

Indulgence 791

Chapter 791: Chu Yu Files a Complaint

Yuwen Ming's future husband's family name was Ma, and the one who came today was her future mother-in-law, Lady Ma.

For the sake of ensuring Yuwen Ming would have an easier life in the future, the Grand Princess would not trouble Lady Ma.

"Speaking of which, the fifth day of the second month is a good date, but it's a bit rushed. The fifteenth of the third month is also a fine day, it's just that, just that the old madam..." Lady Ma said, her face showing difficulty.

"Mingming, what do you say?" The Grand Princess looked at Yuwen Ming standing aside and asked.

"I'll leave it all to my grandmother to decide!" Yuwen Ming gave a slight curtsy, poised and respectful.

The Grand Princess nodded, "I had wanted to give you more time, but since old Lady Ma is not well, it's proper for you to marry earlier, so let's choose the fifth day of the second month!"

With less than a month before her wedding, Yuwen Ming felt nervous and wronged.

Yet she also looked forward to her future life.

Accompanying Lady Ma this time was her illegitimate son, Ma Wenbin, who was tall and slender, exuding a scholarly aura, handsome and gentle in appearance, pleasing and delightful to the eye.

Yuwen Ming and he had made eye contact and quickly looked away.

Ma Wenbin, seeing Yuwen Ming's refined beauty and dignified grace, felt his heart race.

Such a fine young lady, yet some did not know to cherish her.

Yuwen Ming, on the other hand, did not think too much and simply regarded him as her future brother-in-law.

She was about to get married and would miss Yun Jinnian's coming-of-age ceremony, but the gifts had to be prepared nonetheless. With this in mind, Yuwen Ming returned to her room and selected various items.

These included books she had read, as well as collected calligraphy, paintings, and treasured antiques.

She packed them all into a chest.

"Whew!"

News of the Grand Princess's granddaughter's marriage spread quickly.

Invitation preparations were also underway, with almost everyone who could be invited in Capital City included.

"Mingming has already been wronged; we must make the wedding banquet lively, so she can marry off with dignity and pride!"

Several marchionesses echoed in agreement.

"Everyone, go prepare!"

After everyone left, she called Chu Yu over, "Busy man, how come you have time to come by today?"

"I've been wronged and have come to seek my aunt's judgment!"

"Tsk tsk tsk, who in Tianchu Country would dare to show you disrespect? Tell me who's wronged you, and let's hear it!"

"It's Qu Mianke..." Chu Yu slowly recounted the deeds of Qu Mianke, which made the Grand Princess furious.

"That is utterly disgraceful; I don't know how Ning An taught her child. You did the right thing. Initially, you kindly took her in, and it's clear she had ulterior motives. Now she has caused such confusion, sending her back to the Princess Residence is correct. If your aunt Ning An asks, tell her to come and speak with me!"

Chu Yu quickly stood up and clasped his fists, "Thank you, Aunt!"

"You rascal, you're not getting any younger; you should start thinking about your own marriage!"

"You're right in your teaching, Aunt!"

The Grand Princess laughed, "Since you think my teaching is right, then what do you and Jinnian plan to do?"

Speaking of Yun Jinnian, Chu Yu softened considerably.

He smiled very broadly, "After Jinnian's coming-of-age ceremony, I'll still need to trouble my aunt to make a trip for me!"

"Ah haha, you rascal, so you were waiting here for me!" The Grand Princess laughed heartily.

"Come to think of it, when your father was your age, I secretly helped him check on his future wife. In the blink of an eye, it's your turn now. It all seems like it was just yesterday!" The Grand Princess's eyes reddened slightly as she got to the latter part.

Oh, her brother, so dear to her since childhood.

No matter what others said, he was always unwavering in his affection for her.

It's a pity that he left too early to see his most beloved daughter's son marry and have children...

Chapter 792: Those Trifles

The Commandery Princess lamented with a sour feeling in her heart.

"Now I'm old!"

Chu Yu walked over to the Commandery Princess's side and gently embraced her, "Aunt, you are not old at all. Haven't you noticed? Your hair has gotten darker, and the wrinkles on your face have diminished."

"Your words are always so sweet, but I'm much more at ease now that your cousin Yan has recovered."

She knew more clearly that if it hadn't been for meeting Yun Jinnian, she probably wouldn't have made it through that ordeal.

And in a dazed state, she could feel that she had died.

Having lived for so many years, she had seen a lot and experienced much. Regarding matters of the supernatural, she was always half-believing, half-doubting.

Moreover, had it not been for meeting Yun Jinnian, the poison in Xiao Wu's body would not have been curable.

"Aunt!"

"Speak."

"What do I need to bring to the Yun Family to propose marriage?" Chu Yu earnestly asked.

"You don't know this either? I'll have Madam Song write a list for you later, but you must prepare a pair of living geese!"

"Is there anything else?" Chu Yu asked eagerly.

The Commandery Princess couldn't help but laugh, "You impetuous boy, why the rush? Take it one step at a time. Once Madam Song gives you the list, take it home and have someone prepare the items. Of course, if you want to make a grand proposal, ensure that the gifts are more exquisite and valuable. Later on, Mrs. Han will prepare Jinnian's dowry, and these gifts will certainly be included. You won't have to worry about anyone switching them out!"

Everyone among the prominent households in the Capital City was aware of Mrs. He's actions.

Thus, most people scorned the idea of associating with her.

Yet Mrs. He had no self-awareness, persistently and shamelessly clinging to others.

Seemingly not considering that her family still had two sons and two daughters to marry off.

"Aunt, you're right to remind me!"

"Alright, go and find your cousin Yan to play. I need to talk with Madam Song for a moment!"

"Yes!"

After Chu Yu left, the Commandery Princess sighed, "He has finally grown up, after all!"

Madam Song offered a slight smile.

Only then did the Commandery Princess ask, "How is the butler Madam selected for Ming'er coming along with her training?"

"Your Highness can rest assured, the training is complete. If Your Highness is still worried, this servant can accompany her at first. Once the Commandery Princess has settled in, this servant will return!"

Upon hearing this, the Commandery Princess pondered for a moment before saying, "That seems like a good idea. You should go along and have a look. I've always felt there's something odd about this marriage!"

"This servant also finds it odd and suggests perhaps we should have someone investigate?" Madam Song hinted with a question.

"Have someone look into it. See if Old Madam Ma is actually ill, and why not, if she isn't?"

"Yes!"

"And about the maids, pick a few carefully. Make sure they aren't all just thinking about climbing into the master's bed—hearts loyal and true are what we need." The Commandery Princess paused briefly, "As for looks, they shouldn't be too shabby either. Choose a few pretty ones. I believe anyone with eyes will know who is better!"

"Your Highness, don't worry, this servant has noted everything. The maids that will accompany the dowry have been seen and approved by the Commandery Princess herself. Shall we call them over for you to take a look another day?"

The Commandery Princess waved her hand, "No need. Your and Ming'er's judgement is sound enough!"

"You flatter me, Your Highness!"

Chu Yu slowly made his way to Prince Yanjun's courtyard.

Since the Commandery Princess was present, he hadn't moved out yet and wasn't married, the entire courtyard was very quiet.

"Tsk tsk tsk, you really live a leisurely life!"

Prince Yanjun looked up at Chu Yu and slightly curved his lips, then gestured to the seat in front of him.

After Chu Yu sat down, he said, "I truly envy you!"

"Why so?"

Chapter 793: Leng Nuan's Comings and Goings

Prince Yanjun leisurely poured tea for Chu Yu, "Try it, though it's nothing compared to the Snow Lotus tea from Nanjiang!"

It lacked that fragrance and that sense of tranquility.

In fact, he was quite fond of Yun Jinnian.

Gentle in nature, uncompetitive, kind-hearted; he was more than suitable to be his cousin.

"You're the most at ease!" Chu Yu took the cup of tea, sipped it, and praised, "Not bad at all, top-grade Xuefeng Maojian!"

"Aren't you carefree and unrestrained yourself?" Prince Yanjun said as he picked up his tea and took a delicate sip.

Gazing at Chu Yu with a gentle look.

As for this cousin, he had never really understood him.

During his time in Nanjiang, his demeanor seemed more normal, smiling all day long, with gentle eyes.

His behavior was completely different from the carefree and frivolous ways he exhibited in the Capital City.

Back in the Capital City, it seemed he was hands-off, not caring for anything; but he often went out to have fun. Was it really just for fun though?

"I'm not as free-spirited as you, cousin. But cousin, hasn't your aunt been urging you to get married?"

Prince Yanjun shook his head slightly.

Indeed, she had urged him at first, but considering his health, she eventually let him be.

"Actually, I've come today because I need your help with something!"

"What is it?"

"The issue is thus: Princess Jinfeng gave birth to a child outside, and now that child is being taken care of at Jinnian's place. Jinnian is returning to the Yun Family and cannot bring the child back with her. I'm constantly under surveillance at my place, could you help take care of the child for the time being?"

Prince Yanjun was momentarily surprised.

But considering Princess Jinfeng's personality, it was understandable.

"Ayu, by this age, I still don't have any children by my side. I've thought about adopting one from my other brothers, but I've never made up my mind. If that child comes to live with me, he can only stay by my side forever, and never return to Jinfeng. You must think it through!"

Chu Yu was silent.

Prince Yanjun continued, "Rest assured, I will treat him as my own and ensure he suffers no injustice. I will not let him become a profligate. The position of Prince Yanjun will be for him, even if I have my own children, which of course, I will not!"

There were some things Yun Jinnian hadn't made clear, but he knew his own body well enough.

Moreover, if it wasn't her, he had no desire to marry.

"Cousin..."

"Take your time to think about it!"

Chu Yu nodded.

He did need to think it over carefully since that was Jinfeng's first child.

It was intended for Yun Jinnian to take care of, but now that she was returning to the Yun Family, she couldn't take the child with her.

With the Emperor keeping close watch over his Prince Rui Residence, taking the child back there wasn't appropriate.

To keep the child outside, care would always be lacking.

After a long while, Chu Yu finally said, "Then, let him be sent over to you!"

"Alright!"

"Thank you!"

Prince Yanjun smiled.

He poured Chu Yu another cup of tea.

Chu Yu drank the tea and after a while said, "I should be going back now. The child, I will bring him over tonight!"

"Mhm!"

Chu Yu left the Princess Residence and returned to Prince Rui Residence.

"Has Qu Mianke left?"

Chen, the butler, immediately approached, "Yes, he has left. Guard Commander Luoyi personally saw him off!"

"Tear down the courtyard where she stayed, throw away her things, and get rid of those who served her..." Chu Yu paused mid-sentence, "No, don't sell them yet, send them to the other residence instead!"

Chen could not help but chuckle, "Prince, there really is no need for that. We can simply store the items, clean and repaint the rooms, and everything will be as usual. Besides, aren't you about to get married, Prince? It's not appropriate to stir up so much dust!"

Chapter 794: Extremely Cautious

"Unsuitable?" Chu Yu asked.

"Of course it's unsuitable. If it were earlier, we could still demolish it, but at this point, it's definitely too late!"

"Then we won't tear it down. Pack up everything inside, and don't let the maids and the old women appear before this prince. Clean up inside and out; don't miss even the corners. Paint it all over again!"

"Yes, yes, all shall be as the Prince commands!"

Chu Yu glanced at Butler Chen and couldn't help but say, "You're getting old, and your health isn't good. Have a few more people around you, let others do what they can, as this prince is counting on you to serve for a few more years!"

Butler Chen's eyes immediately reddened, and he nodded vigorously, "Yes, yes, all shall be as the Prince commands!"

"Alright, you may leave now!"

After responding, Butler Chen withdrew.

Chu Yu returned to the side courtyard and couldn't resist visiting the main courtyard as well.

After looking it over inside and out, he felt quite satisfied, especially with the courtyard prepared for Yun Jinnian.

"This courtyard needs a name, but what should it be called?" mused Chu Yu.

He was definitely going to see Yun Jinnian tonight; perhaps he could ask her.

Wonder what she would name it, if she had a courtyard of her own to store medical supplies and herbs, as well as to see patients and practice medicine?

Keep it a secret and surprise her when they got married.

Thinking of this, Chu Yu couldn't wait to see Yun Jinnian even sooner.

After getting ready and carefully ensuring that nothing was amiss, he prepared a gift to take to the Han Residence.

"Luo'er!"

Luo'er promptly approached Chu Yu, "Your Grace?"

"Should I go to the Han Family's home quietly or with a grand entrance?"

Luo'er pondered before replying, "Your Grace, you can make a grand entrance. Look, Miss Yun from the Yun Family, no, now she should be called Princess Yijia, she even saved you. The Commandery Princess and the Emperor have expressed their gratitude, but it seems you haven't made any gesture yet?"

Upon hearing this, Chu Yu looked at Luo'er, "Go on!"

"You could prepare some things, maybe more, and send them directly to the Han Residence. If you send them to the Yun Residence, I'm afraid they may not reach Princess Yijia's hands. Those people from the Yun Family, well..."

Luo'er didn't even deign to mention them.

Truly disgusting people.

"No, now that you mention it, I think sending the things to the Yun Residence is a good idea. When the time comes, those Yun Family people will definitely be salivating with desire, itching for something Jinnian won't give them. They will try every trick in the book to deceive her, then we can have someone watch and let them expose some secrets. That should give those Yun Family scoundrels something to stew over!"

"Your Grace, you really think too highly of those Yun Family people. They've got thick skins, and such a small matter wouldn't shame them!" Luo'er said, and feeling it was not enough, continued, "Not to mention the ladies inside the house, but even the masters and young lords outside the house have no sense of shame. Yun Qi, Yun Chen at the top, Yun Zhen, Yun Yi, Yun Xuan below, each one appears so honorable and upright on the outside, but inside they are utterly shameless and unprincipled. I certainly don't think much of them!"

That's also why those Yun boys were unsuccessful in the imperial examinations.

Because people with principles looked down on them, naturally they would not be promoted, and even the Emperor's desire to cultivate them would be in vain.

Chu Yu chuckled coldly, "In that, you and I think alike. We won't prepare anything else, I'll go see Jinnian myself!"

"Then will Your Grace go openly or quietly?"

Chu Yu gave Luo'er a look, "Why, does how this prince goes require your approval and nod?"

Chapter 795: Dispute Between Two People

Luo'er, upon hearing this, hurriedly said, "I wouldn't dare, I wouldn't dare!"

How could he dare to meddle in the master's affairs? That would simply be asking for trouble.

"You'd better not dare!"

After saying this, Chu Yu leapt onto the roof and, with a few jumps, disappeared without a trace.

Luo'er watched and stroked his chin, "The Master's martial arts seem to have improved quite a bit!"

Chu Yu arrived at the Han Family and headed straight for Chaoyang Academy.

The Hidden Guards in the dark spots saw it was Chu Yu, and pretended not to notice, continuing their vigil.

Chu Yu jumped down from the eaves and landed at the entrance of the small hall. Seeing that the door was ajar and the room was quiet, he tiptoed into the small hall and made his way toward the bedroom.

On the large bed, Yun Jinnian and Leng Nuan were sound asleep.

Chu Yu's heart instantly softened at the sight.

He sat down by the bed and did nothing but watch Yun Jinnian and Leng Nuan, feeling completely content.

Seeing that there was still room by the bed, he gently lay down on his side without even removing his shoes.

He closed his eyes to sleep.

Leng Nuan, who had been asleep, had woken up when Chu Yu came in, but she kept her eyes closed. Only after Chu Yu had fallen asleep did she open her eyes, turn her head to look at him, and seeing him deep in sleep and even snoring, she pursed her lips.

This uncle from her previous life, out of guilt for her mother, had been kind to her for a lifetime.

Thinking of this, Leng Nuan felt less resistant to Chu Yu, closed her eyes, and continued to sleep.

It was Yun Jinnian who woke up at some point and, upon seeing Chu Yu sleeping by the bed without having covered himself, felt sorry for him.

She tiptoed out of bed, pulled up the covers for Chu Yu,

and watched him tenderly for a while before leaving the room to find Mrs. Yuan, "Nanny, send a maid to the kitchen to say, make a few more good dishes for dinner!"

Mrs. Yuan knew that Yun Jinnian wasn't particularly demanding about food and would only make such a request if Prince Rui had come over.

Without hesitation, she said, "Then I'll go myself!"

"Okay!"

Mrs. Yuan felt that some rewards were necessary.

For example, the kitchen staff; rewarding them a bit would make their work more meticulous and clean.

Yun Jinnian turned back to the small hall and saw Chu Yu sitting on the Arhat bed, toying with chess pieces.

Yun Jinnian smiled, "I played chess to pass the time earlier!"

"Would you like to play a game?"

Yun Jinnian glanced toward the bedroom, before replying, "Sure!"

Chu Yu arranged the chess pieces, and Yun Jinnian started playing with the white pieces against him.

Chu Yu's play was decisive and aggressive, while Yun Jinnian's approach was gentle and graceful, yet strategic with each move, ensuring both offense and defense.

Playing chess with Chu Yu turned out to be incredibly satisfying.

Indeed, it was true what they said: a good game meets its match, just like a zither finds its harmony.

"Actually, I came today to discuss something with you. If you disagree, I'll listen to you," Chu Yu said.

Yun Jinnian paused with the chess piece in hand, then said, "What is it? Just tell me!"

"It's about Leng Nuan. I'm planning to send him to stay with cousin Yanjun," Chu Yu said.

Yun Jinnian raised an eyebrow, "Is it temporary or permanent?"

"This..."

Chu Yu hesitated.

Yun Jinnian immediately understood.

"I disagree. Although I know that the Commandery Prince won't mistreat Nuannuan, Ayu, he's the Princess's son, your own nephew. The Princess entrusted him to me because she believed I would protect him thoroughly. I've already thought about how to place him, so don't send him to Prince Yanjun. I can't bear it!" said Yun Jinnian, her eyes suddenly brimming with tears.

She had felt connected to this child from the very beginning.

She had taken great pains to think of a good way to take care of him and did not want to send him away for many reasons - she couldn't bear it.

"Jinnian..." Chu Yu suddenly felt heartbroken.

How could he bear to see the girl he loved so saddened.

Luo'er heard the words and hastily said, "I wouldn't dare!"

How could he dare meddle in the affairs of his master, unless he was tired of living.

"Good that you dare not!"

After saying this, Chu Yu leaped onto the roof, and with a few jumps, disappeared without a trace.

Luo'er, watching, touched his chin, "The master's martial arts seem to have improved a lot!"

Chu Yu arrived at the Han Family, heading straight for Chaoyang Academy.

The Hidden Guards in the shadows, seeing it was Chu Yu, all pretended not to know and continued their watch.

Chu Yu jumped down from the eaves, landing at the entrance of the small hall, and seeing the door ajar and the interior silent, he tiptoed into the small hall and moved towards the bedroom.

On the large bed, Yun Jinnian and Leng Nuan were sleeping soundly.

Chu Yu looked at them, and his heart instantly softened.

He sat down by the bed and without doing anything else, just gazed at Yun Jinnian and Leng Nuan, feeling completely content.

Seeing there was still space beside the bed, he tiptoed and lay down sideways on the bed without even taking off his shoes.

He closed his eyes to sleep.

Leng Nuan, who had been asleep, woke up when Chu Yu came in, but kept her eyes closed, waiting for Chu Yu to fall asleep before she opened her eyes, turned her head to look at him, and saw he was sleeping deeply, even snoring.

She pursed her lips.

This uncle from her previous life felt so guilty towards her mother that he treated her kindly for her entire lifetime.

Thinking of this, Leng Nuan felt less averse to Chu Yu, closed her eyes, and went back to sleep.

It was Yun Jinnian who woke up midway, saw Chu Yu sleeping by the bed without a quilt over him, and felt sorry for him.

She tiptoed out of bed, pulled the quilt over Chu Yu,

and watched him tenderly for a while before leaving the room to find Mrs. Yuan, "Nanny, send a maid servant to the kitchen and tell them to prepare a few more delicious dishes for dinner!"

Mrs. Yuan, knowing Yun Jinnian's usual lack of concern for food, realized that Prince Rui must have come.

She didn't hesitate, "Then I shall go myself!"

"Alright!"

Mrs. Yuan felt that some rewards were necessary.

For example, rewarding the kitchen staff would ensure they worked more meticulously and cleanly.

Yun Jinnian turned back to the small hall and saw Chu Yu sitting on the Arhat bed, playing with a chess piece.

Yun Jinnian smiled, "I was playing chess earlier to pass the time!"

"Would you like to play a game?"

Yun Jinnian glanced towards the bedroom before replying, "Sure!"

Chu Yu arranged the chess pieces, and Yun Jinnian started to play with him, choosing the white pieces.

Chu Yu's play was very decisive and aggressive, while Yun Jinnian played gently and gracefully but was strategic, with tight offense and defense.

Playing chess with Chu Yu turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Indeed, it matched the saying, a worthy opponent makes a good game, as a good instrument finds harmony.

"Actually, I came today because there is something I want to discuss with you. If you don't agree, then we'll do as you wish!"

Yun Jinnian's hand, holding a chess piece, paused before she said, "What is it? Just say it!"

"It's about Leng Nuan. I'm planning to send him to stay with cousin Yanjun!"

Yun Jinnian raised an eyebrow, "Temporarily or permanently?"

"This..."

Chu Yu hesitated.

Yun Jinnian immediately understood.

"I don't agree. Although I know Commandery Prince will not mistreat Nuannuan, Ayu, he is the Princess's son, your own nephew. The Princess entrusted him to me because she believed I would keep him safe. I've already figured out how to arrange his future, so don't send him to Prince Yanjun, I can't bear to let him go!" Yun Jinnian said, her eyes welling up with tears.

She had felt a connection with this child from the very beginning.

She had taken great pains to develop a good plan and did not want to send him away due to various reasons; she couldn't bear the thought of it.

"Jinnian..." Chu Yu's heart ached.

How could he bear to see his beloved girl sad.

Chapter 796: The Final Decision

"Ayu, let's keep him. After my coming-of-age ceremony, you come to the residence to propose. Let's marry earlier, and by this time next year, I'm certain I can give birth to a child. If there's one, we'll tell everyone outside that there were twins, and then, using the excuse that both children are in poor health, have my maternal grandfather take them away. After a year or two when they come back, who would doubt that Leng Nuan is not our child, right?" Yun Jinnian persuaded.

"But Jinnian, you're still young and not suitable for pregnancy and childbirth; it's bad for your health!"

"What's wrong with that? So many people get pregnant and give birth at thirteen or fourteen and are still living well. I am a doctor myself and know even better how to care for my own body. You just tell me if my idea is feasible or not?"

Chu Yu fell silent.

Seeing that, Yun Jinnian got a bit angry, threw the chess piece she was holding onto the board, and turned her head away, refusing to look at Chu Yu.

It wasn't that Chu Yu was selfish or not; he was thinking for her sake.

But she had her considerations. Firstly, for Princess Jinfeng, she had promised to take good care of Leng Nuan.

Secondly, this was Princess Jinfeng's child, he could become Chu Yu's child but could not become someone else's child.

Seeing that Yun Jinnian was angry, Chu Yu hurriedly said, "As you wish, everything as you wish!"

He also breathed a sigh of relief.

At the same time, he felt even more sympathy for Yun Jinnian.

Only then did Yun Jinnian turn her head to look at Chu Yu, "You said that yourself, don't send Leng Nuan away!"

"I won't send him away, won't send him away. This child and you are fated, destined to be your son, so we will listen to you! It's just my cousin there..."

"You said it yourself, about Prince Yanjun, you speak to him yourself!" Yun Jinnian said gravely.

"Yes, yes, yes, I'll speak to him myself. But Jinnian, there might be other methods!"

"Whatever the method, he must be the legitimate heir, born of the main line. Even if Princess Jinfeng finds him pleasing and endearing, it cannot change the fact that he is our son!"

Normally, Yun Jinnian would blush saying these things.

But at this moment, she spoke with righteousness and conviction.

Chu Yu was taken aback but nodded firmly.

He had not thought that Yun Jinnian would have all this planned out.

"Alright, don't dawdle here any longer. Go and clarify things with the Commandery Prince, then come back for dinner. I've instructed the kitchen to prepare good dishes, and tonight you can give Tianci a good lesson in martial arts!"

"It's my honor!"

Chu Yu stood up, sneakily kissed Yun Jinnian, and then left the Han Residence.

Yun Jinnian sat on the Arhat bed, not sure whether to be angry or to laugh.

But in the end, she felt more joy than anything else.

She walked to the bedside and looked at Leng Nuan, who was sleeping peacefully, and reached out to touch his small hand.

"We are fated, surely we are!"

The feeling might not have seemed important at first, but the more time they spent together, the more she felt that they had been mother and child in a past life.

The feeling was just like the one she had with Momo.

She could not bear to give him away.

Chu Yu arrived at the Princess Residence and went straight to look for Prince Yanjun. Seeing Chu Yu visit again, Prince Yanjun had guessed the outcome.

Yet he still asked, "Why have you come?"

"I'm here to tell you that Jinnian doesn't agree to the thing I mentioned to you before!"

Prince Yanjun raised an eyebrow, "She doesn't agree?"

"Yes, she doesn't agree. She has thought of a way..." Chu Yu recounted Yun Jinnian's plan.

Prince Yanjun then laughed, "You're quite fortunate, young man!"

"Indeed, good women are rare, yet I've met one who fears not the loss of reputation and is determined to keep her promise. Cousin, I owe you an apology!"

"No, no, no. If you had reconsidered because of some other reason, I wouldn't have let you off lightly. But if it's because of Jinnian's insistence, I actually strongly agree with her and admire her. This woman has shattered all my prejudices against women!"

Chapter 797: Embracing Each Other

Prince Yanjun said and then felt that the word "bias" was not appropriate, hastily added, "Wrong, it's not bias, it's perception!"

Chu Yu smiled without saying anything.

Only then did Prince Yanjun continue, "The women I know, they present one set of behaviors to your face and another behind your back. Someone like Jinnian is indeed rare, you lucky dog!"

"Of course, having lost so much, Heaven must have pitied me and specially sent Jinnian to make up for my losses!"

"Congratulations to you!"

To win a devoted heart and never part till white hairs mark our years.

Nothing is more beautiful in life than loving someone who, by fortune, loves you in return.

"Thanks, cousin, I'll be leaving now!"

"Mm!"

Chu Yu stood up and walked towards the exit. After a few steps, he turned back and asked Prince Yanjun, "Cousin, are you planning to wait for that person your whole life?"

Upon hearing this, Prince Yanjun's face changed slightly, "You know?"

"I know a bit. But cousin, Luo Fu is married, are you sure you want to wait forever?"

"..."

Prince Yanjun fell silent.

"If she has the heart, she will leave everything behind and elope with you to live a life that belongs to the two of you. If she can't let go of the glory and wealth she has now, cousin, there's no need for you to wait for her!"

After saying that, Chu Yu left the Princess Residence.

Prince Yanjun sat on the stool in silence.

That year, with just one glance, she eclipsed the flowers, outshining all blooms in the Imperial Garden.

Only later did he find out she was already married.

Yet his heart was inevitably left behind.

He had never dared to dream of lifelong companionship, but now, with Chu Yu's words, he did harbor some hope of leaving this bustling place of strife with her, to seek out a scenic spot and live an undisturbed life.

Perhaps, he should ask if she would be willing?

Chu Yu returned to the Han Family when it was almost time for dinner.

Yun Jinnian had long requested Mrs. Han and Han Tianci to come over. Upon seeing Chu Yu, Han Tianci smiled and said, "Brother Chu!"

"Ah, Tianci!"

Chu Yu smiled back at Tianci.

Mrs. Han, looking at Chu Yu, was the mother-in-law eyeing her son-in-law, becoming more pleased the more she looked.

"Please, take a seat. Dinner will be served shortly!"

"Thank you, Aunt!"

The four of them enjoyed a meal with more than a dozen dishes, quite sumptuous.

After the meal, Mrs. Han said a few words and then left.

After all, she was supposed to return to the Yun Family the next day, and it weighed heavily on her mind.

Han Tianci looked at Chu Yu and said, "Brother Chu, I heard you sent that Princess Mianke away, is that right?"

"Sent away sounds so harsh. She just went back!"

Han Tianci chuckled, giving Chu Yu a knowing look.

Chu Yu returned the gesture with a raised eyebrow.

Yun Jinnian, watching them, smiled knowingly and asked, "Did you and Prince Yanjun come to an agreement?"

"We did, just as you said!"

"That's good!"

Seeing that Yun Jinnian and Chu Yu had things to discuss, Han Tianci quietly left the room, hugging Leng Nuan with him.

Although he wasn't very fond of Leng Nuan hogging Yun Jinnian, he still liked Leng Nuan very much.

"I have to return to the Yun Family tomorrow," Yun Jinnian said faintly.

She didn't really want to go back to the Yun Family, but she had no choice.

"I know, I will come to see you at the Yun Family!"

"I need a favor from you!"

"What is it?"

Yun Jinnian whispered a few words in Chu Yu's ear. Chu Yu nodded, "I'll do as you say, but after you return, be careful around that old witch Jin. I find her rather sinister; you must be very careful!"

"My maternal grandfather has gone out to find a master for me. I just need to make sure not to fall into trouble before he returns!"

As they spoke, there was a sense of reluctant separation between them.

Chu Yu mustered his courage and pulled Yun Jinnian into his arms, "Jinnian..."

Chapter 798: Picking Up in Person

"Hmm?"

"I really want to marry you soon and take you home, so I can rightfully protect you!"

"That day won't be too far away," Yun Jinnian said, reaching out to hold Chu Yu's waist.

Not far away, Han Tianci hugged Leng Nuan and sighed, "What a pity for Big Brother Feng's heartfelt devotion; now it seems there's not even a chance to cut in!"

The thirteenth day of the first month in the twentieth year of the Yuanhe era.

Early in the morning, Yun Qi personally went to the Han Residence to pick up Mrs. Han.

Sitting in the hall, Yun Qi sat quietly, sipping his tea.

Mrs. Han, accompanied by Yun Jinnian, walked over slowly.

Yun Qi hurriedly put down his teacup and looked at the approaching Mrs. Han.

After more than a year, Mrs. Han seemed to have not changed at all.

Mrs. Han also looked at Yun Qi, only to see that compared to a year ago, he had become much fatter and also aged a lot.

"Second Master!" Mrs. Han called softly.

Without much emotion.

Yun Qi nodded slightly, "Have you packed everything?"

"Everything is packed," Mrs. Han responded indifferently.

"Then let's go!"

Yun Qi stood up and walked outside.

Mrs. Han followed with Yun Jinnian.

After leaving the Han Residence, they got onto Yun Qi's carriage.

Yun Qi and Mrs. Han sat side by side, with Yun Jinnian sitting on one side; the three of them made no conversation or noise.

They did not seem like a family but rather like familiar strangers.

The carriage stopped at the entrance of the Yun Residence.

Mrs. He was sitting in the hall. Hearing the butler say that Mrs. Han had returned, she stood up and said, "Let's go and welcome our Second Madame!"

Wang Yanran walked beside Mrs. He, supported by her maid.

Yun Musi, Yun Mulan, and Xu Xinmo huddled together, whispering, while Yun Qingzhi, Yun Qingqing, and Yun Zuomo had smiles at the corners of their lips; the concubine led the three-year-old Yun He and Yun Mu, Ruan concubine led Yun Kuan, and Xiyi concubine, dressed in rose-red, twisted her waist lightly, pressing her lips together in disdain.

Suyi concubine and Huayi concubine walked slowly with their heads down, not daring to make a sound.

Yun Qi got off the carriage first and saw Bai Que standing to one side; he didn't reach to help Mrs. Han down.

He watched as Bai Que helped Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian off the carriage.

Xiyi concubine ran over quickly, "Second Master!"

Yun Qi extended his hand to Xiyi concubine, who quickly laid her petite hand in his, calling out coquettishly, "Second Master!" She then withdrew her hand and bowed to Mrs. Han, "This concubine greets the madame and the Fourth Miss!"

Mrs. Han responded with a faint, "Hmm!"

Mrs. He, observing this scene, felt extremely pleased with herself.

After all, Yun Chen would not, in full public view, flirt with a concubine and disrespect her.

She approached with a smile, "Second Sister-in-law, you've finally come back!"

"Big Sister!"

Wang Yanran bowed slightly to Mrs. Han, "Second Aunt!"

Mrs. Han looked at Wang Yanran, "This must be Yun Zhen's wife!"

"Indeed!" said Mrs. He, still with a sense of pride.

She had three sons; even though Mrs. Han also had three sons, not one of them was born of her own.

"Second Sister-in-law, it's quite cold outside, let's talk in the hall," suggested Mrs. He.

"Alright!"

The group entered the hall, but Yun Qi continued holding the hand of Xiyi concubine.

Mrs. Han seemed as if she had not noticed.

Yun Musi, Yun Mulan, and Xu Xinmo surrounded Yun Jinnian,

Yun He, Yun Mu, and Yun Kuan carefully sized up their legitimate sister; Yun Zuomo, Yun Qingqing, and Yun Qingzhi also secretly rejoiced, glad that their legitimate sister had come back.

The family seemed quite harmonious.

Except for Yun Qi inappropriately holding the hand of Xiyi concubine, everything else appeared in order.

Once inside the hall, Mrs. He wanted to speak with Mrs. Han.

Yun Qi interjected indifferently, "Whatever you have to say, Big Sister, can wait for another day. Shuniang, Jinnian, let's go pay our respects to the Old Madam together!"

Chapter 799: Start Acting

Leading Auntie Xi, Yun Qi walked in front.

Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian exchanged a glance, silently following them to Cixin Academy.

Wang Yanran walked beside Mrs. He, somewhat at a loss about Yun Qi's thoughts.

Cixin Academy.

Ming Liu had been waiting at the entrance for quite a while. Seeing Yun Qi and Auntie Xi approaching, she hurriedly turned and entered the small hall, "Great Lady, the Second Master has arrived with the Second Lady and the Fourth Miss!"

Upon hearing this, the elderly lady quickly sat up straighter.

She also adjusted her clothes.

"Invite them in!"

"Yes!"

Ming Liu exited the small hall, "This servant greets the Second Master, the Lady, the Second Lady. The Great Lady invites you inside!"

Almost twenty people entered the small hall together, making the spacious room seem a bit crowded.

"Mother, Mrs. Han and Jinnian have returned!" Yun Qi released Auntie Xi's hand.

The elderly lady pursed her lips with a smile and looked at Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian.

Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian stepped forward, "Greetings, Mother (Grandmother)!"

"It's good that you're back. I won't keep you for long today; go back to your respective courtyards. We'll dine together in the dining hall tonight!" Turning to Mrs. He, she added, "Head of the household, give the monthly allowance from Qingjue Academy and Niannian Garden from the past year to the Second Daughter-in-law and Jinnian!"

Mrs. He felt a twinge of pain at the thought.

Yet, she still steeled herself to respond, "Yes!"

"Everyone, go back now!" the elderly lady waved her hand.

"Yes!"

They all left Qingjue Academy. Outside the gates, after exchanging a few words, Mrs. He claimed she had matters to attend to and left first.

Yun Qi then departed with Auntie Xi.

Wang Yanran also bowed slightly to Mrs. Han, "Second Aunt, I'm with child and will not keep you company any longer!" Turning to Yun Jinnian, she added, "Fourth Sister, do come and visit my courtyard when you're free!"

Mrs. Han and Yun Jinnian returned a gentle smile.

Their smiles were strikingly similar.

Wang Yanran left with her maids.

Aunt Su and Aunt Hua also hastily bowed, "Lady, Fourth Miss, we shall take our leave now!"

Looking at them, Mrs. Han sighed with resignation, then turned to Aunt Rou and Aunt Lian, "It's so cold; you should go back too. Look, the children's noses are freezing!"

"Yes!"

The aunts responded, each returning to their quarters.

Mrs. Han, seeing Yun Musi, Yun Mulan, Xu Xinmo, Yun Zuomo, Yun Qingzhi, and Yun Qingqing reluctant to leave, said with a smile, "You should all go visit Jinnian's courtyard. You haven't seen each other in so long; I'm sure there's much to catch up on!"

"Yes, Second Aunt (Aunt, Mother)!"

Mrs. Han smiled, leaving with Bai Que to return to Qingjue Academy.

Yun Jinnian led a group of girls to Niannian Garden.

"Cousin, you're finally back!"

Yun Jinnian smiled, "Home is indeed best, after all!"

"Exactly, no matter how good it is outside, it can't compare to being at home!"

They had not yet reached Niannian Garden.

Yun Jinnian saw Shi Jiayu and Ru Yue standing not far away, their eyes red.

Beside them, Hongdou, Hongxiu, Hongye, the wet nurse, and Yaniang all had faces full of joy.

"We greet the Miss!"

Yun Jinnian smiled, "All of you, rise. There's no need for such formality!"

Looking at Shi Jiayu and Ru Yue, they seemed to have grown into the image of young ladies of noble families, and even Hongdou, Hongye, and Hongxiu had matured a lot in appearance.

"Miss, knowing you were returning, Yaniang prepared many pastries early on!" Shi Jiayu said, her eyes crinkling with a smile.

However, seeing those few people beside Yun Jinnian, she felt displeasure in her heart.

But since Yun Jinnian, the miss, had not spoken, it was not her place as a maid to say much.

Yun Jinnian nodded and turned to Xu Xinmo and the others, "Yaniang's cooking skills are quite remarkable. Let's go in and have a taste!"

Chapter 800: Tit for Tat

Niannian Garden has not changed much since I left, only the trees have grown taller and the plants thicker, everywhere tidy and neat.

It looks very comforting.

We entered the small hall together, where the floor heating was very warm. The items on the Duobao Pavilion shelf were still those I didn't particularly like but had no desire to move.

Yun Jinnian walked over to the Arhat bed and sat down, "You all sit down!"

Shi Jiayu immediately went to serve some refreshments and tea.

Xu Xinmo and the others were surprisingly well-behaved today, speaking and acting in a very endearing manner, absolutely without uttering a single displeasing word.

After sitting for a while, Xu Xinmo stood up, "Cousin, we're going to head back now, we'll come over to play with you in the afternoon!"

"Why not stay for lunch, Yaniang is a good cook, let her make a few delicious dishes. We sisters can sit down, eat and chat!" Yun Jinnian said gently.

If it had been before, she would definitely not have allowed Xu Xinmo and the others to stay.

However, after spending more than a year in Nanjiang, I had become more easy-going and better at hiding my thoughts.

Even though I hated Xu Xinmo, I would not show it.

I had always been waiting, waiting for Zhu Yan to come to the Capital City.

She was indeed my real enemy, and of course, Zhu Yan was about to appear.

"Great!"

Xu Xinmo and the others stayed.

Yun Jinnian kept them company, sharing amusing stories from her travels.

The girls, rarely venturing out and lacking experience, listened with great interest, even Xu Xinmo listened very attentively.

"Next time, I will take you to Huguo Temple to offer incense!"

"That sounds wonderful, cousin, but we need not wait for next time. The Lantern Festival is coming up, you should take us to enjoy the lanterns!" Xu Xinmo suggested.

Her thoughts shifted slightly.

During the Lantern Festival, with so many people around, as the elder sister, if someone were to get lost or kidnapped at the lantern fair, Yun Jinnian would surely be blamed.

"We can do that, but we need to ask Grandmother for her view, and we'll also need to have the three brothers accompany us. It would be even better if we can invite big sister as well!"

She made no mention of Yun Zihan.

Whenever Xu Xinmo thought about Yun Muyou, she couldn't help but think of Marquess Yuanshen's brother, Weng Jianrui, who she had met a few times. He was eloquent and knew how to make people happy.

He showed some interest in her, but her sights were set on the princes. Teasing him occasionally was fine, but she was not willing to marry Weng Jianxun.

Still, she was certain that Weng Jianxun would like Yun Jinnian, the beautiful and wealthy Princess Yijia, even more.

Perhaps, it was time to get in touch with Weng Jianxun!

"Cousin, you've thought this through so well!"

Yun Jinnian chuckled.

Lunch was eaten in Niannian Garden.

A dozen dishes, the girls sitting around together.

Xu Xinmo lifted her cup, "Cousin, I was foolish in the past and made many mistakes. I hope you can forgive me. I will not dare to do it again!"

Yun Jinnian looked down.

A cold laugh in her heart, she raised her eyes to smile warmly, "We're sisters. Let's not talk about the past. Let's get along well from now on!"

"Thank you, cousin!"

Xu Xinmo drank her wine first.

Yun Jinnian drank as well.

The wine was a fruity liquor, without much kick and particularly easy to drink, a favorite among young ladies in their boudoirs.

Mrs. He was surprised to learn that Xu Xinmo, Yun Musi, Yun Mulan, and the three daughters from the second branch were all having lunch in Niannian Garden.

It was quite unexpected.

"What is Xu Xinmo trying to sell with this act?"

"Whatever it is, it's sure not to be anything good," Tianmi said lightly.

"Indeed, a dog can't change its habit of eating feces. I'm curious to see how long Xu Xinmo can keep up this pretense!"