

Young Lady 401

Chapter 401

"I don't know either. Anyway, Father Emperor agreed, and I don't understand why. Marquis Hua Yang is now considered to be in his prime. Moreover, he doesn't even have a son. It's impossible for him to..." Wen Tianyao paused at this point, but Third Prince understood his meaning perfectly.

As members of the royal family, they understood the consequences of a subordinate whose achievements were so great that he intimidated the Emperor.

There were two powerful officials in the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang who held important positions in the administrative and military divisions. Their strength and power had long surpassed that of ordinary aristocratic families. The Emperor wouldn't be able to trust them to such an extent if it weren't for the fact that Wei Luowen did not have a son.

He had two daughters, but they wouldn't be much of a threat to the authority, so no matter how one looked at it, Marquis Hua Yang would not betray the Emperor.

"Does anyone know about this? How about Yan Huaijing? Does he know this?" The Third Prince's eyes flashed as he asked.

"No, this matter has not been spread out yet. After the New Year, Wei Ziyang will return to the border and Wei Luowen will stay here in the capital on the grounds of recovering from his old injuries. When Wei Ziyang has a firm foothold over there, the imperial decree will be announced," Wen Tianyao said.

"Eldest Brother, Yan Huaijing probably takes a fancy to Sixth Young Lady of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang," the Third Prince raised his eyes and said with a serious face.

No matter what, he would not let Wei Yuewu go to the State of Yan. She was not familiar with that place and the people there. If she went there, she would not live for long. He did not want this to happen.

Sometimes, even he felt conflicted about the reason behind this. That weak young woman was actually not that important to him!

“Wei Yuewu’s portrait will definitely not be included in the portraits that we send to Yan Huaijing.” Wen Tianyao nodded at this point as he had made up his mind. Perhaps, he could do something on his side. Yan Huaijing was not a pushover, and Father Emperor still had the intention to marry a princess off to him.

The sunlight streamed in through the window and shone on his handsome face which was extremely similar to the Third Prince’s. Anyone who looked at them would know that they were brothers, and they were close-knit.

The stark similarities between them even surpassed that of the Second Prince and the Fourth Prince. However, as a matter of fact, Wen Tianyao and the Fourth Prince shared a closer bond by blood.

“Father, this bookshelf is also broken!” Wei Yuewu bit her lips and pointed to the bookshelf that was placed on the side. A trace of cold anger flashed through her eyes. These people had gone too far.

Someone deliberately knocked off a corner of the bookshelf. She deduced that there should have been a small piece of gold there.

When she came last time, everything here showed the sign of decay but had not been artificially destroyed. But this time, she came in again and found that everything was out of place. The big items remained untouched, but the valuable golden corners and such had been pried open and taken away. Did the people who did this think that no one would come into her mother’s courtyard?

Wei Luowen was so angry that his face turned red. He pressed his finger on the bookshelf and said, “Someone, check and find out who destroyed it.”

“Yes,” a lad servant answered and ran out.

“Father, do they abandon and neglect this place because you don’t value it? Is that why they tried to cover this place up and bury everything? If so, please hand over Mother’s courtyard to me. I’ll stay and restore everything here,” Wei Yuewu said with a faint look.

Her butterfly-like long eyelashes fluttered twice as she spoke with a bit of loneliness and determination.

With the instigation of those with malicious intentions, her mother's existence and belongings had been forgotten and abandoned. It might have started because of Concubine Dong and Madam Dowager, but who would have dared to be so bold if her father hadn't remained silent on this issue.

Her remarks tugged at Wei Luowen's heartstrings, and he felt an enormous heartache as if someone had stabbed his heart directly. He didn't answer her immediately. Instead, he quietly looked at her. She was just a small baby back then, and they thought that she wouldn't survive. But here she was, firm and strong, and she was even determined to protect her mother.

His heart ached upon seeing this. There were some things that were out of his control. Actually, he was not a good husband for Rui'er and a good father for Yuewu.

"It won't happen again," Wei Luowen said with certainty.

He would not allow anyone to destroy Rui'er's courtyard again. Everything here belonged to Rui'er, and it was once his most beautiful memory. If he represented darkness, Rui'er was the ray of sunlight that shone in his heart. However, in the end, Rui'er did not forgive him!

Did she choose not to forgive him even when she died?

"Father, what if Grandmother has other reasons to interfere in the future?" Wei Yuewu raised her head and looked at Wei Luowen. She needed a clear answer from him. Today, if she hadn't manipulated the situation, would her father have watched them burning and sealing her mother's courtyard?

She tried to understand his reasons, but from the bottom of her heart, she could not accept his performance!

"No matter what the reason is, I will not let anyone lay their hands on your mother's courtyard!" Wei Luowen paused for a moment before giving this answer, and she could see the determination in his eyes. He didn't say it in the spur of the moment, but he had considered it carefully. It was also the question that he had been thinking about recently.

He had been wondering whether everything he had done was worth it or not...

“Thank you, Father!” Wei Yuewu’s eyes became teary with a bit of bitterness in her expression, but she didn’t shed tears. It was just a symbolic gesture to keep everything that her mother left behind. However, if Wei Luowen didn’t want to protect her mother’s legacy, she would.

“Father, how was your relationship with Mother at that time?” The question had been choking Wei Yuewu’s mind for some time. After much hesitation, she finally spilled it out and asked.

There were too many questions that she could not say just because she was his daughter. How could she ask her father this kind of question? But now, Wei Yuewu decided to ask nevertheless.

“Why do you ask that?” Wei Luowen was taken aback, but he asked softly.

“It seems as if someone deliberately tries to erase everything about Mother in this mansion. When I returned to the capital, I found that this courtyard was abandoned through and through. No one ever came here, not even the cleaner. Meanwhile, Concubine Dong’s courtyard was very clean and neat although she only returned once a year. But here, not even a maid came to sweep the floor or wipe the furniture. In fact, no one was assigned to keep this place tidy. It seems this place is redundant.”

Wei Yuewu glanced at the bookcase that had its gold corners missing, and her lips curled into a faint sneer.

“Is it because of Mother’s passing that no one cares about her belongings even though she was Marquise Hua Yang? Your indifference to this place gives others the courage to neglect this courtyard!” Wei Yuewu looked at the scenery in front of her in a daze.

However, Wei Luowen’s body shook violently. Because of his attitude, no one paid attention to Rui’er’s old courtyard. At the same time, Concubine Dong’s courtyard in the mansion remained clean and tidy although she was not in the mansion all year long. Did he unconsciously erase everything about Rui’er?

“I... No... Meeting your mother was the best moment in my life!” It was so difficult for Wei Luowen to say this out loud. It was as hard as if he was fighting enemies on the battlefield.

At first, he thought that he could say it more confidently, but now that he said these words, he actually felt that he was in the wrong. Looking at his daughter's somewhat familiar face, he almost felt a sense of sorrow coming from the bottom of his heart!

If he were someone else, his encounter with Rui'er would have been much sweeter and more passionate. None of this would have happened. Rui'er would have not died with hatred, and he would have had his sunshine instead of sinking into eternal darkness...

"Father, were you by her side when Mother died?" Wei Yuewu walked to the bookcase, casually pulled out a drawer, and asked while flipping through some items inside.

Anyone could notice her indifference, and she didn't care about the items at all.

"I was!" Wei Luowen's heart trembled slightly.

"Didn't she say anything? I don't seem to be able to remember many things, and I don't know what happened." Wei Yuewu frowned slightly, and she touched her forehead. "There seems to be something there, but I can't remember it!"

"Did you think of something?" Wei Luowen asked nervously.

"I didn't, but my head hurts! Every time I try to think of something, my head hurts so much!" Wei Yuewu grunted in distress. Then, she turned and pulled out another drawer. "That's why I can't remember if Mother said anything to me or to you!"

"If you can't remember, then don't think about it. Your mother was concerned about you the most. She asked me to keep you safe and healthy, and to let you live a peaceful and carefree life," Wei Luowen sighed. The woman he loved the most had closed her eyes forever in his arms.

At that moment, his world seemed to have collapsed...

For the first time, he wondered if everything he had done was really worth it!

“Oh, she wanted me to be safe and healthy, so that was why you sent me far away? Just to keep me safe? Then why did you take me back to the capital?” Wei Yuewu looked at Wei Luowen with her watery eyes, not avoiding him.

There was always something that one couldn’t avoid even if they wanted to.

Since she could not avoid it, Wei Yuewu felt that it was better to face it directly.

Escaping was not the best way to solve the problem.

“The marriage between you and Marquis Jing Yuan has been arranged a long time ago, and it was personally arranged by your mother. Since that was her intention, I just followed her arrangements. She wouldn’t harm you, and Mo Huating seemed like a good man back then,” Wei Luowen sighed. She was his daughter, so of course, he wouldn’t want to abandon her outside the capital.

Since the engagement had been decided by Rui’er and had been arranged long ago, he could not disobey her.

However, he never expected that Yuewu would almost die because of this. At the thought of this, he felt that he was incompetent as her father.

“Father, since you did everything according to Mother’s intentions, was the medicine in this bottle also your idea?” Wei Yuewu pulled out a bundle of threads from the drawer. The threads were tangled together into a bunch, but one could faintly see a medicine bottle inside.

Wei Yuewu pulled out a medicine bottle from the ball of thread and sniffed it. A trace of cold light flashed in her eyes, and she gripped the bottle so hard that her fingers turned white...

Chapter 402

“What is this?” Wei Luowen’s eyes jumped as he stared at the medicine bottle in Wei Yuewu’s hand in shock. He felt a lump in his throat, and there was an indescribable feeling of suffocation!

The slightly throbbing yellowish light was very faint. Even he, who was familiar with it, would have almost been unable to identify had it not been for the sunlight that coincidentally shone into the room...

"I found it here. Did Mother take the medicine in it back then?" Wei Yuewu loosened her grip slightly and slowly showed Wei Luowen the bottle. The small bottle seemed to have a weight of one thousand kilograms as the weight suppressed Wei Yuewu so much that she could not breathe.

"The medicine bottle..." Wei Luowen's expression changed. He reached out and took the medicine bottle from Wei Yuewu's hand. After seeing it clearly, his fingers trembled slightly. Even if he wanted to hide the shock in his eyes, he could not...

Although she had expected Wei Luowen to recall something, Wei Yuewu did not expect Wei Luowen to have such a big reaction. "Father, what's wrong?" She hurriedly asked.

"T-T-This is your mother's!" Wei Luowen stared at the medicine bottle in shock, and he seemed to have not heard Wei Yuewu's question. "It was prescribed by Doctor Ming. What's wrong with it?"

"When I was at my maternal grandparents' home, Granny once taught me how to identify some medicine. I knew that this was a type of medicine to strengthen one's body, but I didn't know why Mother would take this medicine when she was in such a fragile state." For the first time, Wei Yuewu clearly expressed that she also knew about various medicinal properties.

"Your granny taught you how to identify some medicine?" Wei Luowen raised his eyes and asked in surprise.

In his opinion, his noble daughter did not need to learn such lowly knowledge.

"Granny said that Mother had always been healthy despite her weak conditions. She didn't understand why Mother passed away at such a young age. So, she taught me these things. She said that there might be something heinous hidden behind the seemingly peaceful and tranquil backyard of a mansion. Even a small family would have this kind of incident, let alone a noble family like the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. Mother married over in such a healthy and joyful state, yet she passed away so soon!"

Wei Yuewu lowered her head, and a trace of sadness flashed across her face.

Every time her wise and smart granny talked about this matter, her face was full of sadness. This was the eternal pain in her granny's heart as well as hers!

"Y-Y-You don't have to learn this!" Wei Luowen shook his head and firmly expressed his objection.

"Father, this is Mother's medicine bottle. Did Mother really die of sickness? Did her death have anything to do with anyone?" Wei Yuewu did not want to discuss these things with Wei Luowen. She hid the pain in her eyes and asked firmly again.

"Yuewu, things are not what you think. Your mother was really ill..." Wei Luowen gripped the medicine bottle tightly, yet he sounded very calm and firm when he spoke, and he even forced a bitter smile on his face. Then, he turned his head and said, "Yuewu, you should go back first. I will get someone to reorganize this place. I'll search for everything if something is missing. I'll never let anyone tarnish your mother's courtyard."

"But, Father..." Wei Yuewu still wanted to say something, but Wei Luowen shook his hand without turning back, indicating that she did not need to say more, and then he hurried out.

The sadness on Wei Yuewu's face faded away and was replaced by a trace of coldness. That small medicine bottle had indeed made her father think of something. However, her father's reaction really made her feel strange. Could it be that everything was not like what she had guessed?

"Miss, why does Lord Marquis leave in such a hurry?" Jin Ling looked at Wei Luowen's figure in confusion that quickly disappeared. In her eyes, Lord Marquis seemed to be leaving in a panic.

"Keep an eye on my father. If there are any unusual movements, ask someone to follow him and see what he's up to!" Wei Yuewu shook her head. Her gaze was as sharp as an arrow, and her voice was cold to the bone. "Father should do something, so we just have to pay attention and watch his movements. Order Yan Yang to keep an eye on the activities outside the mansion. Father has only recently returned to the capital, and he is not usually in the capital, so there will not be anything else that concerns him!"

So, if Father started to investigate something after today, it must be about Mother...

No matter what, she would continue to investigate this matter, even if her father was not willing to cooperate with her!

There were too many doubtful points in the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang and the imperial palace, and all of these points seemed to be connected to Mother. Mother seemed to be the central axis of everything, but she had already passed away long ago. Thus, she left behind all sorts of mysteries and questions.

The reason why she gave the medicine bottle to her father was that she could expose the matter through her father and make him more suspicious of Concubine Dong.

After all, in this whole incident, Concubine Dong would benefit the most if Mother died!

Concubine Dong had schemed against Mother over and over again in order to become the official Marquise Hua Yang. Her methods were vicious, and she was very patient and humble on the surface. Mother was probably no match to such a sly and sinister Concubine Dong.

Her mother was powerless back then, but she would not allow anyone to suppress her mother's injustice. She swore to expose the matter of the past to the world.

She was confident that her father would investigate this matter since he loved Mother. In that case, she could take the opportunity to investigate together while he was at it!

"Yes, Miss. Let's go back first." Jin Ling carefully put away the previous ball of thread. That ball of thread was newly placed. Lord Marquis might be suspicious and turn back to take a look. Then, he would definitely realize that the thread was newly placed here.

In Wei Luowen's study, Wei Luowen stared at the medicine bottle that had been placed in front of him for a long time. The sunlight shone through the window and happened to shine on the bottle, and he had looked at it for a while.

He had been staring at the medicine bottle after coming back from the backyard. It was as if he could cause medicine to appear in the bottle had he looked hard enough.

The lad servant, who quietly guarded the door, saw Doctor Ming coming from afar. He quickly went in to report, "Lord Marquis, Doctor Ming is here!"

"Invite him in!" Wei Luowen withdrew his gaze and ordered indifferently.

The lad servant respectfully retreated and soon brought Doctor Ming in.

"Lord Marquis," Doctor Ming greeted him respectfully.

"Is this medicine bottle yours?" Wei Luowen had already looked at the small mark on the bottle several times.

"Yes," Doctor Ming looked at it and answered carefully.

"Did you remember Marquise's prescription?" Wei Luowen asked with a gloomy face.

"Yes, I did. This was exactly Marquise's prescription back then." Doctor Ming thought for a moment and lamented, "But the medicine in it might not be prepared by me."

"Not prepared by you?" Wei Luowen looked at Doctor Ming with a fearsome glare, but his expression was very calm.

However, the calmness made Doctor Ming more and more terrified.

"Lord Marquis, at that time, I rarely brought medicine into the mansion. Later, I even replaced all the bottles because of the flawed design of this version, and I never used this bottle since. But Marquise Hua Yang still took this medicine for a long time," Doctor Ming carefully informed.

He recalled many of these things at times. After receiving Sixth Miss Wei's letter, he had been looking for excuses. Therefore, some things that he had forgotten were gradually refreshed in his mind.

"A long time?" Wei Luowen frowned tightly.

"Yes. One time, you even specially asked Marquise about the medicine, and she said that it was her good friend who told her to take the medicine because it was beneficial to her. It looked like it was bought over the counter, but it was actually different. It was very good for her health. Did you remember?" Doctor Ming asked.

"Assistant Minister Yang's wife?" Wei Luowen quipped coldly.

"Yes. Assistant Minister Yang's wife was quite close to Marquise back then. She often came to the mansion to keep Marquise company. Sometimes, she would even go to the temple with Marquise or something. For a period of time, Marquise's body was indeed much better!" Doctor Ming had already reported these things to Wei Yuewu.

However, Wei Yuewu was not Wei Luowen. There were some dots that she couldn't connect at all!

This was the reason why Wei Yuewu wanted to lead the matter to Wei Luowen, and the medicine bottle was the bait to lure him over.

"Are you sure this bottle is yours?" Wei Luowen suddenly snatched the medicine bottle, showed it to Doctor Ming, and asked sharply.

"Y-Y-Yes, it's mine!" Doctor Ming reached out and took it with a trembling hand. He would never mistake the small character "Ming" on the bottle. It was indeed his medicine bottle. Sixth Young Lady had asked him to identify it before.

"Your medicine bottle was custom-made, right? Do you have any at home now? Have you brought any?" Wei Luowen glanced at Doctor Ming. His gaze became darker and more dangerous after he heard such an affirmative reply from Doctor Ming. When Wei Luowen asked his servant to summon Doctor Ming, he specifically ordered Doctor Ming to bring one of the old medicine bottles.

"Yes. Here it is!" Doctor Ming placed Wei Luowen's medicine bottle on the table and took out a medicine bottle from his medical kit.

It was a medicine bottle that looked the same. Whether in terms of size, shape, or even the character “Ming” carved on the bottom, the two bottles looked exactly the same.

Doctor Ming went home to search for the bottle after he saw it at Wei Yuewu’s place. When he heard that Wei Luowen wanted to see it, he hurriedly brought the medicine bottle over.

Despite his innocence, he panicked. After all, the medicine bottle was his. He would probably be a suspect if anything bad happened to Marquise Hua Yang. Hence, he kept recalling what had happened in the past, hoping to find some clues. He was sure that he did not give Marquise Hua Yang this medicine.

“Is this yours?” Wei Luowen took the bottle and looked at it carefully. The corner of his eyes jumped fiercely, and then he forced himself to calm down and asked.

“Yes, this is mine. It’s the same as the one before!” Doctor Ming became more and more careful, for fear that one wrong answer would anger the poker-faced Lord Marquis.

“Is it the same?” Wei Luowen sneered. He took the other bottle and placed it on the table in front of Doctor Ming. There was sunlight shining there. “Take a closer look. Are you sure these two bottles are really the same?”

Hearing what Wei Luowen said, Doctor Ming hurriedly looked at the two bottles that were placed together.

They were indeed the same size and style. Even the small mark was the same, but Doctor Ming suddenly found something strange. He pointed at the two bottles in horror and could not speak clearly for a while.

“L-L-L-Lord Marquis, this is not my medicine bottle! This is not mine!”

Chapter 403

On the table in front of the window, the small medicine bottle had a faint reflected light. The light was actually a very light yellow color, and there was a bit of nobility in the mist.

Doctor Ming's own bottle did not have this kind of color change. It looked exactly the same even under the light.

"L-L-L-Lord Marquis, this is not mine! This is definitely not mine!" Doctor Ming also discovered the difference at this moment. He was pleasantly surprised and almost jumped up in excitement.

It was actually not his medicine bottle. This made him heave a sigh of relief in his heart!

His medicine bottle was just an ordinary medicine bottle, so it did not have a unique reflection like the other bottle. At this moment, Doctor Ming was so happy that he almost burst into tears. He was excited because his concern dissipated.

"It's not yours..." Wei Luowen sounded both doubtful and certain.

Doctor Ming did not understand what Wei Luowen meant, so he quickly restrained the excitement and said with a serious face, "Lord Marquis, it really is not my medicine bottle. My medicine bottle is just the most ordinary one, and the price is also cheap. At that time, I only ordered a batch for convenience, but I didn't use all of them because I had a large number of bottles. Then, I stopped using them altogether, so it was impossible to have such a medicine bottle elsewhere."

"You go back first!" The expression on Wei Luowen's face was gloomy. He waved his hand, indicating Doctor Ming to leave.

Doctor Ming respectfully left. When he was outside, he wiped the sweat off his forehead. At that moment, he really thought that Lord Marquis would punish him severely. He didn't expect that Lord Marquis only asked him to identify the medicine bottle.

After thinking about it, he decided to report this matter to Sixth Young Lady. She was still waiting for his news.

After wiping his sweat, Doctor Ming turned to Lotus Courtyard. Previously, Sixth Young Lady's maid had already come to invite him, saying that Sixth Young Lady was slightly unwell. Now that he was in the mansion, he naturally went to see Sixth Young Lady.

Inside the study, Wei Luowen was still staring at the medicine bottle in front of him, motionless.

The lad servant stood at the door with his hands down and didn't even dare to breathe. Although Lord Marquis was calm and quiet at this time, it was actually the most violent moment in his heart. Anyone would be digging his own grave if they dared to provoke Lord Marquis at this moment.

Sure enough, it went silent for a short moment before a loud commotion echoed inside the study. The lad servant shivered in fear and didn't dare to move. After a long while, he heard Wei Luowen's cold voice.

"Clean up this place!"

"Yes!" The lad servant hurried out and asked two bodyguards to come with him into the study.

As soon as they entered the study, they saw that the wide writing desk was smashed in half, and all the things on the desk fell to the ground. Lord Marquis gripped the two medicine bottles tightly in his hand. His face was as gloomy as the stormy cloud.

Not daring to bat an eye on him, the lad servant and the bodyguards quickly tidied up the place. They picked up the things that fell on the ground and moved the broken writing desk out of the room. Then, they went to move a brand new writing desk over.

"Lord Marquis, Concubine Dong has made some snacks. Do you want some?" After cleaning up the mess, the lad servant asked carefully.

Wei Luowen was staring at the medicine bottle in a daze when Concubine Dong's maid sent the snacks over earlier, but the lad servant did not dare to send them in. Only after Wei Luowen had vented his anger did the lad servant dare to inform him.

"No!" Wei Luowen snapped coldly.

“Concubine Dong asked if you wanted to go over for dinner tonight. She has prepared some tonic soup for you to nourish your body,” the lad servant informed him again with his head lowered.

Wei Luowen had been with Concubine Dong for the past few days. Every night, Concubine Dong prepared some tonic soup for him to nourish his body. However, since so many things had happened today, the lad servant felt that it was better to ask him.

Although Concubine Dong had given him a lot of money, he didn’t dare to annoy Lord Marquis, because he knew clearly that money could not buy his way out of Lord Marquis’ wrath or punishment.

“I have something to do. I won’t go!” Wei Luowen replied coldly. He pinched the bottle in his hand a little tighter.

Others might not know what the faint golden color in the bottle indicated, but he recognized it and knew it very well. Only things produced for the royal family could carry this faint golden color.

Ordinary craftsmen could not master this kind of technology. It was obvious that the two medicine bottles in his hands were not produced in the same place.

If the medicine bottles were similar, what about the medicines inside? Were they similar or...?

A trace of rage flashed across Wei Luowen’s eyes, and involuntarily, his eyes went teary. He suddenly felt weak and collapsed on the chair listlessly. What should he do if his speculation was right?

Rui’er was the woman he loved the most. He had inadvertently implicated her, but his heart would be utterly broken if she really died because of him!

This time, he would investigate everything clearly no matter what...

“What? It’s not your medicine bottle?” Wei Yuewu put down the book in her hand and asked in surprise.

"It's not mine. That medicine bottle had a faint yellow color under the sun. Although it was not obvious, I could see it clearly when the two bottles were placed together. Before, I thought it was my medicine bottle, but now, I'm certain that it's not mine," Doctor Ming affirmed.

He was a doctor who treated and healed the sick and injured, but he was inexplicably involved in the cause of Marquise Hua Yang's death. For so many years, he had been uneasy, for fear that he would be implicated in this matter, and he could not prove his innocence.

"A faint yellow light?" Wei Yuewu's attention was not on the meaning of Doctor Ming's words. She frowned slightly, and a touch of coldness flashed in her watery eyes.

It was quite unique for a medicine bottle to have different light with or without the reflection of sunlight. This kind of skill was not something that ordinary craftsmen could master. Something unusual must have been mixed in the ingredients to produce the bottle. The person who had mixed the special bottle did not intend to do so, which meant that everything that had been taken over was handled in this way.

The special skill and the faint yellow light made it easy for people to relate the bottle to the royal family...

"What did Father say?" Wei Yuewu asked.

"Lord Marquis did not say anything. He just asked me to identify the bottle and then let me out. He didn't ask any more questions." Speaking of this matter, Doctor Ming was equally confused. Lord Marquis seemed to have realized something without needing him to say anything. The former called him over simply to verify his thoughts.

"Father did not ask anything?" Wei Yuewu asked again.

"No. Lord Marquis did not ask too much, and he just dismissed me," Doctor Ming said with certainty.

"Jin Ling, send Doctor Ming back," Wei Yuewu nodded and ordered.

Jin Ling responded and led Doctor Ming to the door. After a while, she returned to the room and saw Wei Yuewu sitting there in a daze. She asked in a low voice, "Miss, do you think there is something fishy about this matter?"

"Why?" Wei Yuewu blinked her watery eyes and mouthed.

"Shouldn't Lord Marquis investigate the issue thoroughly? How can he be so certain that this matter has nothing to do with Doctor Ming with just a bottle? Who knows if Doctor Ming is deliberately deceiving him?" Jin Ling asked in confusion. "Or, does Lord Marquis already have an answer?"

An answer? Wei Yuewu was shocked, and her heart skipped a beat. In an instant, she seemed to have all the answers for all the things that could not be explained before.

"Miss, could it be that Lord Marquis suspected Concubine Dong and directly went to ask her?" Huamo inquired with a bit of innocence.

"No!" Wei Yuewu shook her head. Just now, she noticed that her father looked very strange.

"Jin Ling, go and keep an eye on Father and see where he goes," Wei Yuewu instructed. After a short pause, she added, "If he leaves the mansion, let Yan Feng and the others keep an eye on him."

"Yes, I had them wait outside the mansion long ago!" Jin Ling nodded.

"Miss, Concubine Dong didn't do anything after returning besides punishing and firing several maids. Not long later, Lord Marquis' people came over and seemed to ask who touched the things in Madam's courtyard. After that, several people were beaten up. I think that there is no henchman available on Concubine Dong's side now!"

At this time, the delighted Shufei came in from the outside and reported the situation.

"Did Concubine Dong do anything else?" Wei Yuewu asked with a leisurely smile while tapping the table with her slender fingers.

"No, she was very quiet. Only the maids and old maidservants, who had been beaten up, cried. The rest of them did not do anything. Nanny Dong looked like she was dying. When she was carried out, she was covered in blood. They only let Doctor Yu treat her for a bit. I bet that she will not live for long."

Speaking of Nanny Dong, Shufei was still a little horrified. There were many people watching the scene. She only took a glance and felt her heart palpitate nervously. From the looks of it, she could tell that Nanny Dong was on the verge of death.

"She has to die no matter what. She knows too much!" Wei Yuewu smiled coldly. It was expected that Concubine Dong would somehow murder Nanny Dong, who had been her most trusted servant for years. With Concubine Dong's temperament, she could not let her most trusted servant survive while knowing all her secrets.

"Miss, should we think of a way to save Nanny Dong?" Jin Ling's eyes darted around as she suggested.

"It's useless." Wei Yuewu shook her head and rejected Jin Ling's idea. "Concubine Dong is a stoic and scheming person. How could she give others an opportunity to take advantage of her? She must have left only after making sure that Nanny Dong is dead. Besides, we don't have to waste too much effort on Nanny Dong. Most of Concubine Dong's trusted servants have been eliminated one by one, so she must be anxious. Also, she is still in charge of the management of the backyard. She should be very flustered since she has so few people to use now."

Wei Yuewu smiled and stood up. Her long eyelashes fluttered twice, and her delicate facial features became more charming.

"Let's go. We will also go out to take a look!"

"Miss, is it appropriate for us to go out now? Will Madam Dowager let you go out?" Huamo asked in surprise. It was obviously not appropriate for a young lady to go out of the mansion at this time since such a thing had happened in the mansion.

"It is perfect to leave the mansion at this time!" Wei Yuewu smiled and slowly got up. The mansion was in a mess now. Madam Dowager had no intention of manipulating the event from behind the scenes. Concubine Dong was in chaos right now. The third branch, Lady Zhang, should be busy with Wei Qiufu's dowry. She had no intention at all to intervene in the affairs that occurred in this period.

“Take out the list in the makeup box!”

Chapter 404

The list in the dressing box was actually a list of dowry items. This list was sent by Wei Yuewu’s maternal grandmother according to Wei Yuewu’s request.

It was Wei Yuewu who asked Tu Di, her Eldest Aunt, to ask for it from her maternal grandmother.

It had only been delivered to Wei Yuewu a few days ago. The details of Wei Yuewu’s mother’s dowry and some shops were recorded in it.

However, as Wei Yuewu browsed through the list, there were many things that she could not comprehend. The main reason was that the dowry was so extravagant that it far surpassed her expectations.

Could her maternal grandparents really afford to provide such an excessive dowry?

Wei Yuewu had lived with her maternal grandparents’ family for so many years. Although her maternal grandparents’ family was well-off, there was a gap in terms of wealth between them and the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang in the capital. Her uncles got along pretty well, but it was impossible for them to give so much wealth to her mother as a dowry. Even the dowry of the legitimate daughters of the aristocratic families in the capital would not be in this volume.

In fact, in the list, there were a few shops in the capital. This was so bizarre!

Today, she planned to go out of the mansion to check out the shops.

She had been in the capital for some time now, but she rarely had a chance to leave the mansion. This time, she had a sufficient reason to leave the mansion, and that was to purchase new furniture to replace the ones in her mother’s courtyard that had been destroyed.

Madam Dowager definitely would not stop her from leaving the residence at this time because she had just realized that she had been deceived regarding Wei Yuewu's mother's courtyard, and even the furniture had been destroyed.

Sure enough, Shufei returned soon, and Madam Dowager naturally agreed and gave her permission to leave the mansion.

Thus, they went to the courtyard to get the carriage. This time, Wei Yuewu brought Huamo with her, while Jin Ling and Shufei stayed in the mansion.

Old Li, the coachman, had been waiting by the carriage. When he saw Wei Yuewu coming over, he hurriedly came over and bowed respectfully.

Wei Yuewu stepped on a small stool and got into the carriage. After that, Huamo also jumped into the carriage. Old Li raised the whip skillfully and drove the carriage out of the mansion.

The carriage stopped at the entrance of a gold shop. Wei Yuewu did not get off the carriage. She observed the shop from inside the carriage, and her watery eyes became more profound when she saw the eight door frames of the shop.

There was definitely something unusual with her mother's dowry.

Could her maternal family really afford to give her mother such a huge gold shop on the bustling street of the capital as her dowry? Even though she wasn't sure about her maternal grandparents' family's actual wealth, Wei Yuewu felt that it was impossible for her maternal grandparents to give such an eight-room shop to her mother as a dowry.

She chose to check out this gold shop called "Xian Hall" because Old Li told her that the shop was very famous in the capital. It was said that the price of gold jewelry would immediately rise once it was engraved with the word "Xian". It was one of the best gold shops in the capital city.

How could such a gold shop be the dowry of her mother, who was from a remote and small place?

Even the daughter of a prominent family in the capital could not have such a prosperous shop as her dowry. The shop itself could be said as representing the prestige and foundation of a big family!

“Miss, don’t you think the shop is a little too big?” Huamo was also looking out of the window. She looked up at the three-story building and exclaimed, “Is this really a shop from our mansion? Why haven’t I heard of it before? The mansion actually owns such a big shop!”

These words made Wei Yuewu’s heart skip a beat. She suddenly realized a question that she hadn’t thought of. Indeed, she had never heard the people in the mansion talk about such a big shop. Did they ignore its existence, or was it because of other reasons?

“Miss, do you want to go down and have a look?” Huamo asked in a low voice when she saw that Wei Yuewu was deep in thought.

“Let’s go!” Wei Yuewu nodded. Since she was here, she wanted to go in and see what was going on with her mother’s dowry list!

Huamo jumped down from the carriage first. Wei Yuewu held Huamo’s hand and was about to jump down when the horse of a carriage beside theirs suddenly rushed to them and bumped into their carriage.

Old Li desperately wanted to drive the carriage away, but he failed to react in time and the horse of the other carriage crashed into their horse. Wei Yuewu lost her balance due to the crash and fell to the ground.

Aghast, Huamo quickly rushed forward to catch Wei Yuewu. However, the carriage had deviated from the previous position, so Huamo couldn’t catch Wei Yuewu, and she shrieked in shock.

At the side, a hand suddenly reached over as if wanting to catch Wei Yuewu. Unfortunately, Wei Yuewu fell too fast, so the woman, who was the owner of the hand, fell with her.

However, thanks to the woman, Wei Yuewu only staggered two steps. She immediately grabbed the reins of the horse beside her and stabilized herself.

"Miss, are you okay?" Huamo rushed over and supported Wei Yuewu. Her face was pale with fright.

"I-I-I am fine!" Wei Yuewu was also appalled by the incident. Her clear eyes seemed to be covered with a layer of mist because of the shock. At this moment, she looked even more beautiful than a flower.

A low sound of surprise came from the carriage that had crashed over Wei Yuewu's carriage. The curtain was lifted. Wei Yuewu looked at Wen Tianyao who was sitting in the carriage in shock. Wen Tianyao sighed in dismay. He left the palace because he was too bored in the Crown Prince Mansion, but he didn't expect to bump into her now.

"Sixth Miss Wei!" Wen Tianyao looked at Wei Yuewu's pale face and unconsciously frowned. He looked at the coachman.

The coachman was so scared that he was about to kneel down, but a keen bodyguard on the side immediately stopped him. The Crown Prince left the palace in secret, so he didn't want anyone to know he was there.

"Greetings, Eldest Young Master Wen!" Wei Yuewu glanced at the bodyguard and politely bowed to Wen Tianyao.

She couldn't understand what the Crown Prince was thinking. Instead of staying in the comfortable Crown Prince Mansion, he preferred to hang around. Wei Yuewu felt that she often ran into the Crown Prince whenever she left the mansion.

It had to be said that His Highness had left the palace too frequently!

"Sixth Miss Wei, are you going to take a look at this shop?" Wen Tianyao didn't get off the carriage. He only pointed at the gold shop on the side of the carriage and asked. A faint smile appeared on his face. He originally had something to ask Wei Yuewu, but he didn't expect to meet her at this time. Their encounter made him feel pleasant.

"Yes, I am." Wei Yuewu nodded honestly. She originally wanted to get off the carriage, so she had nothing to hide.

"Let's go in together then. Coincidentally, I have something to ask you," Wen Tianyao said with a gentle smile after getting off the carriage. Then, he turned around and walked into Xian Hall with his people.

Wei Yuewu hesitated for a moment. Instead of following Wen Tianyao into the shop, she turned her gaze to the other side to see the woman who had helped her just now. The woman got up from the floor with difficulty. To Wei Yuewu's surprise, the woman was actually a nun in her fifties.

"A-A-Are you alright?" Wei Yuewu came over and asked softly.

Huamo hurriedly went up to help the woman up. It seemed that the nun was injured because she was limping, but she donned a friendly and polite smile. "I'm fine."

"No, you're not!" Wei Yuewu observed her, who couldn't even walk properly. She knew that the nun had been injured in the leg, but she couldn't tell how serious her injury was, so she asked Old Li anxiously, "Is there a medical center nearby?"

Among them, Old Li was most familiar with the facilities of the capital.

"Miss, there is a medical center not far ahead!" Old Li thought for a moment and answered, "It is at the corner in front."

"Let's go and see the doctor." Wei Yuewu came over and helped the nun to get in the carriage.

"Miss, I'm fine. I don't have to see the doctor." The nun shook her head with a smile and refused. She seemed to want to force herself to show that she was fine, but as soon as she put her foot on the ground and propped herself up, sweat immediately appeared on her forehead.

"It's okay. Just go over and let the doctor check your injury." Wei Yuewu insisted.

"B-B-But the Young Master is waiting for you, Miss. I have taken up your time. I can go by myself. It should not be a big problem!" The nun was still refusing.

“He was the one who caused the accident, so he should wait!” Wei Yuewu insisted. Her watery eyes swept towards Xian Hall’s door and saw that Wen Tianyao was looking at her. Because he was standing with his back to the light, she could not see the expression on his face clearly.

Indeed, the accident occurred because Wen Tianyao’s carriage crashed into hers. Wei Yuewu felt that Wen Tianyao was a reasonable person, and he would not turn a blind eye to the nun who had fallen to the ground.

Seeing that Wei Yuewu was so persistent, the nun said a few more words and was finally taken to a nearby medical center by Wei Yuewu.

After the doctor checked on the nun, he said that she had sprained her ankle, but it was not serious, and she would recover after resting for some time. The doctor applied an ointment and bandage on the nun’s foot, gave her the ointment, and let them go back.

Seeing her like this, Wei Yuewu didn’t want the nun to go back on her own. “Madam, which nunnery are you from? I’ll send you back.”

Wei Yuewu looked at the nun, who was pale from the pain but did not say a word, and asked softly.

“It’s not quite far away. It’s okay. I can go back by myself!” The nun politely refused again.

“No, you can’t walk like this. It’s not serious, but if you sprain your ankle again, it will cause more injury to your bone, and it will be more inconvenient then!”

The doctor advised the nun since he was the one who understood her condition best.

“Let my coachman send you back. After all, you were injured to save me.” Wei Yuewu had already made up her mind to let Old Li send the nun back. Although her voice was soft this time, her tone was determined.

“But...” The nun hesitated.

“Madam, which nunnery are you from?” Wei Yuewu asked again, confused by the nun’s attitude. How could she insist on going back on her own when her leg was hurt to this extent? Did she not feel the pain?

Moreover, the nun didn’t ask for anything from her. This was really too strange!

What made her even more curious was that the direction the nun came out from was actually that gold shop called Xian Hall. Why did a nun go to a gold shop? What was she doing there?

“I-I- am from Plum Blossom Nunnery,” the nun stammered...

Chapter 405

The carriage had already slowly started and was heading in the Plum Blossom Nunnery’s direction. Wei Yuewu held Huamo’s hand and was in a daze.

A trace of gloominess hovered under her clear and limpid eyes. A nun from Plum Blossom Nunnery?

She had met many of Plum Blossom Nunnery’s nuns. Other than a few normal ones, there seemed to be a lot of suspicious figures. Almost many things were related to Plum Blossom Nunnery’s nuns.

For example, a nun came out of a gold shop. It was a very strange scenario.

Moreover, the nun did not want to have anything to do with her at all. She didn’t even want to have any interaction with her despite her injury. In addition, the nun seemed to repeatedly urge Wei Yuewu not to make the Young Master wait for her.

The Young Master was none other than Wen Tianyao.

The nun gave Wei Yuewu a feeling that she seemed to know Wen Tianyao.

However, Wei Yuewu had never seen her before in Plum Blossom Nunnery...

"Miss, let's go. The Crown Prince is still waiting for you over there," Huamo reminded her when she saw that Wei Yuewu was in a daze.

"Let's go!" Wei Yuewu nodded and put away her doubts. They turned around and walked towards the gold shop.

There were many customers entering and leaving Xian Hall. As one of the few big gold shops in the capital city, Xian Hall was undoubtedly majestic.

Therefore, Wei Yuewu was astonished to see different sets of headgear made of red gems and opal stones in front of her. The scale of the shop was so big and it was so extravagant that Wei Yuewu felt that the owner of the shop must be from the royal family!

Otherwise, it would be impossible for the owner of the shop to gain a foothold in the capital even if he earned a lot of money from the shop. She was certain that her maternal grandmother didn't have such abilities, and her maternal grandparents' family was not so wealthy and powerful.

"Crown Prince, this is..." Wei Yuewu raised her beautiful eyes and looked at Wen Tianyao quietly.

"Just take it as my apology for what happened to you just now." Wen Tianyao smiled. "And thank you for the portrait!"

"Portrait?" Wei Yuewu blinked her watery eyes in confusion. "What portrait?"

"The portrait of your mother, Marquise Hua Yang!" Wen Tianyao stared at Wei Yuewu with a deep look in his eyes.

"My mother's portrait?" Wei Yuewu seemed to have forgotten about it all of a sudden, but she immediately thought of something. "Do you mean the portrait that the Heir-apparent of the Duke of Yan State took away?"

“What? Yan Huaijing took it away from you?” Wen Tianyao was stunned for a moment, but he immediately understood. “How did he take it away?!”

“Originally, I wanted to give this portrait to Your Highness, because I had promised you before. However, I bumped into Heir-apparent of Yan. He saw the portrait and said that he would give it to you on my behalf. Since he wanted to help me by handing it over to you, I gave the portrait to him,” Wei Yuewu answered in a natural and graceful manner.

Almost the entire capital knew that Yan Huaijing had saved her life. It was actually not that strange for her painting to fall into the hands of Yan Huaijing.

Since he had saved her life, Wei Yuewu couldn’t refuse even if he wanted the painting for himself. This was why Wei Yuewu asked Yan Huaijing to give the painting to Wen Tianyao.

Compared with Wen Tianyao, It was much more justifiable for Yan Huaijing to take anything from her.

As for the Crown Prince, he was the focus of attention, and the nationwide selection of consorts was underway. Any movement, no matter how small, would immediately attract the attention of many people. Wei Yuewu did not want to have much interaction with the Crown Prince.

“So, Heir-apparent of Yan has handed the portrait over to Your Highness for me, right?” Wei Yuewu looked relieved. There was a faint smile in her watery eyes, which was totally different from her cold and aloof appearance on usual days. She looked particularly attractive and charming in such a youthful and delicate demeanor. Coupled with her elegant eyes, she was so beautiful that no one could bear to look straight into her eyes.

“Yes, he has given it to me.” After a slight pause, Wen Tianyao slowly nodded. As it turned out, Yan Huaijing didn’t accidentally slip the portrait among the other paintings. Instead, he handed it over to him after forcefully taking it from Wei Yuewu.

For some reason, he felt a suffocating feeling inside him. It was as if Yan Huaijing had spied on the thing that had originally belonged to him.

"This is my token of appreciation to you, Sixth Miss Wei." Wen Tianyao nudged the box next to his hand and smiled gently. These were all the jewels that he had asked the waiter in the store to bring over. They told him that these jewels were all of the latest designs and styles, and the young ladies should like them very much.

"I... Thank you, Your Highness!" Wei Yuewu stood up and bowed respectfully to Wen Tianyao.

Wen Tianyao was the Crown Prince. Since he wanted to reward her with something, she couldn't refuse. Thus, she casually chose a set of ruby headgear.

"Your Highness, why did you come here today?" Wei Yuewu raised her beautiful eyes and asked thoughtfully. The patrons of the gold shop were mostly young ladies of aristocratic families. It was quite bizarre for Wen Tianyao to come here.

"Fourth Younger Sister's coming-of-age ceremony is around the corner. I'm here to see if they have anything new and pretty. I want to buy something as a congratulatory gift," Wen Tianyao smiled faintly and said indifferently. Everyone knew that Fourth Princess' coming-of-age ceremony was coming soon, and she was preparing for the grand prayer session.

"But I assume the palace will provide more trending and beautiful jewelry for Fourth Princess' coming-of-age ceremony," Wei Yuewu muttered in confusion.

No matter how nice the gold ornaments sold in ordinary shops in the capital were, the quality would be inferior to the ones in the palace. She couldn't comprehend why Wen Tianyao would rather come all the way here.

"Xian Hall's gold ornaments are newer with original designs, and their qualities are not worse than the ones in the palace. Of course, we can't compare the values, but the styles and designs of the jewelry here are outstanding. Fourth Younger Sister likes the style of the jewelry here very much. Sixth Young Lady, why don't you help me pick out some as my gift to Fourth Younger Sister?" Wen Tianyao casually pushed a few jewelry boxes to the front of Wei Yuewu.

"I..." Wei Yuewu was in a difficult position for a moment. The Fourth Princess was so arrogant and presumptuous that it would be hard to please her. Everything would be fine if the princess liked the

jewelry, but if she didn't, and she found out that Wei Yuewu was the one who picked the jewelry for her, the former would not let her off the hook.

"Your Highness, I actually do not know much about the style of the jewelry in the capital. I have been in the countryside all this time, so I don't know the taste of the young ladies of aristocratic families," Wei Yuewu softly refused.

Despite her refusal, the Crown Prince seemed to be determined to let Wei Yuewu pick the jewelry today, and he insisted. "It doesn't matter. If Fourth Younger Sister doesn't like them, I'll just pick some other pieces later!"

Helpless, Wei Yuewu could only choose four sets of jewelry for the Fourth Princess. Only then did Wen Tianyao leave with a smile. Of course, he specially bought Wei Yuewu another set of jewelry to express his gratitude.

Looking at the two sets of ruby headgear on the table, Wei Yuewu was befuddled and confused. She didn't know why Wen Tianyao picked this kind of ruby for her. Was it because she chose the red gemstones in the first place so that the Crown Prince assumed that she liked jewelry and accessories made of ruby?

"Miss, are the style and design here really so new that even Fourth Princess likes the goods here?" Huamo asked in confusion as she helped Wei Yuewu keep away the ruby headgear.

These words made Wei Yuewu's gaze involuntarily become deep. She trembled and stopped Huamo. She stood up, picked up a set of earrings from the headgear, and observed it carefully.

This pair of earrings was exquisitely made. Three teardrop-shaped gemstones dangled from the earrings, and as they swayed, they were shining and sparkling. Indeed, they were definitely not ordinary items since even the Fourth Princess liked them.

Wei Yuewu was indeed not familiar with the new jewelry style in the capital, but she knew that the three tiny red gemstones were cut from a precious piece of ruby. The value of the earrings increased because of these three small gemstones. What was even rarer was that the six red gemstones on this pair of earrings should have been cut off from one piece of ruby.

As she shook the earrings, the color was even and radiant. They were very eye-catching!

The earrings could emphasize the wearer's fair complexion, making a beautiful sight.

As Wei Yuewu placed the earrings on her fair palm and moved them slightly, the radiant red color of the earrings seemed to enlighten her palm, and the light was dancing naturally.

As the colors mingled together, her palm seemed fairer, and the ruby seemed as red as fire.

"Go and invite the shopkeeper over. Tell him that I want to ask about this pair of earrings!" Wei Yuewu's gaze was fixed on the pair of earrings. This should be from the set of headgear that Wen Tianyao had given her.

The set of headgear she picked was also made of ruby, but it was not so outstanding, and the design and style were ordinary.

As the same two sets were placed together, the difference was obvious. The one Wen Tianyao had given her was apparently more expensive and exquisite.

Not long later, the shopkeeper arrived. Seeing that Wei Yuewu had an extraordinary bearing, he hurriedly stepped forward and saluted. "May I help you, Miss?"

"Are you the shopkeeper here?" A trace of doubt flashed through Wei Yuewu's beautiful eyes. She was a little surprised to find that this middle-aged man with extraordinary bearing in front of her was the shopkeeper of this gold shop.

He was on the heavier side, but despite his size, he gave off a gentle and refined vibe, unlike the clumsy and lumpish demeanor that fat people usually presented. Moreover, he had an extraordinary bearing. He looked more like an amiable young master of an aristocratic family than the shopkeeper of a gold shop.

The shopkeeper was in his fifties. Unlike the other shopkeepers that Wei Yuewu had seen, he was calm and collected when hearing Wei Yuewu's questions.

“Yes, I am the shopkeeper here. How may I help you?” The shopkeeper simply smiled at Wei Yuewu’s disbelief as if he was used to it.

“Uh... Can I add more gemstones for these earrings?” Wei Yuewu’s eyes flashed, but she did not ask any more questions. She picked up the ruby earring in her hand and asked softly.

“Do you mean you want to add more gemstones to the earrings?” The shopkeeper asked with a smile as he looked at the earrings in Wei Yuewu’s hand.

“Yes. Well, it is beautiful, but it will be more beautiful if I add a few more gemstones. Can I add two gemstones?” Wei Yuewu smiled timidly as if she was embarrassed to have such an embarrassing request.

“Uh...” The shopkeeper looked at the earrings in Wei Yuewu’s hand and then at the set of ruby headgear on the side. He was quite taken aback. “I’m afraid that we can’t do so. We cut the parts from the same ruby in order to produce this set of jewelry. It is one of the best rubies we have. I’m afraid that there is not enough to cut two more stones from it.”

Chapter 406

“Can’t you cut them from other rubies? I only want one for each earring. It’s not much,” Wei Yuewu requested with a completely confused look.

“Uh... I’m sorry, I can’t do it. Every set of headgear is designed according to the size of a ruby. Moreover, this set of headgear in your hand should be made of the best ruby here. Rubies of this quality are hard to come by. Sometimes, we will only get one or two per month. The headgear made of this ruby is the best of the best. We try not to waste every bit of ruby, so there is nothing left, no matter how small a part you request!”

The shopkeeper looked at the red ruby in Wei Yuewu’s fair palm and shook his head helplessly. The ruby was even more radiant as it was placed on Wei Yuewu’s hand.

“Does your boss not have any?” Wei Yuewu looked at the earring in her hand reluctantly.

"No, he doesn't have any." The shopkeeper decisively shook his head.

"Can you ask him, please? Maybe he has an extra?" Wei Yuewu asked hesitantly. She obviously liked this set of ruby headgear.

"No, I don't think I can do so. Our boss doesn't have any ruby left. He would have taken it out if he had an extra. He wouldn't have kept the stone around." The shopkeeper sounded even more decisive and resolute.

"Why won't your boss keep the stone around? Maybe his daughter or granddaughter like this kind of ruby, so he can keep the stone for them," Wei Yuewu sighed with a bit of regret as she shook the earring in her hand.

"Uh... Our boss doesn't have a daughter or granddaughter right now, so he doesn't need the stone for the time being," the shopkeeper uttered helplessly with a forceful smile in response to Wei Yuewu's persistence.

"Can I meet your boss, please? I can ask him in person." Wei Yuewu obviously refused to give in.

"No, our boss doesn't receive visitors, nor is he convenient to receive visitors," the shopkeeper refused.

"Uh... What should I do?" Wei Yuewu frowned slightly. There seemed to be a hint of worry between her brows as she muttered to herself, "It would be great if I could meet your boss. I really don't have any other intentions. I just want to ask him if he has such a matching ruby in his hand so that he can produce something similar to this."

"Miss, even if he has top-grade rubies, the actual color of each piece is slightly different. The headgear that you have is made of the same piece of ruby. If you add another one from a different ruby, the color may not be exactly the same as the one in your hand," the shopkeeper explained with a smile.

"It's not the same, is it?" Wei Yuewu was stunned and seemed to have just thought of this question.

"No, it's not!" The answer the shopkeeper gave was always so convincing and sure.

"Oh... alright then!" Wei Yuewu sighed helplessly. She put the earring into an exquisite jewelry box. "How much is this?"

"That young master has already paid for it!" The shopkeeper had already known about the situation before he came up, so he smiled and replied. He immediately looked at Wei Yuewu a few more times.

"He paid for this?" Wei Yuewu was stunned, as if it hadn't crossed her mind at all.

"Yes, he has already paid!" The shopkeeper was sure again.

"Okay. I'm so sorry to trouble you, and thank you," Wei Yuewu lamented with a gentle smile.

"You're welcome. If there is nothing else, I will take my leave!" The shopkeeper's gaze fell on Wei Yuewu's face, and he said attentively.

This time, Wei Yuewu did not speak. She waved her hand with a smile, and the shopkeeper left. When he reached the door, he did not leave immediately. Instead, he stared at the door skeptically, and a trace of doubt flashed in his eyes.

What was the relationship between the young lady and that man? He had never seen that man pay for the jewelry for any young lady of an aristocratic family before. In fact, the expensive headgear the young lady had was not inferior to the two sets he took away with himself.

Did he take a fancy to this young lady? Thinking of this, the shopkeeper felt that he had to understand the identity of this young aristocratic lady.

She had such an exquisite and beautiful appearance and extraordinary bearing. Was she the Eldest Young Lady of the mansion of Duke of Jing? Rumors had it that she was the most beautiful woman in the country.

As he thought of her appearance, he deduced that the young lady had what it took to be called the most beautiful woman in the country. Although she was a little young and childish now, her look was outstanding and peerless...

"Miss, why did the shopkeeper say that the owner did not have a daughter or granddaughter?" After the shopkeeper left, Huamo closed the door of the private room and asked in surprise.

"It means that Madam Dowager is not the owner of this shop." Wei Yuewu picked up the tea beside her and took a sip. Her eyes were thoughtful. She thought that her mother's dowry should all be in Madam Dowager's hands, but to her surprise, this was not the case!

This was really puzzling. After her mother married Marquis Hua Yang, her dowry would definitely belong to the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. When her mother passed away, she was too young, so her mother's belongings were kept in the warehouse while the shops became the public belongings of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. But now, someone actually told her that the shop didn't belong to the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang.

This had never crossed Wei Yuewu's mind!

With Madam Dowager's temperament, how could she not grasp this shop tightly in her hands? Looking at the scale of the shop and the number of customers, she could tell that this shop's business was absolutely good. Even Fourth Princess in the palace purchased jewelry from this shop. Of course, the business was booming!

Why didn't Madam Dowager take control of such a profitable business? But from the looks of it, she was certain that the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang's Madam Dowager was not the owner of this shop.

But who would it be? How did that person take this shop from Madam Dowager's hands?

"Come, let's go take a look at the other shops!" Wei Yuewu stood up. On the other side, Huamo had already placed the jewelry box in a box that the shopkeeper had sent over and picked it up.

They had been on the third floor before. When they came over, Wen Tianyao's bodyguard had brought them directly to the third floor. Now that they were leisurely strolling down, they discovered that gold

ornaments were not the only items that were displayed on the second floor. There were also some musical instruments, chess sets, calligraphy, paintings, and even some exquisite embroidery works. It was quite rare to see these items in the gold jewelry shop.

No wonder there were so many people on all the floors. Wei Yuewu saw several waiters and people entering and leaving the private rooms upstairs. It was obvious that there were many people inside.

Their business was definitely good. Such a shop would definitely make a lot of money in a year.

Wei Yuewu looked around casually and came to the conclusion that all the things here were much more expensive than similar ones sold in other shops. They were stylish, quality-wise, and their prices were definitely higher. Even the carefully crafted cover alone cost more than what an ordinary scholar could afford. Therefore, the main customers in this shop were the members of aristocratic families.

For example, golden jewelry and headgear were more expensive than the same kind of jewelry sold elsewhere, but it was obvious that the carving was more meticulous. Wei Yuewu had received some jewelry from Madam Dowager before. Those ornaments were basically not as good as the ones that Wen Tianyao gave her today.

“Miss, look at that screen!” Huamo suddenly pointed at a screen and shouted.

Wei Yuewu followed her gaze and couldn’t help but be stunned. At first glance, it looked like her mother’s screen that had been damaged by Wei Yuejiao, but when she looked closely, it wasn’t.

The design and style were similar, but when she looked closer, she noticed they were not the same type of flower.

Despite the difference, she felt that this screen bore a stark resemblance to her mother’s screen.

Wei Yuewu couldn’t help but walk over. The screen was very beautiful, and it could be seen that the craftsmanship was exquisite. However, it was slightly different from her mother’s, so it wasn’t embroidered by her mother.

However, this kind of screen gave her a strange sense of familiarity. She felt that this screen was related to her mother's screen, because... they were too similar.

"Miss, look... the layout is almost exactly the same!" Huamo was particularly fond of embroidery. She also came over to check carefully, and she could not help but exclaim.

"It is very similar to my mother's screen!" Wei Yuewu's hand slowly touched the corner of the screen. It was made of very good material. It could be seen that such a screen was definitely worth a lot of money. The rarest thing was that the needlework was done by the same person. In other words, this screen was completed by one person.

Mother spent several years embroidering such a big screen alone. What about this screen in front of her? In what kind of mood did the woman embroider this screen? Was she embroidering her own dowry too, just like her mother? If so, it would be too much of a coincidence!

"Yes, just like Marquise's! They even used the same layout. This is so strange," Huamo said as she looked at the screen. Recently, she had been helping to repair Marquise's screen, so she was particularly clear about the screen left by Marquise Hua Yang.

Because of this, she couldn't help but exclaim in a low voice at first glance.

"What kind of situation would there be two almost similar screens?" Wei Yuewu frowned, and her watery eyes showed a trace of confusion.

In fact, she wasn't asking Huamo, but Huamo thought that it was a question directed to her, so she squinted in befuddlement. "Well, I can't say for sure... Maybe, it was made by two people together!"

Two people together? Huamo's vague words made Wei Yuewu's heart suddenly skip a beat. To produce two big screens with such a similarity, it was either made by two people at the same time, or two people had set up the pattern together.

In other words, the owner of this screen should know Mother, or the screen should be embroidered by a good friend of Mother. Her hand slowly touched the beautiful embroidery on the screen. Her beautiful

eyes were suffused with a faint trace of pain, and she inexplicably thought of the screen that Wei Yuejiao had destroyed.

“Huamo, go and ask how much money this screen costs,” Wei Yuewu ordered softly. No matter who this screen belonged to, it must somehow be related to her mother, so she wanted to buy it and place it together with her mother’s screen.

“Oh? Sixth Miss Wei, you took a fancy to this screen too? Unfortunately, you are a bit late. I already reserve this screen!” Before Huamo could answer, they heard another familiar voice.

Wei Yuewu looked back in shock...

Chapter 407

At the entrance of the staircase on the second floor stood a beautiful woman. Her skin was as fair as jade, and her face was delicate and charming. She stood quietly, looking very elegant and gentle. She was such a head-turner that passers-by couldn’t help but take a few more glances at her.

She was Jing Wenyan of the mansion of Duke of Jing.

“Sixth Miss Wei, do you like this screen too?” Jing Wenyan walked over with a smile, looking dignified and graceful.

“Yes, it’s very beautiful!” Wei Yuewu smiled slightly, and a trace of cold light flashed across her eyes. Ever since Jing Wenyan entered the capital, she had repeatedly expressed her affection for her. In fact, on the day of the mansion of Duke of Jing’s banquet, Jing Wenyan had hinted that she offered a helping hand to Wei Yuewu regarding Wei Fengyao’s matter.

No matter how Wei Yuewu looked at it, Jing Wenyan was extremely friendly to her.

But did this Jing Wenyan have nothing to do with Third Princess’ scheme against her in the palace? What exactly did this beautiful Eldest Miss Jing want from these matters?

In fact, Wei Yuewu would not mind at all no matter what she wanted, as long as it had nothing to do with her. However, Wei Yuewu refused to be a pushover if Jing Wenyan tried to step on her to promote herself!

Since the moment Wei Yuewu escaped from death on her trip to the capital, she had decided not to let herself become a stepping stone for anyone...

Not Wei Yan, and certainly not Eldest Miss Jing too, who looked friendly but was constantly playing tricks behind her back...

"It is pretty, but there are some small flaws. When I saw it, I was amazed by its beauty, but it made me wonder why such a screen would end up here, so I bought it. I also had the flaws fixed. To my surprise, it turned out so well that I couldn't see the flaws now."

Jing Wenyan walked over and smiled as she pointed at a flower pattern on the screen.

Looking in the direction where she pointed, Wei Yuewu spotted some tiny difference and nodded. "If you didn't tell me, I couldn't see it. Indeed, the repair was done perfectly."

It was really surprising that this shop offered repair service.

Embroideress, who was so outstanding in embroidery, did not work in the embroidery workshop but in the gold store. This was quite a surprising revelation.

"This screen is really good, but I bought it before others. Heir-apparent of Yan heard the news too and wanted to buy the screen from me. I was reluctant to let go of the screen, so I told him that I would fix it first. But now, I am really reluctant to sell it to him!"

Jing Wenyan reached out and touched the screen, looking reluctant to part with it.

"However, since His Heir-apparent has requested it, I can't reject him. After all, we went way back..." Her voice was so light as if she was talking to herself, and she didn't finish her words. Coincidentally, Wei Yuewu was standing right next to her, so she heard her no matter how inaudible it was.

The State of Jing and the State of Yan were adjacent to each other, so it was normal for the two big families of both states to have a close relationship. However, a faint and deep look appeared in her eyes when Jing Wenyan talked about this now.

“So, are you going to sell this screen to the Heir-apparent of Yan?” Wei Yuewu asked.

“No, sell is not a suitable term here. We grew up together. If he likes it, he can just take it!” Jing Wenyan seemed to have thought of something sad. Her eyebrows were tightly furrowed, and a bitter smile appeared in her beautiful eyes.

“Sixth Miss Wei, you may not know about this. Yes, the two families were on good terms when I was still a little girl, but... No one expected that we would become enemies eventually... I begged him, thinking that he would let go of my father for the sake of the relationship we shared, but... He said... He said that the Duke of State of Yan made the decision, and he was powerless!”

Because it was decided by the Duke of State of Yan, even if Yan Huaijing wanted to help Jing Wenyan, his hands were tied. He clearly disagreed with the decision to destroy the State of Jing.

“Oh, my bad. I’m sorry. What’s the point of saying this now? It’s all in the past. He is going to marry the princess soon!” Jing Wenyan seemed to realize that she had misspoken. She took Wei Yuewu’s hand with a smile. “Let’s go. Since we’ve met here, let’s go and take a seat. The Heir-apparent of Yan is coming soon. You two know each other, so you don’t have to avoid him.”

As she spoke, she pulled Wei Yuewu toward the staircase.

“I’m sorry, but let’s keep a rain check on this matter. I have something to settle. My grandmother asked me to buy something. I’m worried that she will inquire about this if I go back late.” Wei Yuewu gently broke free from Jing Wenyan’s hand and refused.

“Uh... Don’t worry about this. Please help me with this once. Even if there is nothing between me and the Heir-apparent of Yan, people may say something if I meet him often. I don’t want that to happen.” Jing Wenyan did not want to let Wei Yuewu go, and she frowned in dismay. “Actually, I don’t know many people in the capital, but I’ve known the Heir-apparent of Yan for more than ten years.”

“Uh... Okay then.” At this point, Wei Yuewu naturally could not refuse, so she followed Jing Wenyan and went up to the third floor again.

She would like to see what Jing Wenyan wanted to do this time. Every step Jing Wenyan took seemed to have a deep meaning, and Wei Yuewu could not tell what she was up to this time.

Previously, she repeatedly expressed that she had nothing to do with Yan Huaijing. She even organized an event to choose her future husband. The title of the most beautiful woman in the world was very attractive, so all the young masters of the aristocratic families went to the mansion of Duke of Jing for the selection event.

However, this matter was left unsettled in the end. No one knew if it was because Eldest Miss Jing was too choosy, or that Duke of Jing, who had lost his territory, was too picky. Anyway, she had never heard of anyone being selected.

However, what Jing Wenyan said now indicated that she had an unusually close relationship with Yan Huaijing. Wei Yuewu did not think that this matter had anything to do with her. That day, her father took her to Duke of Yan State Mansion with great fanfare to express her gratitude to Yan Huaijing and her father’s intention.

What was Jing Wenyan up to this time?

On one hand, she managed to instigate the Third Princess to scheme against her, and on the other hand, she expressed that she was close to Yan Huaijing.

The handsome Yan Huaijing’s appearance was attracting attention as usual. Even if the people in the capital city had seen the Heir-apparent of the Duke of Yan State many times now, they would still gather around to catch a glimpse of him.

Of course, the crowd controlled themselves this time and no longer dared to follow him closely. Ever since the heir-apparent, who was always as gentle as jade, suddenly revealed a cold gaze and ordered his men to beat the delicate women who surrounded him, the people who gathered to see him only secretly stood to the side.

They no longer dared to secretly follow him all the way like before.

“Sixth Miss Wei, what a surprise!” Yan Huaijing smiled at the sight of Wei Yuewu. His dark and bright eyes flashed with a hint of joy.

The waiters had already served tea. Jing Wenyan personally poured a cup of tea for Yan Huaijing, pushed the cup to him, and explained softly, “Your Heir-apparent, I happened to meet Sixth Miss Wei, so I brought her here. I hope that you will forgive me!”

Wei Yuewu picked up the tea beside her and took a sip. Her long eyelashes fluttered twice, but she did not speak. The way Jing Wenyan explained it sounded like Wei Yuewu insisted on coming here with her.

“It’s fine. How about the screen?” Yan Huaijing shook his hand. His expression was still gentle, and his voice was elegant.

“Uh... I...” Jing Wenyan looked a little befuddled when they talked about the screen. She hesitated and lifted her beautiful eyes. “I can give the screen to you, but can you please let me copy the pattern on the screen first? I like the embroidery very much. After I copy it, I will send the screen to you.”

“Eldest Miss Jing, do you want to embroider a similar screen?” Yan Huaijing’s voice sounded quite playful.

“Yes, it will be wonderful if I can complete the embroidery of such a screen. It is a big project for one person to embroider the entire screen with this kind of embroidery method. However, it also shows the foundation of the person and her quiet personality. I like it very much.” Jing Wenyan bit her lips and said with some embarrassment.

“Since you like it so much, let it be for the time being! But please be quick, Eldest Miss Jing, or my mother will be anxious!” Yan Huaijing curled his lips into a leisurely smile, and he leaned back on the chair.

“Of course, I will be quick. I won’t let the duchess wait so long!” Jing Wenyan hurriedly said. She suddenly turned to Wei Yuewu to ask for help as if she wanted Yan Huaijing to believe her words. “Don’t you agree, Sixth Young Lady?”

“What?” Wei Yuewu looked up, confused.

“The screen. You like it a lot too, don’t you?” Jing Wenyan asked.

“Well... No, I don’t like it that much!” Under such a circumstance, Wei Yuewu answered in a natural and graceful manner. She couldn’t say that she liked the screen so much that she wanted to take it from its original owner.

Even though she had some feelings about the screen, the feelings were not strong enough for her to snatch the screen from Jing Wenyan or Yan Huaijing.

“Oh? So you don’t like it very much.” Jing Wenyan looked sad. “I thought that you liked the screen as soon as you saw it, just like me, and even wanted to embroider a similar one. The person who embroidered this screen was really amazing. She could actually do it!”

“Yes, she was indeed amazing!” Wei Yuewu echoed Jing Wenyan’s words and said very straightforwardly.

“She was indeed awesome... The one in my mansion... also likes it very much!” Yan Huaijing coughed softly and smiled.

“Who exactly is this person in your mansion?” Jing Wenyan was very curious about Yan Huaijing’s vague statement. “I know a lot about the beautiful ladies in the State of Yan. I wonder if I know this person too.”

“I don’t think you know her.” Yan Huaijing smiled.

“A lot of the famous young ladies of State of Yan are my friends,” Jing Wenyan said softly with a smile on her face. Her beautiful face was even gentler, which made people have a good impression of her.

If it had not been for Wei Yuewu, others would have felt some kind of affection between Yan Huaijing and Jing Wenyan as they heard such a gentle conversation between the two.

The window was open, and on the street opposite the window was a teahouse. The teahouse was a three-story building. The private room opposite the window was also occupied at this time. Moreover, there was a person there who quietly pulled up the curtain and looked in their direction. When the woman in that particular room saw clearly and confirmed that Wei Yuewu was also inside, she frowned indignantly...

Chapter 408

"What is Wei Yuewu doing over there?!" The Fourth Princess, who was sitting in the private room of the opposite building, raised her eyebrows angrily and snapped.

"It should be a coincidence. Your Highness, Eldest Miss Jing said that she would speak up for you!" The palace maid, who was standing next to the Fourth Princess, comforted her in a low voice.

"If it was a coincidence, she could leave. Why is she so shameless as to stay with them? Oh my, the upbringing of all the young ladies of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang is infamous for being lousy. Doesn't she see that Jing Wenyan has something to say to the heir-apparent?!" The Fourth Princess grunted hatefully.

She sneaked out of the palace and dressed like an ordinary young lady of an aristocratic family. In order to avoid being recognized, she specially wore a veil.

The waiter brought tea and snacks into the private room and then left. At this moment, she secretly lifted the curtain of the window and looked out.

The teahouse and the gold store were separated by a street, facing each other from a distance. Coincidentally, the two private rooms were directly opposite each other, so the Fourth Princess could clearly see everything in the private room of the opposite store. In order to not let the people opposite spot her, the Fourth Princess only lifted the corner of the curtain to peek.

"Princess, don't worry. In a while, Eldest Miss Jing will definitely be able to talk to the heir-apparent. Didn't you say that Eldest Miss Jing and the heir-apparent were childhood friends? They grew up together, so they must have a strong friendship. Although they didn't get married in the end, with their friendship, Heir-apparent of Yan will certainly listen to Eldest Miss Jing!"

The palace maid consoled.

“Hmph, I want to see how shameless this Marquis Hua Yang’s legitimate daughter is. She’s also one of the sluts who is stunned by the heir-apparent’s looks to such an extent that she can’t move!”

The Fourth Princess was very upset. She felt as if someone wanted to snatch her things. Heir-apparent of Yan was clearly her future husband, yet these women couldn’t stop casting greedy eyes on him.

Wen Caidie was her rival-in-love in the palace, and there were so many love-struck fools outside the palace.

As soon as she thought of those aristocratic daughters’ shy and affectionate expressions when they saw Yan Huaijing, the Fourth Princess was extremely indignant. She couldn’t stand it anymore. She decided to urge Mother Empress to talk to Father Emperor again after returning to the palace.

She was the most suitable person to go to the State of Yan. Mother Empress only had her. Wen Caidie was no match to her.

“Your Highness, we can observe them for a bit longer. Look, do you think Eldest Miss Jing is talking about you to the heir-apparent?” The other palace maid suddenly whispered.

The Fourth Princess hurried over, lifted the curtain, and continued to peek outside.

On the opposite side of the room, Wei Yuewu had already stood up and said her goodbyes, “Your Heir-apparent, I have something to do, so I have to take my leave now. Excuse me.”

After saying that, she bowed and wanted to leave. However, Eldest Miss Jing was unusually enthusiastic today. She pulled Wei Yuewu back as if she didn’t want her to leave.

“Sixth Young Lady, don’t go. Let’s leave together later. I have a few more words to say to the heir-apparent. I’ll be done soon.”

“No, thanks. I have something urgent to tend to. I’m afraid I can’t wait for you any longer, Eldest Miss Jing.” Wei Yuewu refused once again.

“Okay then. I will go with you.” Jing Wenyan held Wei Yuewu’s hand and stood up, looking like she was going to stick with Wei Yuewu no matter what. She acted as if she had a close-knit friendship with Wei Yuewu.

“Well. Then I will wait for you to finish speaking before I leave.” Wei Yuewu could only stand still and sit down again.

The private room was not big, but it was similar to the private room just now that had good lighting. The only thing she was dismayed about was that Jing Wenyan stopped her every time she expressed her intention to leave.

However, this room was obviously reserved by Jing Wenyan. She ordered the waiter to take them directly to this room after going upstairs. Wei Yuewu chose a seat by the window, where she could directly see the street. It was much more lively compared to the room that Wen Tianyao had chosen just now. It was a great place to kill time by sitting here, drinking tea, and looking at the lively streets below.

This was indeed a very good place for leisure, but she was skeptical about Jing Wenyan’s decision to choose this room. Jing Wenyan had always been a low-profile person, hadn’t she?

Judging from the room that Wen Tianyao chose, she could clearly tell that he did not want anyone to know about his presence in the shop because the view outside the window of the room was the small alley behind the shop. However, this room had a clear view of the street, which meant that the people on the opposite could see the situation in the room clearly.

The people on the opposite? At the thought of this, Wei Yuewu arched her eyebrows cheekily and looked at the opposite side.

The curtains of the opposite room were down, and there seemed to be no one there.

However, looking at the surrounding private rooms of the opposite building, she noticed that the curtains of the rooms were slightly lifted at this moment regardless of whether there were customers or not. The location of the rooms was extremely good as the sun coincidentally shone in their directions. It was perfect timing for being able to bask in the sun at this moment.

This was most probably the reason why the tea house was set up here. Compared with the private rooms in the gold shop, the tea house was more leisurely and casual as it was a place for resting and drinking tea.

Due to her suspicion, Wei Yuewu paid close attention to the room opposite, and indeed, she noticed that the curtains on the opposite side moved from time to time. She secretly curled her lips into a sneer. Sure enough, there was someone in that private room, and from the looks of it, that person was secretly watching them.

On one hand, Jing Wenyan emphasized her close friendship with Yan Huaijing, yet on the other hand, she wanted Wei Yuewu to be with them to avoid arousing suspicion. Was she worried that the person on the opposite side would see them and suspect her?

There weren't many people in the capital whom Jing Wenyan would be apprehensive of, and this person they were now with was Yan Huaijing, so the answer was obvious.

No wonder Jing Wenyan insisted on pulling her hands and whatnot, making it seem as if they were very close. It turned out that it was because of the person in the opposite room. It seemed that she had appeared at the right time and bumped into Jing Wenyan's trap...

"Your Heir-apparent, I'll have someone send the screen to the Duke of Yan State Mansion tomorrow." As Jing Wenyan was talking to Yan Huaijing, they heard a loud cry behind them and hurriedly turned to look. It appeared that Wei Yuewu was fidgeting with the cup in her hand and accidentally dropped it to the floor.

The cup smashed on the floor. It seemed to have smashed next to her skirt, and the tea splashed on her skirt.

"Eldest Miss Jing, I-I need to go now!" Wei Yuewu stood up frantically and shook her skirt.

“Why don’t you take a seat first? I’ll have someone...” Jing Wenyan insisted on keeping Wei Yuewu here.

“Eldest Miss Jing, I’m sorry but I can’t stay any longer. In my current state, it’s not nice for me to stay outside and get changed. I’ll take my leave first.” This time, Wei Yuewu said decisively without giving Jing Wenyan a chance to think of a solution.

“Miss, I will help you out.” Huamo reacted quickly and helped Wei Yuewu to walk by Yan Huaijing’s side.

Even if Jing Wenyan wanted to pull Wei Yuewu, she could not, because Wei Yuewu had circled around Yan Huaijing and walked towards the door.

Yan Huaijing leaned back and revealed an ambiguous smile. He glanced at Wei Yuewu and raised his eyes slightly. There were some emotions in his eyes, but his words stopped Jing Wenyan from making any movements. “Eldest Miss Jing, when you return to the capital this time, have you found anything different from the State of Jing?”

This question was quite profound, so much so that Jing Wenyan was startled when she heard this. At this point, Wei Yuewu had already walked out of the door, and Huamo even closed the door for them before leaving.

“Alright, Your Highness, Eldest Miss Jing finally has a chance to be alone with the heir-apparent. The annoying Sixth Miss Wei has left!” The palace maid, who was in the opposite private room, excitedly told the Fourth Princess.

The anger on the Fourth Princess’ face receded. She felt pleased when she looked at the private room from her location. Now, there were only two people in the room. If Yan Huaijing really cared about Jing Wenyan, he would definitely listen to Jing Wenyan and take the initiative to propose to marry her. This was a much more satisfying result than an imperial decree from Father Emperor declaring her marriage with Yan Huaijing.

Wen Caidie had always been a head above her. Even Royal Brother had said that Wen Caidie was better than her. At the thought of this, the Fourth Princess was frustrated. She was the daughter of the Empress. How could she be inferior to a daughter of a concubine?

Although Zhaoyi Tu was her mother's sister, their statuses were different from the beginning due to their positions in the palace. How could Wen Caidie be nobler than her?! Why did Eldest Brother think highly of Wen Caidie, so much so that all the people now looked up to her?! In fact, Mother Empress even secretly told her that Father Emperor actually liked Wen Caidie more.

This made the Fourth Princess angry and anxious. Because of this, she met with Jing Wenyan, who was said to have grown up with Yan Huaijing since childhood. The two of them almost got married. If it hadn't been for the Duke of Yan State's obstruction, Jing Wenyan might have been the Heiress-apparent of Yan now.

But even if the Duke of Yan State stopped their engagement, he could not stop their friendship. The Fourth Princess even promised to help Jing Wenyan realize her big wish if she could get what she wanted.

"Your Heir-apparent, actually, I haven't been in the capital for a long time. I have always been in the mansion and lived in seclusion, and I don't know much about anything! I-I have something to do, so I..." Jing Wenyan stood up uneasily. She was just testing the water today. How could she really persuade Yan Huaijing?

"Eldest Miss Jing, who do you think is more suitable to be State of Yan's future duchess, the Third Princess or the Fourth Princess?" Yan Huaijing looked at her. Although his smile was gentle, there was a flash of dark light in his eyes.

"I..." Jing Wenyan had not expected such a question from Yan Huaijing, and she was taken aback. She was now stepping on two boats. It was inappropriate no matter which side she took.

In fact, she would be in a difficult position if either princess heard her answer.

"Do you not have an idea? I heard that you are on good terms with both princesses. Can you tell which princess is more suitable as the future duchess of the State of Yan?" Yan Huaijing smiled slightly. His handsome face revealed an amiable expression. He even waved at her as if he was very close to her.

"Your Heir-apparent, I... I don't know..." Jing Wenyan remembered that the Fourth Princess was still watching her from the opposite room, so she gritted her teeth and retreated instead of moving forward.

She keenly felt that she could no longer stay here. The longer she stayed, the more suspicious the Fourth Princess would be. "Your Heir-apparent, I need to take my leave now. Excuse me."

After saying that, she respectfully bowed deeply to Yan Huaijing and then retreated. When she reached the door, she was already sweating on her forehead.

"Miss..." Her maid called her in a low voice.

"Let's go!" Jing Wenyan gritted her teeth in dismay. She had originally thought that it would be best if she could use Sixth Miss Wei as a shield, but she hadn't expected her to be so astute.

"Stop the carriage of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang first, and then investigate who the person is in the opposite room. Remember, don't be too harsh with the attack." Inside the room, Yan Huaijing held the cup in his hand and leisurely spun it twice. The smile on his face gradually faded, and his handsome eyes were suffused with a deep, cold light.

Chapter 409

Wei Yuewu did not expect to stumble upon the heir-apparent's carriage although she had left first.

She lifted the curtain and was speechless when she saw the heir-apparent's leisurely face.

No matter how she looked at it, it was not a coincidence!

"Sixth Miss Wei, how has your father been these past few days?" Yan Huaijing asked in a faint and leisurely tone as always. His smile was brilliant, but it made Wei Yuewu feel a strong sense of malice. When had his relationship with her father become so good?

"Your Heir-apparent, how may I help you?" Wei Yuewu had no choice but to bow in the carriage. She felt helpless when the Heir-apparent of the Duke of Yan State stopped her carriage.

"A drama will unfold soon. Are you interested to watch it?" Yan Huaijing invited her with a smile as if he was inviting Wei Yuewu to watch an interesting affair.

"I'm busy. I have something to deal with." Wei Yuewu rubbed her forehead. She did not know what to say. Of course, she did not believe that the interesting things that the heir-apparent said were really interesting.

"It's a good show. Just come over and take a look!" However, the heir-apparent did not look like someone who could be rejected. She put down the curtain of the carriage, and Yan Huaijing's carriage drove ahead. Wei Yuewu was about to tell Old Li to leave when she saw two bodyguards coming over from Yan Huaijing's carriage.

"Follow them," Wei Yuewu said helplessly.

From the looks of it, she had to follow him despite her reluctance. The strong-willed heir-apparent had never been the gentle and polite man he looked to be.

The two carriages, one in front and one behind, turned a few corners on the street, and they slowed down at a particular intersection. Because Yan Huaijing's carriage was in front, Wei Yuewu's carriage naturally slowed down too.

She lifted the curtains slightly. She did not understand what Yan Huaijing meant, but she saw a carriage coming from the opposite end of the road. Although there were no signs on the wide carriage, she could tell that the person in the carriage was either extremely rich or powerful. Ordinary aristocratic families could not afford such a wide carriage.

The carriage was moving, and the curtain was lifted as if the person spotted Yan Huaijing's carriage. The person in the carriage said something to the coachman, and the carriage slowed down.

At this time, they saw a horse galloping over from the side. Originally, if the carriage did not stop, the horse would not collide with the carriage. But at this moment, the carriage stopped in the horse's way. Therefore, the horse crashed into the back of the carriage.

The horse did not stop. The person on the horse urged the horse and ran wildly all the way.

The rear end of the wide carriage was hit, and it spun half a circle. The sharp scream of a woman came from inside, and there were people shouting, "Princess! Princess!"

Wei Yuewu had been secretly looking outside. At this time, she could not help but be stunned. Princess? Was she the person who was peeking from the opposite room just now?

"Sixth Young Lady, the heir-apparent said that you can leave now," a bodyguard lightly walked to Wei Yuewu's window and said in a low voice.

Wei Yuewu nodded. She knew that it was quite conspicuous as her carriage was behind Yan Huaijing's carriage. Since he no longer restrained her, she asked Huamo to tell Old Li to turn around and go to a small road. They directly went to the next destination to take a look.

Her next destination was just an ordinary grocery store. It could be considered a very inconspicuous shop in her mother's dowry.

"Your Heir-apparent, Sixth Miss Wei has already left." A bodyguard watched as Wei Yuewu's carriage nimbly turned around and left the place at the fastest speed before returning to the carriage to report.

"She left quite fast!" Inside the carriage, Yan Huaijing smiled lazily. The corners of his lips curled into a gentle smile, and his face was actually filled with pleasure.

"Should we go and help? The carriage is going to turn over soon!" The bodyguard looked at the carriage outside and asked.

"Just a little help will do. After all, I am just passing by occasionally!" Yan Huaijing lazily held his head and said indifferently.

"Yes, I understand." His order meant that the person in the carriage should not go completely unscathed. Therefore, the bodyguards simply prepared themselves but did not immediately take action.

Only when they saw that the carriage was really going to flip over did the three bodyguards go over. One pulled the horse's head, and the other two supported each side of the carriage, each using force to stabilize the carriage.

"Princess, Princess, how are you? Are you alright?" When the carriage stopped, the crying voice of the woman in the carriage became more and more obvious, but there was no response. Obviously, the princess was not doing well.

"Your Heir-apparent, should we go over?" A bodyguard came over and asked.

"No need. I need to keep my distance due to the gender difference. Leave two guards here to help her out. Just say that I need to talk to Eldest Miss Jing about the screen, and it is urgent, so I can't stay to take care of the Fourth Princess." Yan Huaijing shook his head and put down the curtain in his hand while saying casually. He wouldn't have cared about the princess' affairs if it hadn't been for the little sly fox who had been tricked.

Jing Wenyan used Mother Consort's screen as part of her ploy. What a coincidence! He finally found a perfect candidate to suffer the consequences.

Yan Huaijing thought leisurely as if he didn't notice that his thoughts had pushed Jing Wenyan to the front.

Jing Wenyan wanted to hide behind the scenes, but she was pushed to the front. For Jing Wenyan, who had lost her territory and wanted to curry favor with the two princesses to seek benefits for herself, Yan Huaijing's words really pushed her to a dangerous position.

Jing Wenyan thought that she understood Yan Huaijing well. The tiny scheme against Yan Huaijing would not harm him at all. So, even if he knew about her scheme, he would not do anything to her unless she jeopardized something that he cared about.

Therefore, Jing Wenyan had always been very careful and meticulous. Originally, she had been wholeheartedly on good terms with Wei Yuewu, but Yan Huaijing's childhood sweetheart had suddenly appeared. In Jing Wenyan's opinion, Wei Yuewu definitely did not have a special meaning to Yan Huaijing, so she treated her casually. Unexpectedly, she offended Yan Huaijing nevertheless...

The curtain of the carriage fell down, and the carriage slowly left in the direction of the mansion of Duke of Jing.

The Fourth Princess, who had been awakened, sat in the carriage in a daze. She covered the corner of her broken lips with a handkerchief. She was so angry that she almost tore the handkerchief apart. Jing Wenyan promised that there was really nothing between her and Yan Huaijing now. She said that she had let bygones be bygones, and she would not think about marrying Yan Huaijing anymore.

She said that she would help her, but from the looks of it, did she really not have any thoughts about Yan Huaijing?

The screen? What was so special about a woman's screen? The princess refused to believe that Yan Huaijing would deliberately go to Jing Wenyan to talk about the screen. It was clearly an excuse.

He needed to keep a distance due to the gender difference... What the hell was that?! He didn't even come to check if she was okay, and he simply assigned a few guards to check on her. Yet, he spent so much time with Jing Wenyan discussing the screen. Why couldn't they finish it off in the gold store? Why did he have to go to her again to continue the discussion? No matter how the princess looked at it, there seemed to be something between the two of them.

Previously, the Fourth Princess had always thought that Wei Yuewu had ruined her plan. Now that she thought about it, she felt that the relationship between Jing Wenyan and Yan Huaijing seemed to be full of affection.

Jing Wenyan actually used her as an excuse to meet Yan Huaijing!

This realization made the Fourth Princess so angry that she almost bit down on her teeth. She exerted force in her hand and cried out in pain again. It was not just her lips. Just now, her head was heavily knocked on the carriage. At this time, it was still faintly painful, and she was dizzy...

Wei Yuewu had no idea that in order to vent her anger, Yan Huaijing had plotted against the Fourth Princess and Jing Wenyan. She was now standing in front of a small grocery store.

Compared with the previous gold store, this shop looked extremely humble, with the difference between a beggar and an Emperor. The gold store was huge and extravagant, but this grocery shop was just a small facade hidden in an inconspicuous corner. The shop was not big, and there were not many people entering the shop.

In fact, this shop was not an ordinary grocery store. Instead, some exquisite goods were sold here, such as women's accessories, fans, jade belts, purses, handkerchiefs, and so on. Some of them were quite exclusive. Due to the slump condition of the shop, the price was relatively lower.

But even so, there were not many customers.

When Wei Yuewu brought Huamo in, she did not see any staff. She looked around and saw two elderly shop assistants in the shop, looking lazy and sluggish. They were astonished by Wei Yuewu's beauty when they looked up and saw her, but they did not seem very energetic.

There were not many goods on the shelves.

"Why are there so few goods in your shop and so few customers?" Huamo understood Wei Yuewu's intention and went forward to ask the shop assistants.

"It's going to be closed. It's not bad to have such goods!" One of the shop assistants sighed.

"Closed? Why? Is the business here so bad?" Huamo was startled.

"The business has always been very good before. It's just that it hasn't been good recently. The other shop assistants also quit. We worked here for the longest time. We couldn't bear to leave, so we stayed!" The shop assistant sighed.

"It hasn't been good recently? What happened?" Wei Yuewu couldn't help but ask. When she observed the shop outside, she found that it was indeed inconspicuous. But when she stepped into the store, she found that apart from the lack of goods and the shop assistants' dejected demeanor, everything in the shop was neatly arranged and clean. It made people who entered the shop feel that it was pleasing to the eye.

Even if such a shop was not particularly popular, the business would not be so bad.

“Well, our boss wants to end the business!” The shop assistant grunted weakly and then took the small accessory that Wei Yuewu was looking at and placed it on the table. “See this. It’s actually very beautiful. In the past, we could sell it at a much more expensive price, but now, we can only sell it at a bit of silver.”

It was an exquisite boat-shaped accessory made of hawksbill. It was very beautiful and could be used as a good-looking ornament whether it was placed on a bookshelf or in front of the flower pavilion. Wei Yuewu had seen it in her maternal grandmother’s flower pavilion before. It was said that the price of such a small one was not cheap. It was worth at least 100 taels of silver.

As for the one in front of her, although it was a little smaller, the price was only ten taels of silver, which was really a little cheap.

“Why is it so cheap?” Wei Yuewu’s eyes flashed with a trace of deep thought as she slowly asked. Mother’s shops made her feel particularly peculiar. There was clearly something wrong with this one too.

“Madam Dowager said that the fengshui is not good here!” Another shop assistant came over and said.

Chapter 410

“The fengshui is not good?” Wei Yuewu’s heart skipped a beat.

“Yes. She said that the fengshui was bad and wanted to end the business. She fired all of the waiters in the shop. Now, there are only our shopkeeper and the two of us. We have been working here for so long, and we don’t want to leave. Moreover, this is Eldest Young Lady’s shop. It’s really too much to close the shop.”

One of the waiters grunted angrily.

“Eldest Young Lady’s shop?” Wei Yuewu asked faintly.

“Yes. She was Marquise Hua Yang. This shop was originally hers. We were the old staff who were transferred here with the shop when she got married. Later, she even redeemed us and turned us into ordinary citizens in the capital. She said that we didn’t have to work for the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang anymore. We thought that we could guard her shop, but now...”

The old waiter choked, turned his head, and secretly wiped his tears.

“Are you saying that this shop is Marquise Hua Yang’s dowry shop?” Wei Yuewu asked calmly. “Do you have any evidence? You’re not bluffing, right?”

“No, we’re not bluffing! It’s true! Our shopkeeper has Eldest Young Lady’s signature at that time. Back then, she would personally check the account book herself. Even when she was sick, she asked the shopkeeper to send the account book to the mansion. When Eldest Young Lady passed away, the account book was directly sent to the mansion. Previously, it was said that the second branch checked the account, and then it was Concubine Dong. Now, Madam Dowager gave the order...”

The waiter was agitated, and his face and neck turned red as he grunted indignantly.

“Did it happen suddenly?” Huamo asked.

“She announced it the day before yesterday and then fired all the waiters. We chose to stay behind because we are reluctant to leave. Concubine Dong and Madam Dowager are really something. They are so mean. Isn’t it a basic etiquette for the aristocratic families to leave Madam’s dowry to their children? Eldest Young Lady had a daughter! Why didn’t they let her manage the shop?!”

“Are those account books still here?” Wei Yuewu’s eyes flashed as she asked softly.

“Of course, they are! The shopkeeper would take them to the mansion once a month. Ever since Eldest Young Lady passed away, the shopkeeper has always kept the account books for nostalgic purposes,” the waiter said.

So, there was evidence! Wei Yuewu's eyes were slightly cold. Her father had just said that he wanted to ask for the dowry back, and Madam Dowager immediately took action. Her watery eyes were slightly raised as she gestured to Huamo.

"This is the Sixth Young Lady of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang. Please ask your shopkeeper to come out and see her!" Huamo took a step forward, straightened her chest, and said loudly.

"Sixth Young Lady of the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang?" One of the waiters was dumbstruck.

The other shopkeeper was quick to react. He nudged the dazed waiter and beamed excitedly. "Sixth Young Lady? The daughter of Marquise Hua Yang? The Sixth Young Lady who has been raised in her maternal family?"

"Yes! It is our Miss!" Huamo nodded.

"Little Miss, please wait!" The other waiter also reacted, turned around, and ran away.

The other immediately invited Wei Yuewu to the lounge on the side. After inviting her to sit down, he happily ran out to make tea for her.

When he served her tea, the old shopkeeper came to the lounge with the old waiter. When he saw Wei Yuewu's familiar face, the old shopkeeper already believed her. He respectfully called out, "Little Miss!" After that, his eyes turned red.

"Shopkeeper Liu, please sit down and talk," Wei Yuewu said politely.

The names of the shopkeepers were noted on the list of her mother's dowry. Since this shop had not changed its staff much, she believed that the last name of the shopkeeper was Liu.

"Little Miss..." Shopkeeper Liu wanted to exchange some pleasantries, but Wei Yuewu interjected him and went straight to the point. "Shopkeeper Liu, I just want to know about the matter of the shops on the list of my mother's dowry. You are my mother's old staff and are loyal to her. We can skip all the formalities."

"Yes, Little Miss!" Shopkeeper Liu wiped away his tears and sat down.

"How many shops did my mother have when she married my father?" To find such a loyal old shopkeeper was exactly what Wei Yuewu needed the most right now. Her watery eyes raised slightly, and her gaze fell on the old shopkeeper.

"The shops that Madam had when she got married... Actually, I'm not too sure..." At this point, Shopkeeper Liu frowned and looked a little apologetic. "She had only five shops when she got married. They were all similar to this one. You should know that it was quite good for Madam to have so much dowry."

Of course, Wei Yuewu understood this. Based on the number of shops in the capital as her mother's dowry, Wei Yuewu could speculate that her maternal family had given all of the capital city's businesses to her mother. Brocade Clothing Shop was opened later on, and this shop was one of the original ones.

"What happened afterward?" Wei Yuewu asked calmly. It was impossible for such a big gold jewelry shop to appear out of nowhere.

"I'm not sure what happened later, but I heard that the contents on the dowry list suddenly increased a lot. I don't know exactly how many shops Madam had. But every month, when I handed in the account books to the mansion, I bumped into a few people, but I don't know them."

Shopkeeper Liu thought for a moment and lamented with a bitter smile, "Some said that the old master got some rare treasures, so he could give so much dowry to Madam. Some said that Lord Marquis filled in some of the items to make her dowry look more extravagant so that others would not look down on her."

In short, these shops appeared inexplicably, so much so that those staff who came over along with her mother had no idea about them.

"You said that you bumped into a few shopkeepers that you didn't know when you handed in the account books earlier?" Wei Yuewu's eyes were a little deep, and she repeated it for affirmation.

"Yes, there were some that I didn't know, but I didn't meet them every month. I didn't even meet some once a year, but Madam checked the account books all the time," Shopkeeper Liu thought for a moment and said with certainty.

"Are you certain that those people are not part of my mother's dowry?" Wei Yuewu bit her lips.

"Yes, I'm certain. Previously, I thought that they were newly hired, but no one recognized them. In fact, when we tried to talk to them, they seemed very arrogant and proud, and they didn't want to have anything to do with us, the shopkeepers of the smaller shops."

"Later... Did you meet these people after my mother passed away?" Wei Yuewu asked, her heart skipping a beat.

"I have rarely met them ever since. After so many years, I have only met them several times, and I don't even know which shops they are from." Shopkeeper Liu shook his head. He had always been very puzzled about the shopkeepers' identities. He couldn't figure out what those people were doing.

He felt that those people were extraordinary. Their eyes were too sharp, and their movements were fast. They seemed to be martial artists.

There was indeed something fishy in the shops of Mother's dowry...

However, this was not something that needed to be dealt with immediately. Wei Yuewu could not figure it out for a while, and she temporarily put the matter aside. "Why is this shop going to be closed?"

"Sixth Young Lady, actually, it's not just this shop. Most of Madam's shops are going to be closed. Two of them were already closed yesterday. If you don't come today, our shop will be closed soon." With a sigh, Shopkeeper Liu lamented sadly.

The shopkeeper and waiters had feelings for this shop after working here for years. Shopkeeper Liu was extremely sad when he received the order to close the shop because the person who gave the order did not give them any warning beforehand. Shopkeeper Liu wondered what he had done wrong to upset the Master in the mansion of Marquis Hua Yang, which had led to the current situation.

“What about the other two that haven’t been closed?” Wei Yuewu asked after thinking for a while.

“The shopkeepers of those shops have joined Concubine Dong long ago and are loyal to her. I heard that they only moved to a different location this time, unlike this shop, which is listed among the mansion’s shops. Soon, there will be no more Madam’s shop!” Speaking of those two days, Shopkeeper Liu bellowed angrily.

Shopkeeper Liu was very disdainful toward the two ungrateful shopkeepers who chose to curry favor with Concubine Dong despite receiving kindness from Madam.

“So, the two shops only changed the address and name, but it is still the same shopkeeper and selling the same thing?” Wei Yuewu asked indifferently as she looked at her fair hands.

“Yes, I heard that they were transferring shops these past two days,” Shopkeeper Liu said angrily.

In other words, not only Madam Dowager, but Concubine Dong was also trying to lay her hands on Mother’s dowry shop. One used a merging method, and the other changed the locations. These two people both attacked her at the same time!

A cold and fierce ripple appeared in her eyes. Both Madam Dowager and Concubine Dong had planned their schemes really well. They wanted to keep Mother’s shops for themselves in a stealthy way!

“Do people need to go to the government to register for the transfer of the shop?” There were some things that Wei Yuewu didn’t understand very well, so she asked in detail.

“Yes, you have to go to the government office to register. For our case, we need to state the reason that we end the business due to the lack of profit, while they can also say that they intend to end the business of the two shops. Madam Dowager even asked me to go to the mansion to report to her, but the waiters and shopkeepers in these shops have been hired by someone else,” Shopkeeper Liu said in detail.

So, she couldn’t blame anyone for the closing of the shops if the business ended because of poor management. It had nothing to do with the newly-hired shopkeepers and waiters.

Wei Yuewu was sure that the goods were taken away with the shopkeepers and waiters.

Both Concubine Dong and Madam Dowager were good at scheming, and both of them had a tacit understanding. Madam Dowager had three shops, and Concubine Dong had two shops.

Their division of wealth really suited their temperament...

"There will be goods coming tomorrow. In the past, Madam left a message saying that whoever has a good business will get more goods. But now there is nothing to take!" Shopkeeper Liu shook his head with a bitter smile and muttered to himself.

"Where did the goods come from?" A light flashed in Wei Yuewu's mind as she asked quickly.

"They were transported here by cargo ships. Actually, we have nothing to do with the goods now. They will probably be delivered to the two shops that have moved to new sites!" Shopkeeper Liu shook his head.

"Shopkeeper Liu, can I ask you something?" A sharp light flashed in her eyes. Wei Yuewu stood up and politely bowed to Shopkeeper Liu. Shopkeeper Liu hurriedly stood up and waved his hands. "Sixth Young Lady, please just tell me if you have anything to say. I will do as you say!"

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