

Indulgence 291

Chapter 291: Awesome My Bro

Han Zhong looked at Luoyi. He couldn't see his face clearly in the dark, but he could still feel the hostility radiating from him.

"You wait a moment, I'll go and ask if my young miss knows you!"

"Hmm," Luoyi nodded his head.

In recent days, his master had been acting oddly, and though Han Zhong did not understand why, after a few words with Luo'er, it all became clear to him.

Han Zhong entered the main house of the guesthouse. Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci were still reading, while Hemei and Henuan slept sweetly on the quilted bedding on the floor, prompting a slight chuckle from Han Zhong.

Those two foolish girls were not unworthy of Yun Jinnian's sisterly affection, always thinking of the best for them and wanting to share her portion.

"Young Miss!"

Yun Jinnian looked up at Han Zhong, "Uncle Zhong, have they arrived?"

"It's not those people who've arrived, but a guard from Prince Rui Residence named Luoyi. Young Miss, do you know him?" Han Zhong whispered.

So as not to wake Hemei and Henuan.

Wherever Luoyi was, Chu Yu was certainly there as well.

And Prince Yanjun came to mind.

Yun Jinnian guessed that Chu Yu might be escorting Prince Yanjun to Nanjiang and by chance, were also staying at this guesthouse.

Yun Jinnian nodded, "Uncle Zhong, I know him. I'll speak with him!"

"Yes!"

Yun Jinnian set down her book, got up to tidy her clothes, and then left the room, heading for the courtyard entrance.

Han Zhong walked beside her, holding a lantern.

Luoyi, who awaited by the door, felt as though in a blur, saw Yun Jinnian approaching gracefully, looking very pleasing to the eye.

"Luoyi!"

Yun Jinnian's light and indifferent voice brought Luoyi back to his senses, and he quickly responded, "My respects to Miss Yun the Fourth!"

"Luoyi, are His Highness and the Commandery Prince also staying at this guesthouse?" Yun Jinnian asked.

"To answer the Fourth Miss, yes, they are!"

Yun Jinnian had intended to let Han Zhong settle things privately with the Azure Dragon Sect, but now that Chu Yu and the others had arrived, a public judgment would be more appropriate.

She turned to Han Zhong and said, "Uncle Zhong, please go and meet with His Highness Prince Rui and discuss our current situation with him!"

Han Zhong also felt it was better to let Prince Rui handle the matter, "Hmm, you rest. I'll go and come back quickly!"

"Alright!"

When Luoyi returned to Chu Yu and was joined by Han Zhong, they learned that Yun Jinnian was staying in the next room over, which made Chu Yu's heart bloom with joy. However, he suppressed his emotions and, after listening to Han Zhong's account, immediately understood the situation, "No wonder the Magistrate was so frightened upon seeing me. That explains it!"

Without saying much else, Chu Yu instructed, "Luoyi, take men to take down the Azure Dragon Sect!"

"Yes!"

After giving a bow and salute, Han Zhong returned to his quarters.

Looking after him, Chu Yu felt a twinge of disappointment. How nice it would have been if Jinnian had come.

But at this late hour, she wouldn't come out.

"Your Highness, do we kill them all?" Luoyi asked.

After all, not everyone in a sect is evil.

There are a few good ones, forced onto this crooked path.

Just as Chu Yu was about to speak, he sensed several people approaching, and not just one or two.

"It seems your kindness is not appreciated. Remember to take captives, for tomorrow, I want all of Hongchou City's people to see those who oppress the common folk and force good people into prostitution meet their end with nothing but death. The heavens are clear, retribution is certain; it isn't that revenge never comes, only that the time hasn't arrived yet. Karma cycles, and heaven spares no one!"

Luoyi nodded. He and Luo'er led the twenty hidden guards to apprehend Sun Wang and his group of thirty, binding them with ropes, gagging them, and leaving them at the guesthouse entrance.

They directed the Shopkeeper to lead, and the guesthouse workers to clang copper gongs through the streets while announcing, "Sun Wang, the leader of the Azure Dragon Sect, audaciously attempted to assassinate His Highness Prince Rui and has been captured. He will be publicly questioned at the Prefectural Governor's Office tomorrow morning. All those with grievances, come to seek your revenge!"

Chapter 292: Petty

"Even if there are grievances, one can still write a petition, and His Highness Prince Rui will personally handle it!"

For a time, every household in Hongchou City lit up their lamps, and those with children or grandchildren in the Azure Dragon Sect were suddenly so frightened that they rolled on the ground.

"It's over!"

Magistrate Liao exclaimed, his entire being somewhat dazed.

Feeling a warmth below, he looked down only to realize to his horror that he had wet himself.

But he was truly afraid.

During his years as the magistrate of Hongchou City, he had been responsible for dozens of human lives and had embezzled countless amounts of money.

He had originally thought that His Highness Prince Rui was merely passing through, but it turned out that the prince had come specifically for him.

All of this, Yun Jinnian did not know.

After Han Zhong returned, she let Han Tiansi go back to his room to sleep. Watching Hemei and Henuan lying on the ground, Yun Jinnian sighed softly, then went to bed to sleep.

She did not think about Chu Yu at all.

Additionally, dealing with medical practices, she quickly fell asleep, exhausted.

Chu Yu in the next courtyard, however, tossed and turned, thinking about Yun Jinnian, wondering if she was also thinking of him, and then became sleepless...

With the first rays of morning light shining in, Yun Jinnian turned over, her hands clasped together under her cheek, sleeping peacefully and serenely.

The sachet on her chest had fallen out; darkness first enveloped it, but then it gradually dissipated. Finally, it emitted a faint golden light, exceedingly weak but not to be ignored.

After Hemei and Henuan got up, they quietly left the room, fetched water for washing, and then Hemei headed to the kitchen to keep an eye on Yun Jinnian's breakfast.

Yun Jinnian's breakfast was actually very simple: porridge and pickles would do, but the porridge had to be slowly simmered in a clay pot, stirred gently until it was cooked and thickened; the pickles needed a bit of spice. As for other foods, Yun Jinnian was very casual.

Chu Yu had gotten up early.

Prince Yanjun and Yuwen Ya, upon learning that Yun Jinnian was staying next door, were also overjoyed.

"Uncle, Uncle-in-law, shall we go invite her over now?" Yuwen Ya said.

Chu Yu remained silent.

However, Prince Yanjun shook his head slightly.

It was still early, and they did not know if the lady was up yet.

"Why not?" Yuwen Ya asked.

Chu Yu gave him a look, "Let's go to the Governor's Office first!"

Upon hearing this, Yuwen Ya said nothing more and simply responded with an "Oh," then began to eat his breakfast.

After getting up and freshening up, Yun Jinnian found that her breakfast was already laid out. After eating, dressed as a man, she took Tianci out of the courtyard, heading towards Chu Yu's quarters.

"Sister..."

"Hmm?"

"Is Prince Rui the same brother who served me food last time at the Princess Residence?"

Yun Jinnian nodded.

Tianci smiled, "Sister, I like him!"

Yun Jinnian rubbed Tianci's head, her eyes tender as water, filled with doting affection.

Luo'er, standing at the entrance of the courtyard, saw Yun Jinnian and Tianci approaching and shouted loudly, "Greetings to Miss Yun the fourth!"

His loud voice startled Yun Jinnian.

"Luo'er!" Yun Jinnian called out softly.

Luo'er grunted in acknowledgment, then looked towards Tianci.

"This is my brother, Han Tianci. I hope you will take good care of him in the future!"

"Of course, of course!" Luo'er replied, his expression turning somewhat sheepish.

In the courtyard,

Chu Yu almost choked upon hearing Luo'er's loud voice but, afraid that Yuwen Ya might tease him, forcibly suppressed a cough, clearing his throat heavily instead.

Prince Yanjun looked at Chu Yu with a knowing smile, as if aware of something, and slightly curved his lips but lowered his eyes, concealing what he was thinking.

Yuwen Ya, meanwhile, stood up and walked towards the entrance.

After all, this was the benefactor of the Yuwen family; he dared not neglect her.

Seeing this, Chu Yu also rose and went towards the entrance, even overtaking Yuwen Ya in his stride. He certainly did not want Yun Jinnian to see anyone else but him when she entered the courtyard, especially not the young Yuwen Ya!

Chapter 293: Silently for You

Yuwen Ya failed to understand what Chu Yu was so anxious about, but he did start to feel somewhat suspicious!

Just as Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci stepped through the main entrance, they saw Chu Yu coming forth in a splendid sapphire blue brocade robe, exuding an air of suave nonchalance, and the corners of his eyes and eyebrows wore a smile.

The rising sun was at his back, and Yun Jinnian thought she saw the dawn spread across the sky as if he marched upon clouds, his commanding presence unparalleled, like a breath of fresh air after a rainstorm, causing one to sink deeply.

She bowed slightly, "Greetings, Your Highness!"

Chu Yu gestured dismissively, "No need for such formalities, no need at all!" he said, yet his eyes remained brightly fixed on Yun Jinnian.

He hadn't even noticed Han Tianci standing beside her.

Han Tianci touched his own face, wondering if he was not handsome enough to be noticed?

Yun Jinnian gave Chu Yu a light smile, her eyes soft and honeyed, which delighted Chu Yu as if he had consumed pounds of the sweetest honey wine, leaving him so intoxicated that he could scarcely tell north from south.

She had, after all, noticed him at first glance!

Yun Jinnian had no idea of Chu Yu's thoughts and turned to bow to Yuwen Ya, "Greetings to Young Master Yuwen!"

Yuwen Ya returned a warm smile, "Now that you are the Fourth Young Master Yun, you should offer a fist-and-palm salute instead!" As he spoke, he gave a serious fist-and-palm salute to Yun Jinnian, "Brother Yun, you honor me with your courtesy!"

Yun Jinnian was startled for a moment but quickly returned the salute, "Brother Yuwen, you honor me with your courtesy as well!"

Seeing that the two seemed to be getting along well, Chu Yu pulled Yuwen Ya aside, "What nonsense are you talking about!" and turned gently to Yun Jinnian, "Cousin is already inside, could you perhaps examine his pulse first to see how he is doing?"

Yun Jinnian nodded.

Then, they saw Prince Yanjun, dressed in white, walking slowly towards them.

If Chu Yu was as warm as fire, then Prince Yanjun was cool and refreshing like water, akin to the dew from atop an eternal snowy mountain, ethereal as though he wasn't truly a man of this world.

With each step he took, he seemed almost like a mirage.

Could he really be a mere mortal and not a celestial being inadvertently fallen from the Ninefold Palace into the mortal world?

Han Tianci tugged at Yun Jinnian's sleeve, "Brother, he is truly beautiful!"

Yun Jinnian nodded in agreement.

There was no denying his beauty.

Prince Yanjun could not speak, and his vision was blurred, but his ears were still functioning. Listening to Han Tianci's words, he did not feel embarrassed.

Instead, he found it quite novel.

It had been so many years since anyone dared to compliment his beauty.

"This one..." Yuwen Ya looked at Han Tianci, feeling an inexplicable sense of familiarity.

Chu Yu, however, was smiling as he stepped forward and patted Han Tianci's shoulder, "I did not expect you to accompany your sister here!"

"I am a man, of course I must accompany and protect my sister!" Han Tianci said, his body slightly shifting to avoid Chu Yu's hand on his shoulder.

"That is as a man should be!" Chu Yu agreed, then explained to Yuwen Ya, "This is Jinnian's younger brother, the young master of the Han Family, named Tianci!"

Yuwen Ya, however, stared at Han Tianci, puzzled, "Why do I feel like I have seen the young master Han before?"

Where had he seen him?

Yuwen Ya couldn't recall, but his instincts told him that he had certainly seen Han Tianci before.

"Hehe," laughed Han Tianci.

Chu Yu shook his head, paying no heed to Yuwen Ya.

"Shall we go inside?" Chu Yu asked.

"Let's stay in the courtyard. It's brighter here, and everything can be seen more clearly!" Yun Jinnian spoke up.

Chu Yu nodded, and immediately someone brought out a table and chairs.

Yun Jinnian said to Prince Yanjun, "Please, Your Highness."

Prince Yanjun gently lifted his sleeve, placing his hand upon the table.

His fingers were slender and flawless, clearly a sign of a life lived in the utmost luxury. Yun Jinnian could not recall ever seeing such beautiful hands.

Like her own hands, which she knew would be used to feel pulses and perform acupuncture, she took great care of them, but they paled in comparison to those of Prince Yanjun.

Yun Jinnian only glanced twice before shifting her gaze, believing that no one had noticed her momentary fascination.

But Chu Yu, who had been watching her all along, rubbed his own hands and then made a decision in his heart...

Chapter 294: A Hint

Yun Jinnian gently placed her fingers on Prince Yanjun's wrist, feeling the icy chill that penetrated to the bone.

She had always thought herself to have a cold constitution, but she hadn't expected Prince Yanjun to be even colder than her.

Her coldness was on the surface of her flesh, but this man, it seemed, was cold in his bones, blood, and possibly even his soul.

If he could, he would probably prefer to die.

However, sometimes, one neither dares nor can die!

Because too many people care for him. And him? Does he have anyone he cares about?

Yun Jinnian suddenly recalled her previous life, how not long after Prince Yanjun had passed away, the Empress had also departed this world...

Yun Jinnian was startled by her own thoughts.

After a brief change in her expression, she composed herself and seriously began to take Prince Yanjun's pulse.

His condition was worse than she had imagined.

First he had gone mute, and now he was blind. She feared that in a few months he would become deaf, unable to hear any sound at all, and eventually his limbs would become immobile, his memory would fail him, turning him into an idiot who could not move, speak, hear, or see.

Yun Jinnian lifted her hand, "Commandery Prince, please switch to the other hand."

Prince Yanjun nodded and pulled back his hand to offer the other.

Yun Jinnian once again took his pulse carefully, and then she asked, "Commandery Prince, may I have my brother also take your pulse?"

Prince Yanjun looked at Yun Jinnian, knowing she wanted Han Tianci to gain more experience, and gave a slight nod.

Yun Jinnian rose to her feet, gesturing for Han Tianci to come over.

Han Tianci was overjoyed and sat down in the designated spot. Yun Jinnian stood by his side, encouraging him with a smile.

Han Tianci nodded towards Yun Jinnian and reached out to take Prince Yanjun's pulse.

The moment Han Tianci touched Prince Yanjun's skin, he almost jumped up in shock.

Yun Jinnian quickly pressed her hand on his shoulder, using force to keep him seated.

Han Tianci blushed with embarrassment, looking up at Yun Jinnian and finding her still bearing an encouraging gaze, his eyes immediately rimmed red.

"Continue," Yun Jinnian said softly.

"Hmm!"

Han Tianci acknowledged with a nasal tone.

Keenly remembering the way Yun Jinnian had taken the pulse earlier, he mimicked her gentle touch on Prince Yanjun's wrist.

Even though the chilling cold crept from his fingertips to his entire body in an instant, he took the pulse with utmost seriousness. With his current medical skills, he might not discover much, but the learning opportunity his sister had secured for him was not something he dared waste.

Focusing intently, Han Tianci could only feel that Prince Yanjun's pulse was extremely chaotic, one moment rushing like a torrential river, the next silent and pulseless, like that of a dead man.

After finishing, Han Tianci stood up and bowed with clasped fists to Prince Yanjun, "Thank you, Commandery Prince!"

Prince Yanjun nodded slightly. This child had great potential, and with such a sister willing to think and teach him heartily, his future was boundless!

Yun Jinnian was quite satisfied with Han Tianci's performance.

"Commandery Prince, have you been taking the Detoxification Pill recently?" Yun Jinnian asked.

Prince Yanjun nodded, looking towards Chu Yu.

Chu Yu hurriedly smiled, "It's the one you gave me!"

Yun Jinnian indicated her understanding, glanced at Chu Yu, then turned to Prince Yanjun, "Stop taking this pill in the future, it's not good for your health!"

"But after my cousin took the pill, he could see again!" Chu Yu hurriedly inquired.

Yuwen Ya also spoke up urgently, "Yes, when my uncle first saw us, he couldn't see at all!"

"That is precisely why you should not continue taking it. This Detoxification Pill can't remove the poison from the Commandery Prince's body. On the contrary, it will hasten the onset of other severe toxins in his body. Not only does it have no benefits, but it also brings a plethora of harms!" Yun Jinnian explained.

Chapter 295: This World

Chu Yu and Yuwen Ya were startled.

They really hadn't considered all of this.

"What should we do?" Yuwen Ya quickly asked.

Everyone knew that the youngest uncle was the apple of grandmother's eye; if something happened to him, grandmother would be devastated.

"We'll stay in Hongchou City for a few days before leaving. I'll prescribe some medicine to help the Commandery Prince recover for now. It won't solve the root problem, nor will it be a permanent cure, but it will at least get the Commandery Prince's health back on track. Once we're in Nanjiang, I'll figure out a way!" Yun Jinnian said, her face inevitably showing her worry.

This was the greatest challenge she had faced in her practice of medicine.

If she solved it, her medical skills would advance by leaps and bounds.

If she couldn't solve it...

Yun Jinnian glanced at Prince Yanjun, who was like a celestial being, and thought about the ardent hopes of the Commandery Princess.

She vowed to herself that she must cure Prince Yanjun.

Even if she couldn't cure him completely, she had to ensure he lived many more years, to follow in the footsteps of the Commandery Princess!

Yuwen Ya quickly made a fist-and-palm salute to Yun Jinnian, "Then I'd be indebted to Miss Yun for her efforts. Please ask for any herbs you need, I'll make sure to find them!"

"Mhm!" Yun Jinnian nodded.

When it came to medicinal herbs, she certainly wouldn't hold back.

Looking at Prince Yanjun, she saw that he still bore a composed and carefree expression, showing neither sorrow nor joy. Yun Jinnian felt like she saw a kindred spirit and turned her head away slightly, feeling inexplicably distressed.

Her indifference came from her own will; Prince Yanjun's came from the state of his body.

Indeed, his body could not withstand intense sorrow or joy.

Then a guard came to report, "Your Highness Prince Rui, Your Highness Commandery Prince, Young Master Seven!"

Chu Yu looked at him, knowing that everything must be ready at the Governor's Office, "Did anyone file a complaint?"

"Yes, I have counted around fifty people so far, and the number is still increasing!"

Chu Yu nodded, "Luoyi, Luo'er, go get the carriage ready; we're heading to the Governor's Office soon!" He then turned to Yun Jinnian, "Jinnian, will you and your brother be joining us?"

Yun Jinnian shook her head slightly, "I'm going to the pharmacy. Let Tianci go with you to gain some experience!"

"Alright!"

Chu Yu replied, knowing precisely why Yun Jinnian was going to the pharmacy, "Let Luo'er escort you there!"

Yun Jinnian nodded slightly.

Prince Yanjun would not be going out. As he watched Chu Yu and Yun Jinnian leave, his eyes remained indifferent, betraying no emotion.

Yun Jinnian, accompanied by Hemei and Henuan, went to the pharmacy. Han Zhong drove the carriage, with Luo'er seated beside him. Luo'er wanted to strike up a conversation with Han Zhong, but seeing his stern face, he remained silent.

Upon arriving at the largest pharmacy in Hongchou City, Yun Jinnian listed several herbs, all of which were very expensive. The shopkeeper was delighted and brought out the herbs. After Yun Jinnian inspected the quality, she had Luo'er pay with silver.

"Miss Yun, where shall we go next?" Luo'er asked.

"Let's head to the Governor's Office to take a look," She wanted to see how many people would file complaints, how many commoners were oppressed without a chance to seek justice.

This world...

It was survival of the fittest; those who were oppressed had no chance to retaliate or seek revenge.

At the entrance to the Prefectural Governor's Office

Chu Yu sat behind a case desk, reviewing the petitions in his hands. He called out a name, and someone would immediately come forward and kneel down, recounting their grievances.

Chu Yu was stern in his judgments.

When dealing with the members of the Azure Dragon Sect, Chu Yu would ask if they confessed to their crimes. Those who didn't were beaten on the spot until they were bruised and bleeding, confessing not only to their own misdeeds but also implicating others.

Listening, Chu Yu turned to look at the Magistrate beside him; Magistrate Liao wished he could bury himself alive.

Chu Yu was planning to scold the Magistrate right then and there, but he caught sight of Yun Jinnian, dressed in men's clothing and protected by Hemei, Henuan, Han Zhong, and Luo'er, standing at the forefront of the crowd, and he couldn't help but smile.

Just as he was about to head over, he heard a shout, "Excuse me, please make way..."

Chapter 296: The Grievance

Chu Yu sat down again.

A young man called out, and the people automatically cleared the way. Then they saw a carriage stop, from which a woman dressed in white with a veil descended first, followed by her helping a white-haired elderly lady down with great care and caution.

Under the old lady's wide sleeves, there were arms but no hands, and a face but no eyes - her eyeballs had clearly been gouged out.

Watching this, Yun Jinnian was suddenly transported back to her days in the cold palace, where she had been dismembered and silenced, living a fate worse than death.

Her whole being felt as if it had plunged into an icy cellar, the cold biting to the bone.

Next to Chu Yu, Magistrate Liao's face had already undergone a drastic change.

The woman in white slowly walked forward, supporting the old lady, and knelt down in front of Chu Yu.

"With my grandmother, I pay respects to Your Highness. May Your Highness enjoy peace and prosperity!" the woman in white said, her voice hoarse as if it had been scorched by something.

"Dispense with the formalities!" Chu Yu said.

Nevertheless, the woman in white and her grandmother continued kneeling on the ground, refusing to stand.

Chu Yu did not take offense, "What injustice have you suffered?"

"Your Highness, my grandmother and I have suffered a grave injustice. The person I wish to accuse is not anyone from the Azure Dragon Sect, but the Governor at Your Highness's side!"

The crowd burst into an uproar at the woman's words.

Magistrate Liao exclaimed in a hurry, "You, do not spout nonsense!"

His heart was filled with fear and dread.

"I'm spouting nonsense?" The woman in white countered and suddenly lifted the veil from her head, revealing a face full of pockmarks, and she was also bald.

"God, how ugly!"

"So terrifying!"

"Is that a human? That looks like a demon!"

Yun Jinnian, who was relatively close to the woman, had a clearer view. The scars on the woman's face were from being burned by a great fire, and they had been left untreated properly afterward, leading to infection and festering wounds.

She did not feel terror or disgust; she simply thought that the woman must have led a very pitiful life.

Chu Yu slammed his palm down on the tabletop, "All of you, shut your mouths for this prince!"

The onlookers fell silent at once, having witnessed Chu Yu's methods.

Nobody dared to cause a commotion.

Seeing the crowd quiet down, Chu Yu turned to Magistrate Liao, "Do you recognize them?"

The old lady was very aged, her face covered with wrinkles; how could he recognize her?

But with the old lady having her eyes gouged out, her hands hacked off, and her tongue cut out, he had already guessed...

"No, I do not recognize them!" Magistrate Liao said, his voice trembling.

Chu Yu did not expose him, "Since they accuse you, you're the defendant. Kneel down!"

"Yes!"

Magistrate Liao did not dare hesitate and knelt beside the granddaughter and grandmother.

But he did not dare to look at them for a second.

Chu Yu then continued, "Why do you wish to accuse an official of the Imperial Court, do you not know that as a common citizen, to accuse an official, you must be flogged with fifty strokes and roll on a studded board?"

After bowing devoutly with both hands on the ground, the woman in white spoke, "Your Highness, I am aware of all that you have said, but my family numbers one hundred and twenty-eight people, including my baby brother who was not yet a month old."

Chu Yu was slightly taken aback, and his eyes shifted from the woman in white to Yun Jinnian, whose face had turned pale among the crowd. After a slight frown, he said, "If you bear such a huge injustice, I will grant you an exception and waive the fifty lashes and the rolling on the nail board. But if you falsely accuse someone, I shall punish you tenfold, a hundredfold. Do you understand?"

"I understand!"

Chu Yu nodded, "If that is the case, then hand over your written complaint!"

Chapter 297: Unfounded Fears

Having received the complaint, it meant that the case was accepted.

In Tianchu Country over the years, there had been many manslaughter and major cases, some solved, while others remained unsolved. In many of these major criminal cases, entire families of hundreds had been wiped out.

After looking over the complaint, Chu Yu gently laid it on the desk, "You say you are of the Su Family, do you have evidence?"

The woman in white took out a jade pendant from her bosom, held it in her palm, "This is the ancestral jade pendant of the Su Family!" the woman said, presenting the jade pendant in her palm and bowing as she handed it over.

Her graceful and luxurious demeanor indeed exuded the aura of a noble family.

Luoyi immediately went forward to take the jade pendant and presented it to Chu Yu. Chu Yu examined it carefully and then placed it on the desk, "Speak!"

"I am Su Ling, the legitimate daughter of the Su Family from Zhouqu City. I accuse Magistrate Liao of conspiring with bandits fifteen years ago to poison and murder one hundred and twenty-two members of the Su Family!"

"Do you have evidence?" Chu Yu asked.

"Your Highness, there are bandits who colluded with Magistrate Liao at that time to testify!" Su Ling said, and three men in their forties and fifties were brought forward.

Chu Yu looked at them, his brow furrowing slightly, "Miss Su, are you telling the truth?"

"Your Highness, it's true, it's true!" the three men said in unison, appearing very anxious, frightened, and flustered.

"Why would they come forward to testify?" Chu Yu asked.

"Because, because Miss Su has captured our families!"

Upon hearing this, Chu Yu immediately fell silent.

His fingers gently tapped on the desk. He did not continue to ask questions, but instead, looked indifferently at Magistrate Liao.

Suddenly, Magistrate Liao spoke up, "Your Highness, I have been wronged..."

"Shut up!" Chu Yu threw something at Magistrate Liao, hitting him on the head, "I will ask you once, was the attack on the Su Family committed by you colluding with bandits, killing people, and seizing the Su Family's assets?"

"Your, Your Excellency..." Magistrate Liao tried to deny it.

"Luoyi, bring Magistrate Liao's child here, and do as the old lady did: amputate hands, gouge eyes, pull tongues!" Chu Yu finished his command.

Luoyi went down immediately.

Magistrate Liao collapsed to the ground, but he dared not admit his guilt, nor dared to say another word.

In his heart, he was still betting, betting that Chu Yu was only trying to scare him.

He was an official appointed by the Imperial Court, and His Highness the Wise Prince wouldn't treat him like this.

Yun Jinnian watched the scene, her eyes growing dark, "Let's go back first!"

Leaving the crowd, they got into the carriage and returned to the inn.

As for the outcome, she believed that Chu Yu would give justice to the Su Family and reveal the truth.

Whatever was going to happen next, she no longer wanted to know!

"Miss?" Hemei called softly.

Yun Jinnian shook her head slightly, "I'm fine!"

Back at the inn, Yun Jinnian excused herself, saying she was tired and needed to rest for a while.

Hemei watched as Yun Jinnian entered her room, lay on the bed, and closed her eyes as if asleep, but Hemei knew that Yun Jinnian was not sleeping; she was just too sad to face anyone else.

Hemei thought for a moment and then left the room.

Han Zhong quickly came up to her, "How did it go?"

"Uncle Zhong, please bring the young master back!" Hemei said, her face full of worry.

Han Zhong was afraid because Yun Jinnian like this, detachedly pushing everything away by miles, was similar to her demeanor last year at Yingci'an, calmly looking at you with eyes that were indifferent and deep, the calm before a storm.

"I'll go right now, you take care and don't leave the miss alone. Remember, she must not be left alone, I will return very quickly!"

Han Zhong was genuinely afraid, afraid that Yun Jinnian might harm herself in despair!

Chapter 298: Unconscious

Throughout this journey, Yun Jinnian had been nothing but kind to Tianci, and Han Zhong believed that as long as Han Tianci was there, Jinnian would surely get better.

By the time Han Zhong arrived, it seemed that Magistrate Liao had already been captured.

There was blood on the ground, and both the Su Family's grandmother and granddaughter were nowhere to be found, and even Magistrate Liao's whereabouts were unknown.

"Young master!"

Han Tianci looked at Han Zhong, "Uncle Zhong, how come you're here?"

"Young master, come back with me quickly, Miss seems to be not doing well. You should go back and stay with her!"

Upon hearing this, Han Tianci was startled and grabbed Han Zhong's sleeve, "What happened to my sister?"

The nonchalant Chu Yu also stood up abruptly, "What happened to Jinnian?"

"She was fine at first, but after seeing those two from the Su Family, she started acting strangely. After returning, she went to her room to sleep," Han Zhong said, glancing at Chu Yu.

Chu Yu was also extremely annoyed, "Aya, you keep watch here, I'm going back to check on her!"

He took Han Tianci back to the inn.

In the carriage, Chu Yu suddenly said to Han Tianci, "If your sister really isn't doing well, just cry. Cry and hold onto her relentlessly; she loves you and definitely wouldn't want to see you sad. For your sake, she will pull through no matter what the dangers!"

Han Tianci listened in silence.

His head bowed.

Chu Yu didn't press him further; he knew that Han Tianci had taken his words to heart.

Just as he had surmised, Yun Jinnian indeed loved Han Tianci the most.

When the two returned to the inn, Jinnian was feverishly hot as if she was on fire.

A perfectly healthy person suddenly fell ill and kept calling out, "Tianci, get out of here. Hurry, Tianci!"

Han Tianci's eyes reddened as he knelt beside the bed and took Yun Jinnian's hand, "Sister!"

Tears swirled in his eyes, yet he desperately held them back from falling.

He knew that his sister had lived a life of great hardship, and all this was her nightmare.

In her dream, Yun Jinnian found herself back in the desolate palace, her limbs intact, then Tianci kept coming to her until he died under a barrage of arrows, and that was when Chu Liange ordered her hands and feet to be cut off and her tongue to be ripped out.

Chu Liange didn't believe Tianci was her brother but thought he was a man with whom she had an affair, a man with whom she cheated.

"Tianci, Tianci..." Yun Jinnian called out in fear.

Han Tianci held onto her hand tightly.

Chu Yu stood aside, summoning a physician who, after examining Su Ye, prescribed medicine to reduce the fever.

With much effort, they managed to get her to swallow it down.

But even though the fever subsided, Yun Jinnian still hadn't woken up.

It had been two days, and Chu Yu went from being calm to furious, then to raging mad, even ordering the execution of Magistrate Liao and some of the most heinous members of the Azure Dragon Sect at the vegetable market. No matter what was tried, Yun Jinnian still hadn't woken up.

Han Tianci kept Yun Jinnian company the entire time, staying by her side except for necessary bathroom breaks, holding her hand without crying or making a fuss, just silently watching her.

Chu Yu stood by, looking at the haggard Han Tianci, "Why don't you cry? Cry already; your sister would wake up if you did!"

"Sister will wake up, she definitely will!" Han Tianci asserted with conviction.

Chu Yu, frustrated to the point of stomping his feet, had never seen anyone so foolish, "Aren't you good at acupuncture? Give her a few needles then!"

"I can't do acupuncture," Han Tianci said softly, taking a handkerchief to wipe the sweat from Yun Jinnian's forehead.

Looking at the red string around Yun Jinnian's neck, Han Tianci suddenly remembered the bead Jinnian had, which she would often take out to play with and wipe clean with a handkerchief.

He tugged the red string several times, pulling out a small pouch. Opening the pouch, he took out a single bead and gently wiped it in the palm of his hand...

Chapter 299: Seeing Through

Han Tianci wiped diligently, while Chu Yu watched, his annoyance evident.

Yet he couldn't do anything to Han Tianci, and could only fret helplessly on the side.

Yun Jinnian felt incredibly exhausted, as if before her lay an endless thorny path, and she stood at the crossroads, too scared to proceed.

"Mother!"

"Momo?" Yun Jinnian called out softly, looking around in suspicion.

"Mother, don't be afraid, move forward, Momo will take you home!"

Yun Jinnian's eyes instantly filled with tears, "Momo, Mother can't go back, Mother can't go back!"

She remembered that Momo had eaten her flesh; she was already dead.

How could she possibly return if she was dead?

"Mother, believe Momo, just walk forward, don't be afraid of the thorns. Trust Momo, they can't hurt you, you must return, only if you return can Momo come to find you, Mother, Mother..."

On hearing this, tears streamed down Yun Jinnian's face.

Yet she still gathered her strength and moved forward.

Indeed, though the thorns pierced her body and made her bleed, she felt no pain.

Yun Jinnian sighed in relief and then broke into a run.

"Mother, keep it up, just a little more and you'll be home, Mother..."

"Momo..."

With a startled cry, Yun Jinnian sat up.

Gasping for breath, her eyes wide open, it took a while for her pupils to gradually gather a trace of light.

"Sister..."

"Jinnian!"

Two anxious voices reached her, and Yun Jinnian suddenly came to her senses, turning to look at Han Tianci and Chu Yu.

"You? Me?"

Her throat was hoarse, even speaking was painful.

"Sister, it's good that you're awake, so good that you're awake!" Han Tianci embraced Yun Jinnian, then suddenly burst into tears.

"Wuu, Sister, you scared me to death!"

Yun Jinnian was stunned for a moment before coming to her senses. She reached out to hold Han Tianci, her voice raspy as she comforted, "It's okay now, it's okay!"

Chu Yu breathed a sigh of relief, instructed Hemei and Henuan to prepare hot water for Yun Jinnian to wash her face and rinse her mouth, and ordered Han Zhong to bring over some light porridge.

He also had two older servants brought over to attend to her.

After bathing and having some porridge and her medicine, Yun Jinnian slept again, and when she next awoke, it was already dark.

She saw Hemei and Henuan asleep on the side, with Han Tianci lying by the bed, her chest aglow with warmth and trembling subtly.

She gently stroked Han Tianci's head and smiled tenderly.

Han Tianci looked up, still drowsy, and gazed at Yun Jinnian, "Sister, you're awake, are you thirsty? Do you want to drink water?"

Yun Jinnian shook her head slightly, "I'm fine now, go back to sleep in your room!"

"But Sister..."

"Tianci, be obedient, go back to sleep, I'm really fine!"

Han Tianci looked at Yun Jinnian, took a deep breath, "Then Sister, I'll go to sleep. I'll come to see you in the morning, you take care!"

Yun Jinnian nodded, watching Han Tianci leave the room, then told Hemei and Henuan to continue sleeping.

She too lay down and closed her eyes, took a deep breath.

It was seeing that old lady who had been subjected to mutilation that frightened her, reminding her of her past life, which led her into a nightmare.

In the future, she must stop indulging in reckless thoughts.

Thinking too much led her into nightmares, and awakening from them was like losing half her life, not to mention it was physically damaging and terrified the family members who truly cared for her.

This life was completely different from her past life, for she had severed all potentially dangerous ties.

As long as she saved the Prince Yanjun, returned to the palace to save the Emperor, she would ask for a favor: to decide her own marriage in the future and cut off any thoughts of people trying to use her to climb higher.

Chapter 300: Favoritism

At daybreak, Yun Jinnian got out of bed.

After pacing around the yard a few times, he washed his face, rinsed his mouth, and changed into men's clothing, Han Tianci also came over.

"Sister!" Han Tianci greeted with a sweet smile.

Yun Jinnian returned a gentle smile, "You're up, did you sleep well last night?"

"Well!"

"Let's have breakfast together!"

Yun Jinnian suggested, and Han Tianci naturally was overjoyed.

Breakfast offered a mix of meat and vegetables; Yun Jinnian ate lightly, while Han Tianci preferred meat, his enthusiasm evident as he ate heartily, which in turn lifted Yun Jinnian's spirits.

She picked up a meat bun and placed it on the plate in front of Han Tianci, "Eat slowly, don't choke!"

"Hmm hmm!"

After breakfast, Yun Jinnian took Han Tianci to take Prince Yanjun's pulse.

"How is it?" Yuwen Ya inquired.

"The Commandery Prince has now completely lost his sight, let's pack up and set off for Nanjiang!" Yun Jinnian proposed.

As for selling elixirs to make money, Han Tianci had already given up on that idea.

When Yun Jinnian said they should leave, Chu Yu certainly had no objections since everything had already been taken care of in Hongchou City, and there was no harm in leaving.

He gave the order to pack up and set out.

Two carriages, one leading and one following, left Hongchou City, the procession of more than twenty guards looking quite imposing.

But Chu Yu had left someone behind in Hongchou City to spread the rumor that the young master who had set up a stall on the street that day was the legitimate grandson of Divine Doctor Han Xuzi and had inherited all of the Divine Doctor's medical skills.

As a result, many people in Hongchou City were beating their chests and stamping their feet in regret, especially after cleaning up Zhuge City Lord, who started wailing on his bed, "Heaven wants to destroy me!"

The coquettish concubine immediately soothed him with soft words, coaxing Zhuge City Lord to pursue Yun Jinnian and her company.

Upon hearing this, Zhuge City Lord immediately ordered the preparations for his carriage; he still wanted to live, so he had to chase after them.

Watching the departing caravan and the young son by her side, the wife of the City Lord slowly said, "If things really get stirred up, pretend you know nothing about it!"

"Mother..." Zhuge Wenyen called softly.

"Listen to your mother!" the wife of the City Lord stated firmly.

Her gaze lingered into the distance, pensive and distant.

"Big brother will have a way to deal with it!"

Yun Jinnian's group was traveling slowly because Yun Jinnian wanted to read books, and Chu Yu had also ordered people to search for medical skills that had spread from Nanjiang.

So, as the group rested in a small town, Zhuge Wenxui led Zhuge City Lord to catch up with them.

Now too corpulent to walk, Zhuge City Lord didn't send his own son forward but instead had his bewitching and beautiful Concubine Yin come to pay her respects.

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian furrowed his brows and said indifferently, "I will not see her!"

Yun Jinnian was not the type to look down on others, but as a concubine, she should adhere to her place.

Moreover, because of the appearances of the Yun Family's Concubine Ruo and Concubine Lian, Yun Jinnian was particularly averse to concubines.

When Concubine Yin heard that Yun Jinnian would not see her, her expression changed, and she returned to the carriage, weeping softly, "It must be because of my lowly position that Young Master Han refuses to see me. My lord, you should send the eldest young master instead!"

Zhuge City Lord thought for a moment, "Wenxui!"

"Father!" Zhuge Wenxui responded from outside the carriage.

"You go, bring Young Master Han here, and if you cannot bring him back, there's no need for you to continue being the young City Lord!"

Concubine Yin immediately smiled.

An opportunity had arisen for her son!

Zhuge Wenxui stood by the carriage, silent for a moment, before replying softly, "Yes."

He then stepped toward the restaurant.

Outside the restaurant stood only two men, but no one dared to enter to dine.

Zhuge Wenxui advanced, clasped his hands in greeting, and said, "Excuse me, could you inform Young Master Han that Zhuge Wenxui seeks an audience to discuss an important matter?"