

Indulgence 421

Chapter 421: Third Master Yun Bi

Gallant and rapturous in demeanor, strikingly handsome to the point of enchantment.

Yun Jinnian glanced at his reflection and touched his own face, which felt blazing hot.

Shi Jiayu giggled, and Yun Jinnian cast her a faint glance, feeling somewhat bashful as he looked away, ignoring Shi Jiayu's teasing.

On the way back, Yun Jinnian didn't read but rather enjoyed the scenery along the way, feeling at ease.

The May weather wasn't too hot; he lifted the curtains of the carriage, and a gentle breeze made it quite comfortable.

Relaxed, Yun Jinnian drifted off into a drowsy sleep.

Han Tianci followed Prince Yanjun, engrossed in the prince's conversation, which was as gentle as a spring breeze, and he listened attentively and earnestly.

Everyone was in good spirits, except for Nanny Qian and her entourage.

After ten days on the road, they were about to arrive in Hengzhou.

Yun Bi had managed Hengzhou very well; the locals lived and worked in peace and contentment, free from worry about food and drink. Even in the drought last year, Hengzhou had been affected, but with Yun Bi in charge, the people didn't suffer too much hardship.

Looking at the lush and verdant crops along the road, there was a sense of vitality and a pleasing sight it was indeed.

Hengzhou

Thirty-year-old Yun Bi set down his writing brush.

He stood up and walked to the window.

Looking up, he gazed at the blazing sun in the sky.

Blue sea and sky stretching endlessly.

Only he had trapped himself in this corner of the world for many years.

"Master!"

"Hmm?" replied Yun Bi softly, showing indifference.

His handsome face bore not a trace of expression.

"We've just received news that Prince Rui, Prince Yanjun, along with the Yun Family's Fourth Miss and the Han Residence's young master, are about to pass through Hengzhou!"

"Who?" asked Yun Bi in a low voice.

The Yun Family's Fourth Miss? The Han Family's young master?

"It's your niece, the Yun Family's Fourth Miss, and a Han young master; he's the child from the Fourth Miss's maternal family!"

"Jinnian?" Yun Bi murmured softly.

He remembered the soft and sweet little girl who loved to laugh.

From afar, she would run toward him, patter, patter, patter, sweetly calling him 'Third Uncle' and opening her arms to be held.

"..."

The butler didn't know the Fourth Miss's name.

"Prepare Xingchen Academy and clean up the outer court guesthouse as well. Have Prince Rui and his party stay for a couple of days!", commanded Yun Bi in a detached tone, then added, "Tell the cooks to prepare some Hengzhou dishes. Also, gather some information, send someone to wait at the city gates, and welcome them to the residence as soon as they arrive!"

Continuing, Yun Bi paused, "Open the storeroom, take all the things I've collected to Xingchen Academy. When Jinnian leaves, let her take them back with her!"

"Yes!"

Yun Bi issued so many orders at once, the butler couldn't afford to be negligent.

Whether it was for the sake of Prince Rui or for the Fourth Miss, such an outpouring of words from their typically impassive master was an eye-opener for him.

Yun Jinnian's party was still quite noticeable.

There were bandits interested in making a move along the way, but seeing their large numbers, they dared not act. Several trade caravans also followed behind them, ensuring a safe arrival in Hengzhou.

"Sister, Hengzhou is just ahead!", exclaimed Han Tianci excitedly.

"Hmm!"

Yun Jinnian hesitated, wondering whether to take Tianci to see Yun Bi.

Her mother and maternal grandfather had kept Tianci hidden, unknown to the Yun Family, but Tianci would eventually have to come before the public.

Yun Jinnian held Han Tianci's hand tightly, "Tianci, are you ready?"

Han Tianci nodded, "Sister, I'm ready. No matter when, I will always be a member of the Han Family, your true brother, and nobody can change that!"

The road ahead was fraught with dangers, but he wasn't afraid.

"As long as you are ready, Sister will stand behind you, silently supporting you!"

"I will protect Sister!"

Chapter 422: Somewhat Excited

Yun Jinnian trusted Han Tianci,

This time, bringing him along, Yun Jinnian was also in a dilemma. By doing so, Han Tianci would gain experience and skills, allowing him to grow up quickly.

She pondered several times, guiding him carefully and thoughtfully.

She also used her sincere love to make Han Tianci feel the warmth that belonged to an elder sister.

Therefore, they had a very good relationship.

She reached out to straighten Han Tianci's clothes, then said gravely, "When you meet people later, call them 'Third Uncle'!"

"Mm, whatever sister calls them, I will call them. I listen to everything sister says!"

"Good boy!"

The procession stopped at the gates of Hengzhou City, and immediately a middle-aged man came forward. Seeing Chu Yu on horseback, he said, "Your subordinate greets Your Highness!"

"You?"

"Your subordinate is Zhou Yuping from Hengzhou's military department!" Zhou Yuping said, bowing again.

Chu Yu slightly nodded his head.

This man was considered one of the most important in Hengzhou. Yun Bi had him wait here, which was a great show of respect for Chu Yu and his party.

"Your Highness, the adults have already prepared accommodations for you. Will Your Highness be staying in the adult's mansion or at an inn?" Zhou Yuping asked tentatively.

"Lead the way ahead!"

With such a response, it was naturally to stay in the mansion.

Zhou Yuping smiled, had someone bring over a horse, and mounted, "Your Highness, please!"

"Mm!"

On this side, as Chu Yu and Yun Jinnian's group arrived in Hengzhou City, Yun Bi had already received the news. He didn't need to command anything; everything would be perfectly prepared. Yun Bi took people to the main gate to welcome them.

If it were only Chu Yu, he wouldn't be so polite, but there was also Yun Jinnian.

It wasn't just for the sake of blood and kinship, but for the sake of the person in his heart, he couldn't bear to neglect the precious daughter she cherished.

As he saw the procession approaching closer, Yun Bi clenched his hands tightly, his palms sweating.

He was somewhat like an elder father waiting at home, anticipating the long-awaited return of his child, filled with both hope and nervousness, and a touch of loneliness.

In the end, he couldn't call him 'father'.

The carriage stopped, and Yun Bi approached in a daze to greet it, his gaze drifting towards the carriage, absent-mindedly welcoming Chu Yu.

It wasn't until a figure in treasured blue, compact and agile, emerged from the carriage, the child looking adorably pink and delicate as he leapt down with an excited giggle, sweetly calling into the carriage, "Sister, we've arrived!"

Yun Bi stood petrified on the spot.

This child, this child...

Who is he? Who is he?

Then, a delicate white hand extended from the carriage, white sleeves, black hair tied up neatly, wearing refined and expensive hairpins and earrings.

A charming and unparalleled little face, with a soft and gentle smile.

"Sister, I'll help you!" Han Tianci immediately extended his hands joyfully.

Yun Jinnian smiled lightly and placed her hand in Han Tianci's, stepping down from the carriage by the stool.

In a white robe, she moved gracefully like a startled swan, her beauty stunning enough to overthrow kingdoms and cities.

Yun Jinnian, holding Han Tianci's hand, walked towards Yun Bi, who nervously swallowed.

The young Jinnian he knew had grown up so much.

Adorably playful as a child, now incomparably beautiful.

"Jinnian pays respect to Third Uncle!" Yun Jinnian said, bowing slightly.

Han Tianci also followed with a fist salute, "Greetings to Third Uncle!"

Yun Bi looked at the two children. Yun Jinnian's features favored Mrs. Han but were more delicate, while Han Tianci didn't resemble Mrs. Han very much; he looked somewhat like Yun Qi but even more like him!

...

Yun Bi was so excited, he couldn't even keep still any longer.

"Ah, ah, you must have had a tough journey. The house has already prepared hot water and meals. I wasn't sure what you would like to eat, so we prepared a bit of everything. Go freshen up first, then have a meal. Just tell the maid or the old woman any specific preferences, or you can tell me, and I'll instruct the kitchen to make it..." Yun Bi rambled on and on.

Chapter 423: Too Excited

Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci were astonished.

Chu Yu was also quite amazed.

And Zhou Yuping, who had served Yun Bi for many years, had his eyes widened in shock.

This master of his, in ordinary days, probably hadn't spoken this much in a whole day, let alone about household trivia like this.

He had always been hands-off.

"Third Uncle..." Yun Jinnian couldn't bear to interrupt.

This sort of prattling, she had only ever sensed from Mrs. Han. Although it was bothersome, it was warm.

Yun Bi paused when he heard her, then laughed, "Look at me, rambling on, let's go inside, let's go inside!"

He was seven parts respectful and three parts distant toward Chu Yu and his group, but completely affectionate and doting toward Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci, even though he was restraining himself, making his demeanor seem quite casual, his hands were trembling slightly and his eyes reddened just a bit.

Even though he was a little unsteady on his feet, Yun Jinnian still noticed.

Yun Bi was very excited.

But what was he excited about?

The place where Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci stayed was a large courtyard, split into two smaller ones, arranged elegantly and exquisite, and cleaned spotlessly.

Hot water had already been prepared, and taking a comfortable hot bath was truly a delight.

Yun Jinnian and Han Tianci were unaware of the inside story, but Han Zhong knew about the disputes between Yun Bi, Mrs. Han, and Yun Qi. It was just that now, he didn't know how to begin to speak to the siblings, to warn them to be wary of Yun Bi.

And Tianci's true identity...

Especially since Yun Bi had not gone to greet the Royal Highness and his people, but was walking back and forth outside the courtyard, seeming to want to come over, yet hesitating.

Han Zhong wished he could just kick Yun Bi into the air and send him flying away; the Han Family had everything, they didn't need him here playing the good guy!

After bathing and changing clothes, Yun Jinnian had Shi Jiayu, Hemei, and Henuan also take a bath. Sitting alone on a stool, towel in hand to wring out her hair, she tried to remember everything about her third uncle Yun Bi from her past life, but it was all so vague; she only knew that before her death, he had not yet taken a wife.

Maybe he married after her death, who could say.

"This servant pays respects to Fourth Miss!"

Yun Jinnian looked up to see a pretty young maid bowing to her in friendliness.

"Fourth Miss, may this servant help you wring your hair?"

"No need, I can manage it myself!"

"Oh!"

The young maid was a little disappointed.

But being assigned to serve here was already a tremendous fortune.

After all, it was what many people in the house had fought over, and she only got this position because her grandfather was the butler.

"Would you like some fruit, Miss? The master ordered us to prepare crisp melon, sweet melon, and peaches!"

Yun Jinnian thought for a moment, "Fetch some water for me to wash my hands!"

"Yes!"

After washing her hands, Yun Jinnian went to the small hall, where the table was arranged with seasonal fruits and dried fruit snacks, all made very delicately, bite-sized, not to mess up one's makeup.

Yun Jinnian picked up a green-skinned, red-fleshed, black-seeded sweet melon and took a bite; it was so juicy and sweet, quenching her thirst, "Does the young master have any?"

"Yes, the honored guests in the front courtyard have some as well!"

Yun Jinnian started to smile, "You eat, too!"

"This servant dares not!"

"Go on, eat. I permit you!" said Yun Jinnian, pushing the food toward the young maid.

The maid hesitated, licked her lips, "Then, this servant will have a piece of sweet melon!" She took a bite, chewed slowly, and after swallowing said in wonder, "This is really sweet, really delicious!"

"If you like it, eat a few more pieces. Once those three bandit-like men arrive, you won't even have the chance to want it!"

"..."

The young maid was confused.

Who would be so thoughtless as to dare to eat the young miss's food?

Seeing her baffled expression, Yun Jinnian found it amusing, "What's your name and how old are you this year?"

"This servant is Nuandong, eight years old this year!"

Yun Jinnian's face changed upon hearing that.

Nuandong, Nuandong...

Chapter 424: So That's How It Is

The so-called selling herself to bury her father was not true, those most difficult days, Nuandong held her, consoled her, told her not to be afraid, it was not because she spent silver to bury Nuandong's father; Nuandong was actually arranged for her by Third Uncle.

Yun Jinnian tried hard to think what kind of suffering Nuandong had endured in her previous life, but she didn't know, only remembering that in the end, Zhu Yan sent someone with the head of Nuandong, eyes

wide with terror, right in front of her. She just silently watched, her heart aching beyond measure, yet she could not utter a single word.

Yun Jinnian's eyes reddened slightly as she carefully looked at Nuandong.

It turned out that Nuandong was so cute as a child, chubby with rosy cheeks, so different from the frail and resolute girl she had become; now she was simple and kind-hearted, timid and serious.

"Miss, Miss, what's wrong?" Nuandong, holding a sweet melon, couldn't bear to take a second bite. Seeing Yun Jinnian silent for so long, she became somewhat worried.

Yun Jinnian snapped back to reality at the sound and shook her head sullenly, "No, it's nothing!"

Seeing Nuandong hold the sweet melon without eating, she hastily said, "You go ahead and eat, there's more here. Do you have sisters? Can you call them over so I can see them?"

"..."

Nuandong was completely taken aback.

This Miss was really too kind.

"May I?" Nuandong asked cautiously.

"Of course, go call them. Don't worry, Third Uncle won't blame you!" Yun Jinnian replied, becoming ever more gentle.

In her previous life, she had been powerless, but in this life, she was determined to treat Nuandong well, as well as her sisters.

Nuandong looked at the pastries on the table and thought of her three sisters who truly hadn't tasted them. Seeing Yun Jinnian's warm smile, she curtseyed, "Then this servant will go!"

"Mhm!"

Watching Nuandong leave, Yun Jinnian reflected on how Nuandong had once told her that she was originally to have four sisters, but when the fourth sister was born, her grandmother, seeing it was another daughter, threw her into the slop bucket to drown alive.

They even lied saying the child was born dead.

Her mother didn't believe it and carried the child to the Governor's Office to sue. On the way, she was hit by a carriage and by the time she awoke, the little sister had already been hastily buried, and her mother went mad, eventually dying by setting fire to herself!

Yun Jinnian had once asked Nuandong if she hated them?

Nuandong replied, how could she not hate? She hated her grandmother's heartlessness, even more, she hated her father's foolish filial piety and ignorance, because the person driving the carriage that hit her mother was her father.

If she hated them, how could she possibly sell herself to bury her father?

Now that she thought about it, Nuandong probably spent her life in exchange for her three sisters' survival, willingly becoming Third Uncle's pawn, serving by her side.

How foolish she had been back then to believe in Nuandong's story of selling herself to bury her father, without carefully considering that a father who indirectly killed her sister and drove her mother insane — would she really sell herself to bury him?

Hopefully, it was not too late, hopefully...

Nuandong stepped out of the courtyard and saw Yun Bi pacing back and forth, which startled her into hiding her smile, "This servant pays respect to the Master!"

Yun Bi looked at Nuandong, "You are not serving the Miss in the room? What are you doing out here?"

"The Miss instructed this servant to bring over the sisters from home to see..." Nuandong said with her head lowered, extremely nervous.

Fearing that Yun Bi would scold her.

Grandmother had been against her serving the Fourth Miss. But it was only after Grandfather personally spoke out that Grandmother refrained from objecting, and naturally, she wanted to perform well.

Yun Bi, however, didn't question her but asked indifferently, "Has the Miss finished dressing up?"

"Not yet, she's still in the small hall eating sweet melon!"

Yun Bi took a deep breath, this little girl really had no manners, he asked sternly, "Is there a maid attending to her?"

Chapter 425: Nuandong is Afraid

Nuandong shook her head.

Yun Bi looked at the silly and clumsy Nuandong and had little to say, "Since the young lady asked you to go, hurry up and bring the person over!"

Nuandong responded and ran off like a streak of smoke.

Yun Bi watched her, shaking his head helplessly.

She was just a child after all, he couldn't demand too much.

Yun Jinnian hadn't finished getting ready, and naturally, he couldn't enter, so he headed to Han Tianci's courtyard.

Han Tianci was still bathing, attended by two little boys around seven or eight years old. The three of them were just kids, and Han Tianci, being lively and talkative, was now soaking in water, chatting away with the two boys, Hu Kai. Since the two boys had never been outside, they took everything Han Tianci said as truth, listening with great interest and admiration.

Han Zhong blushed at the conversation from outside.

Seeing Yun Bi step in, Han Zhong squinted his eyes, "Third Master, what brings you here?"

Yun Bi disliked Han Zhong, as if it weren't for Han Zhong's meddling, the one marrying Miss Shu would have been him instead of that hypocrite, Yun Qi.

"Just came to have a look," Yun Bi said, glancing into the room.

"The young master is bathing!" Han Zhong stated indifferently, scarcely deigning to look at Yun Bi.

"If that's the case, I'll come back later," Yun Bi said, turning around to leave.

Han Zhong snorted coldly.

He also had an extreme dislike for Yun Bi.

The people of the Yun Family, all black-hearted, not a single good one amongst them!

Nuandong quickly returned to the servants' quarters. Mrs. Xia, Nuandong's mother, with her large pregnant belly, was washing clothes, while her seven-year-old Nuanchun, six-year-old Nuanqiu, and five-year-old Nuanqiu were helping out.

Without any young masters or misses in the house needing maids, the three sisters could only help out with Mrs. Xia's work, incidentally washing clothes for the dozens of members of the Fen Family to earn their keep.

"Mother!"

Nuandong called out softly, quickly walking over to help Mrs. Xia sit down.

In earlier years, Mrs. Xia had a child every year, already having weakened her body, and after giving birth to Nuanqiu, she miscarried three times. Now being pregnant again, Nuandong was very worried.

Having a brother might still be okay, but if it were another sister, although her father wouldn't say anything, it would not be well-received by the grandmother.

"Nuandong, why are you back if you're not attending to the young lady?" Mrs. Xia asked anxiously.

They all relied on Nuandong being favored by the young lady so that their lives would improve. Even if the child in her womb was still a girl, with a word from the young lady, their lives could be spared.

"Mother, the young lady asked me to come back and bring my sisters over!" Nuandong said, also delighted.

Nuanchun, Nuanqiu, and Nuanqiu, upon hearing this, were overjoyed.

"Big sister, is it true?"

"Of course it's true. Quickly change into clean clothes and comb your hair!"

The three kids scampered back to their room, took off the patched clothes they were wearing, combed each other's hair, and then stood neatly in front of Nuandong.

"You three follow your big sister and be obedient. Don't look around wildly, don't talk out of turn, and remember to follow the rules, understand?" Mrs. Xia instructed gently.

"Mhmm, mhmm, mhmm!"

The three sisters nodded incessantly.

Nuandong, afraid that Yun Jinnian might become impatient, dared not delay any longer, and hurriedly led her three sisters out of the servants' quarters towards the back courtyard, only to be stopped by someone blocking the way.

Nuandong looked up at the girl standing in front of her.

It was her cousin, Fen Zhiqiu and Fen Zhidong. Filled with fear, she called out hesitantly, "Third cousin, fourth cousin!"

Fen Zhiqiu and Fen Zhidong were daughters of Nuandong's eldest and second uncles. With each uncle having three sons, the two cousins were very domineering and always bullied Nuandong and her sisters.

Chapter 426: A Little Sweetener

Nuandong was not timid by nature, but Mrs. Xia forbade her to fight back. Moreover, her father did not care and would certainly not support her and her three sisters, so Fen Zhiqiu and Fen Zhidong became more and more presumptuous.

"Hmph, Nuandong, why did you run back here instead of attending to the young miss?" Fen Zhiqiu said as she pushed Nuandong.

Fen Zhiqiu, well-fed and strong, pushed Nuandong, causing her to stagger.

Nuandong steadied herself and said with a flushed face, "Cousin, I am on my way to the young miss!"

"Heh, with that foolish look, you were probably chased away by the young miss!" Fen Zhiqiu, seeing the new clothes on Nuandong, was consumed with jealousy.

She had thought that this job should have been hers, but to her dismay, it had been given to Nuandong.

How could she not be angry?

"No, that's not true. The young miss asked my sister to come back and bring us to her. My sister was definitely not chased away!" Nuanchun quickly retorted.

After all, she was defending her own sister.

In this family, only their sister and mother truly cherished them. Their father breathed the same air as their grandparents and wouldn't care whether they lived or died.

Despite being young, the children understood everything.

Upon hearing this, Fen Zhiqiu became even more enraged and raised her hand to hit Nuanchun. "You impudent girl, how dare you talk back!"

Nuandong quickly grabbed Fen Zhiqiu's wrist, "Third cousin, whether you believe it or not, the young miss did ask me to come back and fetch my sisters to see her. If you obstruct us further, and the young miss later asks why we were late, I will definitely tell her the truth. You know father's methods, so don't blame me for not warning you!"

Fen Zhiqiu knew all about father's methods; a maid had once dared to strip and climb into father's bed, and he had thrown her onto the street without a stitch of clothing to wear.

Since then, no maid had dared to climb into bed, nor approach father too closely.

It seemed that there were no favorites around the thirty-year-old master.

Fen Zhidong quickly pulled Fen Zhiqiu aside, and Nuandong promptly left with her three sisters.

Fen Zhiqiu stomped her foot in vexation.

Fen Zhidong said ominously, "We can't do anything to Nuandong, but what about her mother..."

Hearing this, Fen Zhiqiu got an evil idea.

When Nuandong arrived with her three sisters, Hemei, Henuan, and Shi Jiayu were sitting at the door, eating sweet melons. They paused when they saw the four fresh-faced children, but it was Yun Jinnian who stood up, "Nuandong!"

Nuandong quickly approached with her three anxious sisters and knelt down, "We greet the young miss!"

"Stand up, all of you!" Yun Jinnian spoke gently.

Because of Nuandong, Yun Jinnian felt an extra fondness for the several little maidens.

"There are pastries on the table, go help yourselves!"

The pastries and fruit on the table were of the finest quality, usually unseen, let alone tasted.

The three young children were still so young, especially Nuanqiu, who licked her lips and eagerly looked at her elder sister.

"The young miss told you to take some, so go ahead," said Nuandong, glancing at Yun Jinnian with caution. Seeing her smile, she felt a bit relieved.

"Sit down and enjoy your meal!" Yun Jinnian instructed the four sisters to sit and pour tea for them.

The four sisters sat down obediently but remained very restrained.

Yun Jinnian asked them their ages and what they liked.

"I can weave!" Nuanqiu declared with a childlike voice, her face flushing red.

Yun Jinnian smiled, "That's really impressive. Can you weave some for me?"

"Sure, young miss! The weavings I make are very pretty, and the ones my elder and second sisters make are even prettier!" Nuanqiu continued, her face reddening again.

Chapter 427: The Shameless Person

Hemei, Henuan, and Shi Jiayu didn't understand why Yun Jinnian, who was usually indifferent, was so good to the four sisters, but they didn't get jealous. Instead, they enthusiastically chatted with the sisters.

It relaxed them gradually.

Suddenly, a commotion came from the outside, followed by a young girl's voice, both soft and loud at the same time, calling out, "Nuandong, you better go back quickly, something's happened to your mom!"

Nuandong sprang to her feet as soon as she heard this.

Her mother was pregnant.

"Miss, this servant, this servant..." Nuandong stammered, too anxious to speak properly.

After a moment of thought, Yun Jinnian said, "Hemei, Sister Jiayu, accompany Nuandong and see what's going on!"

"Yes!"

At the servant quarters.

Mrs. Xia lay on the kang, blood flowing continuously from her lower body. Her husband, Fen San, stood aside, watching with a heavy gaze, neither approaching to ask how she was doing nor calling for a doctor, leaving her to suffer in extreme pain.

Granny Fen Chen rushed in hurriedly. Seeing Mrs. Xia's endless screams of agony, she cursed, "What's with all the noise? You're summoning spirits? You won't die just yet. And even if you do, don't die today; you need to hold on, you barren hen, what's the use of keeping you!"

Two women followed behind Granny Fen Chen. "Mom, I told you there's nothing wrong with our sister-in-law, but you insisted on coming to see for yourself. There's still work to do in the kitchen; I need to go and see to it!"

The other woman chimed in quickly, "We have guests at the estate today, and everyone is busy. I'm going to get back to it!"

Both women glanced at Mrs. Xia, reassured she wasn't dead, and left with peace of mind.

The current situation didn't concern them or their daughters.

Mrs. Xia almost fainted from anger.

She had been doing laundry when Fen Zhiqiu and Fen Zhidong sneaked up behind her and pushed her, causing her to fall. They ran away as soon as she hit the ground, thinking she hadn't seen clearly, but she had.

The children were vicious at such a young age.

Mrs. Xia knew she couldn't make a scene now. If she did, her mother-in-law would dare to kill her.

After a glance at her husband, who stood there like a wooden block, Mrs. Xia's heart turned cold as ice, and she felt utterly unwell. However, thinking of her daughters, she forced herself to rally, "Mother, please call a doctor for me. My stomach hurts so much!"

"Why call a doctor? Doesn't calling a doctor require silver?" scoffed Granny Fen Chen, then turned to her son, "Take your wife's trousers off!"

Only upon hearing this did Fen San approach and remove Mrs. Xia's trousers, baring her pale legs.

Fen San, a heartless man, didn't even pull a quilt over Mrs. Xia, just letting her lie there.

He was deaf to her cries of pain.

"Grandmother!" Nuandong burst into the room and saw this scene.

Her grandmother sat unbothered on the side; her father was equally indifferent.

Her mother lay on the kang with her lower body exposed and bloodied.

Nuanchun, Nuanqiu, and Nuanqiu ran in, all stunned.

"A bunch of burdens, what are you doing rushing in here? Get out, shameless good-for-nothings, scat..." Granny Fen Chen suddenly fell silent.

That was because she saw Shi Jiayu walk in with Hemei and Henuan.

Granny Fen Chen had only glimpsed them from afar before; they were attendants who followed the young miss closely.

Shi Jiayu glanced at Granny Fen Chen, then at Fen San standing aside, and snorted coldly, "Hemei, go find the third master, have someone call for a doctor and a midwife. Also, let the miss know I won't be able to return for a while!"

She pulled a thin quilt over Mrs. Xia and comforted her, "Don't be afraid, the doctor and midwife will be here soon!"

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Xia nodded vigorously, crying non-stop.

This time, she was determined to leave Fen San and the Fen Family with her children and the baby, even if it meant death. She had to take her four children away from this den of wolves...

Chapter 428: Jinnian Makes a Move

Fen Chen's wife was terrified when she heard Shi Jiayu's words.

Thinking that Hemei was just a little maid, she tried to stop her, but Hemei turned around, immediately grabbed Fen Chen's wife's arm, and threw her to the ground.

"Ouch, ouch, my third child, my third child..." Fen Chen's wife cried out in pain.

Upon seeing his mother at a disadvantage, Fen San picked up a stool and smashed it towards Hemei, who easily dodged and dislocated Fen San's arm in two moves.

"Nonsense!" Hemei shouted angrily, completely ignoring these two lunatics.

She went to find Yun Bi to report the incident.

However, Hemei did not find Yun Bi; instead, she found the butler.

The butler's surname was Fen, namely Fen Chen's husband, Fen San's father, Mrs. Xia's father-in-law, and grandfather of Nuandong and a few others.

As soon as Butler Fen heard what Hemei said, he knew trouble had befallen.

This domestic issue should not have been stirred up; if it escalated, the Fen Family would not reap any good rewards. Now that someone from the miss's side had brought it up, the master would not spare him, let alone the Fen Family.

"Miss, this old servant will immediately go call for a doctor. Can you not inform the master and miss for now?" Butler Fen pleaded.

He hoped to settle the matter privately.

Hemei looked at him, "Crazy!"

She turned to find Yun Jinnian.

This was a matter that Yun Jinnian had to decide on.

Butler Fen's heart was filled with panic, "These wretched women!"

Having given birth to a daughter who was also Fen Family's granddaughter, she should have been well-raised and married into a prosperous family, receiving a hefty dowry. That would have been far better, but she insisted on provoking Mrs. Xia, and now everything was ruined...

Forget about luxurious clothing and abundant food; it would be difficult even to keep their positions.

He quickly turned to instruct someone to call the doctor and the midwife, knowing he couldn't go to the servants' quarters himself.

Yun Jinnian saw Hemei return in a huff and asked in confusion, "What happened?"

"I've seen shameless old prudes, but never one as evil and heartless as this!" Hemei recounted, telling him everything she had witnessed.

Yun Jinnian frowned deeply upon hearing this.

Huan was stunned.

Were there really families and men like this?

"Huan, go call Qian Mama and have her bring a few people over. We'll go and have a look together, hurry!" Yun Jinnian quickly commanded.

Huan did not hesitate and immediately summoned Qian Mama. Yun Jinnian was already waiting at the crossroad with Hemei, carrying a medicine chest.

When Qian Mama arrived with five female guards, they all headed together to the servants' rooms.

Along the way, maids and old women were startled by Yun Jinnian's presence and, seeing the group following behind her, who were clearly not to be messed with, bowed and made way after paying their respects.

Upon reaching the servants' quarters, Yun Jinnian could smell the stench of blood from a distance.

And the sound of ugly cursing.

Yun Jinnian frowned, "Gag her mouth!"

Qian Mama immediately went forward with her people, didn't care whether Fen Chen's wife was injured or not, gagged her mouth, and dragged her out of the house.

When they saw Fen San, they dragged him out as well.

"What do you think you're doing? Is there no law anymore?" Fen San roared.

He had never imagined that anyone would back up Mrs. Xia.

He kept on shouting.

"Law?" Yun Jinnian stopped, glanced indifferently at Fen San, "You treat your wife like this, heartless and cruel, inhuman and unjust. Do you really think we need to talk about the law with someone like you?"

Fen San, looking at the celestial beauty of Yun Jinnian, was suddenly at a loss for words.

Yun Jinnian looked at him, feeling utter disgust.

She walked into the room.

It was a very small room, very cramped; there was a kang bed, a table, four stools, two wardrobes, and a washstand. It was very clean, however.

"Miss..."

The four Nuandong sisters had cried themselves into a mess. Seeing Yun Jinnian enter, they looked to her like their pillar of strength, all of them full of hope.

Yun Jinnian nodded slightly, checked Mrs. Xia's pulse, and her expression turned even more grave, "Qian Mama, prepare to move her to my courtyard!"

Chapter 429: This is Not Over Yet

Everyone who heard was taken aback.

Not to mention Mrs. Fen and Fen San.

Even the butler who rushed over was so frightened that he collapsed to the ground.

Mrs. Xia's two sisters-in-law also paled, standing at the door, not daring to breathe.

This time, Nurse Qian actually obeyed and immediately wrapped Mrs. Xia with a quilt and had her carried out.

Mrs. Fen wanted to cause a scene, but upon seeing Yun Bi striding over with a stern face, she was too scared to make a peep.

The butler hurriedly greeted him, "Master!"

Yun Bi looked at the butler, took a deep breath, "Harmony brings wealth, but I never would have thought that my Yun Residence's inner courtyard could be in such chaos. My niece audaciously dared to push her pregnant aunt, the mother-in-law actually turned a blind eye, the husband looked on coldly, the sisters-in-law reveled in schadenfreude. Good, very good!"

The people of the Fen Family were immediately scared witless.

The master knew about it, the master actually knew.

What should they do now?

Yun Jinnian slowly came out and bowed to Yun Bi, "Third Uncle!"

"What you did was right, but perhaps we should still call for a doctor. After all, as a young lady..." Yun Bi hesitated.

"Third Uncle, a doctor won't be able to save her. I must handle it personally. Please take care of things here; I will take her back first!" Saying this, Yun Jinnian bowed again to Yun Bi.

The Nuandong sisters hurriedly followed.

Yun Bi looked at the Fen Family members kneeling on the ground, "Shameful display!"

He turned to Zhou Yiping and instructed, "Detain them. When the time comes for the court session, let the people see how this official will deal with a wicked mother-in-law like Mrs. Fen and these dregs of the Fen Family!"

"Yes!"

All members of the Fen Family were locked up in the prison, and not a single person in the residence pleaded for them, with many even feeling terrified.

In order to please Mrs. Fen, they too had been ruthless towards their own daughters-in-law. The master never used to bother with trifles in the back courtyard, but after hearing the master's words earlier, the Fen Family was probably in for a death sentence...

The guest courtyard.

Han Tianci had just finished his bath, dressed, and was eating a sweet melon when he heard the commotion. Confused, he stepped out and saw Yun Jinnian, and promptly asked, "Sister, what's happening?"

Yun Jinnian glanced at Han Tianci, "Go back to your room first and wait. I'll explain in detail later!"

"Okay!"

Han Tianci was obedient but also clever; he quickly sent a servant to inquire while he continued to eat his melon, listening intently.

Mrs. Xia was laid on the bed, Shi Jiayu comforting the Nuandong sisters.

Yun Jinnian entered the bedroom, "Have someone call for the midwife, boil some hot water, and prepare clothes for the baby..."

Yun Jinnian gave instructions one by one, then casually fed Mrs. Xia a medicinal pill.

After the pill, Mrs. Xia's complexion immediately improved somewhat, and then she tightly grabbed Yun Jinnian's hand, "Miss..."

Yun Jinnian looked at her calmly.

"Miss, I beg you to take charge!" Mrs. Xia squeezed out these words with all her strength.

Yun Jinnian looked at Mrs. Xia, who was deathly pale, sweating profusely, with unceasing bleeding below.

If she hadn't been there today, Mrs. Xia's life would have been in danger.

Not just her own, but the child in her womb would have been at risk too.

Yun Jinnian took out a handkerchief to wipe the sweat from Mrs. Xia's forehead, soothing her, "Don't lose heart. Think of your children, and the one in your womb. Rest assured, since I've intervened today, I will help you through this. You must hold on!"

Although she was capable of treating illness, she had never assisted in childbirth, and she didn't know how.

Only when the midwife arrived could she use acupuncture to help Mrs. Xia's child be born.

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Xia seemed to suddenly see hope and nodded heavily, "This servant thanks the miss; this servant and my mothers are willing to serve as slaves to repay your great kindness!"

Chapter 430: Safely Giving Birth to a Daughter

Yun Jinnian sighed softly, "Alright, just have the child in peace, and whatever you want afterwards, I will do my utmost to help you!"

Mrs. Xia, having received Yun Jinnian's assurance, felt as if she had gained strength.

Soon enough, the midwife was summoned. After examining Mrs. Xia and wiping her down with hot water, she said, "The due date is not yet here, I fear it's going to be a difficult labor!"

"Use whatever methods you have to keep her hanging on by a thread," Yun Jinnian instructed.

With that, the midwife felt relieved. She glanced at Yun Jinnian and, seeing a mere child speaking with such authority, felt an urge to prove herself, "Then I do have a way!"

"Hmm!"

Yun Jinnian applied acupuncture on Mrs. Xia, inducing her labor pains. The midwife, bold in spirit, kept busying herself below Mrs. Xia, carrying out basin after basin of bloodied water as Mrs. Xia's cries were unceasing.

Only when the darkness was complete did they hear the child's cry, "Wah wah..."

"Born, she's born!"

In the small hall, the crowd was overjoyed.

In the bedroom, Yun Jinnian gave Mrs. Xia another pill to swallow, and watched the midwife cleaning the child in warm water.

"A son or a daughter?" Yun Jinnian asked softly.

"A daughter!" the midwife said with a slight sigh.

Yun Jinnian, however, smiled, "A daughter is good!"

"But she's weak and might not survive. The child was born in the eighth month due to an accident..." the midwife said worriedly as she wrapped the child.

Poor mother, she had fought so hard to give birth to her.

"She will survive!" Yun Jinnian spoke with certainty.

He looked over at the unconscious Mrs. Xia.

This child, she must survive, she must live.

Her fate is not good, so let Fa Zun cast her horoscope and choose a good name to support her. Carefully nurture her, and she will be able to live.

"If she is well cared for, she might indeed stand a chance!"

The midwife finished wrapping the child, and Shi Jiayu entered the bedroom, "Where is the child? I'll bring her out for everyone to see!"

The midwife handed over the child to Shi Jiayu.

Looking over at Mrs. Xia on the bed, clad in tattered clothes, she sighed secretly that the child was indeed lucky, a stroke of fortune.

Otherwise, survival would be in question, let alone being born.

After Mrs. Xia's placenta was delivered and her body cleaned, Yun Jinnian called for Nanny Qian and others to tidy up the bed, letting Mrs. Xia rest comfortably and placing the child by her side.

The baby, wrinkled and tiny, looked quite tender in Yun Jinnian's eyes.

"Generously reward the midwife for her hard work!"

Having received her reward, the midwife left for home, cheerful and satisfied.

As for the third-day bathing ceremony, it's her choice whether to come if invited; this reward alone equaled a year's earnings from delivering children.

After freshening up, Yun Jinnian went to see Yun Bi.

"Uncle, I've caused you trouble!"

Yun Bi shook his head, "No trouble at all. In fact, I should thank you. If it hadn't been for you, I wouldn't have known that such chaos was reigning in my inner courtyard!"

A whole family conspiring to bully a single woman, it was simply detestable.

"I am curious, why was Nuandong's father so indifferent towards Nuandong, her sisters, and his daughter-in-law?"

Yun Bi sighed, "It is said that back in the day, Nuandong's father had a sweetheart, but Mrs. Xia insisted on marrying him, which led to his aversion to her and his negligence towards Mrs. Xia and her girls!"

"And the truth?" Yun Jinnian felt that Mrs. Xia was not that type of person, being so timid and accommodating.

"The truth is quite different. Nuandong's father's sweetheart was a fortune-seeker who married a wealthy young master, while the Fen Family matriarch, knowing Nuandong's mother's timid nature, schemed to marry her off. The Fen boy is also a worthless character..."