

The Double 501

Chapter 501

Asher had raised his voice not to dismiss the company but merely to remind Mirabella of her standing. It wasn't intended as a harsh eviction, after all. The Reeves family had always placed a high value on proper etiquette.

He straightened up, dropping his arms from their folded position, and without another word, made his way towards the exit.

The butler, seeing this, wiped the sweat from his brow and turned his attention back to Mirabella, whispering, "Ms. Mirabella, Mr. Asher can be a bit blunt. He didn't mean any harm-please, don't take it to heart."

Mirabella stepped through the threshold with a slight arch of her brow, murmuring an acknowledgment.

Soon after, the butler led Mirabella into the grand living room. Beside Nikolai sat an unfamiliar middle-aged man-roughly in his thirties-with a rugged brow and a serious mien, exuding an unmistakable aura of authority.

Mirabella cast him a brief glance before turning her attention away.

"Ms. Mirabella, you've finally arrived," said Nikolai, his face lighting up with relief.

He stood up and turned to introduce her to the stern-faced man, "This is the medical prodigy I've told you about, Miss Mirabella Davis."

The man's piercing gaze landed on Mirabella, his expression stern as if he were sizing up a suspect. Yet, in the face of his scrutiny, Mirabella remained as serene as ever, not betraying a hint of intimidation. This surprised him, though his brows furrowed in doubt, and he turned back to Nikolai. "Are you certain she's... suitable?"

He had heard so much about this young friend from Nikolai that he had begun to harbor some hope. However, seeing her in person, he hadn't expected Nikolai's friend to be so youthful-barely seventeen or eighteen.

It wasn't that he meant to belittle her, but at such an age, and a young lady no less, how proficient could she be in medicine?

A tinge of disappointment crossed Johnny's eyes. Pressing a hand to his forehead, he didn't wait for Nikolai to respond before saying. "Didn't Dane say he was almost home? I think I'll wait for Dane to treat my husband."

Nikolai understood that Johnny's reluctance stemmed from seeing Mirabella as just a young girl. He had intentionally hinted at her youth earlier, hoping to prevent this exact situation, but it seemed his efforts were in vain.

Glancing at Mirabella, concerned she might just walk out, Nikolai cleared his throat and said to Johnny. "Trust me, Johnny, Mirabella's skills in medicine are beyond mine."

After a pause, Johnny replied, "Let's wait for Dane."

The prestige of being a mid-level apothecary from the Riverdale Pharmacists' Guild spoke volumes about Dane's capabilities. Johnny couldn't risk his employer's well-being on an unknown girl. It was too much of a gamble.

Nikolai approached Mirabella and whispered, "Ms. Mirabella, may We have a word in private?"

Unruffled by Johnny's barely m

concealed contempt, Mirabella calmly studied Nikolai's worried face and agreed, "Of course."

Stepping outside, Nikolai looked up at Mirabella, a trace of apology etching his features. "Ms. Mirabella, I'm terribly sorry about earlier..."

With a detached gaze, Mirabella interrupted, "No need for apologies; it's only human nature."

Hearing this, Nikolai felt even more ashamed. He let out a sigh before saying. "My patient is a special case, and his condition is quite peculiar. Even though my son Dane is a member of the Pharmacists' Guild and more skilled than Asher, I fear this illness might be beyond his expertise."

This was precisely why he had summoned Mirabella before Dane even reached home or assessed the patient himself.

It wasn't just because Dane's medical knowledge paled in comparison to Mirabella's, but also because of the patient's identity. Should anything go wrong, the Reeves family couldn't bear the responsibility.

Mirabella regarded Nikolai, her eyebrows arching slightly as she spoke, "My services don't come cheap."

At her words, Nikolai immediately understood that Mirabella wasn't dwelling on the past issue. He quickly replied, "Don't worry about the cost. They will certainly be able to afford it."

Mirabella nodded. Money talks.

After a moment of thought, Nikolai added, "Let me brief you on the patient's symptoms."

"Alright." Mirabella acknowledged.

Just then, Asher entered from outside, followed by Dane, Nikolai's eldest son.

Nikolai had just begun to describe the symptoms when he caught sight of Dane. His face broke into a smile. As his son approached, he introduced him to Mirabella, "This is Dane, my son."

Mirabella slowly lifted her head to look at Dane. He appeared to be in his forties, and despite the lack of expression on his face, a certain haughtiness was evident in his demeanor. Such men often carried an air of arrogance.

As Mirabella's gaze met his, Dane also looked her over. From the moment he stepped through the door, his brother had made a point of mentioning this young woman. Asher scoffed at his father's folly for treating a teenage girl like an honored guest and expecting her to tend to an important patient.

Dane withdrew his gaze and turned to his father, nodding slightly. "Dad, I'm back."

Nikolai nodded. "Yes, was the journey rough? By the way, this is Ms. Mirabella, another pharmacist."

After a curt 'hello' to Mirabella, Dane didn't bother with further pleasantries, nor did he take the mention of another pharmacist to heart. Glancing around the room with a serious expression, he stated, "Let's go inside and talk." With that, he strode forward, his bearing straight and commanding, exuding the presence of a man who runs his household.

Asher glanced at his father and Mirabella but remained silent, quickly following Dane.

Nikolai gestured for Mirabella to follow. Soon, Mirabella returned to the sitting room and took a seat in an armchair, her posture relaxed and unreserved.

Catching Nikolai's cue, the butler stood by her side, dutifully pouring coffee with impeccable manners.

In contrast, Johnny, upon seeing Dane, seemed invigorated as if spotting a savior, a stark difference from

his demeanor

"Dane, I truly appreciate you coming all this way Johnny said

Members of the Pharmacists Guild were held in high esteem, especially a mid-level pharmacist like Bane. Even someone of Johnny's stature in the political arena would defer to such expertise

Chapter 503

Dane's square-jawed face held a polite smile as he took a sip of his coffee, speaking calmly, "Johnny, you're too kind. I've been planning a trip back home myself soon."

Johnny chuckled, then asked, "How's Mr. Boyd been lately?"

Mr. Boyd-the president and chairman of the Pharmacists' Guild and the patriarch of the Boyd family, was one of the prominent clans in Riverdale.

"To be honest, he has been sequestered, deep in the study of ancient remedies. Otherwise, I would have definitely discussed Mr. Owen's condition with him before coming back," Dane said with a tinge of regret.

Mirabella's eyebrows raised at the mention of ancient remedies. Mr. Boyd?

Johnny felt a pang of disappointment, but he knew that even if Mr. Boyd wasn't in seclusion, it was unlikely they could persuade such a distinguished figure to intervene. After all, Mr. Boyd was known for his passion for ancient remedies, and his medical skills might not necessarily surpass those of Nikolai. That was precisely why he had brought the gentleman to seek Nikolai's help.

Collecting his thoughts, Johnny said, "No worries. I trust that you will find a way to treat our gentleman."

Dane wasn't one to let flattery go to his head. After a brief silence, he replied. The gentleman's symptoms are quite unusual. All I can say is that I'll do my best." He had been informed of the illness the day before. Although he hadn't sought advice from the chairman, he had consulted other senior pharmacists within the guild, most of whom had never encountered such symptoms and couldn't determine the exact nature of the illness. Deep down, Dane wasn't confident, but since the Reeves family had been approached for help, they certainly couldn't turn them away.

Johnny noticed the fleeting hesitance on Dane's face and felt a heaviness in his heart, but he quickly stood up and said, "Then, without further delay, let's have Mr. Dane take a look at Mr. Owen."

"Alright," Dane agreed, eager to assess the situation.

Mr. Owen was resting in the guest room, and soon, Dane and Johnny left the main hall, one after the other. Mirabella remained in her chair, her slender fingers tapping the armrest, still pondering Dane's mention of Mr. Boyd.

As Nikolai reached the doorway, he realized Mirabella hadn't followed and turned back to her, "Mirabella?" Mirabella snapped back to reality, looked up at Nikolai, and shook her head before standing up.

"Let's go and have a look together," Nikolai suggested.

With a soft hum, Mirabella followed a few steps behind Nikolai before casually asking, "Nikolai, what's Mr. Boyd's full name? The man you mentioned earlier?"

Nikolai was surprised at the sudden interest in Mr. Boyd, and after a moment's thought, he said, "I can't quite remember. I'll ask Dane later."

"No need to trouble yourself," Mirabella waved it off, dismissing the importance of the individual.

Nikolai made a mental note not to forget to inquire later, and continued walking.

Asher, walking ahead, overheard their conversation and glanced back at Mirabella, wondering if she was

being too presumptuous. Was the Pharmacists' Guild a place where anyone could get involved? How? involved? could she brazenly ask about the guild's president in front of his father as if knowing Mr. Boyd's name meant they were acquainted?

Shaking his head in irritation, Asher decided not to comment on them less-than-stellar acting. It seemed his father was the only one who didn't see a problem.

Chapter 504

The group made their way into the quest room.

Johnny strode over to the bed where a man, still immersed in work, sat propped up against the pillows. With respectful concern in his voice, Johnny said, "Sir, you really need to take it easy"

While speaking, Johnny tidied up the files that were spread over the man's legs, placing them neatly, face down, on the nightstand. Owen leaned against the headboard, his cheeks gaunt and his complexion pallid. His whole frame was skeletal. His face, shoulders, neck, and hands resting atop the comforter were alarmingly thin.

Bringing up the rear, Mirabella couldn't help but startle slightly at the sight of Owen's emaciated form. He couldn't have been more than in his thirties, but he bore the withered look of a man in his twilight years.

On the way here, Nikolai had briefed her about the man's peculiar condition. An inexplicable wasting away, with no detectable medical reason—it was as if his vitality had been abruptly drained, propelling him into a state of exhaustion. Well, Owen's current state seemed scarcely different from outright depletion.

Owen sensed a scrutinizing gaze and looked up. By then, Mirabella had averted her eyes. He glanced at her briefly before addressing Johnny, who was still fussing with the paperwork. "It's fine. I'll get through as much as I can while I still have the energy."

Johnny mustered a smile, plucked the pen from Owen's fingers, and insisted, "Your health is what's important. Everything else can wait."

He paused and then gestured toward Dane, who had approached the bedside. "Mr. Dane is back. There's hope for your illness now."

Despite his frailty, Owen exuded the commanding presence of a man accustomed to authority. His gaze settled on Dane, and with a polite but weary motion of his dry lips, he murmured, "I appreciate this."

Dane was well aware of Owen's stature as the top executive of Ashford, a man beyond the reach of ordinary citizens, soon to be a significant figure in Riverdale. Even a member of the Pharmacists' Guild like Dane had to show deference.

With a subtle nod, Dane replied simply, "No trouble at all."

He then pulled a chair close to the bed, sat down, and said, "Let me take your pulse first."

Owen extended his arm. As Dane's fingers rested on Owen's wrist, his expression, initially composed, grew increasingly grave with each passing second. By the end, his brows were knitted tightly together.

Johnny, watching Dane intently, felt a sinking feeling in his gut. Nikolai had worn the same troubled look. when he examined Owen the previous night.

After a long five minutes, Dane finally withdrew his hand. Johnny immediately asked, "What's the verdict? Can you help him?"

Asher stood by, his face taut with concern, equally eager for any insight Dane might offer.

Dane addressed Owen, "Mr. Owen, when did you start to lose weight like this?"

"A week ago," Owen replied slowly.

"He has been shedding nearly twenty pounds a day," Johnny interjected. "We've had thorough hospital back tests done, but they all came normal. No issues at all)

After a moment's thought, Johnny pulled out a medical report and handed it to Dane. "Take a look."

The report was extensive, spanning over a dozen pages, with every every m conceivable part of the body. scrutinized. And at the bottom of each page, the conclusion was the same word: normal.

Chapter 505

Dane took a few minutes to pore over the diagnostic report. Its conclusion mirrored his own initial assessment. Owen's health condition couldn't be more normal.

But that was precisely where the bizarre nature of the situation lay. A healthy individual shouldn't wither away to a skeletal shadow of their former self in just a week's time. Even with illness, there would be signs, causes, not this baffling clean bill of health.

Normality in this case was the most abnormal sign of all.

Dane had been holed up in the Pharmacists' Guild for quite some time. His nose was buried in medical tomes, yet this condition was something he had neither heard of nor seen before.

"Mr. Dane?" Johnny looked at him imploringly, repeating his query.

Handing back the diagnostic sheet to Johnny, Dane replied with a hint of apologetic frustration, "I'm at a loss, Johnny. I can't pinpoint the problem just yet."

At Dane's words, Johnny staggered back a step. The hope he had harbored in Dane now turned into profound disappointment. If even Dane was stumped... was Owen simply to wither away? He was so young, on the cusp of a promising reassignment, but now struck down by this mysterious affliction.

"Mr. Dane, please, you must find a way to save Mr. Owen," Johnny pleaded. His voice was heavy with concern.

Dane sat pensively for a moment, then turned to Asher. "Asher, rummage through my luggage for a bottle with a blue pattern. Bring it here once you find it."

Asher nodded dutifully. "On it." He briskly exited the room.

As he watched Asher disappear through the door, Dane's gaze briefly swept over Mirabella then swiftly moved away.

Turning his attention back to Owen, Dane suggested, "I might need to draw a small blood sample from your fingertip."

It was improbable for someone to transform so drastically without a trace of forewarning. If all the organ function indicators were normal, it was time to consider the possibility of poisoning.

Had Dane not been a part of the Pharmacists' Guild, he might not have considered poisoning as a cause. But his experiences with the Guild's master toxin crafters had completely overturned his understanding of what was possible. Those once thought fictional poisons were very real, simply beyond the reach of ordinary folk.

Despite a slight furrow of his brow, Owen nodded, "Alright."

Just then, Asher returned. "Dane, is this the one?" He handed the porcelain bottle to Dane, who confirmed with a nod.

Johnny, catching a glimpse of the bottle in Dane's hands, quickly inquired, "Is this one of the Pharmacists'

Guild's miracle cures?"

Dane retrieved a pill from the bottle and explained, "Yes, this is one of our Guild's Class B medications."

The Pharmacists' Guild had a grading system for their concoctions A, B, C, and D, with A being the highest quality and D the most common.

Johnny had heard of the Guild's exclusive remedies. Hearing that Dane was offering a Class B potion, was sparked excitement in him. "Does this mean Mr. Owen could recover, at least temporarily, if he takest

this?"

Laypeople were lucky to come by Class D. The rarity and value of a Class B potion were evident.

Respect filled Johnny's gaze towards Dane. He realized the weight of om Dane's status within the Pharmacists'

Guild If Owen's allment could be cured, he resolved to advise Owen to forge a stronger

bond with Dane

Just as Dane was about to respond to Johnny's eager question, Nikolai, who had been silent until now, approached.

Chapter 506

Nikolai glanced at the pill in his eldest son's hand. His expression was muted, which was a stark contrast to Johnny's animated reaction upon hearing it was a Class B remedy.

"What's this you've got?" Nikolai inquired.

"It's an antidote pill, can cure all sorts of poisons." Dane replied. His face was lighting up with pride. "It's a new concoction I developed with my mentor. It's been rated Class B, so my mentor says I've got a shot at making Senior Pharmacist this year."

Nikolai's face remained stoic, barely showing a ripple of emotion. He simply patted Dane on the shoulder and said in an even tone. "Well, give it your all." "Dane's gunning for Senior Pharmacist already?" Asher blurted out from the side. The leap from a mid-level to a senior pharmacist wasn't

minor. Some folks might spend a lifetime stuck between junior and mid-level, as the title of a senior pharmacist truly tested one's innate talent and skill in concoction. Asher couldn't believe that Dane was on the brink of earning his senior title in his forties. This would surely elevate the Reeves family's stature in Ashford even further.

Johnny, overhearing the conversation, was taken aback. He thought Dane's Class B antidote was impressive enough, but now a jump to senior pharmacist? The Reeves family was on the rise.

He glanced at Owen, hoping to nudge him to offer Dane some praise, but noticed Owen's indifference. Johnny remembered that Owen only had a keen interest in politics and not much else. Johnny cleared his throat and took it upon himself to compliment Dane. Vanity is a common trait, and Dane was no exception. Though his face showed modesty, his eyes betrayed a hint of pride.

Nikolai observed his son, expecting to feel elated, but strangely felt nothing, which resulted in his unusually calm demeanor. He stroked his beard and turned to Mirabella, the top-tier pharmacist in the room. With her presence, the achievement of becoming a senior pharmacist didn't seem too extraordinary, did it?

Dane was about to hand the pill to Owen when Nikolai quickly placed a hand on his, causing Dane to look at his father in confusion. "Dad, what's the matter?"

"You think Mr. Owen is showing signs of poisoning?" Nikolai cut to the chase.

Dane nodded, "Yes, I can't rule out the possibility." That was why he had Asher fetch his painstakingly crafted antidote pill. If it hadn't been for Owen's special status, he wouldn't have parted with it so readily.

"It's not poisoning" Nikolai said, stroking his beard. "I considered that this morning and had a blood test done, along with a medicinal scan. There are no toxins."

Dane's face showed surprise. "You've tested already?"

"Yes, there's no mistake, Nikolai stated with authority. He might not be part of the Pharmacists' Guild, but the Reeves family had been in the alternative medicine game for centuries.

Dane fell silent, pondering. If it wasn't poisoning, could it be some new, rare Lit be. disease?

"So, your antidote pill is probably useless in this case Without a clear diagnosis, any medication could

s case Without Aclear

Chapter 507

As Asher finished speaking. Nikolai's expression shifted noticeably. First, he glanced at Owen and Johnny, then turned his attention back to his younger son. His eyes were clearly tinged with disappointment. "Have all those years of medical training been for nothing?"

Asher furrowed his brow, catching the implication. Quickly, he retorted, "Dane mentioned before that sophisticated poisons can't be detected by standard tests. Besides, Dane's antidote is a Class B, we can't know its effectiveness without trying it out."

chance brief pause, Asher added, "Instead of waiting cluelessly, why not give the patient a fighting

"You think you're making sense?" Nikolai trembled with anger. If everyone held that attitude, what was the point of having a doctor?

Asher pursed his lips, ready to argue, but a stern look from Dane silenced him. Dane hadn't expected his brother to be so thoughtless. Though Asher's latter statements held merit, the essence of practicing. medicine was responsibility, and one slip could spell disaster.

Resigning to the moment, Dane placed the detox pill he had taken out back into the bottle. He turned to Johnny and Owen. 7 apologize for the spectacle. My father is right; we can't administer any medication with an unknown diagnosis." "You are too polite, Mr. Dane. Mr. Asher spoke out of concern for our master's health," Johnny said, noticing the pill being put away, feeling a tinge of regret. He knew better than to take medicine recklessly. But now, even grasping at straws seemed worth the attempt.

"Let's do another blood test then," Dane decided after some thought.

"That sounds reasonable," Johnny agreed, although not fully understanding the sudden connection to poisoning. He didn't ask further, instead, he looked at Owen and reassured, "Don't worry, sir. We will find a way."

Owen remained stoically calm as if he had already accepted any outcome. His voice was low, "No need. Johnny, go prepare the car."

Johnny's eyes widened. "How can you give up?"

Owen lifted his hand. His gaze fell on the withered back of it. The shriveled skin looked grotesque. His fingers tensed for a moment, and then he spoke, "Things are as they are. No use in clinging."

"But... Johnny started, but sensing Owen's familiar resolve, he knew the decision was made. Finally, he sighed, "... I'll go ready the car."

As Johnny passed Nikolai, Nikolai called out to him, "Wait a moment. Is it my friend's turn now?"

From the moment he entered the room, Nikolai had been waiting for Dane's diagnosis, because Johnny insisted on his medical attention. To avoid offending Mirabella, he had been patient until now.

Johnny, upon hearing Nikolai's request, paused for a second, and then as if remembering something crucial, he lifted his gaze to the young girl next to Nikolai, whose presence he had deliberately ignored

until now.

Even Dane hadn't figured it out, could this young girl do any better?

Chapter 508

Johnny glanced back at Owen. There was no other choice, anyway. With a casual wave, he said, "Have at it, then, hardly daring to hope for anything remarkable."

After saying that, he left the room, convinced that looking for miracles in a young girl was a fool's errand. It was better to follow orders and go prepare the car.

Asher, standing nearby, muttered under his breath, "Dad, c'mon, at least try to save our family some dignity."

The Reeves family had staked their reputation on this girl, and if she failed to diagnose, it would be yet another embarrassment. Asher was visibly opposed to his father's actions.

Nikolai wouldn't even dignify Asher with a glance. Instead, he turned to Mirabella and said, "Ms. Mirabella, it's your turn to take a look."

Before Mirabella could respond, Asher scoffed, this time to Dane, "Dane, you think Dad's gone off the deep end?"

Nikolai shivered with indignation.

Dane coughed awkwardly and massaged his temples. "Asher, that's no way to talk. There's no harm in giving it a shot." His words were diplomatic, but laced with clear skepticism, albeit more tactfully phrased than Asher's blunt outbursts.

Asher rolled his eyes, not wanting to stick around for more humiliation. With a hastily made excuse, he left the room.

Dane sighed softly, letting him go, and then focused his attention on Mirabella. He gestured politely, stepping back to give her space.

"Mirabella, don't feel pressured. Just do what you normally do." Nikolai had absolute faith in Mirabella's expertise, but Owen's condition was bizarre, practically unheard of, which was why he offered those reassuring words.

Mirabella nodded slightly at Nikolai, took a few steps forward, and stood by the bedside. Instead of immediately checking Owen's pulse, she asked, "Your family has seen this illness before, haven't they?" Her tone was inquisitive, but her demeanor suggested certainty.

Owen, looking into the young girl's piercing eyes that betrayed a wisdom beyond her years, found it difficult to regard her as just a teenager.

After a moment's thought, he replied, "Not that I'm aware of."

Mirabella responded calmly, "Well, it's a hereditary illness. Someone in your lineage must have had it."

She paused, sitting down on a chair by the bed, and continued, "If I'm not mistaken, you've had intermittent headaches recently, even mild diarrhea. You often have nightmares, waking up in a cold sweat, right?"

Owen was initially taken aback, but after a few seconds, his pale face registered shock. "You're right," he admitted.

Dane, who had been texting colleagues from the Pharmacists' Guild on Messenger stopped M mid tap his prepared message unsent. He lifted his head, watched Owen in shock, and finally shifted his gaze to

Chapter 509

Mirabella didn't even glance at Dane's expression as she reached out, Her fingertips rested on Owen's wrist, feeling for his pulse. After half a minute, she drew her hand back and gave a small nod. "Although it's a bit late, there's still hope for recovery."

After saying this, she stood up and turned to Nikolai, who looked shocked as if he had be stone. "Mind fetching some paper and a pen? I need to write down a prescription"

Owen, still in bed, was just as stunned.

turned to In Nikolai's ears, the words "there's still hope" echoed repeatedly, leaving him unresponsive to the present moment.

"Nikolai?" Mirabella raised an eyebrow and called out again.

Nikolai's gaze flickered, and he snapped back to reality. His eyes, filled with a mix of excitement and disbelief, seemed to beg for reassurance. "You mean to say that Mr. Owen can be treated, right?"

Both Owen and Dane instinctively turned their gazes to Mirabella. Owen's eyes were clouded with complexity. He was hesitant to harbor too much hope, while Dane was curious about the exact nature of Owen's illness.

After a moment's thought, Mirabella replied, "You could say that it's treatable."

Nikolai blinked, puzzled. What did she mean by that?

"Wasting Syndrome is genetic. Such inherent conditions, with today's medical technology, are not something you can completely cure..." Mirabella started to explain but then quickly clarified, "However, I can ensure it won't recur, which shouldn't be too difficult."

"Wasting Syndrome? What's that? I've never heard of it before," Dane interjected before Nikolai could speak. His impatience was palpable. His brows furrowed together, and his face showed a hint of skepticism as if to say, "Are you making this up?"

Mirabella shot him a glance and said flatly, "You haven't heard of it, but it doesn't mean it doesn't exist."

Dane, taken aback by the young woman's retort, was about to press further but suddenly burst into laughter, "Are you looking down on our Pharmacists' Guild?" After a few seconds, he scoffed sarcastically and shook his head. Why was he even bringing up the Pharmacists' Guild? The girl probably didn't even understand what the guild was.

"Alright, Dane, let's save it for later," Nikolai, knowing Dane was rather blunt, quickly interceded.

At that moment, the butler who had been waiting in the room and had gone to fetch writing materials when he heard the request, walked in with paper and pen, breaking the tense atmosphere. "Ms. Mirabella, here you are."

Mirabella's eyelids lifted slightly. She was impressed with the butler's initiative. She nodded politely, took the paper and pen, and walked over to a side table to begin writing the prescription.

In no time at all, she handed the completed list to Nikolai. "Take the first concoction for three days, and once his bodily functions stabilize, he can start on the second batch of medicine. In about half a month, he should be on the mend."

Nikolai scanned the list quickly and noted that neither prescription contained any rare or exotic herbs, but

rather simple tonics for regulating the body. He couldn't hide his surprise.

"Just these tonics will do?" Nikolai asked, bewildered.

functions a capia Mirabella nodded affirmatively. "Correct. Wasting Syndrome primarily involves a rapid decline in bodily functions. Tonic to regulate the body and nourish the spirit is the right approach."

Nikolai stroked his beard thoughtfully and murmured, "Mirabella, are you sure we don't need to concoct something more... complex?"

The thing was, not only had this illness baffled the entire Reeves family, but even hospital equipment had failed to detect it. It just seemed too simple to him that some boiled tonics could do the trick.