

比卡比

作品 ——

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《三嫁咸鱼》

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SANJIA



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# 三嫁咸鱼

SANXY



比卡比

Married Thrice to Salted Fish (三嫁咸鱼)

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I

Main Story

**1**



# Chapter 1

Nan'an Hou Mansion, inside the bridal chamber on the eve of the wedding.

The two matrons of honor finished their assignments and took the maidservants of the Hou Mansion to file out of the inner room. They hadn't even made it past the door before they were impatiently gossiping in whispers.

"I've already lived the greater part of my lifetime and I've never seen such a beautiful man."

"It's a pity he's been married off to an invalid."

"What do you mean 'a pity'? He's married to the Hou Mansion's Young Master. If it weren't for his Eight Characters managing to fit perfectly for a Chong Xi to Young Master Hou, would Master Hou and Madam Hou deign to even consider the son of a fifth rank Imperial Hospital Yuan Pan?"

"What you say is reasonable. Whether this is a blessing or a curse, only time will tell."

.....

In the middle of their conversation, the matron of honor arrived at the outer room. Before pulling close the two doors, she glanced inside. Amidst the festive, bright red,

the young man, newly married into the Hou Mansion, with the bridal veil covering his face, sat quietly like a jade carving on the bridal bed.

The door slowly closed, leaving only the rejoicing newly-married couple in the bridal chamber.

The surrounding area became quiet, and Lin Qingyu's back which had been stiff the entire day finally relaxed. He moved his body a bit and the tassels hanging on the bridal veil swayed along with him.

Wearing a bridal veil was really inconvenient. When a female bride is married, the bridal veil on her head must be lifted off by her husband. Presumably, this was also the case for when a male bride is married.

However, he was afraid that his husband was incapable of doing this.

His... "Husband".

Lin Qingyu raised his hand to take the bridal veil off himself. His vision finally opened up. He looked around at the light gauze curtains, the red canopy and the warm quilts. Finally, he turned his attention to the sleeping man on the bed — Young Master Hou of Nan'an Hou Mansion, Lu Wancheng.

Under the candlelight, Lin Qingyu expressionlessly sized up Lu Wancheng.

Lu Wancheng had on a crimson wedding robe. His brows were like distant mountains. His lashes were long and thick, his cheeks were hallowed out and his lips were as pale

as paper. Though his eyes were tightly closed and his body broken by illness, it could still be seen that he was gifted with extremely good-looking features.

From today onwards, this person was his husband.

Although he was a man, he became the wife of another man — He was the first male wife “formally and legally married” in the Dayu Dynasty.

How completely ridiculous.

He'd been preparing for the examination of the Imperial Medical Office for three years. If he were to pass the examination, he would become a medical officer just like his father. Even if he weren't to enter the palace, he could open a pharmacy in the capital and be an ordinary doctor.

It was a pity that just as he was preparing to go all out for this major undertaking, the Empress called his father to appear before her and said, “I hear that you have a son, born on March 11, on the Year of Guiwei, at Chen Shi. Is this true?”

After getting the affirmative answer from Father Lin, the Empress asked the Emperor to confer a marriage upon the Lin Family and betroth Lin Qingyu to Nan'an Hou's eldest son, Lu Wancheng.

The officials and the nobility in the capital all knew that Lu Wancheng was born ill and had been bedridden for many years. When he was born, Nan'an Hou specially invited the imperial physician to come see him. The imperial physician once asserted that Young Master Hou would not survive past the age of Weak Crown.

This year, Lu Wancheng was nineteen and his condition was getting worse by the day. Seeing that his days were dwindling and that the end was approaching, Nan'an Hou had no other choice but to write for help to the Dayu Dynasty's National Teacher, who was said to have access to the Heavens and knew the ways of ghosts and gods. The letter the

National Teacher gave him in reply contained only one line of Eight Characters, which was exactly: March 11th on the Year of Guiwei, at Chen Shi.

It was a crime punishable by death to disobey the Emperor's order. Lin Qingyu thought it no great loss if his were to be the only death, but he had to protect his elderly parents and his younger brother. In this way, he became Lu Wancheng's Chong Xi male wife.

More than ten years of hard study, all turned into a joke.

At this moment, Hai Shi had passed. The servant girl outside the door, who was keeping watch for the night, said, "Shaojun, the hour is here. Kindly serve Young Master Hou to bed."

Lin Qingyu looked at his sleeping husband and clenched his fingers — she wanted him to serve Lu Wancheng? What a joke.

The rules and custom one needed to abide by after marrying into a wealthy family are always complicated and cumbersome. Although it had been a rushed Chong Xi, the Nan'an Hou Mansion still sent an instructor aunt to the Lin Mansion to teach Lin Qingyu on the so-called "Way of a Male Wife". Before the wedding, he had his whole body washed clean, inside and out. Something like grease had even been applied.

Lin Qingyu was not a good gay man. He has never suffered such humiliation. If it weren't for protecting the people in the Lin Family, he would have liked nothing more than to take Lu Wancheng to perish along with him.

Seeing that there was no movement in the bridal room, the servant girl urged once again, "Young Master, it's time to go to bed."

Lin Qingyu closed his eyes and pushed down on the upsurge of malice. He blew out the candles, leaving only one red candle in front of the bed. Lu Wancheng was still wearing

the gold embroidered wedding robe, lying atop the quilt. Sleeping this way might be quite uncomfortable.

But then what did it matter to him? He longed for the day that Lu Wancheng slept forever.

Lin Qingyu walked to the bed and his eyes fell on Lu Wancheng's crossed hands on his chest.

The Lin family was a medical family. Lin Qingyu studied medicine with his father since he was a child. When he was a teenager, he left home to study and follow a famous

teacher. Just by looking at Lu Wancheng's complexion, he knew that Lu Wancheng was terminally ill and must be suffering from severe and chronic disease.

In order to confirm this, Lin Qingyu condescended to feel the pulse of this sick seedling. Lu Wancheng's wrist was frighteningly cold, as though it had been fished out of cold water.

Just as he suspected, Lu Wancheng's vitality was exhausted. His pulse showed signs of approaching death. Unless some miracle-working doctor reincarnated, Lu Wancheng would last for only half a year at most.

He needed only to endure for half a year. When Lu Wancheng passed away, he could be freed.

Lin Qingyu unconsciously applied force on his hand, leaving two shallow marks on Lu Wancheng's wrist.

Suddenly, those pale fingertips moved.

Lin Qingyu instinctively let go, letting Lu Wancheng's hand fall back onto the bed. He saw his eyes rolling under his lids, his long lashes trembling slightly.

Was Lu Wancheng going to wake up?

Lin Qingyu had a solemn expression as he stared at Lu Wancheng unblinkingly. Under his sword-like gaze, Lu Wancheng slowly opened his eyes.

Lu Wancheng's eyes seemed to be covered with mist, it was as though he couldn't see anything. When the mist in his eyes dissipated, a trace of puzzlement appeared. "Huh...? Where did this classical beauty come from...?"

Heh, this lecher. He's already on the verge of death and he still didn't forget to lay on

the flattery.

Lin Qingyu said coldly, "You're awake."

Lu Wancheng was momentarily dazed. He asked in a hoarse voice, "Who are you?"

A hint of surprise flashed in Lin Qingyu's eyes. "Do you not know who I am?"

This was their first time meeting, but so long as Lu Wancheng had grown a brain, he should already understand just by seeing the bridal attire he had on him.

Lu Wancheng shook his head, let out muffled coughs and said, "Although it would sound very cliché, I still want to ask. Where is this? And why am I here?"

Lin Qingyu: "...". Could it be that the sickness has made him stupid? Or did Lu Wancheng not even know about this marriage?

Before the Chong Xi, he heard his father mention Lu Wancheng's condition. It was said that Lu Wancheng has been dazed and muddled for the past month. If this were the case, it was likely that Lu Wancheng was completely ignorant of this marriage.

Lin Qingyu's expression eased a little. "My surname is Lin and my name is Qingyu."

"Lin Qingyu? Lin...Qing...Yu." Lu Wancheng said his name. As though hitting upon something, he said, "The beautiful imperial doctor who died in the Eastern Palace?"

Lin Qingyu frowned. "What?"

Lu Wancheng looked at him for a moment, his face filled with shock. He was then suddenly struggling to sit up.

Out of habit as a doctor, Lin Qingyu pushed the flailing patient back down. "What do

you think you're doing?"

"Mirror." Lu Wancheng covered his chest with one hand, and pointed at the bronze mirror on the cabinet with the other. His long hair lay scattered on the pillow, "Cough, cough. Give me the mirror."

The mirror?

Lin Qingyu handed the bronze mirror to Lu Wancheng and asked, "What's wrong with this mirror?"

Lu Wancheng saw himself in the mirror and then, as though seeing a ghost, his eyes widened suddenly. His expression looked as if he had a thousand words to say. He held back for a long time, until he almost couldn't breathe. In the end he only said one word. "...Fuck."

The servant girl on night watch heard the movement in the bridal chamber. She knocked on the door and asked, "Shaojun, has something happened?"

Lin Qingyu looked at Lu Wancheng who was dazed as if he'd been struck by lightning, and said calmly, "Tell your Master Hou and the Madam that Young Master Hou is awake."

The servant girl immediately sent someone to report to Nan'an Hou and Madam Hou. They then invited the doctor to come. After a while, the bridal room was full of people. It was Lin Qingyu instead who stood by the outermost side, acting like a complete outsider.

Doctor Zhang, who was examining Lu Wancheng's pulse, was not an imperial doctor, but he too was a famous doctor in the capital. Doctor Zhang stroked his beard and said



in disbelief, “This is the first time this old man has encountered such a situation during his many decades of practicing medicine.”

Madam Hou said eagerly, “Doctor Zhang, could it be that Wancheng...?”

“Madam, do not be impatient. That the Young Master Hou has woken up is a good thing. Only that, this pulse... Yesterday, this old man also diagnosed Young Master Hou’s pulse. At that time, Young Master Hou’s vitality was clearly exhausted and he was not far from the five decays of Heaven and Man. But now, it’s like a completely

different person.” Doctor Zhang clicked his tongue in wonder. “It’s like the gods have lent their assistance, pouring vitality into his body.”

Lin Qingyu pondered quietly. Lu Wancheng suddenly got better and it wasn’t that last radiance of the setting sun. It was a bit weird. He has never seen a similar case in any of the medical books.

Madam Hou was taken aback and asked, “Then is his illness about to get better?”

The doctor did not dare to confirm. He considered it and said, “At least, there is a gleam of hope.”

“Good, good...” Madam Hou burst into tears with excitement, “Wancheng, did you hear that? Your illness has taken a turn for the better.”

Lu Wancheng had no special reaction. He only said, “I heard.”

The doctor added, “Madam, Young Master Hou has just woken up and he still needs to rest.”

Madam Hou wiped away her tears, and said, “Then mother won’t interrupt your rest — What about Qingyu? Where is Shaojun?”

Everyone looked at each other. Lin Qingyu stepped forward and said, “Madam.”

Madam Hou held his hand and said with a smile, “Qingyu, as soon as you married into the Hou Mansion, Wancheng’s illness has taken a turn for the better. As expected, the

National Teacher is gifted with divine strategy and wonderful planning. You are Wancheng's savior. We shall be leaving our Wancheng in your care."

Lu Wancheng raised his head and looked at Lin Qingyu.

Lin Qingyu said with a smile, "Do not worry, Madam. I will do my utmost to take care of Young Master Hou."

The momo next to Madam Hou teased, "Ai, Shaojun shouldn't be calling Young Master Hou the same way we do. You should call him 'husband'—"

Everyone laughed and no one noticed that Lin Qingyu's hands, hidden in his sleeves, clenched tightly.

Everyone dispersed and the peace in the bridal room was restored once again. The red candle was about to burn empty.

Lu Wancheng lay silent on the bed. His brows, sometimes furrowed and sometimes smoothed. It looked as though he was trying to remember something.

Lin Qingyu was too lazy to pay any attention to him. He stood by the window, looking at the strange moon outside, his body seemed to be covered with moonlight.

After an unknown length of time, Lu Wancheng let out a sigh. He said, "Buddy...oh, that's not right — Beauty, come here."

Lin Qingyu said coolly, "Who are you calling?"

Lu Wancheng smiled and said, "Is there anyone else here?"

Lin Qingyu turned around. The swaying candlelight dyed a trace of crimson blush on

his cheeks. The teardrop mole in the corner of his eye turned as bright as a peony.

He was beautiful but didn't seem to have a good temper.

Lu Wancheng coughed a couple of times and nodded at Lin Qingyu to sit. Lin Qingyu remained standing by the bed, keeping an arm's distance from Lu Wancheng.

"I had just been sorting out the main threads." Lu Wancheng's tone was calm, without the agitation when he had first woken up.

Lin Qingyu said lightly, "And what has that got to do with me?"

"It's got a little to do with you. Because what I was thinking about pertains to your main threads." Having said just these few words, Lu Wancheng was already a little weak and pale, "If I'd come a few days earlier, I definitely wouldn't have agreed to this marriage where you would only inevitably wind up as a lifelong widow."

Lin Qingyu's expression was numb. "What's the use of you saying this now?"

"Indeed. Now we're married, we've tied the knot, we've performed the wedding ritual and the whole capital knows that we are husband and wife."

Lin Qingyu sneered: "No."

"Huh?"

Lin Qingyu sneered, "We didn't perform the marriage ritual. You were asleep the whole time. I performed the ritual with a big cock."

Lu Wancheng scoffed. "That's alright. It's fine. If we didn't perform the ritual, that's good too. You don't have to take this marriage seriously. I won't live past half a year, so you'll just have to be wronged for half a year. When I die, you can make off with my

inheritance and return to the Lin Residence. This way you won't suffer too much of a loss."

Lin Qingyu was startled, and said suspiciously, "Is there such a good thing?"

"There is. But how much inheritance you can bring home depends on your own ability." Lu Wancheng leaned back on the soft pillow, and said in a lazy tone, "With this broken body, I won't be engaging in any domestic struggles. The waters run deep in Nan'an Hou Mansion. I can't grasp it. I just want drift along, eat and wait to die. I want to be a salted fish."

Does the story seem interesting? However, before you decide to proceed further, I would just like to warn that the MC, Lin Qingyu is no saint. He's kind of wicked; the kind to exact payment for offenses. He fires no warning shots and his methods may seem excessive but given his weak position and his dangerous situation, I think it's only...practical. He has to make sure that his first shot counts, after all, he might not get a second one.



## Chapter 2

Although Lin Qingyu didn't completely understand Lu Wancheng's words, he thought he roughly understood what the other meant. For Lu Wancheng to be able to talk so lightly about his limited days, could it be that he really wasn't afraid of death?

When all was said and done, Lu Wancheng was someone ill. Being able to hold on till now was already his limit. He lay down on the bed and said, "Beauty, you..."

Lin Qingyu said sternly, "Stop with that inconsiderate name-calling."

Because of his appearance, when Lin Qingyu had been pursuing his studies on the road, he was often harassed by lechers. Towards these people who called him "beauty" or "baobei" at every turn, he wanted nothing more than to stuff their mouths with the potion he'd mixed himself that could force them to shut their mouths.

However, although Lu Wancheng called him a beauty, he didn't stare blankly at him like a frivolous person. He wasn't completely hopeless.

"How fierce. Aren't you happy being praised for your good looks?" Lu Wancheng closed his eyes and said. "Whatever, I'm going to rest. Just do as you please."

After all that waste of time, it was already past zishi. There really was nothing else to do except to go to bed.

The servant girl just now had helped Lu Wancheng take off his clothes. She had also wiped his arms and face. While on the other hand, Lin Qingyu was still wearing the

dress and crown he had used to the wedding. A huadian had been painted between his brows and he still hasn't washed off the makeup on his face.

Yes, he had on makeup today. Due to his strongly worded request, the matron of honor had only painted his brows and lips. However, because of the cold and aloof beauty of his face, after using even just this little bit, his lips appeared as red as flames and his brows appeared as though they'd been drawn from a painting. This look made others praise him without cease but for him, it alarmed his heart and sent his body leaping. What he had pursed between his lips seemed not to be rouge paper but shackles that imprisoned him. And the ones who placed these shackles on him was this entire Nan'an Hou Mansion as well as...the Imperial family.

He would remember this hatred.

There was that matron of honor too who had to forced him use ointment and made that certain some place feel extremely uncomfortable. He would remember her too.

As for his ignorant "husband"... If what Lu Wancheng said was true, they truly could spend the next six months together in peace. Husband and wife in name but not in truth. He could barely force himself not to harbor any hatred against Lu Wancheng.

He was a man on the verge of death, nothing more. What need was there to bother with him?

Naturally there couldn't be two beds in the bridal chamber. The only bed was occupied by Lu Wancheng. Lin Qingyu decided to spend the night on the luohan.

At this time, it was shortly after the Lantern Festival. The days had yet to warm up. You were sure to catch a cold sleeping on a bare luohan. Lin Qingyu saw that there was an extra quilt on marriage bed. The servants of the Hou Mansion must have deliberately



prepared it, afraid that their precious Young Master Hou wouldn't be used to sharing the same quilt with someone else.

In that case, Lin Qingyu had no wish to be polite.

Even in sleep, Lu Wancheng could not escape the torment of illness and pain; and his brows were lightly furrowed. Lin Qingyu's movements when taking the quilt had been very light but Lu Wancheng still woke up.

When Lu Wancheng opened his eyes, Lin Qingyu was in the middle of bending over. His hair hung before his chest and fell on the other's cheeks, making it a little itchy.

The two locked eyes with each other. Without waiting for Lu Wancheng to speak, Lin Qingyu said first, "I'm taking the quilt."

Lu Wancheng smiled. "Take it."

Lin Qingyu carried the quilt to the luohan and spread it out. Just as he was about to lie down, Lu Wancheng said, "Aren't you going to undress before going to bed?"

Although the wedding dress worn by a male bride wasn't as complicated and cumbersome as that of a woman's, it was still a loose corseted thing covered in layer upon layer of robes. It was far less convenient and comfortable than wearing ordinary clothes. Just looking at it made Lu Wancheng feel tired for him.

Lin Qingyu said calmly, "Naturally, I'm going to take it off."

Turning his back to Lu Wancheng, he raised his hand to undo the outermost buckle. The coat fell from his shoulders and slid to his ankles. Piece after piece of clothing were

removed, and after a while, he was just like Lu Wancheng, dressed only in close-fitting night wear.

After taking off his clothes, he turned around and glanced at marriage bed. — Very good, Lu Wancheng had fallen asleep again.

Early the next morning.

Lin Qingyu had always been a light-sleeper and a quiet cough from Lu Wancheng was enough to wake him up. On the bed, Lu Wancheng was lying on his side, his side profile was mostly blocked by the scattered strands of his hair. His sleeping posture was haphazard, without the slightest bit of dignity.

As soon as Lin Qingyu got up from the luohan, there came a knock on the door. “Young Master, Shaojun, it’s time to get up. According to customs, you must go serve tea to Master Hou and Madam Hou.”

Lu Wancheng showed no sign of waking up. Lin Qingyu opened the door and let them in. The maid walking in front was Feng Qin who was Lu Wancheng’s personal maid. She entered the room, carrying in hot water. When she saw the soft quilt on the luohan, a strange expression momentarily stole over her face.

Half of the maids who came were there to assist Lin Qingyu to freshen up. The remaining half went to get Lu Wancheng up. Lin Qingyu changed into a snow-blue robe. His long hair was simply tied up with a jade crown. On him these ordinary

clothes seemed graceful and full of elegance. However, compared with yesterday's wedding attire, it was less bright and more dignified.

Feng Qin wanted to put on makeup for Lin Qingyu. Lin Qingyu said, "No need."

Feng Qin said, "But I saw that Shaojun had on makeup yesterday."

"And as you said, that was yesterday." Lin Qingyu's eyes fell on the dressing case on the table and he said irritably, "Take this out."

Lin Qingyu had finished putting on his clothes but Lu Wancheng was still asleep. A few maidservants had gathered around the bed, calling him softly.

"Young Master, it's time for you and Shaojun to serve tea to the Master and Madam."

"Young Master..."

Lu Wancheng remained motionless, his expression calm, his hands folded on his chest, looking like a Buddha statue.

Feng Qin said uneasy, "It can't be that Young Master Hou has fainted again?"

Lin Qingyu stepped forward and carefully observed Lu Wancheng. He said, "No, he just died in his sleep. You can force him to wake up."

Feng Qin asked, unable to understand, "Shaojun, how are we to 'force' him?"

"Shout louder or take off his quilt." Lin Qingyu said, "But don't forget. He is ill. So

unless you want his condition to get worse, don't disturb his rest.”

Feng Qin said, “But Master Hou and the Madam...”

Lin Qingyu interrupted her, “He's already this sick and you want him to serve tea? Are the rules more important than his life?” In Dayu, it was the newly married husband and wife together who serve tea to the parents on the day after their wedding. If Lu Wancheng doesn't go, then he probably won't have to go either.

Originally, before the Empress had ordered this marriage, Nan'an Hou's wife, Liang Shi, had sent someone to visit Lin Qingyu's home and propose a marriage. When he decisively refused, she then asked the Empress, thus putting the Lin Family in a state of either marrying or dying. Not to mention treating the Nan'an couple as “in-laws”, he didn't even want to pay any attention to them.

Feng Qin didn't dare decide on this matter. She sent a servant girl to report to Liang Shi. Not long afterwards, the momo by Liang Shi's side came to give her answer, “The madam says that since it is rare for the young master to sleep so peacefully, we should let him continue to sleep. She and Master Hou will drink tea served by Shaojun alone.”

Lin Qingyu sneered, “Sure enough, Madam loves her son like life.”

Living in the Hou Mansion, he was given no choice but to follow. No matter how reluctant, Lin Qingyu could only put on a snow cape and follow the momo to the front hall.

Along the way, the momo prattled on and on about the rules of the Hou Mansion's inner house. Lin Qingyu took her to be talking utter rubbish, automatically cutting her voice out of his ears. Yesterday, he'd been wearing the bridal veil and he could only see the few steps under his feet. Today he was able to see the true appearance of the Nan'an Hou Mansion. Although he had never been to the palace, he had gone to the prince's mansion with his father. The magnificence of the Nan'an Hou's Mansion was not

inferior to that of the prince's mansion. With its carved beams and painted buildings, gorgeous and noble, it showed that Nan'an Hou's status in the court was extraordinary.

In the front hall, Nan'an Hou and Liang Shi were seated upon the seat of honor. Nan'an Hou was nearing buhuo, taciturn and with a resolute and steadfast face. Liang Shi,

though getting on in the years was still attractive, with a kindly face. She looked like a good-natured upper-class lady.

Lin Qingyu took the tea handed to him by the momo. He couldn't help imagining himself putting poison in it.

What poison could he give that would let them have the taste of losing their freedom?

The two drank Lin Qingyu's tea. Liang Shi said with a smile on her face, "Qingyu, did you sleep well last night?"

Lin Qingyu recovered and said, "It was satisfactory."

"From now on, the Hou Mansion will be your home. If there is anything you are not used to, just tell mother."

"Thank you, Madam."

The momo said, displeased, "Why is Shaojun still using 'Madam'? Just like Young Master Hou, you are to call her 'mother'."

This momo was really obsessed with this matter of changing terms of address. He was simply going to call her 'Change-your-title Momo'. If she wanted so much for Liang Shi to be called that, then why doesn't she just call Liang Shi that herself?

Lin Qingyu lowered his eyes and said, "It is force of habit. It may take a while for me to change my terms of address. I hope Madam Hou will forgive me."

Nan'an Hou looked displeased. Liang Shi said graciously, "There is no harm done. There will be plenty of time for that. The first few months after I married into the Hou

Mansion, I also often forgot to correct myself.”

Nan’an Hou said, “Despite that, you must still get used to it as soon as possible, so as not to be a source of amusement in the eyes of others.”

Lin Qingyu thought of his parents and endured silently. “Yes.”

Liang Shi took another sip of tea and said, “Your Eight Characters and Wancheng’s are a match made in heaven. Master Hou and I also fancied this point, so we asked his Majesty to bestow this marriage. Qingyu, in the future, you must put your husband first in all matters. Wait upon him by his sickbed and let your good fortune rub off on Wancheng.”

Lin Qingyu nodded, stupefied.

Nan’an Hou said, “Speaking of which, you are the son of the pan guan of the Imperial Hospital. You have also studied under a famous teacher. Your medical skills are definitely not bad.”

Lin Qingyu’s chest filled with a burst of oppression.

Yes, his medical skills were not bad. Before all this, he could have practiced medicine or pharmacy to help the people; he could have helped the dying and healed the injured. Now, he was locked up in the inner house, forced to be a male wife who was to be content with his own lot. And the main culprit even had the gall to say, “Although Doctor Zhang is in charge of looking after Wancheng’s condition, you can also watch over him a bit. Do not waste your medical skills.”

Nan’an Hou worked as the Minister of Revenue. He had many responsibilities and he left after saying these words. Liang Shi gave a jade bracelet to Lin Qingyu. She said, “This was part of the dowry I brought from my birth family. I had planned on giving it

to Wancheng's son in the future. But now..." Liang Shi paused and smiled again. "No matter, you keep it."

Lin Qingyu could not have failed to understand Liang Shi's intention. She took so much effort to get Lu Wancheng a male wife but and didn't forget to disdain the male wife for being unable to bear children.

They were all worthy of being members of the Nan'an Hou Mansion. Each was worse than the other. It was only Lu Wancheng who he's barely able to tolerate.

Lin Qingyu returned to the Blue Wind Pavilion where Lu Wancheng lived. He threw the brocade box containing the jade bracelet to Feng Qin. Feng Qin said, "Shaojun, welcome back. Young Master Hou hasn't woken up yet. He's been sleeping for so long, is there really nothing the matter...?"

Lin Qingyu stopped walking towards the study. "I'll take a look."

What he wanted to see was not Lu Wancheng, but the Lu Wancheng's once-in-a-century pulse. Doctor Zhang, who had diagnosed Lu Wancheng's pulse last night, as he understood, was indeed a well-known doctor with real ability and talent. It would be a pity not examine the pulse that even Doctor Zhang had never seen before.

When Lin Qingyu walked into the inner room, Lu Wancheng was still asleep. He was even still in the same posture he had before Lin Qingyu left. He stood by the bed, looking down upon Lu Wancheng. He had to say that Lu Wancheng didn't look like his



parents very much. His appearance was much more refined than that of Nan'an Hou and his wife.

Lin Qingyu rolled up his sleeves and stretched out his fingertips. He had yet to touch Lu Wancheng's pulse when his hand was caught without warning. A loose, careless voice spoke, "Sneaking up like that, what were you going to do, Lin Qingyu?"

Lin Qingyu's hand stiffened. "Let go." Given Lu Wancheng's body, he was afraid that Lu Wancheng would faint if he tried even a little bit of force to break free.

Lu Wancheng let go. His eyes were closed, but the corners of his lips curled up. "Don't get excited, I don't like men. You don't have to be so guarded towards me."

Lin Qingyu's eyes widened. "You don't like men?"

"That's right. As I remember, even though male homosexuality was in vogue during the Dayu dynasty, not everyone was a cut-sleeve." Lu Wancheng opened his eyes and said, "What about you? Are you?"

Lin Qingyu choked.

It has been a month since he was forced into this marriage and no one has ever asked him this question. Anyway, he was going to marry a man. What difference did it make if he liked men or women?

"I... Naturally, I'm not one either."

Lu Wancheng covered his lips and coughed a few times. He then said sympathetically, "Then you must feel extremely wronged at being married to me for a Chong Xi?"

Lin Qingyu's brows were gloomy. "What nonsense. If you were to be given to me in

Chong Xi, wouldn't you feel wronged?"

"That's why I said I would make it up to you."

"To say it is easy. What exactly will you do to compensate me?"

"My inheritance."

Lin Qingyu sneered. "Your inheritance that I have to fight for."

Lu Wancheng asked, "Then what compensation do you want? As long as it's not troublesome or strenuous, I will give it to you."

He wanted to take the examination of the Imperial Medical Office. He wanted to leave the Nan'an Hou Mansion. He wanted to do what he wanted to do. But he knew it was almost impossible. The marriage between him and Lu Wancheng was bestowed by the

Emperor. Even if Lu Wancheng agrees for him to leave, he would still need his Majesty's approval.

Lin Qingyu was silent for a while. He said, "Give me your hand."

Lu Wancheng held his wrist in his other hand, and said warily, "Eh? What are you doing?"

Lin Qingyu said impatiently, "I'm going to check your pulse."

"You should have said so earlier." Lu Wancheng raised his hand and presented his wrist, "Doctor Lin, please."

A charcoal brazier was burning in the room and Lu Wancheng's entire body was covered under the quilt. His wrist though remained cold. Feeling the beating of his pulse, Lin Qingyu frowned.

Lu Wancheng's body was better, but the disease was not eradicated. He could feel the "sudden vitality" that Doctor Zhang said but Lu Wancheng's body was like a bottomless pit, consuming this vitality little by little. Unless the root of the illness was eradicated,





## Chapter 3

Lin Qingyu got up and left. The patient himself has lost all desire to live, so what did he have to worry about? The sooner Lu Wancheng died, the sooner he could return to the Lin Residence.

Lin Qingyu went to the study. He came to the Nan'an Hou Mansion with only two boxes of things. One box contained clothing, and the other contained medical books. According to the rules of the Hou Mansion, he could bring two dowry maids with him. But he wasn't used to being served by a woman. When he was in the Lin Residence, he'd had one page who grew up with him, who joined him in his studies and reading.

It wasn't some glorious thing to be married as a male wife. He didn't want his little page to enter the Hou Mansion as "dowry." And so he came to Hou Mansion alone, with probably only this one box of medical books to keep him company in the future.

Among medical books, there were many ancient ones that he had yet to read. He didn't know, there may be records of cases similar to Lu Wancheng's in these ancient books. Lin Qingyu immersed himself in his reading and finally calmed down.

When he was in school, his classmates thought that medical books were boring and complicated. Reading just three pages was enough to get them sleeping. But for Lin Qingyu, those novels his schoolmates yearned for weren't even a tenth as interesting as medical books. He, like his father, had a highly-retentive memory. What his classmates took a day to memorize, he needed only to read once to be able to memorize and recite backwards.

His father was once of a mind to have him take the imperial examination, but he just wanted to be a medical officer. He liked the feeling of a patient getting better under his

own hands. He wanted to enter the Imperial Hospital, where famous doctors from all over the world gathered. He wanted to hone his medical skills with them, to find cures for all kinds of intractable diseases, and to help the people.

He could have. He almost could have.

“Shaojun.”

The voice did not sound like that of a servant girl's. Lin Qingyu looked up. Sure enough, it was the momo who kept pestering him to change his way of address. It was said that her surname was Liu.

Lin Qingyu said coldly, “What?”

Liu momo was all smiles. “Shaojun, it's time to eat.”

Lin Qingyu didn't have any appetite at all, but these dogs in the Nan'an Hou Mansion weren't worth harming his body over. “Bring the food, I'll eat in the study.”

Liu momo waved her hands again and again. “This is cannot be, Shaojun.”

Lin Qingyu frowned, “Why can it not be? Does the Hou Mansion's rules say ‘no eating in the study’?”

“That is not the case. It is the madam's order. It was because of the Chong Xi that our Young Master got his life back. Shaojun is the Young Master's lucky star. You must stay together so that the Young Master's illness can heal faster.”

To refute such remarks would only make him appear stupid. If a Chong Xi really could cure diseases, what need would Dayu have for doctors? Why would the court go to such

great lengths to train medical officers? If you get sick, then just get married; then everything would be fine and well with the world.

Lin Qingyu looked at Liu momo and asked, "Momo, how old will you be this year?"

Liu momo didn't know what Lin Qingyu intended by asking this question. Nevertheless, she still smiled and said, "This old woman is fifty and two."

"A fifty-two year old who looks like forty-two. I might not necessarily live to reach fifty-two. Momo is very lucky. You should be the one to take care of the young master, that way he would heal even faster."

Liu momo's smile froze. "Shaojun jests."

Lin Qingyu's face turned cold. "Do I look like I'm joking? Go."

Liu momo's face turned extremely ugly. She was Madam Hou, Liang Shi's confidant. Who in the Hou Mansion, save for the masters, dared to not treat her with respect? Even the masters usually gave her a lot of face. What was Lin Qingyu? Wording it nicely, he was the Shaojun, but put another way, he was just the male wife "bought" by the Hou Mansion to renew the life of the Young Master. This was only his first day since he was married into this family and he was already scowling at her?

Seeing that Liu momo made no move to leave, Lin Qingyu sneered, "You do not know to recognize your betters. A servant dares to turn a deaf ear to the Shaojun's order. — Is this not one of the rules of the Hou Mansion?"

Madam Liu lowered her eyes. "This servant dares not. It is only that the Madam has personally ordered this servant to bring this chicken soup she had ordered to be stewed



with ginseng. If Shaojun and the Young Master does not have a taste of it, it would be a betrayal of the madam's good intentions."

Ginseng Chicken Soup?

Stupid. Did they not know that a person who is in poor health cannot handle tonic-like foods? Did Liang Shi think that her son was not sick enough?

"She had merely personally ordered someone to make it. She hadn't personally made it herself." Lin Qingyu no longer looked at her. He turned the page of his medical book. "You give it to the Young Master."

Liu momo gritted her teeth. She secretly gave Lin Qingyu a dirty look, took the chicken soup and left.

Calm was restored in the study but Lin Qingyu grew a bit absent-minded instead.

Lu Wancheng is currently suffering from gastrointestinal damage. Having him ingest tonics would only be putting frost atop snow on his already weak body. Lu Wancheng

has been ill since he was a child and prolonged illness turns patients into doctors. How could Liang Shi, as his mother, not even know this?

Once or twice was fine but if done over the long term, Lu Wancheng's body would definitely become weaker and weaker.

Fine, he'll just consider it as him doing good works and accumulating merit. Lu Wancheng's situation was really rare, and he wanted more time to study it.

Lin Qingyu left the study and came to the dining room; but he didn't see Lu Wancheng. He asked a passing maidservant, "Where is the young master?"

Maidservant: "The young master said he was too lazy to get up and wanted to eat in bed."

It was only right for laid up patients to lie down more.

Lin Qingyu headed once again to the bedroom. Before he even entered the room, he was already saying, "The ginseng chicken soup your mother sent, don't..."

Sitting up in bed, Lu Wancheng was eating rice porridge with some side dishes. "Huh?"

There was a square table in front of Lu Wancheng's bed. Most of the things on the table were light dishes, except for that big pot of chicken soup with ginseng slices floating in