

Young Lady 301

Chapter 301 – Who Asked To Change The Rooms

When Wei Qiufu saw Wei Yuewu, she stood up with concern and asked, “Sixth Younger Sister, why are you back so late? How are your legs? Do you need an imperial doctor to come and take a look?”

It was still early. The other young ladies who had returned were chatting in groups under the corridor near Chu Xiu Palace’s gate. Wei Qiufu happened to be among them, talking happily with others.

Wei Qiufu was indeed a sophisticated person. After what happened in the Plum Blossom Nunnery, the young ladies who used to be close to her all distanced themselves from her. As for those who had been indifferent to her, they weren’t even on speaking terms with her after the accident.

After she returned to the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang, almost no one in the other mansions sent her any invitation.

She did not expect that in such a short period of time, Wei Qiufu had turned the table and made the other young ladies look at her with admiration. It seemed that she had once again become the noble and elegant Fourth Young Lady of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang.

“Thank you for your concern, Fourth Elder Sister. I’m fine!” Wei Yuewu smiled slightly, and a trace of coldness flashed in her eyes. Wei Qiufu really didn’t let go of any chance to set her up.

Everyone entered the Palace together and accompanied the Third Princess to pray in the Buddha Hall. While the others were fine, she had to be treated by an imperial doctor. In that case, what would the others think of her? Wouldn’t they think that she, the Sixth Young Lady of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang, was even more arrogant and willful than the Third Princess?

It was indeed like killing two birds with one stone. While expressing her sisterhood and deep concern for her, Wei Qiufu also set her up. She was really sinister!

“Are you really alright?” Wei Qiufu looked worried. She walked over, held Wei Yuewu’s hand and took a closer look at her. “Sixth Younger Sister, why is your face so pale? Let... Let me get an imperial doctor for

you. We just entered the Palace and you were injured. How can I explain this to grandmother and Eldest Uncle after I return? Someone..."

As she spoke, she raised her hand and was about to get someone to run the errand.

"Fourth Elder Sister, I'm really fine!" Wei Yuewu hurriedly stopped her and reminded her in a soft voice. "Fourth Elder Sister, we are now in the imperial palace!"

This was the imperial palace, so no one could act casually. While Wei Yuewu could not casually fetch an imperial doctor, Wei Qiufu naturally could not order people around casually either.

What she said was very reasonable. Compared with Wei Qiufu, she was more sensible because she knew this was the imperial palace, so that even though she was a little uncomfortable, she forced herself to endure the pain rather than casually order the eunuchs and palace maids about.

Wei Qiufu did not expect Wei Yuewu to make everyone look at her with a little more suspicion by casually saying a few words. The atmosphere she had labored to create was immediately destroyed. She secretly gritted her teeth, but she did not show anything on her face.

"Sixth Younger Sister, you are right. I was too concerned about you and forgot we are now in the imperial palace!" Wei Qiufu looked as if she was grateful for Wei Yuewu's reminding, not concealing her indiscreet behavior at all.

Hearing these humble words of Wei Qiufu, some young ladies could not help but speak for her.

A young lady dressed in pink glanced sideways at Wei Yuewu and said bluntly, "Sixth Young Lady, you really don't know what's good for you. The Fourth Young Lady was worried about you. If she didn't care about you, why would she speak like that?"

"Sixth Young Lady, no matter what mistakes the Fourth Young Lady made, she is your elder sister. Do you really think it is proper for you, a younger sister, to scold the Fourth Young Lady in front of everyone?" Another young lady in green also stood out.

Looking at the other ladies who were also having indignant expressions and then at Wei Qiufu who appeared much aggrieved but did not say a word, Wei Yuewu slowly curled the corners of her mouth into a faint cold smile.

It turned out that she had been prepared to attack her here!

“The two young ladies, what do you think I should say? Do you want me to follow my Fourth Elder Sister and fetch an imperial doctor? After making such a big fuss, everyone will say I am arrogant, willful, and not properly educated by the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. Do you think I should do that to express my thanks to my Fourth Elder Sister for her concern about me? Don’t you think that I shall bring shame to the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang by doing that? Besides, others will think that our grandmother has not taught us well, so that we are so presumptuous even in the Palace!”

Wei Yuewu uttered those words with a cold smile. She looked around and said calmly, “The two young ladies, why are you so angry with me? Could it be that you want to disgrace the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang?”

Although Wei Qiufu was her elder sister, she was nothing compared with their grandmother, the Madam Dowager of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. It was definitely the most important for Wei Yuewu to be filial to the Madam Dowager. Besides, she must also consider the reputation of the entire mansion of Marquis Hua Yang.

Everyone present was from an aristocratic family. They all knew that the reputation of an aristocratic family could not be tarnished. Sometimes, for the sake of the reputation of the entire aristocratic family, they would even have to sacrifice their own life. By comparison, sisterhood wasn’t worth mentioning at all.

On second thought, some young ladies realized that even if Wei Yuewu really felt a little uncomfortable, it was quite inappropriate to fetch an imperial doctor. Was this really the idea of the Fourth Miss Wei, who had always enjoyed a good reputation for being intelligent and accomplished?

When Wei Qiufu saw that there was a trace of suspicion in the eyes of several young ladies, she was secretly panicked. She did not expect that Wei Yuewu would be so quick-witted. She smiled and said, “Alright, Sixth Younger Sister, it was indeed my fault for being too concerned about you to think carefully before making the suggestion. Let’s go back and rest first!”

With that, she was about to leave with Wei Yuewu. The two of them were now living in a different place from the other young ladies.

“Fourth Elder Sister, don’t be in a hurry to leave. Let me rest here for a while. My legs really hurt a little!” Wei Yuewu shook her head and sat down weakly in the corridor.

Jin Ling hurriedly squatted down and massaged her legs.

Wei Yuewu’s face had been pale. What was more, she had just suffered the pain caused by the illusion. At this time, her face was as white as paper. People could tell at a glance that she was really not feeling well.

A moment ago, Wei Qiufu was concerned about her and wanted to fetch an imperial doctor for her. But now, she completely ignored her pale face and wanted to pull her away. Such drastic comparison really made people suspicious of Wei Qiufu and wonder if she had intentionally said those words to put on a play of sisterhood.

Among the young ladies, there were a few who saw the accident in the Plum Blossom Nunnery. They increasingly felt that Wei Qiufu’s so-called sisterhood was just ill-intentioned lip service...

Wei Qiufu was so angry that she wanted to vomit blood. Her eyes became gloomy. This Wei Yuewu was really cunning. With just a few words, she destroyed the atmosphere she had painstakingly created just now.

“Sixth Younger Sister, I’m afraid the wind is too strong here. How about Jin Ling and I helping you back to rest?” Wei Qiufu felt a chill in her heart and hurriedly said with a smile. She was even about to squat down and personally massage Wei Yuewu.

“Fourth Elder Sister, please sit down. I will be fine in a moment!” Wei Yuewu reached out and grabbed Wei Qiufu. Jin Ling reacted quickly and supported Wei Qiufu. If Wei Qiufu really squatted down and massaged Wei Yuewu’s calves in front of everyone today, Wei Yuewu would definitely be criticized for being rude and arrogant.

Wei Yuewu sneered in her heart. She no longer cared about the so-called sisterhood with Wei Qiufu and directly switched the subject. "Fourth Elder Sister, why did Eldest Sister change the rooms for us? Although it was a bit cold in the previous rooms for us, it wasn't a big deal. Now that we want to go back, we have to walk a little longer!"

Jin Ling squatted down again and massaged Wei Yuewu's legs. Of course, she understood Wei Yuewu's meaning. She said with a smile, "Miss, don't complain. Eldest Young Lady was also concerned about you and the Fourth Young Lady. She was afraid that the two of you would become sick if you lived in such a cold place."

These words happened to be uttered before Wei Qiufu spoke, rendering her speechless for a while.

Zhao Ru'e, who had been silent at the side, could not help but ask, "So, it was the heiress-apparent who asked you to move to another place?"

"Of course it was arranged by our Eldest Young Lady. Otherwise, why would the Sixth Young Lady and Fourth Young Lady change rooms!" Jin Ling quickly replied.

"Didn't she just say that the Sixth Young Lady was not feeling well and therefore had her room changed?"

"Didn't she just say it was the Sixth Young Lady who asked to change the room?" After hearing Jin Ling's words, some people began to mutter softly, looking at Wei Qiufu more and more suspiciously.

Just now, this Fourth Miss Wei had hinted that they changed rooms because Wei Yuewu was not used to living in such a cold and gloomy house. She was afraid that it would hurt her body, and therefore Wei Fengyao specially asked people to change rooms for them. Could it be that this wasn't done at the request of Sixth Miss Wei, and it was just the intention of the Heiress-apparent of Princess Nan'an?

Seeing the other young ladies' gazes, Wei Qiufu was shocked and hurriedly said, "Sixth Younger Sister's body is weak. Eldest Sister was concerned about me and Sixth Younger Sister and therefore had our rooms changed. Anyway, we can't let down Eldest Sister!"

Wei Yuewu sneered in her heart. Wei Qiufu was really quick-witted. At this time, she pushed all the blame on Wei Fengyao. No matter what happened in the future, it had nothing to do with her.

It was obvious that Wei Fengyao had another plan by arranging for her to live in that room.

It was a pity that today, she had forced Wei Qiufu to push the blame on Wei Fengyao. There were so many people present. Even if Wei Fengyao had a scheme against her, it would not be as perfect as she had expected!

Since these words were said by Wei Qiufu, they were definitely more convincing.

"I really have to thank Eldest Sister. Fourth Elder Sister, I feel much better now. Can we go now?" Wei Yuewu moved her legs and asked Wei Qiufu with a smile.

"Can...can you walk properly now?" In fact, Wei Qiufu had been fully prepared now and was going to retort, but Wei Yuewu decisively asked to leave. She opened her mouth, and only then did she realized what had happened. This slut Wei Yuewu was really cunning. She felt like she had punched heavily on cotton.

"Yes!" Wei Yuewu stood up, turned around and politely said to the young ladies, "Young ladies, we will take our leave first!"

Again, Wei Yuewu didn't give her the chance to speak. Wei Qiufu was so angry that she secretly gritted her teeth. However, she could only stand up with Wei Yuewu. If Wei Yuewu went back alone, it would only make people doubt what she had said before.

"Are all the young ladies here?" The voice of a palace maid was suddenly heard. Everyone turned around and saw a palace maid running over in a hurry.

It was a palace maid who looked to be around seventeen or eighteen years old. Due to the running, her forehead was covered in sweat. When she saw that the ten young ladies were all present, some sitting and others standing, she couldn't help but let out a sigh of relief. She then said, "Ladies, please wait a moment!"

“What is it?” Miss Qin, who was a study companion of the Third Princess, stood up and asked.

Her full name was Qin Wenyu. This time, she was the head of the young ladies who entered the Palace to accompany the Third Princess to pray.

The palace maid was out of breath due to the rapid running. She held the pillar on one side and gasped as she said, “Who... who is the Sixth Miss...Wei of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang?”

“Looking for me?” Wei Yuewu frowned and thought to herself. She did not think that there was anyone else in the palace who would look for her in such a hurry.

“I am... What’s the matter?”

Chapter 302 – The So-Called Beauty In The Cold Palace

“W-Who is Fourth Young Lady of Marquis Hua Yang?” the palace maid asked again.

“I am!” Wei Qiufu had no choice but to step forward.

“Our lady wished to see you. This way, please!” After taking a few deep breaths, the palace maid regained her composure and wiped the sweat on her forehead.

“May I ask which palace you are from?” Wei Qiufu was also surprised.

Wei Yuewu’s gaze landed on this palace maid, who looked pretty and ordinary but seemed to be a bit older than the average palace maid.

“Beauty Wang’s. She has something to ask you,” the palace maid explained.

“Beauty Wang?” Wei Yuewu frowned. She didn’t know who she was, but she seemed to be an imperial concubine of a low status in the Palace. Why was she looking for her and Wei Qiufu?

"Beauty Wang wants to see me and my Sixth Younger Sister?" Wei Qiufu obviously knew who Beauty Wang was, but she looked equally confused.

"Yes. Please hurry up. She is waiting not far ahead," the palace maid answered and pointed in a certain direction.

This time, Wei Yuewu understood the situation. Beauty Wang, who appeared out of nowhere, was probably having a walk around the Palace and happened to be not far away from Chu Xiu Palace. Did she happen to want to meet them when she walked past here, or did she specifically come over to see them?

As for everything in the Palace, Wei Qiufu knew more than Wei Yuewu did, so Wei Yuewu stood aside sensibly and did not reply, giving the initiative to Wei Qiufu.

"Okay. Let's go then, Yuewu!" Wei Qiufu nodded and turned to Wei Yuewu.

"Alright," Wei Yuewu answered gently with a smile. She glanced at Miss Qin, who was standing not far away and deep in thought. It seemed that Beauty Wang, who appeared out of nowhere, was not unknown in the Palace.

Therefore, the two of them took their maids and followed the palace maid out.

"Which Beauty Wang?" After they left, someone finally couldn't bear the curiosity anymore and asked.

"Is there any Beauty Wang in the Palace who is very favored?" Since she sent someone to summon the two young ladies of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang, it seemed that Beauty Wang was favored.

"I've never heard of Beauty Wang in this palace." Some had some understanding of the situation in the Palace, and they found it increasingly strange.

"Have you heard of it?" Zhao Ruó'e, who had never heard of Beauty Wang before, nudged Qin Wenyu who was standing next to her, and asked in a low voice. She had entered the Palace to study with the Third Princess for a period of time, but she was unaware of Beauty Wang in the Palace.

Hearing the question, Qin Wenyu frowned. She was Grand Scholar Qin's eldest daughter, so she had some understanding of the matters in the Palace. At this time, she was also silently making speculations in her heart. Could Beauty Wang be the one she had guessed?

Could it be that Beauty Wang, who once fell in disfavor with the Emperor and was locked in the cold palace, was now released?

However, Qin Wenyu could not speak casually before being definitely sure, so she simply shook her head, indicating that she did not know either, and listened to the people around her making their own assumptions.

If the woman in the cold palace was indeed Beauty Wang, it was no wonder that no one knew her existence. It was said that she was a junior concubine that His Majesty had taken in when he was a prince. Based on her position at that time, the Emperor should have made her a senior concubine when he became the Crown Prince. However, for some reason, everyone had been given higher-ranking titles but she was the only person who had been given the title of Beauty.

After that, she was locked up in the cold palace because she allegedly wanted to harm the imperial son, and later, she had gone crazy. Qin Xinyu did not know the specific reason. She heard about her at an occasional opportunity when her father talked about a junior concubine with the last name Wang who was once doted on by the prince.

At that time, even the current Empress, the former Princess Tu, had retreated to avoid conflict with her.

"Fourth Elder Sister, who is Beauty Wang?" Seeing that the palace maid was getting further and further away, Wei Yuewu stepped forward and walked side by side with Wei Qiufu, asking in a low voice.

"I'm not too sure either. I don't know if it's that person. If she is..." Wei Qiufu was very tight-lipped and shook her head. She wanted to say something but hesitated as she glanced at the palace maid who was not far away.

"Misses, we have arrived!" The palace maid suddenly stopped and pointed ahead.

Wei Yuewu looked up. There was a bridge in front of her, and under the old willow tree by the bridge, there was a small pavilion. Looking from this side, she could see a slender woman standing in the pavilion from afar, putting one hand on the pavilion pillar, and gazing on the lake on the side.

The woman was standing with her back facing Wei Yuewu, so she couldn't see her face.

"Please wait a moment. I will go and report this to our lady!" the palace maid said with a smile. Then, she walked quickly towards the pavilion.

After saying a few words to the woman in the pavilion, she slowly turned around and looked at Wei Qiufu and Wei Yuewu who were slowly walking over.

It was a woman who looked to be in her forties. Her face was slightly pale and yellowish, but they could tell that she was beautiful when she was young. She kept a straight face, making her beautiful eyes sharper and bleaker. There was even a gloomy vibe surrounding her.

Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu approached and bowed to her respectfully. "Greetings, Your Highness!"

"Please sit!" A smile appeared on Beauty Wang's face, but it seemed a little stiff. She turned around and sat down on a stone bench.

Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu sat opposite her.

"Are you Marquise Hua Yang's daughter?" Beauty Wang's gaze shifted between the two of them and finally landed on Wei Yuewu as she asked.

"Yes, I am!" Wei Yuewu replies with a smile. "Do you know my mother?"

"Yes, but we don't know each other personally," Beauty Wang blinked and said softly. "I've seen her several times from afar."

"You are the legitimate daughter of the third branch of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang?" Beauty Wang turned to Wei Qiufu and looked her up and down.

The third branch of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang was the least powerful among the three branches, but Wei Qiufu gave off a natural and unrestrained appearance. Sitting beside the slightly childish Wei Yuewu, Wei Qiufu looked more elegant and dignified. Compared to Wei Yuewu who had a delicate and beautiful little face, she was more convincing.

"Yes, Your Highness!" Wei Qiufu answered respectfully. She didn't look down on Beauty Wang because of her current unknown identity.

"Do you know who I am?" Beauty Wang's gaze shifted from Wei Qiufu to Wei Yuewu, as if she was weighing something.

"No." Wei Yuewu shook her head with a blank look on her face.

"I-I seem to have heard of your name." Wei Qiufu thought of something and said tentatively.

"What did you hear? Tell me!" Beauty Wang asked curiously.

"Nothing much. I heard that you were unlucky and someone framed you. Otherwise, with your status, you will not be like this today," Wei Qiufu carefully asserted while watching Beauty Wang's reaction. If she showed the slightest displeasure, she would immediately stop.

Wei Yuewu listened quietly. As she analyzed the meaning of Wei Qiufu's words, she made some assumptions herself.

"Someone framed me?" Beauty Wang laughed coldly, and the expression on her face suddenly turned stern. "Even all of you know that I was wrongly accused at that time, but... no one believed me. They were so good at this! They killed many birds with one stone, and many lives had perished."

Her remarks were vague and ambiguous, but from the fierce and resentful look on Beauty Wang's face, they could tell that it should be related to her being locked up.

However, this matter was related to the secrets of the royal family, so both Wei Qiufu and Wei Yuewu did not pursue the matter any further and lowered their heads silently, listening to Beauty Wang's wrathful grunt.

"What are you doing in the Palace this time?" Beauty Wang sneered and pondered for a while before looking at them.

"We're here to accompany the Third Princess to pray for the prosperity of the country," Wei Qiufu quickly replied respectfully. Compared to her, Wei Yuewu, who was still looking down, looked much more reserved.

"I heard that the Palace is holding a nation-wide selection to select the Crown Princess. Are you not involved in this now that you stay in Chu Xiu Palace?" Beauty Wang frowned deeply. The deep wrinkles on her forehead indicated that she had been frowning a lot.

Must there be something else other than accompanying the Third Princess for prayers when they lived in Chu Xiu Palace? Wei Yuewu didn't say anything, but there was a doubt in her heart. Did she overlook something?

"H-His Highness has already taken my tag," Wei Qiufu answered shyly, covering her blushing face with a handkerchief.

"The Crown Prince took your tag?" Beauty Wang's eyes suddenly widened, and there was excitement in those lifeless eyes.

The minute Wei Yuewu raised her head, she bumped into the sight, and her gaze became darker. Her eyes fluttered slightly before she lowered her head again as if she did not know how to deal with the current situation.

"What about Sixth Young Lady?" Beauty Wang turned to Wei Yuewu.

"I... I..." Wei Yuewu seemed to not know how to answer, and her face turned red, stammering nervously.

"My Sixth Younger Sister wasn't..." Wei Qiufu helped her out at the right time. However, her answer sounded quite ambiguous. Whether Wei Yuewu wasn't a candidate in the nation-wide selection or she was not selected, it was really hard to tell.

However, this was what Wei Yuewu needed. She felt that she could not see through Beauty Wang's mind, and she did not want to be involved in those old matters of the imperial palace. It was very obvious that Beauty Wang's purpose was not just to meet them.

She seemed to be choosing and examining...

No matter what reason it was, Wei Yuewu did not want to be a part of it at all.

"Oh, I see." Beauty Wang looked disappointed. She looked at Wei Yuewu and then at Wei Qiufu and seemed to be very reluctant to part with them.

"Your Highness, may I know why you want to see us? If there is nothing else, I would like to go back with my Fourth Elder Sister to take a rest," Wei Yuewu lifted her head and blurted with a confused expression. It seemed as if she couldn't see the situation clearly and she didn't realize how inappropriate she sounded right now.

Wei Yuewu's behavior rendered Beauty Wang speechless, and her face sank. She was so pretty, but she was quite a dimwit. Such a person was hard to survive in the Palace.

"That's all I want to say. You're excused!" Beauty Wang waved her hand unhappily, indicating that they could leave now.

Chapter 303 – Flower-Shaped Paper In The Writhing Brush Washer

"Your Highness, we..." Wei Qiufu was befuddled since Beauty Wang dismissed them so abruptly despite her eagerness to see them.

“Leave!” Exasperated to even explain herself, Beauty Wang stood up and instructed the palace maid to go with her. Then, she turned around and walked out of the pavilion without batting an eye on them.

Thus, the two sisters watched helplessly as Beauty Wang stepped onto the bridge and left with her maid.

“Fourth Elder Sister, is Beauty Wang one of the Emperor’s concubines too?” Wei Yuewu asked curiously.

“Yes, she used to be. Forget it, let’s go back. Maybe she was curious about us because we are from the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang.” Wei Qiufu turned around, held Ming Yan’s hand, and headed outside. She looked like she didn’t want to continue the topic.

“Why haven’t I heard of her title?” Wei Yuewu asked in confusion as she followed behind Wei Qiufu.

“I’m not sure either. I only heard someone mention her by chance. Anyway, didn’t you come here directly just now? Why were you so slow?”

Wei Qiufu did not want to discuss the topic of Beauty Wang further because she had a conjecture that made her extremely excited. She did not want Wei Yuewu to know about it or poke her nose into this, so she briefly passed on the topic.

Even some of the young ladies of aristocratic families in the city did not know about Beauty Wang, so Wei Qiufu was certain that Wei Yuewu was equally clueless.

Just now, not only Wei Yuewu, but Wei Qiufu also noticed Beauty Wang’s scrutinizing gaze, which was why Wei Qiufu kept on conversing with Beauty Wang.

“On our way earlier, Jin Ling sprained her ankle, so I slowly walked here with her.” Seeing that Wei Qiufu stayed tight-lipped, Wei Yuewu smiled and did not ask any more questions.

Thus, they chatted casually while walking back to Chu Xiu Palace.

As soon as they reached the palace entrance, they saw that none of the young ladies had left. Upon seeing the sight, Wei Yuewu could not help but sigh. Indeed, people loved gossiping, including the young ladies of aristocratic families who were usually serious and strictly following the traditional paragons of virtue. At this moment, the ladies looked at them with a look of excitement on their faces.

It seemed that there were still people who knew Beauty Wang.

“Fourth Miss Wei, why did Beauty Wang want to see you?” the young lady in pink who had helped Wei Qiufu before asked eagerly. There were a lot of people here who were close to Wei Qiufu.

“Nothing. She seemed to know my Eldest Aunt, so when she heard that my Sixth Younger Sister and I are in the palace, she wanted to meet us,” Wei Qiufu said in an ambiguous tone.

Wei Yuewu’s face turned cold. Wei Qiufu wanted to gain some benefits and push the spotlight onto her. Not a chance!

“No, that’s not what she meant. Beauty Wang only said that she saw my mother from afar, but she did not say that she knew her personally.” Wei Yuewu shook her head and added with a serious face, “But she kept asking if the Crown Prince has taken your tag. What did she mean by that?”

Everyone knew that the Crown Prince had taken Wei Qiufu’s tag, and they started to pay more attention to it since Yang Yuyan entered the Crown Prince Mansion. Everyone was making assumptions about the Crown Prince’s intention. Did he take a fancy to Wei Qiufu or look down on her?

To their surprise, this matter even attracted Beauty Wang’s attention. The young ladies exchanged curious and gossiping looks.

“Fourth Miss Wei, did Beauty Wang ask about you?” Qin Wenyu asked curiously. Although Grand Scholar Qin did not hold a high-ranking position, he was famous among the civil officials, and the Emperor respected him very much.

The Crown Prince Mansion was Wei Qiufu’s target at first, but ever since she was chosen by the Third Princess as her study companion, she wasn’t sure if she was more interested in entering the Crown

Prince Mansion or going with the Third Princess when she got married. The four heirs-apparent and the Crown Prince became the standard comparison points in her heart.

How could she not be concerned when the Crown Prince was mentioned?

“Yes, but she only talked about me briefly,” Wei Qiufu blurted nonchalantly since she didn’t want them to inquire about this matter. “Ladies, my Sixth Younger Sister is tired. I’ll take her in to rest.”

Without waiting for Wei Yuewu’s response, she turned around and headed toward their rooms.

It was an obvious excuse, but coincidentally, it was what Wei Yuewu needed. With a faint smile, she followed behind Wei Qiufu, letting the latter take her away.

“What did she mean by that? Does she think she is invincible now?” Seeing that Wei Qiufu excused herself without revealing much information, a young lady shook her handkerchief in annoyance.

“Who knows what the Crown Prince is thinking about? Does she think that she will become a consort once she enters Crown Prince Mansion?” someone retorted with a bit of jealousy once a person started the topic.

There were many young ladies who wanted to enter the Crown Prince Mansion due to the Crown Prince’s unassailable status. Once they entered the Crown Prince Mansion, they were slated for royal concubines once he ascended to the throne. Perhaps in the future, they could become Empress and even Empress Dowager. No one could resist such temptations when they foresaw such a promising prospect.

Ignoring those young ladies’ apprehensive remarks, Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu turned around a few corridors and saw their rooms in the distance.

“Sixth Younger Sister.” Wei Qiufu stopped walking. “You should go and rest. Let’s go for a walk together around the yard after dinner. Now that both of us are in the Palace, we should look after each other,” Wei Qiufu said with a gentle expression.

"Tonight?" Wei Yuewu's eyes flashed as she looked at the sky. At this time, the sky had already darkened.

"Yes. Let's take a stroll tonight and familiarize ourselves with the environment," Wei Qiufu explained with a smile. Then, she looked at Wei Yuewu's leg with concern. "But we can do it tomorrow if your leg is hurt."

"It's okay. Let's go for a walk after dinner." Wei Yuewu shook her head. She knew that Wei Qiufu was playing tricks, and she was curious to see what Wei Qiufu wanted to do. Furthermore, there should be no difference between tonight and tomorrow night.

After returning to the room to rest for a while, the eunuch brought dinner over. After Wei Yuewu finished eating, she spruced up her attire and went to Wei Qiufu's room on her own accord.

After knocking on the door, Ming Yan came over to open the door. When she saw Wei Yuewu standing outside, she hurriedly opened the door wider and smiled. "Hi, Sixth Young Lady. Fourth Young Lady was just saying that she was going to your room, but you beat her to it. Please come in and have a seat. She will be ready soon."

With a smile, Wei Yuewu entered the door. "Don't mind me. I'll sit here for a while. Go and help my elder sister."

Since Wei Qiufu was not in the outer room, she should still be dressing up in the inner room.

"Sixth Younger Sister, please make yourself at home. I'll be ready in a minute!" Sure enough, Wei Qiufu's voice came from the inner room.

Wei Yuewu hummed with a smile while gazing across the room. Today, she intended to take a look at Wei Qiufu's room after hearing Jin Ling say that Wei Qiufu's room was very similar to hers.

It was indeed very similar. If Wei Yuewu hadn't been meticulous, she would have thought that this room was her own. It had the same layout structure and almost the same decoration. Everything here was almost exactly the same as her room, and it was difficult to distinguish.

Seeing Ming Yan enter the inner room, Wei Yuewu got up and walked to the window. As soon as she opened it, she saw that there was also a small patio outside the window, as well as several bamboos. They were cleaned up tidily. Even the patio outside the window looked very similar to the view in her room.

Then, she picked up a writing brush washer that was placed on the table, which had the same color as the one in her room. Wei Yuewu had once seen the writing brush washer in her room with someone's name engraved on it. The person was not particularly popular. At that time, she had specially taken note of it. Now, the signature on the writing brush washer in Wei Qiufu's room was also the same as the one on her writing brush washer.

Even the details were so similar.

Suddenly, Wei Yuewu's eyes fell on the inside of the writing brush washer, and her pupils contracted. There was a paper inside, which she did not have in her own room.

The reason why Wei Yuewu was shocked was that the flower shape of the folded paper was similar to the shape of the paper that she had received under the window in the Plum Blossom Nunnery asking her to reconcile with Wei Yuejiao.

"What are you looking at, Sixth Younger Sister?" Suddenly, Wei Qiufu's voice, as well as the sound of footsteps, came from behind.

With a slight change of expression, Wei Yuewu quickly picked up the paper and put it into her sleeve. At this time, Wei Qiufu had already arrived by her side. Looking at the empty writing brush washer, Wei Qiufu asked in confusion, "What are you looking at? You're so focused just now."

"It's nothing. I just feel that the layout of your room is very similar to mine," Wei Yuewu turned her head and uttered with a smile.

Ming Yan had already told Wei Qiufu that the two rooms were quite similar. Wei Qiufu did not care. After all, it wasn't Wei Yuewu who arranged the rooms. Even if they were similar, so what?

However, why was Wei Yuewu standing in front of her window in a daze? Wei Qiufu looked at Wei Yuewu suspiciously, and her gaze fell on the writing brush washer on the table. She had just moved into the room, so she did not have the time to check the room's layout properly.

"This hairpin is indeed beautiful. Concubine Dong has good taste!" Wei Yuewu's gaze fell on Wei Qiufu's hair bun as she praised.

The long wooden hairpin that pierced through her silky black hair bun was simple, unadorned, and exquisite. At first glance, it looked distinctive, and it emphasized her fair skin even more.

"I have to thank you for lending it to me!" Hearing the mention of the hairpin on her head, Wei Qiufu immediately turned to the side and thanked her, but she did not want to pursue the topic. She did not want to return such a nice hairpin at all, so it was best not to mention it.

"Let's go." Wei Qiufu smiled and extended her hand to Wei Yuewu.

"Alright." Wei Yuewu nodded, and the two of them left the room one after the other.

At this moment, it was still early in the evening, and Chu Xiu Palace was brightly lit as there were people living here. It did not feel much darker all the way to the door as they walked under the flickering light.

There were also a few young ladies, who were strolling not far away from the door. It was still early at this time, and everyone came out for a stroll after dinner. Moreover, these young ladies were curious and excited since they had just lived in the Palace. They would not feel sleepy at this hour.

"Let's go take a look at the Orchid Courtyard," Wei Qiufu suggested when they reached the door. "We haven't been to other places. The only place we've been to was the Orchid Courtyard, which our eldest sister took us there. It's quite beautiful and nearby, and we won't bump into any noble. Let's go there and have a look. Maybe there'll be something exciting awaiting us."

"Okay. Let's go," Wei Yuewu, who had already speculated something, replied with a smile while hiding the ridicule in her eyes.

Wei Qiufu really couldn't bear it any longer...

Chapter 304 – Bewildered Crown Prince

“Your Highness, do you want to go for a walk?” the eunuch asked in a low voice as he walked over with Wen Tianyao’s cloak in his hands.

There was a pile of scrolls on the writing desk which were given to Wen Tianyao by the Emperor. The scrolls had been reviewed and verified. The Emperor wanted Wen Tianyao to write his thoughts after reading the scrolls and send them back to him.

Wen Tianyao really lived up to his reputation as the Crown Prince.

“A walk...” Wen Tianyao looked at the pile of scrolls on the desk, then looked at the sky. After hesitating for a moment, he blurted, “I won’t go today.”

Usually, at this time, he would go for a walk to put his mind at ease, but he was exceptionally tired today.

It wasn’t just about the issue of the scrolls. The most important thing was that he couldn’t figure out what Yan Huaijing had up his sleeve. Father Emperor intended to let him deal with the four heirs-apparent.

They were about the same age, and all of them were in the capital. Moreover, he was the Crown Prince of the country, so dealing with them was a piece of cake. However, Wen Tianyao couldn’t comprehend Yan Huaijing’s behavior today.

“Is Master Fenghe here yet?” Rubbing his sunken brows, Wen Tianyao thought for a moment and asked the eunuch. He had previously sent someone to invite Master Fenghe.

“He hasn’t come yet. Your Highness, do you want to take a rest first? You won’t be able to finish reading all these scrolls in a short time,” the eunuch advised in a gentle tone while looking at the pile of scrolls that he had not finished reading.

“Never mind. I’ll rest after Master Fenghe is here.” After shaking his head, Wen Tianyao took one of the scrolls, read it, and recorded his opinions from time to time.

There were a few octagon-shaped lanterns hanging high up the pillars, illuminating the quiet room so bright that it looked like it was daytime.

The eunuch put away Wen Tianyao’s cloak and retreated without a sound. Then, he stood behind the guards at the door with his head lowered, waiting for Wen Tianyao’s summons.

Not long after he stood still, the eunuch saw a light flashing over from afar. It was a eunuch who had led Master Fenghe over. Hence, he hurriedly went in to report, “Your Highness, Master Fenghe is here!”

“Take him to the side hall!” Wen Tianyao ordered with a nod and put down the scroll in his hand.

“Yes, I’ll take him there right away!” The eunuch retreated and led Master Fenghe, who was waiting at the door, to the side hall next to the main hall.

After that, the eunuch served the tea. Master Fenghe took his seat and closed his eyes, without moving a muscle.

Not long later, Wen Tianyao entered through another small door.

“Master, please have some tea,” Wen Tianyao sat opposite Master Fenghe and greeted him with a smile.

Hearing his voice, Master Fenghe opened his eyes, looked at him, and replied respectfully, “Thank you, Your Highness.”

“Master, what did Yan Huaijing want to do today?” Wen Tianyao cut to the chase and asked. He couldn’t figure out Yan Huaijing’s intention. No matter how he looked at it, it was a bit casual, but he didn’t know what on earth Yan Huaijing had up his sleeve.

“Your Highness, the Heir-apparent of Yan is extraordinary. You need to be careful.” Master Fenghe raised his gentle eyes and looked at Wen Tianyao gently.

“Frankly, I don’t know what he wanted to do, but he must have heard of the legend of the phoenix-fate woman.”

“He knew?” Wen Tianyao asked subconsciously.

It wasn’t that Yan Huaijing shouldn’t know, but Wen Tianyao was asking how Master Fenghe knew about it. According to Yan Huaijing’s character, even if he knew, he wouldn’t express it so obviously, not to mention the fact that Master Fenghe only had a brief encounter with him.

“Please forgive me, Your Highness. The Heir-apparent of Yan had known about it before the legend of the phoenix-fate woman was spread out. That day, he had brought a woman to the Plum Blossom Nunnery to show me her palm and let me read it.”

“How was it?” Wen Tianyao asked anxiously.

It was a piece of shocking news for Wen Tianyao that Yan Huaijing knew about the phoenix-fate woman even earlier than the rumors were spread. Did it mean that the forces of the Yan State were more powerful and influential in the capital than he had anticipated?

“It was ordinary and nothing special. Your Highness, please rest assured that the woman was not the phoenix-fate woman.” Master Fenghe smiled.

“Could that woman be the woman that Yan Huaijing brought over today?” Suddenly, a new idea flashed across Wen Tianyao’s mind, and it made him frown.

“It is very likely.” Master Fenghe thought for a moment and said, “At that time, the woman was wrapped tightly. The Heir-apparent of Yan said that he was there to play chess with me, but his true intention was to let me read her palm. However, he did not have the intention of letting me see her palm today.”

The remark made Wen Tianyao fall silent. Since Yan Huaijing knew about the phoenix-fate woman, he would definitely ask Master Fenghe to take a look at the woman's palm. If he didn't, it would mean that he already knew that the woman was not the rumored phoenix-fate woman. In other words, the mysterious woman that Yan Huaijing had brought with him twice was the same person.

"Master, is that woman really the daughter of an aristocratic family in Yan State?" Wen Tianyao was puzzled again because the woman was too mysterious. Moreover, when Yan Huaijing left the palace, the woman was not by his side, but there was one more guard with him.

"I think so. When I read her palm the other day, her hand was delicate and smooth like someone who had never worked for a day. There were no calluses between her fingers. It was impossible that she was a well-trained guard who started training from a young age," Master Fenghe explained in detail as he knew what Wen Tianyao was suspicious of.

"Why did he bring her in and out of the Palace by disguising her as a guard?" Wen Tianyao was extremely puzzled by Yan Huaijing's actions. The latter could have brought her to the Palace stately.

"I think... he wants to protect the woman," Master Fenghe answered, although he felt that it didn't make sense.

"Your Highness, you saw how attentive and respectful he was toward the woman. Not only was she wrapped up tightly, but she also sat beside him, hinting that he would give her a title. If she really was a daughter of an aristocratic family in Yan State and also his childhood sweetheart, she would definitely be second only to the Heiress-apparent of Yan. You should know the purpose of him coming to the capital."

Of course, Wen Tianyao knew the purpose of Yan Huaijing and the other heirs-apparent coming to the capital. Yan Huaijing was the best candidate as the princess' groom, but Father Emperor could not decide which prince to marry him for the time being.

However, no matter who married him, if they knew that Yan Huaijing already had such a girlfriend, they would not let it slide away easily. Although Third Younger Sister was soft-spoken, she would not be able to tolerate this kind of thing.

Therefore, it was necessary for Yan Huaijing to protect this aristocratic young lady from the State of Yan by doing this.

However, was this something a person like Yan Huaijing would do? Was he so passionate? Wen Tianyao almost felt that this reasonable explanation was ridiculous. The corners of his lips could not help but curl up slightly.

“Master, perhaps this is what Yan Huaijing wants everyone to think,” he decisively denied what Master Fenghe said.

“Your Highness, why is that?” Master Fenghe asked in surprise.

“Do you think someone like Yan Huaijing is passionate? Will he really give up on marrying a princess for a woman? Although Father Emperor had his consideration, the marriage to a princess is an honor for Yan Huaijing. I don’t think Yan Huaijing would do such a thing because of affection.”

Wen Tianyao found it funny to link Yan Huaijing to passion.

He had sent his spy to investigate Yan Huaijing in Yan. From the result, it was clear that Yan Huaijing was a ruthless man. He might seem refined and elegant on the outside, but once his disguise was removed, he was as cold-blooded as the demon from hell.

Therefore, it was impossible that such a person was passionate about a woman.

Wen Tianyao refused to believe it.

Therefore, even if that woman was the daughter of an aristocratic family, she was not his childhood sweetheart. Wen Tianyao was told that Yan Huaijing sneaked her into the capital by hiding her in the horse carriage. He had another agenda of bringing the woman to the capital.

“Master, did he intend to refuse the marriage arrangement?” Wen Tianyao asked as a possibility popped up in his mind. Yan Huaijing’s behavior was too strange.

“This... might be possible.” Master Fenghe usually studied Buddhism the most, so he could not keep up with Wen Tianyao’s train of thought for a while.

“Third Younger Sister and Fourth Younger Sister both expressed their feelings for him, but Yan Huaijing ignored them. Could it be that he was unwilling to marry them?”

“I don’t think so...” Master Fenghe couldn’t give a clear answer either, and his brows furrowed even more tightly.

“Or could it be that this woman is extraordinarily beautiful, so he specially brought her to the capital to offer her to the Palace?” Wen Tianyao suddenly had another idea. The woman had successfully attracted the attention of everyone. Not only he, but those people were also investigating her.

Perhaps, Yan Huaijing’s goal was not to protect her, but to make her famous, or to stand out.

“Your Highness, please don’t think too much about it. No matter what the Heir-apparent of Yan thinks, you should always be calm and composed. You must not let him lead you by the nose. Please calm down and see how the others are going to act. Your Highness, this is the capital, not the land of a duke. No matter what the Heir-apparent of Yan is thinking, we can consider the woman as his true childhood sweetheart for the time being.”

Noticing that Wen Tianyao was starting to get annoyed, Master Fenghe reminded him in a gentle tone.

“Okay. I’ll have to trouble you to tell me everything about the phoenix-fate woman.” Master Fenghe’s gentle tone abruptly pulled Wen Tianyao back from his chaotic mind. Knowing that he was too impatient, he composed himself, and when he opened his eyes again, he calmed down.

“Yes, Your Highness!” Seeing that they had covered most of the topic, Master Fenghe stood up and excused himself. Wen Tianyao deliberately saw him to the door before returning to sit down. His handsome eyebrows were tightly furrowed.

What exactly did Yan Huaijing mean?

“What exactly does Wei Qiufu mean?” Wei Yuewu, who was sitting in the pavilion, had a similar doubt in her eyes as she looked at Wei Qiufu pacing around the garden.

Wei Qiufu’s behavior was too bizarre that it could not be ignored. Was she really here for a walk in the garden?

Chapter 305 – Love Poems For More Than A Decade

Seeing Wei Qiufu turn to a rockery and look up, Wei Yuewu asked in surprise just as she lifted her skirt and was about to go up, “Fourth Elder Sister, a-are you sure you want to go up?”

This rockery was not big. The curved path leading to the top was only wide enough to fit one person.

“I-I’m curious!” Wei Qiufu instantly smiled when she saw that Wei Yuewu noticed her and knew that she was acting a little too bizarrely. Could it be that Wei Fengyao’s intelligence was wrong?

Shouldn’t the Crown Prince come to the Orchid Courtyard at this hour? Could it be that he was occupied today?

Wei Qiufu was full of doubts, but she restrained herself from exposing her thoughts to Wei Yuewu. However, realizing that Wen Tianyao would not come today, she felt dejected.

“Sixth Younger Sister, I am tired today. Let’s go back and rest.”

“Now?” Wei Yuewu looked around and seemed to be reluctant to leave. “Let’s hang out for a while longer. It’s still early.”

She wanted to see what kind of painstaking arrangements Wei Qiufu had made.

“Let’s come back tomorrow. It’s too late. We don’t know the rules in the Palace. It’s better to go back and rest early. Let’s go!” Wei Qiufu stood up and smiled.

They had strolled around here for a while. If the Crown Prince had not appeared at this moment, he probably wouldn't have come today. It was their first day in the Palace. There would be plenty of opportunities in the future.

"Alright." Wei Yuewu stood up and looked thoughtfully at the dozen or so pots of orchids in the corridor, which were arranged in a dense way.

Previously, the orchids were placed in perfect accordance with the arrangement. They were carefully organized and looked remarkable at first glance. However, there seemed to be no order of this batch of orchids.

It was as if these orchids were arranged here to grab the onlookers' attention.

Wei Yuewu could not tell what kind of orchids they were. They were very fragrant, and they exuded a kind of elegant beauty as the flowers were half rolled up in the night. They were more charming than the other orchids for their richer colors. The leaves and branches were lush, providing a harmonious greenery sight.

This kind of greenish color and the captivating flowers enhanced the beauty and refreshing feeling of the surrounding environment. The scene was really attractive.

Just like that, Wei Yuewu was unconsciously attracted by the sight.

However, she had examined these flowers again because of Wei Qifu. Wei Qifu had always been feeling uneasy, but even so, her eyes would occasionally fall on those flowers, especially when she walked over to admire the flowers just now. Wei Yuewu could clearly see that she seemed to have picked up something and stuffed it into her sleeve.

Wei Qifu had always been a scheming person. She was exceptionally calm and meticulous when she schemed against others. Therefore, it was quite unusual to see her losing focus like this.

The flower was really eye-catching...

When the two of them walked out of Orchid Courtyard's door, an old nurse guarding the door bowed deeply to them and retreated to the side.

Wei Qiufu walked by with a smile. When Wei Yuewu saw the old nurse, she stopped and asked politely, "Excuse me, do you have the encyclopedia of the orchids in this courtyard?"

In some mansions with precious flowers, there would be some drawings and atlas about them. Orchid Courtyard's unique construction already represented that it was extraordinary. The orchids inside also had a kind of uniqueness, and Wei Yuewu didn't know much about them. Although she knew some when she was in her maternal grandparents' mansion, her knowledge was incomparable to the rare orchids in the Orchid Courtyard.

What was more, the orchid must be extremely precious since they enjoyed such meticulous care and the warm flooring.

Hearing Wei Yuewu's question, Wei Qiufu stopped in front and looked at Wei Yuewu with displeasure quietly, not knowing what the latter was up to this time.

"Sixth Miss Wei, we do have the encyclopedia, but I don't have it," the nurse answered. She saw Wei Fengyao bring Wei Qiufu and Wei Yuewu over during the day. From their conversation, she knew that she was the Sixth Young Lady of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang.

"May I know where I can borrow the book for a look?" Wei Yuewu asked in a gentle tone.

"The encyclopedia is in the hands of another person, but she is on her break now. Please come again in the morning," the nurse replied respectfully.

"Alright, I'll send someone to borrow the encyclopedia for a look next time." Wei Yuewu smiled.

"Okay."

It was not a big deal to borrow the encyclopedia. There were so many orchids in Orchid Courtyard and many precious breeds. Many people liked the orchids, but it was inconvenient for the ladies to come often, so they could only borrow the encyclopedia for a look.

“Let’s go!” Wei Qiufu grunted impatiently as she didn’t see the person she wanted to see.

“Alright, Fourth Elder Sister. I’ll be right there!” Wei Yuewu replied. After nodding at the nurse guarding the door, she picked up her skirt and crossed the threshold.

After entering Chu Xiu Palace, they walked towards the rooms where the two of them lived. The rooms where the two of them lived were side by side. Wei Yuewu’s room was inside while Wei Qiufu’s was outside. To get to Wei Yuewu’s room, they had to go around Wei Qiufu’s room.

“Go and rest early.” Standing at the door, Wei Qiufu said with concern.

In the eyes of outsiders, Wei Qiufu was always perfect.

“I will. You should rest early too,” Wei Yuewu answered softly while pinching the paper in her sleeve. Why did the paper look so similar to the paper found in her window?

Back in the room, Jin Ling lit a candle for her. Wei Yuewu sat in front of the dressing table and allowed Jin Ling to remove the hair ornament on her hair. She then took out the paper from her sleeve.

Under the candlelight, she saw the shape of the flower was folded beautifully, just like the paper in her memory.

“Miss, where did you get that from?” Jin Ling was taken aback for a moment when she saw the note and asked.

“I took it from the writing brush washer in Qiufu’s room. Go and see if there is any note in my writing brush washer,” Wei Yuewu instructed while looking at the paper in her hand carefully. She was not in a hurry to unfold it.

“Okay, I will go take a look.” Jin Ling put down the comb in her hand and went to the writing desk in the outer room. She picked up the writing brush washer and looked at it closely. “Miss, there is nothing.”

It was a beautiful and delicate writing brush washer, but there was nothing in it.

“Have you checked the other ornaments in this room before?” Wei Yuewu put down the note in her hand and asked Jin Ling, who was walking back.

This question startled Jin Ling. She stammered, “I-I didn’t check everything thoroughly. I just casually looked through some things.”

Wei Yuewu’s eyes fell on the paper again. Jin Ling had always been cautious, but even she did not notice this note. It seemed that Wei QiuFu really did not notice it.

That was to say that this paper had always been there before.

Everything in the room was cleaned up, which meant that someone had been cleaning up this place frequently. If so, they would clear everything and would not leave this paper behind. Since it was in the writing brush washer, it meant that someone wanted to keep it there.

Perhaps, this was a harmless little piece of paper.

At the thought of this, Wei Yuewu silently unfolded the paper.

When she was in the mansion, Wei Yuewu had folded the other note in her hands several times, and she was also skilled at unfolding it.

“Love is missing someone when you’re apart, but feeling somehow warm inside because you’re close in heart.”

The two lines of words were written in such masculine and powerful strokes. It was obvious that they came from the hands of a man at first glance.

However, this poem was meant to express his feelings of missing a woman. It made her wonder what was the intention of the person who left it in the writing brush washer so openly. Whoever used the writing brush washer would definitely see it.

Although most of the palace maids and eunuchs were illiterate, many of them could read. It would be a disaster as long as someone unfolded it out of curiosity.

However, this person put it there as if he or she wasn't afraid of being discovered.

"M-Miss, how can someone leave such a thing here? This is Chu Xiu Palace! It is a place where they choose concubines for the Emperor, Crown Prince, and the Princes!" Jin Ling shrieked in horror when she saw the poem on the paper in Wei Yuewu's hand.

This slip of paper was almost the evidence of an illegitimate affair. If someone had looked into it, they wouldn't have been spared from the punishment no matter who they were.

Wei Yuewu's gaze slowly fell from the words to the folded mark on the paper. The folded mark was very deep, and it could no longer be smoothed even if she unfolded it and spread out. Despite its good quality, the folded mark was so deep that the note could be torn apart if she was not careful.

The paper was completely different from the paper that she had received. The latter had a very new crease, and with just a touch, it had become even.

This is a piece of aged paper...

It was a private affair that happened many years ago, but the person kept the paper around. It was clearly deliberately left there for people to look at it. In other words, the person left it there with the intention of letting someone see it. It was very bizarre.

"This time, the consort selection for the Crown Prince also took place in Chu Xiu Palace?" Wei Yuewu asked with a frown since she did not know much about the specific affairs of the Palace.

“Yes. Basically, most of the consort selections for the Emperor, Crown Prince or the other princes took place in Chu Xiu Palace. Of the concubines in the Palace, nine out of ten were chosen from here.” Jin Ling had specially studied these matters in the Palace before, so she answered after thinking for a while.

Wei Yuewu’s eyelashes flickered, and she asked thoughtfully, “When was the most recent selection?”

“It should have been ten years ago. I heard that the Palace had once given His Majesty a nation-wide selection ten years ago. I don’t know what happened before that, but there should be small selections from time to time,” Jin Ling replied.

The nation-wide selection was a huge expenditure that involved a lot of spending and manpower, so they basically wouldn’t do it frequently. However, small selections occurred quite often. To replenish the harem, small selections would be conducted once every several years by picking the daughters of the aristocratic families. Of course, there were also those whom the Empress had personally selected due to their extraordinary virtue and talent, but it was a rare case.

The consort selection was the only way for the daughters of noble families to enter the Palace. For those who were directly selected, it was often because of some special reasons or because their father and brothers had directly made great contributions. In this case, if the Emperor did not manage to give them rewards, he would choose their daughters as his consorts. In some cases, the Emperor would choose the ladies to enter the Palace due to his suspicion after some predicament.

Judging from the folded marks on the paper, it must have been at least a decade, but it was still placed here. Thinking back to the troubled look on the nurse-in-charge’s face that day, Wei Yuewu felt her heart fluttering. Did this mean that no matter how many times the selections had happened, no one had been allowed to live in this room, and it was still the same as before?

Did it also mean that it was not a coincidence or intentional for the two rooms to be identical, but it had been this way since the beginning?

Could it be that there was some sort of secret hidden within?

Wei Yuewu even had a faint guess that even Wei Fengyao did not know this secret. To be able to keep two rooms that nobody was allowed to live in Chu Xiu Palace, which had always been used for consort

selections, this Master could be said to be extraordinary. So what if Wei Fengyao was the Heiress-apparent of Prince Nan'an? She did not know everything.

There were many Masters in the Palace who were favored, but not many of them could be so powerful for so many years.

Who was this Master behind the scenes? With her strength, how would she care about Wei Fengyao...

Lying on the bed, Wei Yuewu still stared at the darkness with her eyes wide open. She had some speculations running in her mind, but she couldn't grasp them.

"Miss, Fourth Young Lady is still awake." Jin Ling, who was lying on the pedal in front of the bed, suddenly pointed to the window and said in a low voice.

Chapter 306 – The Real First Praying Ceremony

It was dark outside the window. Previously, Wei Yuewu and Jin Ling didn't notice it as candles were lit inside both rooms. The two rooms did not directly face each other, but now that the candles in Wei Yuewu's room were blown out, they could clearly see the brightly lit candles in Wei Qiufu's room through the patio.

To their surprise, Wei Qiufu was still awake at this hour.

"Miss, do you want me to secretly take a look?" Jin Ling sat up and asked.

"No! This is the imperial palace. There might be someone hiding in the dark." Wei Yuewu shook her head and closed her eyes. She was probably Wei Qiufu's least concerned person for the time being.

Moreover, she had to find an opportunity to put the paper in her hand back into Wei Qiufu's writing brush washer. Since someone had been paying attention to the two rooms, they should know that the two of them had moved in.

She must hurry and put the paper back to its place before the cleaning servant entered the room tomorrow.

The next morning, Jin Ling woke Wei Yuewu up. When Wei Yuewu was sprucing up her appearance in front of the dressing table, she heard a eunuch knocking on the door of the next room. An idea flashed across Wei Yuewu's mind as she smiled.

She walked to the bed and passed the paper she had folded yesterday to Jin Ling. "Jin Ling, when I talk to Fourth Young Lady, put this in her writing brush washer."

"Okay, I will." Jin Ling nodded.

"Sixth Miss Wei, I'm here to deliver your breakfast." At this moment, a eunuch knocked on Wei Yuewu's door.

Jin Ling hurried out and opened the door to take the breakfast from the eunuch. After thanking him, she slightly carried the food box into the door.

Wei Yuewu casually came out with her hair tied up without any ornament on it. It was clear that she had just gotten up and had not put on any ornaments.

Sure enough, the door next door was ajar. Wei Yuewu gently pushed the door open and asked, "Fourth Elder Sister, are you up?"

Wei Qiufu, who was sitting in front of the dressing table in the room, was taken aback as she did not expect Wei Yuewu to come so early. She instantly replied, "Yes, I'm already up."

"Sixth Young Lady!" Ming Yan, who was preparing breakfast in the outer room, did not expect that Wei Yuewu would be so early. After standing still, she bowed to Wei Yuewu.

"Ming Yan, you can go ahead doing whatever you're doing. I'm here to see if Fourth Elder Sister has any pretty accessories. I want to borrow some to wear," Wei Yuewu asserted with a smile, gestured to Ming Yan to send her away, and walked toward the inner room.

Wei Qiufu was about to get up when she heard Wei Yuewu say that she wanted to look at her jewelry. She couldn't help but curl her lips into a sneer. Indeed, Wei Yuewu was a petty-minded country bumpkin. She had just borrowed a hairpin from her yesterday, and now she came to borrow accessories from her early in the morning.

However, it was none of Wei Qiufu's concern. She did not intend to return Wei Yuewu's hairpin. Since Wei Yuewu had come to her room on her own accord, she must seize the opportunity. She had some accessories that didn't belong to the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. If Wei Yuewu wore them, that hairpin would be hers.

Reaching out, she took out an exquisite jewelry box from under the dressing table and placed it on the table. With a smile, Wei Qiufu urged Wei Yuewu, who had just turned around, "Sixth Younger Sister, come over and take a look. If there's anything you like, just take it!"

With that, she opened the box. There were not many ornaments inside, but all of them were of the highest quality, especially a flower-shaped headware. It was an exquisite handiwork, and the flowers looked delicate as if there was really a butterfly on it. The hanging red gemstones added a splendid touch to the ornament, emphasizing the wearer's dark silky hair.

"This... is so beautiful!" Wei Yuewu picked up the flower-shaped headwear and exclaimed.

"If you like it, I'll give it to you," Wei Qiufu said generously.

"Uh... It's not very nice. I'll just borrow it from you." A trace of embarrassment flashed across Wei Yuewu's expression as if she felt ashamed because Wei Qiufu had read her mind.

At this moment, Ming Yan came in with a smile. "You're too polite, Sixth Young Lady. Fourth Young Lady does not mind these silver and gold accessories, but she takes a fancy on your wooden hairpin. If you don't feel nice to take the headwear from her, you can lend the hairpin to Fourth Young Lady for a few more days."

Lend it to her for a few more days? Could she be more specific about the number of days?

Clearly, Wei Qiufu wanted to exchange the butterfly headwear for her hairpin, but Wei Yuewu was not in a hurry. She would get the hairpin back eventually.

“Thank you, Fourth Elder Sister!” Wei Yuewu grinned from ear to ear as she took the headwear. “Fourth Elder Sister, I’ll go back and have breakfast first.”

“Alright, hurry up and go. The Third Princess might call for us in a bit.”

Seeing that Wei Yuewu’s goal was indeed her headwear, Wei Qiufu nodded with a relieving smile.

Previously, Wei Yuewu was Wei Qiufu’s concern. Now that she knew her purpose, she heaved a sigh of relief.

Jin Ling had followed Wei Yuewu here, but she waited at the door of the outer room instead of going into the inner room with her. Seeing that Wei Yuewu exited the room, she turned and left with her. It seemed as if she had not entered the room at all.

“Miss, was Sixth Young Lady really here for your headwear?” After seeing Wei Yuewu and Jin Ling out of the door, Ming Yan turned back into the inner room and asked Wei Qiufu.

“Looks like it!” Wei Qiufu looked at the wooden hairpin and made up her mind. “I will wear this today.”

“Miss, didn’t you say you would only wear it at night?” Ming Yan was startled by Wei Qiufu’s remark. This was different from what she had said before.

“I’ll wear this one now.” Wei Qiufu smirked. “Since Sixth Younger Sister has put on my headwear, it is only right that I wear her hairpin.”

In other words, she wanted to show the ornaments to everyone. Although they had exchanged their ornaments, everyone would have thought that they were wearing their own accessories. With so many witnesses, Wei Yuewu could not exchange them back in the future even if she wanted to.

Originally, Wei Qiufu was still thinking hard to find an excuse to never return the hairpin, but to her surprise, the excuse had knocked on the door itself. Therefore, she would not let such a good change slide away.

“Yes, I understand!” Ming Yan immediately understood what Wei Qiufu meant. She took the hairpin with a smile and inserted it into Wei Qiufu’s hair.

In terms of value or rarity, the headwear borrowed by Wei Yuewu was not comparable to this wooden hairpin. That headwear was exquisite and lovely, but the wooden hairpin was the best of them all. It was a rare possession.

After wearing it, she looked even more elegant and dignified.

Similarly, in the room next door, Wei Yuewu was also selecting jewelry to wear. The flower-shaped headwear was not in her list of selections though. She was choosing among the accessories she brought into the Palace with her. Most of them were given by the Madam Dowager. She had aplenty, but there were not many which were truly outstanding. Fortunately, Wei Yuewu did not think about putting herself under the spotlight. Therefore, she casually picked a pearl hairpin, a pair of pearl earrings, and a pearl headdress.

Jin Ling chose a white dress with dark stripes for Wei Yuewu to match the pearl jewelry.

After breakfast, the Third Princess’ summons had arrived by the time the eunuch carried the food box away.

“Sixth Younger Sister, why didn’t you put on the headwear I gave you?” Seeing that Wei Yuewu was not wearing that exquisite headwear, Wei Qiufu was bewildered for a moment.

“I’ll wear it later. We’re going to meet the Third Princess and pray with her, so it’s better to wear something light,” Wei Yuewu explained with a smile.

The explanation did not clear Wei Qiufu’s doubts, nor did it make her feel relieved, but she knew that it was not the time to discuss the accessories. With that, she could only smile at Wei Yuewu, followed the palace maid who was leading the way, and walked out together.

When Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu arrived at the door, they saw that the young ladies had already been there in twos and threes and boarding the soft sedans on the side. Wei Yuewu's eyes flashed, and she immediately found the eunuch who had carried the sedan for her yesterday. She brought Jin Ling over and sat inside.

When the young ladies came out, some casually chose one, and some chose the sedan that they had sat in for the past few days.

After the young ladies all entered the sedans and sat down, the eunuchs lifted the sedan and started walking, while the maids followed at the side of the sedans.

However, Wei Yuewu realized that it was not the road to the Third Princess' palace which they had been to yesterday.

Wei Yuewu coughed in a low voice. Jin Ling, who was outside the window, understood her intention, slowed her pace slightly, and asked the eunuch who was carrying the sedan behind, "Aren't we going to the Third Princess' place?"

They were familiar with each other thanks to the ride yesterday, so the eunuch answered with a friendly smile, "We're heading to the Buddha Hall now. The Third Princess is there right now."

"Why is the Third Princess there so early?" Jin Ling looked up at the sky. At this time, the sun had not risen, and there was only a bit of red painting the dim sky.

"Zhaoyi Tu is there today, so the Third Princess went earlier." The eunuch worked in the Third Princess' palace previously, so he knew about this matter.

"Zhaoyi Tu?" Jin Ling gasped in surprise. "Didn't they say that only the Third Princess would pray for the prosperity of the country? Why would Zhaoyi Tu come?"

"Yes, the Third Princess is praying for the prosperity of the country, but it doesn't mean that others were not allowed to come. As the Third Princess' birth mother, it is normal for Zhaoyi Tu to take a look and

pray with Her Highness, especially since today is the first day. Many people would come to watch the ceremony,” the eunuch, who seemed young and talkative, lowered his voice and told Jin Ling.

Wei Yuewu heard everything clearly in the sedan. First time? What about yesterday?

“It’s not the first time. Didn’t the young ladies pray with the Third Princess yesterday?” Outside the sedan, Jin Ling asked in confusion.

Checking their surroundings, the eunuch realized that they were the last sedan in the convoy, and no one had noticed them. Only then did he lower his voice even more and whisper, “T-That doesn’t count.”

“Why not?” Jin Ling opened her eyes wide, her face blank.

“O-Of course, it doesn’t count. Yesterday’s event was just to let the ladies familiarize themselves with the environment. It will officially begin today,” the eunuch stammered as he couldn’t say why but he knew that it wasn’t.

“Really?” Jin Ling was rather doubtful about the answer that had not explained anything.

“Really! Take a good look later. There are many people coming today!” The eunuch nodded. In order to make his words more convincing, he pointed to the front and said, “Do you know why we walk so slowly?”

“I don’t know.”

If it weren’t for the eunuch, Wei Yuewu would not have realized it. Only now did she feel that the sedan was moving slowly, and it was slower than when they left Chu Xiu Palace.

“Why are we moving so slow? Who are we waiting for?” The keen Jin Ling immediately speculated the key point.

“Of...” Before the eunuch could finish the sentence, they heard someone scream in front of them, followed by some crashing sound. Then, women’s shrill shouts echoed one after another.

Wei Yuewu’s sedan suddenly stopped. If not for the fact that Wei Yuewu had been carefully supporting the edge of the sedan, she would have fallen out of it...

Chapter 307 – The Gentle Zhaoyi Tu And The Third Princess

“Miss, are you alright?” Jin Ling’s anxious voice came from outside the sedan.

Wei Yuewu composed herself and quipped, “I’m fine. Go and see what happened.”

Such an accident happened too abruptly, but Wei Yuewu managed to hold still as she was at the end of the convoy. The sedans in front of her must have bumped into each other.

The palace paths were crisscrossed. The convoy that Wei Yuewu was in advanced slowly on the widest path, but they could not avoid the convoy that was coming from another small path. The latter appeared too abruptly that the sedan at the front could not react in time and crashed into it.

Although the eunuchs, who were carrying the sedan behind them, witnessed the crash and had stopped in a hurry, the young ladies rolled out of the sedan due to the inertia.

The young ladies who sat at the two sedans behind the first sedan also fell out. All of a sudden, shrill screams echoed around, maids cried out in alarm, and the entire scene was a mess.

Chu Fangnan was in a daze, not expecting such an incident to occur. Just now, he was in a hurry, but he didn’t notice a large convoy on the road when he turned the corner. Therefore, he directly crashed into the first sedan, and then a series of accidents happened.

His subordinates reported that the other three heirs-apparent had already entered the Palace, which made Chu Fangnan extremely anxious. Only then did he rush over to the Palace.

Compared to the other heirs-apparent, Chu Fangnan had to admit that he had no advantage. If he went any later, it would be even more impossible for him to marry the princess.

“Check them out and see if everyone’s okay,” he urged the eunuch beside him with a frown as he looked at the young lady who had fallen to his feet.

Knowing that they had caused trouble, the eunuch followed the maids and helped the ladies to their feet. Then, he looked at the scene briefly and realized that everyone was fine except for Miss Qin Wenyu. She was so shocked by the accident that blood drained from her face and she was still in a daze.

The few young ladies at the back also stood up with the help of the eunuchs and maids.

“Your Heir-apparent, it’s nothing serious,” the eunuch heaved a sigh of relief and reported.

“Let’s go!” Looking at the beautiful young lady who fell in front of him, Chu Fangnan waved his hand and quickly strode forward as he was not in the mood to think about other things. If he went too late, there would be no possibility for him at all. His father was still waiting for his good news.

Then, a large group of eunuchs and guards rushed over together.

“Miss...” Qin Wenyu’s maid stomped her feet in anger and pointed at Chu Fangnan since he turned to leave without an apology. “Look at him...”

“That’s enough. Let’s go!” Although Qin Wenyu’s face was still a little pale, she had quickly calmed down and urged the maid before slowly getting on the sedan that had just been lifted upright.

“Okay.” The maid pursed her lips and ordered the sedan to start moving.

Since Qin Wenyu did not say anything, the young ladies in the sedans behind her shut their mouths despite their upset. One by one, they boarded the sedans, and the convoy started moving again.

“Miss, the Heir-apparent of Chu knocked over Miss Qin’s sedan in front, and she and several young ladies fell out of their sedans.” Jin Ling trotted back from the front and reported to Wei Yuewu in a low voice through the window.

Wei Yuewu’s sedan had already begun to move forward slowly.

“Is anyone hurt?” Wei Yuewu asked after pondering for a moment.

“No, and I think they are merely frightened by the accident. Miss Qin had gotten into her sedan and ordered the convoy to move,” Jin Ling reported.

Hearing this, Wei Yuewu fell into deep thought. It seemed that Qin Wenyu was not simple at all. She had no complaints after such a terrible accident...

“Jin Ling, is Sixth Young Lady alright? Fourth Young Lady is worried sick!” Ming Yan’s voice suddenly appeared outside the window.

The corners of Wei Yuewu’s lips curled up into a sneer. Wei Qiufu didn’t miss a chance to express the so-called sisterhood. However, it seemed a little too pretentious to care about her after the accident.

As far as she was concerned, Wei Qiufu’s sedan should be not far from hers.

“Jin Ling, please thank Fourth Elder Sister for me. Do ask her if she was frightened just now. When you went ahead to have a look, didn’t you say that Fourth Elder Sister was fine?”

Wei Yuewu’s tender and sweet voice resonated through the curtain, and it was loud enough for the young ladies around her sedan to hear clearly.

“Yes, Miss!” Jin Ling answered in an even louder voice. “Please rest assured that I had already seen Fourth Young Lady when I ran to the front to check the situation. She was fine.”

This meant that Wei Yuewu had already sent her maid to check on Wei Qiufu, but Wei Qiufu only came to check on her after the dust had settled. In other words, Fourth Miss Wei was not as close to Sixth Miss Wei as they imagined. If Wei Qiufu genuinely cared for Wei Yuewu, shouldn't she send someone to check on the latter immediately?

"Yes, thank you for your concern, Sixth Young Lady!" Ming Yan felt that the situation had turned against them and did not dare to continue acting. She hurriedly bowed and turned back to Wei Qiufu's sedan.

Wei Qiufu's sedan was just one sedan away from Wei Yuewu's, and she had heard Jin Ling's words clearly. At this moment, she tugged her handkerchief and pulled a long face.

Not only Wei Yuewu, but her maid was also a tough opponent. However, Wei Qiufu was not afraid. After all, Wei Yuewu knew nothing about the situation in the Palace...

This time, the convoy moved smoothly. It did not take long for them to arrive in front of the Buddha Hall. The young ladies slowly got out of their sedans. The few who fell off their sedans earlier went to the side hall and rested for a while. Meanwhile, the eunuchs escorted the rest of the young ladies into the main hall.

Incense and candle smoke had filled the hall. The Third Princess and Zhaoyi Tu were kneeling on the two prayer mats and silently praying. Wei Yuewu and the others went to their respective prayer mats and knelt quietly.

The sound of chanting echoed across the hall, and in an instant, it calmed the atmosphere.

The whole process did not take long. After a while, Jin Ling came over to help Wei Yuewu up and brought her to the side hall to rest.

In the side hall, the beautiful Zhaoyi Tu wore a light-colored dress, and her appearance was bright and outstanding. She used to be the prettiest among the Tu Family's women, and her unique charisma said it all.

At this moment, the Third Princess sat next to her, looking very intimate.

Everyone bowed to Zhaoyi Tu and the Third Princess together. Then, they were about to kneel down again.

"Please stand!" Zhaoyi Tu waved her hand with a smile, gesturing to them to be at ease. Then, the eunuchs led them to their chairs and sat them down.

Wei Yuewu originally wanted to sit at the back, but the eunuch led her to sit beside the Third Princess. When she looked around, she realized that there was a certain arrangement in the seating position.

On her other hand was Wei Qiufu. They had never sat adjacent to each other before.

"Are you the Sixth Miss Wei of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang?" Zhaoyi Tu's gaze fell on Wei Yuewu's face.

Although Zhaoyi Tu had seen Wei Yuewu before when she was with the Empress, she did not remember Wei Yuewu's appearance clearly, which was why she was a little hesitant.

"Yes, I am." At the mention of herself, Wei Yuewu hurriedly got up and bowed.

"You don't have to be so formal. Back then, your mother asked me to act as a matchmaker for you and Marquis Jing Yuan, but I didn't expect that it did not succeed in the end," Zhaoyi Tu sighed and shook her hand.

Many people knew about what had happened in the Palace at that time, and they were aware of the marriage between the two families. However, it had to be resolved because of Wei Yan.

Wei Yuewu lowered her head. "Yes!"

"Your mother was on good terms with me back then. Although we didn't spend much time together, we could be considered close friends. Well, never did I expect that she... Well!" A nostalgic expression appeared on Zhaoyi Tu's face. She gently pressed the corner of her lips with a handkerchief and sighed with a bit of sadness.

"A-Are you close with my mother, Your Highness?" Wei Yuewu raised her head slightly and said in a shaky tone. She seemed a little worked up, hiding a trace of suspicion in her eyes.

Her mother had been engaged to her father not long after she entered the capital, but Wei Yuewu did not know if Zhaoyi Tu was talking about what happened after she entered the Palace or before she entered the Palace.

"I was indeed very close to your mother, or she would not have asked me to match you up with Marquis Jing Yuan." Zhaoyi Tu let out another sigh and looked at Wei Yuewu with a gentler gaze. "After the prayer with the Third Princess, come to my palace. I have something to tell you."

"Yes, Your Highness." Wei Yuewu nodded again.

"Die'er, I have something to do, so I need to go now. After the prayer, send the young ladies back to their quarters. Don't be too restrained. They are all young, so they can't sit still for a long time."

"Yes, Mother. I'll do as you say." Donning a childish smile, the Third Princess tugged Zhaoyi Tu's sleeve and teased, "Mother, you're the most caring person, and you even care about such tiny details. Don't you want to know whether I'm tired or my foot hurts?"

"I know that you're tired, but as a princess, you should make some contributions to the country. However, these young ladies have to suffer along with you."

Zhaoyi Tu's words caused the eyes of the young ladies to turn red.

There were many young ladies who had sore legs from kneeling yesterday. They had yet to recover after a night's rest, and now, they had to kneel again. Although it was shorter than yesterday, their legs were getting more and more painful.

They were all young ladies of aristocratic families, who lived a comfortable life, so they had never suffered much in their lives.

"Many thanks to you for accompanying me!" The humble Third Princess stood up and bowed to the young ladies on both sides, scaring the young ladies so much that they hurriedly stood up and returned the greeting.

With a satisfying smile upon the sight, Zhaoyi Tu stood up and said, "Die'er, I'll be leaving first."

"Farewell, Mother!" The Third Princess bent down. Wei Yuewu and the other young ladies bowed respectfully to see Zhaoyi Tu off. Then, they slowly straightened up. Both Zhaoyi Tu and the Third Princess gave people a kind of amiable and gentle feeling.

"Sixth Miss Wei, don't forget about our appointment." As Zhaoyi Tu walked a few steps forward, she stopped and turned to Wei Yuewu.

"Yes, Your Highness, I'll see you later," Wei Yuewu replied hurriedly.

In fact, the following prayer was not long. Compared with yesterday's situation where they couldn't even stand up properly after kneeling for such a long time, today was much better. Wei Yuewu specially observed her surroundings and realized that the prayers went on in both the main hall and the side hall as there were people there. Thinking of the scene of Chu Fangnan passing by in a hurry, she squinted slightly, and her eyes darkened. It was perhaps because of these heirs-apparent that their convoy moved a little slower just now.

Could it be that the heirs-apparent were praying when the Third Prince and the other young ladies were resting?

Wei Yuewu couldn't figure out why those outsiders would come to attend the Third Princess's prayer and her coming of age ceremony.

However, it didn't matter if she couldn't figure it out. After all, the Third Princess's prayer was her priority, and it was not her problem anyway. Since the Third Princess didn't explain, she naturally didn't need to know.

"Sixth Younger Sister, Eldest Sister is waiting for us outside. Let us go for a walk with her," Wei Qiufu whispered into Wei Yuewu's ear during the break.

"B-But I have to go to Zhaoyi Tu's palace later," Wei Yuewu refused in a low voice.

"It doesn't matter. We will accompany you there. Anyway, we are just taking a walk to relax," Wei Qiufu said warmly as if she did not want Wei Yuewu to refuse.

"Uh... alright," Wei Yuewu stammered in dilemma, and her eyes fell on her handkerchief, which was now held in another hand...

Chapter 308 – A Trick Of Handkerchief

Wen Yuewu had placed her handkerchief casually on the table because she was massaging her legs earlier, while Wei Qiufu was sitting on the other side of the table.

Coincidentally, Wei Qiufu put her handkerchief on the table too, and the two handkerchiefs were strangely mixed together.

Wei Yuewu had always paid close attention to Wei Qiufu's movements, so when she saw Wei Qiufu's hand on her handkerchief, a trace of coldness flashed across her dim eyes, but she turned her face away as if nothing had happened and continued to massage her legs.

After that, the Third Princess stood up again. Wei Yuewu casually picked up the handkerchief on the table and followed everyone into the main hall. This time, Wei Qiufu waited until everyone moved forward before passing the handkerchief to Ming Yan and glancing outside. Nodding knowingly, Ming Yan hid the handkerchief in her sleeve and quietly left.

Outside the side hall's door, Wei Fengyao's maid, who was anxiously waiting, rushed to Ming Yan when she saw her coming out and asked, "Do you have it?"

"Here!" Looking around to make sure that no one was watching them, Ming Yan retrieved the handkerchief from her sleeve and handed it over to Wei Fengyao's maid while covering it stealthily with another sleeve. Then, she curiously asked, "Why did Eldest Young Lady want Sixth Young Lady's handkerchief?"

"It's none of our business!" The maid from Prince Nan'an Mansion scolded Ming Yan and snatched the handkerchief before turning to leave.

She was the maid that Wei Fengyao had sent just now to tell Wei Qiufu and Wei Yuewu that they would go out for a walk after the praying ceremony ended.

Ming Yan pursed her lips in disdain as the maid refused to reveal anything to her. However, there was one thing she was certain, and that was Eldest Young Lady wanted to make her move on Sixth Young Lady. Regarding this matter, the Fourth Young Lady would love to see it happen.

No matter what happened in the end, it had nothing to do with the Fourth Young Lady.

In the Buddha Hall, this time, the praying time was slightly longer, and the young ladies' legs had gotten numb due to the long hours of kneeling. When the Third Princess asked them to get up, the maids helped the young ladies to sit in the chairs to rest. The young ladies thumped their legs with their hands, while the maids squatted down to massage their masters' legs.

"You're dismissed in a while. All of you got up early today, and it isn't lunchtime yet. You can take a stroll in the imperial garden. The weather is nice today," the Third Princess announced with a gentle smile while picking up the tea cup and taking a sip. Compared to the Fourth Princess who looked strict and arrogant, the Third Princess was both kind and attractive.

"Thank you, Your Highness!" the young ladies all beamed.

"Sixth Miss Wei, do you want to go to Mother's palace now or after lunch?" the Third Princess turned to Wei Yuewu and asked with a smile. Wei Yuewu's sitting position had never changed since she was first placed next to the Third Princess. The others sat down according to the Third Princess' arrangement.

"I'll go after lunch," Wei Yuewu replied after thinking for a while. As she looked at the sky outside, it was already close to noon. It would be inconvenient in case she bumped into Zhaoyi Tu having lunch if she went over now.

Although she had promised Zhaoyi Tu to go there immediately, it was inappropriate timing.

"Alright, after lunch, I'll send someone to bring you to Mother's palace," the Third Princess quipped with a gentle smile, obviously delighted to see Wei Yuewu being so considerate.

"Everyone, dismiss. You can go wherever you want to go. There will be guards guarding the places where you're not allowed to enter," the Third Princess turned to the other young ladies and announced.

There were quite a few young ladies who did not take a stroll yesterday. Now that they heard that they could casually take a look and stroll around, all of them were in high spirits. These young ladies were restrained when they were at home, so they yearned for freedom.

Although they had visited the palace several times, their elders would tag along most of the time, so they could not look around as they pleased.

It was extremely rare for them to not have any elders watching over them like a hawk.

With that, the young ladies no longer cared about their sore legs and bowed to the Third Princess before leaving in twos and threes.

Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu followed the crowd to the door. Sure enough, the sun was shining brightly outside. It was rare to see such a bright and sunny day in winter.

"Sixth Younger Sister, let's go over there. Eldest Sister said that she will wait for us in a pavilion over there!" Wei Qiufu pulled Wei Yuewu's hand and pointed to a small path on the right.

"Here?" Wei Yuewu frowned. "I think I'd better go back first. After lunch, I have to go to Zhaoyi Tu's palace."

"What's the hurry? It's still early. This place is quite close to the Chu Xiu Palace we live in. It is much closer than if we go back from the Third Princess' place!" Wei Qiufu persuaded with a smile. She was jealous that Zhaoyi Tu had taken a fancy on Wei Yuewu, but she did not show it on her face.

It was true that this place was much closer than the place they went to yesterday.

“The lunch is prepared at Chu Xiu Palace, but everyone has gotten out to have fun, so they know that they won’t miss lunch. Eldest Sister entered the Palace today to accompany us. It won’t be nice if we don’t show up. In a while, she will go out of the Palace.”

Wei Qiufu persuaded her with a gentle face, and her words were reasonable.

“Alright then.” Wei Yuewu could only nod and agree. The two of them walked towards the small path in the corner.

In another side hall, Yan Huaijing came out with a few guards and eunuchs. He was dressed in a snow-white fur coat, which made his handsome face look like the divine deity. The Third Princess, who had come out at some point in time, looked at him with infatuation, and excitement filled her eyes.

Any woman would feel extremely excited if they could marry Yan Huaijing. Even though the Third Princess never revealed her emotions, at this moment, she could not help but blush as she looked at Yan Huaijing, who was bathed in the sunlight.

However, when the Third Princess saw Lu Yeli’s scrutinizing gaze, she suddenly calmed down and smiled sweetly at him before turning to leave.

Today, it was not only the Third Princess and the young ladies who came for the prayers but also the other heirs-apparent.

No matter if it were the Third Princess or the Fourth Princess, they were the most likely princesses to marry the heirs-apparent, so it was only natural for these heirs-apparent to be here today.

These heirs-apparent had also entered the Palace in the past few days because of the marriage issue, but they had come earlier this time.

The Third Princess clearly knew that Wen Cailuan was her opponent, and a strong one. The Empress would highly likely marry Wen Cailuan to the Heir-apparent of Yan as the Yan State was the most powerful and important one among the four dukedoms. The Third Princess could not give up such an opportunity no matter what.

Whether it was for herself or for her mother and Fourth Elder Brother.

They owed this to her and her mother, so they should pay them back.

Therefore, the Third Princess needed help. She needed someone who could win Yan Huaijing's heart. A beauty, perhaps? If it didn't work, she would bring Jing Wenyan along. So what if she was the First Daughter of the State of Jing? A landless nobility was worse than a peasant.

But right now, the Third Princess had to carefully consider what Jing Wenyan had said and observe Sixth Miss Wei.

When Yan Huaijing appeared in front of the hall, it immediately caused a commotion among the young ladies who had fallen behind.

Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu, who were walking forward, turned around out of curiosity as they heard the commotion and met with a pair of gentle and affectionate eyes.

However, Wei Yuewu saw something more than that. Behind those gentle eyes, there were hidden depths that would give someone a fatal blow.

Yan Huaijing was here?

Wei Yuewu had expected this, and Chu Fangnan should also be coming here when he had rushed over just now.

Wei Yuewu slowly lowered her head and looked away from Yan Huaijing's seemingly affectionate but ruthless eyes. His gentle and charming outlook was indeed attractive, but behind the gentle disguise was a cold-blooded temperament. She would not fall for it.

At this moment, Yan Huaijing also saw Wei Yuewu. The corners of his lips curved up slightly into a wicked smirk, and his black eyes became more and more brilliant. Seeing such a handsome picture, those young ladies were so mesmerized that they covered their chests with their hands and felt that their hearts were about to jump out of their chests.

Moreover, the handsome heir-apparent's gaze swept over, and no one knew whom he had just seen.

"Go, take a look!" Yan Huaijing turned to look at the Third Princess' back and said to the eunuch beside him.

The order was unclear, but the eunuch understood his meaning when he saw which way Yan Huaijing was looking. Although Yan Huaijing was smiling all along, it was not a sincere smile until he saw Sixth Miss Wei. Only then did his smile suddenly become enchanting.

"Yes!" The eunuch nodded and retreated quietly.

Although the eunuchs, who had followed their heirs-apparent into the Palace, had some differences in clothes, if one did not look carefully, they would not be able to tell the difference. It was not as eye-catching as the difference between the clothes of bodyguards. Therefore, no one noticed the eunuch when he retreated.

"Heir-apparent Yan, what makes you so happy?" At this moment, Lu Yeli walked over. His gaze swept over the group of young ladies, and he didn't feel that there was anyone here that could attract Yan Huaijing's attention. He couldn't help but look into the distance and see the Third Princess gracefully leaving with the palace maids and eunuchs. With that, his gaze became profound and serene.

Compared to the arrogant Fourth Princess, Lu Yeli felt that the soft-spoken Third Princess was more suitable for him.

Of course, this was under the consideration of Yan Huaijing's presence. The Fourth Princess was the Empress's daughter and the Crown Prince's only sister. If he married her, not only now, but it would be beneficial to the State of Lu when the Crown Prince ascended to the throne in the future. However, from the looks of it, the Empress and the Fourth Princess had taken a liking to Yan Huaijing.

In that case, his only option was the Third Princess. In fact, there were many benefits to marrying the Third Princess. The relationship between the Third Princess and the Crown Prince was even better than that of the Fourth Princess. Although her status was slightly lacking compared with the Fourth Princess, Lu Yeli believed that he could make use of this relationship in the future to gain profit for the State of Lu.

With this in mind, the Third Princess had become his target.

As for the State of Qi and the State of Chu, Lu Yeli looked at Qi Yunhao and Chu Fangnan who followed him with disdain. Compared with himself and Yan Huaijing, the two of them should be far inferior. He believed that the Emperor and the Empress would be able to see this clearly.

“Nothing. I just saw something interesting,” Yan Huaijing spoke in a gentle tone and waved his sleeve as he walked down the stairs.

“Who caught Heir-apparent Yan’s attention?” Qi Yunhao asked. At this time, he and Chu Fangnan also came over and said meaningfully, “Could it be that you have taken a fancy to a certain beauty here?”

Of course, Qi Yunhao had ulterior motives in asking this question, and he did not expect Yan Huaijing to really answer him. Although Yan Huaijing usually looked gentle, most of the time, that kind of gentleness was rather superficial and insincere.

Ever since he came to the capital and met the famous heir-apparent of Yan State who was said to be “gentle and affectionate”, Qi Yunhao had encountered this kind of scene many times. However, he had indeed seen that there was a slight difference between Yan Huaijing’s mood just now, so he probed.

But in the next moment, he was bewildered.

“Yes!” An elegant and suffocating voice came out of Yan Huaijing’s mouth, but it made the few people who were walking behind him stop in their tracks...

Chapter 309 – The Palace Maid Who Tried In Vain To Accuse Her

“I wonder which beauty Heir-apparent of Yan is interested in?” Qi Yunhao looked at the ladies below.

Lu Yeli also stopped and looked thoughtfully at the people below the steps.

Chu Fangnan looked even more nervous.

If Yan Huaijing was interested in a certain young lady of an aristocratic family, did it mean that he had decided which princess he wanted to marry?

“The woman I like is naturally the most outstanding one!” Yan Huaijing quipped leisurely as he walked down the stairs lazily, as if he did not know that his remark caused a huge uproar.

At this time, Wei Yuewu and Wei Qiufu had already disappeared, and even the Third Princess had left far away.

Only five or six young ladies were left at the scene.

Lu Yeli’s gaze swept over the few ladies below the steps and paused on their faces for a moment. Eventually, he frowned as he felt that none of these ladies fit the outstanding criteria and walked down.

Qi Yunhao and Chu Fangnan exchanged glances and shook their heads as they felt that Yan Huaijing’s remark did not make sense. Then, they slowly walked down the stairs.

The most outstanding woman? Who was the most outstanding woman in the capital that Yan Huaijing had taken a fancy to?

After lining up the outstanding women in the capital, the men started to speculate the possibility secretly, but they knew that it was impossible to get an answer from Yan Huaijing.

Wei Yuewu did not know that Yan Huaijing’s ambiguous remark had caught the attention of the young ladies of aristocratic families in the capital. At this moment, she was walking slowly with Wei Qiufu to the pavilion that Wei Fengyao had appointed.

As they walked along the way, there were fewer and fewer people. At first, Wei Yuewu could see a few palace maids passing by, but eventually, she didn’t see anyone.

"Fourth Elder Sister, where is Eldest Sister?" Wei Yuewu stopped and asked in puzzlement.

"She should be in front. Look at the palace over there. Eldest Sister's maid said that it's in a pavilion over there. She's waiting for us there." Wei Qiufu pointed at a palace in the distance. The place was a little far away. At this time, all Wei Yuewu could see was the few tall eaves in the distance, with the unique carving of dragons and phoenixes only to be seen in the Palace.

"Is that the cold palace?" Wei Yuewu sneered coldly and stopped moving, as if she would never walk if Wei Qiufu did not explain clearly.

"Impossible. Even if Eldest Sister does not want us to be disturbed, she will not go to the cold palace. The cold palace is located on the opposite side of the bridge where we met Beauty Wang that day!"

Wei Qiufu was not surprised by Wei Yuewu's suspicion at all and explained with a smile.

"Why did she pick such a far place to meet?" Wei Yuewu looked a little puzzled, but she began to move slightly. Although it was not fast, she basically agreed with Wei Qiufu.

"Maybe Eldest Sister doesn't want others to see her strolling around with us. I remember that she said that she was coming to the Palace to accompany the Empress Dowager. It wouldn't be nice if she was seen with us since she came to the Palace for the Empress Dowager. Even if the Empress Dowager didn't blame her, it wasn't nice for her to do so in front of others."

Wei Qiufu explained with a smile, sounding more and more convincing. Indeed, Wei Fengyao had entered the Palace in the name of accompanying the Empress Dowager, so it would not be nice if she was seen accompanying her sisters and wandering around the Palace. It was better to avoid the eyes of the others.

"Why isn't she here yet?" Wei Yuewu finally curled her lips into a smile as if she agreed with Wei Qiufu's remarks.

"Maybe she is waiting for us. This is the imperial palace, after all, and Eldest sister is Heiress-apparent of Prince Nan'an. No matter how you look at it, she doesn't have to welcome the two of us. Alright, Sixth

Younger Sister, stop being suspicious. If you don't believe me, I will go ahead and take a look. Then, I'll ask Eldest Sister to meet us."

"Sixth Younger Sister, you only need to come over slowly," Wei Qiufu joked.

"Alright!" Wei Yuewu nodded and agreed.

However, Wei Qiufu was taken aback, and her smile froze a little. It was as if she had not expected this reaction from Wei Yuewu. "O-Okay. Take your time, Sixth Younger Sister. I'll go over and ask Eldest Sister to come over first."

"Thank you, Fourth Elder Sister!" Wei Yuewu bowed slightly, indicating that she felt sorry for making Wei Qiufu into doing this.

"Since you don't believe me, why don't you send Jin Ling over to take a look with me?" The smile on Wei Qiufu's face slowly faded away as she said somewhat frustratedly.

"If you think it's possible, of course, it's the best!" Wei Yuewu thought for a moment and smiled. In her opinion, it was best if Wei Qiufu could take Jin Ling with her.

"A-Alright... I don't know why you are so suspicious of us! F-Forget it! Jin Ling, come with me. Seeing is believing!"

Wei Qiufu looked as if she had been misunderstood. She stomped her feet and huffed angrily, but there was a trace of satisfaction in her eyes.

"I'll have to trouble you, Fourth Elder Sister!" However, Wei Yuewu remained unmoved and seemed very insistent.

"Alright, I'll bring Jin Ling over immediately. If you believe me, slowly come over. If you want to stop, it's fine!" Wei Qiufu was so angry that her expression changed. She snorted coldly and turned to leave.

Ming Yan followed closely behind her. Jin Ling looked at Wei Yuewu and trotted after Wei Qiufu.

Wei Qiufu looked like she had been wronged by Wei Yuewu. Now, she looked for Wei Fengyao to prove herself. She quickened her pace and disappeared from Wei Yuewu's line of sight with Ming Yan and Jin Ling in a turn.

Wei Yuewu stopped in her tracks. Her eyes swept over Wei Qiufu, who had been rushing about just now, and her lips curled into a smile. Since when had Wei Qiufu become so visibly pleased?

It seemed that the so-called meeting with Wei Fengyao was a faux.

"Miss, please make way!" Suddenly, an urgent cry came from behind. Wei Yuewu subconsciously turned around and saw a palace maid holding a tray and hurriedly walking over. Due to her fast walking, the wine jug on top of the tray swayed a bit and slid down.

Wei Yuewu quickly took a step back, but the wine jug smashed to the floor and coincidentally landed beside her feet. Some wine sprinkled on her embroidered shoes.

Wei Yuewu narrowed her eyes dangerously.

"Ah! T-This is royal wine!" Seeing that the wine jug had been smashed, the palace maid was so scared that her face turned ashen as she cried out in shock.

"Royal wine?" Wei Yuewu's heart skipped a beat.

"I-It's the wine that His Majesty asked for. Miss, you can't leave like this. Please come with me to explain to the chief eunuch that the two of us accidentally smashed the wine." The palace maid grabbed Wei Yuewu, her lips trembling. She was obviously frightened, but her remarks clearly indicated that Wei Yuewu should take the blame with her.

"The wine that His Majesty asked for? Why did you come this way? Also, I didn't bump into you just now!" Wei Yuewu's face turned cold. She waved her hand, wanting to shake the palace maid's hand away.

To her surprise, the palace maid grabbed onto her tightly and refused to let go.

“Miss, the place where the wine is stored is far away. It is the tributary wine. If you don’t believe me, you can ask the chief eunuch. I just took it from the storage. There has been no one on the way here, so I walked a little quicker. I concentrated on the wine, but I didn’t notice that you were here. Miss, please save me!”

The palace maid fell to her knees with a thump and kowtowed hard at Wei Yuewu, but she grabbed Wei Yuewu’s dress.

“You are a noble daughter from an aristocratic family. Even if this wine is precious, the chief eunuch will not say anything. His Majesty is currently entertaining Marquis Hua Yang, and the chief eunuch is waiting outside the imperial study. All you have to do is prove that I accidentally spilled the wine. The chief eunuch will forgive me for your sake.”

“Is the chief eunuch so easy to deal with?” Wei Yuewu asked with a dim gaze when she saw the palace maid’s pale face. She also mentioned Marquis Hua Yang. Was her father in the Palace now?

Under normal circumstances, if something like this happened, even if she was brought to the chief eunuch, she wouldn’t be afraid with her father around, so she wouldn’t be so wary.

“The chief is very polite to the young ladies of aristocratic families. Moreover, the young ladies in the Palace today are all accompanying the Third Princess to pray for the prosperity of the country, and the chief eunuch thinks even highly of you. Miss, please help me. You only have to vouch for me. I’ll shoulder all the responsibilities.”

The palace maid seemed to have given up on the idea of letting Wei Yuewu take the blame. At this time, she was begging for mercy. She pulled Wei Yuewu’s dress and kowtowed again and again until there was a reddish bump on her forehead.

“A-Alright! But I’m waiting for someone here,” Wei Yuewu hesitated for a moment before saying.

“Please save my life first. I’ll bring you here as soon as possible. If there are other young ladies waiting for you, I’ll apologize to them. B-But only you can save me now!” The palace maid hurriedly raised her head and looked at Wei Yuewu with tears in her eyes as she pleaded.

“Alright then!” If Wei Yuewu refused again, it would be too unreasonable.

Moreover, the palace maid said that His Majesty met her father in the imperial study. With such a remark, Wei Yuewu felt even more at ease.

With that, she turned and left with the palace maid.

“Thank you, Miss! Thank you!” Seeing that Wei Yuewu had agreed, the palace maid was overjoyed and thanked her profusely.

“Oh no, your shoes are wet!” Suddenly, the palace maid saw Wei Yuewu’s soaked shoes. She hurriedly pointed at the palace in front of her. “Miss, there is an empty palace over there. Usually, there will be an extra few clothes and socks in the empty palace. Miss, do you want to go and see if there is anything suitable?”

“There are shoes and socks here?” Wei Yuewu hesitated for a moment. She was a young lady of an aristocratic family who paid extra attention to dignity and outer appearance. It was indeed impolite to meet the chief eunuch with a pair of wet shoes. Furthermore, she might even meet the Emperor.

“Yes, I remember that there are shoes and socks in several empty palaces here with all kinds of shapes and sizes. If you don’t see anything suitable, we can change to another palace.” The palace maid pointed at the palace in front of them.

“Let’s go then.” Wei Yuewu nodded. She picked up the corner of her skirt and realized that her left shoe was partially drenched and reeked of alcohol. The winter socks and shoes were a bit thick, so now she could feel a trace of dampness and cold. It was indeed inconvenient for her to rush over to imperial study at this time.

“Alright, Miss, hurry up!” The palace maid got up, wiped her tears, and took a few steps forward. She turned back and urged Wei Yuewu who was still standing in the same place.

“Alright, I’m coming!” Wei Yuewu smiled slightly, but her eyes were filled with coldness. The palace maid’s appearance was such a coincidence. Moreover, she was so anxious earlier that she wanted her to take the blame, but now, she was concerned about her wholeheartedly.

What a considerate palace maid!

When ordinary people saw this scene, they naturally believed what the palace maid said. Even if they had doubts about what they had encountered before, they would naturally lower their guard because of this remark. This was what Wei Fengyao had prepared for her!

Wei Yuewu pinched the handkerchief in her hand, which was supposed to be Wei Qiufu’s. She had secretly looked at it before. The word “Fu” was embroidered on it...

Chapter 310 – The Lonely, Vacant, Cold, And Dangerous Palace

The palace was not big, but it was empty. As the palace maid pushed the heavy door open, the layers of curtains in the main hall fluttered.

Then, she brought Wei Yuewu to the innermost area. “Young miss, please wait here for a moment. I will go get it right away!”

With a nod, Wei Yuewu turned and looked at the palace she was in. Layers of palace curtains hung in the small place, and all she could see was the tiny space in front of her. There seemed to be only a chair behind the half-folded screen at the corner of the palace.

Seeing Wei Yuewu agree, the palace maid secretly grinned, a trace of satisfaction flashing across her face. The Heiress-apparent of Prince Nan’an had said that her only job was to bring Sixth Miss Wei to the screen of this empty palace, and the rest was none of her business.

“Wait a minute!” Wei Yuewu suddenly called out to the palace maid.

“Y-Yes? W-What is it, Miss?” Due to her ulterior motive, the palace maid was bewildered, and her expression sheepishly change. She had no choice but to stop in her tracks.

Looking at the palace maid’s nervous and pale face, Wei Yuewu asked with a polite smile, “Are there really shoes here?”

“Y-Yes, there must be. Please wait a moment!” the palace maid hurriedly blurted.

“Oh, please go then!” Wei Yuewu noticed the anxiety on the palace maid’s face, but she didn’t expose her. She then checked out her surroundings again. The layers of curtains indeed limited her line of sight as she could only see the inside of the palace vaguely.

Seeing that Wei Yuewu did not stop her this time, the palace maid was overjoyed. She lifted the layers of curtains and sprinted out without excusing herself. As long as she got out of this place, she would be able to obtain the reward from the heiress-apparent.

“Crick!” Suddenly, the heavy sound of the palace doors being pushed open echoed across the palace again, which shocked the palace maid. This palace had been abandoned for a long time, and no one would come. Who could it be at this time? Could it be the heiress-apparent?

Wei Yuewu lifted the curtains slowly as she treaded carefully into the palace while looking for the door to the side hall. A palace like this usually had a door that linked the main hall and the side hall.

“Is there anyone here?” There was a man’s voice that was a little feminine. Wei Yuewu had never heard the voice before, but the man sounded very young. It should not be the Emperor.

“No one is here! Even ghosts don’t come here!” A woman’s coquettish voice resonated. There was a kind of alluring charm in her voice that came from her soul. Wei Yuewu had never heard the voice either.

The doors of the main hall were pushed open. Through the layers of curtains, Wei Yuewu saw that the palace maid was frantically trying to dodge to the side, and her lips curled into a cold sneer. Wei Fengyao was indeed vicious. From the looks of it, even the palace maid was a pawn that was destined to die in her game.

As Wei Yuewu walked more and more quietly, she slowly retreated to the corner. She had observed several palaces before and knew that there was usually a side door at this part of the palace.

A man and a woman came to this vacant and quiet palace. They must be here for a rendezvous!

The doors to the hall were closed. Only two figures could be seen. One tall and one short, they embraced each other as they entered the hall.

“Your Highness...” The woman’s voice was so soft and charming that it almost melted the man’s heart.

Chuckling playfully, the man hugged the woman and pulled her clothes to both sides as if he couldn’t wait any longer.

Suddenly, a strange sound came from the depths of the curtain.

Hearing the noise, the man abruptly kept a straight face and released the alluring woman from his embrace. Then, he pulled over the curtains and saw a frightened palace maid curling up in a corner. There was a stool at her feet. It was obvious that she had accidentally tripped over it just now.

“Y-Y-Y-Your Hi...” Seeing the man’s somewhat feminine and sickly face, the palace maid trembled even more and couldn’t even complete a single sentence.

The man narrowed his eyes, and a murderous intent flashed across his face. In a blink of an eye, he strode over and grabbed the palace maid by the neck. She couldn’t finish her sentence, but she could clearly hear the sound of her neck breaking. Then, there was blood coming out of her mouth, and her head tilted. She was dead.

In this empty palace, only the sound of the palace maid kicking the stool twice before she died was heard, producing an eerie and tranquil harmony.

“Didn’t you say there was no one in this palace?” the man grunted coldly to the woman.

"T-There can't be anyone! I-I sent someone to check before," the woman hurriedly explained. Knowing how vicious the man in front of her was, she was so frightened that her face turned pale.

"You'd better check thoroughly, or else..." the man growled coldly, killing intent surging in his eyes. He casually lifted the curtains in front of him and went inside layer by layer.

"Yes... I will definitely check the palace clearly!" The gentle and charming expression on the woman's face faded away. Right now, she was angry and annoyed because the man blamed her for not taking care of the matter properly.

Reaching out, she lifted the curtain on the other side and looked inside.

At this time, Wei Yuewu had already retreated to the door of the side hall. She carefully moved her footsteps. Even if she saw a figure swaying not far away, she did not dare to speed up.

As her hand touched the side hall's door, she gently pulled it. Fortunately, the door was not locked.

Although she had long guessed that since the door to the main hall was open, there was no reason for the door of the side hall to be locked. However, under such a treacherous circumstance, she still felt relieved of her good luck.

She gently pulled open the side door, moved her feet slightly, leaned her body sideways, and carefully left the door. Then, she lifted her skirt slightly and tiptoed out of the palace, dropping the handkerchief in her hand to the floor lightly...

The entrance to the palace was just outside. When Wei Yuewu reached the entrance, she saw a bodyguard standing at the entrance to the main hall. She turned around and ran in a hurry. The back door was right in front of her, but as she pulled the handle, it was tightly closed.

The back door was locked...

Cold sweat began to drench Wei Yuewu's forehead. Never did she expect that the back door was locked.

In this case, the front door was her only option for now, but there was a guard at the entrance of the main hall. If she went to the main door, the guard would see her, but if the couple inside the palace found the door to the side hall, they would chase after her too!

She had to leave now, and she had to leave quickly.

Gritting her teeth, Wei Yuewu took out a handkerchief from her pocket and covered half of her face. Then, she lifted her skirt and hurried over to the front door. However, when she reached the front door, she slowed down and composed herself as she looked at the guard who was standing at the entrance.

Then, she slowly walked out of the corner.

When the bodyguard, who was at the entrance of the hall, saw a woman appear, he was startled and stared at Wei Yuewu with burning eyes.

Wei Yuewu calmly pointed toward the palace and then put her finger on her lips, gesturing for him to speak softly. After that, she walked out confidently.

For a moment, the bewildered bodyguard did not understand what Wei Yuewu meant. He looked at the main hall. He knew that his master was inside the palace, but was this woman the one who came with him? He couldn't know for sure, so he could only watch Wei Yuewu leave to see if she had any strange movements.

Suddenly, a low scream came from inside the hall that surprised the bodyguard. He could no longer care about Wei Yuewu and rushed into the hall hastily.

"Master!"

"What is this?" The man's cold voice came from inside the curtains, and the bodyguard rushed to him in a hurry.

After walking around the dead palace maid and reaching the side hall, he saw a handkerchief in his master's hand.

"There are still people here!" Turning to the woman, who had come after hearing his words, the man glowered coldly, "How can you let so many people in here?! Do you want to die?"

"I-I don't know. T-This is impossible!" As the woman thought of the consequences of being discovered, her face turned ghastly pale, and she grabbed the man's sleeve. "Y-Your Highness, what should we do? I-If the Emperor finds out..."

"Look who this handkerchief belongs to!" The man demanded coldly. He shook off the woman's hand, took the handkerchief in his hand, and hurried to the side door.

If there really was someone here just now, this person would definitely be going to the side hall now.

"Your Highness..." The bodyguard hesitated for a moment. Before he could tell his master about Wei Yuewu, the latter had already lifted the curtains and disappeared in front of him. He could only chase after him.

The door of the side door was ajar. The man chased out, and sure enough, he saw another woman's handkerchief on the floor. He hurriedly picked it up to take a look.

"Your Highness... just now, there was a woman who went out through the front door!" At this time, the bodyguard also chased over and hurriedly reported.

"Go after her!" The man's face became more and more gloomy. As he stuffed the handkerchief into his pocket, he shouted and rushed out.

Seeing the bodyguard leave, Wei Yuewu hurriedly lifted her skirt and ran out. Before she could clearly see the road in front of her, she heard a sharp voice of a eunuch shouting, "Stop right there! Who are you?"

At some point in time, a eunuch happened to be standing at the intersection in front of her. When he saw the panicked Wei Yuewu, he pointed and shouted. At this time, Wei Yuewu did not care much and ran to another intersection.

When the eunuch saw that Wei Yuewu did not stop but ran away instead, he hurriedly took a detour and chased after her. However, he did not dare to make a sound and only shouted in a low voice, "Stop right there!"

Then, there was no more sound as he quietly ran after her.

Wei Yuewu ran past the intersection and looked around her. There was another intersection in front of her. On the other side of the intersection, there was a rockery. Coincidentally, the small rockery was wide enough to hide one person, and it was facing a small lake.

The rest of the place was too empty and spacious. No matter where she hid, they could see her.

As Wei Yuewu calculated the time, she was sure that Jin Ling should be coming soon...

Wei Yuewu pondered for a moment, and then she lifted her skirt and ran toward the rockery. The frantic footsteps behind her caught up to her. Without much time to think, she turned her body and hid in a small cave in the rockery.

There was a gap in the rockery where she could see the eunuch standing at the place where she had just been standing. He looked around nervously and did not know which way to go as he didn't see Wei Yuewu. While he was hesitating, he suddenly saw a woman who looked like a maid rushing over.

After thinking for a while, he was overjoyed and hurried to greet her.

Although the incoming person was not the woman he chased after just now, he was certain that the former must be related to her.

Wei Yuewu stretched her neck to look from the entrance of the cave and saw a maid who was opposite her. She sucked in a breath. It was Jin Ling. She had returned...