

All Hail 191

Chapter 191 - 191 Meeting Song Mingzhao

Yu Youyao looked enlightened. Her head was seriously injured, and there was only a scar left after she recovered. Her grandmother had personally cut her hair and let her have a fringe to block the scar so that she wouldn't get a bad tan.

Her grandmother had also sent over the best medicinal dew in the Xie Residence. After applying it with the best jade facial cream for half a year, the scar finally disappeared.

Chun Xiao continued, "That day, you were wearing a longevity lock that looked like a pair of white fish playing with a pearl. Later, a corner of the longevity lock was broken, and the other corner was missing. You cried for a long time. Old Madam's heart ached for you, so she specially ordered someone to enter the temple to look for the missing parts for you but she didn't find them."

At the mention of this, Yu Youyao had a deep impression of it.

The White Jade Pair of Fishes was one of the 15 longevity locks her mother had given her.

There were red and yellow floating flowers on the white jade. The floating flowers looked like two fish, one red and one yellow. Her mother had asked someone to carve them, and they looked like two fish playing with pearls. They also had natural patterns. The fishes were vivid and lifelike, and they were really spiritual. She liked them very much and always wore them.

Later, it was discovered that a piece of the longevity lock was missing, leaving only a red and yellow wishing silk fish.

At that time, she was heartbroken and even cried for a long time.

Later, her grandmother said that the broken longevity lock was inauspicious, so she kept it at the bottom of her box. As time passed, she gradually forgot about it.

Yu Youyao nodded. "Did you catch that thief?"

Chun Xiao smiled and nodded. "I did. I heard that it was all thanks to the heir of the Marquis of Zhen that we caught the thief."

Why was it related to Song Mingzhao again? Yu Youyao did not ask further and went to the Bodhisattva of Wishes in advance. There was an old woman beside her who was selling red wishing silk for wishes. She even had some rare materials.

Chun Xiao bought two of the best prayer mats, took out copper coins, and put them on the wishing silk. She strung a hundred copper coins, but Yu Youyao did not allow her to add any more. "Enough!"

Chun Xiao said, "Young Miss, I heard that the more copper coins you string on the wishing silk and the higher you toss it, the more auspicious it is. Why don't we string more?"

Yu Youyao shook her head. "Buddhism emphasizes fate. Everything can be stopped if it's appropriate. All I want is peace of mind."

Chun Xiao handed the wishing silk to Yu Youyao.

Yu Youyao held the wishing silk and pressed her palms together. She lowered her head and recited the Longevity Scripture. She muttered a wish, “May Grandmother live a long and healthy life...”

After making her wish, Yu Youyao stood on her tiptoes and threw it up the tree.

Behind them, Chun Xiao and the others looked up along with the wishing silk that had been thrown high up. They saw the wishing silk hanging on a main branch high above the Bodhi tree.

The middle-aged woman who was selling the wishing silk said with a smile, “Young Miss, you’re really good at throwing this wishing silk. Not only is it high up, but it’s also on the main branch. It won’t be fall easily even if it’s raining or windy. I guarantee that it will last for a long time.”

Who wouldn’t like to hear such pleasing and auspicious words? Yu Youyao smiled and asked Chun Xiao to give her the silver.

The old lady weighed it in her hand and immediately grinned.

In addition, there was also a wish letter. Yu Youyao recited the Sutra of the Medicine Buddha and made a wish. “Cousin, I hope that your illness will go away and all your illnesses will disappear. I hope that you will be free from calamity and live a peaceful life.”

This time, she did not throw it easily. Instead, she took a deep breath and threw the wishing silk away with all her might.

At this moment, a strange wind came from nowhere.

The wishing silk fluttered in the wind, and Yu Youyao’s heart rose to her throat. Fortunately, the wishing silk followed the wind and wrapped around a higher branch. Only then did she heave a sigh of relief.

Chun Xiao smiled. “Young Miss threw it even higher than before.”

“It’s also because of the wind.” Yu Youyao smiled.

At the side, the old lady said happily, “The good wind is lending you its strength. This wind came at the right time. It’s really auspicious. Miss, you’re lucky to have the help of the east wind. You’ll definitely be able to achieve your goal.”

Yu Youyao felt that this old lady had a glib tongue, so she asked Chun Xiao to give her some silver.

It was rare for the old madam to see such a generous young mistress, so she was happy to say much more flattery.

Yu Youyao took one last look at the wishing basket and was about to return to her room when she suddenly saw a person in a dark green dress not far away. He was looking at her, and she had no idea how long he had been standing there.

Yu Youyao’s heart skipped a beat, and she subconsciously took a step back.

Chun Xiao also saw it and whispered, “It’s Crown Prince Song. I didn’t expect him to come to the Precious Peace Temple today. Do you want to go over and greet him?”

The young lady was still young, so there was no need to be so wary of men and women. Moreover, there were maidservants behind her. If she met someone she knew, she would have to greet them.

“There’s no need. I haven’t seen Young Master Song in the past, so he probably doesn’t know me. There’s no need to go over specially.” Yu Youyao pursed her lips slightly and bowed to Song Mingzhao before leaving.

Song Mingzhao was also stunned.

He had originally planned to make a trip to Youzhou, but before he left the capital, his family had already heard that Youzhou was under martial law. They said that a spy had infiltrated and that no one was allowed to enter or leave, so he could only give up.

Today was the Buddha Festival, so they were just walking around casually. Who knew that he would end up here? He saw a little girl standing under a tree, making a wish and throwing wishing silk.

The little girl was dressed in a plain dress and looked calm and beautiful. She looked like she wasn’t at the age where men and women had to be wary of each other. It was better to avoid her. Just as she was about to leave, he heard the little girl’s gentle voice, like a young bird’s cry. Her voice entered his ears. “Buddhism emphasizes fate. Everything can be stopped if it’s appropriate. All I want is peace of mind.”

For some reason, he suddenly stopped in his tracks.

She looked up and glanced at the Bodhi tree. There were many pieces of wishing silk hanging on it. Some of them had long strings of copper coins. There were even people who had wrapped silver and gold ingots in red paper and tied them to the wishing silk. Everyone felt that the heavier the wishing silk was, the higher it would be thrown, and the longer it would hang on the tree, the more auspicious it would be.

Few people were as clear-minded as her.

Little did they know that the “heavier” the wishing silk was, the more difficult it was to throw it to a higher place. When it came to the wind and rain, the first to fall were those wishing silk pieces that were heavier.

Seeing the little girl’s indifferent figure gradually disappear into the distance...

Song Mingzhao felt a sense of loss for no reason. Coincidentally, he saw an old monk sweeping the leaves at the side and asked, “Which family is that young lady from?”

Actually, he did not know if this monk knew him, so he just asked casually.

The monk who was sweeping the floor looked up. “What a coincidence. I happen to recognize her. She’s the Eldest Miss of the Yu Residence. Every year, she has to follow Grandmother into the temple to worship Buddha and mourn her late mother.”

Song Mingzhao’s breathing tightened. “Every year?”

If he remembered correctly, the Eldest Miss of the Yu Residence seemed to be called Yu Youyao. Her grandmother doted on her very much and often mentioned things related to her.

Eldest Miss Yu had previously given his grandmother a good prescription using the pear paste. After taking it for a while, his grandmother’s cough had eased a little.

Chapter 192 - 192 Song Mingzhao Is Here

Not long ago, Eldest Miss Yu had also given his grandmother some medicinal tea that she had made herself. His grandmother even felt a little better after drinking it.

Recently, he had also been drinking this medicinal tea. Compared to other types of tea, the medicinal tea was more comforting to drink.

He had heard his grandmother mention Eldest Miss Yu a few times and remembered her name.

The old monk nodded. "Of course."

When she met Song Mingzhao, Yu Youyao had a strange feeling that she would bump into him every time she went to the Precious Peace Temple. However, she did not dwell on it for long. Other than that nightmare, Song Mingzhao was just an unimportant person to her.

After returning to the room, Yu Youyao asked the old monk in the temple for some Bodhi leaves and wood. She planned to bring them back to the residence and make some tea for her cousin.

It was rare for her to come out, so she had to bring bacj something for her cousin.

After another hour, a monk came over. "Dinner is ready."

Yu Youyao nodded and turned to instruct Qing Xiu, "Please make a trip to the meditation room and ask if Grandmother wants to eat now."

Not long after Qing Xiu left, she returned with Old Madam Yu.

Chun Xiao and the others went to bring over some vegetarian food. There were a total of six types, including tofu, vegetables from the temple, mushrooms, and fungus from the back mountain. Although they were very light, the taste was excellent.

Old Madam Yu drank some digestive tea and chatted with her granddaughter for a while. Then, she felt a little tired and returned to her room to take a nap.

Yu Youyao was thinking about how Uncle Sun was going to refine the Essence Protection Pill for her cousin, so she couldn't fall asleep for a moment. She brought Chun Xiao and the two old maids to the Hall of the Gods to pay her respects to Buddha. Then, she recited a paragraph of the Sutra of the Medicine Buddha to pray for her cousin and finally asked for a safety talisman.

When she returned to the room, Old Madam Yu had already stood up. "Where did you go?"

Yu Youyao did not hide anything. "I asked for a safety talisman for Cousin so that he can feel at ease."

Old Madam Yu nodded and did not ask further.

Yu Youyao hugged her grandmother's arm again. "I asked the temple for Bodhi leaves and wood. When I return home, I will make tea and incense for you."

Old Madam Yu smiled and said, "It's not in vain then."

At this moment, Qing Xiu came over. "The heir of the Marquis of Zhen is here to greet Old Madam."

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she was also confused. Today was the Buddhist Festival, so there were many people in the Precious Peace Temple. When they encountered familiar families, they would greet them and exchange a few pleasantries before going about their own business.

Even if she didn't meet them, they wouldn't deliberately come to greet her.

The Marquis Residence was also close to the Yu Residence, but Old Madam Song wasn't around today, so Song Mingzhao didn't have to specially come over to greet her.

Yu Youyao had also thought of this, so she said, "Just now, when I saw Crown Prince Song at the Bodhisattva of Wishes, I thought that I didn't know him well, so I didn't go over to greet him. I just bowed from afar and left. However, Crown Prince Song didn't return the greeting, so I don't think he recognized me."

Old Madam Yu nodded. She didn't think that Song Mingzhao had suddenly come over because he had seen Yao Yao. She turned around and instructed Qing Xiu, "Please come in!"

Qing Xiu responded and quickly led Song Mingzhao into the room.

Song Mingzhao was dressed in dark green, making him look slender and handsome. He bent down and cupped his hands. "I happened to see Eldest Miss Yu at the Bodhisattva of Wishes just now." He looked up and glanced at Yu Youyao openly.

Eldest Miss Yu sat obediently beside Old Madam Yu. At a close distance, he felt that the little girl was very young and tender. However, her eyes were already sparkling, and her lips were blooming. She looked beautiful and delicate.

Song Mingzhao's gaze paused for a moment before he looked away. He frowned and said, "I didn't recognize her for a moment. I asked the monks in the temple and found out that Grandmother Yu had brought Miss Yu to the Precious Peace Temple."

Yu Youyao was stunned when she heard this. She did not expect that Song Mingzhao would bring her up when he came over to greet her grandmother.

What did that mean?

Old Madam Yu turned to look at her granddaughter with a meaningful look in her eyes. She pointed at a chair at the side. "Sit down quickly. There's no reason to stand and talk."

Song Mingzhao was in no hurry to leave, so he sat on a chair. Yu Youyao was sitting opposite him. He saw the little girl at a glance and lowered his head to give instructions to a maidservant.

The maidservant lifted the curtain and entered the inner room.

"You came to the Precious Peace Temple alone today. Your grandmother didn't come?" Old Madam Yu was asking the obvious, but she was on good terms with Old Madam Song. When she saw Song Mingzhao, it was inevitable that she had to ask about his elders.

Song Mingzhao retracted his gaze. "It's because I'm bored at home and want to take a walk, but my grandmother can't leave the residence for too long."

Old Madam Yu agreed deeply. The Marquis Residence was large, and the fourth branch had yet to be divided. Even if the Marquis's wife was in charge, Old Madam Yu couldn't be missing.

The curtain that had fallen was quickly lifted again. A maidservant walked out with tea and snacks and quickly placed them in front of him.

Song Mingzhao lowered his head. It was top-grade Longjing tea, but when he brought it to his lips, he thought of the medicinal tea that Eldest Miss Yu had personally made. He felt that even the best tea was tasteless.

He picked it up, then put it down.

Hearing this, Old Madam Yu asked again, "How's your grandmother's health?"

Song Mingzhao replied, "Thank you for your concern, Grandmother Yu. It's all thanks to the prescription for the medicinal pear paste that Eldest Miss Yu gave me last time and the medicinal tea that she made herself. Grandmother's cough has eased a little recently, and she's feeling much better. I'm here today to thank you and Eldest Miss."

These words stunned Yu Youyao again.

In the end, Song Mingzhao really stood up and walked up to Yu Youyao. He cupped his hands and bowed to her, revealing the red knot on his wrist. "Grandmother often talks about Young Miss, so thank you."

Yu Youyao looked straight ahead, but she inevitably saw a piece of broken jade on the red string from the corner of her eye. She didn't take a second look.

With Song Mingzhao's big bow, Yu Youyao suddenly didn't want to stay in the room any longer. However, since Song Mingzhao had arrived, she had to return the greeting.

Hence, Yu Youyao put down the teacup in her hand and stood up as well. She bowed to Song Mingzhao. "You're too polite. Grandmother Song has always been close to my grandmother, and she treats me very well. Grandmother misses Grandmother Song, so I naturally want the best for her. I have to do my best."

Song Mingzhao had used Grandmother Song's health to come over, greet her and thank her. This made sense, and it also showed Song Mingzhao's filial piety.

His behavior was in line with etiquette, which was very appropriate. However, Yu Youyao was a little resistant to Song Mingzhao and did not want to interact with him.

Seeing that Yu Youyao's expression was normal, Song Mingzhao looked down at the longevity knot on his wrist and retracted his hand, covering it with his sleeve.

Old Madam Yu's smile deepened, and she said, "There's no need to be so polite. Yao Yao is a sincere child, so it's nothing much. Just get your grandmother to take good care of herself. If she needs anything, just send someone over to get it."

Chapter 193 - 193 Cousin, Why Are You Here?

Song Mingzhao nodded. "Thank you, Grandmother Yu."

After chatting for a while, Song Mingzhao wanted to leave.

Old Madam Yu turned to Yu Youyao and said, "Send Mingzhao off."

Yu Youyao was not very happy, but she did not show it on her face. Song Mingzhao had specially come to greet her. His presence was important and the Yu Residence had to be respectful but they couldn't possibly ask Grandmother to send him off!

The two of them walked out of the door side by side. Yu Youyao was small, and she was not even as tall as Song Mingzhao's shoulder. However, when they stood together, the man's handsome and noble appearance and the woman's delicate appearance made everyone's eyes light up.

Yu Youyao sent him to the entrance of the courtyard and stopped. "Prince Song, take care."

Song Mingzhao stood rooted to the ground and turned to look at Yu Youyao. "I heard that Eldest Miss Yu goes to the Precious Peace Temple with Grandmother every year on the Buddhist Festival?"

Yu Youyao nodded. "Grandmother lit a lamp for my mother in the temple. I have to come over every year to add oil to the lamp and mourn."

Song Mingzhao was silent for a while.

However, Yu Youyao did not know whether to leave or stay. It was awkward for her to just stand with him. After enduring it for a while, she asked, "Prince, is there anything else?"

Song Mingzhao glanced at Yu Youyao, as if he had something to say. However, he saw the faint expression on her face, so he shook his head. "No, Miss, you don't have to send me off anymore. Go back!"

Yu Youyao heaved a sigh of relief and bowed to Song Mingzhao. Before he left, she returned to the courtyard.

Song Mingzhao tilted his head and saw Eldest Miss Yu, who was brushing shoulders with him, from the corner of his eye. There was a smile on her lips. Her eyes were like sparkling stars and the smile made them look bright and clear.

Eldest Miss Yu did not seem to like him much.

He lowered his head and fiddled with the broken jade on his wrist out of habit before striding away.

Seeing that her granddaughter had returned to her room, Old Madam Yu said, "I wonder if Young Master Song is here to pay his respects or to thank you."

When Yu Youyao heard this, her eyelids twitched again. "Of course he's here to pay his respects and thank me. Young Master Song isn't someone who doesn't know his priorities. How can he not know his priorities? Besides, Young Master Song is a junior. There's nothing to criticize when he didn't specially come to pay his respects when he heard that Grandmother was also at the Precious Peace Temple. Grandmother Song is close to Grandmother, so he specially came over to show his etiquette."

Old Madam Yu knew this logic better than her, so she glanced at her. "I just said it casually, but you can already say so much. You've really grown."

She could also sense that Yao Yao was avoiding Song Mingzhao, but she didn't think too much about it. Although she wasn't at the age where men and women had to be wary of each other, a

daughter of a good family would show more manners and upbringing when she saw another man, regardless of whether her elders were around.

Yu Youyao stuck out her tongue. Since it concerned Song Mingzhao, she didn't say anything else.

Old Madam Yu lowered her eyes and looked at the medicinal tea in her hand. The smoke from the tea hid the many thoughts in her eyes.

Song Mingzhao's thoughts were very deep, and it wasn't easy to guess.

His actions today were in line with etiquette, and he was grateful to Yao Yao. However, his attitude towards Yao Yao was a little obscure, and no one could tell what he was thinking.

After thinking for a while, Old Madam Yu chuckled. "I'll go to Master Hui Neng's meditation room to listen to the meditation. Stay here alone. If you want to go out for a walk, bring your maid servants with you. You can't walk around on your own."

There was no need to be in a hurry to think about this. After all, there was still a long way to go. She had to watch carefully to see if it was good or bad.

Yu Youyao nodded and personally sent her grandmother to the meditation room. When she returned to the room, a small monk brought over the Bodhi Tree branches and leaves that Yu Youyao had asked for previously.

She had to take a good look at what she was given on the spot. Yu Youyao scanned them carefully and did not find any problems. However, she found a folded note under the cloth bag.

Yu Youyao's breathing tightened, but she did not plan to make it public. She turned around and instructed Chun Xiao, "You don't have to wait on me. Go and rest too."

Seeing that Chun Xiao had left and even thoughtfully closed the door, Yu Youyao unfolded the note. She had originally felt uneasy and asked the temple for something, but a note had slipped in. No matter how she looked at it, this matter seemed abnormal. However, when Yu Youyao saw the familiar words on it, she smiled.

After memorizing the contents of the note, Yu Youyao burned it and called Chun Xiao over. "It's rare for me to come to the Precious Peace Temple. I plan to go to the meditation room to listen so that I can pray for Grandmother and Cousin."

There was nothing wrong with this, but Chun Xiao couldn't help but ask, "Doesn't Miss usually hate to go to the meditation room to listen to the meditation? Old Madam always goes alone and doesn't bring Miss along." Today, it was very strange.

Yu Youyao did not explain. "I suddenly want to go."

Chun Xiao had no choice.

Yu Youyao brought Chun Xiao and the two old maids out of the room. When she saw a small monk, she went forward and asked, "Where's Master Hui Ji's meditation room?"

The little monk pointed the way. Yu Youyao thanked him and was about to go over.

Chun Xiao felt a little uneasy. "Young Miss, aren't you going to Old Madam's place?"

Yu Youyao shook her head. "I just want to listen to the meditation on a whim. I don't want to disturb Grandmother's peace."

She was quite self-aware, so Chun Xiao did not say anything else.

Master Hui Ji's meditation room was not far away. They arrived after a turn. Yu Youyao instructed two old maids to guard outside and brought Chun Xiao into the room. She asked Chun Xiao to stay in the outer room while she entered the inner room alone.

The room was a little dark, with sparse light and shadow seeping in through the window. It was quiet. Yu Youyao immediately saw her cousin sitting under the window of the meditation room. There was a chessboard in front of him, with black and white pieces crisscrossing it.

"Cousin!" Yu Youyao's voice was cheerful. She sat down opposite her cousin and asked with a smile, "Why are you here at the Precious Peace Temple? You even got someone to send me a note."

The corners of Zhou Linghuai's lips also curled up slightly. "I have some matters to settle. Thinking that you were also at the Precious Peace Temple, I borrowed Master Hui Ji's meditation hall to meet you. There's nothing special."

Yu Youyao suddenly thought of the man in black who had called her cousin "Young Master." Her eyelids twitched, but she did not ask what was going on. Instead, she changed the topic. "Isn't today the day Uncle Sun will refine the pills? Why are you still moving around?"

Zhou Linghuai smiled. "Uncle Sun is the one refining the pills, not me. It doesn't matter if I'm not around."

That was true. Yu Youyao nodded. "How's Uncle Sun's pill refinement going? Was it successful? Unfortunately, I wasn't in the residence. Otherwise, I would have seen it with my own eyes."

Zhou Linghuai's smile deepened. "Everything is going well. However, it's not that easy to refine pills. Once the furnace is opened, the pills won't be refined immediately."

Chapter 194 - 194 Cousin, Teach Me Chess

Yu Youyao was stunned for a moment before her eyes widened. "It won't take 49 days like in the book, right? Then Cousin..."

However, Zhou Linghuai laughed when he heard that. "Don't think too much. It's just a medicinal pill to nourish the body, not an immortal pill. Why would it take so long? The medicinal pill will be refined in three days at most."

When Yu Youyao heard this, she was relieved. "It's not as it seems. Otherwise, Cousin would have to wait for a long time, and his recovery would take a long time."

Zhou Linghuai looked at her. "Don't read any more nonsensical books. If you like books, I'll give you a few some other day. You can choose one."

Yu Youyao nodded wildly. It was unknown if she had heard him or not. She took out a sachet from her sleeve and held it in her hand. She handed it to her cousin as if she was presenting a treasure. "Cousin, I prayed for you in the palace today and even asked for a safety talisman for you. Cousin, you can wear it on your body to ensure your safety."

Zhou Linghuai's gaze paused. Instead of looking at the sachet she was holding in her palm, it landed on her fair wrist.

The Blood Beeswax Buddha beads flowed with the light, emitting a beautiful and pure shine. The pure red light contrasted with the little girl's plain clothes, making her look stunning.

Noticing her cousin's gaze, Yu Youyao fiddled with the prayer beads on her wrist. "This was given to me by my grandmother today. She said that it had been blessed in the temple ten years ago and had been used during worship non-stop day and night. It was infused by incense, baptized, and absorbed with Buddha nature. It was even personally consecrated by Master Hui Neng. It's a rare Buddhist treasure."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "It's indeed rare." He paused for a moment and continued, "There are three characteristics of beeswax: spirituality, medicinal properties, and Buddhist nature. It's spiritual and can help to avoid evil and calamities. According to the Medicine Scripture, beeswax is one of the five treasures of Chinese medicine. It's a precious treasure that can nourish the body and mind. It also has ten types of Buddhist fate, so wear it well."

Yu Youyao smiled and said, "I have a golden honey beeswax Buddha pendant in my house. It's also very good. The golden honey beeswax is a Buddhist orthodox and the color is suitable for Cousin."

Beeswax was one of the seven treasures of Buddhism. In addition, beeswax was rare. Usually, it was made into Buddhist beads, Buddha statues, and other items related to Buddhism.

Zhou Linghuai did not know whether to laugh or cry. "It's as if I'm trying to get something from you."

Yu Youyao looked like she was rich. "The blood beeswax prayer beads that Grandmother gave me are enough. I can't wear any more. It's a pity to leave such a good thing lying around. I might as well give it to Cousin. It'll be put to use."

Not to mention anything else, the beeswax fragrance was natural, and it wasn't strong when worn on the body. However, occasionally, a wisp of fragrance would curl around the end of her nose, lingering between her heart and mind. It made her feel at ease. It could be seen that the effects of the beeswax were really amazing.

Even if there were many strange things in the Heavenly Fragrance Records, it couldn't compare to the natural ingredients of the earth.

Her cousin was not in good health. Only by recuperating both physically and mentally could he achieve twice the results with half the effort.

At this point, Zhou Linghuai did not say anything else. In any case, he could not refuse.

Yu Youyao handed the sachet over again. "Cousin, quickly put on the safety charm I requested for you."

Under the little girl's sparkling gaze, Zhou Linghuai took the sachet and slowly placed it on his chest. He pressed it against his heart and felt his heart pound. "Thank you, Cousin."

Yu Youyao smiled. Even the dark room lit up.

Zhou Linghuai picked up his tea and took a sip. He lowered his eyes and asked, "I just saw the heir of the Marquis of Zhen coming out of your small courtyard."

The two of them stood side by side. The scene was blinding.

He quietly went up to the Precious Peace Temple. There were many inconveniences in his actions. Initially, he had not planned to see the little girl. However, when he passed by the little girl's room, he could not help but take a detour and suddenly changed his mind.

Yu Youyao replied with an "Oh" and her attitude was a little cold. "He was only here to greet Grandmother. At the same time, he wanted to thank me for giving Old Madam Song the prescription and medicinal tea. Grandmother asked me to send him off."

Zhou Linghuai nodded and did not ask further. He only picked up a black chess piece and placed it on the chessboard.

Even though Yu Youyao did not know much about chess, she could vaguely tell that this game was very dangerous. It was like a long knife smashing into a yellow dragon, and it was very powerful. She suddenly said, "Why don't you teach me how to play chess too? When I master it, I can accompany you to play against you in the future. You won't have to play chess with yourself anymore."

When she went to her cousin's study, she would occasionally see him sitting alone with a white chess piece in one hand and a black chess piece in the other.

At first, she was surprised.

However, as time passed, she inevitably felt that such a cousin was too lonely.

Such a delicate and lazy person wanted to learn chess skills just to play chess with him. Zhou Linghuai was stunned. "Chess isn't as easy to learn as zither skills. You need to study it..."

When Yu Youyao heard this, she waved her hand. "Cousin, you think too highly of me. I will just learn casually and play with you. I don't have time to study it."

"I'll teach you." How could Zhou Linghuai refuse? He placed the black and white pieces on the chessboard onto the chessboard one by one.

Yu Youyao also helped. Suddenly, she said, "I still have a set of top-notch chess pieces in my house. When I return to the residence later, I'll send them to Cousin's courtyard with the golden beeswax Buddha beads. There's also a chessboard made of camphor wood. I heard that the chess pieces are a perfect match."

These were all sent over by her maternal grandfather. She didn't know much about chess, so it was indeed a pity to put them away. If she gave them to her cousin, it would complement his talent.

His little cousin was rich and overbearing, wanting to give something away at the slightest disinterest. Zhou Linghuai felt helpless. "Just listen."

Yu Youyao stuck out her tongue and stopped talking.

Zhou Linghuai said, "The chessboard is a square, and the chess pieces are round. On the chessboard, it means that the sky is round and the ground is square. The chess pieces are divided into black and white, which means Yin and Yang. There are a total of 361 points on the chessboard, which correspond to the number of days in a year. The Heavenly Yuan point means that everything begins at the same time. The nine star positions correspond to the number of nine palaces. The star positions divide the chessboard into four quadrants, which mean that there are four seasons in a

year. Each quadrant has about 90 chess points, which means the number of days in a season. There are 72 points around the chessboard, which means that there are 72 days in each season.”

As he explained, he gestured and pointed at the chessboard.

Initially, Yu Youyao felt that there was nothing special about these small square chess boards. However, when she asked her cousin to gesture and give pointers, she felt that she was ignorant.

No wonder Ms. Ye had asked her to dabble in chess and paintings. It had indeed broadened her horizons.

This time, she was indeed a little interested. She followed her cousin’s gestures and carefully observed the chessboard. Gradually, she felt like she was one with it.

Zhou Linghuai explained and said, “The game moves in a circle, and the game is quiet. It’s for the game.”

The rules for placing the chess pieces were very simple. Zhou Linghuai explained it and Yu Youyao remembered it. After playing for a while, she basically grasped the rules, but it was only limited to placing stones.

Chapter 195 - 195 Stinking Chess Piece

Yu Youyao was excited. “It’s not difficult to play chess. Cousin, I’ll play chess with you.”

Seeing that she was happy, Zhou Linghuai did not want to discourage her. He nodded. “Okay!”

The two of them played chess back and forth. The scene looked quite beautiful.

“Cousin, is it here?” The little girl was holding a white chess piece. The jade piece was transparent and flawless. When it was pinched using her fingertips, it made her look delicate and exquisite.

The smile on Zhou Linghuai’s lips was a little forced, and he gave up on continuing to guide her. “It’s good that you think it’s good!”

!!

He probably did not expect that although the young lady was good at everything, she did not have any talent in chess. He had even guided her through a game of chess, but she only had the ability to turn a good game of chess into a lousy one. During this period, he had saved countless times before he managed to revive this game of chess. He had barely managed to play it. Otherwise, the young lady would have died countless times.

He actually thought of someone who was not good but interested in chess.

Yu Youyao scratched her cheek and bit her lip. She couldn’t make up her mind, so she started to act shamelessly. “I don’t care. Cousin, you’re not allowed to eat my piece.”

Zhou Linghuai nodded weakly. “Alright, I won’t eat it.”

The little girl smiled and put down the chess piece. She looked up at her cousin with sparkling eyes and reminded him, “Cousin, it’s your turn.”

Zhou Linghuai looked at this chess move that had just come to life. After seeing the little girl's move and how she was on the verge of courting death, he felt very weak. Her ability to court death was not for show.

Not only that...

After taking a few steps, the little girl regretted it. Her tender little fingers took down the white chess piece and hid it behind her back shamelessly. "Cousin, Cousin, I played wrongly just now. This doesn't count. Let's start over..."

Zhou Linghuai reminded, "A gentleman has no regrets playing chess."

This was the first time the little girl had learned how to play chess. She didn't care about any chess skills or rules. She pouted. "Oh, I forgot. I'll definitely remember it next time."

So, this time, forget it.

After a while, the little girl regretted making a move again. No matter how well Zhou Linghuai had been raised, the veins on his forehead couldn't help but throb. "Cousin, gentlemen can't have regrets playing chess..."

Before he could finish speaking, he heard the little girl's cheerful voice. "What gentleman! I'm not a gentleman. I'm a woman, and a child at that. Therefore, it's fine to go back on my word."

As the little girl regretted her move, she looked at her cousin. Her eyes were bright, as if there were stars shining in them. Zhou Linghuai was instantly speechless.

That was what this person said, but that wasn't how logic worked.

Forget it. This young lady had just learned how to play chess, so it was normal for her to not know the rules. He would just teach her slowly in the future.

After that, Zhou Linghuai realized that he had been too naive. Chess required innate talent and wasn't something that could be trained easily.

"Cousin, I'll change my position..."

Zhou Linghuai reminded her again, "Cousin, nothing changes!"

The little girl picked up the white piece and said confidently, "This doesn't count. My hand is still on the piece, so it's not fixed. I can change it."

That was one thing...

In the time it took for Zhou Linghuai to take a sip of tea, he had already seen the little girl's fair fingers. He quickly picked up a few black pieces from the chessboard and hid them under it. He even sat up straight guiltily, his eyes no longer darting around. He was focused on the chessboard, as if he was really watching the game seriously.

It was ridiculous.

Not long after, Yu Youyao lost miserably.

The little girl pouted and raised her mouth high. "Cousin, you're too much. It's my first time learning how to play chess today. Don't you know how to make way for me and let me win?"

Zhou Linghuai did not want to speak anymore.

It wasn't that he didn't want her to win. It was just that the young lady was too stubborn. In a game of chess, he had given her countless ways out, but the young lady always courted death.

However, this game was over.

The little girl was only annoyed for a short while before saying, "Cousin, it turns out that playing chess is so interesting. Let's play again..."

Zhou Linghuai had just picked up his teacup to drink when he heard the little girl's words. He almost choked on his tea and swallowed it. However, he choked on his tea and his face turned red. It took him a long time to catch his breath.

It turned out that not only had he taught a lousy chess player, but she was also a chess idiot.

Hence, for a long time, Zhou Linghuai was deeply troubled playing chess with his little cousin until he suggested that the little girl teach Chun Xiao how to play chess.

The young lady boasted that she was good at chess, mainly because her cousin had given her this illusion. When she heard that she could teach others how to play chess, how could she not be happy? She immediately abandoned her cousin and pulled Chun Xiao to the study to play chess. From then on, the person who played chess with the young lady would become Chun Xiao, and he would be free.

Yu Youyao stayed in the meditation room for more than an hour before happily bringing Chun Xiao in.

Chun Xiao had more or less heard the commotion in the outer room. Although she was puzzled as to why Young Master had come to the Precious Peace Temple and why he had not gone to greet Old Madam but had instead met Young Miss alone,

Young Miss clearly knew that Young Master was in Master Hui Ji's meditation room, but she did not say anything and only said that she wanted to come and listen to the meditation.

No matter how she looked at it, it was strange.

Yu Youyao said calmly, "There's no need to tell anyone that Cousin has come to the Precious Peace Temple. If anyone asks, just say that I came to Master Hui Ji's meditation room to listen to the meditation and pray for Grandmother."

Chun Xiao did not think too much about it and did not ask further. "Don't worry, Miss."

Among the maidservants, Chun Xiao and Dong Mei were both born into the family. Chun Xiao had been serving her since she was young. Dong Mei had always been by her grandmother's side. Although she wasn't in front of her, she had always helped to take care of her. It was also because of their relationship since they were young.

Qiu Xing had been selected from the manor and had served her for many years. Xia Tao had been bought from outside the residence. She was not as trained as the others, but she still served her to the best of her abilities.

Chun Xiaoxin was the most honest and her most trusted person. Wherever she went, she had to bring Chun Xiao along. Dong Mei was smart and steady, and she relied on her the most. She was in charge of all the matters in the Jade Courtyard. Xia Tao was smart, so she had to bring her along too. Qiu Xing was cautious and quiet. She was also very capable.

As soon as she left, the meditation room fell silent.

In the quiet room, Zhou Linghuai said calmly, "Come out!"

The man in black suddenly flew down from the beam and knelt on one knee in front of Zhou Linghuai. He cupped his fists. "Young Master."

"When will King Ping enter the capital?" Zhou Huai frowned and picked up the messy chess pieces on the chessboard one by one.

The man in black replied in a low voice, "He will set off at the end of March. However, King Ping was seriously injured by a sneak attack during the war with the Southern Barbarians years ago. I heard that he almost lost his life, and it took him a month to recover. However, his new injuries have implicated the old ailment in his body, and his body hasn't recovered yet. The southern border is a little far from the north, so he's been moving slowly. I reckon he'll only reach the capital after the palace examination."

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "He can really afford it."

Chapter 196 - 196 Make Him Crazy First

This injury was definitely real, and the serious injuries might not all be fake. His injuries had yet to recover, but he had to bring his injuries to the capital to show his loyalty.

No one in this world did not fall for this.

The man in black said, "Young Master, why did you secretly provoke King Ping to enter the capital?"

On that day at the Precious Peace Temple, the young master had asked him to send someone to keep an eye on the King of Liang. He had not understood what he meant, but not long after, the King of Liang's spy in Youzhou had received a secret letter. He had no way of knowing the contents of the letter, but the King of Liang's ambition had been inflated and he had begun to plan to bring the prince into the capital. He knew that the young master was involved.

Young Master had planned for Prince Liang to enter the capital.

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Zhou Linghuai's lips moved slightly. "If the vassal king doesn't move, how can we interfere? You have to know that if you want to destroy him, you have to make him crazy first..."

The man in black froze.

Flowers withered when they were at their peak, and fire burned when they were heated. Young Master was dancing with his sword, and his ambition was to become an official.

Zhou Linghuai shook his head. "Just keep an eye on him." He did not continue talking about the King of Liang and changed the topic. "How's the situation in Youzhou?"

The man in black lowered his head and replied, "It's still under control. Although the Marquis of Changxing is quite capable of using troops, he's ambitious and extravagant. He has been guarding the Northern Region for three years without thinking about governance, but he's been harsh on commoners, causing the people of the Northern Region to complain. A few days ago, the Northern Region was under martial law. It was said that a spy had sneaked in. The Marquis of Changxing ordered people to search everywhere."

The corners of Zhou Linghuai's mouth twitched slightly. "A spy?"

At midnight, Old Madam Yu returned to her room.

This trip to the Precious Peace Temple was a success. Old Madam Yu was a little tired and returned to her room to rest. Yu Youyao instructed the servants to pack up.

About ten minutes later, she was done packing.

The group left the Precious Peace Temple and boarded a carriage. The horses clattered back to the Yu Residence, and it took half an hour for them to return.

When Old Madam Yu returned to the residence, the family inevitably came out to welcome her. When Yang Shuwan saw Old Madam Yu get out of the carriage, she quickly went up to her and took Nanny Liu's place to support her. "It's been hard on you today, Old Madam."

Old Madam Yu glanced at her from the corner of her eye. "It's not as hard as what you did. You had to go to the porridge shed early in the morning."

It was a simple sentence, and she couldn't tell what was going on, but Yang Shuwan felt very awkward when she heard it. "This is the last day of giving porridge. I have to keep an eye on it."

Everyone escorted Old Madam Yu back to An Shou Hall.

After a long day, even with her granddaughter taking good care of her, Old Madam Yu was tired and couldn't stand the filial piety on the surface.

After asking about her well-being, Madam Yao understood. "Since Old Madam is back safely, I can rest assured. I'll return to the second branch to manage it. It's time for Master to leave the office later."

Everyone in the room was finally empty. Old Madam Yu leaned against the couch, looking tired. "I'm getting old, and my body is becoming more and more useless."

Nanny Xu handed her a bowl of medicinal tea. "I think you're feeling much better. Usually, when you go to the Precious Peace Temple, how can you tolerate it until this time? Even if you stay later, you'll still return home at around 3pm."

Now that she mentioned it, Old Madam Yu realized that it was true.

Recently, she had been using a lot of the medicinal cuisine, medicinal tea, and medicinal fragrance that Yao Yao had sent over. Usually, she felt that this was not bad, and she did not feel that it was any different from other supplements. However, after this ordeal, the effects were obvious.

Old Madam Yu smiled. "Our Yao Yao is talented and has grown up."

The two of them chatted for a while before Bai Kui ordered someone to set the table.

At this moment, Qiu Xing came over. "Nanny Xu has made some medicinal cuisine. It's light and appetizing, but also relieves fatigue. Eldest Miss ordered me to bring you a bowl."

Nanny Liu took it with a smile. "There's no one more considerate than Eldest Miss."

As soon as Old Madam returned to the residence, all of them came forward to greet her. They said a lot of filial and considerate words, but when it came to filial piety, Eldest Miss was still the most considerate.

Old Madam Yu smiled. "That's right!"

After a long day, Yu Youyao was also a little tired. After eating a bowl of medicinal cuisine and some porridge, she asked Dong Mei to find the golden beeswax Buddha pendant, a set of jade beads, as well as a chessboard made of camphor wood. Then, she brought Xia Tao to the Green House.

It was almost dark, so it wasn't good for her to go to the Green House. However, Yu Youyao kept thinking about Uncle Sun's alchemy. She had to make a trip there to feel at ease.

When they arrived at the Green House, Yu Youyao went to the pharmacy without even looking for her cousin.

However, not only was the door of the pharmacy tightly shut, but there was also a big piece of paper pasted outside. It was written in large strokes: "No unauthorized personnel."

Even without naming her, Yu Yao knew very well that these words were clearly directed at her.

However, Yu Youyao was so angry that she tugged at the paper on the door and almost kicked it. She thought about how Uncle Sun was refining pills for her cousin and she did not know what was going on. Her rash actions might alarm Uncle Sun, and affect the refinement of the pills. She could only retract her foot angrily.

Xia Tao, who was following behind Yu Youyao, couldn't help but lower her head and laugh.

Yu Youyao turned around and saw that her little shoulders were shaking. How could she not know that she was laughing secretly? She glared at her. "Don't laugh anymore. If you laugh anymore, you won't have your monthly allowance for this month."

Xia Tao did not dare to laugh anymore. She quickly pursed her lips and held back her laughter. Her face trembled, looking very comical.

"Uncle Sun is too much. It's just refining a pill. Why can't anyone watch?" Yu Youyao ran to look for her cousin angrily. "No, I have to tell Cousin."

Xia Tao followed behind and smiled.

The little girl ran to the study like the wind. "Cousin, Cousin, Uncle Sun is bullying..."

"What's wrong?" Zhou Linghuai had just added a layer of paint on the zither. When he came out of the side room, he smelled of paint. He had mixed the paint

used to make the zither himself, and he had also used precious resin paint. The smell was not as pungent as ordinary paint. Instead, there was a wooden fragrance.

Yu Youyao slammed the white paper with black words on it onto the table angrily. "I'm just a little curious about alchemy and wanted to see it for myself. But not only did Uncle Sun not let anyone see it, he even..." Her eyes widened and her cheeks puffed up in anger. "Cousin, look at what Uncle Sun has written. It's too much."

Zhou Linghuai saw the words on it at a glance and couldn't help but laugh. "Yes, it's indeed a little too much. If you want to see alchemy, I'll bring you over to take a look. There's no need for Uncle Sun to agree."

Over the past few days, the little girl had been thinking about the Essence Protection Pill more than him. She also went to the Green House every day. Sometimes, she would go there a few times a day. Uncle Sun was probably annoyed by her.

When Yu Youyao heard this, she was delighted. However, she hesitated and said, "Forget it. Uncle Sun specially pasted a paper on the door. It's probably not appropriate for him to be disturbed. If he doesn't want me to see it, then so be it. I don't think there's anything to see in alchemy. I'm just a little curious. I don't have to look. Refining the Essence Protection Pill is more important."

Chapter 197 - 197 Cousin, Rest Early

Before Zhou Linghuai could say anything, the little girl suddenly became happy again. "Cousin, I've brought everything for you. Take a look."

Her temper came and went quickly, making it impossible for Zhou Linghuai to say anything to comfort her.

Yu Youyao first took the golden beeswax Buddha pendant and placed it in her cousin's palm. "Cousin, the red string on the Buddha pendant is a peace knot that I made myself. I heard that the peace knot is good against calamity, illness, disaster, evil, and filth. It can protect one's safety. I originally planned to give it to you to wear around your wrist. Now, it's just right to put on the Buddha pendant."

Zhou Linghuai's breathing slowed down. On the little girl's fair palm, a five-petal plum flower was woven on the red strap, and the beeswax Buddha was hanging from it.

There were four types of plum blossoms: the first buds were called "Yuan" to indicate the beginning, blossoms were called "Heng" to indicate auspiciousness, fruit was "Li" to indicate success, and maturity was "Zhen" to indicate fertility.

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Five petals signified happiness, luck, longevity, smooth sailing life and peace.

Zhou Linghuai slowly closed his eyes. There were five virtues. The Book of Classics recorded, "The first day is longevity, the second day is wealth, the third day is peace, the fourth day is good virtue, and the fifth day is life."

Longevity meant not dying prematurely.

Wealth was wealth, and status was noble.

Humans had to be healthy and have a peace of mind.

Good virtue is kind by nature, and is generous and quiet

A good ending is perfect, and a good beginning is a good end.

Zhou Linghuai opened his eyes. As he breathed, he could smell the faint lotus fragrance on the little girl's body. It was refreshing and lingered in his nose, around his lungs.

Seeing that her cousin was silent and just staring at the pendant, Yu Youyao quickly asked, "Can I help you put it on?"

Zhou Linghuai's expression froze for a moment before he nodded. "Alright!"

Yu Youyao walked behind her cousin and wrapped her arms around his chest. She put the beeswax pendant on his neck and nimbly tied a five-petal plum knot with her fingers. After examining it carefully and feeling very satisfied, she placed her hands on his shoulders and leaned her head in front of him. She asked, "Cousin, is the knot tight?"

The little girl leaned close. When Zhou Linghuai tilted his head, he could see her young and beautiful face. He shook his head. "Just right."

The beeswax Buddha pendant fell below his collarbone. It was neither loose nor tight, but it was just right.

Yu Youyao moved closer to her cousin. The golden beeswax shone brightly, and the light and shadow shone faintly like Buddha's light and looked dignified. Her cousin looked elegant and noble.

She suddenly leaned closer. Zhou Linghuai's body tensed up and he subconsciously leaned back.

The little girl suddenly reached out and gently lifted his collar.

Zhou Linghuai pursed his lips and felt that it was inappropriate. Just as he was about to dodge, the little girl picked up the Buddha pendant on his chest and put the beeswax into his clothes. She smiled and said, "Cousin, you have to wear the beeswax."

Zhou Linghuai was stunned. He had never liked to wear anything close to him, so he always felt uncomfortable. However, the beeswax was fine and smooth, so it was not bad to wear it on his body.

Yu Youyao did not notice her cousin's abnormality. She smiled and said, "Cousin, let's play chess!"

As she spoke, Yu Youyao had already walked to the window sill and put away the set of jade pieces that had been placed there. She happily set up the chessboard that she had brought with her and took out the pieces.

Zhou Linghuai sat still, but Yu Youyao called out again, "Cousin, come quickly!"

The young lady had just learned chess and was in the midst of becoming addicted. Logically speaking, this was also a good thing. Only when the young lady was interested in chess could she learn well.

However, at the thought of the little girl's indescribable chess skills, Zhou Linghuai did not really want to accompany her. He had seen people with bad chess skills, but he had never seen someone as creative as her.

Zhou Linghuai sat in front of the chessboard. "It's already late. It's been a long day. Go back and rest early."

As he spoke, he picked up a chess piece.

The chess set was made from agate, amber, and other materials. The craftsmanship was not inferior at all.

The black chess pieces were placed on the chessboard. They were pitch-black and had no other colors. When he picked one up and light shined on it, the chess piece would be transparent and crystalline, often green or blue.

On the other hand, the white piece was as gentle as fine jade. It was slightly yellow and jade-green in color. It was beautiful and harmonious.

The chess pieces were firm and delicate. They could be thrown to the ground without shattering. When they were slapped on the board, the sound was crisp and not airy. During winter, they were gentle on the fingertips. During summer, they were cool in the palm of the hand, as if it was filled with vitality.

Yu Youyao pursed her lips, feeling a little reluctant.

However, her cousin had also gone to the Precious Peace Temple today. Thinking that he must have been through a lot, she felt a little regretful. "Then forget it. Cousin, have a good rest. I'll look for you to play chess tomorrow."

When Zhou Linghuai heard this, his eyelids twitched.

The little girl looked at her cousin eagerly and held his sleeve. "Cousin, what do you think?"

How could Zhou Linghuai still say no? He immediately braced himself. "Okay!"

Yu Youyao was delighted when she heard this. "Cousin, rest early. I'll get going first!"

After returning to the Jade Courtyard, Yu Youyao went to the incense room. After processing the Bodhi Tree wood and leaf that she had brought back today, she returned to her room and asked Nanny Xu to train her body. After practicing the Body Toughening Technique for a while and taking a medicinal bath, she fell asleep.

That night, Yu Youyao had a dream.

In her dream, Little Youyao, who was five or six years old, followed her grandmother to the Precious Peace Temple. Accompanying her were her stepmother, Yang Shuwan, and her third sister, Yu Jianjia.

Little Youyao and her grandmother added oil to her mother's lamp and were in a very low mood. When they returned to the small courtyard, they heard the two old maids chatting in the corner of the courtyard.

“Eldest Madam Xie was amazing back then. Not only was she a top-notch beauty, but she was also smart and capable. Although she was born in a merchant family, she had an imposing aura and rules that ordinary people couldn’t compare to.”

“What’s the use of this? However, it’s also not up to First Madam Xie’s liking. First Madam Xie has been married into the family for three years and has never produced a child. Even if First Master doesn’t like to go to the main courtyard, it hasn’t even been a hundred days since First Madam Xie’s death when First Master couldn’t wait to welcome First Madam Yang into the house. Old Madam couldn’t stop him either. Poor First Madam Xie’s corpse hasn’t even turned cold yet, and Eldest Miss is still in her infancy. People in the family know what’s going on. I don’t believe that there’s nothing between them...”

Little Youyao had been raised in her grandmother’s house and rarely heard anyone mention anything about her biological mother. When she heard this, she felt terrible. Tears welled up in her eyes as she stomped her feet and ran into the room.

Coincidentally, Yu Jianjia was about to leave when Little Youyao suddenly stopped in her tracks. Fortunately, she did not bump into Yu Jianjia.

However, Yu Jianjia was shocked. She staggered a step back and was supported by a maidservant that prevented her from falling.

On the other hand, Little Youyao was in a hurry. She suddenly sprained her legs and fell to the ground.

While Yu Jianjia was fine with this, the maidservant in front of her was unhappy. “Eldest Miss, don’t be rash anymore. My young miss is recovering from a serious illness and hasn’t recovered yet. If anything happens, you won’t be able to bear the responsibility.”

Chapter 198 - 198 Don’t Die

Little Youyao was in pain from the fall and felt aggrieved. When she heard this, she was furious. “How can you say that? I didn’t bump into Yu Jianjia, right? Yu Jianjia was fine too.”

Yu Jianjia had just recovered from a serious illness. She was small, thin, and pale. When she heard this, she covered her mouth and coughed. “I’m fine. Eldest Sister has just mourned her deceased mother, so it’s inevitable that she’s in a bad mood. It wasn’t on purpose...”

Little Youyao was already feeling terrible, so these words undoubtedly added fuel to the fire. “Hmph, you’re pretending to be sick all day. I wonder who you’re putting on a show for. It’s as if someone else is bullying you.”

Thinking back to the past, every time she had a conflict with Yu Jianjia, she was the one in the wrong in the end. She would be scolded by her father whether she was right or wrong. She recalled what the old maids had said just now. No matter how stupid Little Youyao was, she knew that what they had said might be true.

Her father did not like her mother and liked her stepmother, Madam Yang.

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Before Madam Yang even entered the house, her father had already started dating Madam Yang.

At the thought of this, Little Youyao glared at Yu Jianjia angrily. “You’re as bad as your mother. I hate you.”

With that, she turned around and ran away. As she ran, she wiped her tears and cried until her face was covered in snot and tears.

As she ran, she saw a tall Bodhi tree with a wishing silk hanging on it. She had been to the Precious Peace Temple a few times, so she knew that this was a wishing Bodhi tree.

Little Youyao ran to the wishing Bodhi tree, wanting to make a wish.

She accidentally saw a man dressed in black fighting clothes not far away. He was very tall and strong, much taller than her father. He was holding a large knife in his hand. In the bright daylight, the bright knife shone brightly under the sun, and suddenly pierced something in front of Little Youyao’s eyes.

The strong light made Little Youyao close her eyes, and tears flowed.

Little Youyao was very afraid. Just now, she had clearly seen that the bright blade was stained with blood. Her heart was beating wildly, and she opened her eyes to look over.

At this moment, Little Youyao saw a little brother lying on the ground, dressed in royal blue eight-treasure pattern clothes.

The young man was very thin and lying on the ground with his hands covering his stomach. There was a long wound on his stomach, and blood was coming out of it, staining his hands and clothes.

Yu Youyao was horrified. Seeing the man in black raise his knife, she shouted in fear, “Father, I’m here. Come quickly...”

In an instant, a pair of bloodshot eyes looked at her fiercely.

Little Youyao was dumbfounded. She recalled that once, when her grandmother had brought her to play at the farmstead, she had seen a ferocious dog near the farmstead. Its eyes had glowed green, and it had opened its mouth to bark. Its sharp canine teeth looked extremely terrifying in the sunlight.

She cried out in shock. Even as she cried, she shouted, “Father, Father...”

Perhaps it was because this cry had shocked the black-clothed man, but before he could use his saber, he fled in panic.

The man in black left. Little Youyao was scared to death. As she cried, she wanted to run away. However, when she saw that the Brother was lying on the ground without moving and was still bleeding, she felt that it wasn’t good for her to run away like this. She ran to the rockery, pushed Little Brother, and shouted, “Little Brother, Little Brother, wake up quickly. Little Yaoyao is crying because of the bad guy. Little Brother...”

Little Brother did not move. Little Youyao shouted in shock and fear, “Little Brother, don’t die, Little Brother...”

At this moment, the little brother, who had been lying still, finally moved. His eyelashes fluttered, and he opened them a crack. He saw a blurry figure swaying in front of him. He asked weakly, "Who, who are you?"

Little Youyao was overjoyed to see that the little brother was still alive. "Little Brother, don't be afraid. The bad guy made me cry. Just wait. I-I'll call Grandmother to save you..."

Big Brother had lost so much blood. It looked so scary. Little Youyao didn't know what to do. There was no one else nearby, so she only thought of asking her grandmother for help.

Youyao stood up, turned around, and ran back in a panic.

After running for a while, in her panic, she tripped on a rock and fell to the ground while screaming. She cut her head on the rock and fell until her head bled.

Little Youyao muttered "Little Brother" and gradually fainted.

Yu Youyao woke up from her dream with a start. Her chest felt so tight that she couldn't breathe for a moment.

When Chun Xiao heard the commotion, she quickly entered the house. "Young Miss, did you have another nightmare?"

Yu Youyao shook her head. "I heard you mention what happened when I was young during the day. I probably dreamed about what happened at the Precious Peace Temple."

When Chun Xiao heard this, she quickly asked, "Young Miss, you remember now? Then did you run into a thief?"

The thief entering the Precious Peace Temple was a very secretive matter. It was not easy to find out the exact situation, and many things were unclear.

Yu Youyao shook her head and laughed. "I fell down myself."

At that time, she had actually tripped over a rock and fallen until her head bled. She was really quite stupid. However, she was young and a little quick-witted. When she saw a thief, she knew how to bluff by calling out "Father."

The thief had fled into a peaceful place in the Buddhist Sect to escape. When he heard the commotion, he was shocked. Then, he heard her crying loudly. He was afraid that she would attract people here, so he had no chance to kill her. He had to find a way to escape.

However, she was so frightened at that time that she did not take a closer look at who the little brother she had accidentally saved was.

Chun Xiao heaved a sigh of relief when she heard that. "I thought so too. At that time, Young Miss's toes were swollen. Clearly, she had tripped over a rock." Therefore, everyone thought that Eldest Miss had fallen by herself. Old Madam did not allow anyone to say anything because she was worried that she knocked into the thief.

Yu Youyao nodded. "Since it's all in the past, don't mention it again."

Back then, it was probably because she had cried so loudly that she had caused a commotion and attracted the attention of the nearby monks.

It wouldn't be good for the temple's reputation if the thief entered the temple, and it wouldn't be good to make a fuss about it. The Precious Peace Temple didn't mention that she had bumped into the thief. They only said that they had discovered her at the Wishing Bodhi.

Even though Grandmother had her suspicions, monks did not lie, so it was not good for her to find out more.

In addition, this matter concerned the thieves, so Grandmother did not want to investigate too deeply. She even took the initiative to ask the temple to help cover up this matter.

Such a big matter had been covered up by the Precious Peace Temple, and with her grandmother's help, it had become a small matter. Even if others wanted to find out, they probably wouldn't be able to find out about her.

Chun Xiao nodded. "It's just that I think of the longevity lock that Young Miss broke. It's a pity."

Yu Youyao also felt that it was a pity. Her mother had given her fifteen longevity locks, and she had worn nine. She had worn each for a year, and only changed to a new one on her birthday.

Only this one was a little lacking. At that time, her grandmother had been afraid that it would be inauspicious, so she had given her a new longevity lock and even personally put it on her.

Chapter 199 - 199 Little Piggy

The next morning, the disciples who were participating in the second round of examinations came over to greet Old Madam Yu.

Seeing that they were in good spirits, Old Madam Yu was also very happy. "The second examination is tomorrow. We have to wait at the palace gate at midnight and enter at dawn. This examination will last from daytime to dusk. Why didn't you rest in the courtyard? You even came all the way here to greet me. It's been tiring."

Yu Shande said respectfully, "Over the past few days, I've been under Third Grandmother's careful care. I have to come and greet her before I can take the examination in peace."

Initially, they did not feel much about the medicinal cuisine, medicinal tea, and medicinal fragrance they ate every day.

However, after eating for three to five days, something effective happened.

At the very least, when he was away from studying, he would eat some medicinal cuisine and drink some medicinal tea. He would then feel more relaxed. Before he went to bed, he would light another incense stick to ensure that he would have a good night's sleep.

After eating and sleeping well, he would be full of energy. Studying would also yield twice the results with half the effort. Even though he was a little nervous, he did not panic.

Old Madam Yu chuckled. "Don't thank me. I was just giving instructions. Yao Yao was in charge of everything."

With that, she turned to look at her granddaughter. Yu Youyao was sitting obediently beside her grandmother.

Yu Shande quickly thanked Yu Youyao, and the other three followed.

Yu Youyao smiled and said, "You can't write the word 'Yu' with one stroke. We're all on the same side. There's no need to be so polite. It's a huge matter for you to participate in the examination. Even if we can't help, we have to do our best."

That night, the Yu Residence was brightly lit.

At midnight, Yu Zongzheng and Yu Zongshen called Yu Shande and the other three over to say some encouraging words. After that, the residence arranged for a large carriage to bring them to the palace gate.

There were already many people waiting at the palace gate.

The candidates gathered together. In order to relieve their nervousness, it was inevitable that three to five people would gather together to talk.

Yu Shande repeated all the rules and etiquette in the palace. After the three of them nodded and memorized them, he said, "It's still early. Sister Yao has prepared a light and suitable medicinal cuisine and a refreshing medicinal tea. You should have some too. When it's time, don't eat anything. Otherwise, you'll lose your etiquette in the palace."

Most of the matters regarding the second round of examinations were handled by Sister Yao. She was meticulous and thorough.

This way, their tense hearts seemed to be much more settled.

The few of them ate and drank very leisurely.

"When I got into the carriage just now, I felt my limbs go weak at the thought that I was about to take the second examination. Now, I suddenly feel at ease."

"It's probably because Sister Yao's arrangements are too appropriate. We can also clear some of our distracting thoughts and charge forward in peace, so we don't feel afraid anymore."

"Sister Yao is young, but she speaks and does things like Third Grandmother. She's really extraordinary."

After eating and drinking, everyone chatted for a while more, and it was dawn.

The candidates were led by the internal servants and the supervisors in charge of the examination. After going through all kinds of etiquette such as roll calls, distribution of papers, worshiping, saluting, and so on, they sat down safely in the Hall of Peace.

No one in the Yu Residence was asleep either. They were all gathered in An Shou Hall to listen to the news.

When the sky turned bright, a servant ran all the way into An Shou Hall. "The few young masters of the family have safely entered the palace. They're probably waiting for the questions in the hall."

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she immediately smiled. "Let's stop worrying here. They'll have to rely on themselves from now on. We're all tired after taking care of them for a night. Everyone, go back and rest!"

Yu Zongshen also smiled. "It's been hard on Mother."

Old Madam Yu turned to look at her granddaughter, only to see that Yu Youyao was sleepy. She was sitting in a chair. Her elbows were on the small table and her small hands were supporting her small head as she dozed off. Her little head was nodding off bit by bit, and there was even a blanket on her back. It was the one that had been on Zhou Linghuai's lap just now. It was also funny. "I didn't have to worry this time. Look, the person who's worked really hard is dozing off there."

When everyone saw this, they immediately laughed.

This smile woke Yu Youyao up from her half-asleep state. She covered her mouth and yawned as she turned around and saw her cousin. "Cousin, let's make some pork trotters later. Do you like them cooked or stewed?"

These words made everyone in the room roar with laughter.

Zhou Linghuai clenched his fist and pressed it against his lips, blocking the widening smile on his lips. Looking at the little girl's sleepy eyes and innocent look, he found her adorable.

Yu Youyao was dumbfounded from laughing. She glanced into the room and immediately snapped out of her daze. Even her small body straightened, and her pink face, which had been sleeping soundly, turned red with embarrassment.

Old Madam Yu laughed until tears streamed down her face. "You're like a little piglet. You even think about eating in your sleep."

Yu Youyao puffed up her cheeks. "Grandmother, you can't mock me like this in public. Aren't you a little hungry after taking care of them for a while?"

Old Madam Yu wiped her tears with her handkerchief and smiled. "Why did I raise such a clown?"

Everyone laughed again, and the tense atmosphere in the room completely dissipated.

However, Yang Shuwan could not smile. Every time there was an examination, it was personally arranged by Old Madam. No one else could interfere.

However, this time, Old Madam had directly ignored her and handed such an important matter to Yu Youyao.

As the mistress of the household, where was her status?

Yu Jianjia lowered her head and drank her tea. She was not in good health to begin with. After taking care of the candidates for most of the night, she was also tired. Although her grandmother had asked her to return to the courtyard to rest early in the morning, everyone in the house was present. If only she was not around, it wouldn't be good, so she forced herself to stay.

Now that she heard that Old Madam was going to show off Yu Youyao's ability as soon as she had the chance, she felt that it was boring. She felt that she might as well return to the courtyard early in the morning to rest.

After returning to the Jade Courtyard, Yu Youyao washed up and went to sleep.

She slept until seven o'clock in the morning. Today, the Yu Residence had stopped classes for the second round of examinations. It was rare that Yu Youyao did not have to attend school. She learned some medicine, incense, tea, and food from Nanny Xu. Then, she planned to go to the Green House.

Her cousin had said that the Essence Protection Pill could be refined in three days. Today was the third day, so it was probably about time.

At this moment, Xia Tao came over and said, "Liu'er has recovered a little. She came over to thank Young Miss."

Yu Youyao nodded. "Bring her in!"

Xia Tao led Liu'er into the room. Liu'er knelt on the ground obediently and kowtowed to Yu Youyao respectfully. Every kowtow was very sincere. When Yu Youyao saw this, her heart skipped a few beats, afraid that her injuries would not recover and her head would be damaged again.

Chapter 200 - 200 The Essence Protection Pill Is Done

Liu'er was unwilling to get up. "I have a lowly life. Eldest Miss, you have not abandoned me. From now on, I will serve you and be your servant. It's my honor." With that, she took out the cloth bag that she had been hugging to her chest and carefully opened it. Inside was a pair of meticulously made shoes. "I don't have much to show. Only my skills in making shoes are good, so I made a pair for you."

She handed over the shoes eagerly.

She could not repay Eldest Miss's kindness, so she wanted to make a pair of shoes for her.

She had saved up this pair of shoes in the past and made it using a thousand layers. She had never been willing to use them, so this time, she took them out and inserted the soles one by one. It took her six to seven days to finish.

Yu Youyao was a little surprised. She noticed that the material used to make these shoes was the Song Jiang cloth that she had given to the servants in the residence previously.

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Although Song Jiang cloth was not as expensive as cloud silk, it was soft, delicate, close-fitting, and breathable. It was most suitable for making close-fitting clothes. The inner clothes that Yu Youyao usually wore were all made of Song Jiang cloth.

Liu'er was very skillful. Her light green Song Jiang cloth shoes were embroidered with pale yellow parasol flowers. They looked elegant and fresh, but they were very beautiful. Clearly, she had put in a lot of effort.

The soles of the shoes were not the usual jade soles of rich families. Instead, they were made of porcelain, wood, and leather. They looked like the soles of ordinary people.

Yu Youyao had never worn such shoes before, but she thought that although they were not expensive, they were made with more effort than ordinary shoes. She smiled and said, "Thank you."

A smile appeared on Liu'er's pale face. "If you don't mind, I'll boldly help you wear it. If it doesn't suit you anymore, I can change it."

Seeing that Liu'er was sincere, Yu Youyao couldn't refuse, so she stuck her feet out of her skirt.

Liu'er knelt down and carefully removed Eldest Miss's shoes. Then, she carefully put on the shoes she had made for her. She was agile and careful, and her hands did not touch her.

After putting on her shoes and stepping on the ground, Yu Youyao noticed the difference.

As if seeing Eldest Miss's confusion, Liu'er explained, "My family has an ancestral shoe-making skill. It emphasizes on using a thousand layers of cotton cloth and a thousand hemp thread. Not only are the shoes made like this durable, but they're also firm and soft. When worn on the feet, they are breathable and absorb sweat. You won't sprain your ankles when walking. Even if you do move around a lot, they're very tight and won't tire your feet."

Liu'er seemed to feel that she had said too much and was a little embarrassed. She lowered her head.

However, Yu Youyao felt that she was not lying at all. These shoes were indeed more comfortable than what she usually wore. She smiled and said, "No wonder they're lighter and more comfortable than other shoes." With a thought, she thought of her cousin. Her cousin's legs were not good, so these shoes were the most comfortable. "Make two pairs for Cousin too. There's no hurry and it's more important for you to recuperate."

With that, she gave her cousin's measurements.

Before she even entered the Jade Courtyard to serve her, she had already received a job. Liu'er was overjoyed and nodded repeatedly. "Young Miss, don't worry. I will definitely do my best."

However, she automatically ignored the rest of Miss's words.

After Liu'er left, Yu Youyao did not change out of her shoes. It was obvious that she really liked them.

When they arrived at the Green House, Yu Youyao saw her cousin and Uncle Sun sitting in the small hall talking. She picked up her skirt and entered the house. "Cousin, has the Essence Protection Pill been refined?"

The first thing she asked when she entered was this. Uncle Sun rolled his eyes. "Annoying girl, who are you looking down on? It's just an Essence Protection Pill. If I make a move, there's nothing I can't refine."

Yu Youyao pursed her lips. "I wonder why. I've been struggling for a few days, but I still don't understand that this Essence Protection Pill isn't made, but refined. Hmph!"

Uncle Sun was so angry that he bent down and wanted to take off his shoe to slap her.

Yu Youyao was not afraid of him. She made a funny face at him, making Uncle Sun so angry that his beard trembled. He glanced at his young master.

Seeing that the young master was holding a teacup and had a faint smile on his lips that revealed indulgence and pampering, his heart immediately ached. In the past, this girl had treated him with some respect, but now, she was becoming more and more disrespectful. It was all because of the young master's pampering.

Yu Youyao ignored Uncle Sun and happily went up to her cousin. "Cousin, have you really received the refined Essence Protection Pill? Quick, show it to me."

She had been thinking about this for the past few days.

Zhou Linghuai looked at the table.

Yu Youyao looked over and saw an agarwood medicine box on the table. There were a bunch of pills inside. They were brownish-red in color and the size of soybeans. Their surfaces were smooth. “So this is how the Essence Protection Pill looks like.” The little girl wasn’t surprised anymore. She leaned closer and smelled it. She actually smelled a faint sweet fragrance. “It feels like candy.”

Zhou Linghuai smiled.

Yu Youyao turned to look at her cousin. “Have you used the Essence Protection Pill? How’s the effect? Is it really as Uncle Sun said? Can it replenish your vitality and nourish your muscles and bone marrow?”

Zhou Linghuai shook his head. “It was just out of the oven. You came over before I could take it.”

Yu Youyao smiled. “Then I came at the right time!”

Zhou Linghuai smiled and nodded. Then, he heard the little girl ask, “Cousin, did Uncle Sun say how to take the Essence Protection Pill? Is there any restriction?”

Zhou Linghuai replied, “One pill every morning and night. Just swallow it directly. There’s no restriction.”

Yu Youyao reached out and picked up an Essence Protection Pill. She placed it on a handkerchief and handed it to her cousin. “Cousin, quickly eat one to see its effect.”

Seeing the concern in the little girl’s eyes, Zhou Linghuai lowered his head and ate the Essence Protection Pill on the handkerchief.

As soon as the brownish-red pill entered his mouth, it emitted a faint sweet fragrance and a faint lotus fragrance. The medicinal cuisine, medicinal tea, and medicinal fragrance that the little girl usually gave him all had such a fragrance. Even the little girl herself had such a fragrance. It did not feel like incense, but a natural fragrance.

Zhou Linghuai lowered his eyes and blocked the thoughts in his eyes. He felt that after the pill entered his stomach, there seemed to be a warmth that spread to his internal organs and limbs. It was probably the first time he had taken it, so it did not feel too obvious.

Before he could speak, Yu Youyao looked at him eagerly and asked impatiently, “Cousin, what do you think? Is it effective?”

Zhou Linghuai smiled. “It should be useful.”

Chinese medicine practitioners looked, listened, questioned, and checked the results. Uncle Sun first carefully observed Zhou Linghuai’s consumption of the Essence Protection Pill, then said to him, “Stick out your tongue.”

Zhou Linghuai did as he was told.

Uncle Sun nodded after checking it. Then, he opened Zhou Linghuai’s eyelids and said with an unfathomable expression, “Give me your hand. I’ll take your pulse again.”

