

E1 - Maomao

Source: [Crunchyroll](#)

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SIGN The Apothecary Diaries

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SIGN This story is a work of fiction. The names of all of the characters, organizations, and so on are imaginary. It also bears no connection to any specific real-life events.

[01:37] Luomen

Maomao.

[01:39] Maomao

Hmm?

[01:41] Luomen

Could you deliver some medicine to the Verdigris House?

[01:44] Maomao

Yeah, got it, Dad.

[01:48] Luomen

Be careful out there.
Kidnappings are on the rise.

[01:52] Maomao

I'll be fine. I'll stop by the herb plot on my way back.

[01:56] Luomen

Yes, please do.

[01:58] Maomao

I'm off!

SIGN Verdigris House

[02:22] Old Lady

Huh, is this all you've got?

[02:25] Customer

It's my life savings! I beg you!

[02:31] Old Lady

This is a non-starter.

[02:34] Customer

That must be Pairin, one of the famous Three Princesses of the Verdigris House!

[02:38] Old Lady

If you want to gawk, pay up!

[02:49] Maomao

Hmm, it's taking too long to heal.

[02:51] Maomao

I'll tweak the recipe some.

[02:52] Pairin

Oh, Maomao!

[02:55] Maomao

Hey, Pairin.

[02:56] Pairin

Hey, you have more wounds again!

[03:00] Maomao

It's just my usual drug experiments.

[03:03] Pairin

Are you eating well?

[03:05] Maomao

You seem to be very well nourished, as always.

[03:08] Old Lady

Maomao!

[03:09] Old Lady

You'd better not be setting off explosions again for your so-called experiments!

[03:16] Old Lady

Or, would you like to start a career as a courtesan?

[03:19] Maomao

Yikes!

[03:20] Maomao

Granny, I left your meds here!

[03:22] Old Lady

Say hi to your old man for me. Sheesh.

[03:25] Joka

Did I just hear Maomao's voice?

[03:27] Meimei

Hey, where's Maomao?

[03:29] Pairin

She took off.

[03:31] Maomao

That shrewd old bag, always trying to make me a courtesan...

[03:50] Maomao

Could it be? Kidnappers?!

[03:58] Maomao

Dad's gonna be really worried...

[04:18] Guen

The prince is born!

[04:20] Guen

Congratulations, Lady Lihua!

[04:30] Hongniang

The prince was born safely.

[04:33] Gyokuyou

I see. Wonderful.

SIGN Three months later

SIGN Episode 1: Maomao

[04:48] Maomao

I want meat skewers from a stall...

[04:52] Maomao

I wonder if Dad's eating properly.

[04:57] Maomao

*I'm not sure if I was sold off or ransomed,
but annoyingly, it's already been three months.*

[05:04] Maomao

The palace and the brothels are really similar.

[05:07] Maomao

If I had a choice, I'd have nothing to do
with the rear palace, ever. But...

[05:12] Maomao

Well, what can I do, now that I'm here?

[05:15] Maomao

I was living a pretty good life
as an apothecary, and now...

[05:21] Maomao

*The rear palace is a garden of women
who are to give birth to the emperor's children.*

[05:25] Maomao

No men are allowed to enter.

[05:28] Maomao

*The only people allowed in here
are the emperor, his kin,*

[05:33] Maomao

*and eunuchs, "formerly male" individuals
who lost an important part of their body.*

[05:39] Maomao

*It's a huge collective of two thousand
concubines and servants,*

[05:42] Maomao

and one thousand eunuchs.

[05:45] Maomao

*Unlike the high, mid,
and low-ranking concubines,*

[05:49] Maomao

*we serving girls are expendable
and can lose our lives at any moment.*

[05:56] Maomao

Next in line are the shut-in,

low-ranking concubines.

[05:58] Maomao

I guess, at the very least, I get paid.

[06:02] Xiaolan

Hey, Maomao...

[06:04] Xiaolan

Do you know which room this plate is for?

[06:07] Maomao

Oh. This one is Wisteria-9, so over there.

[06:11] Xiaolan

Thank you!

[06:14] Maomao

Many of the servants are illiterate.

[06:17] Maomao

In order to work in the rear palace,

[06:19] Maomao

*they're taught the bare minimum
essentials of etiquette.*

[06:22] Maomao

*But reading and writing
is a whole different story.*

[06:25] Maomao

*The raise I would get for being literate
would just get swiped by my kidnappers.*

[06:32] Maomao

*That said, even servants like us
could become low-ranking concubines.*

[06:36] Maomao

What's key is...

[06:39] Maomao

Looks.

[06:41] Maomao

Freckles.

[06:42] Maomao

Flat.

[06:44] Maomao

*Given my skin-and-bones look,
that's not applicable to me.*

[06:53] Maomao

*If I stood out, my life would be
at risk. I'm better off just laying low.*

[06:59] Maomao

*All I have to do is work hard.
I'll be out in two years.*

[07:04] Maomao

I need a drink.

[07:09] Xiaolan

Hey, did you hear?

[07:10] Maomao

Huh?

[07:11] Xiaolan

I heard there's a super beautiful eunuch in the central area.

[07:15] Xiaolan

Everyone's been talking about him!

[07:18] Maomao

I see.

[07:19] Xiaolan

I'd like to get a glimpse of him, if he's so handsome!

[07:23] Xiaolan

Am I right?

[07:25] Maomao

A eunuch, huh?

[07:55] Gaoshun

She has lost much weight.

[07:57] Jinshi

Yes.

[08:04] Gyokuyou

Xiaoling...

[08:06] Jinshi

I'm sorry, the physician is busy attending to the prince.

[08:13] Gyokuyou

I see...

[08:17] Servant A

They're only three months and six months old, right?

[08:19] Servant B

Yeah, both the prince and Princess Lingli...

[08:24] Xiaolan

Is it really a curse?!

[08:27] Maomao

What are you talking about?

[08:28] Xiaolan

You didn't hear, Maomao?

[08:30] Xialoan

The entire rear palace is buzzing about this rumor.

[08:34] Xiaolan

The deaths of all the heirs born in the rear palace!

[08:38] Xiaolan

All three of the emperor's children born so far grew weak and passed away!

[08:43] Xiaolan

Doesn't that seem weird?!

[08:45] Maomao

All three?

[08:46] Xiaolan

And it looks like the same thing's happening now.

[08:49] Maomao

You mean they're unwell?

[08:50] Xiaolan

Yes! And this time, the doctor went to visit both Lady Gyokuyou and Lady Lihua!

[08:58] Maomao

Huh...

[08:59] Xiaolan

The emperor doesn't have an empress consort, so that makes Lady Lihua,

[09:02] Xiaolan

who gave birth to the prince, the empress consort, right?!

[09:05] Maomao

Naturally, I guess.

[09:07] Maomao

Since there is no empress consort,

[09:10] Maomao

Concubine Lihua gave birth to the prince,

[09:11] Maomao

so she should be considered the top of the rear palace.

[09:14] Xiaolan

But then, rumor says the emperor favors Lady Gyokuyou.

[09:19] Xiaolan

They say that could be related to the curse, too.

[09:23] Maomao

A power struggle...

[09:26] Xiaolan

Lady Lihua might be worse off, since the doctor is always with her.

[09:32] Maomao

Lady Lihua herself is sick, too?

[09:34] Xiaolan

Yeah, mother and child both. Head and stomach aches.

[09:37] Xiaolan

Nausea too, I think.

[09:41] Maomao

Headache, stomachache, nausea...

[09:45] Xiaolan

It *has* to be a curse!

[09:49] Maomao

Curses are stupid.

[09:52] Xiaolan

Huh?

[09:58] Maomao

Headache, stomachache, nausea...

[10:01] Maomao

Poison is a possibility.

[10:03] Maomao

No, if it's over the position of imperial heir,

[10:05] Maomao

it doesn't make sense to go after the princess.

[10:07] Maomao

Deliberate poisoning is low on the list of possibilities.

[10:10] Maomao

Could an illness be more likely?

[10:14] Maomao

Perhaps something hereditary?

[10:18] Maomao

Why am I taking a rumor so seriously?

[10:22] Maomao

It's all just conjecture.

[10:26] Maomao

But still...

[10:29] Maomao

I guess I can take a quick peek.

[10:36] Maomao

Given this is where all the high-ranked concubines' pavilions are,

[10:39] Maomao

every building is exquisite,
right down to the individual pillars.

[10:47] Lihua

It's your fault!

[10:48] Yinghua

Lady Gyokuyou!

[10:50] Lihua

You're trying to curse my son,
because your child is a daughter!

[10:54] Gyokuyou

You know that's absurd!

[10:58] Gyokuyou

My Xiaoling is sick, too!

[11:01] Eunuch A

Lady Lihua is furious.

[11:04] Eunuch B

I feel sorry for Lady Gyokuyou.

[11:06] Gaoshun

Master Jinshi...

[11:10] Gyokuyou

That's why I'd like you to examine
my daughter's state, as well.

[11:14] Guen

Yes... Well... Um...

[11:16] Maomao

*Is that flustered eunuch
in the middle the physician?*

[11:20] Maomao

What a stupid quack.

[11:22] Maomao

*He seriously still hasn't noticed? After
spending all that time near the concubines?*

[11:27] Maomao

Or rather...

[11:28] Maomao

Maybe he really doesn't know?

[11:31] Maomao

*Death of the infants.
Headache, stomachache, nausea.*

[11:35] Maomao

*And most of all, how
Lady Lihua seems so worn out.*

[11:39] Maomao

As I thought, this is no curse.

[11:43] Maomao

The only issue is, how do I tell them?

[11:46] Maomao

If only I could find something to write with...

[12:31] Maomao

Barely a month passed before word got around

[12:34] Maomao

that the prince had passed away.

[12:41] Gyokuyou

It seems like you have a question for me.

[12:45] Jinshi

Is that...

[12:47] Gyokuyou

The day I visited the Crystal Pavilion
to ask to have my daughter examined,

[12:52] Gyokuyou

I found this on the windowsill,
tied to this branch.

[12:58] Jinshi

A rhododendron.

[13:00] Gyokuyou

"The white face powder is poison.
Don't let the baby touch it."

[13:05] Gyokuyou

It truly is a sin to be ignorant.

[13:08] Jinshi

The palace physician would not take
such a roundabout approach.

[13:12] Gyokuyou

Agreed. He never could seem
to figure out how to treat the prince.

[13:17] Jinshi

Who could have sent this message?

[13:20] Gyokuyou

I'd like you to find out.

[13:27] Jinshi

Coming to think of it, back then...

[13:30] (Flashback) Maomao

If only I could find something to write with...

[13:37] Jinshi

Understood.

[13:39] Jinshi

May I keep this for the time being?

[13:48] Xiaolan

I heard the emperor is visiting
Lady Gyokuyou a lot,

[13:51] Xiaolan

to show his love for
the surviving princess.

[13:54] Maomao

What about Lady Lihua?

[13:56] Xiaolan

Haven't heard anything about her.

[13:59] Maomao

How convenient.

[14:01] Eunuch C

Oh, there you are.

[14:04] Eunuch C

You are to report to the Matron
of the Serving Women immediately.

[14:08] Xiaolan

You're being summoned?

[14:10] Maomao

For what, I wonder?

[14:12] Eunuch C

All right, all of you who've
gathered here, head inside.

[14:17] Maomao

*Serving girls getting summoned by
the high officials can't be good news...*

[14:23] Maomao

Or do they just want more workers?

[14:36] Jinshi

Thank you all for coming.

[14:43] Maomao

Who is this arrogant-looking woman?

[14:49] Jinshi

I am Jinshi, manager of the rear palace.

[14:57] Maomao

That's a man?

[14:58] Maomao

*Ah, that must be the good-looking
eunuch that Xiaolan was talking about.*

[15:04] Maomao

*That's a waste. He's so handsome,
but he can't have children.*

SIGN You with the freckles, stay here

[15:12] Maomao

Huh? Freckles? Stay...?

[15:16] Maomao

Oh, no!

[15:20] Jinshi

We're done here. You may
all return to your rooms.

[15:23] Servant 1

Huh?

[15:24] Servant 2

What was that about?

[15:26] Maomao

Did I do something to get attention?!

[15:29] Maomao

Wait, did the message from the other day...

[15:32] Maomao

Ah!

[15:33] Maomao

I'm the only servant here who can read!

[15:36] Maomao

He wrote that just now to single me out!

[15:39] Maomao

Oh no, I have to get out!

[15:41] Jinshi

Come now, I just told you to stay.

[15:46] Jinshi

Just keep quiet and follow me.

[15:54] Maomao

It was a trap...

[15:56] Jinshi

This is odd. I looked you up.

It said you couldn't read.

[16:02] Maomao

I am of lowly birth. It must be a mistake.

[16:08] Maomao

I'll never admit it. Pretending to be ignorant makes everything easier in this world.

[16:13] Maomao

Besides, how did this man find out about the messages?

[16:17] Maomao

I made absolutely sure nobody was around...

[16:24] Maomao

He's so mistrustful!

[16:27] Maomao

Rather, he must have nothing better to do!

[16:30] Hongniang

Please.

[16:31] Jinshi

Excuse me.

[16:33] Maomao

What will I be punished for?

[16:35] Maomao

I hope I make it out of this alive.

[16:42] Jinshi

I brought her.

[16:44] Gyokuyou

Come in.

[16:51] Gyokuyou

Thank you for your trouble.

[16:57] Maomao

I'm so glad.

[17:00] Gyokuyou

So, it was you.

[17:02] Gyokuyou

Thank you for saving Lingli's life.

[17:06] Maomao

P-Please, I'm not worthy of such kindness!

[17:11] Gyokuyou

No, I can't ever thank you enough.

[17:15] Gyokuyou

You are my baby's savior.

[17:17] Maomao

Perhaps you have the wrong person?

[17:20] Maomao

There must be a misunderstanding.

[17:23] Maomao

I don't want to get beheaded for lying,

[17:25] Maomao

but I don't want to get involved, either!

[17:31] Jinshi

Concubine Gyokuyou showed me something.

SIGN The white face powder is poison. Don't let the baby touch it.

[17:37] Jinshi

Did you know this fabric is used
in the clothing for the serving girls?

[17:42] Maomao

It does look similar, I suppose...

[17:45] Jinshi

Yes, for those who work on clothing, I hear.

[17:48] Jinshi

Like a laundry worker, such as yourself.

[17:53] Jinshi

Did you rip apart a skirt, perhaps?

[17:59] Maomao

So, he figured out that much already...

[18:02] Jinshi

Now, you will explain why you put
that flower on the windowsill.

[18:18] Maomao

Because I figured out what was wrong that day.

[18:21] Maomao

That the cause was the makeup powder.

[18:24] Maomao

There were many courtesans

[18:26] Maomao

who used high-end powder
in the brothels that I grew up in.

[18:30] Maomao

Most of them were poisoned
by it and lost their lives.

[18:39] Maomao

They tried to trade life
for beauty and lost both.

[18:53] Maomao

I used to be an apothecary,
so I know a few things about poisons.

[19:07] Jinshi

That face powder...

[19:09] Gyokuyou

It was used by the baby's nurse.

[19:12] Gyokuyou

She said it has a better whitening effect compared to other powders.

[19:17] Gyokuyou

She seemed to have gotten ill too, so I gave her a break. I paid her properly, too.

[19:23] Jinshi

I see.

[19:25] Gyokuyou

It truly is a sin to be ignorant.

[19:27] Gyokuyou

I should have paid more attention to the things that go into my baby's mouth.

[19:32] Jinshi

I am guilty, as well.

[19:34] Jinshi

Had I noticed sooner, I might have been able to save more lives.

[19:39] Jinshi

The Prince, too...

[19:42] Gyokuyou

When I saw the message, I told Concubine Lihua about it, as well.

[19:51] Gyokuyou

But it seemed like everything I said only made her believe me less.

[19:56] Maomao

So...

[19:59] Maomao

What can I do for you?

[20:09] Gyokuyou

Well, starting today, you'll be my lady-in-waiting!

[20:14] Maomao

Huh?

[20:16] Narrator

There are some things Maomao cannot hold back.

[20:19] Narrator

Curiosity, a thirst for knowledge...

[20:22] Narrator

And just a smidgen of a sense of justice.

[20:30] Mao

No, no, no, no...

[20:34] Maomao

No, if I keep a low profile,
it shouldn't matter where I—

[20:34] Xiaolan

Hey, Maomao!

[20:36] Xiaolan

Welcome back, Maomao! How was it?

[20:39] Narrator

*And thus, Maomao became a
lady-in-waiting of Concubine Gyokuyou,*

[20:44] Narrator

recipient of the emperor's love.

[20:46] Narrator

Put simply, it was a big promotion.

[20:57] Soldier A

Hey!

[21:01] Soldier A

It's poison!

SIGN Next Time

[22:46] Narrator

Next time: "Chilly Apothecary."

SIGN Episode 2: Chilly Apothecary

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