

Primitive 18

Chapter 18: Divine child

Before the formal meal, the food distributed by the Senior Brother does not count as part of the total food.

Because of this, even after the other families received their share of food, Lame's wife could still receive two fish, each less than a foot long.

"Fish, eat," Lame said, holding back tears, as he pushed the large fish in his arms towards his wife, who had just returned with food.

Lame's wife shook her head and pushed the fish back, saying to her husband, "Fish, you eat."

She pointed to the two fish she had received, implying that he should have these, and they still had the two for themselves.

Seeing his wife refusing to eat, Lame thought for a moment and then took the fish back. Instead of eating the meat first, he opened the fish's belly, scooped out the entrails, and smiled as he enjoyed them.

After finishing the fish guts, he finally began to eat the fish in earnest. However, the first parts he tackled were not the meat-rich spine but the fish head and tail, where there wasn't much meat.

After eating these parts, Lame was already full. He handed the fish to two children looking at him eagerly, and said, "Fish, eat."

In contrast to the others who were happily devouring the fish, Han Cheng found eating a bit challenging. The grilled fish, like the others, had not been cleaned. The fish scales weren't much concerned since they were mostly burnt off, but the fish heads and entrails inside the belly were.

It was bitter and gross.

Han Cheng couldn't stomach this, so he could only quietly pick them out and throw them into the fire.

For others, such behavior might earn a smack on the backside as a lesson in frugality, but given Han Cheng's unique origins and his contribution of food to the tribe, his minor flaws were conveniently overlooked.

After dinner, many people felt comfortable enough to hum a tune. Since the arrival of winter, they hadn't been able to eat to their heart's content for a long time.

However, unlike before, people in the cave did not immediately find a place to sleep after satisfying their hunger. It wasn't that they didn't want to sleep, but rather, the shaman lit a fire near his dwelling, illuminating the area.

The feathered crown and white bone staff previously placed in front of the totem pole were again placed on the shaman's head and in his hands. In their place, a fish caught today was offered.

Everyone gathered outside the cave, watching the shaman who wore the feathered crown dance with the bone staff.

This time, the shaman's ceremony was even more devout. He believed that the divine had truly revealed itself because, on this very day, he had prayed for divine favor and received such good fortune before nightfall.

Throughout the winter, their tribe no longer had to worry about food.

With a full stomach, the shaman danced even more energetically. After a while, he stopped and came to Han Cheng.

In a surprised expression and mood, Han Cheng was led by the shaman to the front of the totem pole.

The shaman had Han Cheng turn around, facing away from the totem pole and toward the tribe members. He continued dancing, circling Han Cheng.

Han Cheng considered the fish in front of the totem pole an offering. The corners of his mouth twitched. Could it be that the shaman wanted to sacrifice him to the divine?

The shaman didn't dance for long this time. He stopped before Han Cheng and pointed at him with one hand while holding the bone staff in the other. He pointed to the sky and the totem pole behind Han Cheng, loudly and devoutly proclaiming, "Divine Child!"

Han Cheng's eyes widened instantly. How did a simple act of breaking the ice to catch fish turn him into a divine child?

The shaman's imagination was truly something else.

However, his eyes quickly returned to normal because he realized how much attention and advantage he would gain in the tribe with this new status. Moreover, it would make other tasks much more convenient.

"Divine Child!"

"Divine Child!"

After chanting these words three times while maintaining the same posture, the shaman turned away from the others, facing Han Cheng. He then placed the hand holding the bone staff on his chest, bowed respectfully, and said, "Divine Child!"

The rest of the people in the tribe were influenced and mimicked by the shaman's actions. Awkwardly and with chaotic voices, they called out, "Divine Child!"

For a moment, only Han Cheng stood upright in front of the totem pole while everyone else bowed.

The flickering firelight illuminated Han Cheng's youthful face. He watched the people performing the clumsy ritual of bowing to him, and he couldn't help but snifle.

Unexpectedly, his initial intention was merely to find food to satisfy the tribe's hunger. However, he ended up being enveloped in a sacred halo.

Could this be the result of doing good deeds? Even unknowingly, he became revered.

The ceremony concluded, and the gathered people dispersed. However, not many of them went to sleep immediately.

Firstly, they had learned from the women who went to spear fish, including Lame's wife, about the situation of fishing under the ice. They all wanted to wait until dawn to see if, as they said, the fish would stay still and allow them to spear.

Secondly, the appearance of a Divine Child in the tribe, who had not only descended from the sky but also shared the method of fishing under the ice, resolving the tribe's severe food crisis. People felt that there was nothing inappropriate about calling him the Divine Child.

Han Cheng's treatment noticeably improved. He was almost on par with the shaman.

For example, he lived with the shaman in the inner cave, lying on a thick fur blanket, just like the shaman. It made him marvel that with higher status comes comfort. It seemed understandable why, in the modern world, everyone aspired to climb the social ladder.

When dawn arrived, the people in the tribe woke up surprisingly early. After hastily having breakfast, the Senior Brother called everyone to pick up stones and fish spears and head to the river, eager to experience fishing under the ice personally.

Originally, Han Cheng didn't want to go, but he was worried that they might create holes randomly in the ice, breaking it and endangering themselves. Therefore, he had no choice but to endure the severe cold and go to the river with them.

After a night, the three ice holes that opened yesterday had frozen again.

Han Cheng asked everyone to stand on the bank and had the experienced Lame come forward to demonstrate. Lame, holding a stone, limped onto the ice, looking excited. Since his leg injury, he has never been as glorious as now. No, even when his legs were healthy, he never had this kind of glory.

He glanced at Han Cheng, who nodded, indicating he could start. Taking a deep breath, Lame swung the stone towards the ice hole created yesterday.

Although the ice was sealed again, it hadn't thickened much due to the short time. The crippled man quickly reopened the ice hole.

Everyone stared at the ice hole, waiting for a miracle, including the crippled man and the other six primitive women who had already caught fish yesterday.

"Fish!"

A child pointed at the ice hole and shouted with great excitement as a fish swam to the opening.

Before his excitement could subside, three more fish appeared at the hole, causing everyone, including the Senior Brother, to cheer.

They shouted, ready to rush onto the ice to create more holes and ensure abundant food for the tribe.

Han Cheng, who was prepared for this, quickly shouted to stop them.

Rushing onto the ice together could disturb the fish and risk the entire tribe falling into the river.

In the past, no one would have listened to Han Cheng's words at a time like this. However, things were different now.

Following his instructions, they halted, looking at their Divine Child, wondering what he had to say.

Han Cheng spoke and gestured for quite a while before finally making them understand the importance of not having too many people in one place at a time, or they might all fall into the water.

He then personally went onto the ice. At intervals of about ten yards, he placed a bundle of dry grass near the shore to mark a spot for ice fishing.

He also stopped the eager Second Brother, explicitly instructing the Senior Brother to keep an eye on him. He allowed the Second Brother to only handle the fishing on the bank, not the ice. Given his weight, standing near the opening could risk pulling others into the river.

Witnessing the fishes had ignited great enthusiasm in these people. The sound of ice being chiseled resonated continuously.

Han Cheng patrolled back and forth on the bank, occasionally giving corrections. He had become a leadership figure who only spoke but didn't do the manual work in no time.

Not to mention, overseeing others' labor was quite enjoyable.

Of course, it would have been even better if the weather weren't so cold or if he wore a warm down jacket.