

Indulgence 85

Chapter 85: Invitation

"Of course!"

Yun Jinnian wrapped her arm around Yun Zihan's and stepped out of the warm hall, leisurely walking toward the garden.

"Why the unnecessary trouble, second sister?"

Yun Zihan chuckled, "Are you afraid that I will offend our eldest sister and then displease Mother? Or is it cousin Xinmo who will be upset?"

"It's both, I guess!"

Yun Zihan gripped Yun Jinnian's hand tightly, "Don't worry!"

When they arrived at the garden, the plum blossoms were in full bloom and fragrant. Yun Zihan picked one and handed it to Yun Jinnian, "Little sister, you are like this plum blossom, which must endure the bitter cold to exude such fragrance."

Yun Jinnian was slightly taken aback but still reached out to accept the plum flower, "Without experiencing the bitterness of the cold, how can the plum blossom's scent be so alluring?"

"Do you resent it?" Yun Zihan asked.

In recent years, she had lived worse than a concubine's daughter, receiving exceptionally harsh treatment from the old lady.

Yun Jinnian thought seriously for a moment before nodding slightly.

Yun Zihan's eyes reddened, and she placed a plum blossom in Yun Jinnian's hair, "Is there anything you need me to do?"

Yun Jinnian shook her head, "I won't dwell on the past, just don't come after me or scheme against me in the future. If you do, I will definitely not show mercy!"

Yun Zihan didn't speak but just hugged Yun Jinnian tightly.

Could she really promise that?

Yun Zihan thought she certainly couldn't live without resentment or hatred.

After being treated like that, once she turned the tables, she would surely pay everything back twofold.

Yun Jinnian looked at the plum tree and nonetheless smiled gently.

Resentless and hateless?

How could that be possible!

"Would you like to come sit at my place? Grandfather gave me some medicinal tea that tastes absolutely amazing!"

"Of course!"

Yun Zihan followed her to Niannian Garden and felt a sense of relief upon seeing its arrangements.

Indeed, a child with a mother is like a treasure.

Look at the decorations in this room—each one is exquisite and luxurious.

Yun Jinnian had Ming Yang prepare the medicinal tea while Yun Zihan took a sip, "This taste..."

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"It's odd!"

"This is a heat-clearing, fire-reducing medicinal tea. It might not taste good now, but wait until summer when it's iced, then it will taste wonderful!"

The sisters chatted.

Lunch was served in the dining hall, spread across two large tables.

No talking while eating, no speaking while sleeping. After lunch, there wasn't much entertainment, because all the small and large opera troupes in the Capital City had been hired by the noble families. Wealthy households had their own opera troupes, and the Yun Family, although seemingly a century-old noble lineage, was showing signs of decline after this year's events, with revenues unable to cover expenses.

Unable to compete with the noble families and unable to maintain appearances despite their wealth, Yun Qi completely ignored the household expenses, much to Mrs. He's distress. Yet, she dared not complain out loud.

This was why Yun Zhen was especially eager to pass the imperial examination for the title of *jurenl*, which would qualify him to sit for the higher-level *jinshi* exams.

To rejuvenate the Yun Family.

This year was mind-numbingly dull.

In the afternoon, the Yun Family received an invitation from Dai Hanmi, the legitimate second daughter of the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence, asking the young ladies of the Yun Family to come admire the plum blossoms at the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence on the third day of the first lunar month.

"What's so special about these plum blossoms?" Xu Xinmo was perplexed but still wanted to visit the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence.

The Empress's maiden home was the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence; now the birthplace of the Dowager Empress's own daughter. Marquess Zhuangyong's legitimate sister, Dai Hanmi's aunt.

If she could become close with Dai Hanmi, that would be splendid.

"It's said that the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence has a plum tree blossoming with two different colors!" Yun Muyou said and glanced at Yun Jinnian who was casting her eyes down.

Yun Jinnian remained silent.

In her dreams, the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence indeed had a plum tree with flowers of two colors, but later, someone used it to make a fuss, indirectly suggesting that the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence had dual loyalties. Otherwise, why would a single plum tree bloom with two different colors?

In her dreams, she never made it to the Zhuangyong Marquis Residence, and she didn't have much contact with Dai Hanmi, so should she go this time on the third day?