send the old maid beside her to ask Old Lady Ji for permission together with Qing Mei.

The two of them left in a hurry and returned very quickly. They said that Old Lady Ji immediately agreed when she heard that Qu Qiuyan and Madam Duan had to go outside and do something.

“Third Lady Qu, your matter is not a problem. After I go and talk to that Madam, I will send another Buddhist scripture to Fourth Lady Qu and tell her that I lent her the wrong one.” A smile appeared on Madam Duan’s face as she gently said to Qu Qiuyan. It could be considered as an expression of her thanks to Qu Qiuyan for giving her a chance to go out.

“That will be the best!” Qu Qiuyan naturally would not be willing to go to meet someone with Madam Duan. It would be best if Madam Duan could solve it herself.

Madam Duan was prepared. The two of them walked out together, but they got on their own carriages separately outside the mansion. The two carriages drove in different directions, and they went to deal with their own affairs.

As soon as they left Earl Ling'an's Mansion, Xiao rushed to Old Lady Ji's yard.

An old maid entered the room and reported, "Your Ladyship, Second Madam requests an audience."

Old Lady Ji was crying again. She wiped her tears and nodded. She said weakly, "Let her in!"

Xiao asked as soon as she entered, "Mother, why did you let her go out? Everything is a mess outside. How dare she go out!"

Old Lady Ji said, "The Third Lady of Vice Minister Qu's Mansion wanted to go out with her."

"So what? She's just a young lady of the Vice Minister's Mansion. She doesn't matter much." Xiao said angrily. She did not take Qu Qiuyan seriously because Qu Qiuyan was only a lady of Vice Minister Qu's Mansion. She thought if she had been here just now, she would not have let Qu Qiuyan leave with Duan.

Although she did not think that Duan was able to make things worse, she thought it was always right to prevent Duan from going out.

She did not expect Third Lady Qu to take Duan away. She had heard that Third Lady Qu was not on good terms with Qu Moying, so why did Third Lady Qu do so?

If there was anyone Xiao was most afraid of, it must be Qu Moying!

Xiao always felt that her family's affairs were all related to Qu Moying, but she couldn't find any evidence to prove her guess when she investigated the matters. But even so, Xiao felt that she had to be wary of Qu Moying.

But now, it was Third Lady Qu...

Chapter 397 Yue's Gold Pavilion Changed Owners

“Third Lady Qu is going to enter Lord Jing Mansion, isn’t she?” Old Lady Ji sighed. In fact, she was also very angry. She had never seen an unmarried lady do such a thing as Qu Qiuyan. Qu Qiuyan actually sent a maid to speak up for Duan. Old Lady Ji was reluctant to let Duan out, but she couldn’t say no because she didn’t make any excessive requests but only asked to let Duan go out.

However, Old Lady Ji felt very aggrieved. When her eldest son was alive, she had never been treated like this.

Back then, if she showed a trace of displeasure, those madams and ladies would try their best to please her.

She compared her two sons in her heart and felt that her second son was really useless.

Moreover, the second branch couldn’t compare with the first branch.

Xiao said disdainfully, “Mother, even if she enters Lord Jing Mansion, with her reputation, she will at most be a concubine. She couldn’t even be a Side Princess.”

Qu Qiuyan’s reputation had declined greatly. Her reputation used to be good, but it couldn’t get any worse now. Moreover, most of the rumors about her were true.

Old Lady Ji said, “Even if she can only be a concubine, she cannot be underestimated. After all, she will be Lord Jing’s woman.”

Seeing Old Lady Ji showing weakness, Xiao stomped her feet angrily, “Mother, what are you afraid of? Youran is still the Crown Prince’s Side Princess. She has a dominant position over Third Lady Qu. Third Lady Qu won’t dare to say anything even if you are harsh on her!”

Old Lady Ji was unhappy that her daughter-in-law was stomping her feet here. She said with a bit of annoyance, “Who knows what will happen between Eastern Palace and Lord Jing Mansion in the future?”

Xiao was shocked. "Mother, what do you mean?"

Old Lady Ji also knew that she had made a slip of the tongue. She shouldn't have said these words and instead should keep them to herself. No one knew whether the Crown Prince or Lord Jing would inherit the throne.

"Alright, stop messing around. You don't want the Crown Prince to start a fight with Lord Jing. If they do, Princess Ji will be affected." Old Lady Ji said grumpily. She waved her hand, indicating for Xiao to leave.

"Mother, how could Youran be affected? Third Lady Qu is a lady with a bad reputation. No one will take her seriously." Xiao said. She was exasperated at Old Lady Ji's attitude.

Old Lady Ji had already closed her eyes. She didn't want to continue the topic. She snorted and warned, "Xiao, Duan is your sister-in-law. Even if you don't like her, she is still your sister-in-law. You have to respect her. Otherwise, I will not spare you."

Xiao was so angry that her face turned pale. Old Lady Ji thought that Xiao could not tolerate Duan because of Duan's previous identity. Now that Duan had become the first branch's legitimate wife, Xiao could not say anything even if she was really dissatisfied.

A part of Ji Hanyue's dowry had been returned to the first branch, which was what Xiao couldn't accept the most. She thought her children should enjoy the benefits since there wasn't anyone important in the first branch. However, Duan and Ji Yuanhai enjoyed the benefits.

If Xiao's plan this time worked, she could obtain a lot of benefits, which were worth at least half of Yue's Gold Pavilion.

Although she could not directly take over Yue's Gold Pavilion, the benefits would be enough for her to open two shops by herself in the capital. Her daughter had told her that these shops like Yue's Gold Pavilion were too eye-catching and she should not interfere. However, she could secretly help others and obtain benefits from it, and no one would know about it.

However, Duan had gone out now, which meant that Xiao couldn't accomplish what she had promised others before. Xiao was afraid that it would affect her final gain.

Old Lady Ji closed her eyes and did not say anything else. It seemed that no matter what Xiao said, Old Lady Ji would not listen. Xiao could only turn around and leave with hatred. "This old woman is useless. She always ruins my plans!"

Xiao decided to tell her daughter about this so that if Duan stirred up any trouble, Ji Youran would be able to suppress it. Before, Xiao thought that she didn't have to trouble her daughter because all she needed to do was to stop Duan from going out, which was just a piece of cake.

When Madam Duan arrived at Yue's Gold Pavilion, Qu Moying was already there waiting for her. They both volunteered to deal with the ownership matter, so they only needed to take contracts with them and go to the Yamen to register.

However, Qu Moying couldn't get the ownership of Yue's Gold Pavilion right away because Yue's Gold Pavilion was in a lawsuit. Only after the case was settled could the shop be officially handed over to Qu Moying.

But the registration was done, which meant that Qu Moying had the right to deal with the case. If the case was successfully settled, she would be the owner of Yue's Gold Pavilion.

They dealt with the matter in Yamen quite smoothly. After going over the procedure, Madam Duan entrusted the case to Qu Moying. Her current situation wasn't good, but it was much better than before. At least for the time being, Xiao did not dare to do anything to her. What Madam Duan needed to do now was to protect the little Young Master, Ji Yuanhai.

She was afraid that Xiao would hurt Ji Yuanhai.

Qu Moying knew Madam Duan's difficulties, so she did not keep her. She explained the situation to Yamen. After that, she was able to intervene in Yue's Gold Pavilion's matters. At the same time, she expressed to Yamen that she was temporarily on Madam Duan's behalf. As for Yue's Gold Pavilion's shopkeeper, Madam Duan told him to follow Qu Moying in the future.

After a simple handover, Madam Duan returned to the mansion.

Qu Moying stayed to deal with Yue's Gold Pavilion's affairs. Right now, the most important thing was to deal with the lawsuit. Qu Moying asked Yu Dong to inquire people in the Yamen who the customer was that made the ruby customization order and where he lived.

It would be better to settle this matter privately, but Qu Moying felt that this matter was not simple, so she asked Yu Dong to investigate the people around Xiao.

Since this matter had something to do with Xiao, someone around Xiao must have done something behind it.

Although they had not completed the formalities in Yamen, they handed over the job in front of Shopkeeper Zhang, so Shopkeeper Zhang now took Qu Moying as his master.

In fact, Shopkeeper Zhang and Aunt Yang both used to work in Yue's Clothing Pavilion. It did not matter to them whether to follow Little Yue or Elder Yue.

Moreover, Elder Yue was gone, and her daughter was also gone. Fortunately, Little Yue's daughter was still alive. Shopkeeper Zhang did not have any uncomfortable feelings about working for Qu Moying.

After dealing with a series of matters, Qu Moying returned to Qu Mansion. As soon as she sat down at Qianyue House, she saw an old maid coming in with a smile. It was Old Lady Qu's old maid.

"Fourth Lady, just now, Earl Ling'an's Mansion's Madam Duan sent someone over to tell you that the Buddhist scripture that she lent you was not the one used by the ex-Crown Princess before. She gave you the wrong one. This is the right one. Please take it." The old maid respectfully presented a Buddhist scripture to Qu Moying.

Qu Moying stood up and respectfully took it. Since this was the ex-Crown Princess' Buddhist scripture, she should take it respectfully.

Qu Moying ordered, "Yu Chun, send this scripture to Third Sister and tell her that the previous one was not the right copy, and she could just put it aside."

Yu Chun complied, respectfully took the Buddhist scripture, and headed towards Qu Qiuyan's yard.

When Qu Qiuyan received the Buddhist scripture and the words that Madam Duan had sent over, she heaved a sigh of relief. She had been back in Qu Mansion for a while, and she had been waiting for the message from Earl Ling'an's Mansion. It seemed that Madam Duan was a person who handled matters appropriately. Since the message was delivered by Qu Moying's maid, it meant that Qu Moying was also informed.

Qu Qiuyan was very satisfied. She smiled and gave Yu Chun a big reward.

But after Yu Chun left, Qu Qiuyan's face darkened again. She spent a large sum of money this time and ended up getting an average Buddhist scripture. Although this Buddhist scripture was said to be used by the ex-Crown Princess before, it did not have much value. She couldn't even send it to Noble Consort He to please her.

All of this was caused by Qu Moying!

Qu Qiuyan gritted her teeth in hatred. She went for wool but came home shorn this time. The more she thought about it, the angrier she became. She picked up the teacup on the table and smashed it on the ground.

Her maids stood aside, trembling. They didn't dare to say or do anything to calm her down.

Qu Qiuyan was still very angry after smashing a teacup. She stood up and walked to the antique shelf. Then, she pushed it hard. The shelf fell down, and the fine porcelain items on the shelf fell one by one and broke into pieces on the ground...

"Your Ladyship, our Duchess thanks you for your generous gifts. She sent gifts to the two ladies in your mansion in return. Your Ladyship, please accept them."

The old maid from Duke Qi's Mansion said with a smile and pointed at the four maids beside her, each holding a gift box.

The boxes were open, and there were brocade and jewelry inside them.

The brocade in the first box looked a little dark, which was obviously prepared for the elder. The brocade in the other boxes was bright, and there were some flower hairpins and two pairs of jade bracelets. These should be the gifts prepared for Qu Qiuyan and Qu Moying.

“Please thank your Duchess for me!” Old Lady Qu smiled with satisfaction. She was not greedy for these gifts, but she could see Duchess Qi’s attitude through such appropriate gifts that were delivered by Duchess Qi so quickly.

Qu Mansion was still a little weak among the capital’s powerful families, but things would be different if Qu Mansion could get along well with Duke Qi’s Mansion, or at least, it would benefit Qu Moying.

Old Lady Qu secretly sighed in her heart. She hoped that she was doing the right thing instead of taking the wrong step.

“Your Ladyship, it’s too polite of you. Our Duchess said that she wanted to invite Third Lady Qu and Fourth Lady Qu to our mansion in a few days because we are going to hold a chrysanthemum viewing party.” The old maid smiled and handed over an invitation. “Not many people are invited to this event. The ones who are invited are all old friends of our mansion. The chrysanthemums are obtained from other places by our Duke. They are very precious!”

“Have they bloomed?” Old Lady Qu asked curiously. In fact, the chrysanthemums had not yet bloomed at this time of the year.

The old maid answered, “They will be bloomed in these few days, so our Duchess wants to hold a gathering again. She wants to invite Third Lady Qu and Fourth Lady Qu to come.”

Old Lady Qu said, “Many thanks for your Duchess’ invitation. By that time, the two of them will naturally go over.”

Granny Wu went forward and took the invitation.

Duke Qi's Mansion's old maid bowed to Old Lady Qu again before leaving.

"Send the gifts to Qiuyan and Moying. Tell them about the invitation. Moying should go. As for Qiuyan..." Old Lady Qu hesitated for a moment. In fact, she did not want Qu Qiuyan to go, but it was not good to let Qu Moying go alone. After thinking for a while, she nodded and said, "Let her prepare too. Let them go together. Later, let the embroidery workshop of our mansion make two sets of clothes for the two of them!"

Chapter 398 What Duke Qi Meant

The Old Lady felt that Qu Moying's clothes were not enough, and she wanted to ensure that Qu Moying had enough clothes for formal occasions.

As for Qu Qiuyan, the Old Lady thought that since she wanted to have two sets of clothes made for Qu Moying, it was no big deal to also have two sets of clothes made for Qu Qiuyan.

"Yes, Your Ladyship!" Granny Wu replied. After dividing the gifts for Qu Moying and Qu Qiuyan, she asked two old maids to send the gifts to the two of them respectively.

Qu Moying accepted the gifts and rewarded the old maid who sent the gifts over. Then, she sat down and wondered what this so-called chrysanthemum viewing party was.

Although she knew that Duchess Qi would definitely send gifts in return, she did not expect that there would be a chrysanthemum viewing party. Ever since Duke Qi gave up his leading post, Duke Qi's Mansion had been very low-key and rarely held parties.

"The scale of the party held by Duchess Qi last time was not big. It is quite intriguing that Duke Qi's Mansion is going to hold a chrysanthemum viewing party because there is no such a party normally. Why is it going to be held? Is it because of the gifts I sent over?"

"If it is because of my gifts, it is quite weird. The one I wanted to approach by sending the gifts was Eldest Young Master Qi. Why are my gifts so valued?"

Qu Moying's gifts were placed neatly on the desk. It was picked out from the pile of gifts from Qu Mansion. There was a copy of the qin music score, two sets of knee pads, and a forehead band. Although the embroidery was not perfect, it was embroidered carefully and exquisitely, and it could be seen that Qu Moying embroidered it herself. When the gifts were sent over, Qu Mansion's old maid said they were a token of her lady's appreciation.

Duke Qi sat on the chair in front of the desk. He was tall, but he looked old and tired at the moment. He frowned and looked at the gifts.

He had been looking at the gifts for a long time. It was so long that even the lad servant at the door felt uneasy. After these things were brought over, Duke Qi just stared at them, and even the air froze.

The lad servant suddenly saw Qi Xiuran at the door and hurriedly ran to him, "Eldest Young Master!"

Qi Xiuran asked, "Where is my grandfather?"

The lad servant pointed at the study and said in a low voice, "In the study."

Qi Xiuran stopped. He could sense something strange although the lad servant didn't say anything. "Is there a guest?"

The lad servant said, "No. His Lordship has been sitting there for a long time. Just now, I wanted to change a cup of tea for him, but he stopped me."

"Who has been here?" Qi Xiuran asked. Duke Qi was not the kind of person who could sit quietly for a long time. He once said that as someone who used to be a general, he could not sit still and pretend to be profound.

"No one has been here, but I heard that Vice Minister Qu's Mansion sent some gifts over. His Lordship picked a few of the gifts, brought them over, and kept looking at them." The lad servant was confused. These gifts were obviously not for Duke Qi, but he brought them over with an excuse.

As for the excuse Duke Qi used, the lad servant felt strange. Duke Qi said he wanted to send gifts to other mansions, so he wanted to use these gifts as a reference.

It was always Duchess Qi who decided on the gifts!

Qi Xiuran did not hear it clearly. "Which mansion sent the gifts over?"

"They were from Vice Minister Qu's Mansion. They were said to be prepared by the two ladies and the Old Lady of Vice Minister Qu's Mansion for our Duchess." The lad servant stretched out his hand and pointed in a random direction.

Qi Xiuran's eyes widened in shock. "Grandfather kept looking at those gifts?"

The lad servant said with a bitter face, "Yes. His Lordship is still looking at them now, and I don't dare to disturb him."

"I'll go take a look!" Qi Xiuran said. He had something to talk about with his grandfather. He had heard from his grandmother that a chrysanthemum viewing party was going to hold in the mansion, but the chrysanthemum had not bloomed yet. Where could he find blooming chrysanthemums?

Duchess Qi said that this was Duke Qi's idea, so Qi Xiuran came over to ask Duke Qi about it. He did not expect to see such a scene.

Qi Xiuran gently pushed open the door and saw his grandfather sitting in front of the desk. He had not seen his grandfather for only a few hours, but his grandfather seemed to have aged a lot, looking quite haggard. With his hands on the chair railing, his grandfather stared blankly at the several items on the desk in front of him.

"Are those items the gifts from Vice Minister Qu's Mansion?"

"Why is Grandfather entranced by these gifts?"

Qi Xiuran coughed slightly and finally attracted Duke Qi's attention. Duke Qi looked up and saw that it was his eldest grandson. He smiled and seemed to be spirited up a little.

"Xiuran, you're back."

Qi Xiuran stepped forward and bowed to Duke Qi. "Greetings, Grandfather!"

Duke Qi leaned back and pressed his forehead with his hand. He closed his eyes and seemed to have relaxed, but Qi Xiuran could see his tiredness clearly.

Qi Xiuran said, "Grandfather, Grandmother said that you are going to hold a chrysanthemum viewing party, and you are going to invite some people here. They are all young ladies and young masters from families that are or used to be close to our mansion."

He thought this thing was weird even though his grandmother had explained it to him. He couldn't understand what his grandfather's intention was. Since when did his grandfather care about such things?

"Xiuran, sit down first. I was going to talk to you about this." Duke Qi said gently as he pointed at a chair.

Qi Xiuran sat down obediently and looked at Duke Qi. The lad servant came in and changed the tea for Duke Qi and also served a cup of tea for Qi Xiuran.

"Xiuran, your marriage hasn't been arranged yet, so I am inviting a few young ladies from the acquainted families in the name of the chrysanthemum viewing party. You can take a look at them, and you might be able to find someone suitable for you."

Duke Qi picked up the tea in front of him, took a sip, and said slowly.

"Grandfather, don't worry about my marriage." Qi Xiuran felt a little uneasy when it came to his marriage, especially when his grandfather mentioned it. Normally, only his grandmother talked about his marriage. He didn't understand why the elders were so worried about his marriage. Did they think that he had difficulty finding someone to marry with?

Was his grandfather trying to pick someone for him?

Duke Qi said, "It's not only for you but also for your younger brother. However, it is not good to invite only noble ladies, so I also invite some young masters whose families have good relations with us. Everyone can freely admire the flowers."

Hearing that it was held not only for him, Qi Xiuran wasn't that uneasy anymore. After thinking about it, he felt that it wasn't bad. In any case, he was not intended to pick anyone, so he didn't need to care too much about the event.

Qi Xiuran said, "I will listen to you, Grandfather. But I'm afraid I can't find chrysanthemums for now."

The chrysanthemums in the capital had basically not bloomed yet. The weather in the capital changed slightly slower than in other places. As for getting the flowers from other places, it could not be done in only a day or two, but the party was about to be held.

Duke Qi said, "I forgot to tell your grandmother about this. I will handle the chrysanthemums. There are tributes of chrysanthemums in the palace. I will ask His Majesty for two pots of them."

"Isn't Grandfather the least fond of flowers and plants? Why does he care so much about this? Is it really so difficult for me and my younger brother to get married that Grandmother even asked Grandfather for help?"

"No way. I am at least Duke Qi's Mansion's Young Master. I and my second younger brother are considered outstanding talents in the capital. There is no need for Grandmother and Grandfather to be so concerned about our marriage."

Qi Xiuran reminded his grandfather, "Grandfather, I don't think it's a good idea to bother His Majesty with such a small party!"

"It's fine!" Duke Qi said gently. He pointed at a set of knee pads in front of him and said, "This is a set of knee pads sent by the lady of Vice Minister Qu's Mansion. It looks pretty good, so I took it from your grandmother. I think I can also send others a set of knee pads when I send gifts in the future."

“Is this the reason why Grandfather brought these gifts over?”

Qi Xiuran was confused, but he nodded and said, “It is indeed a good idea. Grandfather, it’s a good idea!”

This reason was really far-fetched. Qi Xiuran’s eyes fell on a qin music score. Then, he stood up and said happily. “Grandfather, this is a qin music score!”

Everyone in Duke Qi’s Mansion knew that he liked qin.

“Yes, take a look. I have read it, and I think it is a good one!” Duke Qi said as he handed the qin music score to Qi Xiuran.

Qi Xiuran couldn’t believe what he heard. “What did Grandfather say just now? He said that he has read it and thought it is good. But since when did Grandfather know about qin? And he even said it so seriously.”

Seeing Qi Xiuran standing there in a daze, Duke Qi asked unhappily, “What’s wrong?”

“No... nothing!” Qi Xiuran hurriedly said. He took the qin music score from Duke Qi’s hands and sat down again. He read it carefully. The more he read it, the more excited he became. He was now sure that this qin music score was from Qu Moying. He had read the incomplete qin music score before, and he had also tried to complete it, but his work was not as good as hers.

He couldn’t help but clap and exclaim, “Great!”

But then he realized that he was not in his study, and his grandfather was still sitting next to him. He looked up in embarrassment but suddenly saw his grandfather’s face in front of him. He could not help but be shocked. When did his grandfather come so close to him?

Seeing his grandson looking at him strangely, Duke Qi leaned back and sat upright again. “How is it?”

"It's great!" Qi Xiuran nodded. "It's better to complete the incomplete music score like this. Grandfather, if there's nothing else, I will go back first. I want to play the qin according to it."

He was so excited that he couldn't sit still any longer. He wanted to play the qin according to the qin music score. When he tried to complete the qin music score before, he found some tones unnatural.

He felt that something was wrong.

"Vice Minister Qu has a good daughter!" Duke Qi sighed and asked, "What do you think of Fourth Lady Qu?"

"She's talented!" Qi Xiuran praised her repeatedly. Judging from the qin music score, he felt that Qu Moying was very talented and intelligent.

"But she's also pitiful. I've seen her once before. Although she wore an eye veil, I can tell that she is not plain-looking as the rumor said. I have heard that her eyes are about to recover. She's in the recovery period now. She'll be like a normal person after a period of time." Duke Qi said as he looked at his grandson.

Qi Xiuran was getting more and more confused about what his grandfather meant. "Is he praising Fourth Lady Qu to fix me and her up like my mother usually does when she mentions that young lady?"

"What is wrong with Grandfather?"

Chapter 399 Investigation

Qi Xiuran braced himself and replied, "Grandfather, that's also what I heard!"

Duke Qi said, "She's a good child. She has a nice personality and a good moral character. She's quite pitiful. She is probably quite good-looking, too."

Hearing Duke Qi's comment on Qu Moying, Qi Xiuran was stunned and began to feel weird.

"You can take a look at her at the party. If you take a fancy to her, I will be willing to see you marrying her. She seems to know how to play the qin as well. She's a good match for you." Duke Qi stroked his beard and nodded with a smile.

Qi Xiuran felt that his grandfather had changed into another person.

"Since when did Grandfather care so much about my marriage? And it seems that he has chosen Fourth Lady Qu for me."

It was not that Qi Xiuran looked down upon Qu Moying, but he really had never thought about marrying Qu Moying. He felt that he and Qu Moying were not in the same circle.

"Grandfather, Fourth Lady Qu has been through a failed engagement." Qi Xiuran felt that it was better to remind his grandfather. Just for this reason, his mother and his grandmother would not allow him to marry Qu Moying.

Duke Qi glared at Qi Xiuran and said angrily, "So what? Young Master Yongning is a blind and nasty guy. How can Fourth Lady Qu's reputation be ruined by him?"

Qi Xiuran thought for a moment and said tactfully, "Grandfather, my marriage is up to Mother and Grandmother."

Duke Qi was unhappy to hear that. "Your liking comes first."

"Yes, that's true, but Mother and Grandmother have to be satisfied with her, too!" Qi Xiuran reminded Duke Qi implicitly again. He did not have much say in this matter. In fact, it was up to his grandmother and mother.

Duke Qi rubbed his brows, looking very annoyed. He leaned back and waved his hand, "You may leave!"

"Yes!" Qi Xiuran hurriedly stood up, bowed to Duke Qi, and left. When he reached the door, he looked back at his grandfather, feeling that something was wrong with him.

"It's so strange! Why does Grandfather care so much about my marriage?"

Qi Xiuran thought as he walked. Just as he was about to turn a corner, he almost bumped into the one coming head-on. Fortunately, the two of them didn't walk in a hurry. They both stopped and stood still before bumping into each other.

Liu Jingyu stood there with a smile and bowed to Qi Xiuran. "Cousin Brother!"

Qi Xiuran also stood still. He looked at Liu Jingyu, gently cupped his hands, and asked, "Cousin Sister, why are you here today? Are you here to see Grandmother?"

"I've seen Grandmother just now, and I want to go see Grandfather now. I heard that Grandfather went back to his study alone. Cousin Brother, you seem to come out of Grandfather's study, right?" Liu Jingyu asked softly. When she was in Duke Qi's Mansion, her personality appeared to be the best. Even if Qi Xiuran minded what had happened last time, he thought it should be an accident on second thought.

He knew that his grandmother liked Liu Jingyu very much.

He also found it strange sometimes. His grandfather had always been very fond of his aunt, Liu Jingyu's mother, whereas his grandmother was indifferent to her. However, his grandmother liked Liu Jingyu very much to whom his grandfather was a little indifferent. He couldn't understand why.

Qi Xiuran thought that even though two people were connected by blood, they may not necessarily be close. The intimacy was decided by something else.

"Grandfather is in his study, but..." Qi Xiuran hesitated for a moment. He felt that his grandfather probably did not want to see anyone at this time, but Liu Jingyu didn't often come here. "Grandfather is thinking about something in the study at this time!"

Liu Jingyu immediately understood what Qi Xiuran meant and asked with a smile, "Grandfather doesn't want to be disturbed?"

Qi Xiuran couldn't help but praise her in his heart, "She is indeed sensible." He didn't hide anything but nodded and said, "Grandfather is thinking about sending gifts to others, but it doesn't seem to be a very important matter. Cousin Sister, if you go to greet Grandfather, I believe he will be very happy."

He told Liu Jingyu about the situation. As for what Liu Jingyu thought, it was not his concern.

"I see. Thank you, Cousin Brother!" Liu Jingyu said softly. Then, she leaned to the side to make way for Qi Xiuran. However, when Qi Xiuran passed by, she sharply noticed the qin music score in his hand.

"Cousin Brother, you have a qin music score in your hand. Did Grandfather give it to you?" Liu Jingyu asked curiously. She knew that Duke Qi did not like to play the qin, but Qi Xiuran indeed came out from Duke Qi's study.

"I found a qin music score at Grandfather's study. I don't know if it's good. I will take a look at it." For some reason, Qi Xiuran did not tell her where the qin music score exactly came from.

Liu Jingyu was surprised. "It's quite surprising that Grandfather has such a thing in his study!"

"Maybe he got it without knowing it." Qi Xiuran said vaguely. Then, he nodded at Liu Jingyu with a smile and strode away.

He was anxious to play the qin based on this qin music score.

Seeing Qi Xiuran quicken his pace, Liu Jingyu frowned. But thinking of Qi Xiuran's love for qin, she understood.

Qi Xiuran's hobby was playing the qin. He was keen on qin. It was understandable that he left in such a hurry after getting a qin music score.

Seeing that Liu Jingyu silently looked at Qi Xiuran's back, the maid asked, "County Lady, should we go over?"

Liu Jingyu said slowly, "Since I am here, I naturally have to go over and greet Grandfather."

Every time she came to Duke Qi's Mansion, she acted properly. Even if she could not see her grandfather at her grandmother's place, she would especially go to greet him. As long as her grandfather was in the mansion, she would go to see him.

She walked to Duke Qi's study with her maids, but the lad servant stopped her at the door of the study.

"Greetings, County Lady."

Liu Jingyu asked with a smile, "Is my grandfather inside?"

The lad servant answered with a smile, "His Lordship is resting inside. He just said that he will not see anyone."

The smile on Liu Jingyu's face slowly faded. "Did my grandfather say 'anyone'?"

The lad servant answered with a smile, "Yes, that's what His Lordship said. He said that he needed to rest for a while. Eldest Young Master has disturbed him just now."

The lad servant was a little panicked. "This is the first time His Lordship refused to see County Lady Jingyu. Her Ladyship has sent an old maid to tell me that County Lady Jingyu was coming to greet His Lordship, but His Lordship asked me to stop her. I can't understand what His Lordship is thinking."

"His Lordship doted on County Lady Jingyu in the past!"

"Why does His Lordship bluntly reject her visit?"

Liu Jingyu asked with a strange expression, "Grandfather doesn't want to be disturbed?"

The lad servant answered quickly, "Yes, that's what His Lordship said. His Lordship might be tired after talking to Eldest Young Master for a while just now. County Lady, please go back."

Since it was Duke Qi's intention, Liu Jingyu could only turn around and leave although she felt uncomfortable.

The lad servant sent her out of the yard and respectfully saw her off.

Liu Jingyu's face darkened. This was the first time she had been rejected when she was about to greet her grandfather. Even though her grandfather might not know that she was coming, she was indeed rejected, which made her very uncomfortable.

After knowing from her grandmother that there was going to be a chrysanthemum viewing party here, she wanted to ask her grandfather why he suddenly had this idea. This didn't seem to be her grandfather's idea.

She didn't care much about it before. She just wanted to talk with her grandfather and ask him casually, but now she felt that there was something wrong with it.

"How could Grandfather feel tired and need to rest after talking with Cousin Brother? Was there something I don't know happened?"

"Otherwise, why did Grandfather behave so abnormally?"

"Not only was Grandfather abnormal, but also the qin music score in Cousin Brother's hand was unusual. Did he really get it from Grandfather?"

"It is so strange. I have to go back and tell Mother about it."

After thinking for a while, Liu Jingyu said to her maid, "Let's go. After saying goodbye to Grandmother, I will just return to the mansion and wait for the chrysanthemum viewing party!"

The maid complied and followed her to the inner yard.

"Lady, it's not convenient for me to collect information from Yamen now. I can only find some superficial information. It seems that the one who sued Yue's Gold Pavilion insists on going to court." Yu Dong said. His two subordinates were secret guards, so it was not convenient for them to directly investigate the case in Yamen.

He could only ask the people in Yamen in the name of a maid of the defendant. He also asked someone to guard outside the Yamen, but the plaintiff did not appear at all.

"Isn't there any other clue?" Qu Moying asked after pondering for a moment. Was this case really going to be brought to court? If so, it didn't seem to be profitable to the plaintiff.

It was impossible for her to exchange the entire Yue's Gold Pavilion for a set of rubies.

The value of a set of rubies could not compare with that of Yue's Gold Pavilion, but this set of rubies was extremely precious, so this matter had to be solved properly.

According to the previous situation, it was inconvenient for Madam Duan to come out, and Ji Yuanhai was too young to deal with this matter. Even if he wanted to deal with this matter, he would have the second branch's people accompany him. The second branch's Ji Yong'an was Ji Yuanhai's biological father, and Ji Yuanhai had Xiao behind him. If Ji Yuanhai were to manage this matter, this matter would be decided by the second branch.

In that case, the impossible matter could be possible. So, was the plaintiff really aiming for Yue's Gold Pavilion?

Qu Moying was certain that the second branch of the Ji Family could not directly interfere in Yue's Gold Pavilion's case. After all, everyone in the capital knew that Yue's Gold Pavilion belonged to the first branch of the Ji Family, and it was Ji Hanyue's dowry.

If the second branch of the Ji Family wanted to obtain great benefits, they could only conspire with others. They would not be able to get this shop, but they could profit from the case.

“Lady, I found something strange.” After hearing Qu Moying’s question, Yu Dong answered with hesitation. He was not sure either.

“Did you get it from Yamen?” Qu Moying pondered for a moment and understood where his suspicions came from.

“Yes, when I was about to go out, two of Yamen’s court runners were talking in a low voice on the side. Coincidentally, I heard them mention ‘Yue’s Gold Pavilion’, so I deliberately slowed down!” Yu Dong paused for a moment before continuing, “I know that the two of them said it on purpose for me to hear, so I think that... what they said might be all lies.”

Chapter 400 The Mysterious Owner of the Ruby

If he was just an ordinary maid, he might have believed the two court runners’ words. If a maid failed to get any information from the Yamen but accidentally got information from somewhere else, she would definitely take the news for real and tell her Master in a hurry.

But he was not an ordinary maid!

“Tell me about it!” Qu Moying smiled. She had been expecting a loophole in this matter. If there was no loophole, she would have to go to court.

The second branch of the Ji Family was behind this matter. It seemed that they didn’t want to go to court either.

If they went to court, more people would know about this matter, making it more likely to be a suspicious case. It would be good for both parties if this thing could be settled in private before going to court.

As for the other party's tough attitude, it was just for show.

Qu Moying could now basically confirm her guess. She was uncertain before, but she could confirm it now.

"Those two court runners' voices were neither high nor low, but they deliberately mentioned Yue's Gold Pavilion. They acted furtively. It was obvious that they wanted to say something, but they didn't want others to hear. However, it was natural for a maid to stop and listen to their conversation after hearing them mention Yue's Gold Pavilion. After all, I didn't get any news from Yamen before. I might hope to get some unexpected news from them."

Seeing Qu Moying's expression, Yu Dong felt more at ease. He no longer hesitated and even analyzed the matter, "They mentioned an address. They said that the plaintiff is living over there. He is said to be a big merchant from the North. He is very wealthy and generous."

"He is from the North?" Qu Moying raised her eyebrows. She really felt surprised this time.

"How could Xiao get hold of a merchant from the North? Where exactly did he come from in the North? Is he from the northernmost place or just a place farther north than us? This is totally different."

Yu Dong said, "Yes. He is said to be from the North. It sounded like he had a strong background. But I didn't hear the specific details!"

The address that the two court runners mentioned was not far away. It was a place not far from Yue's Gold Pavilion. Qu Moying failed to find the plaintiff after spending some effort, but she didn't expect that he lived not far away from her.

"You go there and take a look later." After thinking it through, Qu Moying made a decision in her heart. "Just act like an ordinary maid who tries to find out the truth."

Acting like an ordinary maid meant that Yu Dong should hide casually and be discovered by others. He should act like he didn't notice others, and he couldn't use his secret guards.

Now that the bait was released, Qu Moying thought she should bite it first and wait for the other party's next move.

Yu Dong immediately understood that this was the best way not to expose themselves. "Lady, I will go and check it out later."

Since Yu Dong was going there like an ordinary maid, he might not necessarily be able to find anything. Since someone led him there on purpose, what he would see might be what others wanted him to see. But Yu Dong didn't mind because he believed that he could see what others couldn't see.

He was prepared and was not afraid of what those people would show him.

At noon, Yu Dong left Qu Mansion and went straight to Yue's Gold Pavilion. After walking around Yue's Gold Pavilion, he went to the address mentioned by the court runners.

After turning two streets, he saw a large yard. Outside the yard, there was only a door plate with "Zhao Mansion" hanging above the door. It looked very simple and did not look like a big family.

However, such a big yard was not a place an ordinary person could afford.

Yu Dong looked over at the door. There was no one. The door was tightly closed, and no one entered.

Yu Dong rolled his eyes and went to a small bun shop opposite Zhao Mansion. He ordered a bowl of tofu curd and two steamed buns for lunch. They were simple but adequate.

The business of the bun shop was not bad. It was full of people. Yu Dong ate slowly with his eyes fixed on Zhao Mansion across the street.

Finally, when he finished eating the two buns and began to drink the tofu curd, Zhao Mansion's side door opened, and carriages came out from the mansion one after another. Each carriage seemed to be filled with goods, and each of them was pulled by a man in front and pushed by a man behind, but it still moved slowly.

The noise over there was quite loud, attracting the attention of the people in the bun shop.

Someone sighed, "Is Zhao Mansion transporting goods again?"

"Yes. Although its Master has just arrived in the capital, he doesn't seem to be an ordinary merchant. I heard from the people in their mansion that he is going to open a few big shops in the capital." Someone answered. People who had lunch in this bun shop were mostly regular customers. They had seen such a scene several times in the past few days.

They saw it when they looked up in the past few days. Besides, the Master of Zhao Mansion was a newcomer to the capital, so there were many discussions about him.

Yu Dong asked curiously as he pointed to Zhao Mansion, "What does the Master of Zhao Mansion do for a living?"

Someone answered Yu Dong, "I heard that he is a big merchant from the North. I don't know what specific business he is doing. But he is really rich. These goods don't seem to be ordinary ones. I heard that they are worth a lot of money."

"That's right. I heard that the ancestors of this family served as an official in the prime of the previous dynasty. However, this family declined afterward. Even so, it is still a big family because it has a solid foundation. An ordinary family can't compare with it. I'm afraid that even many aristocratic families in the capital can't compare with it."

Another person shook his head and sighed.

Yu Dong also sighed. "It seems that the Master of this mansion is really capable. I wonder what kind of person he is?"

"There are two Masters. They are a pair of siblings, a brother and a younger sister. I have never seen the young lady, but I have seen the young master. He is young and handsome." The one who answered this time was the owner of the bun shop. He seemed interested in this topic, and he answered with a smile.

He had been here for the longest time, and of course, he had seen the most.

More and more people were interested. "Is he that handsome? Is he married?"

The owner of the bun shop said with a smile, "I don't think he is married. I haven't heard that there is a young madam in this mansion. Of course, he might have gotten married, but his wife hasn't come to the capital yet. After all, he hasn't been here for a long time. This mansion used to be empty, and he moved in just recently."

Yu Dong's heart skipped a beat. "How long has he lived in there?"

The owner of the bun shop answered after thinking for a second, "About half a month!"

Yu Dong had finished drinking the tofu curd. He stood up and walked out of the bun shop. He stood outside the shop and looked over at Zhao Mansion. There were already more than ten carriages outside Zhao Mansion, and each of them was full of goods. It seemed that the Master of Zhao Mansion was trying to show him that he was really wealthy.

He wouldn't agree to settle the case in private if he could not gain great benefits.

Of course, he showed that he was really wealthy, so the priceless ruby was also true.

Ordinary people could not possess that kind of ruby. Although the value of the set of rubies couldn't compare with that of Yue's Gold Pavilion, it could be equal to half of the value of Yue's Gold Pavilion if it was of top quality.

Thinking of this, Yu Dong frowned and turned to leave.

"Sister, please wait!" Suddenly, Yu Dong heard a voice behind him. He turned around in surprise and saw a lad servant, who looked slightly younger than him, standing behind him with a smile.

Yu Dong asked calmly, "What's the matter?"

“Sister, you seem to have something to do. I saw that you kept looking at our mansion. Is there anything I can help you with?” The lad servant asked with a smile. He seemed to be kind and amiable. In addition, he was very young, which could make people let down their guard.

Yu Dong looked him up and down and pointed at Zhao Mansion. “Are you from this mansion?”

“Yes, this is our young master’s mansion. Our young master has just arrived in the capital. He did not know anyone. Sister, which mansion are you from?” The lad servant looked at Yu Dong curiously.

Yu Dong didn’t change his clothes. He dressed like an ordinary maid, so others could tell that he was a maid at a glance.

“I heard that something happened between your young master and a shop in the capital, right?” Yu Dong asked. He had already figured out something. Since he was lured here, what was waiting for him was naturally a well-planned scheme.

But was this person really sent by the Ji Family’s second branch?

Yu Dong was not sure. This lad servant seemed to be cautious. He did not seem like an ordinary person, so he was more likely to be sent by Princess Ji.

“Sister, are you talking about the thing related to Yue’s Gold Pavilion?” The lad servant asked in surprise. He carefully looked Yu Dong up and down and suddenly became alert. “Do you work for the owner of Yue’s Gold Pavilion?”

“Yes!” Yu Dong nodded. “Your Young Master sued my Master, didn’t he?”

“That’s because the people in your store broke my young master’s ruby. Do you know how precious that ruby is? It was passed down from our young master’s ancestors. It has gone through chaotic times. It was difficult to preserve it. But your store’s people broke it. Our young master is very angry. He is determined to deal with this matter seriously.”

The lad servant was furious and said angrily.

“If it goes too far, it’s not good for both mansions.” Yu Dong didn’t act tough. After all, it was his side’s fault, so he could not be tough.

“Even if it’s not good, we have to let the Yamen trial this case anyway. We can’t just let it go.” The lad servant spoke righteously for his Master. It seemed that he wanted to take Yu Dong to court right away.

Yu Dong’s attitude softened even more. “Can’t we sit down and have a talk about it?”

“Sit down and talk?” The lad servant looked at Yu Dong in confusion. “Can you make the decision?”

Yu Dong said with a flattering smile. “Of course, I can’t make the decision, but I can go between my Master and your Master and try to let them have a talk. After all, we really didn’t do it on purpose.”

The lad servant asked again, “Your Master wants to negotiate?”

Yu Dong said, “She has the intention to negotiate!”

The lad servant was silent for a moment. His expression softened a little, but he looked hesitant. “Your Master wants to negotiate, but our young master doesn’t necessarily want to talk about it. He just wants to vent his anger. He can’t accept that the treasure from his ancestors is ruined in vain. He feels guilty.”

“Our Master can compensate you. We don’t have to go to court. It is not good for Yue’s Gold Pavilion’s reputation.” Yu Dong said sincerely as if he really wanted to settle it privately, and he seemed more and more guilty.

“I am a servant. I can’t make the decision on this matter, but I can talk to the people around Young Master.” Seeing Yu Dong like this, the lad servant hesitated for a moment and finally appeared to be willing to compromise.

Yu Dong was overjoyed!