

Indulgence 401

Chapter 401: Chu Yu Gets Angry

In the shadows, two men exchanged glances, "Should we intervene?"

"He's someone familiar to the Saintess!"

"But what if he means to harm the Saintess?"

The two men were conflicted.

They were the Saintess's Shadow Guards, and from the moment the Saintess appeared in the Moon Worship Sect, they had to assume their responsibility. Tonight was their first night on duty.

Their group consisted of twenty-four people, each named after one of the twenty-four solar terms, all with the sacred duty of protecting the Saintess's safety.

"Go!"

Lichun said, and had already thrust his sword into the room, attacking Chu Yu.

Hearing this, Yushui hurried to follow suit.

Chu Yu had intended to complain by Yun Jinnian's bedside, but before he could get close, a fierce sword energy rapidly assaulted him.

It seemed clear that the intention was to block him from getting near Yun Jinnian.

Chu Yu really had to laugh in anger.

If he didn't show his power, did they think he was a sick cat?

Feeling sulky, Chu Yu leapt out of the house after a few moves. Lichun immediately followed, joining Yushui who had come to support, both attacking Chu Yu.

The fight quickly spilled out into the courtyard.

Both were highly skilled in martial arts and recognized Chu Yu, so they didn't use lethal moves.

But Chu Yu showed no mercy and soon had them knocked to the ground, cursing, "Idiots, if I had used the tactic of 'luring the tiger away from the mountain,' your Saintess would have been taken away by now!"

Lichun and Yushui were somewhat angry, but upon hearing Chu Yu's words, they exchanged glances again.

They trained in martial arts every day and had no experience with the ways of the world; how could they understand its perils?

Both looking completely lost, Chu Yu really had to laugh in anger, "Idiots will be idiots, what's the use of being good at martial arts!"

Lacking combat experience and being disastrously stupid yet serving as Shadow Guards was simply disgraceful.

After giving them a piece of his mind, Chu Yu turned and walked away.

Lichun and Yushui quickly got up and chased after him.

"Master Chu!" Lichun called out.

Chu Yu turned his head and looked at them indifferently, "What is it?"

"We are the Saintess's Hidden Guards, please forgive our offense!" Lichun said, bowing his fist in apology.

They were taught martial arts, the official languages and scripts of various countries, but no one taught them to be cunning.

"Heh!" Chu Yu sneered, clearly uninterested in them.

As they watched Chu Yu stride away, Lichun and Yushui doubted their lives for the first time, questioning their own value.

"Are we really that bad?" Yushui asked.

Lichun thought for a moment, "We probably are!"

If this was truly a 'luring the tiger away from the mountain' tactic, then wouldn't the Saintess be in danger...

The two broke out in a cold sweat at the thought.

And decided that from now on they should operate in groups of four, so that if anything happened, two could take action while the other two remained on standby!

That night, Yun Jinnian slept very soundly, and when she awoke in the morning, breakfast was already prepared, and she could eat after washing up.

Han Tianci came happily, followed by Chu Yu, who looked utterly weary with dark circles under his eyes and a face full of grievances.

"What's the matter?" Yun Jinnian asked Chu Yu.

"I'm homesick for my own bed!"

"..." Yun Jinnian was taken aback.

He never had this issue before, so why was he suddenly finicky about beds now that they arrived at the Moon Worship Sect?

Han Tianci, on the other hand, covered his mouth to snicker.

Is he having trouble sleeping now?

Yun Jinnian, considering Chu Yu's feelings, didn't inquire further and invited both to sit as Shi Jiayu arranged the dishes, then went down with Hemei and Henuan for breakfast.

As the three of them sat eating, Yun Jinnian was extremely considerate and attentive to Han Tianci, much to the growing dismay of Chu Yu.

After breakfast, Elder Jin came to escort Yun Jinnian to meet the Sect Leader, and Yun Jinnian insisted on bringing Chu Yu and Han Tianci along.

Elder Jin hesitated for a moment, then agreed.

Yun Jinnian, accompanied by Han Tianci, rode in a palanquin while Chu Yu and the others followed on horseback, heading straight to the rear mountain of the Moon Worship Sect...

Chapter 402: Mysterious Journey

Hemei and Henuan couldn't come along either.

At first, the temperature was quite warm, but as they traveled, it gradually became colder. Elder Jin had someone pass a cloak into the palanquin, and Yun Jinnian wrapped both herself and Han Tianci inside it.

Han Tianci chuckled.

"Sister..."

"Hmm?"

"Following sister is really fun!"

Yun Jinnian ruffled Han Tianci's hair and held him in her arms, "Sister will protect you!"

"I will protect Sister too!"

The siblings exchanged a smile.

The further they went into the mountains, the more it began to snow. Elder Jin felt sorry for Yun Jinnian being cold, but at this point, there was nothing he could do.

Not until they reached a valley, where it was full of green pines, each covered in icicles—an incredibly beautiful sight to behold.

"Wow..."

Han Tianci exclaimed in amazement.

"It's so beautiful!" He couldn't help but exclaim, turning his head to look at Yun Jinnian, "Sister, isn't it beautiful?"

Yun Jinnian nodded, "Indeed, it is beautiful, clear and pure, almost unreal!"

The palanquin stopped, and Elder Jin invited Yun Jinnian to disembark, "Saintess, let's go inside!"

"Please have my brother and Chu Yu come with me. They won't say anything!" Yun Jinnian spoke out.

She was afraid of encountering danger herself, and she also wanted Han Tianci to see more.

Elder Jin remained silent.

Han Tianci was of the former Saintess's bloodline, so it made sense for him to enter, but Chu Yu...

However, seeing Yun Jinnian's insistence, and after consulting with the four Elders, he reluctantly agreed.

Originally, Yun Jinnian was supposed to walk by herself, but since she had injured her leg, walking a few steps was fine, but walking more would be painful.

Elder Jin had a chair prepared for Yun Jinnian to be carried in, while Han Tianci and Chu Yu walked beside her.

They were supposed to be on either side of her, but Yun Jinnian insisted that Han Tianci be in the middle, with Chu Yu beside him.

Inside the cave, rows of oil lamps lit up a narrow path, winding its way further and further in, and the colder it got.

And they were descending.

Chu Yu was keeping track of the number of steps they took and what they saw along the way, tightly holding Han Tianci's hand.

At this moment, Chu Yu was acutely aware that if anything happened, he had to take Han Tianci and leave.

If anything happened to Han Tianci, he and Yun Jinnian would have no chance at all.

Yun Jinnian was the Saintess of the Moon Worshiping Sect; the five Elders wouldn't harm her or abandon her.

Not until they walked three thousand nine hundred steps did a fork in the path appear.

Elder Jin led them left, then at another fork, they also took the left. After that came one fork after another: right, left, right, left, right, left, right, right—a total of ten forks.

All together, that was left, left, right, left, right, left, right, left, right, right.

Chu Yu was certain the other pathways must be riddled with traps—entering alive didn't necessarily mean exiting alive.

They came to a dead end.

Elder Jin touched the stone wall, and after the sound of clicking, a stone door slid open to both sides.

Bright white light.

An icy expanse; it was another valley. A serene fragrance wafted through the air.

The scent of the Snow Lotus!

Yun Jinnian and Chu Yu immediately realized, this was where the Moon Worshiping Sect cultivated the Snow Lotus.

The forbidden area behind the mountain, where the Snow Lotus was planted, and where the Law Patriarch once again guarded the Snow Lotus.

"Saintess, we have arrived!" said Elder Jin as he led the way.

Snowflakes drifted from the sky; Yun Jinnian looked up to see a vast expanse of white, unable to see the sky, but feeling exceptionally awed.

Was it nature's own marvelous handiwork, or the unparalleled ingenuity of the ancestors of the Moon Worshiping Sect, to have found such a place?

"Ah... there's something moving below..." Han Tianci cried out in surprise.

Chu Yu and Yun Jinnian both looked down at the same time.

Indeed, something was moving beneath their feet.

What exactly was this place?

Chapter 403: There's Always Someone Better

Elder Jin hurriedly said, "This place used to be a lake. Due to the perennial snow and ice, it froze over. Since the ice is relatively clear, no matter how thick it becomes, one can still see the fish swimming below!"

"No, those are not fish!" Han Tianci objected.

He had never seen fish that looked like that.

With mouths so large and teeth so sharp.

Elder Jin laughed, "Indeed, there are some other things in there!"

As for what they were, Elder Jin did not say.

Han Tianci, knowing when to stop asking, simply walked on the ice with a certain degree of fear, clutching Chu Yu's hand tightly.

"Do not fear, I am holding onto you," Chu Yu said softly, comforting him.

Yun Jinnian looked over, and Han Tianci, slightly embarrassed, nodded emphatically.

Initially, he was afraid of breaking through the ice and falling down, but after walking for a while, he became less frightened and even let go of Chu Yu's hand.

"It snows here all year round, and as the lake is warm, layer upon layer has built up, creating this spectacle!" Elder Jin explained. Then he said to Han Tianci, "Over there, next to the snow mountain, there are sparrows. When the time comes, the young master can catch sparrows, and the sparrows roasted by Elder Hu are really tasty!"

As Elder Jin spoke, he extended his hand toward Han Tianci.

Han Tianci hesitated for a bit before placing his hand in Elder Jin's larger one.

Elder Jin's hand was dry, warm, and strong. Han Tianci felt a warmth spreading from his palm to his whole body, instantly making him feel warmer.

He looked up, not understanding, at Elder Jin.

"Call me Grandpa Jin!"

He had never married or had children. For years, he had guarded the Moon-Watch Sect, which had been without a Saintess and Sacred Relic. It had not been easy to remain steadfast for so many years.

By the time he had come to his senses and thought of marrying to have children, he had already grown old.

Han Tianci, so clever and well-behaved, immediately called out sweetly, "Grandpa Jin!"

The group walked on the ice for the duration of an incense stick before reaching the stone path leading through the Green Pine Forest, which was swept clean and stretched endlessly out of sight.

Two figures in black darted out, "Elder Jin, why have you come?"

"I have seen the two emissaries, and I bring the Saintess to meet the Law Sovereign," Elder Jin said, bowing with his hands clasped in front of him.

The men in black turned to look at Yun Jinnian who sat in the palanquin, still dressed in simple white with plain hair and silver ornaments.

"Please!"

They did not bow in return.

Yun Jinnian immediately understood that it did not matter if the five elders recognized her; only if the Law Sovereign recognized her would she truly be the Saintess.

She took a deep breath.

After walking on the stone path for a bit longer than the time it takes an incense stick to burn, they saw a bamboo forest. Snow was falling from the sky, but the bamboo in the forest was lush and green, with not a single snowflake on the leaves. Even if any snow did land, it seemed to melt away instantly.

In the depths of the bamboo forest was a house.

An elderly maid walked out, slow but proper, "Old Ma Gu greets the elder!" Then, looking toward Yun Jinnian, she said indifferently, "The Law Sovereign invites the young lady to follow this old servant inside."

"Ma Gu, the Saintess injured her leg and cannot walk," Elder Jin said quickly.

Ma Gu seemed to suddenly understand, "That's alright, the old servant will carry the young lady inside!"

Saying so, she stepped forward and lifted Yun Jinnian.

Han Tianci wanted to follow, but Elder Jin held him back with a slight shake of his head.

"But..."

"Do not worry; nothing will happen!" Elder Jin reassured.

The Law Sovereign would not trouble a young lady, especially since Yun Jinnian was indeed a descendant of the Saintess.

Han Tianci pursed his lips, looking toward Chu Yu.

Chu Yu had been silent all along the way.

Once again, he realized that there were always higher powers, beyond what one knows.

Chapter 404: The Mysterious Elder

His little abilities were nothing in front of this Priest!

Magu held Yun Jinnian in her arms as they entered the courtyard, surrounded by high walls but devoid of rooms. The courtyard was brimming with the fragrance of flowers, and snow lotuses in pots were budding and blooming fiercely, their scent intoxicating.

At a glance, there had to be at least ten thousand plants.

Entering the second courtyard, the snow lotuses were larger than in the first one, and their fragrance was even more potent.

On entering the third courtyard, the snow lotuses were even larger, and there was a crossroad. Magu, still holding Yun Jinnian, took a left turn, passed through an archway, and was greeted with pots of Blood Lotus blooming vigorously in the wind.

"..."

Yun Jinnian was so shocked that he couldn't find the words to speak.

Just how many snow lotuses did this Moon-Watching Sect possess?

A large house stood before them, and the door creaked open as two middle-aged women stepped out, bowed to Magu, and then retreated to the side.

Magu carried Yun Jinnian inside the room. As the door closed, everything was pitch black, so dark you couldn't see your own hand.

But Magu did not stop; she continued to carry Yun Jinnian forward until they reached a spot where a click was heard and a beam of light shone through, causing Yun Jinnian to close his eyes.

Magu carried Yun Jinnian down step by step.

Only after he had adjusted did Yun Jinnian open his eyes.

As they descended the stairs, the wall-mounted lights illuminated the path brightly, and Yun Jinnian could also see the scene below.

A huge Five Elements and Eight Trigrams Array with an old man, his hair and beard white as snow, sitting in the middle, seemingly in meditation.

"Priest, I have brought the girl!" Magu said, placing Yun Jinnian on a chair to one side.

A woman immediately served tea.

"Young lady, please have some tea!" After Magu spoke, she retreated to the side.

Yun Jinnian truly felt thirst and dryness in his mouth.

His heart inexplicably raced, and he was also somewhat afraid.

But it seemed as if after the fear, something was comforting him, telling him not to be afraid, not to be scared.

Gradually, Yun Jinnian calmed down, picked up the teacup, and took a sip.

It was the delicate fragrance of snow lotus.

He wasn't sure if it was brewed from the snow lotus itself or if it was the dew from a snow lotus, but the tea was delicious, and Yun Jinnian couldn't help but finish it.

Setting down the teacup and wiping his mouth with a handkerchief, Yun Jinnian was somewhat startled.

"Is it good?"

The voice was aged yet gentle, filled with a hint of indulgence and affection.

Yun Jinnian mustered his strength to stand up and gave a slight bow, "Thank you for the tea, Priest. It was very good!"

The Priest lifted his head and slowly got up.

His hair and beard had turned white, but his complexion was extraordinarily rosy, and his eyes were bright and spirited, startlingly so.

He walked step by step towards Yun Jinnian, noticing that despite sweating profusely, the young man was still holding firm.

After a brief look of astonishment, the Priest smiled again, "You are indeed gentle and resolute, much better than that heartless girl!"

Yun Jinnian was taken aback.

Then the Priest said, "Let's sit down and talk."

Relieved by these words, Yun Jinnian quickly sat down, holding onto the armrest and wiping his forehead with a handkerchief.

He then turned to the Priest, "You..."

"?"

The Priest gazed at Yun Jinnian silently.

"I might be fake," Yun Jinnian said.

The Priest laughed, "You are not fake. You are a descendant of the previous Saintess's bloodline, there's no faking that!"

This time it was Yun Jinnian who did not understand.

"Does your maternal family have the surname Han?" the Priest asked.

Yun Jinnian nodded, "Yes!"

"So, people can be mistaken, but Sacred Relics and Spiritual Poisonous Insects do not mistake their masters. Plus, you possess the Moon-Watching Sect's legacy; otherwise, how do you explain, at such a young age, your unparalleled medical skills and how you can resolve Nanjiang's poison without the need for deliberate study?"

Chapter 405: Guiding Step by Step

Master of the Law spoke, paused for a moment, and then added, "The former Saintess left the Moonwatching Sect in a huff, and the man she married was surnamed Han. Regrettably, the Saintess died of hemorrhage during the birth of her first child, and the child she left behind is your grandfather Han Xuzi!"

"..."

Yun Jinnian was utterly shocked.

So Master of the Law knew all along...

"Your mother did not inherit the Nanjiang Poisonous Insect Technique, and neither did you when you were little. However, by some twist of fate, you gained the inheritance later on..." As Master of the Law was speaking, he suddenly remembered something, quickly turned, and walked to one side. He took out the Turtle Card and started divining.

He was even muttering to himself.

Watching him, Yun Jinnian felt particularly anxious.

Because at Huguo Temple, Abbot Wuxin and Master Micheng had seen through her destiny and had exposed it with a single statement.

Seeing Master of the Law like this, Yun Jinnian was very nervous, wanting to leave but unable to do so, her back drenched with sweat.

"So that's how it is, that's how it is!" Master of the Law was ecstatic.

He approached Yun Jinnian, "Have you died once before? And was it an extremely miserable death? Someone changed your fate, sending you back to your younger days, altering your destiny. Thus, the fate that was taken from you returned to you once more, and the inheritance emerged!"

Yun Jinnian was so frightened that her face turned deathly pale, and she nearly slid off the chair.

What is all this about?

It seemed outrageous, yet it could explain everything.

Because indeed, she had an extraordinary talent for medicine; she could remember the effects of any herb after seeing it just once, and knew which herbs to combine to cure specific illnesses.

"No!"

"No?"

Yun Jinnian nodded.

"How could it not be? I clearly divined that there was an anomaly in your fate. It changed in the winter of the year you turned ten..."

"Stop talking, I beg you, stop talking!" Yun Jinnian suddenly screamed.

She struggled to get up.

Her eyes were bloodshot, brimming with tears.

She had always tried hard to forget, to grow strong by constant effort. Why bring it up again...

That past was like an arrow with a reverse hook, unbearable to pull out without causing heart-wrenching pain.

Master of the Law suddenly understood that what he had divined was accurate.

He extended a hand and gently rubbed Yun Jinnian's head.

Yun Jinnian looked up at Master of the Law.

"Don't be afraid, I, this old man, have been in retreat for many years. Since it's your secret, it shall forever be your secret. Not a single word will spread from me!"

Yun Jinnian lowered her eyes, and then slightly nodded.

Master of the Law sat down in the chair next to Yun Jinnian, "What are your plans moving forward?"

"?"

"Since someone has changed your fate and stolen your exceedingly noble destiny, don't you want to take it back?" Master of the Law asked, taking a deep breath.

He was old now, and it had been many years since he last traversed the martial world. He had the heart to perform rituals for Yun Jinnian, but his energy was not what it used to be, and he feared bungling it and endangering Yun Jinnian's life.

Therefore, he still needed to seek out a true master of the Taoist arts.

"What should I do?" Yun Jinnian asked.

"Become the Nanjiang Saintess, take control of the entire Moonwatching Sect, and make all the followers do as you wish!"

Yun Jinnian sneered, "Then wouldn't I be utterly shameless, doing nothing yet ordering others around? I cannot do that!"

Master of the Law looked at her and started to smile.

She had the same temperament as that girl; seemingly weak but extremely resolute, adhering to her own principles in all matters.

That was why the girl had stormed out of the Moonwatching Sect and would rather die than return.

"You must have known earlier that you are now the Nanjiang Saintess. As long as I acknowledge it here, from now on, fifty thousand followers of the south will do as you say. Everything in the sect will be yours, including all the Blood Lotuses in this valley. You can pick them freely, use them for yourself, give them to others, or bestow them upon your followers. You truly must think this through!"

Chapter 406: Sincerity in Response

Yun Jinnian took a deep breath.

"Your proposition has tempted me!"

Not to mention anything else, these Snow Lotuses truly tempted her.

"That's not all, Moonwatching Sect has many kinds of Martial Arts that you can let those close to you learn, not to mention the wealth accumulated over the years, the influences in various countries, being the Saintess peacefully; there are only benefits beyond your wildest imagination that await you!"

Of course, there would be rebels, but rebels do not possess the complete Poison Scripture, nor do they have the Sacred Relic and Spiritual Poisonous Insects, let alone the Detoxification Pills refined with the blood of the Saintess.

The end for any rebel is summed up in one word, death!

"I am already the Saintess of Nanjiang!"

It was only after a long while that Yun Jinnian spoke softly.

"It's different, girl. Right now, you have only agreed to be the Saintess of Nanjiang but have not taken this matter seriously. What I want you to promise is to take the rise and fall of Nanjiang as your

responsibility, and you can rest assured, you will only need to make decisions, you won't actually have to do anything!"

After the initial shock, Yun Jinnian also calmed down.

"No, you still need something from me, which is why you're allowing me to take anything I want. There are no free meals in the world!"

To eat, one must pay a price.

Otherwise, there would not be a requirement to return to Nanjiang every three years.

Law Master laughed, "Then, what do you think it is?"

"I don't know. I've agreed to leave behind the Sacred Relic and the Spiritual Poisonous Insects, yet the five elders still insist. I think it's because I can make the Spiritual Poisonous Insects fight desperately to save me, because I can make them obey, or perhaps it's my blood," Yun Jinnian said as she looked at Law Master.

These were all her guesses.

Whether they were true or false, that remained unknown.

Suddenly, Law Master burst into loud laughter, "You're a smart girl indeed, and you guessed right. It's only with your blood that the Spiritual Poisonous Insects will lay eggs inside the small cauldron, and the small cauldron must feed on your blood to hatch the Spiritual Poisonous Insects. The Spiritual Poisonous Insects only respond to the Saintess and release their essence. To create a remedy that can neutralize all poisons in Nanjiang, it is essential to have the essence and blood of the Spiritual Poisonous Insects as well as the blood of the Saintess!"

Yun Jinnian fell silent upon hearing this.

She was being used by these people, but she was using them as well.

Using them, she obtained the Snow Lotuses, the sincere devotion of many people, and some other benefits as well.

Putting oneself in another's shoes, she had gained more.

"My intelligence is limited, but if you trust me, I will be a good Saintess. However, there are some things I still insist on!"

"For instance, I must stay in Capital City; my relatives are there, and in the future, if my daughter inherits my medical skills, I will support her to become the Saintess. If no one can inherit them, once I've fulfilled some of my wishes and can take my family away from Capital City, I will come to Nanjiang and stay forever in the sect. As long as I'm alive, my word stands!" Yun Jinnian was absolutely serious.

Law Master looked at Yun Jinnian with eagerness in his eyes, "A gentleman's agreement!"

"Cannot be taken back even by a team of horses!" Yun Jinnian said resolutely.

"Swear with a palm strike!"

Old and young, they struck their palms together forcefully three times.

Yun Jinnian's palm was slightly numb, but she still smiled.

Law Master then kneeled on one knee, "Your subordinate greets the Saintess!"

Yun Jinnian was taken aback.

"...."

This?

She couldn't accept it.

"Get up quickly, I can't accept this!" said Yun Jinnian hurriedly.

However, Law Master laughed, stood up, and scooped Yun Jinnian into his arms.

"Ah..." Yun Jinnian screamed.

This old man was acting too rashly.

It was simply detestable.

Yun Jinnian's face suddenly turned red with embarrassment.

"Don't overthink it, Saintess. Since your subordinate has recognized the Saintess, it is only natural that everyone in this valley should know who the Saintess of the Moonwatching Sect is and what she looks like!" Law Master said as he carried Yun Jinnian up the steps.

Chapter 407: Jinnian's Probe

The room was bright, with all doors and windows wide open.

Women were kneeling all over the floor.

"We have seen the Saintess!"

This time, Yun Jinnian could truly feel their sincerity and respect.

The Law Elder placed Yun Jinnian in the seat of honor, his eyes brimming with an indulgent smile as he looked at her.

Yun Jinnian swallowed hard, "Rise, all of you, rise!"

"Thank you, Saintess!"

Ma Gu immediately got to her feet and approached Yun Jinnian, "This is not where the Saintess will stay. May I carry you to your room? Shortly, the Saintess will meet with the five great elders, and perhaps your friend will also settle here, right?"

"Many thanks, Ma Gu!"

Upon hearing this, Ma Gu's eyes reddened slightly, "I dare not, I dare not!"

Yet, she was moved in her heart.

Yun Jinnian had raised her status among these women considerably.

Yun Jinnian, however, was unaware of this.

She let Ma Gu carry her out, heading straight to the central courtyard.

The Blood Lotuses within were numerous, arranged row after row in exquisite pots.

"What are these Blood Lotuses cultivated with?"

"These have been growing for many years, at least five to six hundred, or even a thousand years. They grew naturally!"

"..."

Yun Jinnian's mouth fell open in shock.

Just one of these Blood Lotuses taken outside could fetch a fortune. Countless would clamor for it, yet here in the valley, they were merely cultivated for display—a waste of heavenly treasures!

No, perhaps they were not kept for their beauty but because they were too precious to harvest.

The room was uniformly white, everywhere the eye could see was snow-white.

Ma Gu placed Yun Jinnian in the main seat, with the Law Elder standing to one side. Ma Gu bowed to Yun Jinnian and then went downstairs to call the five great elders.

Outside the courtyard.

Han Tianci was getting impatient, "Elder Jin, when will my sister come out?"

"Just a little longer!" Elder Jin replied, also appearing worried.

The Law Elder was advanced in years, and it was uncertain whether he was still in a good mood. Hopefully, he would not make things difficult for the Saintess.

Han Tianci glanced at Chu Yu, who laid a hand on Han Tianci's head.

Initially unnoticed, now it seemed, from the moment they stepped into the back mountain, the surrounding formations, traps, and mechanisms had already been disabled. If someone tried to force their way through, he wondered if anyone could actually make it inside?

He certainly couldn't.

Then the gate opened, and Ma Gu came out joyfully, "Elders, young masters, the Saintess invites you inside!"

The five great elders were overjoyed, while Chu Yu and Han Tianci exchanged glances.

"Young master, Master Chu, please come in!"

The five great elders stepped aside to clear the path.

When Han Tianci and Chu Yu entered the courtyard, they were amazed.

So many Snow Lotuses.

Entering the second courtyard, their astonishment only deepened, let alone upon reaching the third.

When they arrived at Yun Jinnian's courtyard, they were so bewildered they couldn't recover for a long while.

Is this the Blood Lotus?

"..."

Han Tianci's mouth dropped open.

What couldn't be found even after an exhaustive search on the snowy mountain was here in such abundance.

Chu Yu naturally had the same thought.

It was unimaginable that the Moon-Watching Sect was this extraordinary.

Entering the hall, Yun Jinnian sat in the primary position, an old man with white hair and beard, dressed in white, stood by her side. The five great elders hastily paid their respects, "We greet the Saintess and the Law Elder!"

"Dispense with the formalities!" Yun Jinnian gently commanded, smiling as she looked at Han Tianci and Chu Yu.

"Sister!"

Han Tianci called out and ran to Yun Jinnian's side, his eyes wandering outside, "There are so many Blood Lotuses outside!"

Yun Jinnian asked, "Do you like them?"

Han Tianci nodded, "They smell wonderful!"

"Once I feel a bit better, I'll pick a few and make some detoxification elixirs for you, okay?"

Chapter 408: Tianci Becomes a Disciple

Yun Jinnian was overtly talking things over with Han Tianci, but in actuality, she was also testing the waters.

She wanted to know, to what extent the Moon-Watching Sect could tolerate her capriciousness!

Han Tianci nodded, looking toward the five great elders and the Law Honored One, "Is that alright?"

"Of course, it is! Everything at the Moon-Watching Sect belongs to the Saintess, naturally the Saintess can deal with them as she pleases!" the Law Honored One said with a smile.

Originally, Yun Jinnian was to stay in the valley for a while, but she was worried about Prince Yanjun's illness, so she picked two Blood Lotus plants intending to return to the Moon-Watching Sect.

After a moment of thought, the Law Honored One said, "The old man hasn't gone out for many years; I'll accompany her."

Yun Jinnian was astonished.

The five great elders were immediately overjoyed.

The Law Honored One added, "With the Blood Lotus, how can we not include the Thousand-Year Ginseng and Lingzhi!"

"..."

Yun Jinnian was astonished.

"Would the Saintess like to see the Ginseng and Lingzhi that the old man transplanted from elsewhere?"

"..."

Han Tianci hurriedly said, "Sister, let's go, I want to see it too!"

Yun Jinnian smiled, "Then let's go!"

Upon hearing this, the Law Honored One was about to step forward and carry Yun Jinnian, but she quickly refused, "Don't, let Brother Chu carry me instead!"

"..."

The Law Honored One hesitated.

This Chu Yu was an outsider. Was it really okay for him to know so many secrets of the Moon-Watching Sect?

"I trust Brother Chu won't talk nonsense!" Yun Jinnian asserted, vouching for Chu Yu.

For some reason, she was just so undoubtingly trusting.

Chu Yu smiled.

With bright sunshine and clear skies, he was gracefully charming.

"Then let's go!" said the Law Honored One.

Since everything in Nanjiang was said to belong to the Saintess, from this moment on, let's follow the Saintess's lead in all matters!

Chu Yu stepped forward and lifted Yun Jinnian in a princess carry.

Yun Jinnian reached out to wrap her arms around his neck, the two of them very close, both could feel each other's breath.

Yun Jinnian looked down and blushed.

But she noticed that Chu Yu's ears were thoroughly red, and she couldn't help but sneak a smile.

The Law Honored One reached out to Han Tianci, "Young master, is it fine if the old man holds your hand?"

"Sure!" Han Tianci said, placing his hand into the Law Honored One's aged one.

They walked ahead.

Chu Yu, carrying Yun Jinnian, followed behind, with the five great elders bringing up the rear.

"Grandfather Law Honored One, how old are you?" Han Tianci asked with youthful curiosity.

"Why don't you guess, young master!"

Han Tianci was taken aback for a moment, then thought seriously, "You seem older than my maternal grandfather, are you eighty yet?"

The Law Honored One laughed, "More than eighty, indeed!"

"Ninety?"

"Even more!"

"A hundred years old? Wow, really a hundred years old?"

"Still not quite!" the Law Honored One said, trying to seriously remember how old he was, but he indeed was an old but undying one.

Patting Han Tianci's head, "Would the young master like to learn Martial Arts with the old man?"

"Is that possible?"

"Of course, it is!"

Han Tianci hesitated slightly, "But I need to return to the Capital City, my mother and grandfather are waiting for my sister and me to come home!"

"They say 'where you marry, you follow'; if the master follows the disciple, that's also acceptable!" the Law Honored One said with a laugh.

Although he could no longer open altars or perform rituals, teaching a child was still within his abilities...

"Tianci, quickly kowtow to the Law Honored One!" Yun Jinnian urged.

First, pay respects with a kowtow; the formal apprenticeship can be sealed with a tea ceremony upon return.

Although the Law Honored One was of great age, he was certainly capable, or else he would not have lived so long.

Han Tianci, who greatly heeded Yun Jinnian's words, quickly wriggled free of his hand and knelt before the Law Honored One, "Master above, please receive your disciple's bow!"

Watching this, the Law Honored One's eyes reddened instantaneously.

Unexpectedly, in his old age, not only did he wait for the arrival of the Saintess, but he also gained a little disciple.

Good, very good!!

Chapter 409: Free of Distractions

He reached out to help Han Tianci up, "Good child!"

"Master!"

Han Tianci was still very curious about this master of his.

Because what he had learned before was all taught by his grandfather, and it felt different from his master.

"Hmm!"

"Master!"

"Hmm!"

"Master!"

"Hmm!"

The two of them grew fond of each other; one called out and the other responded, and they played joyfully.

Chu Yu looked at Yun Jinnian in his arms and started to laugh.

Yun Jinnian glanced up and saw, "What are you laughing at?"

"I'm happy for you two!"

With the support of Moon Gazing Sect, even if something happened in the future, Nanjiang could protect the siblings.

"Thank you, Brother Chu!"

"No need to be polite!"

Once they passed through the bamboo forest, they saw a verdant woodland up ahead, seemingly comprised of various trees.

But beneath the trees were indeed ginseng plants, and some rotting logs also bore Lingzhi.

"..."

It was clear that no one had been here for a long time.

"Shall the Saintess quickly gather a few ginseng roots to take back?" asked the venerable monk.

Yun Jinnian shook her head slightly, "These ginseng roots and Lingzhi have been here for many years; it's best not to harvest them!"

Having been in one place for so many years, they were likely to have developed spirits.

Ordinary people couldn't possibly benefit from them; they would just carefully treasure them for life-preserving purposes.

"Since we've come, how can we return empty-handed!"

As the venerable monk spoke, he stretched out his hand and produced a small shovel from nowhere, then turned to Han Tianci and said, "Disciple, come help!"

"Yes, master!"

Elder Jin immediately prepared a brocade box.

Elder Mu placed the chair they brought in front of Yun Jinnian, and Chu Yu placed Yun Jinnian on the chair, "I'll go see if I can help!"

"Alright!"

So many ginseng and Lingzhi plants were planted in this forest, and they appeared to be quite old. If one didn't have some skill, they wouldn't even reach this place—fearing they wouldn't even survive halfway.

Chu Yu took a few steps forward, "Senior, do you need help?"

The venerable monk turned his head to glance at Chu Yu and chuckled, "Sure!"

Chu Yu immediately went forward to help, always feeling that the venerable monk was the old man from the cell, though they didn't look quite the same.

But the feeling he got was of the same person.

It was strange to have such a feeling.

The three of them carefully excavated the soil and gingerly dug up the ginseng, ensuring even the smallest roots remained intact. Elder Jin hurriedly stepped forward, opened the brocade box, and the venerable monk placed the ginseng inside.

"Saintess, would you like to dig up another couple of roots?" asked the venerable monk.

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian told herself not to be greedy, but still couldn't help nodding, "Sure!"

After digging up three ginseng roots and picking three Lingzhi, they started back the way they came.

Except for the venerable monk, no one was aware that the path on the way here had changed, only Yun Jinnian held in Chu Yu's arms, her brows creasing more and more.

This entire land was infused with the Five Elements and Eight Trigrams, and with his ability, he couldn't unravel it.

Therefore, even if one knew of the presence of Thousand-Year Ginseng and Lingzhi here, they might not be able to enter.

Out of forty-nine paths, only one was the path of life; all the others were paths of death.

No one other than the venerable monk could come here.

Perhaps in the future, Tianci could!

This was what Chu Yu was thinking.

The group came out of the valley, crossed the lakes, and returned to the Moon Gazing Sect.

Yun Jinnian didn't hesitate and immediately requested the presence of Elders Earth and Wood to remove the Poisonous Insect from Prince Yanjun.

"Elders Earth and Wood, my legs are not well; I trouble you with this task!"

"No trouble at all, no trouble at all!"

Prince Yanjun had already bathed, and his hair was tied up on his head, with only a pair of shorts covering his body.

Yun Jinnian took a look, very composed, her face not blushing in the slightest.

At that moment, in her eyes, there was no distinction between man and woman, only the simple and clear relationship of her being a doctor and Prince Yanjun being the patient.

No stray thoughts whatsoever.

Chapter 410: Making Jinnian Laugh

A large vat, with a fire burning underneath.

Prince Yanjun settled into it as soon as the water cooled, while Yun Jinnian stood beside him administering acupuncture.

"The Thirteen Ghostly Needles!" Elder Mu exclaimed in surprise.

Yun Jinnian glanced at him, "What?"

"The Saintess is using the Thirteen Ghostly Needles, but where did the Saintess learn them?"

"From books!" Yun Jinnian said, swiftly inserting another needle.

Because she was next to the large vat, heated by the warm air, Yun Jinnian quickly broke into a heavy sweat. By the time she'd finished with all the needles, her clothes were soaked through.

Elder Mu and Elder Tu looked at each other, no longer underestimating Yun Jinnian.

The Saintess was only twelve. Given a few more years for her to grow, her medical achievement might be incomparable across the world.

Shi Jiayu, Hemei, and Henuan quickly lifted Yun Jinnian to go change her clothes. Yun Jinnian did not dare delay, quickly changed, and then removed the needles from Prince Yanjun once more.

Yuwen Ya, Chu Yu, and Han Tianci brought over the medicine, helping Prince Yanjun to drink it, only to see the water in the large vat instantly freeze.

"..."

The three of them were shocked and hurriedly moved Prince Yanjun into the second vat.

It was filled with boiling hot medicinal decoction.

Prince Yanjun groaned in pain.

Yuwen Ya was overjoyed, "He's making sounds!"

For someone who had been mute for two years, this was truly a miracle.

Yun Jinnian administered the acupuncture again, on his back, head, chest, and arms—a densely packed area.

She changed the acupoints again, and this time it was much easier than the second time. As soon as the medicinal liquid in the vat froze, Yun Jinnian quickly removed the needles and only then lifted Prince Yanjun out to dry him off and dress him in clean clothes.

Only then did Yun Jinnian take Prince Yanjun's pulse.

"How is it?" Yuwen Ya asked anxiously.

"This poison has been in his system for several decades; it won't be completely eliminated in a short period. At least ten sessions will be necessary!"

One session every half month. Once Prince Yanjun's health improved, her legs should also recover, and by then they could return to Capital City.

Returning to Capital City, just in time for the Mid-Autumn Festival.

Yun Jinnian's medical skills fascinated Elder Mu and Elder Tu. Yun Jinnian did not keep her knowledge to herself, exchanging medical insights with them and even translating the Poison Scripture. But upon looking at the Poison Scripture, the elders took a deep breath.

Indeed, one's actions are determined by their circumstances.

There was no falsity in this saying at all.

"Sister, I'm going to learn Martial Arts with Master!" Han Tianci, holding Yun Jinnian's hand, happily said.

"Let Brother Chu take you there!" Yun Jinnian said.

"Okay!"

Chu Yu certainly understood Yun Jinnian's intentions.

Following Han Tianci over, the Master would not reject them; as he taught Han Tianci, Chu Yu could observe from the side. Whatever he could comprehend and learn was up to his own ability.

But the Master wasn't just teaching Han Tianci Martial Arts; he also taught the Five Elements and Eight Trigrams, medical skills, divination, and even how to set up formations, secret weapons, and mechanisms.

It was diverse, yet the Master was adept at teaching children. Although Han Tianci returned to Yun Jinnian utterly exhausted, able to fall asleep after uttering just a few words to her, he never complained once.

"Jinnian!" Yuwen Ya called softly.

"Brother Seven!"

Yuwen Ya smiled, "Jinnian, how is my uncle's health?"

"Don't worry, take it slowly. But Brother Seven can write a letter to the Princess saying that next Mid-Autumn Festival we're sure to bring back a healthy Commandery Prince for her!"

Yuwen Ya immediately understood Yun Jinnian's meaning, "That would be wonderful!"

"But some things, Brother Seven, don't write them too clearly!"

"I know, rest assured, I know what to say and what not to say. By the way, the New Year is coming up, what are your plans for Mother Qian and the others?"