

Royal Marriage 101

Chapter 101: Who is being insulted?

“Third Brother, wu wu wu...”

“Fifth Sister, why are you crying?” Jiang Yi was surprised and pulled her to sit down.

Jiang Yuan cried and said, “That Lady Yuan, she doesn’t think highly of me. She said she was here to propose marriage to Seventh Sister, not me, and told me, a concubine-born daughter, to look in the mirror.”

After saying that, she wiped her tears and sobbed harder.

Although she was a concubine-born daughter, she had lived in the Jiang Family like a legitimate daughter all these years.

She had never suffered such a grievance before.

Lady Yuan, who came to propose marriage for the Wenren Family, ridiculed her to her face.

And she showed no mercy.

Jiang Yi frowned and said, “Isn’t Father there? Can’t he do something about her rude and disrespectful behavior?”

“Father is there, but he can’t do anything to a woman. Lady Yuan has a high status and is somewhat related to our family. We even have to call her Aunt.” Jiang Yuan choked back her tears.

Jiang Ning said, "There are many people who rely on their age to bully others. But who asked you to be so eager?"

"Jiang Seventh, what are you talking about? Do you enjoy seeing me humiliated? Are you happy?" Jiang Yuan shouted indignantly.

"I'm telling you to have self-respect and self-love and not to be so eager to marry every good man you see. Being too eager makes you less valuable. Understand?"

"I... I... You all bully me!"

Jiang Yuan stomped her feet and cried harder.

"Pathetic," Jiang Ning said. "You've never met Wenren Zong, you only heard from others that he's good, and you want to marry him. It's not a big deal if it doesn't work out, so stop crying."

Jiang Yuan tried to hit her but was stopped by Jiang Yi.

She cried again, "Third Brother! Ever since she came, you only love her and not me anymore!"

Jiang Ning said, "That's only natural since I am a real sister, and you didn't come from the same mother."

"You... you..." Jiang Yuan was choked up and couldn't speak. She cried even more violently.

Jiang Yi said, "Don't cry, Seventh Sister has no ill intentions."

"Wu wu wu!"

"Stop crying! It's so annoying." Jiang Ning shouted.

Jiang Yuan stopped abruptly, tears welling up in her eyes as she stared at her.

Jiang Ning said, "Come here, I have something good for you to eat."

"What could you possibly have?"

Although she was stubborn, she moved closer and took the bowl that Huang Ying handed over.

It felt cold to the touch.

She looked at Jiang Yi.

Jiang Yi smiled and said, "I just ate three bowls."

"Really?"

Jiang Yuan was half convinced and took a small bite.

A moment later, she gulped down a mouthful of saliva.

She finished the small bowl in the blink of an eye.

She smacked her lips and handed the bowl to Huang Ying, "Good sister, give me another bowl."

As she ate cheerfully, much of her earlier frustration dissipated.

Jiang Ning laughed, "Indeed, sweets can save a bad mood."

With Jiang Yuan's anger subsiding, Lady Yuan was still fuming.

She had been entrusted by the Wenren Family to propose marriage and thought it was a done deal. But to her surprise, Jiang Ruobai had brought his concubine-born daughter to the meeting.

What did he mean by that?

Who did he think he was fooling with a bastard daughter?

Who was he insulting?

Lady Yuan was seething with anger. After scolding Jiang Ruobai and ridiculing Jiang Yuan a few times, she left in a huff and went straight to the Wenren Family.

When Madam Wenren heard that Jiang Ning had refused the marriage, she breathed a sigh of relief.

"Sister Yuan, don't be angry. This isn't such a big deal. I just got some new high-quality fabrics. Come and have a look."

Madam Wenren was skilled in soothing others, and soon placated Lady Yuan.

After sending Lady Yuan away, she called Wenren Zong and told him about the matter.

"It's not that I don't agree, it's Seventh Miss who doesn't want to. Thirteen, you can give up now."

"Your son understands."

Wenren Zong didn't say much about it..

Chapter 102: The Princess Consort's deep affection towards her husband (Additional update)

The Wenren Family did not propose marriage again.

Aside from Jiang Ning's delight, there was another who was quite pleased.

That was Prince of Yu, Li Hongyuan.

While reading his book, he casually remarked, "I knew it. Who would want someone like her? A cripple, a divorced woman, carrying a child... The Wenren Family must be mad to have agreed to marry her in the first place."

The housekeeper merely nodded his agreement by his side.

Awhile later, Li Hongyuan asked, "Anything new from the Jiang Family?"

"Nothing much, the Princess Consort... no, rather, Seventh Miss Jiang, has been spending her days at the Jiang Family or out and about with her sisters, enjoying tea and watching plays. She seems to be in high spirits."

Li Hongyuan didn't respond.

The housekeeper continued, "They say the unborn child is doing well, Seventh Miss Jiang is able to eat and sleep well, and no longer feeling nauseous. But she doesn't seem to have gained much weight..."

Li Hongyuan frowned, "Why are you babbling about these trifling matters, do you have too much time on your hands?"

"Isn't this what the Prince wanted to know?"

“Oh, so now you even know what I’m thinking. Shall we switch roles, with you being the master and me the servant?”

“No, no, I wouldn’t dare!”

“Get out, stop annoying me.”

“Ah, I have gathered more details. If your Highness wishes to listen, this servant shall finish speaking before leaving.”

“Speak then.”

The housekeeper leaned in and murmured, “On the day Lady Yuan proposed, Seventh Miss Jiang personally rejected the proposal. Does your Highness know why?”

Li Hongyuan picked up his tea with indifference, “What did she say?”

“She said she loves the Prince and won’t accept anyone else in this lifetime.”

“Pfft ”

Li Hongyuan spat out his tea.

The housekeeper managed to dodge it in time, a look of relief on his face, “Thank goodness I’m quick on my feet.”

Li Hongyuan tossed the remaining tea in his cup onto his housekeeper’s clothes, “Try dodging that.”

The housekeeper:”...”

Li Hongyuan set down his tea cup, wiping the spilled tea from his lips as he eyed his housekeeper, "What did you just say?"

"Huh?"

"Speak up!"

"Oh, Seventh Miss Jiang? She said she loves the Prince, and therefore wouldn't marry Wenren Zong."

"Nonsense."

"This is true, the Princess Consort herself said it. A young servant overheard it and spread the news," the housekeeper nervously stuttered, "The Princess Consort truly has deep and enduring affection for the Prince. Even after being divorced, she's still wholeheartedly thinking of you. But alas..."

Li Hongyuan's brows furrowed, "Alas what?"

"Alas, love is not reciprocated. Our Princess Consort is pitiable, truly pitiable."

"Pitiable? Have you seen how shamelessly overbearing she is?" Li Hongyuan coldly retorted.

"Indeed," the housekeeper laughed, "I saw the Princess Consort listening to a story at the Prosperity Teahouse earlier, and Thirteenth Young Master Wenren was also there chatting with her. It seems this Young Master Wenren still holds some feelings for the Princess Consort. Even though the Prince divorced her, with her beauty, she doesn't have to worry..."

"Get out." Overwhelmed by irritability, Li Hongyuan abruptly commanded, "You've grown bold, daring to chatter incessantly before me."

The housekeeper promptly closed his mouth, silently exiting the room.

Li Hongyuan returned to his book, but after reading a few lines, he couldn't concentrate.

He didn't know why, but his heart was restless.

Abandoning his book, he stood up.

An attendant quickly followed, "Where does the Prince wish to go?"

"Prepare the horse, I want to go out for a walk."

As he hopped onto his horse, intending to enter the palace, he passed by Prosperity Teahouse. Outside, he saw a carriage bearing the Jiang Family crest parked."

He couldn't help but glance towards the teahouse—

Chapter 103: It Really Is Her

The teahouse was bustling as ever.

The storyteller was eloquent and expressive.

The guests were gathered around small round tables, listening to stories, drinking tea, and eating melon seeds and dried fruits, thoroughly enjoying themselves.

However, today's storyteller was not a man, but a young girl with a clear and crisp voice.

The voice was pleasant and lively.

It drew rounds of applause from the customers.

Li Hongyuan casually glanced around, originally intending to leave right away.

He didn't like this kind of place, finding it too noisy.

But somehow, he felt that the faintly heard female storyteller's voice was familiar.

When did teahouses start letting women tell stories?

Su Cheng noticed Li Hongyuan stopping his horse and thinking, and immediately signaled an attendant nearby.

The attendant jumped off his horse, ran into the teahouse, and quickly came back, whispering to Su Cheng, "Boss, the storyteller in there... it seems to be our princess."

Su Cheng was taken aback, rode forward, and whispered to Li Hongyuan, "Shall we go in and take a seat?"

"Since when have you seen me visit such a place?"

"The atmosphere in there is quite lively. They say that the storyteller is a woman, and the story she's telling is fascinating. One pot of tea costs one tael of silver, yet no one is willing to leave."

"Nonsense."

"Though the story may be fabricated, it does indeed have a captivating charm." Su Cheng laughed, "It seems that Thirteenth Young Master Wenren is inside too. Weren't you looking for him? This is perfect. Let me find a quiet table for you."

Li Hongyuan's heart stirred slightly.

He faintly guessed at something.

But he found it hard to believe.

In the end, he couldn't suppress his curiosity, jumped off his horse, and walked into the teahouse.

Just as he entered, a round of applause came.

After bypassing the screen, he saw at a glance the girl in a white skirt seated on the stage. Her long hair reached her hips, and her right hand held a folding fan. She was radiant and spoke fluently.

It was really her!

Jiang Ning!

The person sitting on the stage telling the story was indeed her.

No wonder the voice sounded familiar.

There were so many teahouses in Chang'an City, and all the storytellers were men. What sort of propriety was there for her, a girl, to be onstage in public like this?

Li Hongyuan gave a cold glance, wanting to turn around and leave, yet his legs seemed to disobey him, and he ended up sitting down at a table.

This area was separated by a screen, away from the ordinary commoners.

There were two other tables.

At one table sat Fifth Daughter and Sixth Miss of the Jiang Family, while at the other table sat Wenren Zong.

Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan were eating melon seeds, listening to the story with rapt attention, clearly engrossed by the content of the story.

Wenren Zong, dressed in black official clothes, sat upright with both hands on his legs. Though he was also listening to the story, there was no expression on his face. Just like his personality – strict, upright, adhering to etiquette, and regarding the laws of Great Sheng as the highest authority.

At this moment, he slightly turned his head, occasionally glancing at Jiang Ning on stage, but without blatantly staring.

It was rude and not in line with his character.

However, Li Hongyuan was a bit annoyed when he saw it.

Jiang Ning on stage was narrating animatedly, "... First Brother went out to sell cakes, leaving Jin Lian alone in the room. She found the room stuffy and got up to open the window. But unexpectedly, the pole slipped out of her hand and fell down, hitting someone passing by right in the head!"

At this point, she paused briefly, smilingly asking the audience below, "Can you guess who got hit?"

The crowd below shouted, "Could it be her husband, First Brother?"

"No." Jiang Ning shook her head.

"Who is it then? Miss, don't keep us hanging, tell us quickly!"

The audience, their curiosity piqued, cried out clamorously..

Chapter 104: Unbearable to Hear

Jiang Ning snapped open his fan, smiling, "The one she hit was called Ximen Qing. He's such a dashing man..."

"And what about Jin Lian?" someone asked.

"Ah, Jin Lian is a real beauty," Jiang Ning grinned, "her elegant makeup and neatly coiled hair, gold hairpin slanted and thrust into her raven locks. She called her maidservant, opening the trunk, getting a set of simple clothes, and dressing up like Xi Shi."

Li Hongyuan frowned.

What a mess.

Obscene words and songs, unbearable to the ear!

But the tea guests listened with wide-eyed fascination.

They asked eagerly, "And then? What happened after she hit him?"

Jiang Ning smiled slightly, "After that, they became lovers, and together they killed the first brother."

"How did they get together?" The tea guests were impatient, "Please tell us clearly! How did it happen, and why did they kill the first brother? How did they kill him?"

"Well, that can't be told in detail."

“Why not?”

“Because it needs to be harmonious. Here, skipping ten thousand characters, you can use your imagination.” Jiang Ning put down the fan, picking up a cup to take a sip of water.

The tea guests were speechless.

“If we used our imagination, why would we pay to listen to the story?”

“I was telling about the heroes of Liangshan, but you insisted on the story of the first brother and Jin Lian!” Jiang Ning argued, “Vulgar!”

Tea guests were embarrassed: “We were waiting for you to talk about Wu Second Son, can you tell us now? Will the first brother die in vain?”

“Of course not.” Jiang Ning laughed, “When Wu Second Son comes back, he sees the first brother killed, so he slaughters Jin Lian and Ximen Qing, gets involved in a lawsuit, then runs away to Liangshan and becomes one of the heroes! He’s known as the Tianshan Star, skilled fighter Wu Song!”

Jiang Ning clapped the block, “To learn the outcome, tune in for the next episode.”

“What? That’s it?”

The tea guests had been enjoying the story, their blood boiling, and they hadn’t had enough. They called out, “One more segment, one more segment!”

Jiang Ning said, “I don’t want to tell it, come back early next time!”

“We’ll pay, one silver coin per person! There are over a hundred people here, so that’s more than a hundred coins for you to tell just this one story. You won’t be at a loss!”

“Even if it were a thousand silver coins, I wouldn’t say it,” Jiang Ning said, “I tell these stories purely for enjoyment and not for making money.”

“What about ten thousand silver coins?” A serious voice spoke up.

Jiang Ning looked towards the speaker.

It was Wenren Zong.

Everyone gasped.

So extravagant.

Ten thousand silver coins just to listen to a story?

There was no comparison, not at all.

Jiang Ning wheeled his chair over, and laughed, “If the Thirteenth Young Master is willing to give me ten thousand silver coins, I’d be happy to do a private performance just for you.”

Wenren Zong said, “Consider it done.”

Even Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan looked over in amazement.

Was he serious?

Even to these wealthy young ladies, ten thousand silver coins was no small sum.

Jiang Ning said, “Once the money arrives, Thirteenth Young Master can choose the time and place.”

Wenren Zong said, "Alright, I'll send someone with the banknotes and invitations when I return home."

Jiang Yan and Jiang Ning were both left dumbstruck by the exchange.

"I object," said a voice.

Li Hongyuan stood up.

It was only then that everyone realized that there was someone else sitting in the corner, behind the screen.

Li Hongyuan's handsome face was quite unique in Chang'an City, unforgettable after just one glance. Jiang Yan and Jiang Ning recognized him and dared not look directly at him, hastily saluting.

Wenren Zong also immediately bowed, "Your servant pays his respects to His Royal Highness, the Prince of Yu."

Li Hongyuan ignored them and said directly to Jiang Ning, "You're not allowed to perform stories here anymore.."

Chapter 105: Happy Life of Ximen Qing with

Three Women

Jiang Ning glanced at him and asked Jiang Yuan, "Who is he?"

Jiang Yuan:

A hint of a smile appeared on Wenren Zong's usually serious face.

Li Hongyuan's eyebrows twitched: "Jiang Seventh, are you pretending to have amnesia with this prince?"

Jiang Ning asked Wenren Zong, "Master Thirteen, you are the Jingzhao Magistrate of Chang'an City. May I ask if I have violated any laws of Great Sheng by telling stories here?"

Wenren Zong shook his head: "Not at all."

"In that case, what should I do when Prince Yu orders me not to tell stories here?"

"Seventh Miss can ignore him."

With his hands behind his back, Wenren Zong faintly smiled.

Jiang Ning shook her paper fan and leaned back in her wheelchair, smiling, "Did you hear that, Your Highness? The Jingzhao Magistrate said that I can ignore any of your orders. After all, I have nothing to do with you."

Li Hongyuan fell silent for a moment.

That was true, according to the customs of Great Sheng, when he sent the divorce letter, Jiang Ning was considered to have been divorced and was no longer the wife of Prince Yu.

After a while, Li Hongyuan said, "Have you forgotten that you are still carrying this prince's child in your belly?"

"Oh."

"I can't control what you want to do, but you can't show your face with my child anymore and talk about these indecent things!"

Wenren Zong said, "Prince Yu is being too overbearing."

"When this prince speaks, is it your turn to interrupt?" Li Hongyuan looked at him coldly, "I heard that you want to marry this prince's ex-wife? There are plenty of women in Chang'an City, but you insist on marrying her. I suppose only a fool can't see the intent behind it."

Wenren Zong said, "Your Highness has misunderstood. Since you have divorced Miss Jiang Seventh, others are allowed to marry her. I think Miss Jiang Seventh has her own charm."

"So you won't marry anyone else but her?"

"As long as Miss Jiang Seventh is willing to marry me."

Li Hongyuan's eyes narrowed slightly, "Do you want to be the father of this prince's son?"

"... This subordinate wouldn't dare."

After all, he is Prince Yu, and his son is the imperial grandson, Wenren Zong absolutely cannot say such rebellious words.

Jiang Yan was too frightened to catch her breath.

Jiang Yuan gathered her courage, stepped forward and held the wheelchair, whispering, "Seventh, let's go back first."

"...Let's go."

Although a fight might be interesting to watch, they could not afford to become collateral damage.

The three sisters quickly tried to leave.

But Jiang Ning's wheelchair was held back.

Looking back, it was Li Hongyuan.

"This prince has something to say to you," he said coldly, "Follow me to the second floor."

The second floor was all private rooms.

"I don't want to talk to you."

"That's not up to you." Li Hongyuan grabbed the wheelchair.

"Help!" Jiang Ning reached out and hugged the pillar.

Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan were too scared to step forward and say anything.

Wenren Zong frowned slightly, "Your Highness is being too rough with Miss Jiang Seventh, considering she is pregnant."

Without a word, Li Hongyuan bent over, picked Jiang Ning up from the wheelchair, and then looked at Wenren Zong, "Master Wenren, are you satisfied now?"

Wenren Zong:

Jiang Ning pleaded, "Master Thirteen, save me! I don't need ten thousand coins, I'll tell stories for free, and even include the details of Jin Lian betraying her First Brother! If that's not enough for you, I can also tell the spin-off story of the Happy Life of Ximen Qing with Three Women..."

Everyone:” ...”

This woman is really...

Li Hongyuan turned around and walked up the stairs.

Wenren Zong frowned.

He knew about the hierarchy and also knew he couldn't have a direct conflict with Prince Yu.

But just now, for a moment, he was really tempted to snatch Jiang Ning from Prince Yu.

That was too irrational.

It was not something he should do..

Chapter 106:1 Want You to Stay Away From

Me

Li Hongyuan carried Jiang Ning up the stairs and entered a private room on the second floor.

It was quite different from the struggle and noise downstairs.

On the way up, Jiang Ning stayed quietly in his arms.

She was as still as a statue, a stark contrast to her behavior moments ago.

Li Hongyuan stopped: "I thought you were going to go crazy."

Jiang Ning replied, "You are the knife and I am the fish. I'm afraid if I make a fuss, you will get angry and throw me down. What will happen to the child if something happens to me?"

Li Hongyuan said coldly, "I'm not that crazy."

He put her on a chair.

He was especially gentle with his movements when lowering her down.

After landing safely, Jiang Ning breathed a sigh of relief and reached for the tea on the table.

Li Hongyuan held her back: "Drinking tea is not good for the baby."

"When did Your Highness start caring for this child so much?" Jiang Ning withdrew her hand, "Who said before that I should abort this baby? Now that I want to drink tea, you suddenly care."

"At that time, I didn't know the child was mine."

"I got pregnant before we got married. Didn't you suspect?"

"I asked Emperor Father and learned that the child in your belly is indeed mine." Li Hongyuan turned and poured her a glass of water, his tone softened, "I take back what I said before."

Jiang Ning didn't say anything but picked up some useful information from his words.

"Emperor Father knows about this?"

“He knew much earlier, much earlier than both of us.” Li Hongyuan didn’t say it too explicitly, but anyone with an inkling could figure it out.

Jiang Ning understood even more now.

It must have been Old Man Li’s doing all along.

This shameless old man.

Using such a despicable method, calculating not only his own son but also involving the innocence of a young girl.

Did he even bother to ask for her opinion?

No wonder he gifted her so many valuable items afterwards, his conscience must have been uneasy.

Li Hongyuan sat opposite her and said, “I’ve heard about your situation.”

Jiang Ning glanced at him.

What situation could she possibly have?

Oh, except for the arranged marriage.

Li Hongyuan lowered his gaze slightly, “Since you won’t accept anyone other than me, why bother with Wenren Zong?”

Jiang Ning:“??”

Li Hongyuan continued, "As long as you behave, I can take you back, give you a proper title, and let you live peacefully in the mansion to raise the child. After all, the child is mine, and I will take responsibility."

For a moment, Jiang Ning didn't know what to say and could only respond, "Who wants your title?"

Li Hongyuan looked at her for a few moments: "Then what do you want?"

"I want you to stay away from me."

This woman, wasn't she the one who claimed she only liked him and wouldn't marry anyone else?

She was really infuriating.

He was even prepared to reconcile with her and take her back to the mansion.

"Don't forget, the child in your belly is mine."

"I never denied that."

"In that case, you should come back with me."

"No."

"I won't force you to come back now that you're pregnant. However, you cannot read stories like you did today, and you cannot meet Wenren Zong anymore."

Jiang Ning didn't answer directly but smiled, "Your Highness married me because I looked like Lin Zizi. And now, asking me to go back is also Emperor Father's idea, right? Since you don't like me, why bother?"

"I don't need your advice on what I do. Just remember my words."

"I read the story today just for fun. As for Wenren Zong, since he likes me, I might consider marrying him."

Li Hongyuan was amused by her response, "Do you really think Wenren Zong wants to marry you because he likes you?"

Chapter 107: This King Will Break Your Legs

Jiang Ning countered, "Otherwise? If he doesn't like me, why would he marry me?"

"Naturally for other purposes!"

"What purposes?"

"To gain the influence of your Jiang Family, and to... make things difficult for me."

"Prince Yu, isn't marrying me also for Jiang Family's influence? Don't point fingers at others." Jiang Ning said, "Since both of you are the same, I can choose one who treats me well."

"How can you tell he will treat you well?"

"He admires what I do. He doesn't find my storytelling offensive, but rather interesting, even willing to pay ten thousand taels to listen to me." Jiang Ning laughed, "Furthermore, Master Thirteen is only twenty years old and already a third-rank official with a bright future. He's also quite handsome and refined, the types I like."

Li Hongyuan raised his eyebrows slightly upon hearing the last sentence.

"He's just trying to please you."

"I like when others please me, flatter me, spoil me, and treat me well," Jiang Ning smiled while holding her teacup, "Whether he likes my family background or my appearance, I don't mind. The key is that he treats me well. It's called mutual benefit, understand?"

Li Hongyuan said, "Your twisted reasoning is not bad."

"It's better than some people who obviously use others but still treat them badly and boss them around."

"... Did I abuse you or do something to you?"

"It seems Prince has a poor memory."

"Go ahead and tell me how I abused you."

"Well, I'll say it." Jiang Ning took a deep breath, "You forced me to drink the contraceptive soup, deprived me of housekeeper authority, allowed the maids to bully me, and wanted me to abort the child!"

Li Hongyuan:" ..."

Thinking of this, he frowned and asked, "Did you drink the medicine and suffer no consequences?"

"If there were consequences, could I sit here and talk to you peacefully?"

"You could have told me back then."

“Tell you what? That I was already pregnant with your child? Besides, I didn’t know the child was yours.”

“Really?” Li Hongyuan raised an eyebrow, “You didn’t know the child was mine back then? When exactly did you find out?”

Jiang Ning was at a loss for words, “I... guessed it later.”

“So, when you married me, you didn’t know the child was mine. And that night you purposely got me drunk and seduced me... were you planning to let me raise another man’s child?”

“...” Jiang Ning raised her hand to touch her hair.

Suddenly, he became smart at this moment.

Li Hongyuan sneered, “With your beautiful face, who could think that you’d hide such ill intentions?”

“Have you said enough? It’s not like I begged to marry you. Besides, who harmed me in this way? Why don’t you condemn Emperor Father?”

Li Hongyuan said, “Indeed, Emperor Father was wrong in this matter. But you are also deserving of retribution.”

“Well, I might indeed have no good intentions, but where are you any better than me? Some things are clear to all, and no one should blame the others.”

“Fine, let’s not talk about it.” Li Hongyuan stood up and said while suppressing his anger, “Let me tell you the truth. Since you became my woman, you can only be my woman forever. If you dare to marry someone else, I will break your leg!”

“It’s already broken.”

“... I will break both of your legs!”

“I never thought that the seemingly splendid Prince of Yu would be so overbearing!”

“That just means you don’t know me well enough.” Li Hongyuan coldly said, “In three days, I will come to the Jiang Family to pick you up.”

“Only if you can enter the Jiang Family’s door..”

Chapter One Hundred and Eight: It All Started with His Lavish Spending

Li Hongyuan said, “Do you think it’s difficult for me to take you back?”

“Your Highness, have you forgotten about the divorce letter? We have no relationship now, and you have no right to make me go back.”

“I don’t mind marrying you again.”

II II

“I’ll carry you.”

“No need.”

Jiang Ning waved her hand, “Men and women should not touch. As you please, I’ll drink more tea.”

Li Hongyuan walked up to her, directly picked her up, and said, “We’ve been honest with each other. What’s the harm in this bit of intimacy?”

"I don't remember anything."

"I don't remember either." Li Hongyuan said casually, "However, on the night of the wedding, you personally undressed me. You saw every inch of me."

Jiang Ning:

How could this man say such things without changing his expression or showing any emotion?

Seeing her slightly embarrassed, Li Hongyuan asked again, "Are you satisfied with my body? How does it compare to Wenren Zong's?"

"I'll have to see his body before I can make a comparison."

Li Hongyuan said, "You really aren't afraid I'll throw you down."

Jiang Ning touched her belly, "My son isn't afraid."

Li Hongyuan's gaze fell on her abdomen, imagining a small baby inside, flowing with his blood. Somehow, it stirred something in his heart.

That was his child, after all.

Li Hongyuan, who had never been a father before, felt a strange sensation welling up inside him.

Jiang Ning shifted her body.

Li Hongyuan snapped back to reality, instinctively asking, "Are you uncomfortable somewhere?"

"I'm uncomfortable everywhere when I'm too close to you."

Li Hongyuan's face darkened, and he said no more, carrying her out of the private room and back to the Main Hall on the first floor.

Wenren Zong and the two Jiang girls were still waiting, looking anxious.

Seeing them appear, Wenren Zong stepped forward, "Ningning, are you alright?"

This appellation made Li Hongyuan's face even darker.

He glanced at Jiang Ning and said calmly, "Didn't you reject the Wenren Family's marriage proposal? When did you two become close again?"

"From the moment he spent a fortune to make me happy."

At that moment, Li Hongyuan really had the urge to throw her down.

He whispered, "If you dare to be with him, I'll break your legs."

"You just try!" Jiang Ning's hand fell on her belly.

"You're carrying my child, flirting with other men. Have you no shame?"

"You're still entangled with your ex-wife."

"You " Li Hongyuan took a deep breath, put her in the wheelchair, and

smiled, "Ah Ning, stay at home and rest well. In a few days, I'll take you back to the mansion, and we'll be a family of three reunited."

Jiang Ning glanced at him, thinking that the men of the imperial family really were all Oscar-worthy actors.

To compete for the Imperial Throne, they would stop at nothing.

The cold and scheming Prince of Yu actually spoke such words in public.

Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan both showed surprised expressions.

Wenren Zong remained cool and calm.

After Li Hongyuan left, Jiang Yuan immediately asked, "What did you two talk about? Did His Highness just say he will take you back to the mansion?"

"He was just joking."

"Really?" Jiang Yuan was puzzled.

The Prince of Yu really was a cold person.

And very fierce.

Not at all like someone who likes to make jokes.

His image was completely different from the rumors of a gentle, handsome and charming young man.

All her previous thoughts about the Prince of Yu disappeared without a trace.

On the way back, Wenren Zong pushed Jiang Ning's wheelchair and asked, "Just now, did Prince Yu treat you badly?"

Chapter 109: Ask Me Once Again

"It was nothing, just a little chit-chat."

"Did he say he wants to take you back to the Prince of Yu's residence?"

"He did, but I won't go back."

"Ningning, do you...like the Prince of Yu?"

"Master Wenren, you..."

"Call me Thirteen," Wenren Zong said, "Even if you don't accept my marriage proposal, we can still be friends. No need to be too formal. Can I call you Ningning?"

"No, you can't."

"Ningning, you didn't answer my question."

Jiang Ning was somewhat speechless.

Why did the men here not know how to listen to others?

"Master Thirteen, actually we are really not that familiar."

"I know." Wenren Zong glanced at her, "If you don't like it, I'll just call you Miss Jiang Seventh."

“Just call me Jiang Seventh. Master, please stop following me.” Jiang Ning said, “Look at me, I’m not suitable for marrying again. You’re young and talented, with a bright future ahead of you. Don’t waste your time on someone like me.” Wenren Zong did not speak.

They walked silently for a while, and ahead, Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan went into a jewelry shop.

Wenren Zong stopped the wheelchair at the entrance of the jewelry shop: “Seventh Miss, would you like to go in and take a look?”

“I won’t go.”

“I thought girls like shiny jewelry.”

“I like it too, but it’s too noisy.” Jiang Ning propped up her cheek lazily and said, “I don’t like to pick things when I go shopping. I prefer when others bring things to me.”

Wenren Zong laughed: “Ah Qi, you’re very interesting.”

“Just so-so.”

“The books you mentioned today were also interesting.”

“Oh, that’s Outlaws of the Marsh, which tells the story of a group of heroes forced to rebel. It’s really interesting. If you like it, I’ll write it down for you when I have time. As for Pan Jinlian’s part, it’s just a small episode. It was just for fun, for everyone to have a laugh. Don’t worry about it.”

“No, I think you told it very well, lively and vivid.”

“Thank you, Master, for the compliment.” Jiang Ning covered a yawn with her sleeve.

Wenren Zong was silent for a while, and said, “Ah Qi, I feel that I like you a little.”

Jiang Ning looked at him.

"I really enjoy being with you, and everything you say is interesting. When I can't see you, I want to see you. That's why I always follow you. It's not because I have nothing better to do."

Wenren Zong spoke very seriously.

But for someone as solemn as him, saying such words seemed a bit out of place.

Jiang Ning laughed, "Master, you're just finding it fresh."

"Ah Qi, will you go back to the Prince of Yu's residence?"

"Of course not."

"Then marry me." Wenren Zong looked at her seriously, "I've thought about it, and being with you every day for decades to come would be very interesting."

Jiang Ning said, "Ask me that question again. The one before."

"...Will you go back to the Prince of Yu's residence?"

"Yes."

Wenren Zong's expression was a little dumbfounded.

Jiang Ning burst out laughing.

Poking fun at a bookworm was still quite interesting.

At this point, Jiang Yan turned back and called out, “Seventh Sister, come here. There’s a pair of shoes that are really nice here, but they don’t have our size. Come and try them on.”

Jiang Ning responded, excused herself to Wenren Zong, and pushed herself into the shop.

Wenren Zong watched her back, feeling somewhat lost.

Jiang Yan was holding an extremely exquisite embroidered shoe, adorned with gold thread patterns and inlaid with pink pearls that shimmered with iridescence, truly magnificent.

Jiang Ning really liked it, and reached out to take it, but it was snatched away by another hand.

It was Princess Ling’an.

She sneered, “Does a cripple need shoes?”

Chapter One Hundred and Ten: First Come, First Served

Ever since Jiang Ning was hit by Prince of Yu’s flower ball, it seemed as if Princess Ling’an had a grudge against her and would pick on her whenever they met.

Last time, during Concubine Jin’s birthday celebration, she openly caused trouble for Jiang Ning.

Jiang Ning didn’t feel comfortable due to her pregnancy, and she didn’t have a sense of belonging in this place, so she treated the people here as primitive and didn’t bother to argue with these young girls.

Who knew this girl wouldn’t let it go?

Before Jiang Ning could speak, Jiang Yuan angrily said, "Ling'an, how could you just take someone else's things?"

"Speaking of taking things, who can compare with your family's Jiang Seventh?" Princess Ling'an glanced at the embroidered shoes, very satisfied, "Besides, I claimed this pair of shoes last time!"

"Last time? Why didn't you buy them then?"

"I... didn't have enough money at that time."

"Really? You, the dignified Princess Ling'an, couldn't even afford a pair of shoes?" Jiang Yuan, like a cat that smelled gossip, immediately moved closer.

"Don't talk nonsense, who said I couldn't afford it? I just... didn't bring enough money that time. I'm a princess, how should I know I need to bring money when I go out?" Princess Ling'an raised her chin, looking like a proud white swan.

Jiang Yuan smirked, "You think you're a three-year-old child? Not knowing you need to bring money, last time I saw you shopping for fabric! You had a purse and paid careful attention! If you don't have money, just say it, don't be stubborn about it."

"I'm a princess, so would I have no money?"

"What kind of princess are you, without even a fief? You just have a fancy title." Jiang Yuan didn't give her any face, reached out, and grabbed the shoes back, "First come, first served. Sorry, I brought money!"

She took out a silver coin and slapped it on the table: "Shopkeeper, I want these shoes, and you don't have to give me any change!"

Princess Ling'an was furious and reached out to snatch it back: "Give it back to me!"

"I've already paid!"

"Shopkeeper, didn't I say last time that I'd reserved these shoes?" Princess Ling'an turned her head and asked the shopkeeper.

The shopkeeper was a beautiful woman in her thirties.

Her shop catered to the upper-class ladies and noblewomen of Chang'an City, and she had her own connections, naturally not wanting to offend anyone.

She hurriedly tried to mediate, "Both young ladies, please don't be anxious. You both know that the shoes in my shop are unique, with no duplicates. Since Jiang Fifth Daughter has already paid, why don't you take a look at something else, Princess?"

"I want this pair!" Princess Ling'an's temper flared up, insisting on having it, "Shopkeeper, our mansion gives you a lot of business every year. I said last time that I wanted these shoes, and now you're going back on your word?"

"This..." The shopkeeper looked at Jiang Yuan, "Fifth Daughter, the truth is, the princess did claim these shoes last time."

"I've already paid!" Jiang Yuan refused to let go.

"Didn't you just say it's first come, first served? Why are you contradicting yourself now?" Princess Ling'an said sarcastically.

"You—" Jiang Yuan was at a loss for words.

Jiang Yan softly advised, "Fifth Sister, why not just let it go? It's just a pair of shoes... We can buy something else."

“Why should I?” Jiang Yuan snapped, “I’m not giving it to her!”

“Jiang Fifth, are you trying to openly snatch it?” Princess Ling’an crossed her arms and laughed, “As a young lady of the Prime Minister’s Mansion, can you be so overbearing? When word gets out, aren’t you afraid of tarnishing your father’s reputation?”

“You...” Jiang Yuan’s face turned red with anger.

“Princess Ling’an,” Jiang Ning spoke up, “You said earlier that you had reserved these shoes last time?”