

Venomous 441

Chapter 441: Two Years Later (3)

“That’s right.” Shen Miao said, “But it’s also an opportunity.”

“Cousin, what kind of opportunity do you think this is?” Luo Ling asked with a smile.

“It’s not easy for the Luo army to be reorganized in the past two years. His Majesty wants to make use of it. Although the higher we are, the more danger we will face, the Luo army already has the power to protect us. The Luo army is rebuilt by the Luo family and will only listen to the Luo family’s command, not the emperor. This is the Luo family’s own army, not Ming Qi’s. If the Luo army is benefited, the Luo family will also be benefited.”

It was said that all the lands in the world belong to the Emperor, and all the people in the world are Emperor’s people. Shen Miao clearly separated the Luo family from Ming Qi. If Luo Sui heard this, he would probably faint from anger. Such treacherous words clearly showed one’s ambition for rebellion. However, when the juniors of the Luo family heard this, although they were surprised, they did not feel angry.

Unlike their ancestors, when the younger generation of the Luo family was born, the Luo family was already on the decline. The royal family did not allocate money and forgot about the Luo army at the border. The younger generation had complaints and grudges, so over time, their loyalty towards the Imperial court was gradually worn away.

After a moment of silence, a trace of fanaticism appeared in Luo Sa’s eyes. He said, “Cousin Miao, you’re right.” He was violent and impulsive, completely different from Luo Ling. He rarely praised anyone. At this moment, it was obvious that he agreed with Shen Miao.

Luo Ling approved Shen Miao’s words too.

Luo Qian and Luo Tan were young and believed Shen Miao’s words for no reason. Therefore, the juniors all reached a consensus that it was a good thing that the Luo army was allocated money.

“Speaking of which.” Luo Tan leaned on the table and looked at Shen Miao. “Little Cousin, you are already 16 years old. Yesterday, one of my friends came to ask me if you’re married. If not, she wants to introduce her brother to you. Little Cousin, do you want to go and see him?”

Luo Qian cut in, “What nonsense are you talking about? Little Cousin is only 16 years old. You’re already 18 years old. Why don’t you worry about yourself?”

“Why should I worry about myself?” Luo Tan shook her head. “I’m so beautiful and smart. Even at the age of 80, people will still propose marriage to me. I’m just worried about my little cousin. She’s so soft and weak. She needs someone to protect her. Luo Qian, if you continue to be so not gentlemanly, I guarantee that no girl will marry you in the future!”

“Who said that no girl will marry me?” Luo Qian said indignantly, “If that’s really the case, there’s still my little cousin, right? My little cousin is kind-hearted. When that day comes, she will marry me and help me out, right?”

Luo Tan slapped his face away and said, "Why don't you take a look at yourself in the mirror? Brother Ling and Brother Sa are not married yet. Everyone is better than you. Brother Ling and Brother Sa, don't you want to marry Cousin Miao?"

Caught off guard by this sudden question, Luo Ling was stunned and blushed slightly. Luo Sa coughed and turned his head away. The atmosphere was a little awkward.

Luo Tan did not notice it at all. She smiled and rested her chin on her hand. "Little cousin, tell me, what kind of man do you like? A handsome man? A rich man? A good martial artist? A poet?"

Shen Miao looked at Luo Tan. Although the eyes of the three men in the room were darting around, their ears perked up. Shen Miao said, "Someone who can beat my brother."

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With a bang, Luo Qian slipped off his chair and fell down. He shouted aggrievedly, "No, no. Cousin Qiu is so good at martial arts. No one can beat him!"

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Coincidentally, on the other side, someone was talking about Shen Miao's marriage too.

In the room, Madam Ma, Madam Yu, and Luo Xueyan were talking. Unlike the Shen family in the capital, the sisters-in-law of the Luo family got along extremely well. Madam Yu was gentle, Madam Ma was outspoken, and Luo Xueyan was straightforward. The three women got along extremely well in the past two years.

Madam Yu held an invitation in her hand and said to Luo Xueyan, "This is an invitation from Mrs. Zhang in the city. She wants us to go to the Zhang family's mansion sometime." At this point, she hesitated for a moment and continued, "We have to bring Jiaojiao along."

When Madam Ma heard that, she smiled and said, "I mean, Mrs. Zhang usually looks down on us martial artists just because she has a scholar in her family. I was wondering why such an arrogant person would invite us over. It turns out that she has ulterior motives and wants to see Jiaojiao." Madam Ma nudged Luo Xueyan with her arm. "Xueyan, Jiaojiao is even more popular in Spring City than our father now."

As Shen Miao grew older and more beautiful, many families in Spring City came to ask if Shen Miao was engaged or married. Previously, the people in Spring City thought that girls from the capital must be very hard to please. Unexpectedly, in the past two years, Shen Miao struck them as someone calm and magnanimous and was extremely to the liking of those madams. In addition, Shen Miao was not bad-looking, and the Luo family was famous in Spring City. Almost everyday, there would be matchmakers coming to the Luo family to ask about Shen Miao's marriage.

At this point, Madam Ma said enviously, "It's really good to have such an outstanding daughter. She's not like Tan. Tan is older than Miao, but she's still fooling around every day. No matchmakers ever came to ask about her marriage. If this continues, will she become a spinster?" Madam Ma was originally just joking, but as she spoke, she became a little worried.

Luo Xueyan said, "Tan has a lively personality. That's a good thing. There will always be a suitable man for her. Sister-in-law, what's the hurry? As for Jiaojiao, she's just 16 years old. Why does she look even

more mature than an old woman in her sixties? Her personality is not like mine, nor is she like her father. I wonder who she gets that personality from.”

“Why are you worried?” Madam Ma said, “There aren’t many girls like Jiaojiao these days. Everyone says that she has a noble aura. In my opinion, even the empress in the palace doesn’t have such an aura. That’s why I said that Jiaojiao’s aura is natural.”

“That’s right.” Madam Yu also praised, “Sister-in-law and I have been in Spring City for so many years, but we haven’t seen a girl who is like Jiaojiao.”

Luo Xueyan shook her head and sighed. It was good that Shen Miao was obedient and sensible, but the calmness she exuded was in no way befitting a girl of her age. Luo Xueyan would rather Shen Miao be happy-go-lucky and lively like Luo Tan.

“Speaking of which,” Madam Yu said seriously, “Jiaojiao is already 16 years old now. If she is not going back to the capital, she has to get married sooner or later. Xueyan, do you have a suitable candidate in mind?”

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Luo Xueyan was a woman with a liberal mind. In the past, it was she who took the initiative to be with Shen Xin. She had never agreed to any of the marriages arranged by her parents. When she heard Madam Yu mention this, she was a little stunned. A moment later, Luo Xueyan said, “That depends on what Jiaojiao wants.”

“Xueyan, are you really willing to let a girl like Jiaojiao get married?” Madam Ma sighed and said, “She’s smart and good-tempered, and her personality is very lovable. If it were me, I definitely wouldn’t want to marry her off. I wouldn’t mind keeping her by my side for the rest of my life.” Unlike the families in the capital, the people in Spring City did not think that the sooner a girl got married, the better. On the contrary, they felt that the longer a girl stayed at home, the more desirable she would be. Madam Ma said, “Speaking of which, Ling and Sa are already at the age of marriage. How about... letting Jiaojiao marry one of them?”

When Madam Yu heard this, her eyes lit up. She had been a patient woman, but for the first time, she couldn’t wait to say, “That works! I think Ling and Sa both like Jiaojiao, especially Sa. You all know that Sa usually finds girls annoying, but in the past two years, he has been going to Jiaojiao’s place a lot. The cousins are very close. I know my son very well. He definitely likes Jiaojiao.”

Luo Xueyan opened her mouth, but before she could speak, she saw Madam Yu shake her head again. “But Sa is impulsive and doesn’t know how to dote on girls. If Jiaojiao marries him, I’m afraid she’ll suffer, and that kid is a blockhead. Ling is better. He has a gentle personality and is more mature. Speaking of which, there have been many people who have proposed marriage to Ling in the past few years, but Ling doesn’t like it. I can’t persuade him no matter what. He definitely likes Jiaojiao too. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have gone to talk to her as soon as he comes back from the camp.”

As Madam Yu continued to talk, Madam Ma was unhappy and said, “Sister-in-law, did you forget about Qian. He is about the same age as Jiaojiao. They’re quite close usually. Although Qian is a little naughty, he’s considerate. It’s best if they can be together. Also, Tan and Qiu are a good match too!” After saying that, Madam Ma looked at Luo Xueyan. “Xueyan, what do you think?”

Luo Xueyan was speechless.

Two pairs of eager eyes looked at her. Luo Xueyan said, "That depends on what the children want..." She did not expect Madam Yu and Madam Ma to have such thoughts. However, after thinking about it carefully, Luo Xueyan did not think that it was a bad idea. First of all, they were all family, and second of all, the juniors of the Luo family were all upright and good-looking. She didn't want her future son-in-law to be rich or have a high official position as long as he could treat her daughter well. The sons of the Luo family, Luo Ling, Luo Sa, and Luo Qian, were gentle, brave, and lively. Most importantly, they were kind-hearted. If Shen Miao was married to any of them, her life in the future would only be sweet and not bitter.

However, Luo Xueyan still had to ask Shen Miao. She did not know what kind of person Shen Miao liked. At first, she thought that Shen Miao liked people like Fu Xiuyi, but in the past two years, Shen Miao had never mentioned Fu Xiuyi at all, which gradually made her feel relieved.

"Why don't you find an opportunity to ask Jiaojiao what she thinks?" Madam Ma hurriedly said, "If Jiaojiao really likes one of the boys, no matter who it is, it will be a blessing to the Luo family. We have to hold a wedding for them as soon as possible. The son they have will definitely be smart, and the daughter they have will definitely be beautiful."

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Luo Xueyan was a little embarrassed. "Sister-in-law, Miao is the youngest. Why should the youngest get married first?"

Madam Ma waved her hand. "I'm just afraid that Jiaojiao will be secretly taken by someone without us knowing."

Just as they were chatting and laughing, a servant at the door suddenly came to report, "Madams, there's a message from the palace. General wants you all to hurry to the front hall."

"Didn't the people from the palace just leave? Why are they here again? Are they here to send money again?" Madam Ma stood up and asked casually.

"I think they are here to summon Master Shen back to the capital," the servant replied.

Luo Xueyan froze.

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The front hall of the Luo family was in chaos.

The imperial edict wrote that Emperor Wen Hui wanted to give the title of the mighty general back to Shen Xin and asked him to return to the capital with his family. He even said that he would hand over the Shen army to Shen Xin.

Two years ago, Emperor Wen Hui humiliated Shen Xin in front of the entire court. Now, he was giving Shen Xin a sweet candy. However, whether Shen Xin was willing to eat this sweet candy or not was another matter.

Luo Sui sat on the high seat. Over the past two years, because he had been busy reorganizing the Luo army, his hair had almost turned all white. However, he was still as intimidating as before. Perhaps because he had a decent army under his command, he looked even more like a general. He said, "The Ming Qi tribute is about to begin. The emperor wants you to return to the capital before the tribute."

A tribute would be held every hundred years. The previous tribute in Ming Qi was almost taken advantage of by the State of Qin. At that time, the late emperor relied on the Xie and Shen families to barely tide over the crisis. Now, other than the State of Qin, even the Daliang Dynasty would come.

If the State of Qin was only enough to make Ming Qi worry, the Daliang Dynasty was enough to make Ming Qi afraid. The Daliang Dynasty was located in the south. The country was rich and powerful, and the army was strong. Emperor Yong Le was a wise emperor. Unlike the foul imperial court of Ming Qi, the Daliang Dynasty was filled with meritorious and loyal people. If the Daliang Dynasty wanted to, it was only a matter of time before they annexed Ming Qi. However, for some reason, Emperor Yong Le did not seem to have such an intention. Of course, there was another possibility. Emperor Yong Le wanted to destroy the State of Qin and Ming Qi together and unify the world.

It was just a matter of time before the world was unified, but the only unknown thing was when the day would come. Emperor Wen Hui clearly did not want to see this day while he was on the throne. However, ever since Xie Jingxing died, Xie Ding had no intention of going to court, and Shen Xin was bereft of his military power and chased to Spring City.

No one knew if Emperor Wen Hui regretted making the decision of taking Shen Xin's military power, but at the moment, Emperor Wen Hui hoped that Shen Xin could come back to the capital to hold the fort. The fact that Shen Xin could help Luo Sui rebuild a broken army proved his outstanding military capability.

Emperor Wen Hui was making it clear that Ming Qi needed Shen Xin.

In the past, perhaps Shen Xin would appear when he was needed, and when he was not, he would quietly leave. However, after being treated unfairly by the royal family, he might not be so loyal anymore.

"You should go back." Luo Sui said, "Shen Xin, take back everything that was taken away from you. Show them what the son-in-law of the Luo family and the son of the Shen family is like."

Shen Miao suddenly looked up.

She expected Emperor Wen Hui to call Shen Xin back to the capital two years later, and she also expected the situation in the capital to change drastically. However, she did not expect General Luo, who had always been old-fashioned and stubborn, to say something that betrayed his treasonable intent.

Shen Miao looked at Luo Sui with her eyes widened. Luo Sui smiled and looked at her. "Girl, you think so too. Am I right?"

Everyone in the hall looked at Shen Miao. Luo Lianying and Luo Liantai's expressions changed slightly, but they did not say anything.

Shen Miao sighed in her heart. At the end of the day, she couldn't hide it from an old general like Luo Sui. Luo Sui had a pair of sharp eyes and had seen the world. Perhaps from the beginning, he had vaguely guessed what she was up to.

She thanked Luo Sui for his trust and support. It felt good to have a family behind her. Shen Miao looked at Luo Sui and smiled. "Yes, Grandpa."

Luo Sui laughed out loud. Luo Ling looked at Shen Miao with a smile in his eyes, and the corners of Luo Sa's mouth curled up. Luo Tan and Luo Qian looked at each other in confusion.

Luo Xueyan and Shen Qiu had complicated expressions. They had left the capital for two years. Now... were they still going back?

Were they going back to take back what was theirs? Military power, prestige, reputation, and dignity.

They had to show the world what the real Shen family was like. A tiger would not turn into a dog just because it fell off a cliff. A dragon that swam in the water would one day soar into the sky.

Shen Xin cupped his hands at Luo Sui and said, "I'll listen to you, General!"

Chapter 445: Returning to the capital (1)

The road from Spring City to the capital was bumpy and long. It took half a year to make the trip. The day after Shen Xin received the imperial edict, he set off. Luo Ling and Luo Tan also followed along.

Luo Ling was asked by Luo Sui to go. As the eldest grandson of the Luo family, Luo Ling would eventually take on the responsibility as the head of the entire Luo family. Luo Sui wanted Luo Ling to go to the capital to broaden his horizon and understand the current situation in Ming Qi. Luo Sa had to stay in Spring City and continue to train the Luo army with his elders.

Luo Tan and Luo Qian weren't allowed to go, but Luo Tan secretly climbed into the carriage and hid in the box. When they were far away from Spring City, she suddenly crawled out. At that time, it was too late to send her back. They could only get someone to send a letter back to inform the Luo family.

Luo Tan was yearning for the capital. After repeatedly promising not to cause trouble, she was allowed to stay.

This time, Shen Xin also brought back a batch of the Luo army. This batch was personally trained by Shen Xin and Shen Qiu, and it consisted of the most elite soldiers. Every one of them could be considered a leader in other teams. This batch was nurtured by Shen Xin himself and followed him as guards.

They set off in spring and only arrived in late autumn. The green trees along the way turned into withered leaves and fell into the soil with the wind. When the group started to put on clothes, they were about to reach the capital.

The sky gradually darkened. The group of people rested in an inn outside the city. Shen Qiu said, "Let's enter the city tomorrow morning and find a house to stay in."

Before they left, the Shen family had split up, so it was naturally impossible for them to return to the Shen mansion.

Previously, when they were in the Luo family, Luo Xueyan told Luo Sui about the Shen family splitting up. Luo Ling and Luo Tan were not surprised. Luo Tan rested her chin on her hand and said with a yearning expression, "Auntie, Uncle, let's find a bustling place to stay, okay? I've never been to the capital."

Luo Xueyan smiled and said, "East of the city was the most bustling place in the capital, but we haven't been back for two years. I wonder if it has changed."

"That's simple." Luo Tan asked the waiter, "Waiter, do you know the most bustling place in the capital?"

The waiter did not know the identity of this group of people, but seeing that they had brought so many guards and were dressed exquisitely, especially the little girl sitting in the middle, he knew at a glance that she was from a noble family. He did not dare to be negligent and replied enthusiastically, "Miss, there are many busy places in the capital. The east and south of the city are quite busy. There are many shops in the east of the city. It's more convenient for girls to buy rouge and powder. There are many restaurants in the south of the city. If you want to eat something, go to the south."

Luo Tan was obviously not satisfied with this answer. She frowned and said, "Is that all?"

The waiter was afraid of making her unhappy, so he thought for a moment and added, "Miss, if you really want to have fun, go to the south of the city. Recently, people from the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty have come. The emperor provided accommodation for them in Yanqing Alley in the south of the city."

"What's Yanqing Alley?" Luo Tan asked.

"Yanqing Alley is the most expensive land in the capital." Shen Qiu explained, "It's a good place that even the royal family can't afford to live in. Even the princes didn't live there. Only the empress's brother lived in Yanqing Alley for a while."

Luo Tan was surprised at first. "Yanqing Alley is actually so expensive." Then, she was a little disappointed. "But since it's so expensive, we definitely can't afford a house there."

Chapter 446: Return to the Capital (2)

When the waiter heard this, he suspected that his impression of this group of people was wrong. They were just country bumpkins who had just entered the city for the first time.

"It's fine." Shen Miao said, "There's a street next to Yanqing Alley that's adjacent to a restaurant. It's outside the alley, so the price is not that expensive. We can find a house there."

As soon as she said that, the waiter subconsciously said, "Miss, you are right."

"Jiaojiao, do you want to live in a busy place too?" Shen Xin asked. Shen Miao was not a person who liked to join in the fun, but from what she said, she seemed to be interested.

"I think it's not a bad idea." Shen Miao smiled.

"That's great." Luo Tan looked at Shen Miao with shining eyes. "Little Cousin, you're the best!" She thought that Shen Miao said that on purpose for her, so she was very grateful.

Shen Miao looked up at the waiter. "Are the people from the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty already here?"

The waiter had never taken his eyes off this girl who looked the youngest from the beginning. He felt that when she sat there, even her chair had become golden. When he heard Shen Miao's question, he immediately replied respectfully, "Yes. The Ming Qi tribute will begin in a few days. The State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty have sent people to pay tribute to the emperor. Now, these people are all arranged to stay in the mansion in Yanqing Alley."

"Who from the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty are sent here?" Shen Miao asked.

The waiter scratched his head. "The State of Qin sent the Crown Prince and Princess Mingan. The Daliang Dynasty sent the younger brother of Emperor Yong Le, Prince Rui."

Shen Miao lowered her eyes and said, "Thank you."

After the waiter left, Luo Ling asked, "Cousin Miao, do you have any thoughts about the people from the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty?"

Shen Miao smiled. "Nothing. I just find it a little strange."

Luo Tan smiled and said, "No matter what, when we reach the capital tomorrow, we can watch the show."

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In the palace of the capital, in the emperor's bedroom, it was filled with a strong smell of medicine. The incense burning in the incense burner made people feel even more depressed.

On the dragon bed, Emperor Wen Hui was leaning on the couch with his eyes half-closed. The beautiful woman in palace clothes beside him was feeding him medicine spoon by spoon. This person was none other than Consort Dong.

She fed him extremely patiently and carefully. She would blow on the spoon until the medicine was cold. She tried to test the temperature before slowly feeding it to Emperor Wen Hui. As she fed him, she gently patted Emperor Wen Hui's back, making his breathing smoother.

After the bowl of medicine was emptied, Consort Dong grabbed a sugar-stained fruit from the enamel bowl at the side and fed it to Emperor Wen Hui. Emperor Wen Hui frowned and swallowed it. After the last trace of bitterness in his mouth faded, he said, "It's really thoughtful of you."

"Your Majesty, I'm just afraid that you might find the medicine too bitter, so I prepared some." Consort Dong smiled gently and said, "Eat some of this fruit for my sake."

Emperor Wen Hui chuckled. His eyes softened as he said, "In this palace, you know me the best."

Two years was enough to change many things. No matter how vigorous Emperor Wen Hui was, he could not withstand the corrosion of time. He was much older and his health was deteriorating.

The crown prince's illness was also getting serious, and the crown prince's faction was gradually losing. Prince Zhou and Prince Jing were ambitious and pushy, and Prince Xuan and Prince Li were eyeing the

throne covetously. Because of this, Emperor Wen Hui found all the consorts in the harem annoying. At this moment, Consort Dong and Prince Ding, who were not openly involved in this game of thrones, caught his eye.

Chapter 447: Return to the Capital (3)

When Emperor Wen Hui was sick, Consort Dong was the one he liked to summon the most to serve him. Even when she was gaining the emperor's favor, Consort Dong was still as cautious as usual and would not take the initiative to talk to Emperor Wen Hui about Prince Ding. Emperor Wen Hui was even more satisfied. Occasionally, he would talk to Consort Dong about things that did not go well in the imperial court.

"The tribute is about to begin." Emperor Wen Hui sighed. "The person who went to deliver the imperial edict said that Shen Xin will return to the capital in the next few days. I chased him out two years ago. I'm afraid he's still angry with me. If not for the urgency of the situation, I would definitely not have opened the door to the wolf."

"Your Majesty." Consort Dong smiled and said, "General Shen is your official, so he naturally has to obey your order. Why are you worried?"

"My official?" Emperor Wen Hui sneered. "This official is even more influential than me. How can I be sure that he only wants to be an official? Back then, Xie Ding was the same. However, now that he lost his son and the Xie family is weak, I can't be bothered to kill them all. After the tribute is over, Shen Xin... I can't be relieved with him around."

Consort Dong stopped talking. At this moment, if she spoke, she would be suspected of interfering in politics. Therefore, she lowered her head and did not say a word.

At this moment, a person was standing in Consort Dong's Shufang Palace. That person was dressed in luxurious clothes and had a tall crown. He was cold and elegant. It was Fu Xiuyi. Compared to two years ago, he looked more mature and had an indescribable charm.

"Shen Xin is resting outside the city today. He will enter the city tomorrow morning." The guard in front of him bowed and whispered to him.

Fu Xiuyi held the cup in his hand tightly, thinking about something. A moment later, he suddenly smiled. "Mr. Pei was right. They are indeed coming back..." He said, "Pass down the order. When Shen Xin returns to the capital, he has to receive the utmost decorum."

The guard cupped his hands and quickly left.

Fu Xiuyi stood with his hands behind his back, a pensive look flashing across his face. Two years ago, the drastic move from Shen Xin disrupted his plan. Now that Shen Xin was back in the capital, Fu Xiuyi had a feeling that this was also Shen Xin's preplanned move. Perhaps Shen Xin had long known that he would return to the capital, so he was not at all hesitant when leaving that day.

In that case, how about roasting the Shen family on the grill again? He would use the Shen family as a target for Emperor Wen Hui, Prince Zhou, Prince Li, and even the State of Qin to shoot at. He was a very vengeful person and hated being played by others.

If they dared to play with him, Fu Xiuyi would make sure the Shen family paid the price.

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The next morning, Shen Xin and the others set off again. They would be able to reach the capital before noon. Because they still had to find a house, the sooner they arrived, the better.

When they reached the city gate of the capital, the guards looked at Shen Xin's token and were immediately filled with respect. "It's General Shen!" As they spoke, they got someone to quickly open the city gate and welcome Shen Xin and the others in.

Luo Tan said, "Uncle, they seem to respect you very much. It seems your official rank is very high."

Shen Qiu and Shen Miao frowned at the same time. When they left the capital that day, those guards gave them a cold shoulder, eager to hit them when they were down. Now, they were so enthusiastic. It was definitely not just because Shen Xin's title was reinstated. It was probably... because they were instructed to do so by someone.

Luo Tan lifted the curtain and looked out. She exclaimed, "This is the capital. It's so big and busy. There are many more people here than in Spring City. Ah, little cousin, the girls here are really beautiful. How can they be so beautiful? Oh my god, even the young men here are fair and tender."

Chapter 448: Returning to the capital (4)

Someone nearby heard her voice and turned to look. The moment he saw the group of people, he screamed, "It's General Shen. General Shen is back!"

Shen Xin had always remained a respectable figure in the hearts of the people of Ming Qi. In the past two years, the Xie family couldn't recover from the death of Xie JIngxing and the Shen family moved away, it really made people feel sad. When the people of the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty came to the capital, they suddenly felt that no one was there to protect them anymore. At this moment, Shen Xin's appearance undoubtedly gave the people a boost of confidence. Immediately, more and more people surrounded Shen Xin and exclaimed, "General Shen is back!"

For a moment, the cheering crowd almost blocked the entire street. The citizens were shouting fanatically, and their faces were filled with admiration. Luo Tan covered her mouth. "Oh my god, Uncle is so respected by the people in the capital."

Outside, Luo Ling and the others looked a little troubled. It was a good thing to be welcomed and praised. Every year, when Shen Xin returned to the capital in triumph, he would receive the respect of the people. However, this time, Shen Xin did not come back after winning a battle. Instead, he was summoned back by the emperor two years after he was chased out of the capital. The louder the cheers of the people, the louder the slap was on the emperor. How could the emperor be happy with that?

In the carriage, Luo Xueyan and Shen Miao's expressions darkened, especially Shen Miao's. Her gaze suddenly turned cold. Only Luo Tan did not know the hidden danger and was happy.

The street was blocked, so Shen Xin could only ask his guards to explain to the people. When the people heard this, although they were still standing on both sides of the street and looking, they were not as excited as before and made their way.

Mo Qing and Ah Zhi rode their horses to find a house first. Just as Shen Miao said, there was a street next to Yanqing Alley in the south of the city, and the house there was not bad. Now that Shen Xin had spent a lot of money on reorganizing the Luo army, he was not as rich as before. Even so, Shen Miao insisted on living in a house in the south of the city, so Shen Xin agreed without hesitation.

The carriage headed south of the city.

The closer they were to Yanqing Alley, the fewer people there were. This was because most of the people living around Yanqing Alley were either rich or noble. The commoners could not afford to live there. Most of the commoners who followed along had dispersed gradually, and the carriage was moving smoothly. Mo Qing and the others quickly returned to report that they had already found a house. The renter trusted Shen Xin, so he didn't ask for a security deposit.

When they were only a wall away from Yanqing Alley, a gust of wind suddenly blew open the curtain of the carriage Shen Miao was sitting in.

Shen Miao narrowed her eyes. Seeing this, Luo Tan asked, "What's wrong?"

Shen Miao glanced at the curtain of the carriage and shook her head. "Nothing." However, she was secretly alarmed. Just now, she actually felt like she was being watched. That kind of gaze made her extremely uncomfortable.

On a tall building in the distance, a young man holding a jade flute and a woman stood side by side. The woman was as beautiful as a flower and was wearing a golden dress. She had large eyes and a small mouth, and her entire body was covered in pearls. This tacky jewelry did not look ugly on her. Instead, it made her look exquisite and beautiful. She glanced at the carriage in the distance and said disdainfully, "Is this General Shen's family? Looks like he's not what he used to be."

The man beside her was about 20 years old and looked a little like her. He was considered handsome, but because his nose was a little crooked, he looked more vicious. He smiled and said, "To be able to make the Ming Qi royal family afraid, he's not simple."

Chapter 449: Returning to the Capital (5)

"Crown Prince, you must be joking again." The girl frowned and said arrogantly, "Back then, the Xie family was also above the law, but now after Xie Jingxing died, they are in a complete mess. The Shen family might be the second Xie family."

The man smiled and did not continue after the girl.

On the other side, someone was leaning against the building. The lush evergreen trees covered half of his figure, revealing only the corners of his golden robe. He held the teacup in front of him with one hand. His hand was handsome and strong with a white jade ring on his middle finger, making his entire hand look like it was carved out of jade.

The corners of his mouth slowly curled into a smile.

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The house Mo Qing found was across the street from Yanqing Alley. After passing through an alley, it would be the busiest restaurant in the south of the city. The location was very good. The landlord was

also very easy to talk to. Luo Xueyan and Shen Xin were both straightforward people, and the price given by the landlord was fair. That night, they decided to buy the house.

As soon as they settled down, a eunuch from the palace sent an imperial edict to Shen Xin to ask him to go to the palace to meet the emperor the next day. Emperor Wen Hui was impatient, obviously because the situation was really critical now. After receiving the imperial edict and busying himself with unpacking the things, it was already late. After dinner, because they had been travel-worn for a long time, they couldn't wait to hit the bed.

Shen Miao and Luo Tan lived in the adjacent courtyard. The house here was not as spacious as the Shen Mansion, but it was considered neat and clean. However, Shen Xin and Shen Qiu felt a little disappointed that they could not train in the courtyard. Luo Xueyan and Luo Tan were extremely satisfied. Shen Miao had never cared about living conditions, so she naturally had no objections.

At night, Luo Tan sneaked into Shen Miao's room to talk.

Luo Tan sat on Shen Miao's bed with a cloak around her and said, "Little Cousin, I can't sleep. Can we talk for a while?"

"What do you want to talk about?" Shen Miao asked Jingzhe and the others to leave while she lit the oil lamp. At this moment, she was in no mood to sleep, so she casually found a book and placed it on the table to flip through, but she did not read it seriously.

"I didn't expect the capital to be like this." Luo Tan's tone was filled with both disappointment and joy. "I grew up in Spring City and thought that the outside world was the same as Spring City. I didn't expect the capital to be bigger and livelier than what the storyteller said. Cousin, I'm a little afraid."

Shen Miao smiled. "What's there to be afraid of?"

"I'm new to this place, so of course I'm afraid. Although Brother Ling is also here, this is not Spring City we are familiar with. Cousin, is there a time when you feel afraid like this? Back then, when Aunt and Uncle were in the northwest and left you alone in the capital, weren't you afraid?"

"There's nothing to be afraid of," Shen Miao replied indifferently. Back then, staying in the Shen family was not scary to her, because in her eyes, the people of the Shen family were all her family. Was there a time when she felt afraid because she was new to the place? That was back when she was in the State of Qin.

At the thought of the State of Qin, Shen Miao's eyes narrowed. She suddenly thought of what the waiter had said today. The people from the State of Qin and the Daliang Dynasty were both here. In her previous life, at this time, she saw the Crown Prince of the State of Qin and the people from the Daliang Dynasty. At that time, the Daliang Dynasty was already showing some ambitions to annex Ming Qi. The Ming Qi royal family was afraid, so in order to counterattack the Daliang Dynasty, after Fu Xiuyi ascended the throne, he formed an alliance with the State of Qin and sent Shen Miao, the empress, to the State of Qin as hostage. The Crown Prince of the State of Qin, Huangfu Hao, was a person with a vicious heart and, for some reason, liked to go against Shen Miao. Princess Ming An was even more arrogant and terrifying. Many of her difficult and humiliating days in the State of Qin were caused by this pair of siblings.

Chapter 450: Returning to the Capital (6)

As for Prince Rui of the Daliang Dynasty... Shen Miao frowned. Back then, during the Ming Qi tribute, the envoy sent by the Daliang Dynasty did not seem to be this Prince Rui, but another royal member. This Prince Rui was a well-known figure. He was Emperor Yong Le's brother, but he did not show up much, and the outside world knew very little about him. In her previous life, even as the empress of Ming Qi, Shen Miao knew very little about this Prince Rui, and Fu Xiuyi did not mention him either.

In the end, some things had indeed changed.

Luo Tan did not notice that Shen Miao was in a daze and continued, "I used to tell myself that if I ever went to the capital in my lifetime, I would definitely visit the young marquis of the Xie family. But... It's not going to happen anymore." At this point, she actually felt a little sad. "Why didn't he wait for me to come and see him?"

Shen Miao paused for a moment, and the figure that she had rarely thought of in the past two years gradually became clear in her mind. When she returned to the capital, she found a servant who lived in the original house and asked him about what had happened in the past two years. Ever since Xie Jingxing died, the Xie army suffered a huge blow, and the news caused Xie Ding to age ten years overnight. Xie Ding wanted to step down from his position, but Emperor Wen Hui did not allow him to. Although Xie Ding still had an official title, he was in low spirits and didn't even go to the imperial court. On the other hand, his two illegitimate sons had both become officials. Although they did not have a high status in the imperial court, they had a good reputation. In a few years, they would probably be able to become the best among the younger generation of Ming Qi.

When the news of Xie Jingxing's death spread to the capital, Princess Rong Xin went to the Marquis's Residence to make a fuss. She scolded Xie Ding for being heartless and the culprit of both Princess Yuqing and Xie Jingxing's death. Princess Rong Xin cried madly. She almost destroyed the entire Marquis's Residence. Then, she lived in seclusion and rarely came out.

In the past two years, the Su family, which was on good terms with the Marquis of Lin'an, had also been declining. All in all, the decline of the Xie family started from the death of Xie Jingxing.

People of the capital also felt bad about the loss of this talented young man. He was a hero on the battlefield, but in the end, he died a tragic death. When the girls of Ming Qi heard the news of Xie Jingxing's death, they shed tears of sadness and were brokenhearted.

Shen Miao looked at the dancing flame and lowered her eyes. In the blink of an eye, she saw that Luo Tan had already fallen asleep on the bed.

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Luo Xueyan combed her long hair with a comb. Although she was already the mother of two children, her hair was still black and shiny without any white hair, just like a young girl.

Shen Xin took off his heavy armor and heard Luo Xueyan say, "I don't know why but I feel very ill-at-ease about us entering the palace tomorrow."

"What are you afraid of?" Shen Xin walked behind her and held her shoulder, comforting her. "It's not the first time we've entered the palace. Don't worry. Nothing will happen with me around."

Luo Xueyan glanced at him. "We both know very well that the person in the palace probably has a knot in his heart. Previously, I told my father about this. My father said that he was afraid that His Majesty would use something to tie the Shen family down."

Shen Xin frowned. "Madam, what do you mean?"

"Jiaojiao and Qiu are not married yet." Luo Xueyan reminded him, "It would have been good if the two of them could get married in Spring City. However, I didn't expect the emperor's imperial edict to come so quickly. Now that our Shen family is back in power, I'm afraid many people in the capital are watching us closely. Will the emperor bring up Qiu and Jiaojiao's marriage?"

Shen Xin was shocked. "Impossible! I won't let that happen!" No matter what, Shen Xin would never allow Shen Qiu and Shen Miao's marriages to become a tool for politics.

"Qiu can wait, but Jiaojiao can't." Luo Xueyan said, "Jiaojiao is already 16 years old. In the capital, at this age, girls need to be engaged. After two years, she'll be 18 years old. It's just the right time for her to get married. We have to help Jiaojiao find a good husband while there's no move from the royal family."

"Why are you in such a hurry?" Shen Xin hesitated and said, "There's no good family around here. Moreover, we still need time to get to know their character."

"What do you think about..." Luo Xueyan looked at him. "Ling?"