

Genius 230

Chapter 230: Grandmaster Guidance, Intermediate Acupuncture!_1

Cai Pingyuan didn't disturb Qin Fang and Ma Yunzhi. He acted as if he hadn't seen anything and hummed a tune from Peking opera as he returned to drink tea.

When Elder Ma returned, Qin Fang noticed immediately. Upon entering the courtyard, the two exchanged glances. Elder Ma nodded at Qin Fang without approaching and went straight to Cai Pingyuan.

Qin Fang had intended to look for Cai Pingyuan, but his unscrupulous master just waved his hand, signaling Qin Fang to carry on with whatever he was doing. Thus, Qin Fang had no choice but to continue learning acupuncture skills from Ma Yunzhi.

Elder Ma, named Ma Pingzhang, was somewhat older than Cai Pingyuan and was already over eighty years of age. Yet, he did not look like an octogenarian at all, appearing as hale and hearty as Cai Pingyuan.

"Brother Cai, I really must congratulate you," said Elder Ma with a chuckle. "You've taken on such a fine disciple. You must be feeling much relieved now, eh?"

Elder Ma was joking with Cai Pingyuan, presumably because Uncle Ya had told him something when he just got back, prompting him to speak in such a manner now.

"You're not too bad yourself, old man. I can see that Yunzhi is quite gifted. She has already attained fifty percent of your proficiency in acupuncture techniques..."

Cai Pingyuan replied in a jesting tone, agreeing wholeheartedly with Elder Ma's compliments about Qin Fang, which indeed took a weight off his mind.

"Ah, Yunzhi, that girl..."

When it came to Ma Yunzhi, Elder Ma's face clouded with gloom. "Yunzhi is indeed very gifted, but after all, she's a girl. Even if she were to inherit my mantle, she would struggle to lead the family!"

Every family has its own problematic scriptures, especially a household like the Ma Family with a heritage spanning hundreds of years. Although the preference for males over females has been waning over time, it is still an unavoidable issue within such ancient families.

Though many distinguished physicians emerged from the Ma Family, most of them lead with Western medicine. A majority have learned some traditional Chinese medical therapies, but often this is just to supplement Western medicine.

Elder Ma was very supportive of such medical methods and had always encouraged them.

However, during these last two or three decades, many in the Ma Family had changed their views, with some younger members even believing that family medical skills were inferior to Western methods. This was the most heart-wrenching issue for Elder Ma.

This mindset resulted in the younger generation neglecting the family's medical arts, which is why, after much consideration, only Ma Yunzhi emerged as the most suitable candidate.

But as a girl, she would eventually marry, which for an old family like hers, became the greatest constraint preventing her from inheriting the family legacy.

"Alas, every family has their troubles!"

Hearing Elder Ma say this, Elder Cai also involuntarily reflected on how his own family was similarly situated.

Nevertheless, Elder Cai's situation was slightly better. Practitioners of martial arts might value their own skills, but they were generally very supportive of their disciples, with hardly any reservations. This is one reason why Tai Chi, Bagua, and Xingyi Fist have been transmitted and have developed so many schools.

Medical families, however, were different. They were very rigid about the transmission of ancient medical skills, and many techniques were lost precisely because of this reason. And often, these families were steadfastly controlled by a few old-fashioned elders, which were difficult to shake.

Like the Ma Family, where Elder Ma was the head, but there were still several old-timers of the same generation, let alone innumerable branches of children and grandchildren. At the ancestral rites, hundreds would show up—way more complicated than the mere dozen or so descendants in the Cai Family.

"Let's not talk about that anymore. If it comes down to it, why not just take in a son-in-law for Yunzhi? Wouldn't that solve the issue?" The thoughts of an old man are sometimes quite straightforward.

"Nonsense you old ghost, Yunzhi's marriage is her own decision. Anyone who dares to stick their nose in— I swear, I'll slap them to death..."

As the one who loved his granddaughter Ma Yunzhi the most, Elder Ma could not bear any trace of unhappiness for her. He had stated early on that her choice in marriage is her own to make, with no interference from others. Even her parents, Elder Ma's son and daughter-in-law, had no say. This was well known within the Ma Family.

"Speaking of taking in a son-in-law, that disciple of yours outside seems pretty good. How about him?"

Though saying this, Elder Ma seemed to harbor a thought similar to Elder Cai's. He had noticed that Qin Fang and Ma Yunzhi seemed to get along well and he made faces as he spoke.

"Scram! Don't even think about it..."

If Elder Ma hadn't mentioned Ma Yunzhi inheriting the Ma Family mantle, Elder Cai might truly have played matchmaker, bringing the families closer together.

"This old Ma actually dares to set his sights on my favorite disciple, and even wants to take Qin Fang as his son-in-law; how could I agree to this?" he cursed immediately.

"Aye, if that move really worked, my girl Qing is far prettier than Yun Zhi..."

But in his heart, Elder Cai did feel a tinge of regret.

"That's none of your business. What if this Qin Xiaozi takes a liking to my girl? Let me go and see..."

They say the older people get, the more they resemble children, and the two septuagenarian olds really were like children fighting over candy as they joked and laughed. Elder Ma was more direct; he got up and walked over to where Qin Fang and Ma Yunzhi were.

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"So you mean that using the Inner Breath to guide the acupuncture could, as described in novels, directly eliminate the lesion?"

After a brief acupuncture lesson from Ma Yunzhi, Qin Fang, who had just reached beginner-level acupuncture, was no longer the novice who only knew about inserting needles. With Ma Yunzhi's explanations, the knowledge of acupuncture that had been instilled in him began to fuse with his own memories, resulting in a broader understanding, and he even started to form his own insights on some topics.

When Elder Ma approached, he didn't disturb Qin Fang or Ma Yunzhi, he just stood and listened, and he happened to hear Qin Fang's remark, which he found quite insightful. Unfortunately, everything Ma Yunzhi had taught Qin Fang was basic, yet Qin Fang listened so intently, clearly a beginner, it surprised Elder Ma even more.

"Indeed, guiding the needle with Inner Breath has such miraculous effects, but it also requires some very special techniques and acupuncture skills. Without them, rash use can not only fail to address the illness but can also have serious adverse effects..."

Ma Yunzhi was a bit stumped by Qin Fang's question, not because she didn't know the answer, but because she was unsure from which angle to address it. Elder Ma saw his granddaughter's difficulty and laughed, feeling quite like explaining the matter to Qin Fang.

"Special techniques and acupuncture skills?"

Qin Fang paused at this, clearly unfamiliar with the concept.

"The art of acupuncture has been handed down for thousands of years, and in such a long time, many very famous doctors have emerged, such as Bian Que, Hua Tuo, Zhang Zhongjing, Sun Simiao, Li Shizhen, etc. Their achievements in medicine are considered the pinnacle, and nearly every one of them had their own unique method of needle manipulation. For instance, Bian Que's Nine Needles of Stealing Heaven, Hua Tuo's Heavenly Profound Needle Technique, Sun Simiao's Medicine King's Godly Needles, amongst others... In addition to these renowned doctors, there are many other physicians with great medical skill, each with their own methods of needle manipulation..."

Elder Ma was also extremely accomplished in acupuncture, and he knew many stories in detail, especially when he reached this part of the explanation, a touch of pride appeared on his face.

Master Cai inwardly sneered at Elder Ma, knowing that the Ma Family had its own unique set of acupuncture techniques that had once made a very loud name in the world of Chinese medicine; his ancestors even became imperial physicians in the palace because of it.

"With guidance from a Grandmaster Level medical sage, the proficiency of his acupuncture skills advanced to intermediate, proficiency 0%."

What Qin Fang never expected was that by simply listening to a few words from Elder Ma, he had upgraded his newly acquired beginner-level acupuncture skill to intermediate level in a blink, as if he had caught a rocket.

"Wait, Grandmaster Level?"

But Qin Fang suddenly noticed something, Elder Ma's level was actually Grandmaster Level.

Qin Fang's martial arts were taught by Cai Pingyuan, a Grandmaster Level National Arts expert. Therefore, after being taught Xingyi Fist by Cai Pingyuan, his skill in the Fist Technique directly started at intermediate level.

If Elder Ma was Grandmaster Level, which seemed even higher than Cai Pingyuan's Grandmaster Level, then if he personally taught Qin Fang acupuncture, would it not be... advanced?

At this thought, the joy that had just arisen in Qin Fang suddenly felt very faint.

Damn it, he had the chance to go straight for an advanced skill, but because he was greedy for a small advantage, he had wasted it and only ended up with intermediate level.

"It seems not quite right... If it weren't for learning acupuncture with Ma Yunzhi, Elder Ma wouldn't even be discussing these matters with me, and then I wouldn't even have this intermediate-level acupuncture at all..."

But Qin Fang was quite practical in his thinking, and upon reflection, he no longer felt so regretful. It was just a matter of opportunity.

Under very appropriate circumstances, there was the right chance, and missing such an opportunity naturally meant missing out.

Moreover, Cai Pingyuan had already briefly informed Qin Fang about some matters concerning the Ma Family, a family of traditional Chinese medicine with very high standards for taking disciples. For an amateur like Qin Fang, not to mention that Elder Ma would not accept him as a disciple; without such a serendipitous chance, Elder Ma would not even talk to him about acupuncture.

At most, they would have discussed Qin Fang's Xingyi Fist, because Qin Fang had come today with his master Cai Pingyuan to recognize the family and get acquainted...