

Royal Marriage 251

Chapter 251 - Opening the Door

"I heard that the Imperial Army has surrounded all the nobles' mansions... and taken away quite a few people. Will they come to our house too?" Jiang Yuan whispered, "I don't know where Father and Third Brother are. Will they be in any trouble?"

"Pah, pah, pah, your father and Third Brother must be fine." Aunt Liu glared at her, "If you don't know what to say, shut up."

Everyone was anxious.

They had always lived in luxury and leisure, never having experienced such a thing before.

Just as they were worried, trouble arrived.

The housekeeper stumbled in, shouting, "Madam, many Imperial Army soldiers have arrived at the door. We servants are guarding it, but we may not be able to hold them off!"

"Oh my God!" Madam cried out, her face pale as she stood up, "What do they want? Are they going to arrest us? What has happened?"

Jiang Yan cried quietly.

"Don't panic, everyone!" Lin Zizi stood up and said solemnly, "Housekeeper, you divide the servants into two groups, one guarding the backyard and the other guarding the door."

The housekeeper wiped his sweat: "I've seen them. There are a lot of Imperial Army soldiers. We can't hold them off."

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“Let me go and take a look!”

“Zizi!” Madam shouted, “Don’t go!”

Lin Zizi smiled and said, “It’s all right, Sister-in-law. You stay here with the children. I want to ask these Imperial Army soldiers why they have surrounded the Prime Minister’s Mansion! Are they going to rebel?”

She seemed gentle and elegant, but she was strong at heart.

With only two maids accompanying her, she followed the housekeeper to the front yard.

Jiang Ning called Xiaoman to push her wheelchair and follow them.

She didn’t call Huang Ying and the others because they wouldn’t agree to let her go. Xiaoman was different; she obeyed Jiang Ning without questioning whether her orders were right or wrong.

Besides, Xiaoman was skilled in martial arts and could protect Lin Zizi if anything happened.

As they approached the front yard, they indeed saw the torches swaying outside, and the noise was loud.

In the chilly night of early spring, it was frightening.

“Open the door, open the door—” The Imperial Army shouted harshly, pounding on the door.

“If you don’t open up, we’re going to break it down!”

The servants at the door were terrified but still tried their best to guard it.

“The Madam is here!” The housekeeper led the way.

The servants couldn't believe that Madam would come herself, feeling touched and ashamed. As servants, they failed to protect the mansion, forcing the gentle Madam to come personally.

“Madam, it's too dangerous here, please go back!” The servants urged.

Lin Zizi said, “Open the door.”

“Madam...”

“Open it.” Lin Zizi's expression was calm.

The servants looked at the housekeeper.

The housekeeper said, “Obey Madam's orders.”

The servants had no choice but to open the door.

Many Imperial Army soldiers stood orderly at the entrance, their armor shining with a cold light in the night, and the torches illuminating their emotionless faces.

Lin Zizi stood at the door, with the housekeeper holding a lantern beside her, shouting, “This is our Madam!”

Lin Zizi, dressed in a blue skirt and beautiful and elegant, remained calm.

The Imperial Army soldiers at the door didn't dare to approach for a while.

“Why aren’t you going in to arrest people?” A man’s low voice came from outside the door.

Upon hearing this voice, Jiang Ning, who was not far behind, shuddered slightly.

As soon as the words fell, a tall figure stepped in, wearing an official uniform, a cloak, and a cold expression.

It was Wenren Zong.

Seeing Lin Zizi, he bowed and said, “Madam, please don’t blame us. We are here on orders to take you to the palace. Please come with me.”

“No one can take my mother away.”

A cold, young female voice came from behind.

Xiaoman pushed the wheelchair forward..

Chapter 252: You’re Scheming Against Me Again

The young woman sitting on the wheelchair, wrapped in a red cloak, looked precious and delicate like a rare orchid under the glow of the firelight. Her skin was as white as snow.

Wenren Zong’s originally cold expression softened slightly when he saw her.

Lin Zizi turned her head and noticed her, hurriedly speaking, “Ningning, why are you here? Go back quickly! Your mother is alright.”

“Mother, you can’t go with them.” Jiang Ning came to her side, grasped her hand, and looked at Wenren Zong. “Master Wenren, I’d like to ask what crime the Jiang Family has committed that you need to

surround our front door with the Imperial Guard and arrest my mother? Whose orders are you following to arrest someone here?"

Wenren Zong said, "I'm acting under orders to arrest someone."

"Under orders? His Majesty's orders? May I ask, where is the Imperial Edict?"

"It's a verbal edict from His Majesty."

"A verbal edict? So you have no proof?" Jiang Ning sneered. "In that case, can I say that Master Wenren is suspected of treason?"

The faces of the Imperial Guards behind Wenren Zong changed slightly, and some moved forward, intending to take action.

Wenren Zong raised his hand to stop them from coming forward.

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He approached Jiang Ning, bent down, and lowered his voice, "Ningning, I'm sorry, but I can only follow the orders."

Jiang Ning said, "Come with me."

Wenren Zong frowned, straightened up, and said coldly, "I am carrying out an order to arrest someone, and you, a young woman, dare to block me. If you don't step aside, don't blame me for not showing mercy!"

Lin Zizi angrily said, "Wenren Zong, what are you trying to do? If you dare to hurt a single hair on my daughter's head, I'll make sure you pay!"

“Madam, it’s better for you not to worry too much,” he said, then pushed Xiaoman aside, roughly pushing Jiang Ning’s wheelchair, sending her backward.

Lin Zizi was about to go crazy when she suddenly noticed Jiang Ning winking at her.

She hesitated for a moment, stopped, but still yelled a couple of times.

Wenren Zong pushed Jiang Ning to a distance where their conversation couldn’t be overheard before stopping.

“I’m sorry, Ningning.” Wenren Zong’s voice softened as he squatted down in front of her, “I didn’t scare you just now, did I?”

Jiang Ning shook her head, “What’s going on? Where are my father and my third brother? Are you really here under orders?”

Wenren Zong shook his head, “No, it’s the King of Chen.”

“So King of Chen is rebelling?”

“Not exactly. Today, His Majesty suddenly fell ill, and the illness struck abruptly. The King of Chen swiftly took control of both the inner and outer Imperial Court in the name of maintaining palace and court order. All the officials who entered the palace today have been confined.”

Jiang Ning frowned, “Isn’t the King of Chen seizing power and palace by force? Has His Majesty passed away? Thirteen, why are you helping the tyrant?”

Wenren Zong said, “His Majesty is still alive, but unconscious. Ningning, I’m just a subject, and I can only act according to the imperial edicts. If I didn’t listen to the King of Chen’s command, someone else would be here today. Do you think they would have shown any mercy to you?”

“So are you really going to take my mother away?”

“The King of Chen won’t harm the Madam.”

“I don’t believe it!” Jiang Ning’s face turned cold, “You are not allowed to take anyone away from here.”

Wenren Zong spoke softly, “Ningning, rest assured, I will protect Madam.”

“Wenren Zong, you’re rebelling. Once His Majesty wakes up, you’re done for!” Jiang Ning became emotional, and suddenly stood up. But due to her leg disability, she lost balance and fell down.

“Ningning!”

Wenren Zong was shocked and instinctively reached out to catch her.

Jiang Ning leaned into his arms and raised her hand—

A fragrant scent wafted from her sleeve into his nostrils.

The next moment, Wenren Zong felt dizzy and weak.

However, he still managed to help Jiang Ning into her wheelchair before collapsing.

“Ningning, you... tricked me again.” he murmured softly before falling into darkness..

Chapter 253: Beauty Makes the Wise Foolish

Jiang Ning waved her sleeve to disperse the scent of the drug, then she loosened the handkerchief that was covering her nose.

“Xiaoman, come here,” she called for Xiaoman.

Xiaoman had been secretly following them from a distance, and hearing her call, she immediately ran over, chuckling, “Miss, I didn’t mean to eavesdrop.”

“Stop your foolish laughter for now, get some rope, I need you to tie him up.”

“Alright!”

Without questioning why Wenren Zong suddenly fainted or how the Miss achieved that, Xiaoman obediently followed her instructions.

Soon, Xiaoman returned with a rope, easily tying up Wenren Zong.

“Don’t tie it too tightly,” Jiang Ning urged.

After all, Wenren Zong was just a scholar; they should be careful not to hurt him.

Once he was tied up, Xiaoman picked up Wenren Zong and with Jiang Ning, moved back to the entrance of the house.

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This scene surprised everyone.

Lin Zizi was shocked, and the imperial guards waiting outside the door were even more stunned.

“Master Wenren!”

“You woman, what are you planning to do?”

The imperial guards shouted in unison, raising their swords, preparing to charge forward.

Xiaoman held Wenren Zong with one hand while in her other hand she held a knife to his neck.

Jiang Ning, pushing her wheelchair beside them, coolly warned, "If any of you dare to make a move, this knife has no eyes."

The imperial guards looked at each other in astonishment.

Who would have thought that a petite, disabled girl would take Master Wenren hostage?

Lin Zizi approached Jiang Ning and whispered, "Ningning, you mustn't behave recklessly. Kidnapping an Imperial Court official is no trivial matter."

"Mother, given the current situation, this is not something we need to be concerned about," Jiang Ning whispered back, "I heard from Wenren Zong earlier that the King of Chen staged a coup, and has imprisoned Father, Third Brother, and the other Court Officials. The King of Chen sent Wenren Zong here to take you to the Palace. This can't be good. No matter what, I won't let him take you away."

Hearing this, Lin Zizi furrowed her delicate eyebrows.

So the King of Chen had been so audacious.

Had something happened to the Emperor?

A sense of unease surged within her heart.

Wenren Zong gradually regained consciousness and, looking down, he swiftly realized he had been tied up.

He turned to look at Jiang Ning.

Jiang Ning avoided his gaze.

She was afraid that if she looked at him, she might become soft-hearted.

Wenren Zong gave a wry smile in the darkness.

Held in high esteem as the best detective in Chang'an City, yet he had easily fallen into this woman's hands.

Lust really could cloud wise judgment.

He began to understand the behavior of those infamous imbeciles who fell prey to women in history.

Although he wasn't a Prince, when he was looking into her eyes, listening to her gentle and soft voice, he found himself completely defenseless.

If he were truly resolute, he would not have walked in here alone.

He had forgotten that he was in the Jiang family's abode, where everyone was loyal to Jiang Ning.

No, he hadn't forgotten. He had been bewitched.

Wenren Zong did nothing to struggle, nor did he waste breath in telling Jiang Ning to let him go.

Anyway, he didn't want to take her family away, so he might as well remain tied up.

With him as a hostage, the Imperial guards did not dare to act rashly.

Jiang Ning loudly declared, "Now that Wenren Zong is in my hands, I'm going to close the door. If any of you dares to come in, I will kill Wenren Zong. You bear the consequences!"

She ordered the housekeeper to close the door.

The Imperial guards outside became frantic and shouted towards Wenren Zong, "Master, Master, what should we do now?"

Wenren Zong kept a stern face and reprimanded, "Didn't you hear what the woman said? If any of you dare to act recklessly and this official gets hurt, I won't let you go!"

The housekeeper quickly shut the door and bolted it..

Chapter 254: Cold-blooded

Everyone exhaled a collective sign of relief, only then noticing their clothes soaked with sweat.

The housekeeper wiped off his sweat and asked, "Seventh Miss, what should we do now?"

Unknowingly, Jiang Ning had become the backbone of the group.

Jiang Ning said, "Uncle Wu, we still need your help. Please stay here with the family servants and immediately inform me if anything unusual happens outside."

"Don't worry, Seventh Miss!"

"Wenren Zong is still important. For his safety, the Imperial Army will not act rashly for now. But, once the news reaches the King of Chen, it will be a different story. Mother, we need to go back and discuss what we should do next."

If the King of Chen dared to stage a coup and commit these atrocities, would he really care about Wenren Zong's life?

They don't have much time left.

To avoid causing panic among the family, Jiang Ning asked Xiaoman to keep Wenren Zong in a side room near the central gate, with Xiaoman to watch over him. She and Lin Zizi back to them roughly what is going on outside.

Hearing that the King of Chen had staged a coup, everyone was indeed frightened.

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"What will happen to the Old Master and Third Brother?"

The two aunts were at a loss.

It seemed that Aunt Liu, who usually seemed formidable and could suppress Madam Lin Zizi, turned into a paper tiger when facing a big issue, even less composed than Aunt Bai.

"Seventh Sister, do you have any idea?" Jiang Yuan asked Jiang Ning.

Jiang Ning said, "Before the King of Chen sends anyone here, we should leave this place first."

"But where can we hide now? The current city is probably in chaos and full of the Imperial Army. It's impossible to leave the city."

"Hiding does not necessarily mean leaving the city."

Jiang Ning slowly said, "You should all scatter and head in different directions."

“Why is that?” Jiang Yan curiously asked.

“To distract the Imperial Army’s attention.” Jiang Ning responded.

Lin Zizi glanced at her and said, “Ningning, come with me, I need to talk to you.”

She pulled Jiang Ning aside, directly asking, “Ningning, you know they are targeting only me, why do you want everyone to hide? For everyone, the safest thing to do right now is to stay in the mansion without making any reckless moves.”

“If they are safe, what about Mother?”

“Ningning, you can’t do this.” Lin Zizi frowned. “You can’t protect just me and sacrifice others. They are your family too.”

“The Imperial Army’s targets are not them, they won’t harm them.”

“But it’s still dangerous.”

“I don’t care. I only know that I have to protect Mother now. Don’t forget why King of Chen is trying to kidnap only you. That will lead to worse consequences. As for what’s more important, Mother, you should be clearer than me. What I’m doing may seem heartless, but it’s actually the best choice.”

Lin Zizi watched her daughter stunned, “Ningning, you...”

She didn’t know what to say.

She realised that Jiang Ning’s personality is completely different from hers.

She is rational to the point of being cold-hearted.

"I remember Third Brother told me there is a secret passage in our house. Only the legitimate wife and offspring have the right to know it." Jiang Ning continued, "Mother, you should know where it is. Take a maid with you and hide in the secret tunnel. I'll have the others leave through the back door in different directions. This way, the Imperial Army will think you've also escaped and won't search here. This way, you can be safe for now."

"No, we can't just for my sake..."

"Mother, listen to me." Jiang Ning called Lin Zizi's maid and told her to accompany the Madam to the secret passage..

Chapter 255: I'll Let You Scold for Three Days

She returned to the crowd and instructed them to split into groups and leave the Prime Minister's Mansion through the back door.

Madam Jiang led several children. Aunt Liu led Jiang Yuan, Aunt Bai led Jiang Yan, and several other concubines from the main room split into four groups, riding carriages and leaving in four different directions.

Jiang Yuan asked her, "What about you and the two children?"

Jiang Ning said, "I only told you, why do you think the Imperial Army outside hasn't come in until now?"

"Why?" Jiang Yuan was stunned.

She really hadn't thought of that.

She thought it was because the Imperial Army was giving face to the Prime Minister's Mansion.

Jiang Ning said, "I captured their leader, Wenren Zong."

“What?” Jiang Yuan was shocked, “You...you can really do anything.”

“That’s why I can’t leave. I have to stay here, otherwise the Imperial Army will rush in soon.”

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“It’s too dangerous for you. You take the children and leave, I’ll stay!” Jiang Yuan said.

Aunt Liu anxiously slapped her, “You’re so stupid, you’re not as smart as Seventh Miss, what can you do by staying behind?”

“Auntie!”

“Alright, time is pressing, stop arguing and hurry up and leave.” Jiang Ning looked at Jiang Yuan, took out a packet of medicine and gave it to her, “This is a top-quality powder that can instantly faint people. When using it, cover your mouth and nose. Don’t use it unless absolutely necessary.”

Jiang Yuan stared blankly, “Why do you have something like this?”

“For self-defense.”

“...” Jiang Yuan looked at her leg, somewhat touched.

With her beauty and a bad leg, she must have had a hard time living outside all those years. No wonder she had to use these methods to protect herself.

Jiang Yuan pushed the medicine back, “You keep it for yourself.”

“Take it.” Jiang Ning didn’t take it, instead ordering the coachman, “Let’s go.”

“Seventh Sister, be careful!” Jiang Yuan called out.

Jiang Ning was slightly startled.

If she remembered correctly, this was the first time Jiang Yuan willingly called her Seventh Sister.

Jiang Ning sighed.

It happened to be this time, when she had designs on them.

If Jiang Yuan knew, she would probably be so angry that she would stomp her feet and curse.

“If this matter is resolved safely, I’ll let you scold me for three days.”

Jiang Ning muttered to herself as she looked at the carriage.

Everyone in the family was almost gone.

Jiang Ning returned to her courtyard, only to find that Lin Zizi had taken the two children and hid them in the secret tunnel along with two wet nurses.

Huang Ying forced herself to calm down, “Miss, what should we do now? Just wait here?”

“There’s no other way.”

By this time, the Imperial Army had probably noticed the four carriages leaving the Jiang Mansion and sent people to chase them.

Now all she could hope for was that Old Man Li wasn't so weak.

And also hope that Jiang Ruobai and the others could find a way to save themselves.

The housekeeper rushed in, sweating profusely, "Seventh Miss, they have sent more people and are asking to open the door or else they will break it and set fire."

Huang Ying was furious, "They really want to rebel, how dare they set a fire!"

The people who came this time seemed even more ruthless. Without waiting for Jiang Ning's reaction, they set the fire directly.

There was a sudden surge of fire and flames outside.

Once the fire started, people would definitely be forced out.

Several maids cried out in fear.

The housekeeper was sweating profusely, waiting for Jiang Ning's command.

Jiang Ning pushed her wheelchair into the courtyard and looked outside.

There was suddenly a commotion outside, the clashing of swords could be heard.

"Could it be that they couldn't wait any longer and killed their way in?"

Everyone shivered with fear, even the housekeeper turned pale.

Jiang Ning sat still in her wheelchair, not moving. After a moment of silence, she said, "It doesn't seem like it.."