

Indulgence 751

Chapter 751: Respectfully

Yun Jinnian shook his head slightly and saw Si Qin and Si Ju standing to the side, "Si Qin, come hold the child for a moment!"

"No way, Nuannuan doesn't want Si Qin to hold her, she'll start crying at the slightest touch, bawling like a banshee, and she doesn't want Si Ju to hold her either!" Princess Jinfeng said, then suddenly paused, "You've held him for so long, and he hasn't cried at all!"

Si Qin and Si Ju were also puzzled.

"Does he recognize people?" Yun Jinnian tentatively asked.

"He does, just me and Leng Bingham. He won't even take the nursemaid's milk; otherwise, we wouldn't have gone to the trouble of feeding him tiger's milk!" Princess Jinfeng said as she picked up some food and then praised, "This dish is delicious!"

Mrs. Han smiled, "Princess, eat more!"

And she served Princess Jinfeng some more food.

Princess Jinfeng smiled, "Thank you, auntie!"

"..."

Mrs. Han paused, knowing why Princess Jinfeng called her auntie.

Thinking that after the New Year's celebration, Yun Jinnian would have her coming-of-age ceremony, and soon after that, she would marry, Mrs. Han felt extremely reluctant to part with her.

However, after Yun Jinnian got married, she would inevitably have to divorce Yun Qi.

Mrs. Han picked up some food to feed Yun Jinnian. After a brief pause, Yun Jinnian opened her mouth to let Mrs. Han feed her.

She didn't speak aloud, but her heart was bursting with happiness.

Leng Nuan yawned, closed her eyes, and fell asleep.

Yun Jinnian gently patted the swaddle wraps, especially on his little bottom, with tenderness like water.

Princess Jinfeng glanced over and breathed a sigh of relief.

Sometimes, it really was about fate.

The child truly would cry with anyone's touch, wouldn't eat anything, and tiger's milk was fed five times a day, one bowl each time, not a drop more.

She wasn't skilled with children, and neither was Leng Bingham.

Bringing the baby to Yun Jinnian's place was meant to avoid trouble, yet unexpectedly, he took to Yun Jinnian's embrace.

In Prince Rui Residence, Chu Yu fought Leng Bingham, leaving him heavily injured, both internally and externally, "If you truly had Jinfeng in your heart, you wouldn't have waited until after she had the baby, when the child is already this big, without even a message. You should have married her early on when she was pregnant. As a man, Leng Bingham, I, Chu Yu, have no respect for you!"

Leng Bingham stood in place.

Silent.

Chu Yu glanced at him, took a deep breath, "Now, I will make the decision for Jinfeng. You can leave. Jinfeng saved you, and you gave her a child. From this moment, your debt is written off. Starting from the first day of the new year, I will order all the Hidden Guards of Prince Rui Residence to pursue and kill you, take care!"

After speaking, he turned and left.

He knew where Jinfeng had gone.

However, if he went there now, should he be able to enjoy the New Year's Eve dinner?

As he thought about it, Chu Yu's mood improved considerably.

When Chu Yu arrived at the dining hall of the Han Residence, Princess Jinfeng was so startled she nearly dropped her chopsticks, but Yun Jinnian just raised her hand to her lips and "shushed" Chu Yu, whispering to Mrs. Yuan, "Nursemaid, go get a pair of bowls and chopsticks!"

Mrs. Yuan quickly stood up, clearing a spot as she was already full.

Yun Jinnian then gestured to the spot beside her for Chu Yu, "Sit down!"

Chu Yu obediently took his seat.

All the anger and resentment seemed to vanish in an instant.

Sitting next to Yun Jinnian, Chu Yu asked softly, "Asleep?"

"She's asleep!"

Chu Yu craned his neck to look, "Sleeping soundly..."

As if thinking of something, he quickly stood up, stepped back, and greeted Han Xuzi with his fist cupped in the other hand, "I have seen Mr. Han!"

And he gave Mrs. Han a bow, "Auntie!"

He looked at Tianci, "Tianci!"

Han Tianci laughed.

Han Xuzi stroked his beard.

"Sit down, it's the New Year, no need for such formality!"

"Yes!" Chu Yu sat down politely.

Mrs. Han hurriedly said, "You can eat slowly, I'll go to the kitchen to see if everything's all right and bring another pot of warmed wine!"

Chapter 752: Dilemma

Mrs. Han finished speaking and rose to go to the kitchen.

Mrs. Han thought favorably of Chu Yu. After all, Chu Yu had been waiting for Yun Jinnian for so many years.

They could be considered childhood sweethearts who grew up together.

And at Yun Jinnian's most difficult time, it was Chu Yu who helped her.

She would not forcefully separate them.

Just let nature take its course!

Han Xuzi on the other hand, considered more factors. For example, there was no head matron in Chu Yu's residence, so if Yun Jinnian married into his family, she would become the managing Princess. As long as she was strong-willed and pampered Chu Yu well, she could soon lead a peaceful and comfortable life.

Princess Jinfeng, this little sister-in-law, was quite casual and kind to Yun Jinnian.

The only thing Han Xuzi thought he should ask Chu Yu about was his view on that position...

This year's New Year's Eve dinner was quite interesting.

After enjoying the New Year's Eve meal, they sat in the heated hall and chatted. Yun Jinnian was holding Leng Nuan, and Mrs. Han glanced over and praised, "This child is really growing up well!"

"Would you like to hold her and see?" Yun Jinnian asked tentatively.

Yes!

However, as soon as Leng Nuan was in Mrs. Han's arms, she woke up and started to cry with a loud voice.

Mrs. Han was quite embarrassed.

Princess Jinfeng was watching from the side, and she didn't know how to soothe a child at all.

Yun Jinnian had no choice but to hold the child in her arms and walk slowly, comforting her.

Watching this, Princess Jinfeng's eyes reddened slightly.

Thus, she felt more at ease leaving the child with Yun Jinnian.

Chu Yu was speaking with Han Xuzi. Hearing Yun Jinnian's voice soothing Leng Nuan, he turned his head and laughed at once.

His heart and eyes were filled with warmth.

He didn't even catch what Han Xuzi was saying to him.

Han Xuzi stroked his beard.

If his love was indeed so deep, it was extremely good, but if it was all pretense, then his façade was too deeply hidden.

Princess Jinfeng rubbed her belly, "Jinnian, I'm going to the cleansing room. Si Qin, Si Ju, come and attend to me!"

Si Qin and Si Ju hesitated, but seeing how generous Yun Jinnian was, they followed Princess Jinfeng to the cleansing room.

"Princess, have you made up your mind?" asked Si Ju.

"Jinnian will not mistreat Nuannuan, let's go!" Princess Jinfeng said, and then quietly left the Han Residence with Si Qin and Si Ju.

In the heated hall.

Yun Jinnian didn't think much of it.

After all, she was a princess. It was normal for her to have attendants.

Chu Yu also didn't expect Princess Jinfeng to dare sneak away.

But as he waited and waited without seeing Princess Jinfeng return, Chu Yu felt uneasy and immediately had someone look for her, only to learn that Princess Jinfeng had left.

Looking at the child in Yun Jinnian's arms, he was both angry and annoyed, and shouted, "That girl..."

Looking at the child in her arms, Yun Jinnian felt sorry for him and also for Princess Jinfeng, "The princess must have her difficulties. Go find her quickly. After you find her, don't scold her, don't hit her, talk to her nicely!"

"And the child..." Chu Yu hurriedly asked.

"I will take good care of him, don't worry!" Yun Jinnian took a deep breath.

This child didn't cry or fuss in her arms and that also meant something.

"Jinnian, thank you!" Chu Yu said and then immediately left the Han Residence.

He let Leng Binghan go, and Leng Binghan really went.

Now that Jinfeng had also quietly left, he always felt something was going to happen.

No matter what, he had to find Jinfeng quickly...

The Han Family quieted down at once.

Mrs. Han looked at the child in Yun Jinnian's arms, "Jinnian, do you really intend to raise him?"

"I have no choice but to raise him!"

"But what will you tell the outside world?" Mrs. Han asked.

Yun Jinnian thought for a moment, "I don't know. Let's wait for the King to return and then talk about it. For now, we can only raise him quietly!"

Holding the child tightly in her arms, Yun Jinnian was overwhelmed with maternal love.

Chapter 753: All Disagree

She didn't know what difficulties Princess Jinfeng had encountered, but she firmly believed that there was no mother in the world who didn't love her own child.

And since Princess Jinfeng had entrusted the child to her, she would certainly take good care of the child.

To keep the child, instructions had to be given throughout the household, and Han Xuzi commanded that everyone must keep their lips sealed, not leaking the slightest bit of information.

As for the child's food, at five months old there wasn't much he could eat, but rice porridge was possible.

Having given the instructions, the two cooks in the kitchen began to take action.

Soaking the rice, preparing the grinding stone.

Although they were suspicious of this child who had suddenly appeared, more people suspected that it was Mrs. Han who had given birth outside, and it was also possible that it was Yun Jinnian's child.

But as their own master, they only speculated in their hearts and dared not say more than a word.

Leng Nuan was quite easy to take care of, basically not crying. By the time the rice porridge was ready, Yun Jinnian held him and fed him little by little with a small spoon.

Leng Nuan ate half a bowl and then refused to eat any more,

"This child..." Mrs. Han sighed.

He really was a clever little thing.

Only a few months old, yet so astute.

Han Tianci was making faces and goofing around with Leng Nuan on the side, but Leng Nuan just watched him, neither laughing nor fussing.

Mrs. Han was a bit worried. Could this child be an idiot...

But he didn't quite seem like it!

Yun Jinnian comforted Leng Nuan for a while, then let him urinate and defecate, washed his face, hands, and feet, and put him on the bed to lull him to sleep.

"Jinnian, will he sleep with you tonight?" Mrs. Han asked in astonishment.

What surprised her even more was that Yun Jinnian was very adept at handling the child.

Where had she learned it from?

"Yes, let him sleep with me!" Yun Jinnian said softly, patting Leng Nuan's back and gently humming a tune.

Leng Nuan soon closed his eyes and fell asleep.

It was then that Yun Jinnian whispered to Mrs. Han, "Mother, you go to sleep, and Tianci too!"

"Sister, I'll stay behind and watch. Such a small baby, chubby and so cute!"

Yun Jinnian couldn't help but chuckle and handed a red envelope to Han Tianci.

"New Year's money?"

Yun Jinnian nodded.

Han Tianci took it and opened it to find a deed to a shop.

"Sister..."

"Haven't you always wanted to start a rouge shop? When the flowers bloom more in spring, I'll help you make rouge!"

"Then we'll split the earnings from the silver evenly!"

"All right!"

Han Tianci took what Yun Jinnian gave him and would reciprocate in other ways.

Mrs. Han was quite relieved and took out the New Year's money for the siblings.

Han Tianci opened it to also find a deed to a shop.

"Thank you, Mother!"

"Manage it well, earn lots of silver!"

"I will follow Mother's advice!" Han Tianci said, hugging Mrs. Han and planting a kiss, causing her to smile with her lips pursed.

After chatting for a while, Mrs. Han got up to leave.

She also instructed Bai Que to prepare some fabrics because she wanted to make a few sets of clothes for Leng Nuan.

"There's no need to use the finest fabric, just make sure it's comfortable!"

Bai Que went off in response.

In recent days, Mrs. Han had chosen a few maids to serve closely, including Bai Wu, Bai Lu, Bai Ling, and with Bai Que, they formed a group of four main maids.

However, Mrs. Han still trusted and relied more on Bai Que, with the four maids evidently led by Bai Que as the head.

Although Han Tianci wanted to stay, Yun Jinnian did not agree, so he had to go back to sleep.

Waiting for the first day of the New Year.

Yun Jinnian looked at the sleeping Leng Nuan, fond of him without being too excited.

She gently tucked in the blanket and then sat beside him, watching over him.

"Miss..." Mrs. Yuan softly called.

"Hmm?"

"Are you really going to keep this child?"

Chapter 754: Going with the Flow

Mrs. Yuan was actually very worried, leaving this child with Yun Jinnian would not be good for his reputation.

Yun Jinnian looked up at Mrs. Yuan, "Right!"

"But..." Mrs. Yuan started to speak, then stopped.

"Nanny, I know your concerns, but he is Princess Jinfeng's child, as well as Ayu's biological nephew. Since he has been sent here, I must not throw him out. Besides, this child and I are fated!"

He wouldn't let anyone else hold him, except for her.

It was indeed fate!

Mrs. Yuan sighed, "Then I will help Miss with raising him. I'll find some fabric and make him new clothes tomorrow!"

Yun Jinnian smiled, "Nanny, thank you!"

"..." Mrs. Yuan smiled.

Her heart was filled with joy.

"Nanny, you watch him first. I'm going to freshen up, and then you can go to sleep!"

"Yes!"

Yun Jinnian quickly freshened up but still dressed very neatly.

Mrs. Yuan looked on in astonishment.

"Prince Rui will surely come back later. I should wait for him. Nanny, you go now to the kitchen and instruct them to prepare a pot of chicken soup!"

"Okay!"

Mrs. Yuan actually thought highly of Chu Yu.

No matter from which aspect, Chu Yu was a good man, and he treated Yun Jinnian well.

Mrs. Yuan got up, ready to head to the kitchen.

There was no small kitchen in the Han Residence. You'd just tell the main kitchen what you wanted, and once it was made, you'd go pick it up.

"Nanny, take a few gold hairpins over there, reward the people who work overnight. One for each person!"

Giving silver wouldn't exceed two hundred taels, but a gold hairpin would be worth at least four or five hundred taels. Even if the kitchen staff had complaints, seeing the value of the gold hairpins, they would be willing to work.

"Yes!"

Mrs. Yuan took a few from the jewelry box, wrapped them, and put them in her bosom.

Thinking of the items sent by the Wang Residence, she asked, "Miss, what about the things sent by the Wang Residence?"

"Catalog them and store them in the warehouse!"

"Alright!"

The items from the Wang Residence were what she deserved.

So her taking them did not make her feel guilty at all.

Mrs. Yuan went to the kitchen, where a few cooks were cleaning up. Seeing Mrs. Yuan come in, they quickly greeted her, "Mother Yuan, what brings you here? Does the young miss want to eat something?"

"Miss knows that you all have worked hard. She sent me to reward you!" Mrs. Yuan counted the people and took out the gold hairpins from her bosom. "Here, one for each of you. These are from Qiaoshi Pavilion, excellent to keep for your daughters' dowries!"

The cooks were overjoyed.

Such gold hairpins were rare treasures, hard to come by even if they worked hard for a lifetime.

Having received the gift, they were naturally filled with gratitude towards Yun Jinnian.

"Oh, right, Miss said to stew a pot of chicken soup. Send Hemei to pick it up later!"

"When should she come?"

"I don't know exactly, but once the soup is ready, leave someone to watch over it. Be sure to keep everything clean!"

He who takes a favor is subdued by the benefactor.

"Rest assured, Mother Yuan, we'll remember it well!"

"Good, you all stay busy, then. I'll head back to Chaoyang Academy!"

"Mother Yuan, have a safe walk!"

After sending Mother Yuan off, the cooks were beyond happy, brandishing their gold hairpins yet reluctant to wear them.

"Wow, these gold hairpins are really exquisite!"

"Do you even need to say it? These are from Qiaoshi Pavilion. I think they're worth at least five hundred taels!"

"Not just that, at least eight hundred taels!"

"Regardless, our Commandery Princess is one of the richest in the capital and has exquisite medical skills. Didn't you see the things delivered by the Wang Residence today? Tsk, tsk, tsk, several carts full, those boxes lowered down, worth a great deal of silver!"

"Stop dawdling, go and butcher another old hen, and see if there's any ginseng left in the kitchen. Start stewing it right away, as the Commandery Princess might send someone over soon!"

"Yes, yes, yes!"

Chapter 755: What to Do with the Child

Yun Jinnian leaned against the head of the bed, looking at the child on the bed, and closed his eyes, thinking of his Momo.

Momo...

Princess Jinfeng, holding the token, left the city and saw Chu Yu standing in the middle of the road.

Princess Jinfeng, with a heart full of unease, dismounted and walked slowly to Chu Yu, "Brother..."

Chu Yu looked at Princess Jinfeng, worn from the journey, and took her cloak, draping it over her, "Are you really going?"

"Yes, Leng Bingham is the Prince of Dongwu. I can't rest easy with him going back alone. I must go and help him..."

Chu Yu took a deep breath, pulled out a Jade Pendant from his chest, and placed it in Princess Jinfeng's hand, "Once you reach Dongwu, contact our covert operatives there to protect yourself. I'll be waiting for your return!"

"Brother..." Princess Jinfeng threw herself into Chu Yu's arms, sobbing loudly.

"There, there, you're a mother yourself now, and still crying!" Chu Yu patted Princess Jinfeng's head, "Set off now; the sooner you leave, the sooner you'll arrive and the sooner you can make arrangements!"

"I'll listen to you, brother!"

Princess Jinfeng mounted her horse and galloped away.

Chu Yu watched her, his own eyes slightly reddening.

Originally, he thought about capturing Princess Jinfeng and bringing her back, but he knew all too well how love and affection could wear a person down.

He understood that feeling.

"Luoyi!"

"Yes, my lord?"

"Send someone to secretly protect Jinfeng!"

"At once!"

Chu Yu didn't want to return to the Prince Rui Residence. Despite its grandeur and ornate decorations, he couldn't feel the slightest warmth there, and with Qu Mianke present, he was even less eager to return.

After much thought, he still slipped quietly into the Han Residence.

He could sense that the Hidden Guard had spotted him, but they didn't appear to stop him.

By the time he arrived at Yun Jinnian's Chaoyang Academy, the lights were still on.

Approaching the window, Chu Yu planned to imitate a cat's meow, only to discover that Yun Jinnian's cat, Tuanzi, was already at his feet, looking up at him arrogantly.

"Meow!"

Tuanzi called out.

Chu Yu mimicked the sound as well.

Yun Jinnian, leaning on the bed, laughed upon hearing it.

She got out of bed, opened the door, and saw Chu Yu, "Come in."

Chu Yu bent down to pick up Tuanzi and entered the room. Hemei and Henuan also emerged, drowsy and clearly having been asleep.

"Hemei, Henuan, go check if the chicken soup is ready in the kitchen, and see if there's anything else to eat. Bring some over!"

"Yes!"

Hemei and Henuan promptly withdrew.

Yun Jinnian invited Chu Yu to sit down, took a kettle from the stove, and poured him a cup of hot water, "Have some water first!"

"Hmm!" Chu Yu held the cup and took a sip. He felt much warmer all over.

"Did you catch up with the Princess?"

"I did. Since Leng Bingham is the Prince of Dongwu and she's worried about him going back alone, the child didn't cause any fuss, right?" Chu Yu said, glancing toward the sleeping chamber.

He was still very envious of that little one, actually sleeping in Yun Jinnian's bed.

He didn't know how much longer he would have to wait.

"No, he fell asleep after eating, very well-behaved. He's just like Leng Binghan in temperament, what are we going to do in the future!"

Chu Yu, however, started to laugh, "That's because Leng Binghan spends more time with him. That taciturn fellow barely talks. A child raised by him causing a fuss would be odd!"

If Jinfeng had been the one raising him, the child would definitely be a chatterbox.

"What if it had been me who had been raising him all this time? Or do you want to take him back to the Wang Residence?"

Chu Yu took a deep breath.

He was not skilled at childcare.

Bringing the child back to the Wang Residence, full of rambunctious fellows, he dared not even consider what the child might turn out like.

"You raise him. It'll be more affectionate!" Chu Yu said earnestly.

Chapter 756: Having a Plan

Yun Jinnian nodded, "Then I'll take him, but how should I explain his identity?"

Even if we say he's Princess Jinfeng's child, it's not good for the Princess's reputation. And to have a child suddenly without reason is also not good for her, nor for my mother's reputation.

This child, after all, is still wronged.

"How about I arrange for the child to be left at the Han Residence's gate, and then you 'find' him? That way, his identity will have a way out!"

"And what about after that? How should he live? In what capacity should he appear before others?"

A child born out of wedlock.

If abandoned at the gate of Han Residence, he would be a discarded child.

Thus forever seen as lesser by others.

"At the moment, I can't think of any better solution..." Yun Jinnian added.

Chu Yu was silent for a moment, "Or we could just say he's my child!"

"Your child? Who's the mother? What about his birth mother? What if he asks about her in the future? Do you know how big the difference is between a legitimate and illegitimate birth?"

Chu Yu was taken aback.

When it came down to it, he was also of illegitimate birth.

But his father the emperor doted on him, and it seemed like no one dared mention his status.

In the noble families of Capital City, indeed, the difference between legitimate and illegitimate birth was significant.

"..."

The two were silent when Hemei and Henuan came back with chicken soup and food.

Yun Jinnian scooped some chicken soup for Chu Yu to drink, "It's made by the kitchen!"

"Okay!"

With the warm chicken soup in his stomach, Chu Yu felt his mind clear a bit.

"Let's slowly think about the child's matter. We can definitely give him an identity so he can walk proudly among others!" Chu Yu voiced.

"Mhm!"

Before leaving, Chu Yu went to see Leng Nuan, seeing that he was sleeping peacefully, Chu Yu's heart felt tender.

This blood relation was truly a peculiar thing.

"It's getting late, I should go..."

As Chu Yu prepared to turn around and leave, Yun Jinnian reached out and hugged him, "Ayu, Happy New Year!"

Suddenly embraced by a warm and fragrant softness, Chu Yu grinned.

His heart thumped, his body stiffened, and he swallowed, "Is it New Year's already?"

"Yes, it's New Year's!"

"You too, Happy New Year!"

Chu Yu finally still left in high spirits.

Yun Jinnian sighed softly.

If she were to marry Chu Yu, then she could acknowledge this child as her own.

But now, even if she were to get married, it would be too late.

Perhaps there was another way, which was to get married to Chu Yu early, have children early, and declare that she had borne twins. Send the child to a remote place for a few years, then bring him back. By then, no one could say that he wasn't her and Chu Yu's child.

Upon this thought, Yun Jinnian finally breathed a sigh of relief.

In the 20th year of Yuanhe,

Yun Jinnian watched over Leng Nuan, staying awake all night.

Leng Nuan truly was a well-behaved child, not crying or causing trouble, his eating, defecating, and sleeping patterns were all very regular, never in disarray.

Having taken care of him for a few days, Yun Jinnian found it easy yet also felt extremely distressed for him.

Holding him, she whispered softly to him, hoping he wouldn't grow up to be like Leng Bingham, with a cold and frosty face.

"Nuannuan, Ah Nuan, look at me, look at me..." Han Tianci teased on the side.

Leng Nuan just looked at him, without any extra expressions.

"Sis, this kid isn't cute, not fun at all!"

No reaction, it was boring to tease him.

Han Tianci complained.

Yun Jinnian smiled faintly, "Tomorrow I have to make a trip to the Wang Residence, Nuannuan will be in your care!"

"Got it, Sister, don't worry, I'll take good care of him!"

The child, though not entertaining, was easy to manage; fill him up, put him on the bed, and he could be quiet and settled for hours.

Chapter 757: Mrs. Dai Takes Charge

Han Tianci initially thought Leng Nuan was foolish, but after testing him a few times, he realized he was not foolhardy, just extremely detached.

A mere infant, yet so profoundly inscrutable.

Pressing his chin, Han Tianci looked down from on high at Leng Nuan in the cradle.

In the past few days, this little one had been living in comfort, with everyone making him new clothes, new swaddling clothes, tiger-head shoes, and tiger-head hats.

They all treasured him dearly.

Early in the morning, the Wang Residence had sent a carriage over. Before leaving, Yun Jinnian gave Leng Nuan a long look and left specific instructions before departing from the Han Residence, taking Hemei and Henuan with him onto the carriage of the Wang Residence.

After the New Year festivities, the streets had once again bustled with life.

To prepare for the Lantern Festival, many shops started to hang up exquisite and delicate lanterns.

The carriage stopped at the entrance of the Wang Residence, and upon seeing Mrs. Dai clad in brocade clothes and greeting them with a smile, one felt slightly taken aback.

"The Commandery Princess has arrived, please come inside quickly!"

"Greetings to the second lady!"

Mrs. Dai responded with a faint smile.

Yet, there was still sorrow lurking in the corners of her eyes and brows.

Yun Jinnian followed Mrs. Dai to the back courtyard; along the way, maids and old women treated her with the utmost respect, a stark contrast to his previous visit. Seeing Mrs. Dai dressed in brocade and her accessories both reserved and impressive, and with the Princess absent, he promptly deduced that Mrs. Dai might now be in charge of the household.

"My mother-in-law has fallen ill, so I am temporarily managing the affairs of the house," Mrs. Dai confided softly.

Even though her future title as the wife of a Commandery Prince couldn't be diminished, she used to always keep a low profile, ending up gaining little from it.

Her own son was raised at the side of his grandmother, ending up in such a state.

Her daughter almost got sent away to a country estate, all because she had no say in this family's matters.

But from now on, that would change.

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian nodded in understanding. Seeing the resoluteness on Mrs. Dai's face and the ambition in her eyes, he lowered his eyelids.

Anguo's condition had improved much in the past few days; the poison in his body had largely been detoxified, but having come through a severe ordeal, he was substantially thinner.

Upon seeing Mrs. Dai, he joyfully called out, "Mother!"

Yun Jinnian couldn't help but feel fortunate that Anguo was still able to see out of one eye.

Nor had he become witless from the ordeal, which was indeed a silver lining in misfortune!

Mrs. Dai instantly embraced Anguo with tender affection, "Anguo, see who has come to visit you?"

Anguo looked at Yun Jinnian. He did not recognize him, but he knew that the person before him was his savior, "It's Auntie!"

"Anguo!" Yun Jinnian softly called, instructed Hemei to prepare things, and after cleansing her hands, took Anguo's pulse.

"Auntie!"

"Hmm?"

"I'll get better, won't I?" Anguo asked in a soft voice.

Yun Jinnian nodded earnestly, "Yes, as long as Anguo eats on time every day and is obedient, you'll definitely get better!"

Anguo smiled, revealing tiny front teeth.

After all, he was just a child a little over a year old, not understanding particularly much.

"Thank you, Auntie!"

"Such a good child, next time Auntie comes to visit, I will bring you something fun!"

Anguo nodded vigorously.

Yun Jinnian then readjusted the prescription and reminded Mrs. Dai to make sure that Anguo did not scratch his eyes.

"Rest assured, Commandery Princess, everything is noted down!"

The same carriage from the Wang Residence sent Yun Jinnian back to the Han Residence and even brought some gifts; Yun Jinnian did not refuse them.

Traveling back to the Han Residence by carriage, Yun Jinnian once again re-planned her schedule for the upcoming days.

But during the New Year celebrations, who makes house calls for medical visits?

She had wanted to take Mrs. Han out for a walk, but now with the addition of Leng Nuan, they could not go anywhere, and even if they went out, it couldn't be for long.

What she hadn't expected was for Chen Danyan to pay a visit bearing gifts.

Chapter 758: Candid Heart-to-Heart

"Chen Sister!" Yun Jinnian called out joyfully, stepping forward to take Chen Danyan's hand.

"Jinnian!" Chen Danyan was also filled with joy, sizing up Yun Jinnian carefully, "You've grown taller and even more beautiful!"

Yun Jinnian led Chen Danyan to the Warm Pavilion to sit down, and Chen Danyan got straight to the point, "Jinnian, I came here this time to ask you to look at my grandfather's illness!"

"Should we leave now?" Yun Jinnian asked.

"If it's convenient for you, let's leave now!"

Seeing how serious Chen Danyan was, Yun Jinnian replied, "Alright, just wait a moment for me. I'll get ready, and then I'll go with you!"

Chen Danyan stood up, "Thank you!"

Chen Danyan was naturally bright and dignified; her smile was gentle and amiable. Her sparkling eyes, however, were filled with worry.

It was enough to make anyone feel an uncontrollable urge to comfort her.

Yun Jinnian helped Chen Danyan to her feet, "We are sisters; I also intended to visit. But since the New Year hasn't passed, it wouldn't be appropriate for me to visit. It's good that you came. Speaking of which, this is actually my first time visiting your home!"

"If you like, you can stay for a few days. We sisters can have a good chat!"

Yun Jinnian smiled tenderly.

If it weren't for Leng Nuan, she would indeed like to stay at the Chen Family for a few days to experience the scholarly atmosphere, but with Leng Nuan at home, she couldn't stay at the Chen Family.

She returned to the Chaoyang Academy to change her clothes and prepared many small gifts before leaving the Han Family with Hemei and Henuan.

Chen Danyan's carriage was elegantly decorated with books on one side.

"Chen Sister has good taste!"

"What good taste. It's just for when I'm bored, to pick up and read at random!" Chen Danyan said as she handed a book to Yun Jinnian, "These are all tales of chivalry. See if there's anything you like!"

"..."

The fact that the daughter of the Elder Residence was reading tales of chivalry was hard for Yun Jinnian to accept.

But Chen Danyan just covered her mouth and laughed.

"Right, Sister Hu is coming back, did you know?"

"Sister Hu is coming back?"

"Yes, she met with Countess Xuanping and said she's accompanying her husband to the Capital City for the imperial examination. They've even prepared a residence in the inner city and are bringing her daughter with them!"

"That child should be over two years old by now, right?"

"I'm not too sure about that, but when Countess Xuanping mentioned the child the other day, she hesitated as if there was some complication!"

"No matter what, we can only know the full story once Sister Hu comes back!"

"Indeed, with this, our group of sisters can finally be together again. I have decided not to marry anyone who lives outside Capital City!"

Upon hearing this, Yun Jinnian felt something was off.

If she remembered correctly, Chen Danyan was supposed to be engaged to the Princely Heir of Prince Wang Residence.

"Chen Sister..."

Seeing Yun Jinnian's confusion, Chen Danyan took her hand, "Before you returned, he sent Prince Rui to the Chen Family to break off the engagement!"

"..."

Chu Yu?

How was he involved?

"I've barely met him a few times, and can't say there's any affection between us. It was just that when he proposed, my grandfather couldn't refuse, so he accepted!"

She was a sensible girl who knew that he would be her husband in the future. She had discreetly inquired about his measurements and made him several outfits and pairs of shoes, but she never had the courage to deliver them.

That day he sent Prince Rui to break off the engagement, and her grandfather was so angry that he spat blood afterwards. She burned everything.

If he was heartless, she would end it.

She was not the shallow type to covet his status and position and insist on marrying him and her. Growing up alongside her grandfather, she knew the importance of propriety, righteousness, integrity, and honor.

Yun Jinnian couldn't help but feel moved and squeezed Chen Danyan's hand, "Sister, you'll find someone even better!"

Chapter 759: I'm So Good

Chen Danyan laughed, "Yes, I'm that good!"

Whether it be playing the zither, chess, calligraphy, painting, poetry, song composition, she excelled in all of it. Obedient to elders, kind to sisters, she was indeed a good girl.

She would meet someone even better.

That man would cherish her, love her dearly, and never allow her to be embarrassed.

"Right, Sister is so good, she will meet someone even better!"

One couldn't help feeling that the Princely Heir Hong was truly blind not to see the worth in such a fine young lady and to actually consent to break off the engagement was downright foolish.

Chen Danyan laughed. Concerning Chu Renzhi, she no longer cared that much, especially after he had angered Grandfather to the point of spitting blood—it only added to her resentment and dislike.

The carriage stopped at the entrance of the Elder Residence.

A few women, dressed in brocade robes and in an understated but elegant manner, exuding both wealth and pride, came out to greet them.

"Greetings to Princess Yijia!"

Yun Jinnian looked at them and turned his head to Chen Danyan.

"These are my cousins!"

Today was Yun Jinnian's first visit to the Elder Residence, and the ladies, whether born from the main line or not, all came out to welcome her.

The greater the scholarly family, the more important the observance of etiquette.

Just as in her own family, where her father was the eldest brother, and his uncles all looked up to their father as the head.

Her mother managed the household affairs, and though her aunts had their own ambitions, they did not dare to openly trip her up.

"You may all dispense with the formalities," said Yun Jinnian lightly.

She secretly counted them—there were seven in total.

"Thank you, Princess!"

The ladies of the Elder Residence paid great attention to etiquette. They stepped aside, and Chen Danyan, affectionately holding Yun Jinnian's hand, invited her into the Elder Residence.

In the hall, an old lady with white hair smiled brightly upon seeing Yun Jinnian.

"Here she comes, here she comes!"

Several matrons then stood up and walked to the entrance of the hall.

By rank, Yun Jinnian was a first-rank princess; their highest rank was equivalent to second-rank, so they respectively paid their respects, "Your humble wives greet the Princess!"

Yun Jinnian hurriedly said, "Aunts, please don't be like this..."

Such deference made her feel uncomfortable.

Mrs. Chen looked on and began to smile.

Indeed, she was a sensible child; neither arrogant nor rash. Even after being titled as the Commandery Princess, her demeanor had not changed since they met over a year ago.

"Jinnian, this is my mother, and these are my second aunt, third aunt, fourth aunt, and fifth aunt!" Chen Danyan introduced them one by one.

The matrons of the Elder Residence were quite in harmony. The colors of their dresses were all different for the occasion, making it easy to remember them.

Chen Danyan then led Yun Jinnian to the senior Mrs. Chen, "Jinnian, this is my grandmother!"

Approaching the elder Mrs. Chen, she said softly, "Grandmother, this is the good sister, Jinnian, whom you've mentioned often, the one bestowed as Princess Yijia by the Emperor himself!"

Yun Jinnian bowed in respect, "Jinnian pays respect to the elder Mrs. Chen!"

Although she was a princess, she still needed to show utter respect in front of an elder like Mrs. Chen.

The companion of the elder statesman for many years, who had children and grandchildren all around, was said to have been a famous talent in her youth, and her ways of interacting with the world had always been admired.

"Good child, you may rise. Come here and let me have a good look at you!" Mrs. Chen laughed.

Yun Jinnian stepped forward.

Allowing Mrs. Chen to size her up.

"Indeed you are a striking figure of a girl. I've lived a long time but have never seen such a bright young lady. Come sit and have a chat!"

The seat to the left had always been reserved for honored guests.

Chen Danyan immediately assisted Yun Jinnian into the seat on the left side while the Chen family's ladies sat across from Yun Jinnian, which was next to Mrs. Chen's left side.

The young ladies then stood behind their respective mothers.

It was clear which daughter belonged to which branch of the family at a glance.

Chen Danyan stood by the elder Mrs. Chen's side, watching Yun Jinnian with a smile.

Tea and pastries were served.

"Jinnian, try the pastries and see if they suit your taste!"

"Yes!"

Yun Jinnian acknowledged, took a piece of the pastry, and put it into her mouth—her brow creased slightly...

Chapter 760: Chen Danyan's Home

He spat the refreshment into his palm.

He examined it closely.

"What's the matter?" Lady Chen asked anxiously.

Chen Danyan was also extremely nervous.

She knew that Yun Jinnian wouldn't spit out the refreshment without reason, and even if the taste was disagreeable, he would have swallowed it nonetheless.

The other ladies' hearts also lifted in apprehension.

Lady Chen's grandmother slightly furrowed her brows.

Age and experience were there, but it didn't show.

"This refreshment has been laced with croton!" Yun Jinnian stated indifferently.

The crowd sighed in relief.

Lady Chen's grandmother then cast a calm glance at Lady Chen.

Lady Chen did not move but looked towards a nanny dressed in dark green cotton-padded clothes, who immediately withdrew.

Yun Jinnian placed the refreshment on the table and took a handkerchief to gently wipe his hands before uncovering the teacup lid, and smiled faintly, "It seems that someone doesn't welcome me today!"

"What do you mean by that?" asked Lady Chen's grandmother.

However, internally, she was enraged.

It was detestable.

Who didn't know that today's invitation to Yun Jinnian was for a specific reason, yet someone dared to make a move in secret.

But the method used was so clumsy that it was infuriating.

"This tea has also been laced with croton!" Yun Jinnian stated indifferently, gently setting down the teacup.

Lady Chen's grandmother stood up and commanded with a heavy tone, "Investigate this for me!"

She then said to Yun Jinnian, "The old man has some fine tea stored away, let me take you to try it!"

"Yes!"

Yun Jinnian stood up and followed Lady Chen's grandmother out of the hall.

Chen Danyan immediately followed.

Yun Jinnian noticed that the other young ladies of the Chen Residence hadn't come along, nor had the other ladies.

"The old man is advanced in age and enjoys his tranquility!" Lady Chen's grandmother said.

"Indeed, that's how it is with the elderly!"

Of course, the absence of the other ladies might have been to investigate who had the audacity to do such a thing.

These matters didn't concern him.

The courtyard of the senior Mr. Chen was very quiet, with only pine trees planted directly in the ground.

"Grandfather doesn't like flowers or plants, only pine trees. Sister Jinnian, with your exquisite literary talent, would you care to say a few words?" Chen Danyan said.

"I dare not presume to show off in front of experts!"

Chen Danyan laughed but did not insist.

The young servant attending to the senior Mr. Chen immediately came forward, "Greetings to the great grandmother and Thirteenth Miss!" Looking at Yun Jinnian, he said with utmost seriousness, "Wishing Princess Yijia the utmost peace and safety!"

Yun Jinnian merely smiled without speaking.

The young servant had a keen eye.

"All right, is grandfather awake?" Chen Danyan asked.

"The senior master is awake. Great grandmother, please come in, Princess, and Thirteenth Miss, please!"

Chen Danyan assisted Lady Chen's grandmother, and Yun Jinnian, walking beside them, entered the senior Mr. Chen's room together.

There were many books, and the cabinets around the room held nothing else but books, filled to the brim with them.

The senior Mr. Chen, his beard and hair all white, smiled when he saw Lady Chen's grandmother, "It's so cold outside, how come you're here?"

"Danyan invited Princess Yijia to come and see you!" said Lady Chen's grandmother, sitting down on the stool beside the senior Mr. Chen and tucking in the blanket around him.

The senior Mr. Chen smiled, "It's not a serious illness, just the usual aches and pains that come with old age!"

"Your granddaughter is worried about you, and you should just accept that!" Lady Chen's grandmother said.

"Ah, I'll listen to you!"

Yun Jinnian observed from the side and could see that the senior Mr. Chen and Lady Chen's grandmother had a good relationship or they wouldn't have had several children together.

Chen Danyan leaned closer to Yun Jinnian, "Grandfather and grandmother love each other very much!"

"It's evident!"

The senior Mr. Chen looked at Yun Jinnian, "Princess Yijia, is it?"

Yun Jinnian quickly stepped forward, bowing slightly, "I have come to see the senior Mr. Chen!"

"Hmm, take a seat!"