

All Hail 181

Chapter 181 - 181 Cousin, Be Good

Yu Zongzheng had drunk a lot of wine, and his cheeks were red. He was still awake, but he was still a little angry when he thought about Yang Shuwan's negligence at the banquet.

However, nothing had gone wrong at the banquet either. Madam Yang had been managing it for the entire day, and she had indeed put in a lot of effort. Even though he was unhappy, he couldn't really flare up.

Then, he said calmly, "Go back to the courtyard and rest. I'll go to Lady Qiu's house today."

"This..." Yang Shuwan tightened her grip on her handkerchief.

Two years ago, Old Madam had arranged for Yu Zongzheng to sleep with Lady Qiu. Although she wasn't as seductive as Concubine He, she was still beautiful, delicate and even younger than Concubine He.

Other than Concubine He, she was the most doted on. Previously, Yu Zongzheng had mentioned twice that he wanted to make Lady Qiu his concubine, but she had found an excuse to dismiss him.

During this period of time, Yu Zongzheng rarely went to her room. The imperial court was busy, so he spent most of his time in the main room dealing with official matters. The rest of his days were spent in Concubine Qiu's house.

She was also furious when she heard it.

However, Lady Qiu was someone arranged by Old Madam, so there was nothing she could do even if she was angry.

Other than being able to control Lady Qiu's stomach and not let a scorned child jump out of it, she also had to treat her well.

Yang Shuwan forced a smile. "Well, Master hasn't been to my house for a long time. Moreover, Lady Qiu has also been serving Master for a few days. I don't think her body can take it anymore. She should rest for a few days."

Even the matriarch of an ordinary family would not have the face to say such things.

However, Yang Shuwan did not care about this. She knew very well that it was important to capture a man's heart, and other dignity could be thrown aside.

At this point, Yu Zong was about to consider their relationship as husband and wife and didn't decline. Hence, he frowned and said, "Alright."

Yang Shuwan heaved a sigh of relief. Master was resting in the main courtyard. Not to mention anything else, they were still husband and wife. Even if they had lost face, at least Master's heart was still in the main courtyard, and he was willing to give her the dignity of a proper wife. The entire residence would not dare to underestimate her.

At noon the next day, after Yu Youyao left school, Nanny Xu brought over a booklet. "The things that the Xie family brought over have already been sorted in the warehouse according to the gift list. They're also registered. Take a look."

Yu Youyao took the booklet and checked it carefully according to the gift list of the Xie Residence. There was no problem, so she said, "Pick some top-notch tea leaves, spices, cloth, jewelry, and some novel toys and give them to the elders, brothers, and sisters of the residence. We can't leave out the gifts for the second house either. As for what to give them, we'll follow the old rules and pick some ordinary ones to reward the servants of the residence. Third Cousin has brought too many things. If he makes two more trips, my Jade Courtyard won't be able to accommodate them."

Nanny Xu smiled and agreed.

After giving her instructions, Yu Youyao called Xia Tao over. "Is Cousin here?"

Xia Tao nodded repeatedly. "Young Master has just arrived. He heard that Eldest Miss is busy, so he didn't let us disturb you. He's reading in the study."

Yu Youyao pursed her lips. "Why didn't he tell me earlier that he was coming? It's not like it's anything important. I'm always busy." As she spoke, she instructed Xia Tao, "Bring over the few gifts I specially picked out yesterday."

Xia Tao disappeared in a flash.

Yu Youyao held the bamboo tube like it was a treasure and brought Xia Tao to the study.

Zhou Linghuai was sitting by the window and reading a book. The mottled leaves of the Parasol tree shined through the window and landed on him, making him look even more elegant.

Yu Youyao smiled until her eyes curved into crescents. She leaned over and handed the bamboo tube to her cousin as if she was presenting a treasure. Her voice was cheerful. "Cousin, quickly take a look at what this is."

Seeing how happy the little girl was, Zhou Linghuai thought that it was a new item that Third Cousin had brought for her. He opened it as he was told, and his eyes couldn't help but freeze.

What the...

The little girl said that she wanted to ask her maternal family to find a strange bug?!

At that time, the young lady said, "If you need anything in the future, you have to tell me. I can help you think of a way."

He couldn't bear to reject the young lady's kind intentions, so he didn't refuse. However, he didn't think that the young lady could really help him.

During this period of time, his subordinates had been asking around about the whereabouts of the "strange insects", but they had found nothing. The Southern Barbarians were good at expelling and raising insects. They had even ventured deep into the Southern Barbarians' territory, but there was no news.

As time passed, Zhou Linghuai lost hope.

However, this strange bug that he couldn't find was actually found by the little girl. Zhou Linghuai smiled silently.

"Cousin, you didn't expect that I would really be able to help you find such a strange worm, right?" Yu Youyao looked at him with a smile, her curved eyebrows also revealing a smug expression.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "Yes, I didn't expect that."

Yu Youyao was even more smug. "Third Cousin said that this is called the Lingxi Bug, a treasure inherited from the Xie family. It doesn't exist outside. If I hadn't heard Uncle Sun's words that day and asked Grandfather to help find it, Cousin wouldn't have been able to find it."

So that was the case. Zhou Linghuai's smile deepened. It seemed that this medicinal treasure was also a secret of the Xie family, but the little girl did not hide it from him at all.

Yu Youyao smiled. "So, Cousin, if you have anything in the future, you have to tell me. Don't underestimate me just because I'm young. I've learned many skills from Nanny Xu. I'm amazing!"

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "Cousin, you're really a lucky star."

Ever since he met the little girl, everything seemed to have changed for the better.

After the young lady's treatment, his injured body had improved a lot. It was also because of this that there was hope for his leg to be cured. The young lady had given him a pill formula that could help strengthen his foundation, and even helped him find the most important Lingxi Bug.

She was his lucky star!

Yu Youyao smiled at her cousin. "With the Rhinoceros Worm, Cousin's leg will recover." She blinked, and her smile widened like ripples, filling her eyes, face, and heart. The stars in her eyes flickered, so bright that one couldn't take their eyes off them. "That's great!"

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "Yes, that's great!"

Yu Youyao held her cousin's hand. "I hope you can stand up quickly." Her voice was gentle. "Although you look good in a wheelchair, I still want you to stand up again and live properly." She looked up, her eyes filled with stars. "Cousin, you have to live well in the future."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "Okay!"

There was a smile on his lips, and his deep eyes had a reflection of the little girl. His eyes were like stars decorating the night sky, dazzling with starlight.

The little girl smiled. "Cousin, the Lingxi Bug will stay in the Jade Courtyard. I'll help you raise it. Third Cousin taught me how to raise the Lingxi Bug. I'll definitely be able to raise it well."

The key to raising the Lingxi Bug was the medicinal liquid made by the Xie Residence.

Yu Youyao wanted to secretly feed the Lingxi Bug with the spiritual dew. Perhaps the Lingxi Bug she raised would be better and more useful to her cousin.

Chapter 182 - 182 Truly Unique

“Alright, thank you, Cousin.” Zhou Linghuai nodded. The Lingxi Bug was a secret of the Xie family, and it was not appropriate to tell outsiders about it.

Yu Youyao took out a thumb-sized white jade bottle. “Third Cousin even brought me a small bottle of the Lingxi Bug’s...”

It was indeed not good to use the words “waste” to describe medicine that was going to be consumed. Yu Youyao suddenly stopped talking, but she couldn’t help but smile.

Thinking of the various strange medicinal herbs needed for the Essence Protection Pill, Zhou Linghuai’s expression was a little indescribable. Then, he saw the corners of the little girl’s mouth twitch as she tried her best to hold back her laughter. Her fair face also turned red, and she felt extremely helpless.

“Cousin.” Yu Youyao felt guilty under her cousin’s gaze. She finally felt guilty and felt that she shouldn’t have laughed. “Cough, it’s a medicinal liquid. The medicinal liquid of the Lingxi Bug.”

Zhou Linghuai couldn’t help but feel his hands itch. He tapped her forehead lightly. “Even Cousin is laughing at me.”

Yu Youyao covered her forehead with her hand and looked reproachful. “Cousin, why are you acting like Third Cousin? You always knock on my forehead. Although it doesn’t hurt much, I’m already a big lady.”

Zhou Linghuai’s heart skipped a beat when he heard the words ‘big lady’. He couldn’t help but look at the girl. She still looked very young and still looked like a young lady in front of others, but in front of him, she looked like a child. He didn’t know when she would really grow up.

Yu Youyao held a small jade bottle. “I’ll give it to Uncle Sun later and ask him to try making the Essence Protection Pill. The Essence Protection Pill can help Cousin nourish his muscles and strengthen his bone marrow, so that he can recover faster.”

She would secretly added half a drop of spiritual dew into the medicinal liquid. As she did not know the effect of the medicinal liquid, she did not dare to add too much.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. “Okay!”

“Cousin, Third Cousin brought me many new and interesting things. I picked some for you.” Yu Youyao picked out a sandalwood box from the gifts she received. “Cousin, take a look at this.”

Zhou Linghuai tilted his head and saw a pile of gift boxes on the table not far away. There was a deep smile in his eyes. Whenever the little girl received something good, she would always give it to him.

He took the sandalwood box and opened it, then saw the items inside. “This tells the time? I haven’t seen it in the Great Zhou Dynasty. It was shipped from overseas by the Xie family’s merchant ships, right?”

Yu Youyao nodded repeatedly. “Cousin, you’re so smart. This is called a watch. Third Cousin gave me two, one red and one white.” As she spoke, she took another piece from her sleeve and showed

it to her cousin. "I kept this red one for myself, so I gave the white one to you. In the future, you can use this to look at the time. It's much more convenient than a funnel."

Yu Youyao placed the red and white watches together, her smile soft and sweet. "Other than the different colors, the two watches are identical. Do you like them, Cousin?"

The clocks that Third Cousin had brought were all of different styles. Only these two pieces were identical.

"Yes, I like it very much." After a pause, Zhou Linghuai said in a hoarse voice, "I like everything that Cousin gives me."

Yu Youyao leaned closer to her cousin. "Cousin, I'll teach you to read the time. Look..."

Actually, after taking a look at this clock, he already knew how to use it. There was no need for it, but the little girl was excited to teach him, and he was happy to let her teach him...

After lunch, Zhou Linghuai said, "Go to the study and I'll test what you've learned recently. It'll be good for you to know how much you've grown recently and how much you can teach according to your talent."

Yu Youyao pouted and followed her cousin into the study. Her cousin usually guided her in her studies, calligraphy, and zither skills. Although he did not restrict her from learning, his requirements were very strict.

Ms. Ye had asked them to learn things, but her cousin had asked her to understand them thoroughly.

In a short period of time, her learning progress was much slower than ordinary people, but after a while, she would realize that her foundation was solid. The further she went, the more proficient she became in learning.

Recently, her studies had also improved by leaps and bounds, and Ms. Ye's class progress had also increased. Yu Shuangbai and the others were also suffering. It was only when she looked for Ms. Ye that she slowed down a little.

Zhou Linghuai tested her on calligraphy.

Yu Youyao laid out the paper, ground the ink, held the brush, dipped it in ink, and waved it. Every move was done in one breath, revealing a confident and calm confidence.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. The little girl had long and thin eyebrows. Her eyebrows were lowered, and there was a faint sheen to them. She held a jade brush, and a small portion of her slender wrist was revealed in her narrow sleeve. The more he looked, the more her fingers looked as fair as jade. The light yellow and green parasol flowers were scattered all over her dress. She looked elegant and pleasing to the eye, with an indescribable elegance and beauty.

After Zhou Linghuai finished his cup of tea, Yu Youyao finally put down her pen and gently picked up the brush and ink on the table. She smiled sweetly. "Cousin, I'm done."

Zhou Linghuai did not miss the slyness in her eyes. He knew that this girl was being mischievous again. He took the paper from her and looked down.

Yu Youyao had written a poem from the The Book of Poetry and the Way of the Nation.

An Obscure View—

Gazing into the obscure view, green bamboo.

There were gentlemen who were as sharp as nails.

There was no such thing as a good man with a bad character!

Gazing into the obscure view, green bamboo.

There were gentlemen who were as bright as stars.

A beautiful and elegant gentleman will always be remembered!

Gazing into the obscure view, green bamboo is abundant.

There were gentlemen who were as precious as gold and tin.

They were modest men who were broad minded, magnanimous, humorous, courteous and personable!

Zhou Linghuai looked at it word by word, his eyes deep. The little girl did not realize that her handwriting had improved, but some of her habits of using the brush, ink, and writing were exactly the same as his. The words she wrote were also very similar to his.

However, his words had a hidden sharpness. His muscles and bones were restrained, making him look even more majestic and powerful. However, the little girl's words were graceful and natural, revealing the flexibility of a girl.

Her cousin did not say anything for a long time. Yu Youyao leaned towards him and asked eagerly, "Cousin, are my words acceptable?"

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "Yes!"

Yu Youyao's eyes lit up and she immediately smiled. "I've been practicing my calligraphy according to Cousin's handwriting recently."

Zhou Linghuai's eyes darkened. "Why did you write this poem?"

Yu Youyao sat in front of her cousin and held her little face in her hands. She looked at her cousin with bright eyes. "Bones have to be cut, ivory has to be studied, precious jade has to be carved, and stones have to be ground. I feel that Cousin's bones are like jade. They require cutting and grinding. Only then can they become a treasure that's truly unique."

Cutting and grinding were the methods of carving bones, teeth, jade, and stone. They were figurative language. A person's literary talent, cultivation, and character were like bones, ivory and jade.

In her heart, her cousin was such a person.

Chapter 183 - 183 That Glimpse Between Her Eyes

Zhou Linghuai's eyes darkened.

Back then, after Mr. Xian Yun left the capital, there were rumors in Youzhou that he had solved the precious chess game. "He's unique and there's no other in the world!"

Yu Youyao held her cousin's hand and asked carefully, "Cousin, you don't like this poem?"

Zhou Linghuai came back to his senses and smiled. "I like it." Then, he said, "I'll test you again."

The questions he had set were from the Four Books and Five Classics, but the questions were tricky. Yu Youyao had learned the basics well. Although she couldn't answer them fluently, she could still answer them.

After taking more than ten questions, Yu Youyao was so nervous that her back was sweating. She wrinkled her nose. "The questions that Cousin set are so difficult! I feel like I've learned them before, but also like I've never learned them before..."

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "There are many similarities in the contents of the Four Books and Five Classics. Once you've understood most of them, you'll be able to learn the next one more easily. For example, the Book of Rites also talks about the Doctrine of the Mean. If you've learned the Book of Rites thoroughly, you'll naturally understand some of the relevant content in the Four Books and Five Classics. I didn't set the questions based on what you've learned, but on your grasp of the subject."

Yu Youyao pursed her lips.

Zhou Linghuai handed her a cup of tea. "Cousin, you're doing well in your studies. You can speed up your studies in the future."

Only then did Yu Youyao feel happy. She had been answering questions for a long time and was really a little thirsty. Now that the tea was in her hand, she quickly took it. "Thank you, Cousin."

After Yu Youyao drank her tea, Zhou Linghuai explained the question to her.

After Yu Youyao heard this, some of the things she did not understand became clear. She actually felt as if the clouds had parted.

After that, Zhou Linghuai tested her on her zither playing.

After Yu Youyao burned the incense and cleaned her hands, she sat in front of the zither and played the "Ode to the Zither." So far, she had only learned three songs in total. Among them, the "Ode to the Zither" was the simplest. Due to Ms. Ye's influence when she played in the rain, the "Ode to the Zither" was also her best song.

However, compared to Ms. Ye's zither music, which was clear, strange, light, and distant, hers sounded more mellow, revealing a lingering feeling of spring rain.

The little girl sat in front of the zither. She was slender and exquisite, but she was also beautiful. She was elegant and quiet, but the most beautiful thing was the ripple between her eyebrows.

After the song was over, the sound of the zither entered Zhou Linghuai's ears and lingered in his heart. He was stunned until he heard the little girl's gentle voice. "Cousin, how am I playing? Does it sound good? I've been practicing this 'Ode to the Zither' for a long time. I originally planned to play it under the Parasol Tree in two days."

Zhou Linghuai suddenly came back to his senses and looked at the Parasol Tree outside the window. He thought of the scene of her playing the zither under the Parasol Tree. The zither song was easy to play, but elegant. "The zither sounds meaningful. Cousin, you're talented."

Yu Youyao's eyebrows raised. "I was enlightened by Ms. Ye. Of course, it's also because Cousin taught me well."

It was unknown if she was praising him or herself, but Zhou Linghuai chuckled.

After Zhou Ling got pregnant, Yu Youyao couldn't stay any longer. She hurriedly took the Lingxi Bug's waste and medicinal liquid and went to the Green House to look for Uncle Sun.

After receiving the medicinal liquid, Uncle Sun was so excited that his long beard trembled. He couldn't wait to open the small jade bottle and smell it. Then, he took a silver needle, dipped it in the medicinal liquid, and tasted it.

Before Yu Youyao could ask, Uncle Sun danced excitedly like a madman. "That's right, that's right. This is it. Haha." As he laughed, he ran into the pharmacy. His legs, which used to be a little sprained, were now running very fast. Even his slightly hunched waist was straightened.

Yu Youyao wanted to ask about the Essence Protection Pill, so she picked up her skirt and chased after him. Unexpectedly, just as she reached the door of the pharmacy, she heard Uncle Sun say, "I want to make the Essence Protection Pill. Don't disturb me."

With that, without waiting for Yu Youyao to speak, she closed the door with a bang. Fortunately, Yu Youyao reacted quickly and quickly took a step back. Otherwise, her little nose would have suffered.

Yu Youyao was a little disappointed that she had returned empty-handed. However, when she thought about how brilliant Uncle Sun's medical skills were and how he would probably be able to make the Essence Protection Pill soon, she felt happy again and returned to the house to look at the accounts.

After receiving her mother's dowry ledger from her grandmother, Yu Youyao would take time out every day to look through it. It was not an easy task to figure out the accounts that had been accumulated for many years. Even with Nanny Xu and Dong Mei's help, it was still very difficult. It was probably not something that could be figured out in a short time.

After a while, Dong Mei came over to report that the gift list for everyone in the residence was ready. Yu Youyao took a rough look and felt that there was no problem. "Send the gifts over!"

Once Dong Mei got the word, she went to make the arrangements.

After receiving the gifts, the residence could not help but praise Eldest Miss for being kind and generous. Yang Shuwan was embarrassed to death. When she thought of the jadeite that she had given out previously, she almost tore her handkerchief apart. This time, she was even more careful when choosing her gift. She gave her a set of pure gold head ornaments. It was neither outstanding nor wrong. This way, it was inevitable that Madam Yao from the second branch would feel inferior and feel unhappy again.

Before she knew it, it was April.

After copying a Buddhist scripture, Old Madam Yu asked Qing Xiu to help her out of the temple hall.

Nanny Liu lifted the curtain and walked in happily. “Old Madam, the Imperial Court has announced that the re-examination will be held on April 10th in the Hall of Peace. On April 26th, the imperial examination will be held in the Hall of Peace. There’s a huge commotion outside, and everyone is discussing this matter.”

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she also smiled. “It’s finally settled. My hanging heart now has a place to rest.”

Nanny Liu smiled. “Isn’t that so? Even people like us in the residence are nervous and frustrated during the examination that happens once every three years, let alone those students who are taking the examination.”

As Old Madam Yu fiddled with her prayer beads, she said, “We can’t be careless in the second round of examinations in front of the palace. After the second round of examinations, the rankings of the candidates will also have to be referenced. Send a nanny who knows the rules to the courtyard arranged by the clan to teach the disciples participating in the second round of examinations the rules of the palace. The rules of the palace are long and strict. Every year, there will be candidates who are disqualified from taking the examination because of a mistake in their etiquette. Our family can’t make such a mistake.”

Nanny Liu agreed and listened to Old Madam’s instructions.

In the Jade Courtyard, the green leaves on the trees were thick and shaded. They were like a huge green umbrella or jade clouds that were held high, covering most of the Jade Courtyard. The lotus lake was filled with green leaves, and the entire Jade Courtyard was beautiful.

Yu Youyao was practicing her calligraphy according to her cousin’s handwriting when she heard Xia Tao report, “Young Miss, Nanny Liu is here.”

Chapter 184 - 184 What a Mischievous Child!

Yu Youyao quickly put down her brush, tidied her clothes, and left the study for the reception pavilion.

When she saw Yu Youyao, Nanny Liu smiled and said, “On April 10th, a few disciples who are in the middle ranks of the clan’s examination will be participating in the second examination in front of the palace. Old Madam values it very much and asked me to come over to ask Eldest Miss for some medicinal tea and fragrances to nourish their bodies. She also asked me to send some medicinal recipes over. We can also help out a little and leave it to fate.”

Yu Youyao smiled. “I made a lot in my house, so Nanny can take them over.”

With that, she turned around and instructed Chun Xiao.

Chun Xiao entered the side room. Not long after, she came out with the medicinal tea that had already been wrapped neatly.

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When Nanny Liu saw this, her smile deepened. Then, she heard Eldest Miss say, “There’s nothing taboo about medicinal tea and medicinal fragrances. Just use whatever you want. The medicinal cuisine is more important. It’s more appropriate to pick an old woman who knows medicinal cuisine from my courtyard and send her over to take care of it.”

Nanny Liu smiled and took the items. “Eldest Miss, you’re so thoughtful.”

After returning to An Shou Hall, Nanny Liu looked for Old Madam. “Once you mentioned it, Eldest Miss asked Chun Xiao to bring something over. As soon as I took a sip of tea, the things were already brought out. It’s obvious that Eldest Miss had already thought of this. She was already prepared and waiting for me to get it.”

Old Madam Yu was also happy to hear this. “Yao Yao is a meticulous person. She thinks of others in every way. Now that she’s grown up, she can also take care of her family’s affairs. It’s our family’s luck to have such a child.”

After sending Nanny Liu off, Yu Youyao did not plan to continue practicing her calligraphy. Thinking that there was still no news of the Essence Protection Pill, Yu Youyao inevitably felt a little anxious, so she went to the Green House to look for Uncle Sun.

At this moment, Uncle Sun did not close the door. He stayed in the pharmacy all day and did not even leave the house. He looked like he had gone crazy. His beard was disheveled, and his body was sloppy. There was a strong smell of sour herbs on him.

“Why is it still not working? It doesn’t make sense!”

“What went wrong?”

“Although the prescription for the Essence Protection Pill doesn’t record the steps to making it, doctors with brilliant medical skills have their own unique methods of making medicine. According to my many years of experience, it’s impossible for me not to be able to make it...”

Yu Youyou endured the smell on Uncle Sun’s body and said casually, “Could it be that the Essence Protection Pill was not concocted but made using other methods? The Daoists have alchemy skills, the Southern Barbarians have Miao doctors, and the Xie family has medicinal artifacts...”

Who knew!

“Why didn’t I think of this?” Uncle Sun’s eyes widened, and he slapped his forehead hard.

Yu Youyao looked at Uncle Sun in shock. What did I just say?

Uncle Sun looked excited. “I knew it. Why didn’t it work after trying more than ten methods in a row? It doesn’t make sense. It turns out that the method I made it with was wrong. The Essence Protection Pill is called the Essence Protection Pill. It’s obvious that it’s also refined with alchemy...”

Yu Youyao was stunned when she heard this. She couldn’t help but ask, “Alchemy is a Daoist method. Uncle Sun, do you know how to refine pills? Do you want me to find an alchemist...”

Uncle Sun’s eyes widened, and his white beard trembled. “Little girl, who are you looking down on? Haven’t you heard that medicine doesn’t differentiate between sects? My Sun family’s ancestor was the King of Medicine. Not only was that King of Medicine’s medical skills outstanding, but he

was also an extremely powerful alchemy master. As a descendant, how could I not know how to refine pills?!”

Yu Youyao’s eyes widened in shock as she looked at Uncle Sun in disbelief. “Uncle Sun, you’re too amazing. You even know how to refine pills.”

Uncle Sun enjoyed the little girl’s shocked expression very much. He stroked his long beard and looked like an unfathomable expert as he pretended to be deep in thought. “Of course. Although I rarely refine pills, my alchemy skills are awesome.”

Seeing the little girl’s sly expression, Zhou Linghuai knew that she was fooling Uncle Sun again. What a mischievous child!

Yu Youyao’s eyes darted around and she frowned. “I heard that there’s poison in the pills. It’s not good for one’s health to take too many pills. Cousin...”

Uncle Sun glanced at her from the corner of his eye and snorted. “The King of Medicine has recorded a method of refining pills using ‘fire suppression’ in the ‘Pill Scripture: Internal Sulphur Method’. It can reduce the toxicity of the pills. Then, using a traditional Chinese medicine formulation, the toxicity of the pills refined can be reduced to the minimum. I’ll also refine a special poison expelling medicine for Young Master to take. Then, I won’t have to worry that the pills will harm his body.”

The pill poison was accumulated in the body. If it couldn’t be completely removed with medicine, it would more or less damage Young Master’s body. However, compared to the effect of the Essence Protection Pill, that little pill poison was still acceptable to Young Master.

Yu Youyao was relieved when she heard this.

Spiritual dewdrop had the effect of purging poison. She used it to nourish her cousin’s body. Even if there was a trace of pill poison left, she was no longer afraid.

Hence, Yu Youyao hugged Uncle Sun’s arm. “Uncle Sun, tell me quickly what you need to refine pills. I’ll get someone to prepare it immediately.”

Uncle Sun nodded. “Sulfur, saltpeter, charcoal...”

Yu Youyao’s eyelids twitched when she heard this. She couldn’t help but ask, “These are all explosive items. Can they really be used to refine pills?” Why did she feel that Uncle Sun was a little unreliable?

Uncle Sun was so angry that his long eyebrows trembled a few times. “According to what I said, these are considered black powder used for alchemy. Black powder doesn’t explode easily.”

Yu Youyao was still worried, but since Uncle Sun had already said so, she did not dare to doubt him. She quickly nodded. “Whatever Uncle Sun says then. I’ll get someone to prepare it immediately.”

Uncle Sun snorted.

Yu Youyao ran out but retreated after a few steps. “Cousin, I’ll go prepare what Uncle Sun wants first. I think he’s very confident this time. He’ll definitely succeed.”

The little girl was clearly hesitant, but she still came to comfort him. Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "Go!"

When Yu Youyao returned to the Jade Courtyard, she was not in a hurry to prepare what Uncle Sun wanted. Instead, she first looked for Nanny Xu and asked about the medicinal pills.

Nanny Xu said, "In The Kinship of the Three, it's said that gold is indestructible, so it's a treasure. Most of the time, gold is used to refine longevity medicine."

Yu Youyao was puzzled. "Aren't all medicinal pills refined using gold?"

Nanny Xu shook her head. "There are also alchemists in the palace who can refine medicinal pills. Chinese medicine has a method to treat illnesses with 'fire suppression'. It's said that the fire suppression method can borrow the power of Yin and Yang, and the aura of the five elements. By following a traditional Chinese medicine formula, one can unleash the greatest effect of the medicinal herbs. It's equivalent to brewing medicine properly when it is prepared. However, there is a water refinement method, and a fire refinement method. The methods are different, but they all lead to the same goal."

Yu Youyao suddenly realized that she was too inexperienced.

Nanny Xu smiled and said, "You're thinking too much. Uncle Sun is most likely going to refine medicinal pills, which are somewhat poisonous. For the effects of the pill refinement to be better, the amount of pill poison also has to be greater. However, it doesn't hurt if a person nourishes his or her body more often. The Empress Dowager takes the medicinal pills refined by alchemists all year round to nourish her body. Back then, I specially arranged for her body to be nourished in the palace."

Chapter 185 - 185 Savior

Yu Youyou was finally relieved. She wrote down what she needed to refine pills and handed them to Qiu Xing. She instructed, "Prepare it quietly. Don't make it public."

The people in the residence only thought that Uncle Sun was an ordinary doctor and did not know how powerful he was. If they knew that Uncle Sun wanted to refine pills, they would inevitably suspect Uncle Sun's background and her cousin.

Moreover, he was obsessed with alchemy. It wouldn't be good if news of him refining pills spread.

Since there was progress in refining the Essence Protection Pill, she had to carefully nurture the Lingxi Bugs.

Yu Youyao raised the two Lingxi Bugs separately. One of them was fed medicinal herbs with spirit dew, while the other was kept as an ordinary pet. After two to three days, there were already some differences.

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The color of the one that was raised with spiritual dew seemed to have faded a little. Not only did it excrete more medicinal liquid every day, but its color had also faded a little.

The other one did not change much.

In order to compare the effects of the two, Yu Youyao had used two different medicinal liquids to make medicinal tea that could nourish the body. After drinking it for two days, she had already noticed the difference.

The Lingxi Bug's medicinal liquid had some effect on the medicinal tea after being fed the spiritual dew. It was very effective, and the effect was naturally better.

Yu Youyao planned to raise them for a while longer to observe them carefully. After confirming that there were no problems, she would raise both of them with spiritual dew.

The medicinal liquid of that Lingxi Bug was indeed extraordinary. The medicinal tea that it made was much better than what she had made previously. She planned to make more and ask Uncle Sun to make some powerful medicine.

On April 8th, it was the Buddha Festival. Old Madam Yu paid her respects to Buddha, and everyone in the residence began to do so.

No matter how busy Yang Shuwan and Madam Yao were, they had to make time to go to the temple hall to copy scriptures. On one hand, it was to worship Buddha, and on the other hand, it was to show their filial piety to Old Madam.

Yu Youyao also copied the Ksitigarbha Sutra and the Longevity Sutra every day.

On this day, Yu Youyao had just copied a few pages of scripture when Xia Tao came over. "Young Miss, Liu'er accidentally broke First Madam's favorite blue and white bowl, so First Madam hit her ten times and sent her to the outer courtyard stable to work."

Yu Youyao put down her pen and picked up the teacup beside her. She lowered her head and drank her tea without saying anything.

Xia Tao was a little indignant. "It wasn't Liu'er who broke it. It was the mulberry branch in front of First Madam that caused her to trip and fall. That was why she smashed the blue and white bowl. First Madam got someone to drag Liu'er into the courtyard, and she beat her to death. After ten strokes of the paddle, Liu'er couldn't even get out of bed."

Liu'er had spoken to Old Madam Ma, so Eldest Madam held a grudge against her. During this period of time, she had tortured Liu'er a lot and let her do the dirtiest and most tiring things.

Yu Youyao put down her teacup and wiped the corner of her mouth with a handkerchief.

Xia Tao was worried. "Liu'er is seriously injured. The doctor said that she needs to recuperate for a while, but the work in the horse stable is dirty and tiring. Not many people can take it..."

First Madam was really ruthless. If it weren't for Eldest Miss's rules, which clearly stated that if something was broken, it would only result in ten strokes at most. Liu'er probably almost lost half her life.

Yu Youyao said calmly, "Get Liu'er to recuperate carefully for a few days. After her injuries recover, arrange for her to be sent to the Jade Courtyard to take on Qiu Xing's errands. I still lack a maidservant to serve me, so I'll let Qiu Xing take over."

Yang Shuwan was a petty person. Even if she sent Liu'er to the outer courtyard, she might not necessarily let her off. Liu'er and the Jade Courtyard could be considered to have some relationship, so it was also possible to arrange for her to enter the Jade Courtyard.

Indeed, she needed someone to take care of her study carefully.

Xia Tao's eyes widened. She told Young Miss about this because she wanted to help Liu'er and ask her to arrange a lighter job for her. This was easy for Young Miss, but she did not expect her to directly arrange for Liu'er to stay in the Jade Courtyard. Of course, this was even better.

Xia Tao was very happy. "Young Miss, Liu'er is very efficient. She will definitely do her job well after entering the Jade Courtyard. I'll go and tell Liu'er first."

Yu Youyao nodded.

Old Madam Ma was a noteworthy person. Just by looking at the incident she had caused in the residence previously, one could tell that she was respected. Liu'er did not look special, but she was still considered loyal. To be able to catch Old Madam Ma's eye, she probably had some outstanding qualities. Such a person was naturally much more appropriate than ordinary people.

There were indeed not enough people following her. She had originally planned to let Nanny Xu choose a few people carefully and teach them well before letting them enter the Jade Courtyard to serve her.

Now that Liu'er was connected to her, it was appropriate.

Xia Tao ran into the house and told Liu'er the news.

Old Madam Ma pursed her lips in amusement. "It's a blessing in disguise. In the future, Liu'er will have a good place to go. I can finally be at ease. Eldest Miss has really taken after Old Madam. She's benevolent and kind." As she spoke, she looked at Liu'er and said sternly, "You have to remember Eldest Miss's kindness and serve her well in the future."

Liu'er lay in bed, her face as white as a sheet. She was probably in so much pain that her forehead was covered in sweat. She struggled to get out of bed.

It was common for big families to punish servants who had made mistakes. Although the master would not beat them to death, if they were beaten half to death and tortured for a while, they would die of illness. They were all servants who had been bought into the residence. After signing the death contract, they would take a mat and roll it up before throwing it into the mass grave.

A few years ago, there was a girl called Cao'er in the main courtyard. She was beautiful, and Master took a few more glances at her and asked for her name. In less than two days, that girl made a mistake and was slapped thirty times, losing half her life on the spot.

In order to show her benevolence, she had hired a doctor, but her injuries could not be treated. After being bedridden for a month, she passed away.

One night, when she got up in the middle of the night, she saw two old maids carrying a mat out of the back door. The mat was a little short, revealing a pair of red embroidered shoes with beautiful vines embroidered on them.

She had given these shoes to Cao'er.

Eldest Miss did not allow the residence to abuse the servants at will. She had always treated the servants generously and clearly. She made new rules and made it clear that if something was broken, the culprit would be punished with no more than ten strokes of the cane, regardless of how expensive the item was. In serious cases, the person would be fined monthly. In the worst case, the person would be sold.

If not for this rule, even with her godmother's favor, she probably wouldn't have ended up any better than Cao'er.

Eldest Miss had saved her life.

In her heart, Eldest Miss was her savior.

Xia Tao was shocked and wanted to push Liu'er back down. "What are you doing? Hurry up and lie back down. You're still injured. How can you get up..."

Liu'er shook her head and insisted on getting up. "I want to go to the Jade Courtyard to thank Eldest Miss..."

Although her godmother wanted to arrange for her to enter the Jade Courtyard, it wouldn't be good to do it after Eldest Madam Yang just punished her. She probably needed to wait for a long time.

Chapter 186 - 186 Cousin, I Miss My Mother

Now that she had offended First Madam, she probably wouldn't be at peace even in the horse stable.

The work in the horse stable was dirty and tiring. She was still injured, so she probably wouldn't be able to last for more than a few days. Perhaps after a few days, her body would be damaged and she would almost lose her life.

Not only had Eldest Miss saved her life, but she had also arranged a way out for her.

Xia Tao said angrily, "What's there to thank her for? Would Eldest Miss lack your words? If your body is damaged, it would be a waste of Eldest Miss's kindness. You should recuperate obediently. It won't be too late to thank Eldest Miss after you recover."

Old Madam Ma also advised, "Miss Xia Tao, you're right. Look at you. Don't foolishly offend Eldest Miss. There's still a long way to go. Remember Eldest Miss's kindness and work carefully after entering the Jade Courtyard."

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When Liu'er heard this, she knew that it was inappropriate, so she did not insist.

Xia Tao comforted Liu'er a little more before returning to the Jade Courtyard. "Liu'er said that she'll come over to thank Young Miss when her injuries recover a little in a few days."

Yu Youyao nodded and did not say anything. She thought about how Uncle Sun's Essence Protection Pill was developing after two days, so she made another trip to the Green House.

Uncle Sun was flipping through the almanac when he saw her glaring at him. Without waiting for her to speak, he said angrily, "Girl, aren't you tired? You've been running around the Green House all day. Do you think medicinal pills are that easy to refine? Do you think it's simply picking up medicinal herbs and throwing them into the furnace?"

After being lectured by Uncle Sun, Yu Youyao was stunned. "If this isn't the way to refine pills, what else do you do?"

Uncle Sun was so angry that he blew his beard and glared at him. "Little kid, you're really infuriating me. Alchemy requires the right time, place, and people. It has to follow the yin and yang, be adjusted for the five elements, and match the heavens. Didn't you see that I was flipping through the almanac?"

Yu Youyao quickly leaned over. "Which day do you plan to choose?"

Uncle Sun shook his head and closed the almanac. He glanced at her from the corner of his eye. "I've already picked it. The eighth of April is a good day. It's still the Buddha Festival."

When Yu Youyao heard this, her face fell. She went to look for her cousin. "Cousin, do you think Uncle Sun did it on purpose? He clearly knows that I'm going to the Precious Peace Temple with Grandmother on the eighth of April. He's not in the residence, but he actually decided to start refining pills on this day..."

Zhou Linghuai closed the book. "The sixth day of April is also an auspicious day. I believe it's also suitable for alchemy. I'll get him to change the date."

When Yu Youyao heard this, she quickly shook her head. "How can that be? Uncle Sun must have his reasons for choosing the eighth of April. How can he change it so easily? It won't be good if something goes wrong with the pill refinement."

Zhou Linghuai shook his head and laughed. "I've also dabbled in mystic techniques. Not to mention anything else, I've looked at the date and adjusted for the five elements according to the yin and yang. It still works"

Yu Youyao was a little tempted, but she remembered that the person who was refining the pills was Uncle Sun, not her cousin. Uncle Sun must have the final say, so she shook her head. "No, it's fine. The day of the Buddhist Festival is quite good. Uncle Sun is refining pills for Cousin in the residence, so I'll pray for him in the temple. Anyway, I can't help much in the residence."

Zhou Linghuai smiled and nodded.

Yu Youyao looked at her cousin and smiled. "Cousin, you're really amazing. You even know mystic techniques."

The little girl's eyes sparkled with admiration for him, making Zhou Linghuai laugh. "Not really. It's just that I've read too many Daoist classics, so I naturally understand a little."

Yu Youyao did not believe him. "Cousin, you're too humble. If you say that you know a little, then you must be even better than ordinary people. You said that you know a little about calligraphy, but even Second Uncle praised your handwriting and paintings."

Zhou Linghuai changed the topic. "On April 8th, you're going to the Precious Peace Temple with Grandaunt?"

She had never mentioned this before.

Yu Youyao nodded. "Grandmother lit a lantern for my mother at the Precious Peace Temple. After I turned five, I had to go to the Precious Peace Temple with Grandmother every year to add oil to my mother's lamp and mourn for her."

At the mention of her mother, she looked a little sad.

Zhou Linghuai did not think of this for a moment. He should not have mentioned it, as made the young lady feel uncomfortable.

"Cousin, I miss my mother." The little girl's voice was soft and as low as a feather. "My mother gave me fifteen longevity locks of all kinds. Grandmother said that after my mother gave birth to me, she looked for a model when she was sick and made them for me." As she spoke, she leaned over to her cousin and picked up the longevity lock with the lotus pattern on her neck to show him. "I've been wearing the longevity locks that my mother gave me since I was young. I change it every year. Every year on my birthday, Grandmother will personally help me put it on."

Zhou Linghuai took a closer look. This longevity lock was indeed exquisite. The words "Long Life and Wealth" were engraved on the back.

The children of rich families were afraid that it would be difficult to raise them for a long time. They had the habit of wearing longevity locks from the moment they were born. Newly born babies had to wear silver chains to avoid evil that could suppress their lives. Not only were they lighter, but they were also afraid that if they wore too expensive ones, it would ruin their luck. If they were older, they would have to wear jade chains that were warm and smooth. They would nourish their bodies. When they were well-nourished, they would have to wear gold chains to suppress their luck.

There was a lot of thought behind this.

Madam Xie had given her daughter 15 longevity locks while she was still in her infancy. This was full of earnest blessings and care for her daughter. She probably knew that she did not have long to live and was powerless to take care of her daughter...

Yu Youyao's eyes turned red as she sniffed. "My mother must love me very much. When I was young, every time Father reprimanded me, I would miss my mother very much. For a period of time, I especially hated Yu Jianjia. I felt that it was all her mother's fault that I lost my mother, so I always went against her. Every time Father found out, he would scold me..."

Zhou Linghuai held his breath and pursed his lips.

Yu Youyao said softly, "Not long after Yang Shuwan entered the family, she tainted my mother's dowry, causing Grandmother to be furious. Not only did she make Yang Shuwan spit out everything she had swallowed, but she also sent the people in my mother's house to the farm. I don't see them often."

Her ordinary words made Zhou Linghuai realize that something was wrong.

The old servants in front of Madam Xie were all brought over from the Xie Residence in Quanzhou. They were definitely loyal to their master. Yu Youyao was still an infant, so wouldn't it be more appropriate for these old servants to help take care of her?

Even if Old Madam Yu brought Yu Youyao to her side, she would still have to be served.

Previously, Uncle Sun had said that Yu Jianjia was born at full term. It was obvious that Yu Zongzheng had colluded with Madam Yang when Madam Xie was pregnant and even secretly became pregnant.

Thinking back to Old Madam Yu's actions, it seemed that Madam Xie's death was not that simple.

The little girl was not completely unaware!

Yu Youyao pursed her lips slightly. "I heard most of what happened to my mother from my grandmother. My grandmother said that my mother was a magnanimous and polite person. When I was young, I also heard some things about my mother from the servants. They also said that my mother was clearly a good master..."

At the thought of her mother's death, an indescribable anger suddenly arose in her heart!

Chapter 187 - 187 Cousin, It's Me In The Painting

Zhou Linghuai rubbed the top of the little girl's head. "When your mother got married, your third cousin wasn't young anymore, so he knew a lot about your mother. Your third cousin will stay in the capital for a while this time. After the Buddha Festival, we'll find an opportunity to visit the Xie Residence."

Yu Youyao stammered and said nothing.

Zhou Linghuai called Chang An over. "Bring me the painting I drew yesterday."

Yu Youyao's eyes lit up. She wanted to ask her cousin what he had drawn, but when she thought about how she would be able to see it with her own eyes soon, she restrained herself from asking. However, her eyes inevitably darted in the direction Chang An had left in.

Zhou Linghuai couldn't help but laugh.

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Not long after, Chang An returned with a painting in his hand. Before he could approach, Yu Youyao had already run over to take the painting and asked her cousin. "Cousin, can I see it now?"

The corners of Zhou Linghuai's lips curled up. "It's a gift for you. It can be used anytime."

Before he could finish speaking, Yu Youyao had already smiled widely. She couldn't wait any longer and carefully unfolded the scroll.

The first thing that came into view was the tall green jade umbrella. Every leaf on it was dense and well-defined, with clear veins. There were strings of faint yellow-green flowers on the branches. They were trumpet-shaped flowers without petals, but the stamens grew and hung on the branches, making them look even more beautiful and elegant. They were truly lifelike.

"This is the Chinese parasol tree in my courtyard. Cousin, it's really beautiful. It's just like the real thing." Yu Youyao's eyes lit up. She unfolded the scroll and saw

an incense table under the tree. There was an incense burner with a phoenix head. There was also a faint green incense fragrance.

On the table, there was a seven-stringed zither. A young girl in a green dress was kneeling in front of the table. She was quiet and beautiful. Her fair hand was plucking the strings, and she was wearing a string of yellow-green parasol flowers on her head. The long stamens hung by her temples, making her look gentle and elegant. Her eight-piece dress was like a blooming lotus.

Yu Youyao's eyes suddenly widened. Her voice was cheerful and delicate. "Cousin, Cousin, you drew me. I didn't know I was so good-looking."

The little girl in the painting still looked young and tender, but there was a hint of charm in her eyes, and her lips were a little delicate. From time to time, her expression revealed a hint of tenderness and quiet beauty.

But she was beautiful.

Zhou Linghuai hummed softly and smiled. That day, when he was testing the young lady's zither skills, she had said that she wanted to play the zither for him under the Chinese parasol tree. After returning to the courtyard, he felt an itch and drew the young lady playing the zither under the Chinese parasol tree. Although he was good at painting, he was usually surrounded by flowers, birds, and mountains. However, he rarely saw people in the scenery, but it was still pleasing to the eye.

Yu Youyao held the painting and looked at it happily. She looked at it for a long time, but couldn't get enough of it. "Cousin, I like it so much. Thank you, Cousin."

Seeing that she had finally smiled, Zhou Linghuai heaved a sigh of relief.

Yu Youyao held the painting excitedly and returned to the Jade Courtyard. She lit an incense stick and placed the painting aside to smoke. A painting that had been smoked by an incense stick would be able to maintain the brush ink on it. The paper would not rot, and the color would remain the same for many years.

After smoking the painting, Yu Youyao took the best fragrant wooden box and carefully placed it in the box.

The older the incense wood, the more it could prevent dampness and insects, and ensure that the paper did not rot.

The next day, Yu Youyao found Shopkeeper Wang from Baoxing Rice Shop and entered the residence. "Grandmother, we have to do good deeds in order to return Grandmother's kindness. It's time to set up the porridge station in the rice shop. From April 6th, for three consecutive days, use the old rice from the past to make porridge. The porridge has to be thick. The old rice has to be checked carefully. We can't eat the moldy rice or give it away."

Large families also had the tradition of providing porridge during the new year, holidays, and disasters.

Wang Dongquan nodded repeatedly. "Yes." Then, he asked, "The porridge tent has been set up. Eldest Miss, do you want to find time to go over and take a look?"

Large families gave porridge and rice for the sake of a good reputation. The main family had to step in and pretend to help so that others could see and gain a reputation for being kind.

Yu Youyao shook her head. "I won't go. I'm too young to go out. Get someone to send a message to First Madam and ask her what she thinks."

One couldn't just be superficial, especially when it came to reputation. It wasn't just a matter of showing one's face.

She was still young, so it didn't matter how much trouble she caused at home. It would also be fine if news of this spread outside. At this age, she should stay at home. The elders were in charge of the matters outside, so it wasn't her place to step up and cause trouble outside.

When Wang Dongquan heard this, he couldn't help but sigh with emotion. This Eldest Miss of the residence was really not an ordinary person. She knew how to behave and did things clearly.

As a result, everyone in the residence also knew that Eldest Miss was going to set up a porridge stall in the rice shop. They even exaggerated that Eldest Miss was kind and benevolent.

When Yang Shuwan received the news, she couldn't help but feel angry again. She asked Yu Youyao, "Old Madam, you're paying respects to Buddha. The Buddha Festival is also our family's big day. In the past, we didn't have any porridge to give out. Why are we doing it this year?"

Yu Youyao lowered her eyes and ignored Yang Shuwan's ugly expression. "I'm doing this because I want Grandmother to pay respects to Buddha, and also because I want to accumulate good fortune for my family. As juniors, we should also do good deeds and accumulate good karma for Grandmother, so that she can live a long and healthy life. I want to set up a porridge tent to show my filial piety to her."

Her words were filled with filial piety towards Old Madam Yu.

Even though Yang Shuwan was unhappy, she couldn't say anything else. She forced a smile. "Why didn't you discuss such a big matter with Mother?"

Yu Youyao chuckled. "Mother is in charge of the family's matters every day, and she still has to go to Grandmother's house to copy Buddhist scriptures. It's inevitable that she won't be able to attend to some small matters. As a daughter, I naturally can't bear to see Mother working hard, so I have to share some of Mother's burden. Otherwise, Mother will fall sick and suffer again like before."

Every word and sentence was glib, and it was linked to being filial to her again.

At this moment, Yang Shuwan could barely smile anymore. How could she be willing to let go of the anger in her heart? "You're still young. Don't you know that the matter of the porridge stall is very serious? How can it be easily done?"

Yu Youyao said, "In the past, the family often built a porridge shed, and everything inside has its usual practice. Manager Wang is a capable person. With him personally supervising, it naturally won't go wrong. If Mother is worried, when the porridge shed is built, she can go over and take a look personally. With Mother watching from the side, it'll be even better."

At this point, Yang Shuwan's anger was all bottled up in her heart. She could only send Yu Youyao away and return to her room to vent her anger.

Chapter 188 - 188 Thank You, Edge's Branch Leader, for the Reward

"This little b*tch is really amazing. She sacrificed so much porridge and rice. Even old rice is worth something. She keeps saying that she's filial to me, but she's making such a big decision on her own. It's obvious that she doesn't care about me as her mother or as the mistress of the household."

The most hateful thing was that Wang Dongquan from Baoxing Rice Shop actually listened to a half-grown child and really left the residence to start preparing for the porridge stall.

What about her orders as the mistress of the household?

Yang Shuwan was so angry that her head hurt. Nanny Li was worried that she was having a headache again, so she hurriedly got someone to brew Doctor Ding's medicine and brought it over for Yang Shuwan to drink.

After Yu Jianjia finished her studies and found out about this matter, she came to the main courtyard. "Big Sister is right to make such an arrangement. She's only a young child. She can still manage the family, but if she's short-handed, she won't be able to extend her reach outside. She was the one who suggested setting up this porridge stall, and she also wanted Mother to step in to represent the residence. You will be the one gaining a good reputation."

When Yang Shuwan heard this, she immediately beamed. "I was angry, and I didn't think about it."

Yu Jianjia smiled. "Mother was sick for a while, and Eldest Sister was in charge of the household. There were also many rumors outside. Now that Mother has regained control of the household, it's time for you to go out and show your face so that outsiders will know who you are. Now that Mother is in charge of the household, no one in the Yu Residence can surpass you."

Yang Shuwan nodded repeatedly when she heard this. How could she still be angry?

The next day, Yu Youyao heard that Yang Shuwan had gone to Baoxing Rice Shop early in the morning.

Xia Tao was a little unhappy. "Eldest Miss was the one who wanted to build the porridge stall."

Yu Youyao lowered her head and copied the Ksitigarbha Sutra without looking up. "Why are you arguing about this? I built the porridge shed for Grandmother, not for her. Even if she gained face, she can't surpass Grandmother. This porridge shed was built because Grandmother was paying respects to Buddha. Grandmother will be proud, and the Yu Residence will also gain a good reputation. Why not?"

After the porridge shed was built, the reputation of the Yu Residence's kindness spread in the capital.

Yang Shuwan followed suit and also showed her face.

In the blink of an eye, it was the eighth of April.

Yu Youyao woke up early in the morning and did not learn etiquette with Nanny Xu. Instead, she asked Dong Mei to help her change into a plain white dress that reached her chest. Her clothes were very clean, and there were no additional accessories. Not only that, she was only wearing the simplest jewelry, making her look plain.

After washing up, Yu Youyao had a simple breakfast and instructed Chun Xiao, "Bring all the Buddhist scriptures that I've copied recently. The Ksitigarbha Sutra is to be worshiped in front of Mother's eternal flame. The Longevity Sutra is to be worshiped by Buddha to pray for Grandmother's health and longevity. Don't get it wrong."

Chun Xiao nodded repeatedly. "Don't worry then, Miss."

Just as it was 7am in the morning, Qing Xiu came over. "Old Madam sent me over to ask if Eldest Miss is ready."

"We can leave now." Yu Youyao brought Xia Tao and Chun Xiao to An Shou Hall.

Old Madam Yu was dressed in grayish-blue and had combed her hair into a bun. She did not even wear much jewelry and was also indifferent. "Have you brought all the scriptures you've copied?"

Seeing Yu Youyao nod, Old Madam Yu left with her granddaughter.

When elders went out, the family would definitely send them off.

At this moment, Madam Yao was already waiting in front of the door, but Yang Shuwan was nowhere to be seen.

Seeing that Old Madam had come over, Madam Yao hurriedly went forward to greet her. "I've copied some Buddhist scriptures. I'll have to trouble you to bring them when you worship Buddha."

With that, she handed over the sandalwood box containing the Buddhist scriptures.

Nanny Liu received it with a smile. Old Madam Yu nodded. "Thank you."

Madam Yao smiled. "Mother, you have to take care of your health when you're outside."

Just as they were talking, they saw Nanny Li rushing over with an ebony wooden box. She bowed to Old Madam Yu. "Today is the last day of the porridge tent in the rice shop, and also the most important day. First Madam went to Baoxing Rice Shop early in the morning to manage it. She wanted to complete this good deed so that it could have a good ending, so she couldn't come over to send Old Madam off. Old Madam, please don't blame her."

Old Madam Yu's expression was indifferent, but she did not say anything.

After Yao Yao made the arrangements for the porridge stall at home, she told her about it. It was supposed to be a kind deed, so Old Madam Yu was more concerned about it. There was nothing to be unclear about.

Madam Yang was initially unhappy, but on the sixth of April, when she showed her face outside, she jumped up and down. Every day, she did not do anything serious and just ran to the rice shop.

After the first branch built the porridge tent, the second branch also built a porridge tent.

Why wasn't Madam Yao jumping up and down over such a small matter like her? It was obvious that she couldn't manage her own family, so Yao Yao had to suppress her arrogance. She was looking for an opportunity to show off and let others see her shine.

She was really embarrassing to watch.

Nanny Li was also embarrassed. She quickly handed over the sandalwood box. "Although First Madam didn't come, she's very filial to Old Madam and respectful to Buddha. She's copied a lot of Buddhist scriptures recently, so I'll have to trouble Old Madam to bring them over to worship Buddha so that Buddha can see our sincerity."

Nanny Liu took it with a smile and did not say much.

Old Madam Yu turned to Yu Youyao and said, "It's time to set off. It's better to be early than late for the Buddhist Festival."

There were two carriages arranged in the residence. One was for Old Madam Yu and Yu Youyao, while the other was for the servants. Old Madam Yu was old, so the carriage moved slowly.

It was rare for Yu Youyao to go out. When the carriage drove onto the street, she lifted a corner of the curtain and looked out. The grandfather and granddaughter sat together and chatted about what was happening outside.

At this moment, the carriage passed by Baoxing Rice Shop. Yu Youyao's gaze paused.

When Old Madam Yu saw this, she also found it very eye-catching.

After a while, there was a long line of people waiting to eat the porridge in front of Baoxing Rice Shop.

Yang Shuwan was dressed in green clothes and had a headscarf on her head. She stood in the porridge shed beside Baoxing Rice Shop and helped to give out the porridge with a big spoon. This scene was nothing much. No matter who made the porridge shed, the owner would definitely do this.

However, beside her was Yu Jianjia, who was also dressed plainly like her.

The young lady was holding a smaller spoon and standing in front of the big pot with a smile. Whenever someone came up to her, she would give up the porridge and smile as she called out to them.

Old Madam Yu looked away and sneered. "She's only a young girl but she's socializing outside. She's really capable. She's just an eight or nine-year-old girl. She still has a long way to go. Her reputation is the thing that matters, not what she is doing now."

Yu Youyao said nothing. She only poured a cup of medicinal tea and handed it to her grandmother.

Old Madam Yu took it but did not drink it. "Which young lady's reputation doesn't first spread from the residence to the outside world? If it's a little bigger, it'll be reflected after the elders in the family bring her to the various families. I've never heard of any young lady from a big family getting her reputation from the streets."

Chapter 189 - 189 Blood Beeswax Beads

“She’s just like her mother. She’s used to some superficial work, but she doesn’t know that one can’t just be superficial.” After saying that, Old Madam Yu looked out of the window and sneered. “At least she knows how to wear simple clothes. If she were to wear gold and silver, she would really be a joke.”

Shaking her head, she lowered the curtain. Out of sight, out of mind. She turned to look at her granddaughter and couldn’t help but laugh when she saw her eating figs happily.

Yu Youyao swallowed a mouthful of figs and took a sip of tea. Then, she said, “With Mother managing the porridge stall, it’s naturally more appropriate. It’s also better for outsiders to know that the Yu Residence values the porridge stall sincerely and it’s not just for show. Third Sister is young and doesn’t know much. She’s just following Mother around to learn. Since there are elders with her, it’s not crossing the line.”

Hearing this, Old Madam Yu hugged her granddaughter. “You’re such a kind person. You’re thinking of the best.”

After chatting for a while, they finally arrived at the Precious Peace Temple!

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Today was the Buddha Festival, so there were many people offering incense at the Precious Peace Temple.

Yu Youyao followed closely behind her grandmother. She first went to the room to settle down and eat some tea and snacks before going up to the palace.

Yu Youyao knelt on the yellow meditation cushion and recited the Diamond Sutra to pray for her cousin. Only then did she worship Buddha and offer incense.

Old Madam Yu paid for the incense oil and sent the copied Buddhist scriptures to the meditation room.

At this moment, a gray-robed monk came over with a wooden box. “Amitabha, you have done a great deed!”

Old Madam Yu took the wooden box. “Thank you, Master.”

After the old monk left, Yu Youyao looked at the wooden box curiously. It was made of the most ordinary Bodhi wood and did not have any additional patterns on it.

However, Old Madam Yu held it solemnly in her hand and stroked the box gently. Even her voice sounded complicated. “Ten years ago today, I personally handed this box to a master in the temple and asked him to bless it in front of Buddha. He chanted non-stop day and night. He lighted incense and conducted baptism.”

With a little sigh, she had already opened the box.

Immediately, Yu Youyao’s eyes shone brightly. When she looked carefully, she saw that there was a blood beeswax seven-treasure Buddhist prayer beads lying in the box. It was red and looked as beautiful as honey and as bright as wax.

Beeswax was rare and precious to begin with, and blood beeswax was even more precious. Even though Yu Youyao was used to seeing good things, she couldn't take her eyes off it.

"At that time, your mother was pregnant with you. The midwife said that you would be able to come out in April. In April, it was time to bath the buddha. I felt that you were fated with Buddha, so I ordered someone to make this prayer bead."

At the mention of the past, Old Madam Yu also sighed. As she spoke, she picked up the blood honey wax prayer beads. As soon as she picked up the prayer beads lying in the box, light and shadow flowed and they shone brightly.

"It's really beautiful." Yu Youyao looked at it carefully, but it was glossy on the outside and shiny on the inside. It was pure, natural, smooth, and uniform.

Unknowingly, she was a little dazed.

"The older generation all say that thousand-year-old amber and ten-thousand-year-old beeswax are spiritual and can protect one's safety." Old Madam Yu held her granddaughter's hand and wrapped the blood beeswax prayer beads around her thin wrist.

The texture of beeswax was delicate and moist. The beads were warm and lustrous when worn on the wrist. There is no foreign body sensation at all. Yu Youyao could also smell the fragrance of honey. Although the natural fragrance was light, it lingered in the nose, chest and throat. It seems that it could make the mind happy.

The beeswax was a special crystal that had condensed over a long period of time. This incense also accumulated naturally over time.

Old Madam Yu looked at it. The prayer beads were polished to the size of green beans, and the size was even. There was no difference. The prayer beads circled her wrist four times, but they did not seem cumbersome. Instead, they made her look flawless.

In the three years that Madam Xie had been in the family, she had never had any children. After she was pregnant, she did not care if the child was a boy or girl. She was very happy to have a direct descendant and valued her child more.

This was probably what Buddhism often called fate.

"Grandmother..." Yu Youyao felt a lump in her throat, and her eyes felt a little sore. She looked at the blood beeswax prayer beads on her wrist. There was an entire string of prayer beads, and she could tell that there were 108 of them.

The 108 pearls represented 108 industries, 108 Buddhist deities, 108 paths to Buddha, and 108 types of meditation and the destruction of 108 worries.

Old Madam Yu patted her hand. "I originally planned to keep these prayer beads in the temple until you reached the age of adulthood. Who knew that a few days ago, the eminent monk who consecrated the prayer beads at the Precious Peace Temple suddenly sent a letter saying that the

prayer beads have successfully done their job and were personally blessed by Master Hui Neng. It would be useless to continue consecrating it.”

Master Hui Neng’s Buddhist teachings were profound. During her previous trip to the Precious Peace Temple, Yao Yao had been lucky enough to obtain his teachings.

Now that Master Hui Neng had specially blessed the blood honey wax prayer beads, even Old Madam Yu was shocked. She smiled and said, “Yao Yao, you’re indeed fated with Buddha.”

Yu Youyao suddenly recalled the old monk she had seen in the meditation room the last time she had come to the Precious Peace Temple. At that time, the old monk had glanced at her forehead, and before he left, he even recited a paragraph of the Sutra of the Medicine Buddha.

“Yao Yao looks so beautiful wearing it.” Old Madam Yu was delighted. She had heard from the older generation that there was no other red in the world that could compare to the purity of the blood beeswax.

Yu Youyao threw herself into her grandmother’s arms and cried out in a choked voice, “Grandmother!”

Blood beeswax had ten kinds of blessings, which meant that it was perfectly blessed.

Happiness, wealth, longevity, health, tranquility, kindness, loyalty, courage, harmony and perfection. Her mother wished her a life full of peace and blessings.

Old Madam Yu hugged her granddaughter and sighed. “In the blink of an eye, it’ll be ten years. Yao Yao has already grown up and will be ten years old in a few more days. Take this string of blood beeswax prayer beads as a birthday gift from me in advance. When the time comes, don’t look for me for gifts anymore.”

Yu Youyao said in a muffled voice, “Grandmother, you’re too petty. Birthday gifts are only meaningful on the day of the birthday. How can giving them in advance count?”

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she glared at her. “Little heartless girl, quickly take off the Blood beeswax prayer beads. I’ll take them back and leave them for your birthday.”

Yu Youyao quickly hid her hand behind her back and pouted. “That won’t do, Grandmother. How can I take back a gift that I’ve accepted? I won’t take it off. It’ll be mine if I wear it on my wrist.”

Old Madam Yu glared at her. “You’re smart.”

Yu Youyao threw herself into her grandmother’s arms happily. “Who asked me to be raised by Grandmother?”

Old Madam Yu almost laughed in anger. She stroked her granddaughter’s back helplessly. “You little girl...”

Chapter 190 - 190 Thief

Yu Youyao snuggled into her grandmother’s arms and whispered, “Grandmother, I’ll treat you well.”

Old Madam Yu’s eyes welled up, and she smiled. “The beeswax is one of the seven treasures of Buddhism. It is spiritual, and it has been used to worship the Buddha for ten years. It has a Buddhist nature. Wear it well and be good in the future.”

Yu Youyao nodded.

Old Madam Yu brought Yu Youyao to the Lamp House.

The seven-story Lamp House looked more like a lighthouse.

An old monk with a hunched back held an oil lamp and led them into the building.

The light in the Lighthouse was dim, and the circular wooden stairs lasted for so many stories that one couldn't see the end of it. When stepping on it, the soft creaking sound made it seem even more desolate.

Yu Youyao held the sandalwood box and followed the old monk all the way up to the fifth floor. She walked around for most of the way before entering one of the lamp rooms. The tall Thousand Hand Buddha held a lotus lamp in each hand. The green flames emitted a faint light.

The old monk did not say anything along the way as he led them into the small lamp room.

The lamp room was not big, and they only relied on Madam Xie's lamp light.

Old Madam Yu's expression was indescribably complicated. She turned to look at her granddaughter. "Go!"

Yu Youyao nodded. After adding oil to her mother's lamp, she knelt in front of the meditation cushion and opened the sandalwood box she had brought. Inside were the Buddhist scriptures she had copied recently. She threw the Buddhist scriptures into the brazier one by one, and the flames swept up the thin paper, turning it into ashes in an instant.

Yu Youyao clasped her hands together and closed her eyes to read a passage from the Book of Karmic Difference. "I used my sincere heart to create a lantern that can illuminate the world like a lamp..."

After reciting the scripture, Yu Youyao stroked the longevity lock on her chest and sat on the meditation cushion in a daze. Her eyelashes fluttered, and tears fell from her eyes. "Mother, I hope that we can continue our mother-daughter relationship in the next life."

Old Madam Yu had also finished reciting a passage of scriptures. She brought Yu Youyao down the stairs. "I'm going to Master Hui Neng's meditation room to listen to the meditation. I'll get Nanny Liu to send you back to your room first."

Yu Youyao shook her head. "Grandmother can't do without Nanny Liu serving her. I heard that the Precious Peace Temple has the Bodhisattva of Wishes. I wanted to make a wish there, and I will ask Sister Qing Xiu to accompany me."

Old Madam Yu thought for a moment. "That's fine too. It's just that there are many people in the temple today. If we bring two more old maids along, we still can't be alone for a while."

The old maids who followed the carriage were all burly and strong. Even men could not compare to them.

Although the Precious Peace Temple was a peaceful place in the Buddhist Sect, and it was also stable with the protection of Arhats, there had also been incidents of thieves entering the temple and hurting people a few years ago. It was better to bring more people along.

Yu Youyao nodded obediently. "Grandmother, don't worry. After making my wish, I'll return to my room and won't stay outside."

Qing Xiu called someone over. Old Madam Yu was worried and carefully instructed two old maids to follow closely before letting Nanny Liu help her to the meditation room.

The two old maids followed behind Yu Youyao. They did not get too close, but their eyes were fixed on Eldest Miss.

After walking for a while, Yu Youyao saw a Bodhi tree towering not far away. Its branches and leaves were filled with red silk that fluttered in the wind. It was a spectacular sight.

It was said that this Bodhi tree had been planted here in the previous dynasty and had a history of more than a thousand years.

There was a rockery beside the Bodhi tree. Strange stones were piled up and there were many weird barriers. It was originally an excellent scene, but when Yu Youyao saw it, she felt a little breathless.

She covered her pounding heart as a blurry image suddenly appeared before her eyes.

A tall and strong man was holding a large saber that was stained with blood. Under the bright daylight, the bright blade was so dazzling that she couldn't even open her eyes.

She panicked and shouted, "Father..."

Immediately, a pair of bloodshot eyes looked at her. Yu Youyao's blood immediately turned cold, and she woke up with a jolt.

Seeing that she did not look too good, Chun Xiao was a little worried. "Young Miss, what's wrong?"

Yu Youyao took a deep breath and shook her head. "I'm fine." Thinking about the blurry image from before, she felt a sense of *déjà vu*. However, when she thought about it carefully, she couldn't remember anything. She turned to Chun Xiao and asked, "This place looks familiar. Have I been here before?"

Chun Xiao looked back and saw two old maids following her at a distance. She nodded. "Four years ago, on the day of the Buddhist Festival, Young Miss also came to the temple with Old Madam. At that time, Third Miss had just recovered from her illness, and First Madam had also brought her along to pray for blessings. For some reason, Eldest Miss and Third Miss had an argument and ran out alone."

At first, Old Madam did not allow them to talk about it, but many years had passed since then. Now that Young Miss had taken the initiative to ask about it, there was nothing she could not say.

Yu Youyao vaguely remembered that there was such a thing, but she couldn't remember the details. She had a good memory of her childhood and remembered everything clearly when she was four or five years old. Why didn't she remember this?

At the mention of this, Chun Xiao revealed a look of fear. "You don't know this, but at that time, a thief entered the Precious Peace Temple. I heard that he was a vicious and wanted criminal. He even injured someone in the temple, making Old Madam anxious."

A thief? This matched the memory that she had suddenly recalled. Even in the blurry image, she could feel that the man was very fierce. There was even blood on the knife. He must have hurt someone.

“... I searched everywhere, but I couldn't find Young Miss. Old Madam was furious and scolded Eldest Madam harshly. She said that Eldest Madam didn't take good care of Young Miss and caused her to disappear. As a mother, she even scolded Third Miss.”

However, Yu Youyao did not remember anything. “How did they find me later?”

Chun Xiao looked relieved. “It was a monk from the temple who was sweeping the area. He found you at the rockery beside the Bodhisattva of Wishes. At that time, you had injured your head and lost a lot of blood. You fainted on the ground. Only Old Madam, Nanny Liu, and I knew about this. Old Madam was worried that you knocked into the thief that rushed over, so she couldn't let anyone know. Hence, she instructed the monks in the temple to not let the servants know. Even First Madam and Third Miss didn't know about this. They only thought that Eldest Miss had hit her head because she was playful.”

She was the young mistress of a wealthy family. Now that she was involved with a thief, no matter what, this issue should be kept secret.

Yu Youyao frowned, feeling that something was amiss. “Why don't I remember this? I was almost six years old then, and I was also at the age where I could remember things. I should remember this after what happened.”

Chun Xiao explained, “At that time, Miss was still young and suffered quite a shock. You also injured her head and lost a lot of blood. When you returned to the residence, you had a high fever that lasted for most of the night. You were so anxious that you couldn't remember much about it when you woke up. The doctor said that you were too young and had forgotten some bad things in your shock. It didn't matter that much, and Old Madam didn't let us mention it again.”