

Chapter 291: The Return of the Evil Sister-in-law (3)

“What nonsense are you talking about?” Old Madam Shen frowned and subconsciously retorted, “She’s just a nobody. Why would the first branch want her?”

“I was just saying. Grandmother, don’t take it to heart.” Shen Yuan smiled and changed the topic. After saying a few words, he left. Before he left, he glanced at Mrs. Zhang.

After Shen Yuan left, Old Madam Shen kept thinking about what Shen Yuan had said previously. On one hand, she knew very well that what Shen Yuan said was ridiculous. No matter how open-minded Shen Xin and his wife were, they would not take a fancy to a girl from a lowly background. Moreover, Shen Qiu was not a lecherous person. This was simply as difficult as ascending to the heavens. On the other hand, Old Madam Shen was also tempted by what Shen Yuan said. If Shen Qiu found a young lady from a rich family, wouldn’t his power go up another level? Old Madam Shen disliked Shen Qiu the most. How could she tolerate him gaining more power? However, if he married her grandniece, not only would he gain nothing out of it, but he would also drag the first branch of the Shen family down with him.

As Mrs. Zhang massaged Old Madam Shen’s shoulders, she said softly, “Old Madam, actually, I also think what Second Young Master said just now makes sense.” After a pause, she continued, “Think about it. If Eldest Young Master and your grandniece are married, it will be much easier for you to do something since your grandniece will be on your side.” She said in a low voice, “If the marriage really works, it will be easy for you to get money out of the first branch.”

As soon as she said that, Old Madam Shen’s eyes lit up. That’s right. If Shen Qiu and her grandniece got married, her grandniece would naturally be on her side. If she controlled Shen Qiu, she would control the first branch.

Mrs. Zhang continued, “It will be even better if your grandnephew and Fifth Miss get married. In the future, all the money and assets from the first branch will belong to you.”

Every word Mrs. Zhang said was right to the point, making Old Madam Shen overjoyed. At the thought of being able to seize all the assets of the first branch, Old Madam Shen was excited. However, in the next moment, she became worried and said, “That’s easy to say, but my grandniece and grandnephew are both from a small family. It’s not like Shen Qiu is stupid. Why would he like her?”

“Old Madam.” Mrs. Zhang smiled. “You’ve forgotten about the tricks you used in the past. It’s not that complicated. All we need is a little trick to make it a done deal between the two of them.”

Her words caused Old Madam Shen to be lost in thought. A moment later, Old Madam Shen also smiled. She probably wanted to make a charming smile, but because she was old and haggard, she looked a little scary. She said, “That’s true. We just need to put them on the same bed.” After saying that, she and Mrs. Zhang looked at each other meaningfully. Old Madam Shen said, “Someone, go and fetch the box in my room. It’s been a long time since I last saw my grandniece. It’s time to give her a gift.”

Outside the house, Shen Yuan looked at Rongjing Hall and smirked. A trace of a cold smile flashed across his eyes as he slowly walked out of the courtyard.

...

In the west courtyard, Shen Miao handed ten banknotes to Mo Qing.

"Go to the Treasure Fragrance Chamber and find a girl called Liu Ying. I've already asked around. A hundred taels of silver can buy her a night. Take the money and sit with her for a night. Don't do anything. Go every three days," Shen Miao said.

When Mo Qing heard "Treasure Fragrance Chamber", his eyes widened. When he heard that Shen Miao wanted him to find a girl called Liu Ying, his face turned red. He did not take the banknote for a long time and looked at Shen Miao. "Miss, are you joking with me?"

Chapter 292: The Return of the Evil Sister-in-law (2)

"When have you ever seen me joke with you?" Shen Miao's face was serious. Mo Qing thought for a moment. Ever since he knew Shen Miao, she had indeed meant every word she said.

However... it was too ridiculous to ask him to go to a brothel. Mo Qing shook his head and said with a red face, "Miss, this... I... Why do I have to go to the Treasure Fragrance Chamber?"

Shen Miao looked at him and remembered that in her previous life, she had indeed never seen Mo Qing having affairs with any girl. Who would've thought that the commander of imperial guards was actually a virgin?

She said, "Go if I tell you to. If Miss Liu Ying asks you why you're doing this, don't say anything. In short, play dumb."

Mo Qing was speechless.

Seeing that Mo Qing still looked unwilling, Shen Miao said sternly, "Don't you even listen to me?"

"I wouldn't dare!" Mo Qing quickly said. As soon as he said that, he felt a little frustrated. He was a proud man and was considered a top-notch guard in Shen Qiu's crew. Why did he feel so flustered when Shen Miao shouted at him? Logically speaking, although he was protecting Shen Miao's safety now, he was Shen Qiu's subordinate. What was more, even with Shen Qiu, he wasn't so nervous.

Puzzled, he then heard Shen Miao continue, "I heard that Miss Liu Ying is charming and extremely enchanting. Countless men have fallen for her. Although she's not the signature girl of the Treasure Fragrance Chamber, she's still popular. I chose you because I know you're righteous and have a strong will. I asked you to sit with her for a night, so don't do anything you shouldn't. If you fail, you can pack up your things and leave."

Mo Qing's face turned redder. He had never been so embarrassed before. Not only did Shen Miao make it sound so explicit, but she also glanced at him from head to toe and even stopped at a certain part of his lower body for a while. If not for the fact that Shen Miao was his master, Mo Qing would probably have left angrily. He wanted to cry, but no tears came out. He did not know how Shen Miao grew up to have such a personality. Being stared at her like that, Mo Qing felt like he was pork on a chopping board.

Seeing that Mo Qing's face was turning purple, Shen Miao let him go and waved her hand. "Go. Remember what I said."

Mo Qing ran out. Jingzhe was just returning from outside. Seeing this, she asked, "What's wrong, Guard Mo? You look like you're in pain. Did something happen?" Mo Qing had always been calm and composed. This was the first time she had seen him in such a sorry state.

"Nothing. He's just being shy." Shen Miao said, "How's the investigation going?"

Jingzhe was wondering what Shen Miao meant by him being shy. Hearing that, she said, "I've asked around. Old Madam's grandniece and nephew will be here in two days."

"Is that so?" Shen Miao smiled faintly. "Is her grandniece called Jing Chuchu?"

"Miss, how did you know?" Jingzhe was surprised.

Shen Miao did not say anything. She lowered her head to hide the killing intent in her eyes. Jing Chuchu was none other than her sister-in-law from her previous life.

...

Two days later, the sky cleared up. Shen Miao woke up early and went out to watch Shen Qiu and Shen Xin practice swordsmanship. On this cold day, the two of them were actually sweating profusely. The surrounding guards were all cheering as they watched. Just as they were in a good mood, they saw Old Madam Shen's maid, Xi'er, run over. She said that Old Madam Shen was summoning everyone to Rongjing Hall because her grandniece and nephew were here.

Chapter 293: The Return of the Evil Sister-in-law (5)

Shen Qiu scratched his head and asked curiously, "Who? Why have I never met them?"

Luo Xueyan also said, "I've never heard of them either. Why did they come all of a sudden?"

Shen Xin did not have too much of a reaction. Old Madam Shen was his stepmother, but Old Madam Shen's background was destined to make her unrepresentable. All these years, there was no news of her family at all. He only knew that Old Madam Shen was originally from Suzhou. He didn't know why her family sent the juniors over. However, since Old Madam Shen said so, they could only go.

Shen Qiu put down his sword and went back with Shen Xin to change his clothes. When he turned around, he saw Shen Miao standing at the door with a cold expression. He couldn't help but walk over and ask, "Sister, why are you suddenly unhappy? Aren't you smiling just now?"

Shen Miao came back to her senses and glanced at Shen Qiu. She smiled and said, "Nothing. I'm fine."

When they arrived at Rongjing Hall, they could hear Old Madam Shen's laughter from afar. Ever since Shen Qing's death, Old Madam Shen had been wearing a dark expression every day. Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan were both a little puzzled. When they stepped into Rongjing Hall, they saw that Chen Ruoqiu and Shen Gui were both there. A man and a woman were standing in front of Old Madam Shen. Seeing that Shen Xin and the others were here, Old Madam Shen said to the two people in front of her, "This is

your first uncle and his family.” She then said to Shen Xin, “This is my brother’s grandson and granddaughter, Guansheng and Chuchu.”

Jing Guansheng, Jing Chuchu.

When the two of them heard that, they quickly turned around and bowed to Shen Xin and the others.

Shen Miao stood still and sized up the two of them calmly.

Jing Guansheng was 18 years old this year, and Jing Chuchu was 16 years old this year. They were both in their prime. Jing Guansheng was ordinary and a little chubby, but his skin was fair and he looked quite scholarly. He was wearing a brown robe. The fabric was not bad, and the cut was simple but just right. However, there was a hint of shrewdness in his eyes, which made him look quite unlikeable.

Jing Chuchu was very good-looking. She actually resembled Old Madam Shen quite a lot. However, compared to when Old Madam Shen was young, she was more of a sheepish type. She was wearing a primrose-colored dress that looked quite exquisite. She greeted timidly and bowed, her eyes fixed on the ground, not daring to look up.

When she greeted Shen Miao, Shen Miao smiled and said, “Cousin, why are you only looking at the ground? I’m not six feet under yet.”

Jing Chuchu was stunned. Flustered, she looked up at her and then at Old Madam Shen. Old Madam Shen immediately frowned and said, “Chuchu is a little afraid of strangers. Fifth Miss, be polite.”

Old Madam Shen’s protectiveness towards Chuchu immediately made Shen Xin and the others’ expressions change. They would not let Shen Miao feel aggrieved because of a relative who was not related to them by blood. Their attitude towards Jing Chuchu immediately turned cold.

Old Madam Shen did not notice it at all, but Shen Yuan frowned and glanced at Shen Miao.

Shen Miao smiled and said, “Afraid of strangers? It’s fine. We’ll get to know each other in a few more days.”

Shen Miao’s tone was friendly, but when people heard it, they felt like there was an extra layer of meaning to her words. Jing Chuchu smiled shyly at Shen Miao, then lowered her head and twisted the handkerchief in her hand, as if she would blush if she took another look. On the other hand, Jing Guansheng smiled at Shen Miao gently.

Chapter 294: The Return of the Evil Sister-in-law (6)

Shen Miao’s gaze did not land on Jing Guansheng at all. She stared at Jing Chuchu and could hear herself grinding her teeth.

Jing Chuchu was always like this, shy, sheepish, and non-scheming. She always kept her head lowered timidly, as if she was a pushover everyone could bully. Therefore, when people saw her lying on the same bed with Shen Qiu after drinking, everyone scolded Shen Qiu for being worse than a beast. Who would have thought that such a pure girl would end up making a cuckold of Shen Qiu and sending him to prison for accidentally killing the adulterer? Now that Shen Miao thought about it, the mistakes Shen

Qiu made on his post and his falling off the horse and breaking his leg was most likely Jing Chuchu's doing. Eventually, after Shen Qiu's corpse was found inside the pond, Jing Chuchu pocketed his money and ran back home.

Shen Miao felt that this rabbit-like face in front of her was even more vicious than a snake. Although Shen Qiu did not like her, he still treated her sincerely after marrying Jing Chuchu. With Shen Qiu's personality, he would definitely not let Jing Chuchu suffer.

However, Jing Chuchu was an ingrate.

Shen Miao kept staring at Jing Chuchu. Even someone as insensitive as Shen Qiu sensed that something was wrong and asked in confusion, "Sister?"

Jing Guansheng also said, "Fifth Sister, why are you staring at Chuchu?"

Jing Chuchu took a step back and turned to the side nervously, asking Jing Guansheng to block Shen Miao's gaze for her, as if she was very afraid. Shen Miao smiled and said, "Cousin is really too beautiful. I was absent-minded from infatuation just now."

Shen Yue bit her lip. Shen Miao had been getting prettier and prettier lately and stole a lot of her limelight. Now that Jing Chuchu was here, she felt even more uncomfortable.

Jing Chuchu blushed and whispered to Shen Miao, "Cousin, you are much prettier than me."

Shen Miao smiled and did not comment.

Old Madam Shen cleared her throat and said, "Chuchu and Guansheng are our family too. Shen Miao, Shen Qiu, show them around the mansion when you have time."

There were still Shen Yuan and Shen Yue. At the very least, there was still Shen Dongling. Shen Miao and Shen Qiu were not the only juniors, but Old Madam Shen specially instructed the two of them to show their new cousins around. The corners of Shen Miao's lips curled up slightly. She glanced at Jing Chuchu, who had her head lowered, and smiled warmly. "I'll naturally take good care of cousins."

Among the women in the room, Shen Miao actually had a particularly calm aura. The faint smile that crept up on her face just now had an indescribable charm. Jing Guansheng was a little stunned.

Seeing Shen Miao like this, Old Madam Shen was extremely satisfied. She smiled and said, "In that case, all of you can leave. I still have something to tell Chuchu. We haven't seen each other for so many years. I wonder if my family is doing well." When Chen Ruoqiu saw Old Madam Shen's loving look, she immediately felt something was afoot. However, she only bowed respectfully and led everyone out of Rongjing Hall.

Outside Rongjing Hall, Jing Guansheng said to Shen Miao, "Fifth Sister, what do you like to do at home?"

Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan walked at the front and did not hear this. When Shen Qiu heard this, he walked up to Shen Miao warily and looked at Jing Guansheng without saying anything.

Shen Miao smiled. "Nothing much. Just reading most of the time."

"Coincidentally, I also like to read at home." Jing Guansheng smiled and said, "We can probably talk a lot about books."

Shen Miao glanced at him. Even Shen Qiu could sense the disdain in her gaze. He was a little surprised that Shen Miao was so unfriendly to someone she had just met for the first time. He heard Shen Miao say, "Forget it. I don't think there's a lot of books in your house. How about I get someone to send a few books to you later? They are all limited edition."

Being looked down so blatantly by Shen Miao, Jing Guansheng's expression froze.

In Rongjing Hall, Old Madam Shen was holding Jing Chuchu's hand and saying amiably, "You're so beautiful at such a young age. I wonder if you're engaged."

Jing Chuchu said in a low voice, "Old Madam, not yet."

"I see." Old Madam Shen's smile widened. "With your looks and personality, it would be great if you could be my granddaughter-in-law."

Jing Chuchu lowered her head, and her face turned even redder. She gradually clenched her fists nervously. The Jing family was just an ordinary merchant. When their grandfather heard that his sister had become rich in the capital, he sent them over, hoping that his sister could offer help in one way or another. When Jing Chuchu arrived, she was dazzled by the grand mansion. If she could marry into the General's Mansion, she would not have to worry about money for the rest of her life and could just enjoy the comfortable life of a rich madam. How could Jing Chuchu not be excited at this prospect? However, she did not show it on her face.

Old Madam Shen patted her hand and said with a smile, "With your age, you're very suitable for Shen Qiu. He is now a deputy general. What's better is that he's not married yet."

Chapter 295: Intimidation (1)

Ever since that day when Jing Chuchu and Jing Guansheng came to the Shen family, there had been an extremely subtle atmosphere in the Shen family. Everyone knew that Old Madam Shen was selfish and stingy. To her grandnephew and grandniece, who she had not seen for many years, not only did she not show any coldness, but she also treated them very generously.

However, the two of them seemed to be planning to stay in the mansion for a long time and had no intention of leaving. Because Old Madam Shen was polite to them, the servants were also very polite to them.

In a side room of Rosy Cloud Garden in the east courtyard of the Shen family, Concubine Wan was sitting at the table and embroidering. The colorful fabrics slowly came into shape as she said to Shen Dongling, who was sitting behind the screen and practicing calligraphy, "Has Old Madam changed? She treats her grandniece and grandnephew even better than you."

"Old Madam is up to something we don't know." Shen Dongling sat behind the screen, looking much better than before. At least, she was not as pale as before. Now that Shen Gui often came to visit Concubine Wan, he also started to take this illegitimate daughter of his seriously and asked someone to

send a lot of herbs to help her nourish her body. Shen Gui's attitude immediately made the servants of Rosy Cloud Garden realize that the tide had changed. However, some servants were still observing. Although Ren Wanyun had gone crazy, Shen Yuan was still the young master of the legitimate wife. No matter how favored Concubine Wan was again, Shen Dongling was, after all, just a daughter.

"Dongling, do you also think there is something fishy going on?" Concubine Wan stopped what she was doing. "But why exactly is Old Madam trying to please these two?"

Shen Dongling smiled. "They are both young and good-looking, Old Madam naturally wants to use them to seduce people."

Concubine Wan suddenly enlightened and looked at Shen Dongling. "But seduce who exactly?"

Shen Dongling carefully made a neat stroke as she said, "Of course, people who Old Madam hates the most."

Just as Shen Dongling had said, in the west courtyard, Shen Qiu and Shen Xin finished practicing once and asked their subordinates to continue practicing. Just as they were about to rest for a while, they saw a girl in yellow walking over from the end of the corridor.

This girl was beautiful, delicate, and timid, holding a bamboo basket. She walked to the side, lowered her head, and called out timidly, "Cousin, Uncle."

It was Jing Chuchu.

Luo Xueyan was instructing the soldiers on the other side. Shen Xin and Shen Qiu were a little surprised to see her. Shen Qiu took a step forward and said, "Cousin sister, what are you doing here?"

He was not used to calling her "cousin sister". After all, he had never seen Jing Chuchu. It was a weird feeling for him to suddenly have a cousin thrust upon him.

Jing Chuchu smiled shyly and placed the bamboo basket on the stone stool at the side. She said in a low voice, "I made some snacks myself. I thought that cousins would probably be tired from practicing swordsmanship here, so I made some. I hope you won't mind." As she spoke, she lowered her head and opened the lid. As soon as she opened it, she brought out a few plates of snacks. The snacks were exquisite and cute, and they smelled sweet. Before Shen Xin could say anything, Shen Qiu, the foodie, swallowed his saliva.

Shen Xin had a good impression of her. Jing Chuchu was born timid and weak, but she looked sincere. However, no matter what, girls who were good at making snacks would be liked wherever they went, especially since this girl was good-looking. Luo Xueyan was a general, so she did not know how to make these exquisite snacks at all.

Chapter 296: Intimidation (2)

Jing Chuchu said, "I've been living here for so many days, but I haven't come to pay my respect to you yet. Other than making you some snacks, I don't know what else I can do."

Shen Xin and Shen Qiu liked people who were polite and sensible the most. Jing Chuchu had indeed left a good impression on them.

Shen Qiu said, "Cousin, don't worry. Just take this as your home. We're family, and it is only right for us to help each other."

Jing Chuchu lowered her head shyly. Shen Qiu picked up a piece of snack and smiled. "Then I won't stand on ceremony." Just as he was about to bite it, he suddenly heard a voice behind her. "Brother."

Shen Qiu turned around and saw Shen Miao standing at the side of the courtyard with four maids behind her, looking at him coldly. For some reason, Shen Qiu felt guilty. He subconsciously put down the snack in his hand and asked, "Sister, why are you here?"

Shen Miao did not say anything and walked towards them. When she got closer, Shen Xin saw Gu Yu, Jingzhe, Bai Lu, and Shuang Jiang each holding a basket. Shen Xin asked, "Jiaojiao, what's in this basket?"

"The weather is a little cold today. I thought that everyone would be tired and thirsty from practicing swordsmanship, so I made some soup." Shen Miao glanced at Shen Qiu indifferently. Shen Qiu felt a chill run down his spine and heard Shen Miao say, "Let the soldiers come over and drink the soup. It can warm up their body."

"I'll go get them!" Seeing this, Ah Zhi, who was standing beside Shen Qiu, was overjoyed. He ran to the training ground. Soon, dozens of soldiers in the courtyard swarmed over.

Shen Miao asked Jingzhe and the others to scoop a bowl of soup for everyone. Those soldiers were all the most capable subordinates of Shen Xin and Shen Qiu, so they were kept in the General's Mansion. When the soldiers saw that there was soup to drink, they were very happy. They smiled and said, "Miss is so considerate of us! Miss is really kind-hearted!"

Soldiers were easier to please. Shen Miao knew this very well. Ah Zhi took a sip of the soup and exclaimed, "This soup is really good!" After drinking it, he handed the empty bowl to Jingzhe and said, "Another bowl!"

Jingzhe rolled her eyes at Ah Zhi. "Of course it's good. Miss made it herself."

When Shen Xin and Shen Qiu saw this, they were stunned at first. Shen Qiu said, "Sister made it herself?"

"That's right," Shen Miao said flatly.

"Stop!" Shen Xin shouted, "You all are not allowed to drink anymore!" He shouted at Gu Yu, "Give me a big bowl!"

Luo Xueyan had just drunk the soup served by Bai Lu and was also very surprised. "Jiaojiao, you actually made this soup yourself? How did your culinary skills improve so much?"

The fragrance of the soup wafted out, making people drool. Shen Miao lowered her eyes and smiled. "I have been going to the kitchen quite often lately and learned one dish or two." In her previous life, in order to please Fu Xiuyi, she worked hard to hone her culinary skills. Later, when she went to the State of Qin, she learned to cook many exotic dishes too. After all, she had seen all kinds of grand royal banquets. Her horizons and cooking methods were much better than ordinary people. As for Jin Chuchu,

she was from a small place and it was her first time coming to the capital... Shen Miao glanced at Jing Chuchu. Jing Chuchu stood behind the pillar. This time, she did not lower her head. Instead, she bit her lip and looked at the group of soldiers who were drinking happily with tears in her eyes, as if she had suffered a grievance.

The soup made by the daughter of the first branch was much more precious than the snacks made by the grandniece of Old Madam Shen. Moreover, Shen Miao also prepared a portion for all the soldiers in the courtyard. In comparison, Jing Chuchu, who only made snacks for Shen Xin and Shen Qiu, appeared too stingy.

Jing Chuchu was embarrassed and angry. She looked at Shen Miao with hatred in her eyes.

Chapter 297: Intimidation (3)

Shen Qiu also wanted to scoop some soup for himself, but Gu Yu and the others refused to give it to him. Shen Qiu also sensed something and guessed that Shen Miao was probably angry with him, but he did not know what he did wrong. He could only look at Shen Miao pitifully. When everyone was almost done drinking, Shen Miao asked Bai Lu to take out a bowl from the bottom of the basket and said, "You like it sweet. This bowl is added with honey. Drink it."

"Sister, you're the best!" Shen Qiu was overjoyed. He snatched it and drank the soup in big mouthfuls.

When the soldiers received the soup made by Shen Miao, they were half touched and half delighted. They flattered Shen Miao, feeling that Shen Miao did not have the temperament of a high and mighty rich miss. She was approachable and beautiful.

Shen Miao was surrounded by soldiers, and Jing Chuchu was completely neglected. There were a few times when she wanted to leave, but in the end, she gritted her teeth and stayed.

When everyone went to practice swordsmanship again, Shen Xin and Luo Xueyan also joined them. Shen Qiu sat on the stone stool to rest. Only then did Shen Miao walk to Jing Chuchu and say with a smile, "Cousin, the snacks you made are not bad. However, what they need is something that can quench their thirst. Isn't the snack going to make them more thirsty?" Shen Miao smiled and said, "Next time, make soup instead."

Jing Chuchu's face was pale. Although she was angry, Jing Chuchu still lowered her head in a panic, as if she was very afraid. "Thank you for your advice, Cousin." With that, she looked at Shen Qiu, hoping that he would help her out.

Unfortunately, Shen Qiu was a complete blockhead when it came to understanding women. When he met Jing Chuchu's gaze, he felt puzzled. Shen Miao, on the other hand, smiled and said, "Brother, didn't you want to eat my cousin's snacks just now? Eat some."

"Ahem." Shen Qiu waved his hand. "I drank a bowl of soup just now and am a little full. I can't eat anymore. I'll eat it later."

Shen Miao was very satisfied. The bowl of soup given to Shen Qiu was especially big. She did not believe that Shen Qiu would still have the stomach to eat Jing Chuchu's snacks after having such a big bowl, unless Shen Qiu was a pig.

Jing Chuchu was a little disappointed. Shen Qiu stood up and said, "I'll go and practice too." Then, he walked away.

Looking at Shen Qiu's departing figure, Jing Chuchu was a little indignant. She wanted to say something, but she could only bite her lip and watch him leave. Shen Miao smiled and patted her hand. "I'm afraid your snacks won't taste good when they're cold. If you don't mind, you can send them to Second Brother."

"Second Brother?" Jing Chuchu looked at Shen Miao in confusion.

"That's right." Shen Miao smiled. "My brother used to live in the bitter cold land of the Northwest all year round. He can't appreciate these exquisite snacks, but my second brother is different. He is already an official at such a young age and is now working in the court. His future is limitless." Shen Miao shook her head and sighed. "Unfortunately, there's no one by his side to take care of him. Men are a fool when it comes to taking care of themselves. Cousin, this snack you made might suit his taste."

When Jing Chuchu heard this, she was a little uncertain. Shen Miao smiled and continued, "Maybe in the future, if Second Brother is married, his wife will prepare food for him. I wonder which girl will be so lucky to be my second sister-in-law. Cousin, you might not know this, but my second brother is the sweetheart of many young ladies in the capital."

"Second Young Master..." Jing Chuchu hesitated for a moment and asked, "Doesn't he have a girl he likes?"

Chapter 298: Intimidation (4)

Shen Miao sighed and said, "Second Brother is busy with court affairs all day. How can he have the time for relationships."

Jing Chuchu was deep in thought, so Shen Miao did not say anything. Seeing that Shen Qiu wasn't going to come back anytime soon, Jing Chuchu felt a little ill-at-ease and left.

After Jing Chuchu left, Shen Qiu came over and looked at Shen Miao carefully for a while before saying, "Sister, why are you acting strange today?"

"How am I strange?" Shen Miao said angrily, "Brother, are you angry that I interrupted you from eating your cousin's snacks just now?"

"That's not what I mean." Shen Qiu was so anxious to explain that his face turned red. However, Shen Miao waved her hand and said indifferently, "Forget it, but you've come of age now, and a lot of girls are coveting you. You have to open your eyes wide when you choose a future wife."

Shen Qiu understood what she meant. He said helplessly, "Sister, what are you talking about? That's not what Cousin wants. She's just here to deliver some snacks."

"If you really like her, eat all you want." After saying that, Shen Miao left without looking back. After coming back to the capital this time, Shen Qiu had never seen Shen Miao so angry at him. He was shocked and watched as Shen Miao walked away.

On the way back to the house, Gu Yu asked, "Miss, do you not like your cousin? Otherwise, why would you be so angry?"

"Yes, I don't like her." Shen Miao rubbed her forehead. She really hated Jing Chuchu to the core. Shen Qiu was such a dignified and upright person, but she made a cuckold out of him, caused him to break his legs, and drove him to kill the adulterer. Shen Miao wished she could skin Jing Chuchu alive. However, Shen Qiu was a kind person by nature and did not know that people could be so evil. Seeing that Shen Qiu was almost bewitched by Jing Chuchu again in this life, Shen Miao was furious.

"But Miss, didn't you tell her about Second Young Master?" Gu Yu said, "Perhaps she will turn to please Second Young Master." While talking with Jing Chuchu just now, Shen Miao didn't deliberately avoid the maids. Gu Yu could tell what Shen Miao meant.

Shen Miao shook her head. "She's not stupid. If she can be convinced by me just like that, she won't be Jing Chuchu anymore." Shen Miao smiled. "But we'll see."

The maids were a little puzzled, not understanding why Shen Miao was so wary of this timid and weak-looking cousin.

...

The Treasure Fragrance Chamber was the largest brothel in the capital. If brothels were divided into different grades, then the Treasure Fragrance Chamber would definitely be the top one. Any girl from it could outshine all the other girls in other brothels.

Because of that, the girls in the Treasure Fragrance Chamber were also the most expensive.

The beautiful girls at the door waved their handkerchiefs to attract the passers-by. A man in armor walked in, catching the attention of the girls.

The people who could afford to come to the Treasure Fragrance Chamber were either rich or noble, and most of them were young masters of rich families or officials. However, the man who just came in did not seem to be from a rich family, and the murderous aura on his body made the girls not dare to approach him. Until a middle-aged woman in a red dress walked out and smiled when she saw him.

"Young Master Mo, you're here again? Are you still looking for Liu Ying today?"

Mo Qing nodded and took out a banknote from his pocket and handed it to her. The woman took the banknote and smiled in satisfaction. "Young Master, follow me in. I'll bring you upstairs now. Liu Ying has been waiting for you for the past few days."

Mo Qing suppressed the discomfort in his heart and followed her upstairs with a calm expression.

Chapter 299: Intimidation (5)

The girls in the Treasure Fragrance Chamber were the most expensive. At the same time, the girls in the Treasure Fragrance Chamber were the best. Although Liu Ying was not the top girl in the Treasure Fragrance Chamber, she was quite famous. However, this was only relative to the rumors outside. In fact, new girls came in every day. They were all good-looking and talented. Men all liked the new and disliked the old, so there were fewer customers who came to look for Liu Ying.

However, recently, the girls in the Treasure Fragrance Chamber knew that Liu Ying, who no longer had her former glory, had recently received a big customer. A young man would come to look for her every few days. In the Treasure Fragrance Chamber, it was really rare to see a customer who chose the same girl every time. Everyone guessed that he wanted to redeem Liu Ying.

Mo Qing followed the woman to a small room upstairs. The woman in red smiled and left. On the soft couch, a young woman in a thin red dress was leaning against the wall, holding a jade Guqin and playing it. Her watery eyes were affectionate, and there was an ambiguous smile on her lips. Her clothes revealed half of her shoulders, making people's imagination run wild.

Mo Qing took a deep breath and sat down at the table. He poured himself a cup of tea and started his night as usual, sitting through the night.

The sound of the Guqin stopped abruptly, and Liu Ying looked flustered and exasperated. She walked up to Mo Qing and said angrily, "Young Master Mo, you've come here a few times, but everytime, you act like I don't exist. Are you making fun of me? Or do you think I'm dirty and not worthy of you?"

The girls in the brothel were all envious of her because a man was willing to choose her every time. However, they did not know that other than sitting there like a dummy, this man didn't do anything else. No matter what Liu Ying did, he did not even look at her, let alone do anything else.

Mo Qing shook his head but did not speak. He stared straight at the teacup in front of him, feeling extremely helpless. Shen Miao was right. Liu Ying was indeed a flirtatious woman. She used many tricks and methods to tease him, causing Mo Qing to almost lose control of himself. Now, sitting here for another moment was torture, but Shen Miao wanted him to continue doing so for a reason he wasn't aware of.

Liu Ying sat on Mo Qing's lap and reached out to hook his neck. She whispered into Mo Qing's ear, "Young Master Mo, are you just going to sit for another night?"

With a bang, Mo Qing pushed Liu Ying to the ground.

In a private room opposite the Treasure Fragrance Chamber, there was a dazzling array of jade plates on the table. Three people were sitting around it. A person who looked like a guard walked in from outside and whispered something into the ear of the purple-clothed youth sitting in the middle.

"Speaking of which," Ji Yushu said in confusion, "why did Miss Shen ask her guard to go to Treasure Fragrance Chamber to look for that girl?"

"Moreover, this guard doesn't do anything," Gao Yang added.

Gao Yang and Ji Yushu no longer treated Shen Miao as an ordinary girl. Everything she did seemed to be paving the path for a bigger plan. Therefore, when they found out that Shen Miao sent Mo Qing to the

Treasure Fragrance Chamber to look for a girl, their first reaction was that Shen Miao was dealing with someone again.

Men who were sent by All Knowing Scholar to find out what was going on came back to report. What was shocking was that the guard patronizing Liu Ying did nothing. He sat in her room for a night and then left. They carefully looked into Liu Ying's background. She was just a girl who was sold to a brothel. There was nothing special about her, so they did not understand why Shen Miao did this.

"Could it be that she wants to nurture a eunuch to work for her?" Ji Yushu's thoughts were always especially strange. "Now, she's probably letting that guard adapt to the life of a eunuch in advance."

"Your imaginations are always so wild." Gao Yang pondered for a moment. "I think she wants to rope in Liu Ying, or perhaps she wants to deal with the other two branches of the Shen family. Why Liu Ying though? There are many girls in Treasure Fragrance Chamber who are more charming and enchanting than Liu Ying." He looked at Xie Jingxing. "Xie Jingxing, what do you think about this?"

Chapter 300: Intimidation (6)

Xie Jingxing was looking out of the window. When he heard this, he glanced at the two of them lazily and said, "Don't the two of you have anything to do?"

"You're friends with Miss Shen. Aren't you curious?" Ji Yushu said, "Third Brother Xie, you're the smartest among us. You must know."

"I don't want to know." Xie Jingxing interrupted him. "I'm going out of the city for a while."

"Is it because of what happened at the Jade Rabbit Festival?" Gao Yang asked with a frown.

"The emperor plans to send Old Xie to war in spring." Xie Jingxing said, "We can't wait anymore." When he said "Old Xie", he was naturally referring to Xie Ding, the Marquis of Lin'an and his father.

Gao Yang was silent for a moment before saying, "In that case, I'm afraid there's not enough time."

"I heard that Shen Yuan has been very close to Prince Ding recently." Xie Jingxing smiled. "It seems like they are preparing to deal with the first branch of the Shen family."

"Is Miss Shen going to be in trouble again?" Ji Yushu was a little surprised. "Why does she always provoke these people? That Prince Ding is not to be trifled with. No one targeted by him had a good ending."

"Prince Ding is an unfathomable person." Gao Yang frowned. "Although he doesn't seem to be interested in power, his military strength is not inferior to others. Shen Xin has military power. The Shen family is a big family and is already feared by the royal family. If Prince Ding takes action, I'm afraid Shen Xin will be dealt a huge blow."

"Won't Miss Shen be in danger then?" Ji Yushu looked at Xie Jingxing. "Third Brother Xie, how are you going to help her?"

Xie Jingxing raised an eyebrow. "Why should I help her?"

“Aren’t you... friends?” Ji Yushu widened his eyes. “Didn’t you save her last time? Don’t you plan to help Miss Shen?”

Xie Jingxing looked at him with a faint smile. His eyes were as deep as water, and he looked extremely playful. His words were cold and indifferent as he said, “I need the Shen family to help me stall for time. It’s... very good if Prince Ding wants to deal with Shen Xin.”

Ji Yushu gasped.

...

In Prince Ding’s mansion in the capital.

The young man dressed in light-colored clothes looked cold, but when he spoke to his subordinates, he was extremely friendly.

This person was none other than Prince Ding, Fu Xiuyi.

At this moment, there were also a few men present. These people were all the subordinates of Prince Ding. He was not only good at using the right people, but also he treated them well. Other than giving his subordinates the money and land they deserved, most importantly, he would also give them respect unlike any other princes. It was precisely because of this that he recruited many talented people, and it was also because of these talented people that Fu Xiuyi’s plans were well-kept from the world, including Emperor Wen Hui.

The young man sitting in the middle was dressed in blue. His face looked a little out of place among other subordinates because he was too young. He stood up and Fu Xiuyi asked, “Shen Yuan, what is on your mind. Feel free to speak.”

Shen Yuan cupped his hands at Fu Xiuyi. As soon as he became an official in the imperial court, he secretly sided with Fu Xiuyi. Fu Xiuyi had an eye for talent. He knew that Shen Yuan was talented and ambitious, so naturally, Fu Xiuyi thought highly of him.

Shen Yuan said, “Now, everyone is secretly competing for military strength. Whoever has more military strength will have more leverage. Currently, although the Xie family has a lot of military strength, we can’t tackle them. His Majesty has requested the Marquis of Lin’an to go to war after spring, and he must be planning something. However, the Shen family is different.” Shen Yuan paused for a moment before continuing, “Shen Xin took the initiative to stay in the capital for half a year. There are many people who want to rope him in. The Shen army remains a constant variable. If we can’t get it, it’s better to destroy it.”

Shen Yuan was a member of the Shen family, but he used “The Shen family” instead of “My family”, which showed that he wanted to distance himself from Shen Xin. Fu Xiuyi looked at him with a meaningful smile. Perhaps he understood but pretended not to know. He said, “You’re right, but we can find any fault with Shen Xin. Even if we did, we don’t have a good cause to deal with him.”

Shen Yuan did not speak.

Fu Xiuyi's eyes narrowed, and his tone became even more friendly. "However, since you're in the Shen mansion, you must know something that others don't." He looked at Shen Yuan. "If you can really get rid of the Shen army, I will reward you handsomely."

After receiving the promise he wanted to hear, Shen Yuan said respectfully, "Your Highness, my people have been in the Shen army for a long time. When the Shen army was fighting in the northwest, they did something that they weren't supposed to do. Now, my people are still collecting evidence. Once the evidence is ample, I will definitely hand it over to you. I guarantee that even if we can't completely destroy the Shen army this time, we will at least make it suffer a huge blow."

Fu Xiuyi smiled faintly. "Then I'll wait for your good news."

Shen Yuan lowered his head and smiled.