

Indulgence 241

Chapter 241: Follow

"Jinnian!"

"Grandfather!"

Yun Jinnian stood respectfully in front of Han Xuzi.

"Are you still going to the academy to study?" asked Han Xuzi.

Senior Songzhu's medical skills were almost comparable to his own, but he was a loner while Senior Songzhu mentored and taught students. If Yun Jinnian could receive instruction from Senior Songzhu, that would be excellent indeed.

"Go ahead," Yun Jinnian replied promptly, then asked with urgency, "What do you mean, Grandfather?"

Having lost and regained his affection, Yun Jinnian cherished this kinship even more.

If her grandfather disapproved of her going to Songshan Academy, she would not go.

Han Xuzi ruffled Yun Jinnian's hair, "Go, learn well from your grand-uncle. His teaching methods are different from mine, you will learn a lot more!"

"Yes!" Yun Jinnian replied respectfully.

Han Tianci eagerly said, "Grandfather, Grandfather, I want to go too!"

Han Xuzi looked at his obedient grandson with a smile, "Not you, not yet!"

"Why not?"

"The time is not right. Let your sister learn first; she can teach you later on!" Han Xuzi said, thinking of Senior Songzhu's temperament, "We'll see when the time comes. Maybe you can go with your sister!"

"That would be wonderful!"

Now that Yun Qi had returned, Mrs. Han couldn't stay at the Han Family's home for fear that Yun Qi might come across Han Tianci. She had no choice but to take Yun Jinnian and head back.

Han Tianci clung to Yun Jinnian, "Sister!"

Yun Jinnian didn't want to leave Han Tianci either.

This was her own dear brother, the one who would risk his life to save her. She had missed him for many years, and now that they were reunited, how could she bear to part with him.

"Sister, can I come back with you, please!" Han Tianci begged softly.

Yun Jinnian suddenly felt her eyes welling with tears.

Mrs. Han was about to speak, but Yun Jinnian spoke first, "Alright, but you can't just go back with me like this. You have to dress like Hemei and the rest. And you need to darken your pretty little face a bit, so no one recognizes you!"

Even knowing he'd look less handsome, Han Tianci didn't care and immediately asked Yun Jinnian to help him dress up unattractively.

When a little girl with darkened skin appeared, Han Xuzi didn't even recognize her.

"Hehe, Grandfather, do I look good?"

Han Xuzi waved his hand dismissively, "Go with your sister!"

In the carriage

Han Tianci sat in the middle, with his mother on one side and his sister on the other, smiling so broadly that even his darkened face couldn't hide his cuteness.

Mrs. Han felt like she was in a dream, with both her son and daughter by her side.

When the carriage arrived at the Yun Family's, they found out that Yun Qi had already returned with two concubines. Mrs. Han made Yun Jinnian take Tianci to Niannian Garden.

Han Tianci went off cheerfully.

Mrs. Yuan was startled when she saw Han Tianci, "Miss, who is this?"

"She's a distant cousin, Tiantian, from grandfather's family. It's her first time in Capital City, and she'll be staying with me for a few days!" Yun Jinnian said, glancing at Han Tianci, "Nanny, please prepare a chamber for Tiantian to stay in, Hongye, Hongdou, you go attend to cousin Tiantian!"

"Yes!"

The maidens all knew Han Tianci's real identity and would keep it a secret.

Han Tianci happily entered the parlour and looked around, "Sister, this place isn't bad!"

Purposely lowering his voice, it sounded sweet, and it was kind of hard to tell whether he was a boy or a girl.

"Whatever you like, just play. Medical skills are in the study; if you want to eat something, tell Hongdou and the others to let Yaniang cook it. If that's not enough, we can buy it from outside."

"Okay, I'll listen to Sister!"

When Yun Qi saw Mrs. Han return with Yun Jinnian, he breathed a sigh of relief and lingered outside Qiyue Academy. In the end, he decided to visit Concubine Lian instead.

Concubine Rou was utterly jealous and resentful of Concubine Lian for this!

As it was approaching dinner time and the Dragon Boat Festival, the old lady decided that the whole family should dine together in the dining hall.

It was unclear whether she knew about Yun Jinnian's cousin visiting the Yun Family, but she never mentioned it, nor did she invite the cousin to join them for dinner!

Chapter 242: Hatred

Confronted with the matriarch's petty behavior, Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian could hardly wait for what was to come, so they specifically instructed the kitchen to prepare a few extra dishes. After eating here, they would go over and eat together.

Xu Xinmo kept casting glances at Yun Jinnian.

After all, it had been a long time since anyone in Tianchu Country had been granted the previous favor from the Grand Princess Regent.

She was determined to obtain at least the majority of it.

Therefore, Xu Xinmo whispered many things to the old lady, who assured her not to worry, promising that Yun Jinnian would obediently hand over the items.

However, during the meal, everything remained calm and nothing was said.

"Jinnian,"

When the Old Lady suddenly spoke up, Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian knew she was about to cause trouble.

Yun Jinnian stood up, bowed slightly to the Old Lady, and called out indifferently, "Grandmother!"

"I heard that Her Highness the Grand Princess Regent bestowed upon you quite a few treasures!"

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian knew what the Old Lady intended to do and spoke lightly, "Yes, Her Highness the Grand Princess Regent indeed gave many fine things, which I've decided to keep for my future dowry. I will not give them to anyone, and should anyone dare to forcibly take them..."

Yun Jinnian didn't finish her sentence, but the Old Lady and Xu Xinmo felt a chill down their spines for no reason, as if they had fallen into an ice cellar.

They felt oppressed, struggling to breathe.

The Old Lady's face burned with shame. She had indeed harbored such thoughts, but since Yun Jinnian had spoken first, if she were to demand the items now, it would be a blatant seizure.

"Child, I merely wanted you to take good care of the Highness' favor. Why must you speak such harsh words?"

"It seems I misunderstood Grandmother's intention," Yun Jinnian said and then respectfully inclined her body before sitting back down in her original place.

Everyone clearly understood the Old Lady's intentions.

Yun Qi watched silently, saying nothing from start to finish, allowing the Old Lady to cause difficulties and Yun Jinnian to retaliate.

Mrs. Han stood up, "This is pointless. Jinnian, let's go!"

Yun Jinnian stood up and left with Mrs. Han, heading towards Niannian Garden.

"Look at you both, is there no regard for this old woman in your eyes?"

the Old Lady roared.

Yun Qi stood up and gave the Old Lady a glance before departing.

The Old Lady felt utterly overwhelmed.

Under all those watching eyes, how could Yun Qi dare...

Yun Chen stood up, "Mother, enough's enough. If this goes on, the Yun Family will fall apart!" He then turned to Xu Xinmo, "Xinmo, stay in this family if you can, but if you can't, I'll send you back to the Xu Family or even to Su Hang."

Upon hearing this, Xu Xinmo's face flamed red with humiliation.

Yun Chen turned and walked away.

The three brothers of the Yun Zhen immediately followed suit, leaving.

As they looked at the Old Lady with disdain,

Yun Muyou stood up, and the others quickly followed, offering a bow to the Old Lady before hastily departing.

Mrs. He remained in her seat, "Mother, it's getting late. Your daughter-in-law will escort you back to rest."

"There's no need for your pretense here!" The Old Lady got up, looked at Mrs. He with displeasure, and sighed, "These two should never have been in the Yun Family. Ever since they returned, this household has been in disarray, with no respect for their elders!"

Therefore, she was determined to get rid of Yun Jinnian and Mrs. Han.

She intended to make Yun Qi divorce Mrs. Han and to expel Yun Jinnian from the Yun Family, removing her from the family register.

Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian walked on the road.

"Mother, with such action, the Old Lady will unlikely rest until she's done," said Yun Jinnian calmly.

"It's not her attack I fear, but her inaction. Once she makes a move, there are ways to make her swallow her blood and tears. As for those things, find an opportunity to move them out of here; who knows, one day, we mother and daughter may never set foot in this Yun Family home again!"

Chapter 243: Despair

Upon hearing Mrs. Han say this, Yun Jinnian already had a grasp on the situation.

"Then, let Uncle Zhong help to secretly transport it out on another day!"

Mrs. Han nodded.

When the mother and daughter returned to Niannian Garden, Han Tianci greeted them with a beaming smile.

After sharing some more dishes together, it wasn't until Mrs. Han returned to Qiyue Academy, accompanied by Bai Que and saw Yun Qi standing in the yard, that her body stiffened, filled with distaste.

"What are you doing here?" Her voice was cold and indifferent, keeping people at a distance.

"Madam Shu!"

Yun Qi called out softly,

Filled with aching tenderness.

He truly wished Mrs. Han would beat him or even curse at him; anything was better than this indifference, as if she were dealing with a stranger.

"If you have something to say, say it, if not, you'd better go back to rest early. Both of your concubines are with child; you cannot be careless!" Mrs. Han said mockingly.

She turned and entered the small hall.

Yun Qi stood in the courtyard for a while, feeling a deep chill in his heart and body.

He didn't know what he was still holding on to, given this situation with Mrs. Han?

After all, he didn't know what Mrs. Han truly wanted or how she expected him to act.

Yun Qi turned to leave, feeling utterly drained.

Suddenly, Mrs. Han stopped in her tracks. "Yun Qi!"

Yun Qi, upon hearing her, was overjoyed.

But then he heard Mrs. Han say, "Yun Qi, I won't actively harm your mother and Xu Xinmo, but if they fall into my hands, I won't show any mercy. Today, I just want to ask you one thing—are you going to stand by and watch, or are you going to help your mother?"

Yun Qi turned around, looking at Mrs. Han.

He really wanted to say, I'll help you, I won't get involved with my mother's affairs.

But what use would it be to say so? Mrs. Han wouldn't believe him, and he couldn't truly help Mrs. Han harm his own mother.

"Seeing you like this, I have my answer. That same thing I said before, that old pious woman had better not provoke me or harm my daughter. If she dares to make a move, I will repay it tenfold!" Mrs. Han said coldly. "You can leave now!"

The old lady should have been sent to the family temple long ago, but the Yun Family had indulged her time and again, allowing her to become the way she was.

You reap what you sow; there will be a time when these people regret their indulgence.

Yun Qi wanted to say something, but the door to the small hall had already been closed. All his words were left unspoken.

After a moment of silence, he went to see his concubine Lian.

Gentle, approachable, skilled in music, chess, calligraphy, and poetry—every word she said went straight to his heart.

It truly felt more comforting than facing Mrs. Han's cold expression here.

But, his heart still felt so empty!

In the small hall, Mrs. Han sat on the Arhat bed, the light dim, her face obscured from view. Bai Que came to report, "Second Master has gone to Concubine Lian's room!"

Mrs. Han was silent for a long time before she finally spoke, "A dog will never stop eating feces!!"

Then she added, "Go heat up some water!"

"Yes!"

Niannian Garden

Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci were painting, and Han Tianci was truly talented—all his drawings of cats and dogs were exceedingly lifelike. Yun Jinnian was at his side mixing colors, and the siblings quickly became engrossed in their activity.

Yun Jinnian was gentle and never told Han Tianci what he could or couldn't do, which made Han Tianci increasingly fond of her, growing more and more dependent on her.

The night deepened

and the siblings reluctantly returned to their own rooms to sleep.

Yun Jinnian looked at the firmly closed door of Han Tianci's room, her lips curving into a smile. Having a brother felt really nice.

And she was determined to protect him well and see him live a long life.

After sending Mrs. Yuan and Hemei to bed, Yun Jinnian prepared to undress for rest when she heard a faint sound by the window.

Approaching the window, she gently opened it, and upon seeing the tall and handsome figure of Chu Yu, Yun Jinnian spoke softly, "How did you get here?"

Chapter 244: Jealousy

"I've been here for a while now, who is that little imp?" asked Chu Yu.

Yun Jinnian knew who Chu Yu was referring to, and she still trusted him, "My brother!"

"Your brother?"

A brother-in-law?

Whose seed?

"Yes, my brother, you must not tell anyone!" Yun Jinnian hurriedly instructed.

"I know, I know, I'll keep it under wraps!" Chu Yu quickly responded, taking out an embroidered box and handing it to Yun Jinnian, "Here, for you!"

"What is it?"

"Open it and see for yourself!"

Yun Jinnian took it and opened it; two cups glowed faintly under the moonlight, "Luminous Cups?"

"Right, I won them today, aren't you especially thrilled!" Chu Yu asked, seeking to please.

Yun Jinnian nodded, but she handed back the Luminous Cups to Chu Yu, "Since you've won them with such effort, how can I accept!"

It had the appearance of a private bribe.

"If you don't want them, today I..."

"I saw you at Huiquan Tower!"

Chu Yu laughed, "I saw you too!"

He looked at the Luminous Cups in his hand, "Since you don't want them now, I'll keep them. When you want them later, just tell me!"

Yun Jinnian had no choice but to nod slightly,

Chu Yu looked at Yun Jinnian's delicate and harmonious pretty face, saying with concern, "You should sleep early. Tomorrow, auntie will send someone to escort you to the Princess Residence. Cousin might take a few more days to return. You can ask auntie for cousin's medical records to get a clear picture in your mind!"

Yun Jinnian nodded.

Seeing that Yun Jinnian had nothing further to say, Chu Yu felt a bit stifled and said sullenly, "Then I'm leaving!"

"Be careful on your way!"

"I know, I know, I've brought people with me. See you at the Princess Residence tomorrow, I'll buy you pastries from Xufuji!" Chu Yu didn't wait for Yun Jinnian to refuse, and ran off in a flash.

Yun Jinnian stood for a long time and, too lazy to close the window, turned and went to sleep.

It was the sixth day of the fifth month of the seventeenth year of Yuanhe.

Yun Jinnian was twelve years old, and Han Tianci was seven by false count.

The siblings got up, washed up well, and Mrs. Han had already sent Bai Que to invite them over for breakfast.

The siblings got ready, with Yun Jinnian taking Han Tianci over first, while Hemei and Henuan, having had their breakfast, could come over with the medicine chest when ready.

Mrs. Yuan, feeling uneasy, saw Han Tianci patting his chest and saying, "I know Martial Arts, I'll protect my sister!"

Mrs. Yuan laughed, while Yun Jinnian proudly patted Han Tianci on the shoulder, "Then I'll rely on you for protection!"

"Alrighty, alrighty, sister, let's go!"

Once the siblings arrived, Mrs. Han called someone to have them wash their hands, and breakfast was served just the same.

Mrs. Han tenderly scooped bird's nest porridge for the two children, "Eat slowly, it's a bit hot."

"Mhm, mhm!" the two children nodded obediently.

Mrs. Han was initially somewhat worried that Yun Qi might bump into Han Tianci and might learn something, but after hearing that Yun Qi had left early, she was relieved.

No sooner had they finished breakfast, Hemei and Henuan brought over the medicine chest, and someone from the Princess Residence had already come to fetch them.

Nanny Song came personally to collect them.

Upon hearing this, Mrs. He's expression slightly changed, and she hurried to the main hall to receive Nanny Song, "Nanny Song, you honor us with your presence!"

Nanny Song smiled faintly, "I am here by order of the Princess to bring Miss Yun Fourth over to the Princess Residence for some fun. She will be returned personally after lunch!"

"Someone has already gone to call for Jinnian!" Mrs. He said, her heart tightening with jealousy.

Why did Yun Jinnian gain the favor of the Princess Royal as soon as she returned, while Yun Muyou's marriage was so difficult.

And now it was not just her, but Yun Zhen's marriage was also fraught with difficulty.

Not fitting for high, not settling for low.

Mrs. He thought for a moment, wondering if she could get Yun Jinnian to bring Yun Muyou along...

Chapter 245: Shameless

However, Mrs. He also knew that the person representing the Princess Regnant of Tianchu wasn't those marchionesses or the marquesses but the Princess's personal attendant, Mama Song.

Therefore, Mrs. He couldn't mention it to Mama Song; it had to be Yun Jinnian who spoke up.

But Yun Jinnian...

Mrs. He felt a vague unease in her heart. She knew that Yun Jinnian was no longer the timid and meek girl she had been one or two years ago and regretted not having sent a gift when Yun Jinnian was sent to Yingci'an, nor showing any gesture later at Huguo Temple.

Mama Song calmly sipped her tea, with a serene expression on her face, not initiating conversation with Mrs. He, which made Mrs. He quite embarrassed.

It wasn't until Yun Jinnian approached that Mrs. He could speak, but Mama Song had already put down her teacup with a beaming smile to greet her, "Greetings, Fourth Miss!"

Yun Jinnian promptly curtsied in response, "Greetings to Mama Song!"

"Fourth Miss, no need for such formalities. By the Princess's command, this old servant is here to fetch you. Are you ready with your belongings, Fourth Miss? If so, let us be on our way!"

Yun Jinnian nodded, then turned to Mrs. He with a curtsy, "Aunt, I shall proceed to the Princess Residence with Mama Song now. Should Grandmother inquire, I hope Aunt will mention it on my behalf!"

Although Mrs. He had wanted Yun Jinnian to bring Yun Muyou along, with the conversation at this point, she had no choice but to give up, smilingly saying, "Go ahead, go ahead, I'll see you out!"

Yun Jinnian, along with Han Tianci, Hemei, and Henuan, left the Yun Family and boarded the carriage of the Princess Regnant of Tianchu.

It was truly the carriage the Princess Regnant used whenever she traveled.

Watching the carriage depart, Mrs. He's heart thumped wildly, "My goodness..."

Yun Jinnian indeed had caught the eye of the Princess Regnant.

Mrs. He was both astonished and delighted, turning around hastily to head to Qiyue Academy to seek information from Mrs. Han.

"Sister-in-law, sister-in-law!"

Mrs. Han looked indifferently at Mrs. He's enthusiasm, called out "Sister-in-law!" and sat down.

Mrs. He was overjoyed.

This was establishing a connection with the Princess Regnant of Tianchu, the most revered and senior Princess in the whole country.

"Sister-in-law, how did Jinnian come to know the Princess?" Mrs. He asked with an eager face.

Mrs. Han looked at Mrs. He, "They met in Huaixi County, why do you ask?"

Mrs. Han has never had much fondness for Mrs. He.

"They met in Huaixi County, are you saying you didn't know, big sister-in-law?" Mrs. Han countered.

"Ah..." Mrs. He stammered, "I, I knew that!"

"Since big sister-in-law knew, why come to ask me? If big sister-in-law wishes to know anything more, I am afraid I have nothing to disclose. With big sister-in-law managing family matters, it seems quite busy; please go ahead with your tasks, I won't keep you any longer!"

This eviction was issued without any courtesy at all.

Upon hearing this, Mrs. He internally cursed Mrs. Han, her face turning blue with rage as she stood up darkly and said, "If that's the case, then I shall take my leave!"

She left with a flick of her sleeves.

Mrs. Han watched her go, snorting with indifference.

"What a piece of work!"

When Jinnian was struggling, she hadn't seen Mrs. He lift a finger to help, not to mention making things easier for her in terms of food and clothing with just a word, which the servants wouldn't dare neglect, but what did she do? She turned a blind eye uncaringly — what kind of aunt is that, completely worthless.

Now that Jinnian had caught the eye of the Princess Regnant, shamelessly and ridiculously she came clinging on, not making any sense!

In the carriage.

Mama Song offered Yun Jinnian some pastries, but Yun Jinnian didn't eat them, instead passing them to Han Tianci.

"Thank you, Sister!"

Mama Song had noticed this unattractive Han Tianci from the start, originally assuming he was a maid of Yun Jinnian, but felt it wasn't quite right.

Seeing how attentively and affectionately Yun Jinnian treated him, and hearing Han Tianci call her "sister," she asked, "Who might this little lady be..."

"This is my cousin, Tiantian!"

Chapter 246: Too Enthusiastic

Han Tianci stuffed the pastry into his mouth, chewed and swallowed it, then he turned towards Nanny Song and bowed, "Tiantian pays her respects to Nanny Song!"

Nanny Song hastily smiled, "No need for such formalities, sit down and enjoy the cakes!"

"Thank you, Nanny Song!" Han Tianci sat down and focused on enjoying the cakes.

The pastries here are more delicious than those in Sanzhou.

Yun Jinnian simply smiled, "Eat slowly, don't choke on it!"

The full extent of his affection and concern was impossible to conceal.

Nanny Song immediately understood that this Tiantian could not be treated coldly like those people from the Yun Family.

The residence of the Commandery Princess was at least three times the size of the Yun Family's. After alighting from the carriage at the main gate, they entered directly through the main entrance and then boarded another lavish carriage to pass through the second gate and enter the rear courtyard.

The four daughters-in-law of the Commandery Princess, along with their daughters-in-law and unmarried young ladies, all promptly came to greet them.

Yun Jinnian only recognized Yuwen Ming.

"Oh my, this must be the fourth young miss of the Yun Family, she has grown up so beautiful!"

Before Nanny Song could introduce them, Yun Jinnian received quite a few meeting gifts, ranging from bracelets to jade hairpins, golden hairpins, and gem-encrusted hairpins. Even the young girls gave out embroidered pouches and bracelets. Nanny Song chuckled and let a maid temporarily keep them for Yun Jinnian.

"Fourth Miss, please follow this old servant!"

"Yes!"

Yun Jinnian nodded and followed Nanny Song, with Han Tianci, Hemei, and Henuan trailing behind her.

She did not look around.

Nor did Han Tianci.

Nanny Song watched them and felt that these cousin sisters were no ordinary individuals.

Not to mention anyone else, just Tiantian herself showed no signs of jealousy or envy when others presented Yun Jinnian with meeting gifts, without even asking her opinion.

The main courtyard where the Commandery Princess lived was both large and magnificent.

Nanny Song led Yun Jinnian into the small hall, whereupon the Commandery Princess looked at Yun Jinnian with a smile.

Yun Jinnian stepped forward and bowed, "Paying respects to your Highness the Princess!"

Han Tianci, Hemei, and Huan followed behind Yun Jinnian and paid their respects.

"Very good, very good, take a seat!" the Commandery Princess smiled most amiably.

"Would it be appropriate to take your Highness the Princess's pulse first?" Yun Jinnian asked quietly.

"Certainly!"

Yun Jinnian first carefully took the Commandery Princess's pulse, feeling that the pulse was steady but still could detect the weak pulse from a previous stroke and suffocation. After a moment of contemplation, she finally spoke, "Your Highness, your body has no major issues now, but you should continue with careful treatment in the future!"

The Commandery Princess began to smile, "I owe you a great debt this time!"

After coming back yesterday, she immediately called an Imperial Physician to take her pulse.

What the Imperial Physician said was, "It was fortunate she came across someone skillful in administering needles, or else Her Highness the Princess might have..."

Even though he did not say "passed away," the Imperial Physician added, "It was really a close call, a great fortune indeed!"

The Commandery Princess had not felt it at the time, but now that she reflected on it, she was quite frightened.

Not to mention Nanny Song and Yuwen Ming, who had experienced it firsthand.

Therefore, it was only reasonable that everyone in the Princess's Residence immediately offered generous meeting gifts.

Yun Jinnian merely smiled softly and didn't take credit, "Your Highness, may I have the privilege of reviewing the medical records of the Commandery Prince over the years?"

With such composure, the Commandery Princess was more than eager to agree.

"Of course!"

She asked Nanny Song to take Yun Jinnian to the study, with Yuwen Ming accompanying them, which naturally left no room for objections from anyone else.

The study of the Commandery Princess was extensive.

It had an inner chamber and outer area, as well as a small hall filled with food—fruits, pastries, dried fruits, and candied fruits. Han Tianci looked eagerly at them, prompting Nanny Song to urge him to sit down and eat leisurely.

She also encouraged Hemei and Huan to eat.

Meanwhile, Yun Jinnian sat before a desk where several boxes contained the Commandery Prince's medical records from over the years.

Chapter 247: A Discovery

Yun Jinnian was not in a hurry, but picked up some very ancient records and began to read.

His Highness Prince Yanjun was conferred the title this year at the age of forty-three. He is the youngest son of the Princess of Zhen Guo, and due to his poor health, he has not yet married.

Yun Jinnian first looked at the pulse records from when he was born, then carefully studied and pondered them, looking over each one. When she became thirsty, she reached out her hand and immediately a cup of warm, fragrant tea was handed to her, which Yun Jinnian drank before continuing to read.

Han Tianci, Hemei, and Huan had all been taken out to play by Yuwen Ming, for fear of disturbing Yun Jinnian.

Madam Song was serving at the side.

The Princess of Zhen Guo stopped by halfway through, and seeing Yun Jinnian so focused, she quietly left after giving a command to her eldest daughter-in-law, "Tell the kitchen to prepare some delicious food!"

"Yes, Mother!"

Yun Jinnian had saved the Princess of Zhen Guo; nobody in the Princess Residence dared to treat her lightly.

Moreover, the Princess Residence had already been divided, and it was only because the Princess of Zhen Guo was still around that everyone was living together.

Therefore, there wasn't so much scheming, but there definitely were some crooked acts.

The Princess of Zhen Guo had just returned to her own courtyard when her eldest son, Marquess Zhongyi, came back. "Mother!"

"What brings you here!"

"I heard that Miss Yun from the Yun Family is here and came specially to see if there's anything that I can help with."

"Now that you mention it, there's indeed something I need your help with!"

"Mother, just command me!"

"Go and see if there's a large estate in the Capital City, one that backs onto a mountain, preferably one where the entire mountain belongs to the estate!"

Marquess Zhongyi paused, "Mother means..."

"Just as you are thinking, this estate is intended as a reward for Jinnian," explained the Princess of Zhen Guo.

"Isn't that too generous?"

An entire estate plus a mountain!

The Princess of Zhen Guo's face turned slightly cold, "Is it really too generous compared to the lives of your mother and your fifth brother?"

Marquess Zhongyi immediately got up and knelt on the ground, "Mother, it's my fault. I'll send someone to inquire right away!"

The Princess of Zhen Guo helped Marquess Zhongyi up, "My son, you are the eldest, and although your brothers are all Marquesses, after three generations their ranks will drop to that of an Earl, and after another three, they will become commoners. You are the eldest brother and must care for your younger siblings. Your father passed away early, and as the eldest brother is like a father, even if we heal the fifth's health, it will be extremely difficult for him to have children. However, the position of Prince Yanjun is hereditary without replacement. I have already thought it through. When the time comes, we will let Yaya be adopted under his name. You are the one who must handle this. Do you understand?"

"I understand, Mother!"

Yuwen Ya, aged eighteen this year, is the third legitimate son of the head family and ranked seventh among his brothers, which is why everyone calls him Seventh Young Master.

He is not lacking in either literary or military strategy and is capable of upholding the door of the Prince Yanjun.

"Good that you understand. I was afraid that you might think the reward too hefty. But rest assured, I will provide the silver myself; your brothers don't have to share the cost!" the Princess of Zhen Guo added.

"Mother, you must not say such things!" protested Marquess Zhongyi.

"It's settled then!"

Marquess Zhongyi took a deep breath and exited the room.

The Princess of Zhen Guo sighed; children are indeed life's debts.

After a good while reading the pulse records, Yun Jinnian gently placed down the rice paper, stood up to stretch her somewhat stiff neck.

"Madam Song!"

"This old servant is here!"

"Where is the cleanse room?"

Madam Song smiled and immediately instructed a maid to lead Yun Jinnian there.

A short while later, Yun Jinnian returned clean and tidy, holding the pulse records and deep in thought, "Madam Song!"

"What can I do for you, Fourth Miss?"

"Could you trouble someone to find me a few medical books or miscellaneous records from Nanjiang, or about the local customs there? If there are books that introduce Nanjiang's herbs and poisons, that would be even better!"

Madam Song hurriedly asked, "Has Fourth Miss found something?"

"Yes, at first there wasn't, but now there is. I need to speak with the Princess immediately!"

Chapter 248: Discovery

Madam Song dared not hesitate and immediately ordered the book slave to search according to Yun Jinnian's instructions. Even the libraries of the various masters in the residence were checked, and people were sent to ask if there were any books about Nanjiang—they were to move all of them over for the time being.

"Your Highness, Princess!"

"Please, sit and speak!"

It was only after Yun Jinnian had sat down that she said, "Your Highness, there are some things I'm not sure whether I should speak of."

"What things?"

Yun Jinnian took a deep breath, "The poison that afflicted Prince Rui originates from Nanjiang. Some days ago, at Xiaohe Village, the same poison from Nanjiang struck City Lord Dongfang. Your Highness was poisoned by Nanjiang's toxin years ago, and though you gave your title to the Commandery Prince, sure enough, but en route Commandery Prince too was poisoned once again, the first time when he was seven or eight years old!"

Princess Zhen Guo paused, pondering carefully before responding, "At that time, Xiao Wu seemed to have indeed fallen seriously ill, almost to death. How did you recognize it? How did you know?"

"I noticed from the pulse records and prescriptions!" Yun Jinnian said softly.

But it hit Princess Zhen Guo like a heavy hammer at heart, "Jinnian, if only you had been born decades earlier, how wonderful that would have been. If only you had been born decades earlier, my Xiao Wu, my Xiao Wu..."

As she spoke, the Princess became choked with sobs.

Yun Jinnian quickly offered a handkerchief, "Your Highness!"

Princess Zhen Guo took the handkerchief and gently wiped the corners of her eyes, "Whatever you need, just let Madam Song know!"

"I have already asked Madam Song to help me find some books on Nanjiang!"

The Princess nodded, "As for medicinal materials, anything you need from the pharmacy, just ask. If you can produce some medicinal pills, one third of them will be yours."

The medicinal materials of Princess Zhen Guo's residence were of the highest quality and rarity. Let alone one third, even one fourth would have been agreeable to Yun Jinnian!

She stood up, paid her respects to Princess Zhen Guo, "Yes!"

Seeing Yun Jinnian act in such a manner, Princess Zhen Guo smiled, "Good child, do not feel burdened. Go ahead with whatever you have in mind!"

Su Ye nodded.

In her heart, she already had some plans, yet being so young, she dared not assert herself too boldly.

Of course, Yun Jinnian had her own views regarding the recurring discovery of poisons from Nanjiang but hadn't dared tell Princess Zhen Guo. Instead, she decided to discuss it with Chu Yu.

After rising and bowing, she returned to the library to continue studying the pulse records and prescriptions.

The second prescription was discerned by Yun Jinnian, which, when presented to Princess Zhen Guo, elicited a nod, "Indeed, Xiao Wu fell seriously ill again in his fifty-ninth year!"

Princess Zhen Guo was extremely moved.

Yun Jinnian, despite her young age, had medical skills that were truly impressive.

"Have Jinnian come for lunch, and her cousin as well!"

It seemed that Princess Zhen Guo's affection extended to Jinnian's family.

As soon as everything was prepared, Chu Yu entered the small hall with a playful grin, "Auntie, I haven't had lunch yet, could I possibly dine with you!"

Behind him followed the Seventh Master, Yuwen Ya.

"Grandmother!"

Yun Jinnian stood up and bowed in greeting.

Chu Yu laughed, "Fourth Miss, please, there's no need for such formalities!"

Yuwen Ya couldn't help but give Yun Jinnian a few extra glances, noting her delicate and frail appearance, which was indeed exceptionally beautiful.

However, Yun Jinnian was only twelve years old, and he didn't allow his thoughts to wander further.

"Fourth Miss, please, no need for formalities!" He then approached Princess Zhen Guo, "Grandmother, your grandson has come to freeload a meal!"

"You all, you all, quickly add two more sets of chopsticks and call the kitchen to prepare a few more dishes!"

She beckoned everyone to sit down.

To start eating first.

Han Tianci liked meat, and Yun Jinnian served him several times, enjoying a few bites of the delicacies herself. Sitting next to him, Chu Yu also added food to his plate several times, making Han Tianci smile at Chu Yu and say, "Thank you!"

Chu Yu smiled and nodded in acknowledgment.

Yuwen Ya looked astonished, while Princess Zhen Guo's smile was laden with deep meaning.

Chapter 249: Serious

After eating lunch, the Commandery Princess of the town allowed Yun Jinnian to rest, saying they would continue in the afternoon, as there were too many pulse diagnoses and prescriptions to review; they likely couldn't finish in one day, and little Tianci was not currently in the Capital City.

His return would also take time.

Yun Jinnian nodded and took Han Tianci with her to rest.

The siblings lay next to each other.

Yun Jinnian's heart was at ease, and she didn't blush because Han Tianci was a boy. She spoke with him for a while before closing her eyes to sleep.

After Yun Jinnian fell asleep, Han Tianci sat up.

Looking at the sleeping Yun Jinnian.

This was his sister, his blood sister, a sister who would be kind to him.

Of course, Han Tianci also knew Yun Jinnian was very tired and had it tough.

Back when they were in Sanzhou, he thought his grandfather was remarkable, but today, after entering the Princess Residence and being taken around by Yuwen Ming, seeing how cautious and careful the maids and old women were, Tianci realized it was different.

He sneaked a kiss on Yun Jinnian affectionately and then happily slept beside her.

He closed his eyes and, learning from Yun Jinnian, crossed his hands over his heart in a proper manner and quickly fell asleep.

Yun Jinnian was accustomed to her afternoon nap, waking up at the designated time without needing anyone to call her.

Seeing Han Tianci sleeping soundly, Yun Jinnian's heart felt soft.

This was her brother.

The brother she hadn't met even once in her previous life, yet he had risked his life for her.

She reached out to touch Han Tianci's soft hair and bent down to gently kiss his forehead.

Her smile was incredibly tender.

She knew there wouldn't be many more chances to steal kisses like this.

Yun Jinnian quietly left the room, and Nanny Song immediately came up to meet her. Yun Jinnian quickly put her finger to her lips, "Shhh!"

Nanny Song understood immediately, nodded with a smile, and led Yun Jinnian to another room to freshen up.

After getting ready, she drank some soup in the small hall before continuing with the pulse diagnoses and prescriptions in the study.

It was the third time she had brought a prescription to the Commandery Princess, who was still relatively composed.

But when Yun Jinnian personally brought the fourth prescription and told the Commandery Princess the truth,

The Commandery Princess's body stiffened, "What did you say?"

"Lady dares to guess that Prince Yanjun has become mute!"

Chu Yu, Yuwen Ya, and Yuwen Ming were also extremely surprised.

"Jinnian, you mustn't speak recklessly!" Chu Yu said.

The Commandery Princess hastily added, "Yu, Jinnian is not speaking recklessly; at the time, I didn't understand why he suddenly stopped talking and wanted to make a long journey. It turns out, it turns out..." The Commandery Princess said, her eyes turning red.

Yes, many Imperial Physicians had looked at him, but not one had diagnosed that Prince Yanjun was mute.

Yun Jinnian was the first, the only one.

All those unexplainable things suddenly became clear.

Suddenly, everyone was silent.

After a long while, the Commandery Princess asked, "Jinnian, can Tianci's throat still be..."

"Your Highness Princess, allow me to see the Commandery Prince before I speak; I do not dare to guarantee anything right now, as the condition of the Commandery Prince is worse than I had imagined..." Yun Jinnian's voice trailed off softly.

Yet the Commandery Princess nodded calmly, "You don't need to worry. It's not your fault if he cannot be cured in the end. Yu, you will bear witness today!"

"Yes!"

Chu Yu responded.

Yun Jinnian truly believed the Commandery Princess's words and became even more diligent.

After having dinner at the Princess Residence, she took several books related to Nanjiang, and Nanny Song, Chu Yu, and Yuwen Ya personally escorted her back to the Yun Family.

Chu Yu and Yuwen Ya rode their horses because, given Prince Yanjun's situation, neither was in the mood for their usual horseplay.

"Uncle, do you think Miss Four could really heal Uncle Five?"

Chapter 250: Wicked Affairs

Chu Yu looked at Yuwen Ya and after some thought, said, "I believe she can!"

A simple sentence, "I believe her."

Chu Yu would not say more than necessary, after all, he didn't wish to reveal Yun Jinnian's strengths to Yuwen Ya; if Yuwen Ya took an interest in Yun Jinnian, that would be disastrous.

He certainly wouldn't do something as foolish as lifting a rock only to drop it on his own foot.

After escorting Yun Jinnian to the Yun Residence's entrance and seeing her enter the gates with Han Tianci, Hemei, and Henuan, carrying several bags, Chu Yu, Yuwen Ya, and Nanny Song departed.

Chu Yu had to return to the Prince Rui Residence, while Yuwen Ya and Nanny Song were headed back to the Princess Residence, hence they bid their farewells and separated.

First, Yun Jinnian took Han Tianci to the Qiyue Academy to speak with Mrs. Han for a while.

Seeing Yun Jinnian's tired expression, Mrs. Han immediately sent the two children back to Niannian Garden.

"Ah!"

A light sigh.

Back at Niannian Garden, Mrs. Yuan had already prepared hot water, and the siblings took a warm bath.

Han Tianci then started practicing martial arts in the courtyard. Hemei and Henuan, on a whim, exchanged a few moves with him, only to discover that Han Tianci's martial arts skills far surpassed theirs.

They secretly vowed to practice diligently.

Yun Jinnian, meanwhile, sat on the chaise longue, leaning against a soft pillow, intently reading books from Nanjiang, while Mrs. Yuan joyfully sorted through the items Yun Jinnian had brought back.

Originally Han Tianci wasn't meant to receive anything, but upon finding out he was Yun Jinnian's cousin, the Marchionesses discreetly added a portion for him.

And where would Han Tianci have the need for those items? He gave them all to Yun Jinnian.

"Oh my, this bracelet is nice, so bright and lustrous!" Mrs. Yuan admired as she tried it on her wrist, "It's too youthful for me!"

Then she carefully put it back.

She had Ru Yue take note,

Ru Yue's handwriting was not great, but her drawings were fine. When taking inventory, she would simply sketch the items so that Mrs. Yuan, who could not read, would understand what they were and what they looked like.

Yun Jinnian put down the book, walked over to the trunk, picked up the bracelet that Mrs. Yuan especially liked, and put it on Mrs. Yuan's wrist, "It's perfect for Nurse to wear this bracelet!"

"I'm too old to wear such a pretty bracelet..." Mrs. Yuan desired yet hesitated.

She was deeply conflicted.

"It's beautiful!"

Upon hearing that, Mrs. Yuan asked, "Really beautiful?"

"Yes, extremely beautiful!"

Yun Jinnian nodded, very seriously.

Mrs. Yuan hesitated for a moment, then said, "Then I'll accept it!"

"Yes!"

Yun Jinnian nodded.

She picked out a golden hairpin for Ru Yue, who quickly stood up to thank her, feeling extremely happy.

"Thank you, Miss!"

Ru Yue was a woman of few words, but she was conscientious and didn't shirk her duties or indulge in trickery, and Yun Jinnian highly valued her!

She selected two jade hairpins for Mrs. Yuan to later give to Nanny An and Yaniang and also gave one golden hairpin each to Hemei and Henuan.

"Miss, I will call them all over, it would be better for Miss to reward them personally," said Mrs. Yuan before hurrying out of the small hall, continuously touching the jade bracelet on her wrist.

Soon, Nanny An and the others had arrived, and Yun Jinnian rewarded each of them and received their thanks in turn.

Only then did Nanny An say, "Miss!"

"Hmm?"

"Today, this servant has received some news, but I'm not sure if it's appropriate to speak of it," Nanny An hesitated, still uncertain of the information's authenticity.

"Speak, what is it?"

After a moment of thought, Nanny An disclosed, "It's like this: today a maid sold me a piece of information, saying the Old Madame is planning to make a move against Miss. She advised Miss to be very cautious in her actions, especially to steer clear of any injured men, as helping them would be unwise!"