

A PRINCE'S ENDLESS INDULGENCE

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Chapter 38: Chapter 0038, Design

The courtyard was immaculately clean, ornately adorned with orchids dug out from the mountains and planted in clay pots, creating a unique style.

Yun Jinnian had her own room, featuring a large kang bed adorned with a quilt and pillows covered in blue cotton fabric.

The washbasin stand was placed by the window next to the kang.

In the center of the room was a square table, surrounded by four round stools.

To the left, there was a small room, presumably for storing clothes and the like.

Mrs. Yuan, Ming Yang, and Ru Yue's rooms were in the small courtyard to the left upon entering, also furnished with a large kang and three wardrobes lined up side by side. The kitchen was to the left and right, complete with a large water jar filled to the brim and a stove with dry firewood stacked behind it.

The room was warm and cozy, thanks to the heat still radiating from the kang.

Upon entering the room, the chill was significantly dispelled.

"Fourth Miss, from now on, you will live here. If you need anything at all, please don't hesitate to tell me!"

"Thank you, Abbess, it's quite nice!"

"You should rest for now. The vegetarian meals will be delivered soon. There is hot water in the kitchen's pot if you would like to wash up first," said Abbess Hui Ling before leaving.

Yun Jinnian exhaled deeply a few times and sat on the kang.

Mrs. Yuan, Ming Yang, and Ru Yue had brought their things into the room.

Seeing Yun Jinnian sitting on the kang lost in thought, Ming Yang softly called out, "Miss, let me fetch some water for you to freshen up!"

Yun Jinnian came back to her senses, "Alright!"

After freshening up, the vegetarian dishes were served: pickled vegetables, green vegetables, egg soup, and a large bowl of rice.

Though the variety was limited, the portions were sufficient.

"You all sit down and eat as well. Here in the convent, there are not as many rules as in the Yun Family," Yun Jinnian said, and she began to eat from her bowl in small bites.

She didn't have much of an appetite originally, but whether she was hungry or her taste had changed, Yun Jinnian ended up eating more than she would at the Yun Family.

After dinner, Yun Jinnian walked around the courtyard. Ming Yang taught Yun Jinnian how to read, Mrs. Yuan was sewing clothes for Yun Jinnian, and Ru Yue was sitting nearby, grinding something while attentively watching and seriously learning the characters.

"It's getting late; you should all go to sleep early. There will be more to do tomorrow!"

The next day

Yun Jinnian donated an additional one thousand taels of silver as offering money. Except for the consistently calm and compassionate Abbess Hui Ling, the other nuns' looks toward Yun Jinnian changed.

One thousand taels of silver was enough to keep the convent well-fed and carefree for several years.

The vegetables were grown by themselves, and they raised their own chickens and ducks. Firewood could be collected from the mountain, and medicinal herbs could be dug up there as well, but grains and fabrics needed to be purchased.

Yingci'an was austere, and only Abbess Hui Ling went out to beg for alms. The others who came to the convent had never left it.

On the third day, Yun Jinnian began participating in the morning rituals.

Kneeling in front of the bodhisattva, Yun Jinnian listened intently and devoted three days to memorize the Heart Sutra.

Yun Jinnian had been waiting for Chu Yu to come and find her, and this waiting continued until the third day of the second month.

The Yun Family

With Yun Jinnian's departure, the Yun Family suddenly became a bustling place. The new tutor for the private school was very gentle and endeared herself well to Xu Xinmo and the others.

However, there were problems at several of the Yun Family's shops.

It began with the discovery of counterfeit medicine at one of their drugstores. The locals caused an uproar questioning its authenticity. The shopkeeper denied it vehemently, but after someone reported it to the authorities, the Jingzhao Prefecture officials investigated and found that thirty percent of the inventory was fake. The shopkeeper was thrown into jail, implicating Yun Chen as well.

Even though it was later proven that the counterfeit medicine came from the supplier and Yun Chen was unaware, it brought into question how much fake medicine had been sold over the years.

The reputation and business of the drugstore plummeted.

And that wasn't the end of it.

A jewelry shop and an antiques shop owned by the Yun Family were both robbed. In just one night, their merchandise was stolen clean, not a single item left behind.

The losses were catastrophic.

Many customers who had paid deposits or full payments flocked to the doors.

Among them was the Prince Rui Residence, which had purchased a White Jade Guanyin Statue for fifteen thousand taels of silver. According to the agreement, delivery was due by the fifth day of the second month at the latest; otherwise, the compensation would be fivefold. Fivefold—that would amount to seven hundred and fifty thousand taels of silver...

Chapter 39: Chapter 0039, Unsmooth

Yun Chen was at his wit's end over this matter.

After several visits to the Prince Rui Residence, he had yet to see Chu Yu; instead, it was the butler, Eunuch Chen, who met with him.

Eunuch Chen kept urging Yun Chen, "Lord Yun need not worry, my lord has said that as long as you deliver the White Jade Guanyin on the fifth of the second month, all will be well!"

The others only wanted the White Jade Guanyin, not silver.

But if you can't produce the White Jade Guanyin, then you can only pay with silver.

Eunuch Chen had served the late emperor and had been deeply valued by him. After the emperor's death, Chu Yu was granted Eunuch Chen as his butler. Eunuch Chen had perfected the art of being insidious and smiling with a knife hidden behind his back.

Although Eunuch Chen couldn't guess why his master wanted to deal with the Yun Family, since his master intended to do so, he, as a servant, would surely add fuel to the fire.

"Eunuch Chen..." Yun Chen called out softly.

But Eunuch Chen chuckled and said, "Lord Yun, there are many trivial matters in the Wang Residence. I shall not keep you company any longer. Some other day when I am free, I will invite you for tea. Please take your leave at your leisure, Lord Yun!"

Yun Chen had no choice but to leave the Prince Rui Residence.

On the way back, his carriage was startled and nearly overturned.

Upon enquiry, he found out that his carriage had hit someone, a beautiful young lady dressed in pink, but the servant by her side immediately whipped over, wrapping the whip around the coachman's neck and flinging him to the ground so violently that he died instantly.

In broad daylight, who would dare such reckless boldness...

Yun Chen was dumbfounded.

The beautiful young lady stood up slowly with the help of her servant; her sword-like eyebrows were exceptionally imposing, and her stunning eyes showed an unmistakable air of dominance and anger.

She, she, she...

If the Prince of Great Chu Country were a tyrant king, then his twin sister born of the same mother, Princess Jinfeng was truly a female tyrant.

She had the Hidden Guard, fiefs, and armies, all bestowed by the late emperor.

If she's not a female tyrant, what is she?

Yun Chen immediately dismounted from the carriage and knelt before Princess Jinfeng, Chu Xiangzhao, "This humble official pays his respects to Your Highness the Princess!"

"Hmph, a court official, what, do you have a complaint against this princess for killing your servant?"

"This official dares not!"

"Since you dare not, it means you know you were wrong. Then kneel here. After two hours, you may rise, and we shall consider the matter concluded!" Princess Jinfeng declared and then boarded the Fengluan Vermilion Carriage on the side and left.

Yun Chen had no choice but to kneel.

A female tyrant who dared to attend court against the Imperial Physician's advice and smashed the Dragon Throne in Jinluan Hall, reason speaks no logic to her.

Even the reigning emperor had to give her some deference, for she held a blank Imperial Decree, a Death Exemption Token, and the Shangfang Sword, which had the authority to strike down an inept monarch or decapitate a traitorous minister.

The late emperor had given her a boy's name, which clearly showed how much he had doted on her.

The news of Yun Chen being punished to kneel in the street by Princess Jinfeng for two hours spread like wildfire throughout the Capital City and by the time it reached the Yun Residence, the old madam fainted on the spot, and Mrs. He was no less frightened.

Since Yun Jinnian had left the residence, they thought the clouds had dissipated, but instead one thing after another occurred, each more grave and horrifying than the last.

"Why is this happening?" Mrs. He murmured, leaning weakly against the chair.

After some pinching of the philtrum and calling out, the old madam finally came to but was still pale as a ghost, utterly dazed.

She sat there listlessly in the hall, waiting for the return of a dejected Yun Chen.

"Chenchen!" the old madam exclaimed.

Yun Chen looked at the old madam, then at Mrs. He, and then at his worried daughters and concubines, "I'm tired, I need to rest a while!"

Kneeling on the street, losing face, yet unable to voice a single complaint.

Such is the power of the throne.

Lying in bed, Yun Chen carefully reflected on when the Yun Family began to experience misfortune.

It seemed to have started from the day Yun Jinnian left the Yun Family...

Chapter 40: Chapter 0040, Dispute

On the day Yun Jinnian left, a maid died mysteriously in his house. She died without any visible wounds, poisoning, or internal injuries; she simply perished.

When the butler mentioned it to him, he just said to bury her generously and send some silver to her family. Then, the matter was dropped.

Soon after, the medicine shop ran into trouble, and the jewelry shop and antique shop were successively robbed, facing significant compensation. Today, he had a collision with Princess Jinfeng on the street.

Could it be...

Could it be?

Yun Chen rubbed his temples, then called for the butler, "Did anyone go to see off Jinnian when she left that day?"

The butler's face turned pale, "Master, on that day, the Fourth Miss left alone. No one saw her off, just a carriage covered in green cloth!"

Yun Chen closed his eyes for a long while before asking, "Did she leave through the main entrance or the back door?"

"The main entrance!"

"Did any of the sisters see her out?" Yun Chen's heart filled with increasing dread as he continued his questioning.

"Master, besides the Second Miss who gave the Fourth Miss a purse, nobody came to see her off!"

Yun Chen raised his hand to cover his eyes and after a while asked, "Who do you think is targeting the Yun Family in all this?"

"This... "

The butler fell silent.

The Second Lady hadn't set foot in the Capital City for many years. Back at the Han Residence, her family home, only a few servants were taking care of the mansion, and Old Master Han hadn't returned for many years.

"Go, prepare the carriage, I must go and find Second Master!"

At this moment, Yun Chen could only hope Yun Qi would return to help the Yun Family, otherwise, they might truly be done for...

Yun Qi's residence in the Capital City, with five courtyards, was quite desolate, home to just him, served by two hundred servants, three butlers, and ten stewards.

He lived alone and didn't invite Aunt Su or Aunt Hua to stay with him, nor did he care for the several children.

Whether the Yun Family provided for him or not, it made no difference to him.

When Yun Chen found Yun Qi, he was playing with a mynah in a cage.

His entire demeanor was indifferent and aloof, his handsome face cold and detached. He glanced back at him and continued to play with the mynah.

"Second brother!" Yun Chen called out softly and sat down opposite Yun Qi.

The servants immediately served tea.

Yun Chen had no interest in tea.

"Try it, it's the new tea of this year, quite rare!" Yun Qi said casually.

He continued to entertain the mynah.

A bitter taste filled Yun Chen's heart.

The Yun Family was being so severely manipulated, and yet here he was, leisurely playing with a bird.

Squandering heaps of silver on new tea.

It was only the beginning of February, and the new tea was as precious as gold. How could he stomach it?

"The Yun Family has run into quite a few problems recently, and you're just looking on?" Yun Chen challenged.

Yun Qi raised his eyebrows indifferently, "What does that have to do with me?"

"You are part of the Yun Family; there's a share for you in it!" Yun Chen shouted angrily, smashing the teacup.

"That share of the Yun Family's, I never wanted it!" Yun Qi remained detached, witnessing Yun Chen's face turn white with anger, he coldly chuckled, "If you want me to help the Yun Family through this crisis, fine, but tell me what exactly happened back then?"

Yun Chen staggered backwards a few steps, "You're still not giving up!"

"Give up, why should I give up?" Yun Qi suddenly flipped the table, "Back then, I told you not to come in, not to come in, but all of you rushed into the room so eagerly, resulting in today's irreparable situation. Aunt Shu moved to the cottage, Third Brother went far away, Aunt Shu wants a separation, wants to take Jinnian away, it was you who said that if Jinnian left the Yun Family, she would lose her illustrious status and wouldn't find a good marriage. You promised you would treat Jinnian as your own daughter, not allowing her to suffer the slightest grievance. But what did you actually do?"

Yun Qi's intense interrogation.

Yun Chen found himself at a loss for words...