

Indulgence 771

Chapter 771: Found the Person

Yun Jinnian didn't speak these words to frighten with empty threats.

It was clear that the mastermind behind the scenes wanted to slowly torture the Duan Family, not only to make them die without descendants but also to live in constant fear and panic.

These days, the Duan Family must have been seeking out doctors and asking for medicines everywhere, yet to no avail, for the mastermind's poison truly was formidable.

Unable to find a cure, they pinned all their hopes on her.

Duan Qimeng took a deep breath, "That's true, but where do we even start looking for this person? I'm not going to lie to the Commandery Princess, I've tried everything and I'm at my wits' end!"

People in the manor have come and gone, and there have been numerous killings, creating an atmosphere of terror. Many who could leave, did so.

A number of my cousins divorced their wives, and upon returning home, these women immediately found antidotes, causing several family members now to consider divorce.

The corruption of the Duan Family had begun long ago, even his official position had merely stabilized without advancement.

However, once the poison is cured and the family divided, he planned to resign his official post and retire, spending a peaceful life with Wanrong.

"There's no need to rush. My people are likely on the verge of finding that person. Prepare yourselves and follow me in a while to find out exactly what grievance drives them to such extreme measures!" Yun Jinnian spoke calmly.

Her words brought immediate silence to the members of the Duan family.

Looking at Yun Jinnian with eyes filled with gratitude, Ruan Wanrong took Yun Jinnian's hand, "Jinnian, thank you..."

Yun Jinnian smiled gently, "You're my sister Ruan. Whatever I do, it's only what I should do!"

Ruan Wanrong nodded her head.

Yet, she understood in this world, besides one's parents, no one was unconditionally good to them, and even parents sometimes expected something in return.

To her, Yun Jinnian's actions were truly moving.

Years ago, she had only helped Yun Jinnian out of pity, not wanting her to be bullied by the fickle and haughty people, uttering just a few words of support. Yet, she had not expected Yun Jinnian to remember it for so long.

To offer her so much help!

Duan Qimeng watched this exchange and turned his head away.

Sometimes, he thought money was omnipotent, and power was all-encompassing, but when faced with an enemy whose location and identity were unknown, money and power were as inconsequential as clouds.

Young in age but feeling as if he had lived through vicissitudes, all he desired was to live a life of peace and harmony with his beloved.

The waiting was like an arrow piercing the hearts of the Duan Family men.

Growing restless, yet seeing Yun Jinnian still sitting composedly, none wanted to lose face and force themselves to stay seated.

Until, a figure clad in black dropped from the roof, and the Duan Family's Hidden Guards didn't notice, leaving the men red-faced with embarrassment.

Yun Jinnian asked indifferently, "How did it go?"

A reminder to the Duan family that this was her, Yun Jinnian's, person.

The person in black approached Yun Jinnian, "Miss, we've found them!"

"Well then, lead us there!"

Several carriages quickly departed from the Duan family estate.

Yun Jinnian and Ruan Wanrong sat together, "To see such a good family fall apart right before our eyes, Jinnian... my heart feels..."

"When a tree grows, it branches out; when a family grows, it divides. The Duan Family is now uneven, and it's difficult for brother-in-law to support them all alone, especially when these people won't listen to him. It's even harder for him to handle affairs, so it's better to divide the family!" Yun Jinnian held Ruan Wanrong's hand firmly.

She understood Ruan Wanrong.

Having known the Duan family since childhood and played together, their feelings were not ordinary.

"What you say is true!"

Everyone is selfish to some extent; she chose her husband without hesitation.

The group went from the Inner City to the Outer City.

The Outer City, compared to the Inner City, was more bustling, with even more passersby, mostly ordinary folks; the goods sold were also more practical and affordable.

"This is my first time in the Outer City!" Ruan Wanrong said.

Chapter 772: Save Xiaocao

"I'm here for the first time too,"

Yun Jinnian softly spoke out.

If it weren't for the wrong timing, she really wanted to get off the carriage to see how the common people in the Outer City lived.

"Please, save my mother, I beg of you!"

A hoarse female voice came through.

Yun Jinnian lifted the carriage curtain and a gust of cold wind made her shiver.

At the entrance to a pharmacy, a girl in tattered clothes was kneeling and kowtowing continuously into the doorway, desperately crying for help.

Yun Jinnian said to Hemei, "You go down and find out what's going on, and help her out by the way!"

Hemei responded, got off the carriage, and hopped down.

Heading towards the pharmacy.

The girl kept kowtowing, her forehead broken and bleeding. Although there were many spectators, most just watched and pointed, with no one willing to lend a hand.

Hemei stood by and listened for a while and then understood the girl's plight: her father had passed away early, her mother had fallen ill, their family was extremely poor with no money for medical treatment, and now her mother's condition had worsened—she was truly at her wit's end.

It had brought her to this desperate act.

Dressed brightly and looking charming, Hemei had a demeanor rarely seen in the Outer City. She inquired casually and many were willing to provide information. She quickly grasped the situation and walked up to the girl, taking out a small purse from her bosom and handing it to her, "Here, this is from my young mistress. Quickly take this silver and get a doctor to prescribe medicine!"

The girl was named Xiaocao.

Her parents believed a humble name would make it easier for her to survive.

In utter despair, she saw a delicate pale hand reaching out to her, holding a finely embroidered purse.

"What did you say?"

She was so focused on crying that she didn't hear clearly.

"This is from my young mistress; hurry and take it to get a doctor to go home and treat your mother!" said Hemei, grabbing Xiaocao's hand and placing the purse into her palm.

Then turned around and ran back to the carriage.

Xiaocao stood there, dumbfounded, as she watched Hemei catch up with a moving carriage. The carriage didn't stop, and Hemei swiftly leaped onto it.

She was astonished beyond belief.

If even a maid exhibited such grace and was dressed so finely, what then would her mentioned mistress be like?

"Ah, that girl is lucky indeed!"

"Isn't that so? Did you see the emblem on the carriage? It looks like it belongs to the Han Family!"

"The Han Family? Which one?"

"Aren't you daft, in the Capital City, how many Miss Han, with the heart of a Bodhisattva, are there?"

"Could it be the Han Divine Doctor's granddaughter? The fourth Miss Yun of the Yun Family, the one bestowed the title of Princess Yijia by the Emperor?"

"You do have some insight!"

The voices faded away into the distance.

Xiaocao stood there, murmuring under her breath, "Princess, Princess..."

Xiaocao gripped the purse tightly in her hand.

She was determined to go to the Princess and serve her, no matter what!

She quickly entered the pharmacy to have a doctor come back to treat her mother.

Hemei gave fifty taels of silver, which in the Capital City, might only buy a few pastries, but in the Outer City, could do a lot more!

Aboard the carriage, Ruan Wanrong looked at Yun Jinnian, "With your soft heart, I truly worry for you."

"Why do you say that, Ruan sister?"

"Sooner or later, you're going to return to the Yun Family, and you will have to marry. Let's not even talk about your future husband's family, but the Yun Family is a den of wolves. With your tender heart, won't you be worn down to your death!"

Yun Jinnian smiled faintly, "Ruan sister, that girl earlier posed no conflict of interest to me, nor did we have any deep hatred. Giving her a few dozen taels of silver helped save her mother's life. It counts as a good deed and was a simple gesture on my part. I did not help her because I am soft-hearted or excessively kind. If today someone from the Yun Family were kneeling at the door of the pharmacy, I wouldn't give a single coin!"

Chapter 773: That Person's Identity

Ruan Wanrong paused and then felt relieved, "In that case, I'm relieved!"

She was afraid that Yun Jinnian was too weak and would be bullied again upon returning to the Yun Family.

"Sister Ruan can rest assured, I am no longer the Yun Jinnian who let others bully me without daring to fight back. If anyone dares to bully me now, I will surely repay them tenfold or a hundredfold!"

"Right, that's how it should be. It's said that one shouldn't harbor malicious intentions but must always be on guard. They say to repay evil with kindness, but then how should one repay kindness? Jinnian, the Yun Family is truly detestable. In the future, if you need anything, just speak up. I may not be able to help with big things, but I'm still capable of handling small ones!" Ruan Wanrong said indignantly.

"Thank you, Sister Ruan!"

Hemei got into the carriage and relayed the events, and Yun Jinnian didn't say much, choosing to put it out of her mind.

They soon arrived at their destination.

Duan Qimeng got off the carriage to knock on the door.

"Who is it?"

A hoarse voice came through.

The wooden door opened, and a middle-aged man in grey clothes looked cautiously at Duan Qimeng. His expression shifted slightly when he saw Yun Jinnian and Ruan Wanrong alight from the carriage.

He didn't recognize Duan Qimeng or Ruan Wanrong, but he knew of Yun Jinnian.

Yun Jinnian also felt he was familiar, but couldn't recall who he was. The only people she felt familiar with but didn't remember were the followers of the Moon-Watching Sect of Nanjiang.

Seeing the middle-aged man's expression change again,

Yun Jinnian was certain that he was a member of the Moon-Watching Sect from Nanjiang.

She didn't ask him anything further and stepped forward. The middle-aged man immediately knelt down, his heart filled with guilt.

And with a sense of inexplicable joy, because the Saintess had recognized him.

Duan Qimeng and Ruan Wanrong were astonished beyond measure.

Yun Jinnian turned to Duan Qimeng and Ruan Wanrong and said, "Sister Ruan, Brother-in-law, please wait for me outside for a moment. I'll go in and have a look!"

"But..." Ruan Wanrong worried about Yun Jinnian's safety.

Duan Qimeng quickly held Ruan Wanrong back, "Alright, Commandery Princess, please!"

After all, he was more knowledgeable than Ruan Wanrong and had a clearer mind.

Seeing Yun Jinnian approach with her head held high, the middle-aged man became even more panicked and knelt down.

It was clear that Yun Jinnian recognized him, and he recognized Yun Jinnian.

A sense of joy ignited in Duan Qimeng's heart.

Yun Jinnian only brought Hemei and Henuan into the yard. Looking at the middle-aged man still kneeling on the ground, she said, "Aren't you going to close the door?"

"Yes!"

The middle-aged man quickly got up and closed the wooden door.

Only then did he respectfully say, "Saintess, please take a seat in the parlor!"

Once inside the parlor, he immediately ordered the maid to serve tea and then said with utmost care, "Saintess, please sit for a moment, I will go and call out Auntie!"

Auntie?

Yun Jinnian raised an eyebrow.

Given his age, the person he called Auntie must be quite old.

"Go ahead!"

Yun Jinnian lightly sipped from the teacup in her hand.

It was tea from Nanjiang.

The middle-aged man left the hall and turned into a small courtyard, entering a room, "Auntie, the Saintess has arrived!"

"What did you say?"

The voice was old and extremely hoarse.

It carried surprise and excitement, along with an undefinable joy.

"The Saintess has come; she is in the parlor right now!"

"Heh heh, that child is quite capable, to have found this place and so quickly, too! But it's not surprising, the sect hasn't had a Saintess for decades, and now that they finally have one, those old folks are sure to revere her like an ancestor, naturally giving her the best of everything!" As she spoke, she took off the dark veil and one by one removed her clothes.

The middle-aged man kept his head down, not daring to look up.

"Bring me that set of white clothes!"

Immediately, a maid brought the clothes, helping her dress.

Then they tidied up her pale hair and adorned it with silver ornaments.

"Auntie?" the middle-aged man softly prompted.

"At any time, I mustn't forget that besides being the blood of my sister, she is also the Saintess recognized by the Spiritual Poisonous Insect and the Sacred Relic. I am her elder and a member of the Moon-Watching Sect; it is only proper to be respectful when meeting the Saintess for the first time!"

Chapter 774: Quite the Origin) 4 more

The middle-aged man's eyes immediately reddened upon hearing this. "I will heed Auntie's teachings!"

The Moon-Worshipping Sect of Nanjiang holds white in the highest regard. Those who can wear white are either of high ranking or are the Saintess.

And the silver ornaments they wear are also very particular.

What level wears what style of silver ornaments.

Although anyone can wear them, some accessories with exquisite and profound meanings can only be worn by the Saintess.

The surname of the Saintess of the Moon-Worshipping Sect of Nanjiang had long been untraceable. The old granny used to be called Duozhu, and she had a younger sister named Treasure Bead.

And Yun Jinnian was considered a descendant of Treasure Bead, hence a junior of hers.

"Let's go, let's see this junior of mine!"

Stepping out of the room, only under the bright light did it become clear that Duozhu's entire head of hair was white, her face crisscrossed with scars, raised like creeping centipedes, terrifying to behold.

It must have been a great torment that left such fearsome scars behind.

Those eyes were like the most venomous snake, gloomy and chilly.

Even now tinted with joy, they could not conceal the cold ferocity in her gaze.

Upon entering the hall, Duozhu saw Yun Jinnian seated in the place of honor.

It was as if she saw her charmingly delicate, lively and lovely younger sister, Treasure Bead.

Only, this child was very dignified and elegant, simply sitting in the place of honor, looking at her impassively.

Duozhu approached and slightly bowed, "Duozhu pays respect to the Saintess!"

Yun Jinnian looked at Duozhu, indeed a member of the Moon-Worshipping Sect.

But at such an age, and with a scarred face, who could she be?

In her time at the Moon-Worshipping Sect, she had never seen her, nor heard the four Elders or the Law Sovereign mention her.

"No need for formalities!"

Yun Jinnian said coolly, gazing at Duozhu.

Duozhu smiled and sat down on the other side, "Now that I've paid my respects to the Saintess, shouldn't you also bow to me, your great-aunt?"

"Great-aunt?" Yun Jinnian was taken aback.

That would make her her mother's grandmother's sister.

"Yes, what else did you think? You always try to foil my plans, do you think I would only send you letters to warn you?"

"So it was you?" said Yun Jinnian, now scrutinizing Duozhu seriously.

Duozhu let Yun Jinnian look at her, taking a deep breath.

"Child, why do you always help the Duan Family?"

"And what about you? What deep grudge do you have against the Duan Family, that you cursed all the men in that branch to be barren?" Yun Jinnian retorted.

"What deep grudge?" Duozhu sneered, "Look at my face, look at my hands, look at me. Should I not harbor hatred? Should I not seek vengeance?"

...

Yun Jinnian was silent.

She wasn't the one involved, so she didn't know what to say.

"What about you, what's your relationship with the Duan Family?"

"Nothing much; I didn't know them before. It was only after a sister of mine married into the Duan Family that I came to know them. Before Sister Ruan joined the Duan Family, I had saved Old Madam Duan, and as thanks they gave me three shops."

Duozhu believed Yun Jinnian.

There was affection and pity in her belief.

She was old now, having returned with great difficulty to seek revenge; she did not want to fail halfway.

But because of Yun Jinnian, she didn't want this great-granddaughter of hers to struggle, otherwise she wouldn't have sent threats over and over again.

"Does the Duan Family still have elders living?"

"Now the oldest in the Duan Family is Old Madam Duan, who must be over sixty or seventy years old!"

Duozhu was silent for a long time, then said, "Go ask what wicked things their previous generation did, tell them that the creditor has come to settle the score, and see what they have to say!" Then turning to Yun Jinnian, she added, "You also cannot just cure them of their poison now,

Chapter 775: Past Events

Yun Jinnian looked at Duozhu, the woman who claimed to be her aunt by marriage, and took a deep breath, "But you can't keep poisoning them!"

"That depends on how they speak. If they dare to twist the truth, I'll show no mercy!" Duozhu said emphatically.

"Fine, I'll have Hemei go out and tell them to go home and inquire, or you can follow them to the Duan Family and ask in person!"

Old grudges and grievances always need to be resolved.

"I won't go to the Duan Family. Let someone from the Duan Family come..." Duozhu started, then paused, "No, I won't let the people from the Duan Family dirty my place!"

"Then we shall meet outside. How about Huiquan Tower?"

"Agreed!"

Yun Jinnian immediately gestured for Hemei to go out and speak with Duan Qimeng. Now the eldest in the Duan Family was only the old lady, and whether she knew the full story was anyone's guess.

Not for the sake of other members of the Duan Family, but for Ruan Wanrong's sake, she had to intervene.

Hemei left the courtyard and faced Duan Qimeng, "Young Master Duan, we have found her, but you must return home and inquire if the older generation had done anything wrong. It's probably best to ask the old lady!"

As for the rest, Hemei did not know.

But Duan Qimeng seemed to have an epiphany, "Anything else?"

"Let's meet on the third floor of Huiquan Tower, in the private room of my mistress!"

Whether the issue could be resolved or not, this was the only chance they had.

"Alright, I'll go back now!"

The Duan Family also had a private room at Huiquan Tower, but since the other party had made a request, everyone from the Duan Family had no choice but to comply.

At last, there was a clue, which was better than aimlessly buzzing around like a headless fly.

Duan Qimeng quickly returned to the Duan Family with the young men and went straight to the old lady, "Grandmother, did our Duan Family ever do anything shameful in the past generation?"

"What?" the old lady inquired in surprise.

"We found her, and she wants us to ask you and to meet at Huiquan Tower. Grandmother, we owe this to Princess Yijia; otherwise, we wouldn't have found any clues!" Duan Qimeng explained.

In any case, there was at least a lead now.

The old lady thought hard for a while before responding, "I don't know much about the past generation's affairs, but your great-grandfather left behind a brocade box before he passed away, which is enshrined in the ancestral hall. He mentioned that if someone ever comes to the Duan Family, we should give this brocade box to her, and made it clear that the person would be a woman!"

"It must be about this brocade box!" said Duan Qimeng, and immediately went to the ancestral hall to find the box.

The old ancestor of the Duan Family had passed away over fifty years ago.

Moreover, the Duan Family had only moved to Capital City during the time of the old ancestor, and it was he who had built the ancestral hall.

When Duan Qimeng arrived at the ancestral hall, he quickly located the brocade box.

It hadn't been opened in many years and was covered with dust, the brocade box itself in a state of disrepair.

"Who knows what's inside!" Duan Qimeng muttered to himself but did not open it.

Instead, he reverently held the brocade box and, together with the old lady, left his residence and headed straight for Huiquan Tower.

Yun Jinnian arrived at the third floor of Huiquan Tower first. Duozhu sat in a chair, not drinking tea or eating pastries—it was evident that she was somewhat nervous and harbored suppressed rage, despair, and ruthlessness.

No matter what the bygone days had witnessed, today would see an end to it.

"Miss, the people from the Duan Family have arrived!" Hemei called from outside the door.

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian turned to Duozhu, "What do you say?"

Duozhu took a deep breath, "Let them in!"

After all, she couldn't bear to see the younger generation of Treasure Bead suffer hardships...

Chapter 776: Letting Go Indifferently

Yun Jinnian gestured to Hemei, who immediately invited the Duan Family members inside.

Not many people came: the elderly Madame Duan, Duan Qimeng, Duan Qimeng's father, and a few uncles, totaling seven people.

All seven of them were rather wary upon seeing Duozhu.

Duan Qimeng handed the worn-out brocade box to Duozhu, "Senior, if you are the person my great-grandfather spoke of waiting for, then this brocade box is what my great-grandfather left for you!"

Duozhu hesitated for a long time before finally taking the brocade box.

The brocade box was very old, but it was made of extremely fine wood, aged but not rotted.

Looking at the key, Duozhu's eyes instantly reddened.

Pulling out a red cord from her neck, to which a key was attached on the other end, she inserted the key into the keyhole, and with a click, the lock opened.

Madame Duan immediately became excited, "So you truly are the person my husband mentioned!"

"Is there another key?" Duozhu asked.

"Before my husband passed away, he expressly wished to be buried with that key, saying the person who came must have a key, and also that among his burial items was a painting and a wedding dress!"

Duozhu clenched her fist tightly.

Upon opening the box, there was only a letter inside.

Stack upon stack filled the box.

The letter on top was sealed with wax, Duozhu took the letter, tearing it open only to see handwriting that was familiar to the bone.

There was love, and there was hatred.

But after reading the letter, Duozhu instantly wept like rain.

She had toiled for decades at the bottom of the valley before climbing up, filled with resentment, never ceasing to wonder if he actually loved her. But she never imagined that he had spent twenty years looking for her, and upon discovering the truth, had not the courage to live on, cruelly killing his wife, and being buried with her portrait and wedding dress.

"What is love in this world, that demands life and death vows!" Duozhu said, then turned her head to Yun Jinnian, "You give them the antidote now!"

She rose, clutching the box, and left the room.

The Duan Family members immediately sank into their chairs, sweating profusely.

Fortunately, fortunately...

As for what was written in the letter, Duan Qimeng and the others did not dare to ask, nor dared to chase after Duozhu.

The issue was resolved more easily than they had imagined.

"Commandery Princess..." Duan Qimeng called softly.

Yun Jinnian rubbed her forehead, "Let's go back to the Duan Family, I will prepare medicine for you!"

After taking the medicine, they would still need rest for a while, not to mention that the detoxification process itself would take a considerable amount of time.

"Thank you for your trouble, Commandery Princess!" Duan Qimeng bowed with his fists clasped.

"Let's go!"

Together they returned to the Duan Family, and Yun Jinnian got busy.

She retook pulses one by one, preparing medicines, "Remember, you must not mix them up, and you certainly cannot take someone else's medicine!"

"We will remember!"

Ruan Wanrong watched Yun Jinnian busy herself for a long time before approaching her, "Jinnian, I've prepared some food, you should come eat in my courtyard, and we can talk as well!"

"Alright!"

Yun Jinnian stood up, stretching her limbs.

Sitting for so long, she was indeed very tired.

They arrived at Ruan Wanrong and Duan Qimeng's courtyard, where the meal was already laid out, and Duan Qimeng had also come over after grooming and changing clothes.

"Let's keep the meal simple today, and someday I'll treat you to a good meal at Huiquan Tower!" Ruan Wanrong said.

Perhaps it was the knowledge that the poison could be cured that lightened her mood, making her seem more radiant.

"Alright then, I won't hold back when the time comes!"

"Between us sisters, there's no need for formality!"

The food was light, very much to Yun Jinnian's taste, and since she was really hungry, she ate a few more bites than usual.

After the meal, Duan Qimeng found an excuse to leave, giving space to Yun Jinnian and Ruan Wanrong.

Ruan Wanrong hesitated for a while before asking, "Jinnian, once the poison is gone, how soon can we expect to conceive a child?"

Chapter 777: Jinnian's Plan

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian pondered for a moment before replying, "That's hard to say, it depends on one's constitution, and one shouldn't be too stressed, open one's heart, maintain a joyful mood, and the child will come naturally. Besides, sister Ruan, you're still young; even resting for a year or two would be fine!"

"That's easy to say, but I..." Ruan Wanrong spoke, and then sighed, "Let's not talk about this anymore. No matter what, everything is in the past now!"

"Exactly!"

When returning, it was Duan Qimeng himself who personally escorted Yun Jinnian back to the Han Residence.

They say a starving camel is still bigger than a horse, and the Duan Family gave diagnostic fees this time in pearls and jades, two large boxes of them.

"Actually, there was no need for all this!"

Duan Qimeng smiled, "With these items, the Princess can sell them to buy more medicinal materials, helping even more people in need!"

Yun Jinnian thought of the many in the Outer City who couldn't afford medical treatment and gladly accepted them.

"Thanks, brother-in-law!"

"No need for formalities, Princess. If there's anything you need in the future, just give the word!"

"Speaking of which, I do have a matter I'd like to consult with my brother-in-law about," said Yun Jinnian.

"What is it?"

"The Duan Family has been trading for many years, do you know any reliable medicinal material merchants? I need some medicinal herbs and seedlings, not the expensive ones, just some that ordinary people can use and afford when they have a headache or fever!"

"You're thinking of growing them yourself?" asked Duan Qimeng.

"Yes, the two residences rewarded by the Commandery Princess and the Princess Residence are adjacent to each other, and I can't live in all of them, so I'm thinking of tearing some down to plant medicinal herbs!"

The few houses definitely could not be sold, but leaving them empty would need manpower and resources to maintain; it would be better to plant medicinal herbs, which could be sold for a profit or used to save the common people—either way, a good deed benefitting the nation and the people!

"I wonder if the Princess needs someone to manage them!"

"Does brother-in-law have anyone to recommend?"

"What does the Princess think of me?" asked Duan Qimeng.

Yun Jinnian couldn't help but laugh, "Brother-in-law, you are really joking. It's said a wife is honored by her husband, and you think of joining me as a butler when you have a perfectly good official position? You may be taking it easy, but have you thought of sister Ruan? If you are tired of Capital City, why not wait until your poison is cured, find a post in another place, and lead a simple life with sister Ruan for a few years!"

Duan Qimeng fell silent.

"I seem to have thought too much!"

Whatever he did, Wanrong would support him, but as Yun Jinnian had said, if he truly gave up everything to become a butler for her, how could Wanrong bear it.

"It's good that brother-in-law has thought it through," said Yun Jinnian.

"Thank you for the reminder, Princess. All you need to do is prepare the land, and I will take care of the seedlings!"

"Then I must thank brother-in-law greatly!"

"I take my leave!"

"Brother-in-law, travel safely!"

After seeing off Duan Qimeng, Yun Jinnian called over Butler Cheng.

"Butler Cheng, take these jades and sell them. After they're sold, go buy several shops in the Outer City, or residences on the street will do too. If they're shops, make sure they're connected; if they're residences, make sure the roads are wide. You can buy several, and after you've bought the residences, then purchase some maids, young male servants, and matrons as well!"

Butler Cheng paused, "Miss, are you planning to open a pharmacy in the Outer City?"

"Yes, open a pharmacy, to give those who can't afford medical treatment or medicine another chance at life!"

"So, does the Miss plan to provide this for free, or...?"

"There's no such thing as a free lunch in this world, so naturally, it won't be free. But if a family really can't come up with the silver, I can give treatment first and let them work off the debt in the pharmacy!"

Chapter 778: Inner City, Outer City

Yun Jinnian said as he sat down, "This matter seems easy to talk about, but it's actually quite troublesome to act upon. Uncle Cheng, it's going to be hard on you next!"

"Where is it hard? Miss, rest assured, I will take care of it!"

"Good!"

Yun Jinnian guessed that the Elder Residence would break off the engagement, but she didn't expect it to happen today.

"You're saying that Sister Chen's brother personally returned the betrothal gifts?" Yun Jinnian asked Han Tianci.

"Yes, I glanced at the doorstep, that Sister Chen is truly admirable. She just stood there straight, watching as they carried out the betrothal gifts one by one, Sister, if I ever get married in the future, I'm going to marry a woman with such a strong and steely character, someone with personality!"

Yun Jinnian burst into laughter, "You're still a child now, it's too early to talk about marriage. Besides, if you want to marry a woman with a strong and steely character, she can't be a simpleton!"

"Look at what Sister is saying, of course I won't be a simpleton!" Han Tianci said, puffing out his chest.

This trip to the Elder Residence left a deep impression on what a true scholar-official family was like.

It also gave him the urge to study seriously.

"I naturally trust you!"

As the siblings talked, they first went to greet Mrs. Han and chatted with her for a while.

Then they each returned to their own courtyards.

Yun Jinnian went back to Chaoyang Academy, and Leng Nuan was awake.

After cleaning herself up, Yun Jinnian held him in her arms.

"Did Nuannuan cry today?"

Mrs. Yuan hurriedly said, "He didn't cry at all, very well-behaved. Ate and slept, woke up and went to the bathroom, then slept again. Maybe he knew Miss was coming back, so he stayed awake!"

"What a good child!"

Yun Jinnian said, asking Mrs. Yuan to fetch the swaddling clothes and wrapped Leng Nuan up snugly.

"Miss, what are you going to do?" Mrs. Yuan asked curiously.

"I'm taking him out for a walk. It's not good to always stay inside!"

Boys and girls are different; it's always beneficial to see more of the outside world.

"What if he gets cold?"

"I won't go far, just around the courtyard a couple of times. It's spring now, and Nuannuan should also see what spring is like!"

A child of several months actually knows some things.

And has feelings too.

As she carried Leng Nuan out of the room, his eyes began to roll around, mostly gazing at Yun Jinnian.

Yun Jinnian also tenderly looked at him, kissing his forehead, "Nuannuan is so good!"

The lips were cool and warm, a familiar yet strange taste, but the pure love and affection remained unchanged.

He intended to smile, but his eyes moistened and tears fell, yet he made no sound of crying.

Seeing this, Yun Jinnian's heart ached even more, "It's okay, it's okay, Nuannuan, don't cry, it must be Auntie's kiss that was too strong, next time Auntie will kiss you gently, Nuannuan, don't cry!"

While comforting him, she wiped away his tears.

Her voice was soft and gentle.

Leng Nuan gradually stopped crying.

Yun Jinnian sighed, "Auntie kisses Nuannuan because Auntie likes Nuannuan very much!"

"He's just a baby, he doesn't understand!" Han Tianci came over.

He didn't like Yun Jinnian holding Leng Nuan.

"He must understand some things, sit down!" Yun Jinnian told Han Tianci to sit.

After Han Tianci sat down, Yun Jinnian continued, "I plan to open a pharmacy in the Outer City, would you like to go with Uncle Cheng to have a look?"

"Sister, you want to open a pharmacy?"

"Yes, from what I saw today, the Outer City is not as prosperous as the inner city. I think there must be a lot of people who are sick and can't afford medical treatment or medicine. I want to open a pharmacy there. What do you think?"

Chapter 779: Currying Favor by Acting Cute

"Sister, your idea is good, but there are too many insatiable people in this world. Once they get a little benefit, they want even more!" Han Tianci said as he stretched his hand out to pinch Leng Nuan's cheek.

Leng Nuan did not cry or smile, just looked at Han Tianci indifferently.

"I've already figured that out. Help those in dire straits but not the poor; those who can't afford the medicine will work in the shop until they've paid off their debt. Then they can leave. In the meantime, they'll be provided with three meals a day so that they won't starve to death with medicine in hand but no food to eat!" Yun Jinnian remarked calmly.

"Sister, why don't you let me handle this? I promise to manage it neatly!"

"Alright then!"

Yun Jinnian naturally had a lot of trust in Han Tianci.

Seeing Han Tianci constantly pinching Leng Nuan's cheek, who did not cry or become annoyed—just watched indifferently—

Yun Jinnian laughed and said, "Stop pinching his cheek, he will drool!"

"Just a light pinch, no harm done!"

As he spoke, Han Tianci reluctantly withdrew his hand.

The guy had chubby cheeks that felt quite comfortable to pinch.

The siblings began talking about other matters as Leng Nuan leaned into Yun Jinnian's embrace, quiet and well-behaved.

Yet his little hand tightly clutched Yun Jinnian's thumb.

Prince Wang Residence

Chu Renzhi looked at the object before him, suddenly feeling uncomfortable.

Very uncomfortable.

"This..."

He looked at Chen Kang.

Chen Kang's face was somber; they had once been in-laws, but now, they were enemies.

"Now that the Princely Heir's wish has been followed, he should no longer come to the Elder Residence, and the Elder Residence will no longer associate with the Prince Wang Residence!"

Having said this, Chen Kang turned and left the Prince Wang Residence.

He hated that his name also contained the character 'Kang' and planned to change it once he got home.

To sever all ties with the Prince Wang Residence and Chu Renzhi forever.

Chu Renzhi sat in a chair, considering that the Elder's illness might have been caused by the annulled engagement.

He understood even clearer that he would never have another chance with Chen Danyan in this lifetime.

"Crown Prince..." the butler called softly.

Chu Renzhi gestured with his hand, "Dismissed!"

He didn't want to say anything more.

At this moment, he was also beginning to regret.

But in this world, there's no such thing as a pill for regret!

The Elder Residence called off the engagement with the Prince Wang Residence, which baffled many people, but many others began to scheme, considering the status of the Crown Princess Consort to be very noble indeed.

Yun Family

Xu Xinmo's fifty-fourth birthday was on the fifth of February, but now nobody in the residence even mentioned her birthday.

After discussing with Granny Jin, she went to seek the elder matriarch of the Yun Family.

"Great-grandmother!"

The elder matriarch of the Yun Family had not been feeling well all year, appearing somewhat groggy every day as if she had not fully woken up.

"Is that Xinmo? Come over to your great-grandmother!"

Xu Xinmo sat beside the elder matriarch, "Great-grandmother, how are you feeling?"

"Still the same old body, why are you here today?"

"I came to see how great-grandmother is!" Xu Xinmo smiled tenderly.

The picture of filial piety.

The elder matriarch laughed.

"Good child, you'll be of age next year. Learn more about needlework and embroidery; try to avoid coming here if you can!"

"I couldn't possibly, great-grandmother! You are the closest person to me in this world now. I can do without everyone else, but I can't do without you!" Xu Xinmo said, hugging the elder matriarch.

Her eyes reddened slightly.

The elder matriarch looked at her, her heart aching fiercely.

"You, you have always been more filial than the others!"

Yun Musi and Yun Mulan were barely seen all day; Yun Qingzhi, Yun Qingqing, and Yun Zuomo just sat on stools like blocks of wood.

Yun He, Yun Mu, and Yun Kuan were just over two years old, barely able to speak clearly, and would cry at the slightest provocation.

Chapter 780: Those Little Thoughts

As for those three grandsons, they also leave early and return late, and the grandson's wife is now pregnant, so they dare not let her brave the cold to come over.

It goes without saying, this old lady is lonely as well.

"My cousins are filial too, it's just that they are busy with their studies and have visited their maternal grandmother less!"

"You don't need to speak for them. I know very well who is right and who is wrong in here!"

Smiling, Xu Xinmo thought for a moment and then said, "Grandmother, Sister Jinnian has returned to the Capital City, and she is currently staying with the Han Family. Grandmother, do you want to send someone to bring her back?"

On hearing this, the Old Lady Yun became visibly agitated, "You say she's back?"

Deep in her heart, she had an extreme aversion to Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian.

"Hmm, she came back before the New Year!" Xu Xinmo said as she leaned into Old Lady Yun's embrace, "Grandmother, I'll be fourteen soon, and after I turn fifteen next year and have my coming-of-age ceremony, there will be talks of marriage. But Grandmother, I simply can't meet any of the princes, and I'm not even invited to the banquets of the daughters from the prominent families!"

The Old Lady Yun was well aware of this fact.

The prestigious families would not invite the womenfolk of the Yun Family to their events, and even if invited, they would not attend those of the Yun Family.

"..."

Seeing the Old Lady Yun's expression soften, Xu Xinmo continued, "But Sister Jinnian can, look. She has just returned, and she's already visited the residence of the Princess of the State, the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence, and even the Prince's residence treats her as an honored guest. Grandmother, the only one who can take me around now is Sister Jinnian. Let's invite her back!"

The Old Lady Yun fell silent.

To bring Yun Jinnian back...

She was annoyed by Yun Jinnian and Mrs. Han, but if she didn't bring her back, as Xinmo had said, Xinmo would never get to meet any of the princes.

Seeing that the Old Lady Yun's expression was softening, Xu Xinmo added, "Grandmother, Sister Jinnian will have her coming-of-age ceremony soon, and then there will be marriage talks. When the time comes, you can decide on a family for her, marry her off, and that's all. And there are still many things in the residence, now that she is back, it is time for her to display filial piety to you!"

If Old Lady Yun was a bit moved by Xu Xinmo's words initially, upon mentioning the valuables awarded from the palace to Yun Jinnian, she was truly tempted.

"I will need to discuss this matter with your second uncle!"

"Hmm!"

Seeing that she had achieved her aim, Xu Xinmo stayed and started discussing other matters with the Old Lady Yun.

In the evening, after learning that Yun Chen and Yun Qi had returned, the Old Lady Yun sent someone to summon Yun Qi over.

Yun Qi had gained a lot of weight in these days, and on seeing this, the Old Lady Yun was genuinely delighted.

"Mother summoned her son over, do you have any instructions?" Yun Qi asked indifferently, his voice soft yet chilly.

The Old Lady Yun didn't care at all, "I heard that Mrs. Han and Jinnian have returned to the Capital, and they are currently staying with the Han Family. When will you go to fetch them?"

Upon hearing this, Yun Qi looked up at the Old Lady Yun, his gaze piercing through her guilt, displeasure, and schemes.

He spoke slowly, "Perhaps in a few more days!"

"Since you have plans, then you must fetch them before the fifteenth of the first lunar month. If you're available, you should go yourself!"

"Yes!" Yun Qi replied and stood up, "Mother, if there's nothing else, I will take my leave now!"

At some point, the bond between mother and son had faded.

Suppressing the sorrow in her heart, the Old Lady Yun said softly, "Go ahead!"

Yun Qi left Cixin Academy, taking a deep breath.

He walked slowly to the gate of Qingjue Academy, remembering when it used to be called Qiyue Academy.

"Life and death, taken in stride, binding oneself to one's words."

Such beautiful promises, but alas, they are all in the past, with no hope of reversal.