

Indulgence 521

Chapter 521: Nostalgia for the Past

Yun Jinnian heard the words and looked at Mrs. Han with concern.

Mrs. Han was very calm, gently patting Yun Jinnian's hand. "Go to the carriage behind!"

"Mother..."

Mrs. Han gave a gentle smile, her heart softening, "Just go!"

It was only then that her daughter's worried concern became clear to her – no matter what, she was valued in her daughter's heart.

That was enough for her.

Yun Jinnian hesitated for a moment, then dismounted the carriage. As soon as she got off, she heard Yun Qi's indifferent voice, "Let's go!"

Yun Jinnian stood by the side of the carriage, too stunned to come to her senses.

But she wasn't very disappointed, for she had never had much hope to begin with, her heart had long grown cold, and she had no expectations of his chill paternal love.

She was just a bit worried about Mrs. Han.

"Miss!"

Shi Jiayu immediately got off the carriage and helped Yun Jinnian onto it.

"Miss?" Shi Jiayu looked concerned.

"I'm alright, Uncle Shi, please follow them!"

Yun Jinnian still worried about Mrs. Han. Yun Qi seemed very strange today.

Logically, after yesterday's incident, he was supposed to detest her and her mother. So why had he come to pick them up?

What exactly did he want to do?

Yun Jinnian couldn't figure it out!

Inside the carriage

Mrs. Han sat up straight, her spine ramrod stiff.

No matter the circumstance, Mrs. Han would never submit to Yun Qi or lower her status in front of him, nor would she let her dignity be trampled upon.

Even now, although she knew Yun Qi must have guessed something, she remained proud and fearless.

Yun Qi stayed quiet for a long time, his hands clenched into tight fists.

He had never envied anyone, but at that moment, he envied Yun Bi.

Without his knowledge, Shuniu had borne him a son.

Back then, Shuniu had been manipulated, but what about Yun Bi? Had he taken advantage of Shuniu, or just seized an opportunity?

"Is there something you want to tell me?"

Mrs. Han, hearing this, looked at Yun Qi, "What do you say?"

"Shuniu..." Yun Qi growled lowly, taking a deep breath, "Since you are like this, so be it. After all, you're married now. It doesn't matter anymore, and you needn't worry about Jinnian. Even if her reputation is ruined and she can't marry into a good family, as long as you, her mother, don't care, why should I!"

Mrs. Han glared furiously at Yun Qi.

This man had always been despicable and shameless.

"Don't go too far!"

"And what if I do? A woman follows her husband after marriage. In the past, I was too generous with you, allowing you to think that you could trample over me, Yun Qi, at will. Now that I think about it, with you being so fickle, why should I cherish you in my palm!"

Yun Qi's voice was clear and cold, yet it pierced into Mrs. Han's heart like a sharp arrow, blood dripping.

Her body trembling, she pointed at Yun Qi, unable to utter a single word.

It took her a while to let out a mocking laugh, and then she sat up gracefully, straightening her posture.

For such a man, she shouldn't distress herself. It wasn't worth it.

"From now on, visit your mother every day at dawn and dusk. Since the plaque of Qiyue Academy has been taken down, let's change it to Qingjue Academy!"

Qingjue Academy, the end of affection.

From now on, they would be husband and wife in name only, no need to be considerate of each other anymore.

"Agreed!"

Mrs. Han agreed without hesitation.

The end of affection was exactly what she desired.

The two of them spoke no more.

The love they once shared seemed like it belonged to a distant past, long gone.

Yun Qi's face was cold, but he could still remember, once upon a time, when Mrs. Han would tenderly snuggle into his arms, softly calling him husband, or with a sweet smile, send him off and welcome his return.

Doing his needlework, his shoes, arranging everything in perfect order for him.

In their spare time, they would read a book together, drink a cup of tea; he, hugging the soft and fragrant her, acting on his whims; her, the charming companion to his literary pursuits. What a beautiful life it was.

It was all gone.

It had all passed...

Chapter 522: The Wet Nurse's Past

There's no turning back now.

And it will never be the same again.

The instigator of all the troubles turned out to be his mother, but Yun Bi still needed to find out exactly what had transpired between her and Shu Niang.

Avoiding the issue won't solve anything.

Some things, if not clarified, would not let him rest in peace, even in death.

"We will enter the palace together tomorrow to attend the Mid-Autumn Palace Banquet!"

"All right!"

Both of their voices were indifferent, devoid of excess emotion. Mrs. Han didn't want to see Yun Qi, and Yun Qi, looking at Mrs. Han's profile, closed his eyes.

He kept all his thoughts and schemes deep inside, never to mention them again.

The carriage stopped at the gate of the Yun Residence, and Yun Qi got down first, followed by Mrs. Han.

Standing by the carriage, waiting for Yun Jinnian to come over.

"Mother?" Yun Jinnian called softly, not able to hide the worry in his eyes.

Mrs. Han shook her head slightly, "It's nothing, just tired from a day's work. Let's go back to Niannian Garden."

"Okay!"

Yun Jinnian acknowledged, then saw Yun Qi already striding away.

His back was a lonely sight.

He had questions for Mrs. Han but ultimately asked none.

Yun Jinnian reminded himself that if he ever ended up together with Chu Yu, he must never allow their relationship to reach such a state.

It's exhausting for both parties.

Back in Niannian Garden, Yun Jinnian had Hongxiu go out to gather information. Hongxiu quickly returned, "Miss, the Second Master has gone to the concubine's quarters!"

Yun Jinnian nodded slightly, "Is everything else peaceful in the residence?"

"The Mid-Autumn Palace Banquet is tomorrow, and both the elder Miss and the Old Lady will be attending. All is calm for now, but I heard from someone close to the Lady that she's prompting the Old Lady to set new rules. From now on, everyone would need to pay their respects at the Cixin Academy every morning and evening!"

Pay respects?

What tricks is the Old Lady planning now?

"Is there anything else?"

Hongxiu shook her head, "That person is just a menial servant, not privy to much information. However, it is said that the harvest from the family's farms wasn't good. One of the farms suffered water damage and a lot was burned. The Lady might exempt the rent there and has to send someone to rebuild the houses, so finances are somewhat tight!"

"None of that concerns us!" Yun Jinnian said dispassionately.

The expenses for Niannian Garden and Qiyue Academy are covered by silver from mother, without using a penny from the Yun Family. Everything will continue as before.

In the room, many things had been moved out, leaving only what her father had provided. She wouldn't give them another glance.

She yearned to leave this family right away, never to be entangled with these people again.

Hongxiu acknowledged the order.

Yun Jinnian said indifferently, "You may go and rest."

"Yes!"

After Hongxiu left, Mrs. Yuan came in with some clothes, "Miss, for your visit to the palace tomorrow, I've prepared two outfits and this handkerchief, all pure white without any embroidery. I'm not sure what the situation will be like in the palace, so please be very cautious tomorrow and don't fall into any traps set by schemers!"

Mrs. Yuan always felt that the Old Lady was up to no good, possibly plotting something in the palace.

"Don't worry, Nanny. Although the palace is large, there are many watchful eyes from all families. Nobody would dare to make bold moves without full preparation," Yun Jinnian soothed softly.

Thinking dearly of Mrs. Yuan's kindness.

The Nanny had always been devoted to her, putting her needs first above all else.

Gripping Mrs. Yuan's hand, "Nanny, do you miss home?"

Mrs. Yuan chuckled, "I was driven out all those years ago and have long since given up any thoughts of returning."

Back then, her first child was a son who had died.

The second one was a daughter, whom her in-laws and husband scorned. They seized her dowry and turned her out, and after much hardship, she finally came to Yun Jinnian's side.

Chapter 523: Aunt's Scheme

"Nanny, don't you want to go back and see your milk sister?"

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Yuan was momentarily stunned before shaking her head, "Her grandfather and grandmother are both heartless and overbearing, and they don't recognize any kin. Having been raised by them all these years, I'm afraid she's become just like them. I don't want to go back and acknowledge her. If she's still alive, when she gets married in the future, I'll just send her dowry through someone else!"

She was even more fearful that acknowledging her daughter would bring endless trouble to Yun Jinnian.

This was not what she wanted.

At that time, the child was so young, and especially with that heartless dead man wanting to remarry, he would definitely have killed the child. She feared that the child had long since died.

It was better not to think about it or worry. But when Yun Jinnian mentioned it, she did want to take a look.

See if she's doing well or not?

Yun Jinnian, seeing Mrs. Yuan's demeanor, guessed what was on her mind.

He asked Mrs. Yuan a few more questions, such as the location of her old home. Mrs. Yuan, being simple-minded, did not conceal anything and told Yun Jinnian everything. Yun Jinnian decided to send Lichun and Yushui on a trip.

The two were skilled in martial arts, but they were still very innocent. It would be good for them to gain some experience.

So, after Mrs. Yuan went back to sleep, Yun Jinnian called the two over and gave them two thousand taels of silver, instructing them to find out whether Mrs. Yuan's daughter was still alive and how she was faring.

"Just go and inquire, and find out about her character too, whether it's good or bad. But don't bring her back just yet!"

"Yes!"

Lichun and Yushui were excited to receive an order from Yun Jinnian for the first time.

Taking the silver, they left the Capital City overnight and headed to Mrs. Yuan's hometown to look for her daughter.

Mrs. Han looked at Yun Qi playing with the child, hesitating to speak.

"If you have something to say, just say it," said Yun Qi indifferently, not even lifting his head as he continued to play with the child.

Mrs. Han took a deep breath, "Master, why not send the two children to be with their stepmother? She's their birth mother after all. The children growing up by their birth mother's side is always better than being raised by a concubine!"

Upon hearing this, Yun Qi looked up at Mrs. Han. His expression remained calm, inscrutable, "Are you serious?"

Mrs. Han nodded her head.

Yun Qi looked at Mrs. Han deeply for a few moments before lowering his gaze to continue playing with the child, "Rest assured, I won't be sending the two children over. You gave birth to them, so you take good care of them. What does it matter if they're from the concubine's side? If they are raised well, they can still achieve greatness!"

Mrs. Han harbored a venomous hatred for him and for the Yun Family.

If he sent the children over, Mrs. Han would not like them, and he wouldn't send them either.

"But..."

Mrs. Han still hesitated.

"No 'buts'. Rest assured, even if I die, I will ensure that you and the three of you have a well-arranged place to go, so that you'll never have to worry about food and clothing for the rest of your lives!"

Mrs. Han had saved his life and was gentle and attentive, unlike Mrs. Su and Mrs. Hua.

He could be harsh with the two because they had schemed against him and also caused him and Mrs. Shu to drift further apart, never able to return to what they once were.

He wouldn't care about the life or death of those women; whoever made promises to them should be the one they trouble.

Mrs. Han's heart settled back in place.

She took a deep breath and sighed.

She might look favored, but she was well aware of how genuine Yun Qi's feelings for her were.

If the stepmother asked for the two children, Yun Qi would definitely send them to her immediately.

Today's probing was also a move born out of helplessness.

The children she bore were her own to cherish.

Although it had been the stepmother who had instructed her to get close to Yun Qi, and had told her a lot about his preferences, she had been well-behaved these days, never daring to make trouble in front of the stepmother, humbly keeping a low profile, barely daring to breathe loudly.

She only followed the original agreement, entrapping Yun Qi's heart.

But she knew deep down that she would never truly capture Yun Qi's heart. At most, she could only hold on to his presence, his desires.

Chapter 524: Lifting the Stone

It's strange when you think about it.

The dignified Second Master, he was truly unrestrained between the sheets.

She did not know what the Second Master was like in front of his wife?

But she always felt that the Second Master did not see her as a person.

After playing with the child for a while, Yun Qi let the wet nurse take the child away and entered the inner room. The concubine hesitated for a moment before immediately coming forward to attend to him.

It was a long time before the inner room quieted down. Yun Qi stepped out, resting against the bed, while the maid immediately entered the inner room and saw the concubine lying on the chair, her body covered in bruises, with a faint scent of blood in the air.

"Help me up!" the concubine said, her voice as thin as a thread.

The maid immediately came forward to help the concubine up and fetched water to clean her, only to find that her lower body was covered in blood, "Concubine..."

"Keep your voice down!"

The concubine whispered, her eyes filled with tears.

She had thought there was at least a sliver of affection, yet because she had suggested taking the child to see the wife, he didn't lose his temper at the moment, but turned around and left her half-dead.

He was indeed cold-hearted.

Inside the room,

Yun Qi leaned on the headboard, with the maid coming forward to wipe his hair.

Yun Qi turned his head, "New here?"

"Yes, Second Master!" the maid crisply replied, her face flushed with embarrassment, stealing glances at Yun Qi. Seeing his dignified appearance and extraordinary elegance, her heart raced.

The concubine had asked her to serve closely, and she understood the concubine's intentions.

"No wonder I haven't seen you before, you're quite pretty!" He said, and then took her hand to look, "Your hands are nice too, soft and tender!"

The maid, with her face blushing, stood by Yun Qi's side, letting him play with her hand, her body weak.

She was well aware that if the Second Master took her in tonight, she could plan for other matters.

She must have a child, to ensure a life free from worry.

Looking at the current concubines like Lian and Rou, after having children, the Second Master often gave them silver notes and gifts, living a very comfortable life.

"What's your name?"

"This servant is called Shuangxi!" Shuangxi answered shyly.

Yun Qi lifted his gaze, looking at Shuangxi, his large hand pulling her firmly into his embrace.

From beginning to end, Yun Qi never showed any tenderness.

In this world, the person he would cherish was gradually becoming more distant; as for others who threw themselves at him, why should he be conventional when he could simply enjoy them?

The concubine stood quietly at the entrance of the inner room for a while before letting the maid help her leave the room.

The night breeze brought a refreshing coolness.

It was then that the concubine's thoughts became clear.

To tell the truth, in this household, aside from the wife, no one could protect the three of them.

One would lose the game if they took the Second Master seriously.

"Help me to rest, and by the way, tidy up the inner room and prepare hot water!"

"Yes!"

Chapter 525: So Cruel

The concubine knew that soon, Sixi would become Lady Xi.

It was said that the women of Sixi's family all possessed exceptional charms, and they were extremely favored in their husbands' households. Sixi was sold only because her father committed a crime. She no longer knew whether bringing Sixi to the Yun Residence was right or wrong. Now that the arrow was shot, there was no turning back, she could only take each day as it came.

Qingjue Academy

Mrs. Han returned and went to bed after cleaning up, seemingly neither joyful nor sad.

Bai Que watched her, very worried.

But Bai Que also knew that Mrs. Han was a decisive person, she had her own plans, and it was not good for Bai Que to say too much, so she went to rest in a heated room.

Cixin Academy

In preparation for tomorrow's palace banquet, the Old Madam Yun had made early arrangements; the imperial attire was indispensable to highlight her status.

At first, she was also afraid that Yun Qi would make a fuss, but since he had been calm and stable all day long, she felt relieved.

After all, her son was loyal to her.

"Old Madam, everything is ready!"

Old Madam Yun nodded, "What about Wanwan?"

"She's ready too, with Mrs. Hu there, there won't be any problems!"

Mrs. Hu was Xu Xinmo's wet nurse and looked after Xu Xinmo closely. With her helping Xu Xinmo get ready, everything would be well in hand.

"Mm, as long as it's properly managed, it's good. Xinmo is also twelve now, it's good for her to show her face among the noble ladies in the palace a bit earlier!"

"Indeed, with Old Madam's help, the young lady's future is bound to be brilliant, and her fortune is looking good!"

Old Madam Yun liked to hear such words.

Xu Xinmo indeed had the fate of a phoenix, and under the heavens, only the Empress could compare with a phoenix.

And she had raised Xu Xinmo from a young age, so she would have her glorious days in the future.

"Alright, alright, tomorrow you will accompany me to the palace as well. Go and rest!"

"Yes!"

After Nanny Tian left, Old Madam Yun went to bed. In her dreams, she was still immersed in the thought that all the Capital City's women would greet her with utmost respect, daring not even to breathe too

loudly, with Mrs. Han kneeling before her, bowing her head in apology. Yun Qi also did not favor Mrs. Han, only listening to the words of his mother, neglecting Mrs. Han altogether.

Yun Bi had returned as well, kneeling in front of her, weeping and admitting his wrongs, begging for her forgiveness.

She laughed triumphantly, and as she laughed, all her teeth fell out. She then saw Yun Jinnian look at her coldly, slowly taking away everything she cared about. Xinmo was dead, her Imperial Edict was gone, Mrs. Han was high above once more, and Yun Qi and Yun Bi also looked at her coldly. The Yun Family was gone, and she had become a beggar...

"No!"

Old Madam Yun screamed, sitting up.

She was drenched in sweat, her entire being not quite right.

"Old Madam?" Ming Liu called softly, poured a cup of tea for Old Madam Yun, who took a sip.

Then she fiercely smashed the teacup to the ground.

"Strike first to gain the upper hand, those who act later will suffer. Since she will not do as I wish..."

Then she would not blame her for being ruthless and merciless, disregarding any semblance of affection.

Old Madam Yun thought bitterly, but forgot that she had no real affection for Yun Jinnian.

Ming Liu did not know what the Old Madam was thinking, but seeing her look so ruthless, she knew that Old Madam must be planning against someone.

And in this residence, there were only two people that could make the Old Madam grind her teeth in hatred!

Ming Liu did not dare to say more, she cast her eyes down and assisted Old Madam Yun in changing her clothes, keeping her company and talking...

Niannian Garden

Yun Jinnian sank into a bewitching dream, unable to extricate herself, dreaming of Chu Yu kissing her. She did not reject him, but instead indulged in it, tenderly reciprocating.

"Ah..."

Yun Jinnian cried out and woke up.

Chapter 526: The Little Days Approach

Yun Jinnian sat on the bed, unable to regain her composure for a long time.

Her undergarments were damp and carried a faint scent of blood, Yun Jinnian's mind became a whirl, and she suddenly thought of something, calling out in haste, "Nurse, Nurse!"

The first to enter the room were Hemei and Henuan, one lit the lamp while the other hurried to the bedside, asking with concern, "Miss, what's wrong?"

Yun Jinnian bit her lip, unsure of how to explain, after all, Hemei and Henuan were just children, three years younger than her.

"Nurse will be here soon, Miss, please wait a moment!" Hemei consoled her.

They also smelled the faint scent of blood in the room, thinking Yun Jinnian was injured, they were somewhat worried.

Then somewhat taken aback, they asked, "Miss, are you injured?"

No sooner had the words left their lips than Mrs. Yuan hurried over, her hair disheveled, "Miss, what's happened, what's happened?"

Yun Jinnian, with her face flushed, didn't dare to look at Mrs. Yuan, "Nurse, I've started my 'Auspicious Water'!"

Mrs. Yuan was stunned for a moment, then suddenly understood, and joyfully exclaimed, "Oh, good, good, Hemei, Henuan, help the Miss up and change into clean underwear, I'll go get the menstrual pads we've prepared!"

Without hesitation, Hemei and Henuan hurriedly helped Yun Jinnian up, while Nurse went into the storeroom to get the menstrual pads prepared for Yun Jinnian.

Mrs. Yuan had these ready long ago, with clean, dried cotton as the lining and absorbent cotton cloth on the outside, each piece clean and dry, all with a faint scent of Motherwort.

Mrs. Yuan earnestly taught Yun Jinnian how to use them, with gentleness and kindness. By the time Yun Jinnian was settled, Hemei and Henuan had already cleaned the bed, Ru Yue took the dirty undergarments and sheets out, and returned holding a hot water bottle.

Mrs. Yuan helped Yun Jinnian to the bed to sit down, letting her lean against the headboard, "Miss, you'd better rest in bed for the next few days and not eat anything cold or uncooked. As for the palace banquet tomorrow, let's cancel it!"

Yun Jinnian had a fragile constitution in her early years, and this was her first 'Auspicious Water.' If she didn't take proper care, it could lead to health problems.

At Mrs. Yuan's words, Yun Jinnian nodded slightly in agreement.

In her previous life, she didn't have her 'Auspicious Water' until she was seventeen or eighteen years old, and it took a lot of medicine to regulate it. She was over twenty by the time she had children; by then, Chu Liange's eldest illegitimate child was almost ten years old. Every time she had her 'Auspicious Water,' the pain would make her roll on the bed, all because she was poisoned when she was ten.

Before, with no one to rely on, she couldn't investigate, but now that she had people, Yun Jinnian intended to find out who in the residence was plotting against her.

"Hemei, tomorrow morning, have Uncle Cheng take you to the Princess Residence to explain things to the Princess, and as for the palace banquet, the Emperor would probably not wish for me to enter the palace!"

For men, a woman's 'Auspicious Water' is considered impure.

Generally speaking, they wouldn't even share a room; they would keep their distance.

Hemei assented.

To everyone's surprise, Yaniang brought over brown sugar eggs, Mrs. Yuan chuckled and let Yaniang bring them in. After washing her hands and smoking them over the incense burner, Mrs. Yuan personally fed Yun Jinnian.

"Nurse, I'm not so delicate!"

"Silly child, this is your first time; naturally, you need to be properly nourished. It'll be much easier later on!"

With a warm hot water bottle on her belly, Yun Jinnian smiled gently, listening to Mrs. Yuan's tender words.

She took every single one of them to heart.

After eating the sweetened egg, Yun Jinnian felt her entire body warm, "Nurse, you go to sleep, I'm fine!"

Chapter 527: Chu Yu's Conjecture

"I'll watch over you during the night, so if you get up, I'll be able to..." Mrs. Yuan rambled.

Yun Jinnian clasped her hand, "Nanny, I can take care of myself, you go to sleep!"

Mrs. Yuan thought for a moment, then said, "Then I'll go to sleep, and have Hemei and Henuan watch over you!"

"There's no need, I'm fine by myself!"

She feared loneliness, yet relished solitude.

The transition from a child to a girl brought her joy.

Because it signified that she was growing up.

"Alright then, we'll all go to sleep, Miss, you should also rest early!"

Mrs. Yuan helped Yun Jinnian lie down, left a lamp burning, exited the bedroom, closed the door, and everybody went to their own rooms to sleep.

Yun Jinnian lay in bed, daring not to move about recklessly, lying still with a mind exceptionally clear.

Everything seemed crystal clear.

Could it be that the old lady wanted to harm her? But why would the old lady hate her so much? Yun Jinnian suddenly thought of the life fate that the Law Master mentioned had been stolen from her.

Logically, she should have been doted on and pampered...

Even if not, she shouldn't have lived such a wretched life.

Perhaps, she should investigate Xu Xinmo and the people around her.

"Jingzhe, Chunfen!"

"At your service!"

The voices came from outside the room.

Utterly respectful.

"Go and check on those around Xu Xinmo, be careful, don't get caught!"

Xu Xinmo had an expert by her side, yet they had never shown themselves; who was this expert sent to protect her?

"Additionally, have Qingming and Guyu investigate the old lady, Lixia and Xiaoman check on the Lady, and scrutinize the ladies of the house carefully. Everyone take your assignments and go, I just need two people to stay by my side!"

"Saintess, you must keep four people by your side!"

Yun Jinnian laughed, "Alright, then go on your way, Silver, go to Elder Mu for the funds!"

"Yes!"

Everything was now well arranged, but Yun Jinnian still felt no sleepiness.

She knew nothing about the court or the noble families of the Capital City.

She took a deep breath.

In her previous life, she had been too foolish, bringing about such an end; it wasn't anyone else's fault but her own.

This life could not go the same way.

The night was already very deep.

Yun Jinnian still couldn't fall asleep, so she got up and went to the outhouse.

Upon returning, she continued to lie in bed, pondering. The hot water bottle was warm and comforting. In this weather, holding a brazier made Yun Jinnian feel amused, yet also warmed her heart.

A slight noise came from the window, and as Yun Jinnian turned her head, she saw a shadow jump into the room, carrying the familiar scent of dragon's breath incense.

It was Chu Yu.

The faint lamplight in the room illuminated Chu Yu's face.

"Why have you come?" Yun Jinnian asked, puzzled.

Aren't you sleeping at this late hour?

Chu Yu took a deep breath, "I was a bit worried about you, just came to check!"

Sitting down by the bed, Chu Yu smelled a faint scent of blood, "Are you injured?"

Yun Jinnian shook her head slightly and slowly sat up.

"I'm fine!"

It was a bit embarrassing, yet there was a subtle joy.

She hadn't expected him to come.

At this moment.

"Are you really okay? Why do I smell blood?" Chu Yu asked, puzzled, his eyes intently gazing at Yun Jinnian.

He wanted to check her, yet felt it wasn't appropriate.

"No, I just..." Yun Jinnian hesitated, somewhat at a loss for words.

Chu Yu tilted his head, thinking carefully, then suddenly it dawned on him.

Chu Yu was delighted but uncertain, and tentatively asked, "Could it be your time of the month has come?"

Chapter 528: The Two Make a Commitment

Yun Jinnian's face turned crimson, neither speaking nor arguing, which made Chu Yu understand.

He scratched his head and laughed foolishly.

Yun Jinnian asked in confusion, "What are you laughing at?"

"It's that time of the month for you, you're still a young lady, and even if we get married, we can still consummate the marriage, heh heh...!"

"You..."

Yun Jinnian was choked with anger.

How did the conversation turn to this topic?

"Heh heh!" Chu Yu laughed foolishly, boldly reaching out to take Yun Jinnian's hand and place it in his palm.

Yun Jinnian's hand was warm from holding the soup pot.

Chu Yu held it with both hands, brought it to his lips tenderly, and kissed it softly, "While I was in the Wang Residence, tossing and turning, unable to sleep, I was afraid you were mad at me, afraid you would ignore me, I couldn't bear the pain of longing, sneaking out to see you, although I knew it wasn't right, I just couldn't help myself!"

Yun Jinnian was stunned.

Was this a confession?

"Jinnian, I don't know what the future holds, but all I can say is, no matter what happens, my intentions will not change; as long as you're willing to stay by my side, I will always cherish you, love you, and pamper you like this, putting you atop my heart. If love entails a hundred steps, I am willing to take ninety-nine of them, you only need to step out once!"

This step was an affirmation for him, letting him know that his ninety-nine steps were not in vain.

"We will never be like your parents, going from love to strangers. I won't let any other women get near me, nor will I be as foolish as he was!"

After this, Jinfeng would no longer dare to recklessly put people in his bed.

And the Emperor would not dare to casually offer him any women, fearing that if he had children, he might harbor thoughts of usurpation.

But he had forgotten that any of these things he had done were grounds enough for him to rebel.

His current inaction was only so that Yun Jinnian could marry him openly and legitimately, letting the Emperor make more mistakes, as he sought only to protect himself.

Yun Jinnian stood there in a daze.

Yet he nodded slightly, "Chu Yu, remember what you said tonight, if you have love, I will follow, if you have affection, I will be by your side, unwavering and true to my initial intentions!" Yun Jinnian said, gradually leaning towards Chu Yu, resting in his embrace before slowly continuing, "But I too have my words, if your love falters, I shall leave; Chu Yu, after seeing the tumultuous love life of my parents, I cannot bear even the slightest betrayal!"

"I know!"

Chu Yu said earnestly, holding Yun Jinnian tightly.

"I will never fail you!"

He would not fail this beautiful moment.

Nor would he fail her trust; in her prime, he appeared at just the right time.

"I remember, and you must too!" Yun Jinnian said, and then smiled.

How wonderful this was.

On her most important day, he came.

She did not want his visit to be in vain, so she made a promise, hoping that in the future, she and he would both hold each other in their hearts like at this moment.

Their love would be stronger than gold and unswerving even until death.

What he wanted, she may not be able to give, but she would not hold him back.

Chu Yu did not speak but instead leaned down to kiss Yun Jinnian's lips, with gentle entwining and much cherish.

Only when they were both breathless did Chu Yu lean on Yun Jinnian's shoulder, took a moment to catch his breath, then carefully seated Yun Jinnian and knelt down on one knee in front of him, "I, Chu Yu, swear before Yun Jinnian tonight, in this life..."

Astonished, Yun Jinnian quickly put a hand over Chu Yu's lips, "Those who keep promises do not give them lightly; I trust you!"

She believed in him at this moment, genuinely.

More so, she believed in Chu Yu's sincerity at this moment.

"Jinnian..."

Chu Yu called softly, with tender affection.

Yun Jinnian smiled, her small hand gently touching Chu Yu's handsome face, she bit her lip gently and leaned in for a soft kiss...

Chapter 529: Emotions Surge

Chu Yu was stunned, his eyes wide as he watched Yun Jinnian get closer and closer to him.

Though it was just a light peck, Yun Jinnian sat back down, her head lowered in shyness, not daring to look at him.

But Chu Yu felt his heart surge, passion rising high, wishing he could tell the whole world that he, Chu Yu, had won over such a wonderful woman as Yun Jinnian.

"Hehe, hehe!"

Chu Yu laughed foolishly, then slowly got up and headed towards the door, "bump," his head hitting the wardrobe, still smiling stupidly, "You go to bed earlier, no need to enter the palace tomorrow, I'll talk to aunt about it, suck suck..."

Chu Yu took a few breaths, then wiped his hand across.

His nose was bleeding.

Yet he smiled like an idiot, and when he climbed out of the window, he "thud" fell to the ground.

Then he got up, jumped onto the roof nonchalantly, and sped away.

Yun Jinnian, inside the room, watched, dumbfounded.

She touched her nose, "Did I scare him?"

But thinking of Chu Yu's foolish appearance, Yun Jinnian was also filled with joy.

She lay down slowly, pulled up a thin blanket to cover herself, closed her eyes, and fell into a deep sleep.

Chu Yu returned to the Prince Rui Residence, where Chu Zhaowei and Chu Renzhi had just sneaked in during the night, intending to attack Chu Yu at Kangsong Academy, only to find no trace of Chu Yu in his room, leaving them both surprised and puzzled, when suddenly, a fierce palm wind attacked them.

The two were shocked and pale.

In just over a year's time, their uncle, the young prince's martial arts had become even more formidable.

They were not his match before, and now even less so.

Soon, cries of pain and pleas for mercy came from Kangsong Academy. Chu Yu was in a good mood and did not hit their faces; he only struck their bodies – painful enough yet not causing internal injuries, with precision in his control.

After the ordeal, Chu Yu was tired.

Sitting at the table, sipping tea, Chu Zhaowei and Chu Renzhi rubbed their bodies, "Uncle prince, you're really vicious!"

"Huh!" Chu Yu sneered coldly.

If he weren't ruthless, they wouldn't show him mercy given the chance.

It's better to be the one striking hard than to be beaten.

Chu Zhaowei hastened to laugh and say, "Uncle prince, did you bring back something nice from your trip?"

"Yes, uncle prince, can you share some with us?" added Chu Renzhi eagerly.

Chu Yu looked at them without a word.

After pondering for a moment, Chu Zhaowei said, "Uncle prince, if you give us something, I'll tell you a piece of news that you will thank me for your whole life – big news!"

Chu Zhaowei said this, feeling smug in his heart.

This was indeed big news; he had gone to great lengths to find out.

"Is that so?" Chu Yu was skeptical.

Chu Zhaowei hastily said, "Really, really, trust me this time, uncle prince!"

Chu Yu pondered for a moment, "Speak then. If the news is truly valuable, I'll reward each of you with two Supreme Detoxification Pills, made from Blood Lotus, Thousand-Year Ginseng, and Thousand-Year Polygonum Multiflorum. Just one can save a life from the brink, as long as there's a breath left to save!"

Upon hearing this, Chu Zhaowei and Chu Renzhi's eyes lit up, "Really?"

"What, you don't believe me?" Chu Yu asked back.

"Dare not, dare not!"

The two of them dared not provoke the tiger, and Chu Zhaowei hurriedly said, "Uncle prince, you fancy the Yun Family's fourth young miss, right? I'll tell you, someone else has the same idea as you!"

"Who?" Chu Yu asked in a deep voice.

His voice turned colder.

He knew Yun Jinnian was a catch and that many would fancy her, but he didn't expect someone to move so soon.

He thought it would be years before Yun Jinnian became Princess Rui, frustrating those interested in her.

"Dai Hanbo, the third young master of the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence!"

Chapter 530: Oblivious to Danger

Chu Zhaowei said these words, and silently offered up a stick of incense for Dai Hanbo in his heart.

From now on, he would finally not have to live in such dire straits.

Chu Renzhi thought the same.

"..."

Chu Yu was silent.

For a long time, he didn't utter a single word.

But he took out a porcelain vial from his bosom and tossed it to Chu Zhaowei, "Take this and divide it, keep the extra for yourselves, now tell me everything!"

Dai Hanbo...

However, Chu Yu hadn't forgotten that as soon as Yun Jinnian returned to the Capital City, the first place he visited was Zhuangyong Marquis Residence, and he was on very good terms with Dai Hanbo's sister.

The Zhuangyong Marquis Residence was the Empress's maternal home.

From the old Marquess down to the several young masters, none had taken concubines, they didn't even have secondary wives.

This, Chu Yu found very troublesome.

What if Yun Jinnian took a fancy to Dai Hanbo?

Dai Hanbo was not mediocre in military strategy and prowess, and it was said that his literary accomplishments were quite profound. If he hadn't been considerate of the Empress Dowager, he might have already participated in the imperial examination.

Someone once described Dai Hanbo like this, "His writings bring storms, his poems make ghosts and gods weep!"

Chu Yu always felt that was an exaggeration.

In this world, who could outdo his cousin, Prince Yanjun? But after secretly reading Dai Hanbo's poetry, he had to admit it truly lived up to "writings that bring storms."

Chu Yu slapped his hand on the table, "Go, get me some books, any books will do!"

He had to strive hard and surpass Dai Hanbo.

Chu Zhaowei and Chu Renzhi were still immersed in the joy of receiving the life-saving elixir. Hearing Chu Yu's roar, they looked at each other with astonishment, their eyes full of surprise.

And they stood stiffly.

Has Uncle Wang lost his mind?

He and Miss Yun were mutually in love; he was better looking than Dai Hanbo, had a more distinguished status, was wealthier, had superior martial arts skills; and when it came to poetry, he and Prince Yanjun shared the same mentor, would he be worse than Dai Hanbo?

Although Dai Hanbo had the elegant nickname of "His writings bring storms," he also had the praise of "unparalleled literary grace," a reputation that was sure to linger.

It's just that he never showed off his talents, and not many people knew about it, while those two were showing off his poems...

The two exchanged glances, not daring to speak the truth, and certainly not going to remind Chu Yu.

His reputation was already known far and wide.

It's just that now those two phrases were about them two...

"Hiss!"

Chu Zhaowei felt a sudden pain in his body.

If Chu Yu found out that they had been showing off with his poetry, he would kill them.

They had to act fast to curry favor.

Chu Renzhi hurriedly said, "Uncle Wang, rest assured, we will definitely support you, never giving Dai Hanbo and Miss Yun any chance to be alone, and we will spare no effort in smearing him, making Miss Yun avoid him at first sight, and never giving him a second glance!"

Chu Yu looked at them, "Do your work well, I will not forget to reward you, come over..."

He summoned them closer and gave a few instructions, "Understood?"

Chu Zhaowei and Chu Renzhi nodded.

Cursing inwardly, ruthless, harsh, and venomous.

If Dai Hanbo fell for this, then he would truly have no future with Miss Yun.

"Get going, and check on the whereabouts of the Xin Chuntang brothers too. Be careful not to let Princess Yanjun's wife catch on, and also find some beauties to present to Prince Yanjun, lest his inner court be too quiet. Princess Yanjun's wife's hands are already reaching into the Prince Rui Residence!"

"Uncle Wang, what happened?" Chu Zhaowei asked anxiously.

Chu Renzhi also looked curious.

Chu Yu grew up with them, and their relationship was not ordinary; he didn't conceal anything, and told them about Princess Yanjun's wife inciting Princess Jinfeng.

Their silence followed.

Growing up together, engaging in mischief like walking dogs and teasing birds, they had no secrets between them. Being confined to the imperial city, they naturally sympathized with each other, and their affection was deep.

Now that Princess Yanjun's wife was scheming against Princess Jinfeng, it was like a slap to their faces.