

Indulgence 201

Chapter 201: Heart-to-Heart Talk

The night was deep.

Yet some in the City Lord Residence could not sleep.

Dongfang Huo waited at the city gates for his second younger brother, Dongfang Xu, who had not returned for many days, while Dongfang Zan was clearly distracted by his side.

"What are you thinking about?"

With hope for his father's poison, Dongfang Huo's mood had also improved considerably.

He also had more time to care about this sixteen-year-old cousin.

Dongfang Zan shook his head, his eyes flickering.

"Really nothing? I've heard that you gave the precious Luozhu vine that Uncle had obtained with great difficulty to the fourth miss of the Yun Family!"

"Big brother!" Dongfang Zan exclaimed in shock.

Dongfang Huo couldn't help but laugh, "What? Have you fallen for her?"

But thinking about it, Yun Jinnian had an exceptionally beautiful appearance, graceful and elegant manners, and her medical skills were nothing short of miraculous, not to mention her broad-mindedness.

His cousin had traveled early in life, appearing gentle and genial, yet in truth he was a deeply scheming smiling tiger, most adept at playing the fool to catch the wise.

"Mm!" Dongfang Zan nodded.

He admitted it.

Dongfang Huo took a deep breath, "Indeed, for a fairy-like beauty such as Miss Yun, it would be strange not to be moved!"

"What about you, big brother? Have you ever been moved?" Dongfang Zan asked urgently.

Dongfang Huo tapped Dongfang Zan on the head, "Towards Miss Yun, the feelings I have are different from yours, mine are admiration, respect; for her being a woman, she did not cling to trifles in detoxifying our father. If she were from a very strict family, her actions could have cost her reputation,

yet she conducts herself openly and with neither servility nor arrogance. I respect heroes, and Miss Yun is a woman who does not concede to men, how could she not move me!"

"Speaking like that, I was indeed narrow-minded!"

"Sigh, it's not that you're narrow-minded; it's just that I want to remind you, in matters of love, you must not employ the slightest deceit or stratagem, nor can you be too direct. The Capital's rules are different from those in the small river village, and women here pay much attention to their reputations and won't easily engage in private exchanges with men. A dignified and pure woman like Miss Yun cannot tolerate the slightest impurity in love!"

Just like her mother, ever since Yun Family's second master took a concubine, the second lady of the Yun Family has never shared a room with him again, and to this day, they are like strangers, not divorcing perhaps only for the sake of giving Yun Jinnian a complete family.

But to stay together without affection...

"Big brother!"

Dongfang Zan exclaimed in surprise.

"Younger brother, true love is the least tolerant of any fickleness. Do you understand?"

Dongfang Zan was silent.

It was a long while before he said, "In the future, I will admire her just like big brother does!"

He had a marriage arrangement pending, just waiting for the girl to come of age to wed.

If he were to break off the engagement, what would become of the innocent girl?

It wouldn't be moral to burden her with all this just because he fell in love at first sight, and then deeper upon the second.

"It's good that you understand!"

Dongfang Huo breathed a sigh of relief.

He was afraid Dongfang Zan would become obsessed.

To run to the Yun Family to break off an engagement for Yun Jinnian would lead to a mess in the end.

A woman like Yun Jinnian would have countless men moved by her, and with her medical skills, she wouldn't possibly just stay at home forever. Should she have a heart of compassion, she would be bound to travel the world to heal others.

And Dongfang Zan couldn't protect her!

It wasn't that he underestimated his cousin, but that's just how the world works.

The strong feed on the weak.

If someone with wealth, power, and ability came along, Dongfang Zan wouldn't even have the chance to strike back!

Dongfang Zan's body softened, and he slowly retreated to lean against the wall.

Dongfang Huo glanced at him, thinking it was better to let go now than to wait until feelings became too deep to salvage.

In the distance, a troop of riders sped towards them.

Dongfang Huo immediately perked up, because the person he was waiting for had arrived!

Chapter 202: Enchanting

A team of tall horses escorted the carriage in the middle, the front of which had two bright lanterns that swung from side to side in the quick pace, casting dancing shadows.

It was impossible to see clearly how many people had come, but judging by the procession, it was probably no small number.

Not until the troupe drew closer did Dongfang Huo stand up straight, and Dongfang Zan also subdued his disappointment, and stepped forward. When the carriage stopped, the curtain was lifted, and Dongfang Xu crawled out of the carriage, "Big brother, third brother!"

As Dongfang Xu emerged, Dongfang Huo and Dongfang Zan, with keen eyes, spotted another person in the carriage. Though they couldn't make out the face, the figure exuded a natural air of imperial authority.

Looking at the people around the carriage, several of them were certainly not from the City Lord Residence.

In the darkness, their faces were indiscernible, but the emanating hostility of their presence let Dongfang Huo and Dongfang Zan know that the person inside the carriage was of significant importance.

"Second brother!"

"Second elder brother!"

Dongfang Xu started to laugh, "Get on the carriage and we'll talk!"

Once the three of them had boarded the carriage Dongfang Xu had alighted from, and they saw Chu Yu seated in the place of honor, Dongfang Huo was briefly stunned.

"Big brother, third brother, this is Prince Rui!"

Prince Rui, Chu Yu.

Dongfang Huo and Dongfang Zan hurriedly stood up and cupped their fists in salute, "Dongfang Huo (Dongfang Zan) pays respect to Prince Rui!"

Chu Yu nodded slightly, "For this visit to Xiaohe Village, not many are aware of my coming, nor do I wish for more to become aware."

"Yes!"

The carriage entered the city and the city gates closed immediately after.

They went straight to the City Lord Residence, with the carriage entering directly through the front gate. Dongfang Huo called for the butler, "Quickly prepare the East Garden!"

There were two finest guesthouses in the City Lord Residence, the East Garden for male guests, and the West Garden for female guests, one situated in the front courtyard and the other in the back.

The butler complied and immediately went to do so.

Dongfang Huo, Dongfang Xu, and Dongfang Zan invited Chu Yu to dine and drink in the study before personally escorting him to rest in the guest room.

Chu Yu, thinking that Yun Jinnian was in the City Lord Residence and that they would meet soon, was overjoyed. But on the bed, he couldn't fall asleep no matter what.

When he finally managed to fall asleep, he dreamt of Yun Jinnian undressing before him, revealing a delicate and graceful body.

Chu Yu woke with a start, his crotch damp.

"..."

At the same time he was speechless, he also laughed at himself.

"Luoyi!"

Luoyi entered from the outer room, clad in underclothes and still holding a long sword, "Your Highness?"

"Get me a pair of underpants!"

Luoyi, utterly astonished, glanced towards Chu Yu's crotch.

"What are you looking at, go get them now!" Chu Yu snapped in embarrassment and anger.

Luoyi hurriedly fetched the underpants from the wardrobe and handed them to Chu Yu to change. Afterward, Chu Yu went out to the yard to practice boxing.

Luoyi stood to the side while Luo'er, scratching his head, came over, "What's going on?"

Wasn't he just asleep? What is he doing up again?

"The lord changed his underpants earlier!" Luoyi mentioned.

Luo'er's understanding of sexual matters was minimal, almost nonexistent.

However, Luo'er's eyes widened in realization.

"What's up?" asked Luoyi.

"Nothing!"

Luo'er didn't dare to speak ill of Chu Yu.

But just being in close quarters had caused the lord to have a wet dream; if Miss Four did anything, would their lord even survive? They better treat Miss Four with even more respect in the future.

After a set of boxing, Chu Yu exhaled deeply.

It had been two months since he'd seen Yun Jinnian, and he missed her dearly. Now, his beloved was within reach, yet he couldn't just rush in recklessly to see her.

Especially with his mother-in-law present, Chu Yu knew he absolutely must not act rashly.

"My lord!"

"Prepare some water, I'll wash up and sleep!"

Luo'er hesitated.

Just like this? He wasn't going to sneak into the lady's chambers to see Miss Four? He was all set to ask Miss Four for some golden sore medicine or Detoxification Pills as gifts!

Chapter 203: Hidden Secrets

City Lord Residence

Dongfang Huo poured tea for his two younger brothers. "Second brother, what did you find out on your trip this time?"

"There wasn't much, but I always feel like Father's injury was part of a conspiracy!" Dongfang Xu said, sipping his tea before he continued, "Is Father's poison cured?"

"Speaking of Father's poison, we owe a great deal to Miss Yun today. Her medical skills are truly astonishing!" Dongfang Huo praised.

He couldn't help but feel deeply moved.

"How so?" Dongfang Xu asked.

He was curious, having not seen it himself.

When Prince Rui initially suggested this to him, he had doubted whether Yun Jinnian, with her young age, possessed the medical prowess the prince had described.

"Her needle technique was incredibly precise; she remained unfazed as she cut away flesh and scraped bone, as calm as if she were doing embroidery!" Dongfang Huo, taking a deep breath, said.

He still felt excited thinking about it.

It was a pity that Yun Jinnian was a woman; had she been a man, he would have earnestly sought her friendship and cherished it for a lifetime.

"That impressive?"

"More than that. She used silver needles to extract an Iron Sand Snake from Father's arm, prescribed a medicine that was boiled in a big tub, and had Father soak his injured leg in it. The Iron Sand Snakes came out one by one, filling up almost half of the water vat!"

Dongfang Xu felt his scalp tingle upon hearing this.

He saw Dongfang Zan, who had been silent all along. "Third brother, what's wrong with you?"

"It's nothing!" Dongfang Zan hurriedly replied, clearly distracted.

Dongfang Xu didn't think much of it. "What about those filthy poisons?"

"Per Miss Yun's instructions, all were taken to the ice cellar. She said they need to be brought back to Capital City for disposal!"

Dongfang Xu frowned.

Why take them back to Capital City? Can't they just be dealt with at the City Lord Residence?

The three brothers talked some more, inevitably discussing the several major families in the city that were getting restless.

"Big brother, we need to be cautious and also inform Second Uncle. Command everyone in the City Lord Residence to act prudently and avoid falling prey to someone's schemes!" Dongfang Xu said gravely.

He had a feeling that a conspiracy was targeting the City Lord Residence.

"Don't worry. I understand completely, and have already given the orders. If anyone dares to abuse their power, they won't be let off easily!"

"That's very good!"

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Having spent some time in Huguo Temple, Yun Jinnian had come to cherish Mrs. Han's affection and sympathy for her, and now held Mrs. Han closer to her heart than ever.

When she got up in the middle of the night to relieve herself, she tucked Mrs. Han in and carefully embraced Mrs. Han's arm, resting her little face on Mrs. Han's shoulder before falling back into a deep sleep.

When Yun Jinnian woke up in the morning, she was still holding onto Mrs. Han's arm, even drooling a little. Mrs. Han gently smiled as she wiped Yun Jinnian's face with a handkerchief. Yun Jinnian, still groggy, looked at Mrs. Han. "Mother!"

"You're awake!"

Yun Jinnian nodded. "Was I restless in my sleep last night?"

Mrs. Han chuckled. "Not at all, you just drooled!"

Since returning from Huguo Temple, Yun Jinnian had grown much closer to Mrs. Han, shedding some of her earlier hesitations and becoming more affable. Mrs. Han was delighted at heart.

She, too, desired to indulge in the deep affection shared between mother and daughter, letting Yun Jinnian be pampered and willful.

Time was slipping away, and soon the child would be grown.

Yun Jinnian's cheeks flushed a little, and she shyly burrowed into the covers, curling up like a shrimp. Mrs. Han laughed out loud at the sight.

"It's still early, sleep a little longer!"

Yun Jinnian shook her head. "No, I should go check on the City Lord first!"

Dongfang Fu and Dongfang Rong soon arrived, and after breakfast together, they went to treat the City Lord.

Entering the room, Dongfang Huo and Dongfang Zan greeted them, accompanied by a young man. When Yun Jinnian saw him, her expression changed abruptly.

Chapter 204: Surprise

Why would he be here?

She had seen him, by Chu Liange's side.

Now she had forgotten what Chu Liange had said about him, but later, he and Tianci went to the cold palace to rescue her.

That time, Tianci died, but he was nowhere to be seen!

Now, although he was still young, his distinguished appearance hadn't changed much!

Yun Jinnian pursed her lips tightly, staring at Dongfang Xu without moving any closer.

Dongfang Xu was also confused, having no recollection of Yun Jinnian in his memory.

"Fourth Miss!" Dongfang Huo called out softly.

Dongfang Zan was bitterly disappointed, thinking Yun Jinnian had taken a liking to Dongfang Xu.

It made sense, after all, Dongfang Xu had the best looks and the highest martial arts skills in the Dongfang family.

Dongfang Rong and Dongfang Fu were also puzzled, "Fourth Sister, what's wrong?"

Yun Jinnian snapped back to reality upon hearing them, "It's nothing!" She flashed a shallow smile at everyone, "Let's go in and check on the City Lord!"

Upon entering the room, the lady of the City Lord Residence came up to greet her, "Fourth Miss!"

"Has the City Lord woken up?"

"He has!"

Yun Jinnian nodded and entered the bedroom.

Dongfang Jingtian was leaning against the headboard, greeting Yun Jinnian with a gentle smile.

"City Lord!" Yun Jinnian bowed respectfully.

Her heart was in disarray because of Dongfang Xu's presence.

Sitting at the bedside, Yun Jinnian asked, "Did you eat anything last night?"

"I had a bowl of porridge!"

Yun Jinnian didn't ask whether the porridge contained oil, nor did she inquire about what had happened in the meantime. These were not matters for her to concern herself with.

"Let me take the City Lord's pulse!"

"Mmm!" Dongfang Jingtian nodded.

The lady of the City Lord Residence immediately pulled out Dongfang Jingtian's hand and gently rolled up his sleeve. Only after Yun Jinnian had taken his pulse did she say, "You should get more sun exposure,

don't stay inside all the time. If you can manage it, getting sun from morning until evening would be best!"

Dongfang Jingtian remained silent.

The lady of the City Lord Residence eagerly asked, "Does the lord still have the Iron Sand Snake in his body?"

"Yes, it can't be completely eradicated in one go. It will take three or four rounds, plus medicines, to thoroughly remove it!"

"As long as it can be completely removed, that's good. Fourth Miss, just say whatever you need. You can make use of whatever is in the medicine room, and if there is something you need that we don't have, just write a list, and I'll send someone to buy it immediately!"

"Okay, I'll take a look at the medicine room in a bit!"

To the medicine room, there would be Dongfang Fu and Dongfang Rong leading Yun Jinnian, accompanied by a few tall maids who look quite strong.

When they reached the medicine room, Yun Jinnian examined each medicine cabinet but didn't see any particularly rare medicinal herbs.

Perhaps the rare herbs were not stored in the medicine room.

Yun Jinnian took some herbs, instructed someone to decoct them, and then applied the resultant paste to Dongfang Jingtian's wounds.

"It promotes tissue regeneration. Once applied, the flesh should heal faster," Yun Jinnian said.

Dongfang Fu and Dongfang Rong looked on with eyes full of admiration.

After spending a while in the medicine room, Yun Jinnian prepared to return to the guest courtyard to accompany Mrs. Han, only to see Dongfang Huo rushing over and greeting Yun Jinnian with a fist in palm salute, "Fourth Miss!"

"What's the matter?"

"Fourth Miss, a guest has suddenly felt unwell. The guest's status is illustrious, so we dare not let just any physician treat them. I wonder if it would be convenient for you to come and have a look?"

In the City Lord Residence, for the eldest son to mention an illustrious status meant the visitor was no ordinary person.

Yun Jinnian pondered for a moment, then nodded slightly, "Lead the way, Eldest Young Master!"

Following Dongfang Huo were Hemei and Henuan.

Dongfang Fu and Dongfang Rong couldn't follow, so they went to inform Mrs. Han instead, so she wouldn't worry.

When Yun Jinnian arrived at the guest courtyard with Dongfang Huo and saw Luoyi and Luo'er standing at the entrance, she knew the illustrious guest was Chu Yu.

Whether Chu Yu was genuinely sick or faking it, her steps quickened.

Chapter 205: Faking Illness

Before entering the house, Yun Jinnian glanced at Luoyi and Luo'er, who immediately bowed their heads guiltily.

Upon entering the parlor, he saw Chu Yu lounging on the nanmu Arhat bed, his complexion rosy and lips red, his eyes brimming with smiles. He hardly looked ill at all.

It was clear that he just wanted to see her and had found an excuse.

When Chu Yu saw Yun Jinnian come in, he intended to sit up, but recalling that he was supposed to be a patient, he flopped back down, sickly.

His brocaded clothes spread out, his banished fairy-like face all aglow with secret delight.

"Ouch, ouch!"

Yun Jinnian found it amusing and glared at Chu Yu before sitting on the stool in front of him, "Young Master, where do you feel uncomfortable?"

"Everywhere is uncomfortable, everything feels awful!"

"Then it's nothing serious. I'll give the Young Master a few acupuncture needles, and you'll surely feel much better!" Yun Jinnian said, signaling Hemei to bring the medicine box over.

Chu Yu exclaimed in surprise, "Aren't you going to take my pulse first?"

"No need. This is a disease of extravagance, Young Master. I can cure it without taking your pulse!"

Looking for trouble when none existed, if it wasn't a disease of extravagance, what else could it be?

Chu Yu smiled gently, "Then, will it hurt when Miss administers the needles?"

"Not at all!"

"Well then, Miss, please proceed!" Chu Yu said bravely, and in the end, Yun Jinnian's heart softened.

"We'd better take the pulse first."

Chu Yu was delighted inside and quickly rolled up his sleeve for Yun Jinnian to take his pulse.

Yun Jinnian's hands were ice-cold, while Chu Yu's wrist was warm. When they touched, both of them shuddered slightly.

Chu Yu felt a ripple through his heart and mind.

Watching Yun Jinnian's delicate fingers, his heart thumped wildly, and his face also flushed a bit.

After the initial shock, Yun Jinnian earnestly took Chu Yu's pulse, "Young Master, there is nothing seriously wrong with you. It's just some internal heat. I'll prescribe some heat-clearing medicine, and you'll be fine after taking it!"

Having said this, Yun Jinnian withdrew her hand.

She asked someone to prepare writing materials and wrote the prescription.

Then she got up and left.

Chu Yu lay there bewildered on the Arhat bed, thinking of Yun Jinnian's ice-cold hands and her delicate fingers. He felt a tightness in his body and dared not dwell on it further.

Yun Jinnian returned to the guesthouse to chat with Mrs. Han.

"Shall we go for a walk around the market?" Mrs. Han suggested.

"Let's wait until I've finished treating the City Lord!"

Mrs. Han thought that made sense.

It wasn't quite proper to wander around before the illness was cured.

In the afternoon, Yun Jinnian returned to the City Lord Residence to scrape the bone and apply acupuncture.

However, this time, far fewer Iron Sand Snakes came out.

In the following days, Dongfang Jingtian's condition improved greatly. There were no more Iron Sand Snakes left in his body, but he was as thin as a rach. However, he still had his spirits.

During her free time, Yun Jinnian often wondered why Dongfang Xu had appeared in her previous life and where he had gone after that.

Over the past few days, Chu Yu indeed found opportunities to encounter Yun Jinnian several times, but they never spoke.

Chu Yu was not discouraged but became even more determined.

"The City Lord's poison has been completely cured. He can take gentle nourishment in moderation in the future, but he must not over-indulge in tonics!" Yun Jinnian said, taking a cloth to wipe her hands.

Dongfang Jingtian let out a deep breath.

Madam Dongfang thanked heaven and earth profusely.

Everyone in the room was overjoyed, but they also knew that Yun Jinnian was about to leave.

Yun Jinnian had saved the City Lord, becoming a benefactor of the City Lord Residence. Naturally, Madam Dongfang would prepare a generous gift.

It was decided that they would leave early on the first day of the fifth month.

The day before, led by Madam Dongfang, Yun Jinnian and Mrs. Han went shopping in the streets. Yun Jinnian wanted to buy a few gifts for Ruan Wanrong and the others.

At the jewelry shop, Yun Jinnian picked out a precious hairpin and a precious bracelet for each of them. The price was quite high, but Bai Que payed the silver promptly.

Madam Dongfang smiled, realizing that she hadn't bought anything herself this trip. She was simply accompanying Yun Jinnian and Mrs. Han.

Having bought their goods, they returned to the City Lord Residence, only to find the road ahead blocked.

Chapter 206: Cherishing Each Other

"What's the matter?" Mrs. Dongfang asked.

"Madam, ahead, a woman is selling herself to bury her father. She's quite good-looking, and two madams got into a fight over her, drawing quite a crowd and blocking the road!"

Mrs. Dongfang slightly furrowed her brows, "Go and say a word, just tell them I've bought the person!"

"Yes!"

Mrs. Han looked at Mrs. Dongfang, "Madam has a kind heart!"

"Going to the City Lord Residence, even as a maid, is still better than ending up in those filthy places!" Mrs. Dongfang said, with a slight sigh.

"That's true, it's just that the girl's appearance seems too..." Mrs. Han said, shaking her head with a wry smile, "Perhaps I'm overthinking it!"

Mrs. Dongfang hadn't thought much of it, but Mrs. Han's comment made her carefully contemplate the situation, growing more uneasy as she did.

The City Lord Residence, because of Dongfang Jingtian's injury and poisoning, had undergone a major purge by her, followed by another by her two sons, making it airtight like iron. It was difficult to send a message in or out.

But if that woman were brought back...

Selling herself to bury her father—if her identity were to be verified later and it all turned out to be true, no one would suspect anything.

If she really was a spy...

Mrs. Dongfang broke out in a cold sweat.

She took Mrs. Han's hand, "Thank you for the reminder, Madam!"

Mrs. Han slightly shook her head, "I'm glad Madam doesn't mind my meddling!"

"Why would I mind your meddling, Madam? It's just that I wonder why Madam would have such suspicions?" Mrs. Dongfang was still curious.

"The players are blind while the bystanders see clearly. The current City Lord Residence doesn't allow any strangers near.

Mrs. Dongfang, let me ask you, if this girl, after burying her father, were to seek a position at the City Lord Residence, would you think her grateful and thus give her an important role?"

Mrs. Dongfang was at a loss for words.

Because she certainly would have given her an important role.

She then broke into laughter, "There was once a legend, saying that in the Capital City, the Han Family had a daughter, peerless and distinct, her talents and intellect unparalleled, matching even the top scholar. I didn't believe it, but now that I have met you, Madam, I can no longer doubt it!"

"So many years have passed, Mingzhu has also gathered dust, no longer possessing the pride and ambition of her youth..." Mrs. Han said, her tone marked by desolation.

If she had listened to her father back then and not married Yun Qi, her life would not have turned out this way.

But fortunately, she had Yun Jinnian, a clever daughter, and a son, which made it all worthwhile.

Mrs. Dongfang felt a bitter sensation in her heart and held onto Mrs. Han's hand, "Madam, do not speak like that. How could a lady like you, as bright as a pearl or the moon, be dulled? It's just that Madam has chosen not to shine anymore. But, Madam, we women, in our youth we obey our parents and elder brothers, after marriage we listen to our in-laws and husbands. Have we ever lived for ourselves? Even if not for ourselves, we should live for our children, right?"

"What you say, Mrs. Dongfang, is very true!"

"It's not about being right. It's simply the accumulation of blood and tears," Mrs. Dongfang said with a sigh.

In her youth, Dongfang Jingtian was also romantic and handsome, attracting women everywhere, with over thirty concubines in the City Lord Residence and more than a dozen children. Overwhelmed with sadness, she was brought to the depths of despair.

As a result, her own children suffered immensely, living lives worse than dogs, legitimate children worse off than the illegitimate ones.

Her heart hardened with purpose.

She immediately returned to her parental home, requesting her brother to hire an assassin to kill Dongfang Jingtian. When the assassin came, all Dongfang Jingtian's concubines were frightened and panicked, while only she stepped forward and took a sword strike for Dongfang Jingtian.

With the gratitude she earned, she cultivated her two sons and daughter with all her heart.

Mrs. Han did not ask Mrs. Dongfang what had happened.

Sympathetic as she was, she simply held her hand tightly, feeling as though it was a pity they had not met sooner.

Chapter 207: Return to the Capital

Mrs. Dongfang and Mrs. Han sat in the first carriage, Yun Jinnian, Dongfang Fu, and Dongfang Rong were in the second carriage. Compared to the mutual admiration between Mrs. Han and Mrs. Dongfang, Dongfang Fu and Dongfang Rong admired Yun Jinnian to the utmost degree.

"Can little sister really make medicine that attracts bees and butterflies?"

"Yes, I can. It's just that we lack the necessary ingredients. Once I return to the Capital City and perfect it, I'll send someone to bring it over!" Yun Jinnian said mildly.

"That's wonderful!"

Dongfang Rong didn't beat around the bush with Yun Jinnian.

Upon returning to the City Lord Residence, they began to pack up.

There wasn't much to pack, but the thank-you gifts from the City Lord Residence were quite substantial—

Fabrics, jewelry, vases, decorations, ginseng, medicinal ingredients; twelve large boxes, which took up three horse-drawn carriages.

Yun Jinnian felt quite embarrassed by the abundance, but Mrs. Han saw it as fitting.

The gifts were accepted, but the debt of gratitude remained.

On the morning of May 1, they set out on the journey back to the Capital City.

The family stood at the door to see them off, and even Dongfang Jingtian, though unwell, made the effort to bid farewell. Dongfang Huo, Dongfang Xu, and Dongfang Zan, the three brothers, accompanied them to Shili Pavilion outside the city, where a convoy of martial artists was arranged to escort Yun Jinnian, Mrs. Han, and the others back to the Capital City.

"Fourth Sister!" Dongfang Rong, hugging Yun Jinnian, cried so hard she couldn't speak. "When will you come to visit me again?"

"How about I come to add to your trousseau when Sister gets married?" Yun Jinnian said gently.

"Then I will definitely marry early!"

Dongfang Rong's words amused everyone, yet also struck a chord of melancholy.

Yun Jinnian nodded and helped Mrs. Han into the carriage.

They left the city.

Shili Pavilion.

Watching the departing carriages, Dongfang Zan let out a sigh of relief.

Dongfang Huo clapped his shoulder.

"Brother, I'm fine!"

"As long as you're fine. Let's go. We have a lot to deal with when we get back!"

On the road back to the Capital City.

Yun Jinnian leaned against Mrs. Han and slept.

Mrs. Han tenderly stroked Yun Jinnian's hair, her heart brimming with happiness. Thinking of her son she had never seen since his birth, Mrs. Han smiled.

"Madam, we're about to enter Huaxi County!"

Once they reached Huaxi County, the Capital City was only a day's journey away.

"Let's find an inn to stay in Huaxi County and set out early tomorrow morning!" Mrs. Han said softly.

The coachman called Old Ghost nodded, leading the team into Huaxi County. They found an inn with a small courtyard that could accommodate the horse-drawn carriages.

Although it was slightly more expensive, everyone felt more secure staying together.

The party of Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian included six people, plus another six sent by the City Lord Residence to escort them, making a total of twelve.

Those six sent by the City Lord Residence were clearly highly skilled in martial arts, the formidable kind.

After cleaning up, it was time for dinner.

Mrs. Han was generous, allowing the men to dine at one table while the women ate in a room. The food was the same for both, and there was also wine, but only a little—just enough to whet their appetite, fearing that too much could lead to misconduct.

However, for these men, their respect for Yun Jinnian's medical skills meant they were extremely polite and respectful.

After dinner, unable to sleep, Yun Jinnian took a book and read next to Mrs. Han.

"Read for just a little while more, then go to sleep. We have to get up early tomorrow!"

"Okay, I'll listen to mother!"

After going to the washroom and washing her hands, just as Yun Jinnian was about to go to bed, she heard a commotion outside.

"What's the matter?" Yun Jinnian asked quietly.

Bai Que had already stepped out to see what was happening.

Concerned about the inn's safety, Bai Que, Hemei, and Henuan were all sleeping on the ground inside the room.

Yun Jinnian also walked out to the courtyard, curious.

Old Ghost remained silent, but the six men from the City Lord Residence were buzzing with discussion.

Soon after, Bai Que returned to report, "An elderly woman has fainted. Her family has gone to fetch a doctor."

Chapter 208: Crisis

As a doctor, Yun Jinnian naturally wanted to go and have a look.

Mrs. Han stood at the doorway, smiling, "Bai Que, why don't you accompany Jinnian to see if there is any way you can help!"

This was the best inn in Huaixi County, and to be able to stay in a courtyard meant that one's family was certainly not simple.

Mrs. Han hoped Yun Jinnian would form good connections, so that even if these people did not help when troubles arose, as long as they did not kick others when they were down, that would be enough.

Yun Jinnian nodded and set off with Bai Que.

Already a crowd had gathered at the entrance to the small courtyard. Outside stood guards, and inside, a woman's voice cried out in anguish, "Grandmother, please wake up, don't scare Ming'er!"

Yun Jinnian looked around; the doctor had not yet arrived.

After hesitating for a moment, Yun Jinnian stepped forward, "Excuse me, sir, I have some knowledge of medical skills. Could I go in and take a look at the old lady?"

The guard looked at Yun Jinnian, considering her young age, "Little girl, don't cause trouble!"

Inside was the Princess, the Emperor's very own aunt, and the only remaining elder statesperson among the late Emperor's brothers and sisters.

There couldn't be the slightest mistake.

"Sir, I am not making trouble. My maternal grandfather is Divine Doctor Han Xuzi. I have studied medicine under my grandfather for a long time. Please let me..."

Before Yun Jinnian could finish speaking, a voice came from inside, "Did you say you are the granddaughter of Divine Doctor Han Xuzi?"

Someone came out.

Even though it was dark and her features indistinct, her commanding presence was still enough to unnerve people.

If Yun Jinnian had not lived through two lifetimes, she might indeed have been intimidated.

"Yes!" answered Yun Jinnian, neither overbearing nor servile.

"Come in!"

Yun Jinnian turned her head and said to Bai Que, "Sister Bai Que, please go and fetch my medicine box!"

Now that she could enter the courtyard, she would do her utmost.

Upon entering the room, she saw it was brightly lit by the glow of a huge night pearl by the bedside.

When Yun Jinnian clearly saw the girl weeping and calling out by the bed, she was shocked.

It was none other than Princess Xiaguang, Yuwen Ming.

And the person being called grandmother by her and lying in the bed must be the Commandery Princess of the state, the biological sister of the late Emperor and the actual aunt of the current Emperor.

However, in a past life, the Commandery Princess died on her way back to the Capital City. She passed away just before the Dragon Boat Festival in the seventeenth year of Yuanhe, which caused Tianchu Country to not celebrate the festival that year, a fact Yun Jinnian remembered clearly.

At this moment...

Yun Jinnian bit her lip. Being at the point of no return, she could only do her best and take the plunge.

"I have medical skills. Let me examine the old lady!" Yun Jinnian spoke out.

Yuwen Ming turned her head to look at Yun Jinnian, her eyes blurry with tears, like she had grasped at a lifeline, "Can you really practice medicine?"

"Yes!" Yun Jinnian nodded.

"Then please examine my grandmother!" Yuwen Ming stepped aside.

Yun Jinnian immediately stepped forward to take the Commandery Princess's pulse, her heart pounding.

The demise of the Commandery Princess in her previous life was not without reason.

By the time they called for the doctor, she would have already stopped breathing, how then could she be saved?

"The old lady has heatstroke that's triggered an old chronic illness, resulting in vomiting of blood and fainting, and there are also signs of a stroke! Do you have silver needles? Or even sewing needles will do!"

"Why do you need a needle?" Yuwen Ming asked urgently.

By then, someone had already brought over a silver needle.

"First, I need to bleed the old lady!"

"Ah..."

Yuwen Ming was stunned.

"Yes, we need to bleed the old lady. Quickly take off the old lady's shoes and socks, I'll start with bleeding from her fingers!" Yun Jinnian urged firmly.

As she was preparing to begin, Yuwen Ming grabbed Yun Jinnian's wrist.

"But, but..." Yuwen Ming stuttered, unsure of what to say.

"No buts. If we hesitate any longer, once the opportunity is missed, not even the Great Luo Immortal could save her!" Yun Jinnian urged, sweating profusely.

But the old nanny who let Yun Jinnian in spoke calmly, "Let her try!"

Chapter 209: Treatment

"Madam Song!" Yuwen Ming exclaimed in alarm.

"Let her try. Since she claims to be a descendant of the Divine Doctor Han, she must have some skills!" Madam Song said as she stepped forward to remove the Commandery Princess's shoes and socks.

Yun Jinnian quickly bled the Commandery Princess.

The blood that came from all ten fingers was dark and black. Yun Jinnian frowned and began to bleed the Commandery Princess's toes, which were also dark and black.

The Commandery Princess was not only suffering from Chenke's chronic condition, but she had also been poisoned.

And the poison had been in her body for many years. The sunstroke had caused a complete outbreak of the poison, which explained why in her previous life, the Commandery Princess had died before the Dragon Boat Festival.

Because not only was the poison difficult to neutralize, but the antidote was also hard to find. Even if a doctor were to come, how capable could a doctor be in a mere county town?

Bai Que also brought over a medicine box. Yun Jinnian took out a porcelain bottle and handed it to Madam Song, "Dissolve one pill in a cup of tea!"

Madam Song took the pill and hurried off.

Yun Jinnian took a silver needle, preparing to pierce the Commandery Princess's head with it, and Yuwen Ming hurriedly said, "Be careful, my grandmother is afraid of pain!"

Yun Jinnian glanced at Yuwen Ming and nodded slightly.

This Princess Xiaguang, who had not been particularly close to her during the years when she was the fifth prince's wife and had not yet borne children, was always very respectful to her, even after she became the Empress.

She was a person who was both innately kind and extremely intelligent.

With each needle insertion, the Commandery Princess only let out a groan of "Oh". Yuwen Ming immediately stepped forward, calling out softly, "Grandmother, grandmother, my Ming sister, can you hear me?"

"Mm!"

The Commandery Princess made a sound, then remained silent, her whole body in deep discomfort.

She had a dream in which she died in an inn in Huaxi County. She saw her children and grandchildren crying sorrowfully, and Ming, whom she had raised since childhood, fainting several times in front of her coffin.

In the dream, there were no doctors to save her, but right now, she seemed to sense a frail figure swaying before her eyes, carrying a hint of medicinal fragrance, faint yet extremely pleasant to smell.

Before coming to the Capital City, a sanctified monk had told her fortune: this visit to the Capital would bring a calamity, and if she overcame it, she would live a long life of a hundred years; if not, her lifespan would be complete.

Could it be that her destined benefactor was this very person swaying before her eyes?

Yun Jinnian stopped the bleeding on the Commandery Princess's hands and feet and removed the silver needles. Madam Song had already dissolved the medicine and brought it over.

"Have the elder lady lie down, scoop up the medicine with a spoon, and feed her slowly. Do not move the elder lady for now!"

"Why?" asked Madam Song.

"The elder lady also has symptoms of a stroke; she must not be moved!"

Madam Song, willing to err on the side of caution, carefully spoon-fed the medicine to the Commandery Princess.

She had just risen to bow slightly to Yun Jinnian, who quickly returned the gesture.

"Thank you, young lady!"

"It's good that Madam Song doesn't blame me for my rash actions!"

Though her medical skills were commendable, she was rather young; it took courage to trust her.

Especially for the Commandery Princess.

The uniquely esteemed elderly noble of Tianchu Country.

"Despite your young age, your medical skills are so impressive, and you possess a heart of compassion and medical virtue. I admire you deeply; how could I blame you, young lady? But are you truly the granddaughter of the Divine Doctor Han?"

"Yes, I am Yun of the Yun Family, Jinnian. My mother is also at the inn!"

Overjoyed, Madam Song said, "If that is true, I met your mother many years ago when she had just become a wife. It's astonishing how her child has grown so much!" Feeling sentimental, she added, "Linglong, go see if Mrs. Yun has rested. If she has not, please invite Mrs. Yun to come over and sit for a while!"

Chapter 210: Secrets

Only by seeing Mrs. Han could one determine whether Yun Jinnian was indeed the granddaughter of the Divine Doctor Han.

The maid Linglong immediately went down.

Nanny Song invited Yun Jinnian to sit aside.

Yun Jinnian glanced at the bedside and saw Yuwen Ming carefully wiping the sweat off the Princess, feeling a slight warmth in her heart.

Apart from the Yun Family, whether old or young, everyone she met observed proper etiquette, with elders being kind and the younger generation being filial.

"The mistress dotes on the sixth young lady the most, and the sixth young lady is also a person of utmost purity and filial piety!" Nanny Song praised.

She was very fond of Yuwen Ming.

"It shows!"

Seeing Yuwen Ming's careful demeanor, it didn't seem feigned.

As Yun Jinnian spoke, she took a handkerchief to wipe sweat.

One must never be careless when administering acupuncture; it required high concentration, and after the procedure was over and one slightly relaxed, sweat would come out.

Yun Jinnian also knew that her physique was somewhat frail and that she hadn't been able to properly recuperate at Huguo Temple. Once back in Capital City, she needed to start eating medicated meals.

Soon, Mrs. Han came over, and upon seeing Nanny Song, she paused slightly, "Are you Nanny Song from the Princess Residence?"

Nanny Song smiled, "I didn't expect madam to still remember me!"

Nanny Song had spent her lifetime serving the Princess and had never married. After self-dressing her hair when young, the Princess had appointed her as a second-rank female official. It wasn't inappropriate for her to refer to herself as "old body."

"Mrs. Yun Han pays respects to Nanny Song!" Mrs. Han hurriedly performed a courtesy bow, then said to Yun Jinnian, "Jinnian, quickly pay your respects to Nanny Song. She is the only second-rank female official in our Tianchu Country!"

Yun Jinnian quickly tried to stand, but Nanny Song raised her hand to press on Yun Jinnian's shoulder, "No, no, no, this child is the savior of the Princess, and she has been busy earlier and is now very tired. We can do the courtesy next time, next time!"

Next time she performed a courtesy, she would also seriously prepare a meeting gift. It would be better than being in a rush now, without any good items to offer.

On her wrist, she had a jade bracelet, but it was a reward from the Princess. She had worn it for over forty years and couldn't bear to part with it.

Mrs. Han was shocked, "Was that the Princess just now?"

"Hmm!" Nanny Song nodded her head.

"How is the Princess now?" Mrs. Han asked urgently, worried in her heart.

"Mother, I've already administered acupuncture to the Princess. As long as she takes good care of herself afterward, she will recover. It's just that the Princess has been poisoned, but it seems that some of the toxins in her body have been neutralized. Yet it doesn't seem to be completely neutralized, it's more like when she was pregnant, transferring them to the fetus..."

Yun Jinnian didn't finish her sentence, as it was only speculation, and she worried that Nanny Song might think she was speaking nonsense.

With what Yun Jinnian had said, Nanny Song no longer dared to doubt her medical skills.

For many years, no doctor could detect the Princess's poisoning, not even the Imperial Physicians of the palace, but the Princess was indeed poisoned. She had transferred the poison to her son, the fifth master.

The fifth master, born with the poison, was extremely frail. Despite consulting countless doctors and using innumerable precious medicines for conditioning, the poison wasn't cured.

Had it not been for the immense wealth of the Princess Residence and various rare medicines sustaining him, he might have long passed...

"Don't talk nonsense!" Mrs. Han said with urgency.

The fifth master of the Princess Residence was not in good health and hadn't taken a wife despite being nearly forty. It was said he was a character like a Banished Fairy with autumn moon and gentle breeze, but because of his poor health, he was unwilling to marry, nor was anyone willing to marry him!

Yun Jinnian fell silent.

"Girl, come here!!"

The voice was very weak, yet commanded authority.

Looking towards the sound, one could see the Princess on the bed, beckoning Yun Jinnian over.

"Except for this girl, everyone leave!" the Princess commanded again.

Mrs. Han wanted to say something but Nanny Song stepped forward, grabbing Mrs. Han's hand, "Madam, rest assured, the Princess is very kind and will not force Miss Yun!"