

Pregnant Before the Royal Marriage

Chapter 26: Chapter 26 Handsome Young Man

Speaking of Jiang Yi, the only male in the second household of the Jiang family, he was indeed a figure who was admired by all, akin to a fairy-like noble son.

Jiang Yi was the third in line in the entire Jiang family, known as Jiang Third Son, the eldest son of Jiang Ruobai and Lin Zizi. He was also the legitimate elder brother of Jiang Ning who shared the same father and mother.

He inherited all the virtues of his parents, was clean-cut and handsome, and brightly talented. Although he was only eighteen, he had already been selected for the Autumn Examination.

It could be said, Jiang Yi was the pride of the first and second households of the Jiang family.

He spent most of his time studying in the Academy and rarely came home.

Although Jiang Ning had never met Jiang Third Son, judging from the reactions of Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan, he must be very kind to his younger sisters.

Jiang Ning had no expectations concerning this, and appeared quite indifferent.

However, Jiang Yuan was somewhat eyeing her suspiciously, glancing at her from time to time.

Looking at her, it was as if she was very worried that Jiang Ning might snatch her brother's affection.

Jiang Ning minded her own business and left it at that.

Although she and Jiang Yi were legitimate siblings by blood, she had been missing for over a decade. Jiang Jiang and Jiang Yan had been living under the same roof, spending day and night together, their bond must be very deep.

Bearing a cripple leg, she felt lucky not to be rejected or despised.

After a meal, Jiang Ning barely managed to eat half a bowl of porridge. She was feeling uncomfortable due to lack of appetite yet still felt extremely hungry. After returning to the

Black Bamboo Garden, she nibbled on a dry steamed bread, which finally eased her discomfort a little.

Interestingly, other foods made her feel nauseous, but this dry steamed bread was manageable.

She thought about cooking something for herself but she couldn't stand the smell of cooking smoke in the kitchen.

Being so hungry, she was inevitably a little irritable.

She went to bed early after freshening up. However, as soon as dawn broke, she was awakened. Chunlai and several maids brought in brand-new clothes and jewelry for her to get dressed and dolled up.

The fabrics were of the best quality, and the styles were the most fashionable. A large wide-sleeved dress cinched at the waist, outlining her slender figure, making her look light and delicate.

However, sitting in a wheelchair, Jiang Ning couldn't quite show off the dress to its full effect.

As a young maiden not yet out, she didn't need to dress up too much. She wore a playful double bun, each topped with a small pink pearl hairpin, and small, delicate pearl earrings.

She was beautiful in her own right, and with the pearls, her complexion looked even more radiant and glowing.

Chunlai's eyes sparkled: "Although Miss was originally beautiful, she is truly different when dressed up."

"People are judged by their clothes, and horses by their saddles."

Jiang Ning brushed her bangs and yawned, "We got dressed up so early, what for?"

"Third Young Master arrived home late last night, and he's now waiting in the front yard." Chunlai said, "Fifth Daughter and Sixth Miss have already gone over. Miss, let's go too. The Old Master instructed the Third Young Master to accompany Miss for a little walk."

Jiang Ning was fond of going out, but what was the point of going out with her current disability?

But she agreed to go, considering her own plans.

All the doctors who came to this mansion unanimously claimed that she was fine, yet the symptoms of vomiting and drowsiness were real.

Something was fishy.

Something was strange.

Jiang Ning's intuition told her that this was not as simple as it seemed.

Waiting for death was not her style.

She decided to quietly find a doctor on her own to take a look.

When her wheelchair reached the front yard, from afar, she saw Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan buzzing around a young man like two butterflies, chattering away.

The young man in the green robe was indeed extraordinarily handsome, his temperament mirrored Jiang Ruobai.

Jiang Yuan was the first to notice Jiang Ning and immediately smiled, "Third Brother, look, Seventh Sister is here."

Jiang Yi turned his head to look at her

Chapter 27: Chapter 27: Third Brother

Her hibiscus-like almond eyes, so big and seemingly unintentionally bearing an ambiguous hint of a smile.

It was the first time that Jiang Yi had seen such an expression on a young girl's face.

But that wasn't what surprised him the most.

He was shocked that the girl's appearance resembled his mother so much.

Although his mother had become haggard and changed, he could still clearly remember her youthful beauty.

He never thought he could see it again.

As they spoke, Jiang Ning's wheelchair had already arrived in front of them.

Jiang Yuan stood by her brother's side, just smiling.

Jiang Yan was more polite as she came over and said with a smile, "I heard that Seventh Sister has not been feeling well these past few days. I also had a headache from a cold recently, and only just recovered, so I didn't manage to visit Seventh Sister."

"Visiting or not, it doesn't matter."

Jiang Ruobai, escorted by a servant, approached and asked, "Yi, have you met your sister yet?"

Jiang Yi collected his thoughts and greeted his sister with a bow: "Upon hearing that father managed to find Seventh Sister, I was relieved. Now that I see her, her appearance resembles that of my mother. It's quite remarkable."

Jiang Ning simply smiled and said nonchalantly, "I've met Third Brother."

Jiang Ruobai said, "Your mother is sometimes confused, sometimes lucid, and she has seen Seventh Miss, but she does not know that she is her long-lost child. Take it slow, and don't say anything to upset her."

Even though Lin Zizi is their birth mother, her health and spirit had deteriorated over the years, making her almost nonexistent within the household. The two concubine-born daughters only occasionally paid their respects to her, and generally kept their distance.

Even though Aunt Hua was doted upon, her status as birth mother ensured that no one dared to show any disrespect.

All of the siblings agreed.

Jiang Ruobai said, "Yi, your Seventh Sister has just returned and is still adapting. Her body is also unwell. I've asked someone to invite a nanny from the palace to teach her some manners, and she will be entering the palace the day after tomorrow. Take advantage of today by bringing her out for a stroll. Bring plenty of silver and buy whatever she likes."

This statement startled the three siblings.

The day after tomorrow was the day when the Emperor would be choosing a Princess Consort for the Prince of Yu.

The Prince of Yu was the Emperor's fifth and youngest prince. He had now turned eighteen, and it was time for him to marry. The Prince of Yu's residence was ready, and all that was left was for him to marry his chosen Princess Consort and move in.

Jiang Ruobai's mention of entering the palace with Seventh Sister in two days could not possibly be for mere sightseeing.

Could it be that she was also participating in the selection?

Although Jiang Yi's impression of his younger sister by blood wasn't deep, she was a child that his mother had been missing for over a decade, so he cared about her.

He glanced at Jiang Ning's legs, not quite understanding his father's intentions.

As the only royal prince yet to marry, the outstanding Prince of Yu was naturally the object of everyone's desire. He understood his two concubine-born sisters participating in the selection, despite their lower status and the slim chance of succeeding.

But it was strange for Seventh Sister, who had just been found and had not even been recognized by their mother, to be sent to the selection.

Especially with her leg disability.

Wouldn't that be offensive to the royal family?

Upon closer examination, the only praise-worthy aspect of Seventh Sister was her beautiful face.

Marrying a wife for virtue and taking a concubine for beauty.

When a prince marries a main consort, it wouldn't be just for a pretty face, would it?

Family background, personal character, and physical health for childbearing were the primary factors examined.

As for beauty, it wasn't important.

If they fancied beautiful women, they could take concubines.

Those were merely playthings.

Jiang Yi didn't understand and couldn't help but frown slightly, though he refrained from contradicting his father in public.

Jiang Yan remained silent, while the usually doted-upon Jiang Yuan seemed a bit restless..

Chapter 28: Chapter 28: Enchantment

There were no legitimate daughters in the family, and Jiang Yuan was pretty. Aunt Hua was also good at sweet-talking and pleasing people. So, Fifth Daughter gained favor within the second household.

Over time, Jiang Yuan seemed to forget that she was a concubine-born daughter. Now that the real legitimate daughter was back, her appearance was more outstanding, and her status was higher.

She was inevitably unable to accept it.

But Jiang Ning was disabled, so Jiang Yuan still didn't take her seriously.

What respectable family would be willing to marry a disabled girl as their main wife?

Especially not the exalted Prince of Yu.

Moreover, taking into account the profound words Jiang Ruobai had said earlier, Jiang Yuan felt certain that she was the one valued by her father.

But she hadn't expected that her father would also send Jiang Ning to the palace draft.

Her astonished expression didn't last long, and she originally waited for Third Brother to speak, but he remained silent.

Anxiously, she couldn't help but laugh: "Father, Third Sister has just returned and hasn't adapted to her home yet. Besides, her health isn't good. How can she enter the palace?"

You're right." Jiang Ruobai agreed, nodding.

Jiang Yuan continued, "In my opinion, it's better to just leave it."

But," Jiang Ruobai added, "her name has already been submitted, and the palace has approved."

"..." Jiang Yuan was stifled for a moment. "Does the palace know about Seventh Sister's condition?"

"This kind of thing, I dare not hide from the palace." Jiang Ruobai didn't want to say more, waving his hand. "Yi'er, take good care of Seventh Sister and have fun. Any expense will be reimbursed by your father. But you must return early to at least learn the basics of palace rules."

He had always thought Jiang Ning's spirits were low because she was new to this high-class environment.

So he wanted his son to take her out and have fun, and also to let these two siblings, both born of the legitimate wife, get closer to each other.

No matter if they were successful or not, they would have to support each other in the future.

Both Jiang Yuan and Jiang Yan also followed, riding in a horse-drawn carriage. Once they got off, they wore light and delicate veils, covering all but their chins, so they could still breathe easily.

Jiang Yi spent most of his time studying at the academy, and on this rare occasion when he returned home, he ran into several friends along the way. They were either scholars or children of noble families.

After exchanging greetings, they saw him leading his three sisters out for some fun, and they didn't want to intrude.

Although the customs had become more liberal, there was still some taboo when interacting with unmarried young girls.

They didn't intrude, but they couldn't help but cast a few glances at the girl in the wheelchair.

They had all heard that the Jiang Family's legitimate daughter, who had been missing for twelve years, was found, but her health wasn't very good. Could it be her?

Seeing his friends gazing, Jiang Yi introduced them openly.

When a gentle breeze blew, it lifted the edge of the veil, revealing just half of her fair and radiant face. It was mesmerizing and difficult to look away.

One of them, named Shang Lanyi, was instantly captivated.

He couldn't help but keep glancing at Jiang Ning.

Shang Lanyi was a nobleman's son and a good friend of Jiang Yi. He immediately asked Jiang Yi about the beautiful little sister's situation.

Jiang Yi laughed, "My Seventh Sister is indeed beautiful, but you better not think about it. Our father has submitted her name for the palace draft."

"Ah..."

Shang Lanyi stamped his foot in regret, "I just don't have that good fortune."

Jiang Yi said, "However, her health isn't good, and the chances of her being chosen are slim. Still, I don't think your family would agree to marry a girl with mobility issues."

"Oh, what does that matter?" Shang Lanyi just sighed, his eyes lingering on Jiang Ning with reluctance.

Usually, when they went out, Jiang Yuan would be the one receiving the attention of other young masters and ladies when accompanying her third brother. But now, everyone's eyes were on the Seventh Miss..