

Indulgence 281

Chapter 281: Deepening Contradiction

"I don't want to see it now. Oh right, stop at the city gate, I'm picking someone up to go with us!" Yun Jinnian spoke indifferently.

Madam Qian frowned, "Who is it?"

"My brother!"

After Yun Jinnian finished speaking, he fell silent.

She wasn't pleased; she would just stay in Nanjiang for a while. After all, the Emperor didn't even know whether she had learned to cure poisons or not, and he was probably more afraid that, if she hadn't learned, she wouldn't heal him but accidentally kill him instead!

Madam Qian wanted to say something, but in the end, she said nothing.

She lifted the curtain of the carriage and said, "Stop at the city gate to pick up a person!"

In front of the carriage sat three people: a coachman and two female guards.

Yun Jinnian didn't know what expression they wore, but she could guess—they were not pleased.

But displeased as they were, the carriage still stopped outside the city gate.

Yun Jinnian alighted from the carriage and watched as Han Tianci, who was walking with his head held high, approached. He was carrying a huge bundle, so enormous it nearly squashed him.

Yun Jinnian looked around but saw no sign of Han Xuzi.

"Are you alone?" she asked Han Tianci.

"Yeah, Grandfather had Uncle Zhong bring me here and then he left!" said Han Tianci, bursting into laughter.

Yun Jinnian laughed along with him and helped him with the bundle, "It's so heavy, what did you bring?"

"I'll show you on the carriage!" Han Tianci said mysteriously.

Madam Qian stepped forward to help, but Han Tianci quickly shook his head, "No, no need!"

Hemei and Henuan came forward to help, and Han Tianci didn't disdain their help; together, they loaded the bundle onto the carriage. Madam Qian wanted to enter too when Yun Jinnian then said, "Madam Qian, you take the carriage behind!"

Madam Qian's face immediately cooled by several degrees, and Yun Jinnian, truly not pampering her, dropped the carriage curtain.

Madam Qian, never having been treated such, took a deep breath and twisted her body onto the second carriage.

"Go!" The carriage once again sped off.

Kicking up clouds of dust.

Inside the carriage, the siblings looked at each other and burst into laughter.

Han Tianci opened the bundle, and Yun Jinnian, looking at it, couldn't help but chuckle.

"Why are you carrying so much medicine?"

"It's useful on the road; if we encounter poor folks who need emergency aid, we can give it to them, and if we meet wealthy landowners, we can sell it to them for silver!"

Yun Jinnian nodded, "You make sense!"

"Sister, am I not very clever?" Han Tianci playfully asked.

"You should call me 'brother'!"

"Yes, 'brother'!"

Yun Jinnian affectionately tapped Han Tianci and then wrote in his palm, "Did Grandfather arrange for someone to secretly protect us?"

Han Tianci nodded and wrote back in Yun Jinnian's palm, "Uncle Zhong!"

Yun Jinnian immediately felt relieved.

Elsewhere

Upon learning of Yun Jinnian's departure, Princess Zhen Guo took a deep breath, holding back tears, "May the Bodhisattva bless her, may everything go smoothly for Jinnian, and may my Xiao Wu..."

On the official road, two horses galloped, carrying Yuwen Ya and Chu Yu.

"Little uncle, we'll soon see Uncle Five, and I'm actually quite excited!" said Chu Yu, smiling.

But when they met Prince Yanjun, their smiles vanished.

Because Prince Yanjun could no longer see them.

Yuwen Ya waved his hand in front of Prince Yanjun's eyes, which didn't move an inch, "Uncle Five?"

Prince Yanjun smiled.

His Banished Fairy beauty, in that moment, seemed as though a hundred flowers bloomed simultaneously, so beautiful it didn't seem real.

And dressed in his white robes, he looked like an immortal descending to the mundane world, standing there, out of place with the world around him.

Chu Yu took a deep breath, "Cousin Five!"

Prince Yanjun nodded slightly.

"Cousin Five, Auntie asked Xiaoqi and me to come to pick you up!"

Once again, Prince Yanjun nodded.

Chu Yu exhaled, realizing that returning this way, Auntie would likely be heartbroken.

Chapter 282: Poisoned

However, no matter what, we still had to take the person back.

When they arrived at the Capital City, Chu Yu learned that Yun Jinnian had gone to Nanjiang, and he felt somewhat unwell.

Lethargic.

After zoning out for a while, he finally said to the Commandery Princess of Zhen Guo, "Aunt, I will escort my cousin to Nanjiang, and Xiaoqi will come with us!"

The Commandery Princess of Zhen Guo was sobbing her heart out with Prince Yanjun.

She nodded.

After a brief meeting and spending a total of two hours together, once Chu Yu had gone back to pack his things and brought people with him, he, along with Yuwen Ya, escorted Prince Yanjun to Nanjiang to chase after Yun Jinnian and the others.

Over these past few days, the friction between Yun Jinnian and Nanny Qian had been growing increasingly intense.

The carriage was too fast for Yun Jinnian to read, and after mentioning it several times, Nanny Qian actually suggested she read at night.

Sometimes, they even traveled at night.

"Heh heh," Yun Jinnian scoffed coldly.

Han Tianci was furious.

Not a single pill of his medicine had sold, how could he not be angry?

Yun Jinnian took Han Tianci's hand and wrote on his palm, "Find a chance to deal with these people!"

Han Tianci nodded emphatically.

If they didn't handle them, who knew whom they should be listening to by now.

Dammit!

After another three fast-paced days of travel, Yun Jinnian, Han Tianci, and Nanny Qian were not speaking to each other at all; upon arrival, when Nanny Qian suggested a rest, Yun Jinnian and his sister got off the carriage to rest, not caring whether the food was good or bad.

In fact, Nanny Qian was somewhat worried.

After all, the Emperor's decree hinged on Yun Jinnian, but now she found herself in a dilemma. If she apologized to Yun Jinnian, how would she maintain her authority?

So they remained at an impasse.

Therefore, when they entered Hongchou City, even though it was still noon, Nanny Qian decided to stay the night and continue the journey early the next morning.

"Fourth Miss, Hongchou City is quite bustling. Would you like to take a walk?" Nanny Qian asked.

Yun Jinnian didn't even glance at her, pulling Han Tianci into the room and swiftly shutting the door, locking Nanny Qian out.

Nanny Qian clenched her fists tightly, really wanting to hang Yun Jinnian up and give her a beating!

But she really didn't dare to lay a hand on her.

She turned around and ordered someone to prepare the meals, which Nanny Qian managed quite well.

Yun Jinnian whispered something to Hemei, who then took a vial and left the room.

The guards, seeing it was Hemei, didn't ask her where she was going.

Hemei went straight to the kitchen and asked loudly, "Are the meals for my young mistress ready yet?"

The kitchen staff hurriedly asked, "May I know from which courtyard the lady comes?"

"Heaven Character, first class!"

The kitchen staff did not dare hesitate and immediately said, "It's still being prepared, but it will be ready very soon!"

"What are the dishes? Hemei asked.

"Everything over there on that table!"

Hemei nodded, "Hmm, carry on with your work, I just want to have a look!"

"Ah, alright, alright!" The butler of the kitchen immediately busied himself again.

Hemei looked around and pulled out a porcelain bottle from her sleeve, dosing all the dishes with a silent, colorless sedative that could put someone to sleep for a day and a night. No matter what Nanny Qian had delivered to Yun Jinnian's room, once Nanny Qian and her company ate these dishes, none of them would get away.

Hemei did not care whether anyone saw her because even if someone did, they dared not say anything. After all, Yun Jinnian's entourage was much too conspicuous. Each one dressed well, used fine things, ate well, and had an air of arrogance. Who would dare speak up?

Hemei quickly returned to Yun Jinnian's side.

When Nanny Qian and her group found out Hemei had been to the kitchen, they did not suspect that Yun Jinnian might drug them.

When the meals were served, Nanny Qian told everyone to go down to eat.

But soon after the food was digested, Nanny Qian started feeling dizzy and utterly drained of energy. She then saw Yun Jinnian slowly approach her, "Fourth Miss, what are you..."

Chapter 283: Look Clearly

"How did you drug us?" Yun Jinnian asked coolly.

Madame Qian hummed in response.

"When I was in the Imperial Palace, I told His Majesty that those sent were to take orders from me, not the other way around. I said I didn't understand the medical skills of Nanjiang and needed to read books. But you rushed the carriage all the way here, how could I read? Should I read at night and ruin my eyes?"

"Besides, haven't you thought about, if I knew nothing of Nanjiang, where would I go to learn medicine once there? Madame Qian, you think too highly of yourself and too little of me, Yun Jinnian!"

Having said that, Yun Jinnian turned and walked away. After a few steps, seeing that Madame Qian had not yet fainted, he added, "When you come to, write a letter to His Majesty yourselves, telling him you've offended me and lost me. Go and admit your guilt to him!"

With a swish of his robes, he left.

In the meantime, Han Tianci had already made contact with Uncle Zhong.

Han Zhong looked at the siblings, unable to help but smile wryly, "You two!"

Han Tianci pulled at Han Zhong, "Uncle Zhong..."

"Alright, I'll quickly prepare a carriage, have someone drive this carriage and head straight for Nanjiang. When Madame Qian and her group wake up, they will definitely not dare to write to His Majesty in the Capital City about this. They will surely chase after you as quickly as possible and then apologize to you!"

Yun Jinnian agreed with Han Zhong's idea, "So, Uncle Zhong, let's not go to Nanjiang first!"

"?"

"Lead them to chase the empty carriage while we follow slowly behind and infuriate them!" Yun Jinnian said carelessly.

Even if they were beaten to death, Madame Qian and her group would never guess that the carriage headed for Nanjiang was empty.

Meanwhile, Yun Jinnian and her group were leisurely walking behind.

Han Tianci quickly clapped his hands, "Sister, that's a great plan!"

Han Zhong was resigned but still supported the siblings, not saying much, but he was extremely indulgent of them.

He quickly arranged people, drove the empty carriage away, and picked up the siblings to find a new inn to settle down first.

Then he went to the main hall of Hongchou City to inquire which wealthy household had someone with a serious illness.

Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci planned to sell some medicine and make a fortune...

The next afternoon

When Madame Qian and her group woke up, they were truly terrified to learn that Yun Jinnian and her brother had left.

Madame Qian was filled with even more regret, "If I had known, why would I have bothered with two children!"

It was because they looked down on Yun Jinnian, thinking what could a child be capable of? But now they had been harshly slapped in the face, the burning pain evident.

The others said nothing, just stood there looking at Madame Qian.

"Madame, do we report back to His Majesty?"

"..." Madame Qian was silent.

If they reported this matter, none of them would end well. They might even be executed on the spot.

At this moment, Madame Qian finally understood what Eunuch Hai meant when he said, "Listen to the Fourth Miss in all matters!"

"Let's immediately chase after the Fourth Miss. When we catch up, we can admit our mistake, hoping to make amends. Once back in the Capital City..." Madame Qian rubbed her forehead.

Perhaps, they had been wrong from the moment they appeared.

They had thought too highly of themselves and too little of Yun Jinnian and her brother. Along the way, Yun Jinnian was unwilling to speak with them, and they should have realized their mistake...

"Regardless, let's catch up with them first!" Madame Qian said and immediately made arrangements.

"Madame, one carriage is missing. I investigated, and that carriage left the city yesterday, heading toward Tortoiseshell City!"

Passing Tortoiseshell City, after a few days and crossing several small counties and towns, one would reach Nanjiang.

Madame Qian took a deep breath, "Let's go, chase after the Fourth Miss!"

The group set off on horseback overnight, abandoning the carriages, all for the sake of catching up with Yun Jinnian faster. It was only right to keep Yun Jinnian behind!

Chapter 284: Happy Now

"Ha ha ha, ahahaha!"

In a small courtyard of an inn in Hongchou City, Han Tianci laughed until he bent forward and leaned back.

He had been feeling so oppressed these days, but now he finally felt relieved.

Yun Jinnian smiled softly, feeling comforted in her heart as well.

Madam Qian and the others had truly gone too far. She had traveled thousands of miles to find a cure for the Emperor, and instead of being treated with respect, they gave her orders arrogantly, throwing all her plans into disarray.

It was indeed delightful to give them a taste of their own medicine now.

"Sister, to be free from that old prude forever, it's just fantastic!" said Han Tianci, smiling from the corners of his eyes and the tips of his brows, his bright eyes shining brilliantly.

Seeing this made Yun Jinnian feel a soft fondness in her heart.

If it had been just her, perhaps she could have endured it, but she couldn't bear to see Tianci so unhappy.

"Let's think of a way to sell those medicines of yours first, then with the silver, we'll buy more herbs, make more pills, and then profit will roll in on itself..." Yun Jinnian paused, looking at Han Tianci, who was listening intently, and smiled softly.

Han Tianci hugged Yun Jinnian's arm and whispered softly, "Sister, you're the best!"

"You're my brother, of course, I should be good to you!" said Yun Jinnian indulgently.

Without Madam Qian to supervise, Han Tianci even ate an extra bowl for dinner. Yun Jinnian, worried he would overeat, took him for a walk around the yard after dinner, casually reciting prescriptions and discussing the theories behind them.

These days, it had been Yun Jinnian teaching Han Tianci about medical theories, having him memorize the Yi Jin Jing and Xi Sui Jing, and made him promise not to tell anyone.

The siblings practiced in secret.

Yun Jinnian, lacking a solid foundation, was not at all nervous, but Han Tianci had a background in martial arts, and a strong one at that. His martial arts skills swiftly reached new heights.

Yun Jinnian then had Hemei and Henuan start learning as well.

Seeing their rapid progress, she felt joyful in her heart.

But she wondered how she would explain to Abbot Wuxin that she had secretly memorized the Yi Jin Jing and Xi Sui Jing!

For now, she wouldn't worry too much about it. If it came down to it, she could just transcribe more scripture and prepare some extra medicine.

That's what Yun Jinnian thought.

However, their secret practice of the Yi Jin Jing and Xi Sui Jing was eventually discovered by Han Zhong.

Han Zhong, who loved the siblings, didn't scold them once he understood the reason. Instead, he helped them out with some pointers, and even he benefited greatly. His martial arts, which had been at a plateau, surged past it thanks to the Yi Jin Jing.

"No wonder everyone desires these two martial arts so eagerly. I've gained so much from you two!" sighed Han Zhong.

Yun Jinnian smiled without saying a word.

Han Tianci then said, "Uncle Zhong, how about we spar for a few rounds?"

"Sure!"

The two of them dashed out into the courtyard and began to spar.

Han Zhong held back a little, while Han Tianci gave it his all, making the match fierce and difficult to call. Yun Jinnian glanced over, then said to Hemei and Henuan, "You go too!"

"Yes!"

Then she picked up a book and began to read earnestly.

Han Zhong soon found out that there were thirteen families in Hongchou City with members suffering from serious illnesses. The most severe case was that of the City Lord Zhuge, who used to be slim but,

for some reason, had been gaining weight nonstop since the year before last, and now he was so heavy he couldn't even get out of bed.

If not for his good relationship with the Governor, he probably would have lost his position as City Lord long ago.

"Girl, are you confident?" asked Han Zhong, slightly concerned.

But thinking of Yun Jinnian's abilities, he relaxed quite a bit.

However, for the treatment to be a resounding success, everyone needed to know that a Divine Doctor had come to Hongchou City, someone whose medical skills were extraordinary, who could even cure City Lord Zhuge.

Chapter 285: Hitting a Wall

Yun Jinnian thought for a moment before he spoke, "I need to see what medicines he has taken, and assess his physical condition before I can make a decision!"

He was neither arrogant nor flustered; neither servile nor overbearing; nor was he conceited.

This was what Han Zhong admired.

And it was also what Han Tianci needed to learn.

"Then let's first send an invitation using the old master's name, and then..."

"Send it in Tianci's name," Yun Jinnian said indifferently.

"Why me? Sister, it's clearly you who are treating people!" Han Tianci asked, puzzled.

"Because I am a woman, and the world is already quite unfair to women. Using your name is better, as it spares me a great deal of gossip!"

Of course, he also wanted to build a network for Han Tianci, to smooth his way for when he makes his mark in the world.

Han Tianci didn't think much of it, "Then I'll listen to Sister!"

Once the two had made a decision, Han Zhong went ahead and sent the invitation to the City Lord Residence.

City Lord ZhuGe, who was around fifty years old, had been a charming and elegant figure in his youth. However, now he had grown so fat that he could hardly walk, and he no longer possessed the dashing elegance of his younger years.

He spent his days listless, lacking spirit for anything.

Fortunately, his sons had grown up and could shoulder the heavy responsibilities of the City Lord. Plus, with a good relationship with the Governor and substantial tributes each year, he was able to hold on to his position as the City Lord, although it wasn't very secure.

He had invited many famous doctors for his illness, consumed a lot of medicine, and spent much Silver, but to no effect.

When he heard that someone had sent an invitation, he didn't think twice before exclaiming, "Refuse! Refuse!"

Upon hearing this, the butler sighed, took the invitation, and withdrew.

Han Zhong didn't say much and returned to the inn.

"Not seeing us?" Yun Jinnian was slightly taken aback.

"Mmhmm, he sent the invitation back!"

"If he doesn't want to see us today, then when he does want to see us in the future, the consultation fee and gratitude gifts will have to double!" Yun Jinnian said, as ideas began forming in her mind.

"Sister, you have a plan?" Han Tianci asked.

"Mmhmm, those wealthy families won't trust us all at once, but those poor households, those who cannot afford to see a doctor, will stumble upon us by mistake!" Yun Jinnian said, then turned to Han Zhong, "Uncle Zhong, you go and make arrangements with a medicine shop. We'll just set up a spot outside their door to see patients, and then the patients can get their prescriptions filled there!"

Han Zhong nodded, "But what if there are those who can't afford the medicine, what then?"

This was also a concern for Yun Jinnian.

She had indeed brought a good amount of Silver with her when she left.

"We can help by buying for them, but we'll have them sign a promissory note to ensure they will pay back the Silver!"

What they needed to do now was to first establish their reputation.

Han Zhong thought it was feasible, "Okay!"

Promissory notes signed in public left no room for denial. If anyone dared to deny their debt, public opinion alone could drown them.

"However, we need to prevent the wealthy from coming to muddle the waters!" Yun Jinnian added.

Han Zhong had naturally already thought through this as well.

"Don't worry, I have my methods!"

Han Zhong quickly found a large medicine shop willing to cooperate. They usually had a doctor, but he had to go home due to some matters, so business was somewhat slow. Han Zhong's approach was indeed good.

Because even if there were any issues with the treatment, they only had to handle selling the medicine and would have no other involvement. They could earn Silver without any downside — why not do it?

The group quickly set up a table outside of the medicine shop, placing a medicine chest, silver needles, a water basin, a bucket for fetching water, and a cloth on it.

Yun Jinnian acted as the doctor, Han Tianci assisted, Hemei and Henuan, both in men's clothing, ran errands, and Han Zhong acted as the guard.

It all looked quite proper!

But even after setting up for a day, not a single person came...

Chapter 286: They Started Fighting

Yun Jinnian didn't seem to care and earnestly focused on his book, his little face pure and delicate, features exquisitely beautiful, and his fingers holding the book were slender as jade.

Instead of attracting those seeking medical consultation, he had drawn the attention of the local ruffians and hooligans of Hongchou City.

"Hey, young master, the sun is so fierce, and you're out here setting up a stall, getting all tanned without any business. Why not come with me? I'll make sure you have plenty of fish and meat to eat, the best of everything!" said the thug as he moved to touch Yun Jinnian.

But he was stopped by Han Tianci, who grabbed his wrist and gave it a forceful twist.

"Ah..."

The thug had initially only seen Yun Jinnian, who was clean enough to tempt a crime but hadn't noticed another exquisitely carved young master beside him.

His wrist throbbed with pain, yet in his mind, he thought if he sold the young master to Genggeng Building, he could make a fortune.

He was just about to speak up when Han Tianci kicked his knee, making him fall heavily to his knees, "Ouch!"

The gang that had followed him, seeing their boss at a disadvantage, immediately rushed towards Han Tianci.

Han Tianci dodged nimbly and knocked them all down.

"Scram!" he barked sharply, his young age belied by his commanding aura.

The ruffians, seeing that Han Tianci was so skilled in martial arts at such a young age, and noticing the composed adult standing by, as well as the two not-so-older children, and that child who claimed to be a doctor was still seriously reading his book.

He never even lifted his head to look.

"Alright, you're tough. Just you wait. If you want to survive in Hongchou City without my permission, I want to see who can manage!"

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian slightly raised his head and said indifferently, "Uncle Zhong, slap him!"

"Yes!"

Han Zhong responded, flashing in front of the thug leader in an instant, grabbed his collar, and gave him a series of slaps.

Han Zhong executed his slaps with skill, inflicting excruciating pain that made the thug wish for death without losing consciousness or teeth, yet any movement of the mouth caused his entire head to hurt.

After the beating, Han Zhong then said, "Scram!"

The thug leader, cradling his face now swollen like a pig's head, mumbled, "You'll wait!" before staggering away.

Han Zhong saluted the onlookers with a fist and resumed his position behind Yun Jinnian.

Onlookers always enjoyed drama and chattered for a while, but then dispersed.

Yet, no one stepped forward to seek medical advice.

Han Tianci was getting impatient, seeing Yun Jinnian still engrossed in his book, "Sister, brother, aren't you anxious?"

"Haste won't bring success; what is meant to come will come. Besides, we're not relying on this to make ends meet!" Yun Jinnian said softly as he continued to read.

All were books from Nanjiang. After reading for a while, Yun Jinnian finally looked up and called out, "Uncle Zhong!"

"Yes!"

"We need to find someone who understands the Nanjiang language to teach us. Otherwise, when we get there, not being able to communicate would leave us in the dark!"

Upon hearing this, Han Zhong also felt Yun Jinnian had considered the matter carefully, "Don't worry, Young Miss, I'll go make arrangements right away!"

"Hmm!"

Yun Jinnian went back to her book with earnest focus.

Soon after, the ruffian with his gang returned, pointing decisively, "It's them, beat them up for me!"

Han Tianci, upon hearing this, became furious, "You refuse the open gate of heaven but break into the doorless realm of hell. Today, I'll teach you a lesson, to make you realize there's always someone stronger out there!"

Then he charged and clashed with the gang of ruffians.

Watching, Yun Jinnian let out a soft sigh, "Hemei, Henuan, go help him!"

No matter how capable, he's still just a seven-year-old child after all.

Chapter 287: Making a Move

Yun Jinnian was still worried that Han Tianci would suffer a loss.

Hemei and Henuan immediately stepped forward to help, and the three children beat a gang of adults until their noses were blue and faces swollen, falling to the ground groaning in pain.

This time no one came to watch the excitement; everyone quickly left the scene.

Because this incident had blown up!

"Just wait, you all wait!"

The thugs were defeated once again, leaving in an embarrassing retreat.

The shopkeeper of the pharmacy stepped forward, "You should hurry and find another place, I won't do business anymore; don't set up your stall in front of my store's entrance!"

Han Tianci was going to ship goods, but Yun Jinnian gently reached out and pulled him back, then turned to Han Zhong and said, "Uncle Zhong, let's leave!"

"Yes!"

They moved their belongings back to the inn.

After freshening up and cleaning up, Han Zhong went out to ask the innkeeper to prepare some food, only to see the innkeeper coming over with a somber expression.

"Guests, I'm truly sorry!"

"What's wrong?" Han Zhong asked.

The innkeeper was worried, worried about his own shop, and also worried about these guests, "Why would you guests have to offend the people from the Azure Dragon Sect!"

"The Azure Dragon Sect?"

"Yes, the Azure Dragon Sect, the local bullies of Hongchou City, even the Governor has to give them a lot of face!"

"They are that powerful?" Han Zhong really didn't believe it.

"The Hall Master of the Azure Dragon Sect has a cousin who is a lady in the Imperial Palace!"

Upon hearing this, Han Zhong turned to look at Yun Jinnian.

A lady in the Imperial Palace, could she be mentioned in the same breath as the Emperor?

Even the Empress could not do that.

"Would you know the Hall Master's full name? And which lady in the palace is his cousin?" Han Zhong asked coldly.

"The Hall Master of the Azure Dragon Sect is surnamed Sun, with a single name, Wang. His cousin is surnamed Pan, said to be Lady Jieyu!"

So, she was just a Lady Jieyu.

Little did they know that above Lady Jieyu were Zhaoyi, the four consorts, Noble Consort, and the Empress. And within the Imperial Palace, there are at least eight if not ten Lady Jieyus, among whom only one or two are favored.

Even if they are favored, the Emperor would not gamble his own life for such a woman.

"So it is!" Han Zhong said in a low voice.

The innkeeper then said, "Guests, I'm afraid I cannot keep you here; could you possibly..."

Han Zhong immediately understood; after talking so much, it turned out that the innkeeper was here to drive them out.

"Innkeeper, rest assured, we'll pack up and leave!"

"I'm really sorry about this!"

Han Zhong waved his hand, unfazed.

They were strangers anyway, so there was nothing much to care about.

After discussing with Yun Jinnian, Yun Jinnian smiled faintly, "Then let's pack up and look for another inn!"

She really wanted to see how far these hooligans could stretch their influence.

How far would the Magistrate go to protect them?

The group packed up their belongings, left the inn, got on the horse cart, with Han Zhong leading the search for another inn.

But before they could find an inn, they were blocked by five men, with another man looking like a pig, his nose blue and face swollen, trailing behind them.

"Hall Master, it's them!"

The man in the lead nodded slightly before looking at Han Zhong, "You are foreigners, what are you doing in Hongchou City?"

"Just passing through," Han Zhong replied indifferently.

He did not take these people seriously.

"If you are just passing through, do so quietly. Why cause harm?"

"That scoundrel spoke nonsense and insulted my master; him getting hurt was letting him off easy!"

"It seems you do not wish for this matter to end peacefully!"

"Peacefully?" Han Zhong sneered, "Is it us who don't wish for peace, or is it because you are too bullying!"

"In that case, don't blame us for striking harshly and taking your lives!" The leader hadn't finished speaking when Han Zhong had already swiftly made his move.

Nobody saw how he acted; by the time he returned to the horse cart, those men were standing still without moving, and it seemed as if blood was dripping from their bodies onto the ground...

Chapter 288: Murder

The several men kneeled on the ground in unison, and then they heavily prostrated themselves, with a thud, blood splattered in all directions.

"Ah, murder!"

Someone screamed shrilly, and then the screaming did not stop.

Passersby fled in panic, afraid of being involved in the turmoil.

Han Zhong did not say more.

Inside the carriage, Yun Jinnian glanced faintly at Han Tianci, "Scared?"

"Not scared, they were the ones who said they wanted our lives first!"

So they were in the right.

Yun Jinnian nodded, holding Han Tianci's hand, "Uncle Zhong, let's go!"

"Hmm!"

Han Zhong asked at several inns with the carriage, and as soon as they recognized Han Zhong, they all refused to offer lodging.

Han Zhong was not discouraged.

Hongchou City was not small; there was no fear of not finding an inn.

As formidable as the Azure Dragon Sect was, it too had enemies.

In the most luxurious inn in the city, in a third-floor elegant room, a man in purple smiled slightly upon hearing about the incident in the city, "Are you saying that those two young masters initially had a dozen or so imposing followers?"

"Yes, ten men and six women, among them an older nursemaid, whom people called Nurse Qian. It's just that the young master's servant later drugged them to stupor, creating the illusion that they had left earlier, and those people have already dashed off in pursuit!"

The man in purple pondered for a moment, "Any other clues?"

"From their accent, it seems they came from the Capital City. Our people also heard words related to the emperor, 'untouchable,' and phrases like 'beg for mercy'!"

"Capital City accent? The emperor? Could it be..." The man in purple suddenly stood up, then asked, "You're saying that initially the carriage driver did not take action, but only after the Azure Dragon Sect people said 'don't blame us for being ruthless and taking your lives' did he strike, and under everyone's eyes, with one move snuffed out six lives?"

"Yes, no one saw how it was done!"

The man in purple asked the person beside him, "Can you do it?"

The man in green sitting off to the side had not spoken, shook his head, "Cannot!"

"The Hall Master of the Azure Dragon Sect, although not a peerless expert, is no pushover either, to kill five with one move..." The man in purple was slightly incredulous, "I cannot do it either!"

The man in green was silent, and after a long while, he said, "If they come to our inn, let them stay!"

"Hmm, I understand!"

Those who dare to strike viciously under the eyes of the public must have no small background, and are evidently not afraid of the Azure Dragon Sect or the power backing it.

Such people must be won over, and through them, the Azure Dragon Sect must be destroyed in one fell swoop.

As night approached, Yun Jinnian and his companions once again arrived at the luxurious inn they started at, and Han Tiansi smiled, "Brother, we've come back here again. Shall we stay in the Tian Character Number Room again?"

"Where do you want to stay?" Yun Jinnian asked.

"I'll listen to brother!"

"Then let's stay in the Tian Character Number A Grade Courtyard!"

After settling in, Han Zhong called for a servant, asking him to bring some food from the kitchen.

While the siblings were talking, they deliberately did not mention the people Han Zhong had killed.

They understood even clearer now, no one from the Governor's Office had come by now; the Azure Dragon Sect intended to settle this privately.

Since they wanted a private settling, tonight's assassination was inevitable!

"Uncle Zhong, what do you plan to do?" Han Tianci asked.

"Don't worry, little master, I have my plans. Tonight, if they come one by one, I'll kill each one, if they come in pairs, I'll kill them both. This way, we'll also be ridding the people of a scourge!"

"I can help you, Uncle Zhong!"

Han Zhong curved his lips in a smile, patting Han Tianci's head, "The little master is still young and should not be tainted with blood. Don't worry, this inn has Hidden Guards arranged by your lord father; even if the whole Azure Dragon Sect were to come forth, we wouldn't be afraid!"

Chapter 289: Chaos Dance

Compared to those families whose descendants flourished, the Han Family, by their generation, had only her and Han Tianci.

Han Tianci bore the weight of the Han Family's rise and fall and its legacy; he could not afford even the slightest mishap.

Bringing him out this time took a great deal of courage from Yun Jinnian.

Although she knew her maternal grandfather would send people to protect them in secret, she never imagined how many. Now that Han Zhong had mentioned it, Yun Jinnian realized that there were at least more than a hundred, perhaps even many more.

Han Tianci didn't quite understand and looked towards Yun Jinnian.

Yun Jinnian gave him a slight smile, "Just listen to Uncle Zhong, and you'll be fine!"

"I'll listen to my sister!" said Han Tianci as he walked over to Yun Jinnian's side, staying close to her.

He liked Yun Jinnian.

Because Yun Jinnian embodied all his fantasies about a mother and a sister.

Towards his mother, Mrs. Han, he felt respect; he could act spoiled and throw tantrums with Yun Jinnian but wouldn't do the same with Mrs. Han.

Perhaps because he'd been neglected for so many years, he harbored some resentment towards Mrs. Han.

And because Yun Jinnian had suffered even more, he felt pity for her in his heart and wanted to treat her even better.

Yun Jinnian nodded in agreement.

She and Han Tianci went aside to read books, and she would occasionally explain some of the medical principles he didn't understand.

Yun Jinnian's voice was soft and gentle, like a spring breeze, warm and comforting.

Han Xuzi was very strict when teaching, and Han Tianci had some resistance to it, but when Yun Jinnian taught him, he always studied very diligently and willingly.

Azure Dragon Sect

Sun Wang found it hard to believe, "What did you say?"

"A fatal blow without a chance to strike back, Sect Master, we can't just sit and wait for death, we must fight back, otherwise...!"

Listening to his subordinate's report, Sun Wang's brows were tightly furrowed.

He had a feeling that this situation would not end well. Even if he were willing to stop, those unknown assailants might not, and since that was the case, no one could blame him for being ruthless.

After a moment of deep thought, Sun Wang said, "Get ready. Tonight, I will personally make the visit!"

"Yes!"

The subordinate responded respectfully and withdrew. After exiting the door, his expression was still respectful, but he let out a slight cold laugh.

That laugh came quickly and disappeared just as fast.

Prefecture Office

The Magistrate of Hongchou City was surnamed Liao, known as Magistrate Liao, a man extremely greedy, smooth, and ruthless.

Today, when six people suddenly died on the main street, Magistrate Liao pretended not to know and refused visitors at his door.

Because if it went public, the Sect Master of the Azure Dragon Sect would surely visit with generous gifts, and if it were kept private, there would be a rich reward afterwards. Either way, he wouldn't miss out on his share.

Thus, why bother with the trouble, he thought, let them make their fuss.

The carriage was moving quickly, but inside, it was steady and secure, showing no sign of bumpiness.

Chu Yu leaned on the couch, with a chess piece in his hand; he gently placed it down.

Then he took a sip from his wine cup, "Life is such, truly delightful!"

Hearing this, Prince Yanjun raised his eyebrows without saying a word, gently placing a piece on the board.

He was supposedly blinded, but after eating Chu Yu's Detoxification Pill, he could see things somewhat clearly; it was blurry, but enough for him to see hope.

And so, he found the interest to play a few games of chess with Chu Yu.

"Uncle, we'll soon arrive at Hongchou City. Shall we stay in the city for a night?" asked Yuwen Ya.

Chu Yu had intended to have a meal and then continue on the journey, but after glancing at Prince Yanjun said, "Let Luoyi book the best rooms at the inn for us. We'll stay for a night and then leave!"

Luoyi, outside the carriage, heard the order and responded, "Yes!"

He then hurried on his horse to do so.

Yuwen Ya said nothing, but he poured tea and handed it to Prince Yanjun, "Uncle, have some tea!"

Prince Yanjun took the teacup and had a sip; the fragrance of the tea was subtle, his favorite....

Chapter 290: Encounter

Thinking of that person, Prince Yanjun felt a dull pain in his chest.

He knew he shouldn't think about her, couldn't afford to, for their relationship was a mistake from the very moment they met.

There could never be an outcome, so any further thought was a sin.

Chu Yu placed a chess piece down and saw that Prince Yanjun hadn't moved for a long time. He didn't urge him, but leisurely sipped on his wine, his mind preoccupied with thoughts of his sweetheart.

With such haste in pursuit, he thought that in a few days he might finally catch up to her.

Thinking of Yun Jinnian, Chu Yu was in an excellent mood.

In the Capital City, seeing each other was difficult, but now with his cousin as an excuse, he could see her every day.

How wonderful!

"Little uncle, what are you laughing about?" Yuwen Ya asked, perplexed.

His laugh was eerily strange and lecherous.

"Ha!" Chu Yu sneered, "Do I need to report to you what I am laughing about?"

"Of course not, of course not!"

Yuwen Ya quickly backed down, not daring to question Chu Yu, his junior uncle.

When the group arrived at Hongchou City, it was already midnight. By all accounts, the city gates should have been closed by then. However, after securing the inn, Luoyi visited the Prefectural Governor's Office, where the Magistrate almost fainted upon seeing the token from the Prince Rui Residence. Thinking of the day's events on the street, his legs went weak.

He stuttered, unable to utter a complete sentence.

Luoyi didn't think much of it, assuming that the Magistrate was just terrified because of his sordid dealings being exposed with the arrival of Chu Yu. He said, "Send someone to wait with me at the city gate!"

"May I accompany you?"

"There's no need. His Highness is traveling incognito and does not wish to disturb the local officials. We're only entering at night because we were delayed on the road. Just send someone to wait, and when His Highness arrives, open the city gates and do nothing more," Luoyi said coldly and indifferently.

The Magistrate didn't know whether Luoyi's words were true or false, but he didn't dare speculate and promptly dispatched a personal guard to accompany them.

Therefore, when Chu Yu and his party arrived, the city gates were promptly opened for their entry and then immediately shut behind them.

The largest inn in Hongchou City was called Return Home Inn, where Luoyi had reserved the second-best courtyard since the first one had already been taken by Yun Jinnian and her party. Luoyi didn't wish to cause any disturbance, so he accepted what was available, which was just next door.

Upon entering the inn, Chu Yu's group found that hot water for baths and food had already been prepared.

As soon as he entered the courtyard, Chu Yu sensed skilled figures hidden in the shadows of the neighboring courtyard.

"Strange?"

Chu Yu murmured softly.

Luoyi naturally felt the difference as well. "My lord?"

Chu Yu originally intended not to meddle, but suddenly remembering Yun Jinnian, he said, "Luoyi, go check if the person staying next door is Miss Yun, the fourth young lady of the Yun Residence from the Capital City."

Luoyi was startled for a moment but hurried off to check.

Prince Yanjun and Yuwen Ya both entered their rooms to bathe and change before eating and resting early.

Though the carriage ride was steady, it couldn't compare to a proper bed.

Additionally, the party comprised three masters, besides Luoyi and Luo'er, and also included twenty Shadow Guards turned into conspicuous bodyguards from the Commandery Princess's entourage.

Even though each was skilled in martial arts, they were not made of iron, especially after traveling under the scorching sun in the month of June, which left them all peeling.

To have a good meal and a good night's rest was indeed splendid.

Meanwhile, Chu Yu stood in the courtyard waiting for news from Luoyi.

Luoyi took the direct approach, walking the main path and knocking on the courtyard door.

Han Zhong came to answer it, not recognizing Luoyi. "Who are you looking for?"

Luoyi bowed with his hands clasped, "May I ask if Miss Yun, the fourth young lady from the Yun Residence in the Capital City, resides in this courtyard?"

Han Zhong frowned, "And you are?"

"I am Luoyi, a guard in service to Prince Rui," he replied.