

## All Hail 231

Chapter 231 - 231 Always With Cousin

Zhou Linghuai's expression froze, and his grip on the armrest tightened.

Yu Youyao held her cousin's hand. Her eyes were clear and bright. "Cousin, what do you think?"

At this moment, the innocent and ignorant young lady felt that her cousin was good and she wanted to be with him forever. She did not know that some promises could not be made easily.

Faced with the little girl's sparkling, joyful, and expectant gaze, Zhou Linghuai had always had no resistance. Naturally, he couldn't refuse, so he nodded. "Okay!"

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After Qi Sinian returned to the Qi family, she went to her mother's room.

Eldest Madam Qi was talking to the nanny in front of her. When she saw her daughter coming over, she waved her hand. "You're back a little late today. Did something happen at the Yu Residence?"

Qi Sinian shook his head. "We're just playing together. I'm a little too happy."

First Madam Qi was a little surprised. Her daughter seemed to be straightforward and generous, so she was not used to her being humble. In the past, she had only gone through the motions when she went to other families.

Qi Sinian smiled and said, "Yao Yao is a bright person. She's different from the sisters I used to know."

When First Madam Qi heard this, she understood that they were going to be close. She smiled. "She took after her dead mother. Back then, First Madam Xie was also an open person."

Qi Sinian told her mother about what had happened at the small banquet today.

Eldest Madam Qi seemed to be deep in thought. "It's fine for the first wife to be an ordinary person, but once her children grow up, she was not up to standard. She couldn't even restrain the children in the family well. It's obvious that the household manager isn't much either. The daughter of a concubine is so good at causing trouble. It's obvious that she has lost her upbringing, so she's also being unkind to her mother. No wonder Old Madam Yu asked Eldest Miss Yu to help manage the household when she's only half-grown. This eldest daughter of the first wife, who was raised in front of Grandmother, has been educated from a young age. Isn't she better than this little mother?"

Eldest Madam Yang was in charge of the family, so she had asked her stepdaughter to come out and cause trouble. Whether it was on purpose or not, it showed that she was not well-mannered or good at managing the household.

These women from the inner residence were in charge of the family, filial to their elders, and raised their children. All of this was to stabilize the inner residence and be a good wife.

As the saying went, it was better to have a virtuous wife.

With less trouble from her husband and a stable family, the women of the inner residence were more presentable.

Qi Sining nodded. "Third Miss Yu Jianjia had the intention to befriend me. She found an opportunity to talk to me, so I said a few polite words. Yu Jianjia saw that Zhi Li was still kind-hearted, but with a mother that had many thoughts, she felt uncomfortable, so she decided not to proceed."

First Madam Qi nodded. "When interacting with others, you have to look at fate."

Qi Sinian continued, "Yao Yao has prepared a lot of gifts in return. She's grown up and has learned a lot from the nanny in the palace. She can make medicinal tea, medicinal fragrance, and incense paste very well. Mother, haven't you been sleeping badly recently? I specially asked Yao Yao for some medicinal fragrance. It's different from the ones sold outside, so it should be useful."

With that, she asked the maidservant in front of her to place the bags on the table.

Eldest Madam Qi's interest was piqued when she heard this. "Nanny Xu, she's a decent person. I've even seen her when I visited the Empress Dowager in the past. How can anything that comes out of her hands not be good? Eldest Miss Yu is really considerate."

She looked at the bags on the table. There were a lot of them, and she must have taken a lot of effort to make them. Things made by hand were often more elaborate than some jewelry.

Eldest Madam Qi thought about it and said, "You should think carefully when you go back. Send back some things that you're good at. Don't let me pick and send them again. This relationship is all about you taking charge."

Qi Sinian nodded. "I'm only good at paintings. When I draw a Water Lotus Painting later, I'll draw the lotus pond scenery in the Yu Residence and give it to Yao Yao."

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Ever since her daughter left the house, Eldest Madam Tang had been feeling uneasy all day. She was either worried that her daughter would be bullied by Tang Yunmeng, or that her daughter would be treated coldly in the Yu Residence because of her appearance and personality.

She sat there like a needle in a haystack for the entire day, constantly asking the maidservant in front of her to pay attention to the door. When she heard that her daughter had returned, First Madam Tang immediately tightened her grip on her handkerchief and went to the door.

Tang Yunmeng was the first to get out of the carriage. She had a dark expression on her face. When she saw her legitimate mother, she did not even bow. She snorted coldly and left.

Eldest Madam Tang was puzzled. Usually, no matter which house she went to, Tang Yunmeng would always go out with a radiant face and return home happily. It was obvious that she had been in the limelight outside.

What was going on today?

First Madam Tang's heart tightened and she was about to walk towards the carriage.

She saw her daughter getting out of the carriage and running towards her with her dress. There was a smile on her round face and a glow in her eyes.

First Madam Tang looked around and held her daughter's hand to prevent her from opening her mouth. She brought her daughter back to her room before asking, "What happened?"

Tang Yunxi couldn't hide the excitement and joy on her face, so she explained what had happened in the Yu Residence today. "Yao Yao took good care of me at the small banquet. I like her very much."

Eldest Madam Tang smiled and stroked her daughter's head. "It can be seen that not everyone in this world only cares about their appearance and are shallow and ignorant. My Yunxi is gentle and polite, and her literary talent is stronger than that of ordinary young mistresses. It's rare to see someone who's skilled in Sichuan embroidery in the entire capital."

No wonder Tang Yunmeng's expression was so dark.

It turned out that she had been treated coldly by Eldest Miss Yu in the Yu Residence. The tables had turned.

First Madam Tang immediately felt proud, and the gloom on her face dissipated a lot.

She had encouraged her daughter to attend Eldest Miss Yu's birthday banquet because Eldest Miss Yu was as chubby as her daughter. Perhaps she could get along with her daughter.

Tang Yunxi's face turned red from the praise, and she quickly changed the topic. "Yao Yao even asked the nanny in front of me to take a look at my body. Nanny Xu said that if I use medicinal cuisine to slim down, I can still lose weight if I practice some body-building techniques. Nanny Xu even gave me a medicinal cuisine recipe and recommended a nanny who's good at this. Mother, Nanny Xu used to serve in the Empress Dowager's palace. She's a very powerful person. What she said is definitely right. Hurry up and ask the Education Department to find someone like her..."

With that, she took out a stack of medicinal recipes from her sleeve and showed them to First Madam Tang.

Eldest Madam Tang had also heard of Nanny Xu in the past, so how could she not be happy? She pulled her daughter into her arms. "Alright, alright, alright. Leave this matter to Mother. You can't let anyone know, lest that mother and daughter play tricks."

She looked at the medicinal recipes one by one. Even though she didn't understand them, she was still excited. When her daughter was young, she also looked exquisite.

Chapter 232 - 232 Showing Off!

However, for some reason, in the past few years, she hadn't grown any taller, and her body had become rounder and fatter. The other young mistresses were all thin when they were eight or nine years old, but no matter how little Yun Xi ate or even if she became a vegetarian, she didn't seem to have lost any weight.

She had asked Tang Yunmeng and her daughter to instigate her father and force them to bring her out a few times. She had suffered a lot of cold looks and mockery, and her personality had become more and more timid.

As she watched, she felt very anxious.

She had secretly found many alternative methods, but they had not been effective.

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Now that Nanny Xu was involved, it would definitely be useful.

Moreover, when her daughter said that the once chubby Eldest Miss Yu was now as thin as a willow branch, hope ignited in her heart.

Tang Yunxi nodded repeatedly. "I want to embroider a screen for Yao Yao."

First Madam Tang nodded repeatedly. "Of course, of course. Regardless of whether this matter succeeds or not, we should thank Eldest Miss Yu."

First Madam Tang was also a straightforward person. After saying that, she called for the nanny beside her and arranged to send a gift to Eldest Miss Yu in her own name.

Eldest Miss Yu was warm-hearted. She was only helping her daughter out of kindness.

At night, the Yu Residence specially held a family banquet for Yu Youyao. The family gathered for a meal to congratulate Yu Youyao on her birthday. It was also very lively.

Yang Shuwan forced a smile the entire night. At the thought of Lady Qiu, who was about to be a concubine, she cursed Yu Youyao and Old Madam Yu in her heart.

Yu Jianjia had fallen ill in the afternoon, but she had taken the medicine in time, so it did not affect her too badly.

However, she kept feeling a tightness in her chest and did not look too good. From time to time, she could not help but cough a few times. She was really feeling uncomfortable, but no one cared too much.

After all, she used to be like this too.

She had been sick for too long. No matter how nervous she was, it had become normal.

Yu Youyao was the happiest.

After receiving her cousin's birthday gift, she was so excited that when it was time for the family banquet, she couldn't help but take out the longevity peach blossom stone seal and show it off. "It's personally carved by Cousin. In the future, I'll also have a seal!"

Old Madam Yu couldn't help but look surprised. She hurriedly held the seal in her hand and looked at it carefully. "This is good stuff. In my early years, when I went to the Prince of Rong's residence, I saw a longevity peach blossom stone the size of a thumb. The Princess Consort of Rong felt like she had obtained a treasure and said that she wanted to send it into the palace to show her respect to the Empress Dowager. That longevity peach blossom stone is also beautiful, but it's not as good as this."

Old Madam Yu had seen all kinds of good things in her life.

If she said that it was a good thing, then it was really good.

“Cousin has always given me the best.” Yu Youyao turned to look at her cousin. She saw that he was holding a teacup and listening. He was dressed in a green robe with golden patterns, making him look even more elegant.

The little girl’s eyes were burning with joy. Zhou Linghuai looked up and smiled.

Old Madam Yu looked at Zhou Linghuai reproachfully. “You’re willing to give such an expensive thing to a half-grown child like Yao Yao. What a waste of such a good thing.”

She was a little curious about where Zhou Linghuai had gotten such a good stone.

However, thinking about it, the Zhou family’s ancestors were also quite prominent. Which family didn’t have a few things that were passed down in the family? Even the Yu Residence had a piece of blood beeswax.

It was obvious that not only was he close to Yao Yao, but he also doted on her as much as her grandmother did. If there was anything good, he wanted to give it all to her.

That was good!

Yu Youyao puffed up her cheeks and muttered indignantly, “Grandmother, how can you mock me like this? How can giving it to me be a waste of good stuff? Why did Cousin give it to me and not to anyone else? It’s obvious that in Cousin’s heart, I’m the most suitable person to use this engraved longevity peach blossom stone.”

When she said this, even her eyebrows were raised slightly. It was obvious that she was smug.

The most ridiculous thing was that when Zhou Linghuai heard this, he nodded slightly. “Cousin, you’re right.”

Old Madam Yu laughed so hard that her wrinkles appeared. “Alright, it’s your Zhou family’s belongings. It’s up to you who you’re willing to give it to. I’m already in a difficult position as an outsider.”

With that, she handed the longevity peach blossom stone to Yu Zongzheng, who had been eyeing it for a long time. Anyone who saw such a good thing would have to appreciate it.

Yu Zongzheng took the longevity peach blossom stone and looked at it carefully. “The six features are complete. It’s light red, beautiful, and dazzling. I’ve never seen such a top-grade longevity peach blossom stone before.”

His tone was full of amazement and admiration. He gently rubbed the peach blossom frozen stone and called a maidservant over. “Go and get a bowl of water.”

The maidservant did not dare to delay and quickly poured a bowl of water from the side room.

Yu Zongzheng placed the seal into the bowl and exclaimed again, “Peach blossoms appear on the stone. When soaked in the water, the water will be light red, and there will be red and white strokes in the water.”

Not only him, but Yu Shanyan and Yu Shanxin also came over to take a look.

Yu Shanxin clicked his tongue in wonder. Yu Shanyan's eyes were filled with surprise. "After the peach blossom was placed in water, its color is as vibrant as a dragon. It's indeed worthy of its reputation."

Yu Shuangbai rolled her eyes. What somebody didn't know can't hurt them.

No matter how powerful Cousin Zhou was, he was still Eldest Miss's cousin. They were fake cousins. No matter how envious they were, they couldn't do anything about it. Instead, it was annoying.

She tilted her head and saw her eldest sister, Yu Youyao, looking at the bowl in her eldest uncle's hand with sparkling eyes. She did not even blink. The smug expression on her face really made one feel stifled.

But she was showing off!

Yu Shuangbai decided to eat the snacks alone.

These snacks were all personally made by Nanny Xu. She usually couldn't eat them to her heart's content.

"How rare." Yu Zongzheng also felt that it was indeed a pity that such a good Longevity peach blossom stone had been engraved by Zhou Linghuai and given to his eldest daughter.

He sighed softly and handed the seal to Yu Zongshen, who was also interested.

Compared to the longevity peach blossom stone itself, Yu Zongshen was more interested in the carving of the seal. "I heard that the Shoushan stone carving method is extremely high level and extremely difficult to master. On a small seal, one has to be masterful. He has to use dozens of techniques, including circle carving, seal carving, thin carving, hollowed-out carving, shallow relief, high relief, inlaid carving, chain carving, seal carving, and micro carving. Moreover, every technique is extremely difficult. This carving varies based on the situation and vividly displays the essence of the stone carving of Shoushan. It's really ingenious."

His tone was also filled with surprise, but he was praising Zhou Linghuai.

The more he knew about this child, the more he felt that he was unfathomable. He was really impressive.

Yu Youyao only knew that this seal looked good and that it wasn't easy to make. However, she didn't know how to carve and inscribe, so she didn't know that a small seal was so complicated. She pouted and looked at her cousin.

Chapter 233 - 233 Unparalleled in the World

Zhou Linghuai's expression froze for a moment. He felt that he was coaxing her again.

However, he couldn't possibly give her a gift and tell her that he had spent so much time and effort to make this!

No one would bring this up when they gave a gift.

Yu Zongshen looked at Zhou Linghuai and said with a smile, "The Shoushan stone carving method is known as one of the Great Zhou's Three Absolutes. Linghuai can be considered a master."

Even if his leg was broken, Zhou Linghuai was still unparalleled in the world.

A few elders were reading the inscriptions on the longevity peach blossom stone and fighting to look at them. Yu Jianjia was also envious. Her eyes were fixed on the inscriptions for a long time.

Thinking about how Zhou Linghuai had given Yu Youyao a lot of rare items and how the other sisters in the residence could only covet them, they felt an itch in their throats and couldn't help but cough.

However, everyone in the room was so distracted by the moment that no one noticed the coughing.

At this moment, Yang Shuwan couldn't help but say, "Linghuai's carving skills are really impressive. I have a piece of yellow field stone in my house. I also want you to help me carve a seal so that I can give it to Jia Jia as a birthday gift on her birthday."

As soon as these words were spoken, the hall fell silent.

Yu Jianjia raised her head, her eyes inevitably filled with joy. The yellow field stone was also a rare material for carving seals. Although it was not as good as the longevity peach blossom stone, it was still quite rare.

It seemed that after Zhou Linghuai's wonderful carving, even if it was just a yellow field stone, it would still be extraordinary.

She couldn't help but look at Zhou Linghuai.

Yu Youyao pursed her lips, feeling a little unhappy and regretful. She had been so smug that she had forgotten her etiquette and showed off the seal her cousin had given her.

As soon as she showed off, trouble came knocking on her door.

She did not like it when her cousin carved things for others.

Everyone also looked at Zhou Linghuai, curious as to whether he would agree or not. Engraving a seal was not something easy, and it required a lot of time and effort.

Under everyone's gaze, Zhou Linghuai's expression was indifferent. He put down the teacup in his hand and said, "I'll have to disappoint you, Eldest Aunt. I'm not in good health, and I'm not in good spirits. Even though I've carved a seal for Cousin, I still feel that it's very tiring. The longevity peach blossom stone requires more work on one side and more thought has to be given to the shape of the stone. It's also easier. However, the yellow field stone emphasizes on detail and requires more effort. I'm afraid I'm not suitable."

Yu Youyao quickly said, "That's right, that's right. Yellow field stones are rare. If I'm not careful, they'll be damaged. I can't even repair them. The seal Cousin carved for me is made of his own material. It doesn't matter if it's damaged. I can't let it ruin Mother's material."

Her anxious look made sense.

However, Zhou Linghuai could tell at a glance that she was afraid that he would really agree to carve something for someone else. He lowered his eyebrows, and the smile on his lips was faintly discernible.

As the only insider in the room, Yu Zongshen picked up his teacup and lowered his head to drink.

The yellow field stone and the longevity peach blossom stone were both Longevity Mountain stones. Although the colors were different and there was a certain difference in quality, they were still generally similar. They were both particular about the golden rule and that stones should be carefully carved. How could it be easy?

Zhou Linghuai had used the words of an expert to reject Madam Yang.

Madam Yang did not understand what he meant, but it was rare for yellow field stone to appear, so she did not dare to let Zhou Linghuai make a move easily. If it was damaged, there would not be a second one.

Yu Youyao smiled. How was it that her cousin did not have the energy? It was obvious that he was unwilling. Others did not know about her cousin's health condition and only thought that he was indeed sick and weak, but she knew.

After taking the Essence Protection Pill for a while, her cousin's health had already improved a lot.

Zhou Linghuai glanced over and saw that the little girl was smiling like a cat that had just stolen a fish. Her face was filled with joy. It was obvious that she was also happy that he had rejected Madam Yang.

"In that case, forget it." Yang Shuwan was a little unhappy. However, when she thought about how rare the yellow field stone was, and how such a small piece might be ruined by Zhou Linghuai, she felt that there wouldn't be a second one.

She had even secretly looted it from Madam Xie's private vault.

Later, when the matter was exposed, Old Madam asked her to spit out everything else, including the interest. Only this piece of yellow field stone was something she was unwilling to take out, so she replaced it with a yellow jade with a similar color.

Yellow field stones were rare and precious. How could the servants recognize them without seeing them?

Zhou Linghuai was young, so he didn't know if his second uncle was praising her sincerely or exaggerating. She also didn't know if he was really reliable. It was better for her to find a powerful carving master.

When Yu Jianjia heard Zhou Linghuai's rejection, she was a little disappointed. She covered her mouth and coughed a few times.

How could she not know that Zhou Linghuai's carving skills were really good?

Zhou Linghuai said that his health was not good and he was not in good spirits, but he was willing to spend more effort on painting, making incense fans, making zithers, and carving seals for Yu Youyao. It could be seen that her cousin was very close to him.

Saying that he was incompetent was just an excuse. He was clearly unwilling!



Yu Shuangbai glanced at Yu Jianjia and pursed her lips. "After Cousin Zhou entered the residence, he ate a lot of the medicinal cuisine from Eldest Sister's courtyard. It's only right for him to carve a seal for her."

In other words, Cousin Zhou was willing to carve a seal for Yu Youyao because she had taken care of him a lot. Her relationship with him was also not ordinary. Some people should not join in the fun.

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she nodded repeatedly. "That's right. It's not good for your son's health. He should recuperate more. You're not allowed to torture him with such trivial matters."

After saying that, she even looked at Yang Shuwan meaningfully.

Yang Shuwan couldn't keep a straight face anymore. How could she have known that a casual sentence would be so annoying? "Oh, I was just saying it. Of course, your health is more important."

With that, she lowered her head and tugged at her handkerchief.

Madam Yao smiled and said, "You're still the most thoughtful. Which of us won't sign our names directly when writing letters? We thought that the seal was something for men, but who knew that women would like it too? Now, even Third Miss wants to carve a seal. Looks like I have to find a good piece of material and help Shuangbai carve one too."

That was also the truth.

If the material of a good seal was not good, it would be better not to use it. Therefore, not everyone could make such an expensive thing like a seal.

But now, Yu Youyao and Yu Jianjia have seals. They were all sisters, so they had to have seals too.

This wasn't to compete, either. It was the norm.

However, she was also worried. The eldest son and second son in the family were both men, so this thing could not be of bad quality. Now that Shuangbai was added, the material could not be bad or it would make things difficult.

When Old Madam Yu heard this, she smiled. "There's no need for you to look for it. I still have a small piece of bloodstone in my house. It's the remaining material from Miaofu's seal. I asked Old Master to give it to me, but I didn't use it, so I kept it. It's a good gift for Shuangbai." After saying that, she looked at Yu Zongshen. "Second Brother knows how to engrave."

Chapter 234 - 234 Thank You, Leader of Miao

Yang Shuwan's eyes widened.

The bloodstone was also one of the four famous materials, and its value was not inferior to the Golden Steatite Stone. She had seen her aunt's seal with her own eyes. It was thick and beautiful, and its value was definitely above the osmanthus yellow field stone.

They were all sisters of the same family. Why did Old Madam care so much about the few people in the second branch? She even gave such an expensive bloodstone to the second branch?

Old Madam had probably forgotten which family she was from. She was so biased that she really did not take the first branch seriously.

It was simply too infuriating.

Old Madam Yu glanced at Yang Shuwan. "Since Yao Yao received the seal from Cousin, I wanted to give this bloodstone to Third Sister. Since you have the better yellow field stone material, I'll give this to Shuangbai."

Not only was Yu Jianjia's throat itchy, but her chest was also suffocating. For a moment, she couldn't even breathe. She hurriedly pressed the acupuncture point on her left hand and covered it with a handkerchief, not daring to let anyone see.

Yang Shuwan was extremely stunned. After being her daughter-in-law for so many years, she more or less understood Old Madam. Since Old Madam had said this, she really had such plans.

However, she had only been focused on showing off the yellow field stone previously, and this had backfired.

For a moment, Yang Shuwan almost tore her handkerchief.

Madam Yao was overjoyed. Without looking at Yang Shuwan's expression, she quickly said, "Thank you, Old Madam."

However, she thought to herself that she still had some high-grade supplements in her house. She would send them to Old Madam's house later and let her nourish her body carefully.

Thinking of this, Madam Yao glanced at her daughter, who was sitting on a chair and eating and drinking foolishly. She was speechless.

She suddenly felt that the Dou Yujun's blessing she had asked for at the Precious Peace Temple was really amazing.

Yu Shuangbai also reacted belatedly and said with a smile, "Grandmother, you're too good to us. No grandmother can compare to you. I'm really blessed to have a grandmother like you."

With that, she took a piece of lotus seed cake and ate it. It was like the rare bloodstone which was bestowed to her by an elder.

Old Madam Yu laughed at her carefree personality. "You're a smooth talker!"

As she spoke, she looked at the dejected Yang Shuwan and the pale-faced Yu Jianjia who was about to faint and shook her head.

She had so many thoughts over a bloodstone. It was obvious that her character was not good.

Yu Youyao carefully put away the seal and sat down beside her cousin. She whispered to him, "These people really can't act like this. No matter how they act, they will only cause trouble for themselves."

Her grandmother never spoke with false bravado.

It was not a lie to say that she wanted to give the Bloodstone to Yu Jianjia.

Yang Shuwan and Yu Jianjia also knew this very well. This was because if they missed out on a good osmanthus yellow field stone, they would definitely die from embarrassment.

Zhou Linghuai couldn't help but smile. "Cousin wanted me to make a golden steatite stone pendant previously."

It was obvious that whether he would help or not still depended on the person.

When the little girl was throwing a fit, he wanted to coax her and make her happy.

Yu Youyao was embarrassed. Her face turned red and she pouted unhappily. "Cousin, you can't dig up old scores like this. You're really petty."

Zhou Linghuai laughed when he heard that. "Only officials are allowed to set fires, not commoners."

When it came to digging up old scores, who could compare to her?

Yu Youyao tugged at her cousin's sleeve. "I don't agree with that. I just feel that it's too tiring to carve the seal. I don't want you to work so hard for me. My heart aches for you. Besides, the golden steatite stone pendant was given by you. I didn't ask you for it. You can't blame me."

Zhou Linghuai tightened his grip on his teacup.

Yu Youyao propped her elbow on the small table and held her face in her hands. She tilted her head to look at her cousin. "Carving requires a lot of time and energy. Cousin, you're not in good health. In the future, you can't easily agree to carve things for others. You won't tire yourself out. Occasionally, you can carve some small things for me to nourish your emotions."

Zhou Linghuai did not know whether to laugh or cry when he heard this. It took time and effort to carve something for others, and but if he did it for her, he would be nourishing his emotions.

Yu Youyao tilted her head and looked at her cousin. "Cousin, please!"

She was trying to stop him from carving something for others. Zhou Linghuai originally wanted to agree, but when he saw the little girl's burning gaze, he wanted to tease her, so he didn't say anything for a moment.

Yu Youyao pouted and wheedled, "Hurry up and promise me."

Zhou Linghuai couldn't take it anymore. He held it in for a while, but still nodded. "Cousin, you're right. Sculpting is indeed too time and energy-consuming. I usually still have schoolwork, so I don't have much time. My body isn't in good condition either. It's fine to do such delicate work occasionally, but I can't do it too often."

Yu Youyao smiled. "Yes, yes. Cousin, you have to take good care of yourself."

In the future, her cousin would only carve things for her.

Even though he had also only carved items exclusively for her in the past.

How wonderful!

The family banquet ended at 9pm. Yu Youyao held her cousin's hand and said, "Cousin, teach me how to carve. I want to carve something for you too."

Zhou Linghuai smiled when he heard this. He looked at the little girl's delicate hands. "I don't want you to learn it. If you know how to carve things yourself, what I give you in the future will seem ordinary."

It was very difficult to learn carving, and it would hurt her hands.

When he first started learning, not a single one of his fingers were unscathed. Yu Youyao was delicate and afraid of pain, but he did not want her to suffer.

Yu Youyao pouted. "But every time Cousin gives me something, it takes a lot of time and effort. Compared to that, the things I give are much more ordinary."

Since her cousin treated her well, she also wanted to think of ways to treat him well.

Zhou Linghuai smiled. "The medicinal cuisine I eat every day, the medicinal oil used for massage, the medicinal tea used to nourish my body, the medicinal fragrance, and even the Essence Protection Pill... The things that Cousin gives me every time are all that I need. Compared to that, the things I give to Cousin are just for play."

Yu Youyao's eyes lit up a little, and her lips curved into a smile. "Cousin also helped me in my studies, calligraphy, and zither skills. These are also what I need."

Zhou Linghuai shook his head and laughed. He asked Chang An to push him back to the Green House.

Yu Youyao returned to the Jade Courtyard happily.

There were many birthday gifts in the house that she had received today. Everyone in the family had given her a gift. Even the maidservants in front of her had made exquisite fans, socks, sachets, and shoes for her.

Nanny Xu was holding a small booklet and recording the gift list.

After a long day, Yu Youyao didn't feel tired at all. She rushed into the side room and rummaged through the drawers. When Dong Mei saw this, she went over and asked, "Young Miss, what are you looking for? I'll help you look for it too."

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She was in charge of everything in Miss's house, so she knew best when it came to searching for items.

Chapter 235 - 235 Giving Cousin An Embroidery Sachet

Yu Youyao said, "I want to embroider a sachet for Cousin. I want to pick a Song brocade that's the same color as mine. Quickly help me find it."

Dong Mei looked at the girl's clothes and opened a box. There were a few pieces of clothes of this color inside. "Miss, take a look. Are these useful?"

"This one." Yu Youyao picked out a piece of moonlight brocade at a glance. It was the same color as the one on her, but the material was more elegant than the Song brocade.

Dong Mei carefully cut the material.

Yu Youyao couldn't wait until tomorrow, so she asked Xia Tao to bring over an embroidery basket. She used the embroidery shed to fasten the material, then asked her cousin to draw the embroidery pattern in the afternoon.

Her cousin's drawing was very good. Even with just a few strokes, it still exuded a sense of elegance and beauty.

Yu Youyao took a closer look. The design was very simple, so it wouldn't be too difficult to embroider. If she put in more effort, it would take at most three to five days!

At that time, her cousin would be able to change out of his ugly sachet.

At this moment, Nanny Xu had finished sorting out the gift list and entered the room. Seeing that Yu Youyao was preparing the brocade, she felt a little confused and turned to look at Dong Mei.

Dong Mei explained, "She feels that Young Master's sachet is too ugly and can't afford to lose face. She plans to embroider a better one and replace Young Master's sachet."

Nanny Xu smiled when she heard this. She was very concerned about her reputation, so she had to be more proactive when it came to matters related to her reputation. "It's a little late today, so you should be preparing to rest. Why don't you embroider it tomorrow?"

Yu Youyao shook her head. "That won't do. I promised Cousin that I would embroider the sachet as soon as possible. I definitely have to embroider it as soon as possible, lest I make Cousin wait too long."

Her cousin did not mind that the sachet was too ugly, but she could not afford to embarrass herself as he wore it all day. She definitely had to finish embroidering it early.

Nanny Xu took the embroidery shed from her hand and placed it in the basket. "It'll hurt your eyes if you embroider at night. If Young Master finds out, his heart will ache. Moreover, it's not bright in the house, and the embroidery won't be as good as in the day. We'll embroider tomorrow."

Yu Youyao had originally wanted to bring the embroidery shed back, but when she heard that things embroidered at night were not as good as the ones in the day, she gave up.

After getting Nanny Xu to help mold her bones, Yu Youyao practiced the Body Toughening Technique for ten minutes. She was covered in sweat and fell asleep after soaking in the medicinal bath.

A good night's sleep!

The next morning, Yu Youyao woke up at dawn and put on her nine layers of clothes to learn from Nanny Xu.

The nine layers of clothes she was wearing now were even heavier than when she had just started learning etiquette. Layer by layer, they probably weighed a few kilograms. It was really tiring to wear them.

Not only did she have to walk, but she also had to learn how to sit, greet, serve tea, drink tea, eat, and so on.

The weather was hot, and Yu Youyao's clothes were drenched in sweat every time she finished her etiquette. Her already heavy clothes felt uncomfortably tight on her body.

In the beginning, she couldn't stand it and would complain a little.

But she had gotten used to it over time.

She could do it now. Even if she was sweating from the heat, she could still take a handkerchief and wipe her face generously. Even if the clothes inside were wet and uncomfortable to wear, she could still smile.

After learning etiquette for an hour, Yu Youyao hurriedly ran to the bathroom and soaked herself in the medicinal bath.

After the medicinal bath, she changed into a set of dry and thin clothes. Yu Youyao heaved a sigh of relief. After breakfast, she went to the side room with Nanny Liu. There were gifts from yesterday's birthday.

Nanny Liu showed Yu Youyao the birthday gift list.

Yu Youyao quickly asked, "Which one was the gift from Third Cousin?"

Ever since her third cousin, Xie Jingliu, had entered the capital, he had been very busy. He had gone to the Baoding Residence a few days ago and had yet to return. He still remembered to give her a birthday gift.

Dong Mei picked up a palm-sized yellow rosewood box. "This is it."

Yu Youyao opened it expectantly and her eyes suddenly widened. The inside of the box was sparkling like jade. Under the light, it looked like a lamp or beeswax. "This is a light pagodite."

Light pagodite was one of the four famous stones in the world. It was called the Three Great Stones along with golden steatite stone and oriental jasper. In terms of value, it was even rarer and more expensive than longevity peach blossom stone. However, the longevity peach blossom stone that her cousin had given her was beautiful and unique. It was not inferior to this stone.

Yu Youyao carefully picked up the light pagodite and exclaimed, "I've heard that there are six associations with the light pagodite. It's pure and fine with a gentle feeling. It's clean and free of impurities with a sense of peace. It's just and not evil. It's just and elegant. It's bright and beautiful. It's transparent and feels like ice. It's alive. Its meridians are filled with vitality, and it's dazzling. It's indeed worthy of its reputation."

This light pagodite was actually the size of a baby's palm. It was also rare in the world.

Nanny Xu was also full of praise. "It's not inferior to the longevity peach blossom stone seal Young Master gave you." In fact, it was even more expensive. Not to mention anything else, just in terms of size, there was also a difference. However, Young Master's longevity peach blossom stone was too good. Not to mention that his carving skills were superb.

As a result, there was no difference in their gifts.

Yu Youyao was a little vexed. "But I already have the Peach Blossom Frozen Seal, and Cousin also has the Yellow Field Frozen Seal. It's such a pity to let such a good light pagodite go to waste!"

Nanny Xu smiled. "Who said that there can only be one seal?"

Yu Youyao immediately smiled. "I'll keep it first. I'll see what can be carved on it tomorrow."

With her cousin, Third Cousin's gifts paled in comparison.

Yu Youyao looked at them one by one. Her father had given her a square inkstone. It was a blue-and-white inkstone, an expensive stone among inkstones.

Although Yu Youyao did not lack this, she could not help but admire it. "It's light, hard, and soft. It's as soft as a child's skin. It's soft but not smooth. It's rare."

The inkstone was famous for its solid, smooth and delicate quality.

The ink was not stagnant, and it flowed quickly. The ink was smooth, one's handwriting was smooth and the color did not change.

Whether it was in the hot summer or in the cold winter, high-grade inkstone was azure blue and the ink was black when pressed with one's hand. The moisture in the inkstone did not dry for a long time, so there was a saying that went like this.

It seemed that her father had indeed put in some effort to give her this gift.

Yu Youyao handed the inkstone to Qiu Xing. "Change the inkstone in my study."

Every time Second Uncle gave her a gift, he was more meticulous than others.

This time, it was a ivory carving of a monkey holding a peach.

Ivory carving was also one of the three unique skills of the Great Zhou Dynasty. The carving on it was also very good. The monkey was agile, and there was a yellow halo on the peach tip. It looked very pleasing.

Yu Youyao liked it very much. "Put this ivory carving on the top of the Treasure Pavilion."

Chapter 236 - 236 The Tang Residence's Visit

Chun Xiao carefully picked up the ivory carving and replaced it with a wooden carving from the Treasure Pavilion.

Nanny Xu handed an inconspicuous bamboo box to Yu Youyao. "Ms. Ye specially asked Old Madam Su to send this over yesterday afternoon. At that time, Miss was in the Green House. I was the one who accepted it."

When she heard that it was a gift from Ms. Ye, Yu Youyao's eyes lit up. She carefully opened the box and smiled. "It's a brush made by her. Previously, she said that she wanted to give me a set of brushes, but it's not easy to make a brush. It takes a month or two to make a good brush. Previously, she had just given me a brush, but before she could rest, she already made another one. I think it must have been hard on you."

Nanny Xu laughed when she heard this.

!!

Yu Youyao was pure and naive. She understood who was good to her.

Other people would only treat a brush as a brush. Even if they felt happy and grateful, they wouldn't think about how difficult it was to be the person who made the brush.

With such a good personality, it was no wonder that she had gotten along with the other girls after holding a small banquet.

Third Miss Yu Jianjia had put in a lot of effort to befriend her. As soon as the young misses of the various families entered the residence, she arranged for the servants in the residence to talk about how kind and polite Third Miss was.

Not only that, but she also tried to show that she was really kind and polite. However, the ladies from the second branch did not fall for this. They supported Yu Youyao so much that she did not have a chance to stand out.

When she arrived at the Jade Courtyard, she said that she wanted to recite poetry. They were all sisters, so how could she not know that Yu Youyao was proficient in poetry?

It was understandable that outsiders would hear this suggestion, but she could tell immediately that she wanted to suppress Yu Youyao and show off her poetry and show off.

But what happened in the end?

She even found an opportunity to speak to Third Miss Song and Sixth Miss Qi.

Third Miss Song and Sixth Miss Qi had taken a fancy to Yu Youyao's personality, so they ignored her.

Yu Youyao looked at the brush carefully. "It's the Five Purple and Five Sheep. A few days ago, Cousin said that my handwriting had improved. I was just about to exchange it for the Seven Purple and Three Sheep brush, but I didn't have the chance to use the wolf brush given by Ms. Ye. I can't let Ms. Ye down this time."

Her cousin used a full-sheep brush, and the tip of the brush was reserved and unyielding. When she saw her cousin's calligraphy, she also felt that the words written with a softer brush looked better.

She had grown up soaking in the medicinal dew made from the medicinal liquid of the Lingxi Bug. She was born with a tenacious spirit. Not to mention the Five Purple Five Sheep, she could even use the Seven Sheep Three Purple.

She did not intend to use a brush that Full Sheep.

In the end, a girl's wrist strength was not as good as a man's. It was more difficult to write with a pen that was too soft. It was fine if there were fewer words, but if there were too many words, she would suffer.

Yu Youyao put away her brush and instructed Xia Tao, "Send over a box of blue and white porcelain medicinal tea from my house for Ms. Ye to use."

Some time ago, Old Madam Su had privately asked her for some medicinal cuisine to nourish her body. It was actually used to treat a woman's illness.

She felt that something was wrong, so she secretly asked someone to ask around.



Later on, she found out that Ms. Ye had been pregnant back then and had been harmed by the concubine in the residence. Not only had she failed to protect her child, but her body had also been injured and she couldn't bear another child.

Even so, Second Master Chang still doted on his concubine and protected her.

Ms. Ye simply used this as an excuse to get a divorce.

Even if the Count of Changning's Residence had done something wrong, Ms. Ye was not from an ordinary family. If this matter blew up, how could a down-and-out noble like the Count of Changning's Residence withstand Madam Ye's interrogation? Hence, they did not dare to make a fuss.

Therefore, Ms. Ye could also escape unscathed. Even if they divorced, the Count of Changning's Residence would not dare to say anything bad about Ms. Ye.

It was also because of this that Ms. Ye was not in good health.

Xia Tao quickly agreed.

Young Miss always made two types of food. She made the ones served on blue and white porcelain more meticulously. Usually, she would give them to Old Madam, Young Master, and the Young Misses to eat.

Everything else was used as gifts.

After sorting out the gifts, Qing Xiu came over. "Eldest Miss, Eldest Madam Tang's nanny is here. Old Madam has invited you over."

Yu Youyao nodded and changed her clothes again before leading Chun Xiao over.

As soon as she entered An Shou Hall, Yu Youyao saw a round-faced nanny sitting in the room. She was wearing a grayish-purple jacket and looked friendly.

Yu Youyao went forward to greet Old Madam Yu.

Old Madam Yu turned to look at the nanny. "This is Nanny Bai, Eldest Madam Tang's right-hand man."

"Hello, Nanny!" Yu Youyao stepped forward and bowed. The greeting was for Nanny Bai, but it was directed at Eldest Madam Tang.

Nanny Bai hurriedly stood up and returned Yu Youyao's greeting. She smiled happily. "Thank you for taking care of my Fifth Miss at the birthday banquet yesterday. Madam specially asked me to bring you a gift."

She looked at Eldest Miss Yu calmly.

She used to be a chubby person, but in just two or three months, she had already lost weight. She looked generous and beautiful, and her demeanor was good to the bone. No girl in the capital could compare to her.

Fifth Sister might really lose weight this time.

Yu Youyao waved her hand repeatedly. "That won't do. It was my fault for taking the liberty to invite Fifth Sister over to play. It's only right to take care of her. Madam is too polite."

It was obvious that she did not take the prescription seriously and did not mention it at all.

Eldest Miss Yu treated everyone well. It was no wonder that Fifth Miss fell in love with her the moment she came to the Yu Residence.

Nanny Bai hurriedly said, "Yes, yes. In the past, Fifth Miss had been cooped up at home, and the more she was nurtured, the more her personality became dull. Madam was also very worried. Yesterday, after she visited the Yu Residence, Fifth Miss became much more cheerful. Madam was happy, so she had to thank Eldest Miss. Eldest Miss, you can't decline."

She did not explicitly say that Tang Yunxi had been cooped up at home because of her obesity and that she was not having a good time. However, how could Yu Youyao not understand what she meant?

Poor parents!

After her mother gave birth to her, even if her body was weak and her life was in danger, she still had to painstakingly plan for her and make a good future for her. Otherwise, she would not be able to survive in the Yu Residence.

Even Yang Shuwan was devoted to Yu Jianjia.

It was obvious that as a mother, she hoped that her children would be kind. Yu Youyao did not refuse anymore. "Thank you, Eldest Madam Tang."

Nanny Bai's smile deepened.

The Tang family valued their granddaughter, so how could Old Madam Yu not be happy? She also smiled and said, "The few of you have a close relationship, so it's good for you to interact often."

This was a clear declaration that Tang Yunxi was welcome to come over and play. Other people's words were not as effective as Old Madam's.

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Chapter 237 - 237 Lady Qiu

Nanny Bai smiled even more happily and handed a letter to Yu Youyao. "This is a letter from Fifth Miss to Eldest Miss. She specially asked me to pass it to her."

Yu Youyao took the letter happily. "This is the first time I've received a letter from someone. I have to go back and read it carefully."

After a few more pleasantries, Nanny Bai was about to leave. She happily let Nanny Liu send her out of the house.

Yu Youyao was not in a hurry to leave. She planned to spend more time with her grandmother.

!!

At this moment, Qing Xiu came over. "Old Madam, Lady Qiu is here. She wants to greet you."

In the family, a concubine like Concubine He could not often approach Old Madam, not to mention that Lady Qiu was only a concubine.

Old Madam Yu's heart stirred. "Are you going to mention Concubine?"

Qing Xiu nodded. "I just received the news. First Madam said that it was a good day tomorrow, so she picked a festive outfit from her closet and gave it to Lady Qiu. She asked her to wear it tomorrow night and come to the residence in a small sedan chair."

Old Madam Yu sneered. "She's rushing to welcome her into the house, afraid that she'll be a little late. This is the first time I've seen this. She's really afraid that I'll really find a noble concubine for Eldest Son."

Yu Youyao wanted to laugh when she heard this.

Her grandmother had just said yesterday that she was going to nominate Lady Qiu to be a concubine. Yang Shuwan did not even protest and was going to welcome her home the next day.

Although there was nothing particular about mentioning a concubine, she would be dressed in festive clothes and have a red flower on her head. She dressed well and used a small sedan chair to be carried into the residence through the side door. Then, she went to the main courtyard and kowtowed to the mistress. She served tea and let the mistress put on the airs of a proper wife. The mistress would explain the rules of the residence and some of her duties as a concubine. Finally, she was sent to the Rain Autumn Courtyard and the ceremony was completed.

However, this was also because her father taking in concubines was a serious matter. He would spend a few days managing it well.

Yang Shuwan was probably thinking that Old Madam had even dealt with Mu Jin this time. It was obvious that she was really angry with her.

Old Madam was the one who had taken the initiative to mention Concubine Qiu as the new concubine. She had even threatened her with a noble concubine. She had no choice but to do it. If she were to delay it, Old Madam would probably be displeased. Not only would she take the opportunity to vent her anger, but it would also be bad if she really took in a noble concubine for her father.

She might as well throw away her dignity and finish her business first.

This idea was not wrong. It could even be said to be very shrewd.

Yu Youyao was a little impressed by Yang Shuwan. It was true that she couldn't show her face in public, but when it came to her own interests, she was more shrewd than anyone else. She could even bear to lose her face more than ordinary people.

Even though she often made stupid moves, she never stopped.

It wasn't that Grandmother couldn't guess Yang Shuwan's thoughts. It was also because she had guessed that she felt annoyed. However, no matter how annoyed she was, she couldn't do anything about it.

Old Madam Yu instructed Qing Xiu, "Bring her in!"

When the concubine entered, the first day was to kowtow to the mistress.

On the second day, after gaining the favor of the young master of the residence, her status as the concubine could be truly confirmed. Only then would she have to kowtow and greet the elders in the family.

Lady Qiu had yet to officially acknowledge her, but she had already come over to greet her. It was obvious that she remembered their previous relationship as master and servant and had come over to show her loyalty. She had to meet her.

Not long after, Qing Xiu led Lady Qiu into the house.

Lady Qiu was wearing a new lotus-colored robe. She followed behind Qing Xiu obediently and knelt in front of Old Madam Yu.

“My parents passed away early when I was young. There were a few younger brothers and sisters in the family who I had to support. They were constantly worried about not having a next meal. It was Old Madam who pitied my family and brought me into the residence to serve you. Only then could I live well in the family. She even gave me the blessing of serving Eldest Master. I don’t dare to forget Old Madam’s kindness to me for a moment.”

With that, she kowtowed to Old Madam Yu.

Old Madam Yu said calmly, “Get up!”

Only then did Lady Qiu stand up obediently.

Yu Youyao sized up Lady Qiu.

Lady Qiu was petite, so her figure was surprisingly slender. She looked very beautiful and elegant. Her looks had finally reached her father’s heart. No wonder he doted on her so much.

In the past, considering that Lady Qiu was a concubine, it was not good for him to always go to her room. Now that she became his concubine...

Her grandmother’s methods were really impressive. Yu Youyao picked up her tea and drank it.

When Old Madam Yu saw that Lady Qiu had sat down and was still a little reserved, she said, “Since you’ve been brought into the household, you’re still a legitimate concubine. I’ll get Nanny Liu to prepare 50 bundles of betrothal gifts. Tomorrow, she will tie a red silk cloth and find a few people to carry them. They’ll play the drums along the way and send them to your house. Then, I’ll bring your family over to meet us. It’ll be considered a form of etiquette for your parents.”

This arrangement was very dignified. Lady Qiu knelt on the ground in excitement. “Thank you, Old Madam.”

Seeing that she was still sensible, Old Madam Yu said, “Since you’ve become a concubine, you should serve Eldest Master well in the future and help the Yu Residence grow as soon as possible.”

As an old woman, she should not be the one saying unnecessary things.

Lady Qiu agreed repeatedly!

When Yu Youyao returned to the Jade Courtyard, she instructed Dong Mei, “Pick two pieces of festive material from my closet and a few pieces of jewelry for Lady Qiu.”

Dong Mei nodded in agreement.

Yu Youyao went to the study and opened the letter Tang Yunxi had written to her.

In her letter, apart from thanking her, Tang Yunxi also mentioned that her grandmother was not in good health. Her mother planned to use this as an excuse to let her stay in Hui Ning Nunnery for a month to pray for her grandmother.

Tang Yunxi was not yet grown up. It was not appropriate for her to go to the nunnery alone. She needed two capable nannies to follow her.

First Madam Tang naturally went to the Education Department and invited Nanny Zhang, who was proficient in body-modeling and had some skills in recuperating, into the residence.

At home, Aunt Ye only thought that Tang Yunxi was not liked by Old Madam in the residence. Tang Yunxi had also grown up, so her future depended on her husband’s words. First Madam Tang was muddle-headed, so she thought of such a foolish method to curry favor with Old Madam. She would not suspect anything, so naturally, she would not stop her.

After all, if Tang Yunxi did not look outstanding, she would not have a good future.

In the letter, Tang Yunxi said, “Actually, I don’t want to stay in the residence either. It’s quiet in the nunnery. Hui Ning Nunnery is also a big nunnery. There are nobles who have become monks in the palace. There are also soldiers stationed at the nunnery. It’s also peaceful. When I’m in the nunnery, I can try the medicinal cuisine recipe you gave me.”

After Yu Youyao saw it, she couldn’t help but sigh. “Eldest Madam Tang has also made thorough plans for Eldest Sister Tang Wu. I hope that Fifth Sister Tang will really use those medicinal recipes.”

Otherwise, it would be a disappointment.

At the thought of this, Yu You also realized that she had been a little rash. “If I had known earlier, I wouldn’t have...”

#### Chapter 238 - 238 Cousin Won’t Be Disgusted

This gave her hope, but in the end, it might have little effect. She had done something bad out of kindness. It was also because she had not thought it through in the past. She only felt that Nanny Xu was impressive and that she had lost weight, so she did not consider anything else.

Nanny Xu interrupted her with a smile. “Although you’re a little lacking in consideration, you’re just being kind. You’re also a half-grown child. Even if there are some mistakes, it’s fine. Eldest Madam Tang specially came to give you a thank-you gift today because she understands your intentions.”

Otherwise, this gift wouldn’t have been sent into the residence on the second day of Yu Youyao’s birthday banquet.

Yu Youyao shook her head. “It’s also because First Madam Tang and Fifth Sister Tang treat me sincerely that I’m worried that I won’t be able to help. I’ll only disappoint them.”

!!

Nanny Xu handed her a cup of tea. "If I wasn't confident, I wouldn't have made a move so easily and made things difficult for you."

Although Yu Youyao was a little lacking in consideration, she wasn't considered rash. She didn't take the initiative to give her the prescription. Instead, she prompted her and asked her to try it out. It was obvious that she had done a good job.

Yu Youyao's eyes lit up and she threw herself into Nanny Xu's arms, acting like a spoiled child. "Nanny dotes on me the most. Even if I lack consideration, she has already thought about it for me." She looked at Nanny curiously. "I forgot to ask before. Why is Fifth Sister Tang so fat? Why can't she lose weight?"

At the thought of what had happened at Fifth Sister Tang's house, she was about to come up with a conspiracy theory.

Nanny Xu said, "It's also a person's physique. In such a situation, it's not easy to lose weight without using some special methods. It's not enough to just rely on medicine and eat less. We have to nourish our bodies and improve our physiques. Then, we have to practice the Body Modeling Technique and use it together."

It was not that taking medicine and eating less was useless, but the results were minimal. Often, after eating a banquet, the fat would be eaten again, so it was not effective.

Yu Youyao nodded. "Nanny has seen such people before?"

Nanny Xu nodded. "Princess Liyang in the palace also had such a physique. The Empress Dowager likes Princess Liyang, so she asked me to help nurse her back to health. Princess Liyang has also lost weight now. In the future, her diet will be lighter and less oily. She will be able to maintain it if she insists on practicing the Body Modeling Technique every day."

Princess Puyang was born to the Empress. She was a year younger than Yu Youyao and was very liked by the Empress Dowager.

Yu Youyao felt relieved. After asking Nanny Xu about the taboo topic of weight loss, she went to the study and took out a piece of paper to write a reply to Tang Yunxi.

First, she wrote down all the taboos about weight loss. It took her a total of three pages. Then, she wrote about her difficult experience when she first started losing weight.

After she was done, Yu Youyao showed it to Nanny Xu.

Nanny Xu nodded. "Losing weight isn't something that can be done in a day. It requires perseverance. Most people give up halfway because they can't take the hardship. This letter can be used to encourage her."

With Yu Youyao's hard work and successful experience of losing weight, Fifth Miss Tang would naturally be more confident. Even if it was difficult later on, she could grit her teeth and persevere.

This letter had also been painstakingly written.

“That’s what I think too.” Yu Youyao tilted her head. The box, which was only slightly larger than a baby’s palm, was made of rare and dark gold-threaded wood. The patterns were fine and beautiful. The golden threads shone brightly, making it look ancient and precious.

Ebony was an imperial material. All the materials used were regulated and each household could not exceed a certain amount.

Last night, she flaunted the seal her cousin had given her, but she did not dare to show off the ebony.

Since it was the size of a baby’s palm, it didn’t really overstep the rules. It was just that her cousin’s actions were a little too... unlike the Zhou family’s family background.

Due to its golden color, the Golden Steatite Stone had almost become exclusive to the royal family. The green field stone was even more popular with scholars because of its elegant appearance. The blood stone was red and pure, so it was more favored by the noble families.

However, the seal that her cousin made was made from the Golden Steatite Stone.

Yu Youyao shook off the strange thoughts in her mind and stroked the dense patterns of the ebony. Her lips curved into a smile. “Cousin just gave me a seal yesterday, but it already has a use today.”

Still laughing, she opened the box.

The longevity peach blossom stone was beautiful and glossy. No matter what, she would find it beautiful. With a blink of her eyes, she could tell that it was a little different. Even if she stared at it for a long time, she would not feel tired of it.

Yu Youyao had an idea.

She took out a high-grade piece of paper and placed it on the table. She used a paperweight to flatten it. Then, she picked out a brush that her cousin had given her. HeShegently dipped it in ink and wrote, “Shun was brought up in the fields, and Fu was brought up in a building...”

She held the brush in her fair hand and gently folded her jade wrist. The poem “Born in Troubles and Die in Peace” was completed in one breath. As she spoke, she looked left and right, looking forward to the future. There was actually a hint of lingering affection.

After writing it, Yu Youyao took a closer look and was very satisfied. “Cousin, you definitely didn’t expect that when we first met, the little girl who couldn’t even memorize the poem ‘Born in Troubles and Die in Peace’ and was scolded because her handwriting was too bad, could not only memorize it, but also write it now!”

When she finished speaking, her expression was smug. Her eyebrows couldn’t help but rise, and she looked even more energetic.

After admiring her “great work”, Yu Youyao took the seal that her cousin had given her and stroked it gently. Immediately, her hands were covered in grease. “Cousin gave me a seal so I’ll give him my first piece of calligraphy!”

Although her handwriting wasn’t as good as her cousin’s, he wouldn’t mind.

Yu Youyao opened the seal box and solemnly pressed the seal on the ink pad. She carefully pressed the seal stained with cinnabar to the place where she was supposed to sign.

The cinnabar seal landed on the pure white paper. Yu Youyao's eyes widened in shock. "It's actually a double fish seal."

The seal was carved into the shape of a strange stone. Two embroidered fish, one above and one below, were in contact with each other. The fish's body was carved with detailed scales, and every piece was exquisitely carved.

When she looked at the engraving, she couldn't tell anything.

When it was used, the two goldfishes swayed their fish tails, looking vivid and lifelike. The apricot patterns and flowers were dyed red and looked like they were on a branch of an old village.

On the small inscription, there were a few strokes, but they formed a scene of mountains and rivers, old branches and apricots, and embroidered fish.

Yu Youyao suddenly recalled that day at the Precious Peace Temple. She had seen the old tree by the lake in full bloom, so she had wanted to break off a stalk of spring apricot and bring it home to make a sachet for her cousin. However, she had accidentally bumped into her cousin at the rock garden and had a strand of her hair cut off by a sword.

In her panic, she shouted, "Cousin, save me!"

Later, when the man in black disappeared, her cousin broke off a spring apricot for her. This spring apricot was a symbol of trust that her cousin had given her.

From then on, she and her cousin had secrets that belonged to them only, and she became closer to him.

Her cousin had engraved the scene at the Precious Peace Temple on a small seal. It was a secret that belonged only to them.

## Chapter 239 - 239 Cousin, Your Ears Are Red

Yu Youyao stroked the fine and smooth patterns of the seal. She had originally thought that it looked good, and she had loved it so much that she couldn't bear to part with it. Now, it suddenly had an extraordinary meaning. Holding it in her hand, she felt both solemn and touched.

Her eyes were sparkling, but she pouted. "Cousin must have spent a lot of effort on this seal. He made it look so simple when he gave it to me, and he even wanted to hide it from me. Hmph!"

She had seen many seals from ancient books. Most of them were engraved with words, objects, and images. However, she had never seen anyone carve words, objects, and images into a scene.

Even the scenery of these few strokes tested one's carving skills greatly. In this small engraving, her cousin had used the two great carving techniques: The Shoushan stone carving method and The Micro carving method.

From this, it could be seen how much effort her cousin had put in.

After the ink dried, Yu Youyao took out the scroll from the blue and white vase behind her and carefully rolled up the words.



Yu Youyao took the seal and stamped the letter before handing it to Qiu Xing. "This is my reply to Fifth Miss Tang. It's sealed and so send it to the Tang Residence. I'll go to the Green House to look for my cousin."

Without waiting for Qiu Xing to answer, she had already run out with the scroll.

Just as she ran to the door, Yu Youyao thought of something and turned back. "The light stone that Third Cousin gave me is in the study. Help me find it."

Qiu Xing quickly brought over a light stone.

Yu Youyao came to the Green House with the painting scroll in one hand and the rosewood box in the other. Zhou Linghuai had just finished the insertion of needles and came out of the inner room with Uncle Sun.

Zhou Linghuai's lips curled up. Just as he was about to speak, he saw—

The little girl, who had been smiling at him just now, was now in front of Uncle Sun, crying. "Uncle Sun, Uncle Sun, Cousin has been taking the Essence Protection Pill for a while. Is his health much better? I see that Cousin's appetite has also increased recently, and his complexion has improved a lot..."

Zhou Linghuai pursed his lips.

Uncle Sun sat at the table and glanced at the tea on it.

Yu Youyao reacted faster than her brain. She quickly poured a cup of warm tea and handed it to Uncle Sun with both hands. "It's been hard on you. Hurry up and drink some tea to rest."

Only then did Uncle Sun slowly take the teacup. He opened the lid and lowered his head to take a few sips. "I wasted a lot of medicinal liquid last time. I didn't refine many Essence Protection Pills. Send some more of the Lingxi Bug's medicinal liquid over later."

Only when the effect was proven to be good would he continue refining it. Yu Youyao's eyes lit up. "That's great. I've collected two small bottles of the Lingxi Bug's medicinal liquid. I can refine more this time."

The other Lingxi Bug was also being nurtured with spiritual dew, so it produced more medicinal liquid.

She could feel that the medicinal liquid was becoming more and more effective.

This way, Cousin could recover as soon as possible.

After drinking the tea, Uncle Sun did not disturb the two anymore. He carried the first aid kit and left.

Only Yu Youyao and Zhou Linghuai were left in the room.

Yu Youyao poured a cup of warm tea and handed it to her cousin. Her lips curved into a smile. "Cousin, you've been performing acupuncture for a long time. You must be working harder than Uncle Sun."

When she was young, she had a rash and refused to take any medicine.

Her grandmother had no choice but to get a doctor to perform moxibustion on her. When the slender needle was inserted into her body, it hurt more than a mosquito bite. Furthermore, she had to wait for three minutes before she could remove the needle. It was much more terrifying than drinking a bowl of bitter medicine.

Not long after the needle pierced her body, she cried at the top of her lungs. She wanted to drink bitter medicine instead of having needles inserted in her. Her grandmother laughed at her.

Her illness of not drinking bitter medicine was cured by her grandmother just like that.

Her cousin's leg was broken and it hurt a lot more than her past illness.

After receiving the tea from the young lady, Zhou Linghuai's pursed lips relaxed. "You didn't go to school today?"

Yu Youyao moved over and sat in front of her cousin. "I had my birthday party yesterday and received a lot of birthday gifts. I sorted out the gift list with Nanny Xu in the morning. I'll go to school tomorrow."

When the little girl spoke to her, she raised her head slightly, looking beautiful.

Zhou Linghuai subconsciously smiled. Yu Youyao liked to sit in front of him. When she spoke to him, her face was filled with joy. She had a pair of delicate sleeping phoenix eyes that were bright. When she smiled, her eyes were bright and often filled with joy. Her chair was a little shorter than a stool. When she spoke, she raised her head slightly to look into his eyes. He could see his own bright figure in her eyes.

She reached out to take a copy of The Analects from the table and handed it to Yu Youyao. "I haven't been to school recently, so I've learned The Analects again. There are notes and explanations that I've written when I was studying it. Take it back and read it. You'll be able to gain some inspiration. It'll also be easier when you're learning at home."

Yu Youyao quickly took it and couldn't wait to open it. Indeed, just like the Spring and Autumn that her cousin had given her previously, it was filled with small words. Every word and sentence was unique. It was obvious that he had put in a lot of effort.

Yu Youyao held the book and smiled. "Cousin, are you planning to learn all the Four Books and Five Classics again?"

Zhou Linghuai's lips curled up. "The books of these thought leaders are great. The knowledge they impart contains the universe, the sun and moon, and an imposing aura. You should read it repeatedly, taste it, and think about it." He paused for a moment before adding, "I do have this intention."

Yu Youyao said with a smile, "Cousin, if I want to learn the Daoist Canon, will you read it repeatedly, taste it, and think about it?" Her voice was filled with laughter, and she sounded like she was crying. "Read it carefully, huh?"

Even someone as calm as Zhou Linghuai couldn't help but feel his ears heat up when he heard her say the last word. He picked up his tea and lowered his head to drink.

Little did she know that when he lowered his head, it revealed his reddened ears.

When Yu Youyao saw this, she chuckled. "Cousin, your ears are already red. How can you fool me? Am I easy to fool? Hmph!"

Zhou Linghuai choked on the tea in his throat and swallowed it with some difficulty. "I-I just want Cousin to learn more seriously at home."

For a moment, he couldn't even speak properly. Yu Youyao had never seen her cousin like this before, so she laughed even more happily. "Hmph, I just know it!"

The little girl wrinkled her nose, her eyes filled with joy. Zhou Linghuai also calmed down and said, "Cousin, did you just say that you want to learn the Daoist Canon?"

Yu Youyao burst out laughing. "Cousin, you're killing me with laughter. Can't you tell that I was joking just now?"

Zhou Linghuai was speechless for a moment. Actually, he had just asked casually. After asking, he realized that there were a total of nine books in the "Daoist Canon" and it was very obscure. Even though the current emperor was knowledgeable, it was inevitable that the entire court would follow his instructions and learn some Daoist classics, but how many of them had learned it seriously?

Even back then, it was only because his personality was too messy that his father had learned to restrain himself.

#### Chapter 240 - 240 Imperial Zither

The Daoist Canon was not a book that women should read. If women learned the Daoist Canon, they would be seen as deviant.

Yu Youyao couldn't stop laughing. As she laughed, she said, "Cousin, I don't want to learn the Daoist Canon. It's already very difficult for you to teach me the Four Books and Five Classics now. I can't tire you out."

Zhou Linghuai tapped her forehead lightly. "I'm afraid you're just too lazy to learn."

She even said that she didn't want him to tire himself out.

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Yu Youyao chuckled mischievously. "Cousin knows me best."

She had already learned much more than many young ladies. She needed to spend more time learning these things, and it would already be infinitely beneficial.

Zhou Linghuai smiled.

Yu Youyao tilted her head and smiled. "Second Sister saw the copy of Spring and Autumn that Cousin gave me previously. She wanted to borrow it back to copy, but I was worried that she would damage it, so I didn't agree and asked her to come to the Jade Courtyard to copy it herself. Now, Fifth Sister and Sixth Sister often come to the Jade Courtyard to copy books. Recently, they have also kept up with their studies in school. Not only that, but even Eldest Brother and Second Brother often borrow the transcripts they copy. They're so envious of me!"

Thinking of how Yu Shuangbai curled her lips as she copied the books, she said, "We're all siblings, but why are we so different? It's really infuriating to compare ourselves to others!"

Zhou Linghuai also knew a little about this matter. He nodded. "As long as you're happy."

As she spoke, Yu Youyao thought of something serious and quickly took the scroll. "Cousin, I have something for you too. Look."

Zhou Linghuai raised his hand to take it, but he was in no hurry to open it. Instead, he took a few careful glances at the scroll and said, "It must be Cousin's own brush and ink."

Yu Youyao's eyes widened. "Cousin, how did you know?"

"It's new paper." Zhou Linghuai raised the scroll to his nose and sniffed it. He smiled and said, "It's slightly moist. It's a smell that only new ink has. It was used less than two hours ago."

Yu Youyao was shocked. "Cousin, you're really amazing. You can even tell this."

Zhou Linghuai was a little embarrassed. Even anyone who was proficient in literature and calligraphy could tell that. He carefully opened the scroll and first saw the words on it. They were written in large characters and looked very emotional. She had actually improved greatly.

A smile appeared on his lips. "The reason why people like to praise Wang Xi's calligraphy with Cao Zhi's 'Ode to the Goddess of Luo's' is because Wang Xi learned many things, and is especially good at learning from others. In the early days, her handwriting was quite tactful as she was influenced by Madam Wei's small handwriting. Although Cousin hasn't been learning calligraphy for long, she's a natural. She already has some attainments of being as graceful as a dragon, as glorious as autumn chrysanthemums, and as beautiful as the wind."

Yu Youyao was overjoyed, but she deliberately pouted. "With my attainments, I'll be showing off in front of you. I won't dare to embarrass myself in front of you. Cousin, look behind you."

The little girl's smug expression could not be concealed. Even her humble words revealed a little pride. Zhou Linghuai smiled when he heard this. He skimmed through the calligraphy and saw the title. "Born in Troubles and Die in Peace by Mencius."

The seal on it was his gift from yesterday.

He looked at the small seal and it seemed to be huge. The bottom of the seal, which was a little thicker than a thumb, was carved with the image of the old tree beside the rock garden lake of the Precious Peace Temple that day. In order to create the scenery, he had even used a small carving technique and spent a lot of effort to complete it. Now, it seemed that it was all worth it.

Yu Youyao moved closer to her cousin and pointed at the seal. "The first time I wrote calligraphy with a seal, I gave it to you. You have to keep it carefully. Don't break it."

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "Alright! When it's smoked, I'll put it in a wooden box to store."

"That's great." Yu Youyao was very happy. She looked at the patterns on it. "By the way, Cousin, why didn't you tell me that you carved a double fish pattern, or that you..." As if she felt that she shouldn't have mentioned this, she quickly stopped and blinked at her cousin. "I didn't notice it before."

There were all kinds of strange carving techniques. If one did not use the seal, one would not be able to see what was carved.

The little girl looked secretive and playful, making Zhou Linghuai laugh. “Do you like it?”

“I like it.” Yu Youyao’s voice was clear, and even the smile on her lips became brighter. “I like it too much. I like the embroidered fish patterns the most!”

She had come to look for her cousin because she liked it too much.

Zhou Linghuai smiled brightly.

Yu Youyao brought over a rosewood box and handed it to her cousin. “Cousin, this is a birthday gift from Third Cousin. It’s a pity to leave it here. Take it and play with it!”

As a girl, she could just carve a seal using it but she did not want to waste such a rare good material.

On the other hand, as a man, his cousin had many uses for it. There were also various seals for different purposes, so this raw material was just right.

Zhou Linghuai reached out to take it and opened the box. “This light pagodite is quite rare. Coincidentally, I still lack a graphic seal. I’ll use it to communicate with others in the future.”

The golden steatite stone was a five-sided seal. Each side had a different print, and each print had a different purpose and meaning. It was an extremely private seal. He usually didn’t show it to others, but he didn’t deliberately hide it from the little girl.

Her cousin had also given her a graphic seal. Yu Youyao smiled. “Cousin, what kind of seal are you planning to carve?”

The sudden question really stumped Zhou Linghuai. “What do you think, Cousin?”

This time, Yu Youyao was stunned by her cousin’s question again. She pursed her lips and really rested her chin on her hand. She pinched her little nose and thought seriously, “The common graphic seal has an animal from the twelve zodiac signs. Cousin, the zodiac sign is a snake, so you can carve a snake-shaped seal.” As soon as she finished speaking, she quickly shook her head. “No, no. Just thinking about the snake-shaped seal makes me feel strange. It doesn’t match Cousin.”

Zhou Linghuai couldn’t help but laugh when he heard the little girl complain about deer, horses, bears, and birds.

After thinking about it, Yu Youyao’s eyes lit up. “Why don’t you carve a zither? It’s good to have a zither. I just hope that you’ll have a zither by your side in the future.”

There were many types of seals. The more common ones were animals and birds. Some scholars liked Plum, Orchid, Bamboo, and Chrysanthemum. Drums, bells and zithers were relatively rare.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly thought of the “Green Parasol Zither Painting” hanging in the little girl’s courtyard. He had already thought of the pattern that he wanted to carve. Parasol leaves, parasol flowers, and a zither. The scene should be extremely beautiful.

Seeing that her cousin was silent, Yu Youyao tugged at his sleeve. “Don’t you like the zither?”

Zhou Linghuai shook his head. “If you like it, we’ll do as you say.”

Yu Youyao was overjoyed.