

All Hail 341

Chapter 341 Not As Impressive As My Cousin

When Chang An heard this, he quickly said, “There’s still medicinal cuisine in the small kitchen. I’ll bring a bowl over for Young Master. You can draw it after you take it.” Seeing that Young Master’s expression was getting darker and darker, he quickly added, “Just now, Young Miss ordered someone to send it over. It promotes blood circulation. She said that Young Master has a leg problem and should eat more nourishing food.”

Zhou Linghuai’s expression relaxed. “Bring it over!”

Chang An felt as if he had been pardoned and fled from the study. Fortunately, he was smart enough to mention Young Miss. Otherwise—

His life would be over!

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Zhou Linghuai put down his brush and recalled the yearning and longing expression on the little girl’s face when she mentioned the dragon boat race during the Dragon Boat Festival this morning. He couldn’t help but purse his lips.

The next day, Yu Youyao got up at dawn. She washed up briefly and went to the small kitchen.

The small kitchen in the Jade Courtyard made medicinal cuisine every day, so Yu Youyao created a small pharmacy with a lot of medicinal herbs that she usually needed.

Yu Youyao picked out China root, white lentils, lotus seed flesh, barley rice, Chinese yam, congee, ginseng, dangshen, and so on. She washed them clean, crushed them into powder, added rice flour, white sugar, and so on. She added spiritual dew. After kneading them, she made small pieces of Eight Treasures Cake and steamed them in a pot.

Eight Treasures Cake sounded simple, but making it was not simple at all.

It took Yu Youyao an hour to make a pot.

She instructed Madam Zhao to take good care of the fire. “After it’s steamed, send a plate to An Shou Hall. There’s ginseng in the Eight Treasures Cake. It’s a great supplement. Grandmother can only eat one piece at a time, two pieces a day at most. It’s best if it’s once every three days.”

After returning to the house, Yu Youyao learned etiquette from Nanny Xu and washed up again. Then, the servants prepared breakfast.

After Yu Youyao ate, she thought about the heavy rain that had fallen the entire night yesterday. “There might be bamboo juice in the bamboo forest. Hurry up and prepare. Let’s go chisel the bamboo and get the sap. bamboo juice is a good thing. It can be used for medicine and tea...”

Chun Xiao quickly went down to prepare something.

“I’ll go find Cousin.” Yu Youyao picked up her skirt and ran to the Green House.

Seeing that Yu Youyao had come over, Chang An was wondering if he should report it to Young Master.

Yesterday, Young Master had promised him that he would rest at 11pm. However, after sleeping for four hours at night, he got up at 3 to 5 am. and stayed up in the study for half the night!

However, before he could speak, Yu Youyao asked, "Is Cousin in the study?"

Chang An nodded and was about to talk about Young Master staying up late yesterday.

Yu Youyao ran away like the wind.

The little girl ran into the study excitedly. "Cousin, let's go to the Xiaoxiang Forest to chisel bamboo and extract the juice. I'll make you bamboo tea."

The corners of Zhou Linghuai's lips curled up slightly. He rolled up half of the painting and said, "Okay!"

Yu Youyao took three steps to the shelf beside the desk and took out a cloak. "It rained all night yesterday. It's humid outside, so you need a cloak when you go out!" As she spoke, she circled behind her cousin and was about to help him put it on. "Cousin, reach out."

"Thank you, Cousin." Zhou Linghuai stretched out his arm and let the little girl help him put it on.

After putting on the cloak, Yu Youyao walked around to her cousin and tied the straps on the cloak. She tied a "gift" knot and tidied his clothes.

Seeing this scene, Zhou Linghuai recalled the past. His father had combed his mother's hair and eyebrows, and his mother had also dressed and trimmed his father's hair.

"It's done!" Yu Youyao looked at her cousin carefully. The black cloak was embroidered with crane patterns, making his aura look deep, noble, and poised. He looked like a royal descendant from nowhere, with an innate noble aura.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly came back to his senses and quietly tightened his grip on the armrest. "Then let's go!"

"Wait." Yu Youyao thought of something and quickly took a blanket that was draped over the chair. She squatted in front of her cousin and gently placed it on his lap. "It's humid outside. Although Cousin's leg condition has improved a little, you have to keep warm."

Zhou Linghuai suddenly closed his eyes.

Yu Youyao was stunned for a moment. "Cousin, what's wrong? Does your leg hurt? Then, then you should rest well in The Green House. I'll go get the bamboo juice alone. When I get it, it'll be the same tea that I'm making for you."

Zhou Linghuai slowly opened his eyes. The little girl was squatting in front of him, looking up at him with her jade-like neck. Her face was as fair as jade, and his figure was all she could see.

He suddenly approached and pressed his chin against the top of the little girl's head. He closed his eyes and lowered his head, his pale lips landing on her hair.

The faint fragrance of lilies suddenly lingered in his nose, rushing into his heart and lungs.

After realizing what he had done, he suddenly retreated.

Yu Youyao was stunned. "Cousin, you..."

Zhou Linghuai's gaze darkened as he interrupted her. "There are petals on your head."

"Huh?" Yu Youyao felt that her cousin was a little strange.

Zhou Linghuai turned his wheelchair around. "Let's go!"

"Oh, okay!" Yu Youyao was in a daze. She quickly stood up and followed behind her cousin. It was windy outside, so it was normal for petals to fall!

It had rained all night yesterday, so the limestone path was a little slippery. Yu Youyao was worried that it would be difficult to walk, so she called Chang An to push her cousin along.

At this moment, Chang An had already given up on complaining. Young Master was in a good mood. Even if he was given a hundred guts, he wouldn't dare to dampen his mood.

Chun Xiao had already prepared everything and brought a few old maids to wait at the Xiaoxiang Forest.

Yu Youyao tucked the blanket around her cousin's legs. "Cousin, wait for me here. When you're done, we'll make tea together."

Zhou Linghuai looked up at the Xiaoxiang Forest and turned to look at Chang An. "The bamboo forest is muddy and slippery. Be careful not to fall. Let Chang An accompany you."

Yu Youyao was a little disgusted. "Alright then!"

It had rained all night, and the bamboo forest was wet.

"This area is made of light bamboo. Not only can water enter the mouth directly, but it can also be used to make tea. Chisel this side first." Yu Youyao knocked on a few thick bamboo trees in a row, picked one, and instructed Chun Xiao to chisel the bamboo.

Chun Xiao took a chisel and cut open the bamboo. She cut the sharpened bamboo tube, but there was no bamboo juice flowing out. She couldn't help but feel a little disappointed.

Chang An snorted and casually picked a bamboo. Without even using a chisel, he slapped the sharpened thin bamboo tube into the bamboo, and light red bamboo juice flowed out of the bamboo.

Yu Youyao was dumbfounded. "This is legendary martial arts?"

Chang An crossed his arms over his chest and looked smug. "Hmph, ignorant. I used my internal strength and hidden strength just now, so I don't need any tools to directly penetrate the bamboo."

Yu Youyao couldn't bear to see him so smug. She pursed her lips. "What's there to be smug about? You're definitely not as impressive as my cousin."

No matter how powerful he was, he still had to listen to my cousin, right?

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Chapter 342 You Bullied Me

Chang An snorted again. “Of course. From the moment young master was born, he soaked in all kinds of medicinal baths to nourish his muscles and bones. At the age of five, he started practicing the horse stance and different moves, and developing his muscles and bones. At the age of seven, he was thrown into the military camp by his master...”

Halfway through his sentence, Chang An suddenly realized that he had misspoken. He quickly shut his mouth. It was over, it was over. He had let it slip just now.

Yu Youyao was also stunned for a long time.

If she remembered correctly, her cousin was born with a congenital deficiency and had been raised at home, living in seclusion.

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He practiced the horse stance, exercised his muscles, and entered the military camp...

Was this really the cousin she knew?

Seeing Yu Youyao’s thoughtful expression, he knew that she must be suspicious. Chang An quickly said, “I made it up, but you actually believe me. Haha, my young master’s health hasn’t been good since he was young, so how can he practice martial arts? It’s not like you don’t know that.”

Yu Youyao was furious. “Chang An, how dare you lie to me? Are you itching for a beating?”

Chang An suddenly heaved a sigh of relief.

Fortunately, he had finally managed to fool her.

Next, Yu Youyao pointed at Chang An righteously. “I previously promised Third Sister Song, Sixth Sister Qi, and Fifth Sister Tang that when the Dragon Boat Festival comes, I’ll get some bamboo juice and give it to them. Since you’re so smart, help me get more bamboo juice, in case there’s not enough. If you don’t work hard, I’ll tell Cousin that you’re bullying me.”

Zhou Linghuai couldn’t help but smile.

Martial arts practitioners had sharp eyes and ears. He did not need the little girl to complain. He had already heard Chang An’s previous words.

It wasn’t that Chang An didn’t know the severity of the matter, but he knew that his master trusted Yu Youyao completely and never deliberately hid anything. Naturally, he was also affected. Just like him, he didn’t guard against Yu Youyao.

There were some things that he had never wanted to hide from her.

He hadn’t told her for the time being because the time wasn’t right.

This time was coming soon.

He hoped that the little girl wouldn’t be too surprised when the time came.

After taking out a large jar of bamboo juice, Yu Youyao pointed at another bamboo forest not far away. “There’s a bamboo forest over there. The bamboo juice I took is light yellow, like amber. It can be used as medicine. Help me get another jar.”

Chang An had no complaints about his hard work.

Zhenguo Marquis Residence!

Tomorrow was the Dragon Boat Festival. Song Wanhui used five-colored silk to make sachets and planned to give it to Yu Youyao and Qi Sinian.

At this moment, her maidservant, Que'er, entered the room. "Young Miss, Eldest Miss Yu's sister, Xia Tao, is here. She said that she's here to deliver something to you on Eldest Miss Yu's orders."

Song Wanhui smiled when she heard this. She quickly said, "Yao Yao's things arrived before I gave her mine. Let's go and take a look."

Que'er followed Young Miss to the front hall.

When Xia Tao saw Song Wanhui, she quickly bowed. "Third Miss Song, you're well. It rained all night yesterday. My family took some bamboo juice from the Xiaoxiang Forest this morning and specially ordered me to send some to you."

That was it. She would hand over the blue and white porcelain jar.

Que'er quickly took it.

Song Wanhui was overjoyed. "It's been so long, but Yao Yao still remembers what she said casually previously."

At that time, Fifth Miss Tang had asked casually when she saw that there were holes in the bamboo.

Yao Yao had said that it was left behind from the bamboo juice. She had even said that if it rained in May and there was bamboo juice, she would collect some for them.

If it weren't for the bamboo juice that Yao Yao had sent over today, she would have forgotten about this.

Xia Tao smiled. "You can drink the bamboo juice directly or make tea. It's fine if Third Miss tastes it fresh, but there's no more than what's given."

Not every bamboo tree had bamboo juice. She took a jar and divided it. She also gave it to many people. Young Miss did not have much left.

However, Miss had kept the bitter bamboo juice that could be used as medicine.

It was mainly because it was not appropriate to give it to others directly.

This small jar was just enough to brew tea once. Song Wanhui couldn't help but smile. "Help me thank your young miss." With that, she turned around and instructed Que'er, "Give the gift I prepared for Eldest Miss Yu to Miss Xia Tao so she can bring it back."

Que'er returned to the inner room to get the prepared gift and handed it to Xia Tao.

Xia Tao thanked her and left.

Song Wanhui couldn't wait to open the small jar and pour a small cup of bamboo juice.

The light red bamboo liquid was placed in a small porcelain cup, like a pool of jade liquid. It was clear and translucent, and the faint fragrance of bamboo entered her nose, giving her a refreshing feeling.

Song Wanhui took a small sip. When the bamboo juice entered her mouth, there was no taste, but after entering her throat, there was a hint of sweetness.

“No wonder Yao Yao thinks so highly of bamboo.” Song Wanhui’s eyes darted around, and she suddenly had an idea.

Song Mingzhao was painting “Shu Ai Painting”. Every year, on the Dragon Boat Festival, scholars would paint different sceneries. It could also be hung indoors.

The servant came over to report, “Young Master, Third Miss is here. She said that the Eldest Miss of the Yu family gave Young Miss a jar of bamboo juice today. It’s a rare and good thing. Third Miss invited Young Master over to make tea.”

As soon as he heard the words “Eldest Miss Yu”, Song Mingzhao instantly thought of the Eldest Miss of the Yu Residence. Her surname was Yu, and her name was Youyao. Her nickname was Yao Yao.

He couldn’t help but think of the day of the Buddha Festival on the eighth of April. Eldest Miss Yu was wearing a plain dress and standing under the Bodhi tree with a green cover. She held the wishing silk and stood on her tiptoes, wishing to throw the wishing silk.

Eldest Miss Yu looked calm and beautiful.

Although it had been a long time, he still remembered her gentle voice. It was like a delicate oriole, and her voice entered his ears. “Buddhism emphasizes fate. Everything can be stopped when it’s appropriate. All I want is peace of mind.”

Seeing that Young Master had not said anything, the servant remembered that Third Miss was still waiting, so he asked, “Third Young Master, are you going?”

“Yes!” Song Mingzhao casually threw the brush into the brush wash and turned to walk out.

This stunned the servant.

For some reason, he felt that Young Master was walking a little faster. Could it be that he was worried that Third Miss would wait for too long?

Song Mingzhao arrived at the pavilion.

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Song Wanhui had already set up a small clay stove and lit a charcoal fire. The light red bamboo juice in the cup was thick with smoke, and the elegant bamboo fragrance entered her nose without warning.

Song Mingzhao sat on a stool and took the tea tweezers from Song Wanhui. “I’ll do it!”

Song Wanhui was shocked. “You want to make tea yourself?”

Eldest Brother was talented and smart. He had displayed extraordinary talent since he was young. In order to prevent the family from being chaotic and disturbing his temperament, his father not only carved out a large area in the residence and built a courtyard for him, but also sent him to the Precious Peace Temple when he was seven years old. He said that the temple was quiet and he could study in peace.

It was probably because of this that her eldest brother's personality was indifferent and he was not too close to her.

She had never drunk tea personally brewed by her eldest brother in her life.

Song Mingzhao said calmly, "According to the Book of Herbs, bamboo juice is the divine water of the heavens. Phoenixes don't live unless they're resting on parasol trees, don't eat unless they're eating bamboo, and don't drink unless they're drinking bamboo juice. The bamboo juice before and after the Dragon Boat Festival is even rarer."

Chapter 344 Forgiving Cousin Once

Yu Youyao's eyes widened in surprise. "Cousin, you can actually divide tea like this?!"

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "The method of dividing the tea is different. I used the tea infusion method. It's a little different from the "stirring" tea method you learned."

"Cousin, you're really amazing!" Previously, Nanny Xu had also mentioned the tea infusion technique, but Nanny Xu was not proficient in it so she did not teach her this.

Zhou Linghuai handed the tea to Yu Youyao. "Try it."

Yu Youyao held it with both hands and lowered her head to smell it. She smiled and said, "The tea is fragrant and mellow." After saying that, she took a sip of tea and rolled it on the tip of her tongue before swallowing it. "It's as mellow as tea, but it's also as refreshing as bamboo juice. This is the first time I've tasted such delicious tea. Cousin, you're amazing."

Zhou Linghuai chuckled. "Cousin, you flatter me."

Yu Youyao held her teacup. "Although the bamboo juice is good, it's a little cold. I made Eight Treasures Cake. It's moist and should be eaten together. Cousin, don't just drink tea."

Her cousin had a leg problem every rainy day. She had only thought of the Eight Treasures Cake yesterday. This was a kind of health-nourishing dessert that could nourish the spleen and stomach, strengthen the body, and remove moisture from the body.

She had even added spiritual dew, but it was very good for strengthening the foundation and nurturing the essence. It was exactly what her cousin needed for his illness.

Zhou Linghuai looked at the small plate of Eight Treasures Cake on the table. There were only eight pieces on it, and the words "Fortune, Longevity, Health and Peace" were printed on it. It was done very delicately. "You made it yourself?"

Yu Youyao nodded. "There was a small amount of ginseng in the Eight Treasures Cake. It's a great supplement. Cousin, you can only eat three pieces at most, and you can't eat more. Otherwise, you won't be able to take the nourishment and your body will be damaged."

Her cousin's body was a little weak and he needed to replenish his vitality. It was fine to eat two more pieces.

But not too much.

Zhou Linghuai sat still and recalled that during this period of time, every time it rained, the little girl would wash her hands and make soup for him to nourish his body.

Seeing that her cousin wasn't moving, Yu Youyao took out a handkerchief, twisted a piece of the Eight Treasures Cake, and handed it to her cousin. "I know that cousin doesn't like sweets, so I put less sugar, and the taste is not greasy at all. Cousin, try it."

However, Zhou Linghuai felt that he could eat it even if there were ten kilograms of sugar. He reached out to take the Eight Treasures Cake and lowered his head to take a bite.

The Eight Treasures Cake melted in his mouth. Perhaps it was because she had used medicinal herbs, but she had put in too little sugar. The taste was a little bitter, and a hint of sweetness was cleverly incorporated. Not only was it not bad, but it was also very smooth and exactly to his taste.

Yu Youyao asked impatiently, "How is it? Does it taste good? I tried some previously and felt that it was a little bitter. I wonder if Cousin likes it."

Zhou Linghuai suddenly smiled. "It's delicious. I like it very much."

He really liked it.

Seeing that the corners of her cousin's eyes were slowly raised and there was a hint of joy in them, Yu Youyao knew that he really liked it. She quickly said, "Cousin, if you like it, I'll make it for you often in the future. The Eight Treasures Cake is good for your health. You can eat one every day for many days. It won't take too much effort."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "Okay."

As the two of them sipped on tea and ate cake, Yu Youyao thought of the Dragon Boat Festival tomorrow. "Cousin, you'll be at the Jade Courtyard at nine tomorrow. We'll wrap brown seeds together. It'll be fun to celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival together."

When the little girl mentioned the Dragon Boat Festival, she did not look like that day when she had regret in her eyes. Zhou Linghuai nodded in agreement.

Yu Youyao thought of the gift again. "I've prepared a gift for Cousin. Did you prepare a gift for me?"

The little girl's eyes were filled with curiosity. Zhou Linghuai suddenly remembered that she had asked him about the gift previously. "Since Cousin has personally spoken, I naturally can't be negligent. Otherwise, you'll cry again."

Yu Youyao also thought of that and was immediately embarrassed. "Who's crying? It's all your fault for teasing me, Cousin. That's why I... Hmph, in short, it's all your fault. You actually dared to mention it. You're too much."

Zhou Linghuai wanted to laugh, but under the little girl's delicate and fierce expression, he suppressed his laughter and said seriously, "Okay, it's all my fault. I won't mention it again, okay!"

Yu Youyao snorted and said reluctantly, "On account of Cousin's sincere apology, I'll forgive you this time!"

With that, she laughed.

As the two of them were talking, Liu'er rushed over. "Young Miss, there's a commotion in the Songtao Courtyard. Fourth Young Master is crying and asking for Mother. He's smashed a lot of things. No one can persuade him..."

Zhou Linghuai's face darkened and was a little displeased.

Yu Youyao turned to look at her cousin and smiled. "I'll go to the Songtao Courtyard to take a look first. The weather is wet and cold today. Cousin has been outside for a long time. It's time to go back."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "You go first. I'll return to the Green House after this."

During this period of time, he had been busy, and the little girl had also been busy. Although they met every day, the little girl had added "Heavenly Works" to her readings, so she did not have much free time.

It was rare for her to have half a day of leisure today, but Yu Shansi had interfered.

Yu Youyao squatted in front of her cousin again and tugged at the velvet blanket on his leg. She then held his hand and instructed again, "You can stay for another ten minutes at most. You can't stay any longer. Otherwise, your leg will hurt terribly from the humidity."

Last time, her cousin's leg had an aggressive reaction which scared her.

Now, every time it rained, she would be nervous. She wanted to help her cousin nourish his body. When his body was warm, his legs would feel better.

Zhou Linghuai smiled helplessly. "Got it, little housekeeper grandmother."

When Yu Youyao heard the words "little housekeeper grandmother", she pouted unhappily, but she did not say anything. After all, she was indeed in charge of the household now.

Little housekeeper grandmother seemed to be right.

However, why did he have to call her a "grandmother"? It felt like he was calling her old.

Yu Youyao made a face at her cousin as if she was playing a prank, then went to the Songtao Courtyard with Xia Tao.

Yu Shansi had almost drowned yesterday and was unconscious for the entire night. When he woke up this morning, he cried and complained that he couldn't stay in the Songtao Courtyard anymore. He wanted to go to the main courtyard to look for his mother.

The servants said that First Madam's illness was serious and she had moved into the Tranquil Heart Residence to recuperate. No one was allowed to disturb her.

Yu Shansi did not believe it and was about to go to the courtyard to look for his sister.

The servants also said that Third Miss had fallen ill yesterday. After Imperial Physician Hu came to treat her, he said that Third Miss needed to recuperate and her courtyard was even closed.

This time, how could Yu Shansi tolerate it? He flew into a rage on the spot and caused a commotion.

As soon as Yu Youyao entered the courtyard, she heard a clang from the inner room, the sound of smashing, and Yu Shansi's cries.

Liu'er drew the curtain and Yu Youyao walked into the house. At a glance, she could see the mess in the room. The ground was a mess, filled with things that Yu Shansi had smashed.

Chapter 345 Vicious Woman

She turned around and instructed an old woman beside her, "Clean up the things that were smashed in the house. Make a booklet of whatever was damaged and send it to First Madam to fill it up."

The things in Yu Shansi's house were all from the government, and the things that were broken were also from the government. It was only right that Madam Yang fill in the gaps as his mother.

The old woman nodded repeatedly.

When she saw Yu Youyao, Yu Shansi shouted, "Yu Youyao, did you cause me to drown? Did you harm my mother and sister? I'll tell Father and get him to chase you out of the Yu Residence..."

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Yu Youyao's expression was indifferent, and she couldn't even be bothered to explain. "Calling your sister by her name means you show no respect for seniority." She turned to instruct Liu'er, "Go and invite the nanny from the residence over. Let her teach Fourth Young Master the rules well. Before Fourth Young Master learns the rules well, he's not allowed to take half a step out of the Songtao Courtyard. The monthly allowance of the Songtao Courtyard will be halved."

Liu'er agreed and went out to invite the nanny over.

However, Yu Shansi shouted, "I'm Father's only son. If you dare to treat me like this, Father won't let you off..."

He was just a spoiled child, so Yu Youyao did not indulge him. "Eldest Madam Yang has migraines and is recuperating in Tranquil Heart Residence. Third Sister is seriously ill and needs to rest quietly. She's not allowed to be disturbed. It's said that an eldest sister is like a mother. Since I'm the eldest sister, it's my duty to raise the younger siblings in the family. If you're unhappy, feel free to look for Father."

After all, he was still a child. He was usually spoiled by his mother and pampered by the servants, so he was arrogant.

However, today he encountered Yu Youyao who was even more unreasonable than him. Not only did she not coax him, but she also treated him bluntly.

Yu Shansi was furious, aggrieved, and sad. He immediately became a weak and helpless little pitiful child. He cried at the top of his lungs, "Mother, ah, ah, sob, I want my mother. I want to go find her..."

Yu Youyao chuckled. "On the account that Fourth Brother drowned yesterday and was frightened, I'll forget that you were smashing things today. If there's a next time, you'll starve for a day."

Yu Shansi stared at her in disbelief and shouted, "You, you, I'm already crying, but you're still treating me like this. Wah, you vicious woman. You harmed my mother and sister, and now you want to harm me. Let me tell you, I'm my father's only son..."

Yu Youyao's gaze darkened. "Fourth Young Master's lunch can be used to feed the dogs in the courtyard today."

Yu Shansi immediately wailed in grievance. "Wow, I want to tell Father that you're bullying me and not giving me food..."

Yu Youyao instructed the servants in the Songtao Courtyard calmly, "In the future, you don't have to report anything in the Songtao Courtyard to me anymore. Just report it to Zhao Da and let Father decide."

With that, she left Songtao Courtyard with the old maid.

Seeing that she had left decisively, Chun Xiao couldn't help but ask, "Young Miss, are you really not going to care about Fourth Young Master?"

Now that Young Miss was in charge of the household, Old Madam was old and his eldest sister was like a mother. If Young Miss did not care about Fourth Young Master, wouldn't no one care about him?

Yu Youyao said calmly, "I will act accordingly. Fourth Brother has been spoiled, so Father won't be at ease letting others interfere with Fourth Brother's upbringing."

Besides, she did not want to care about Yu Shansi.

After Yu Youyao returned to the Jade Courtyard, she instructed Liu'er, "Tell the small kitchen to brew a pot of medicinal cuisine to nourish one's body every day and send it to Concubine Qiu. It's time for her to nourish her body and spread her roots in the family."

She did not care if Concubine Qiu could help the Yu Residence.

However, her grandmother had suffered a huge blow because of Yu Shansi, so she couldn't just stand by and watch.

Madam Yang was not a problem. In order to deal with her, Yu Jianjia could even kill her own brother, so she had to be wary. In order to prevent her from using Yu Shansi to cause trouble in the future, it was indeed time for the first branch to have more children.

In An Shou Hall.

Old Madam Yu had been copying Buddhist scriptures in the temple hall for the entire morning. It was only when it was time for lunch that Nanny Liu came over to call for her. "Old Madam, it's time for lunch. Eldest Miss sent over the Eight Treasures Cake that she personally made this morning. She just ordered someone to send over some nourishing medicinal cuisine. You haven't had much breakfast. You have to eat a few mouthfuls after lunch. Otherwise, Eldest Miss will be worried."

Only then did Old Madam Yu stop writing and sigh slightly. "Let's go!"

Nanny Liu quickly helped her up and went to the outer room to eat.

Perhaps because she did not want to ruin her granddaughter's kindness, Old Madam Yu forced herself to eat a small bowl of medicinal cuisine. After using two pieces of Eight Treasures Cake, she could not eat anymore.

“Have you settled the matters in the main courtyard, the Songtao Courtyard, and the Huan Courtyard?”

Madam Yang was in charge of the house, and she had also damaged it, causing the servants to be disrespectful. When Brother Si drowned in the water, the entire residence was in chaos. Everyone changed.

Nanny Liu nodded. “It's all been handled. All the people who served First Madam have been beaten and sold to the brokerage house. The others have also been tied up and sent to the manor to do manual labor. The Songtao Courtyard and the Huan Courtyard have also been dealt with the same way.”

She paused for a moment and continued, “In the residence, we chose a group of servants to enter the residence and trained them for a few days. They can still be used. On Fourth Young Master's side, Eldest Miss sent Nanny Yin over to teach him the rules. Third Miss also chose someone who knows some pharmacology to serve him. However, we still have to search carefully for appropriate people to serve him.”

This arrangement was also timely. This messy matter had come to an end. Old Madam Yu's expression softened slightly. “That's good. You can choose from the rest first.”

Nanny Liu agreed.

“Go to the storeroom and pick some supplements and send them to Concubine Qiu. The medicine for the few maidservants by Eldest Master's side has also stopped. Take good care of their bodies and give orders that if anyone can get pregnant, they will be promoted to concubine.” At this point, Old Madam Yu sighed slightly. After a while, she said, “It's time for the first branch to have more children.”

In the past, she had never interfered in the matters of the main courtyard.

Firstly, it was because her health wasn't good and she didn't have the energy to manage it. Secondly, it was because Madam Yang was in charge. Thirdly, it was also because her eldest son trusted Madam Yang. She didn't want to waste her effort..

However, Madam Yang had caused trouble for the first branch.

Fourth Miss had been raised to be more ambitious and wanted to surpass her sister.

Brother Si had been spoiled. He was almost seven years old and had not even learned all the principles

Even Third Miss had been neglected too much. Her body had been damaged and she was so weak.

It was time for her to step in.

Nanny Liu agreed in a low voice.

Old Madam Yu drank some tea. The faint medicinal bitterness entered her throat, and the depression in her heart eased a little. "How are the arrangements at home for the Dragon Boat Festival tomorrow?"

Nanny Liu smiled. "Eldest Miss is in charge of the family. How can there be any mistakes? She has already prepared it well. I guarantee that you won't have to worry."

Old Madam Yu was a little gratified, but also a little uncomfortable. "That's true. The family was in such a mess yesterday that even I felt that it was troublesome, but Yao Yao didn't panic at all. She could handle things one by one and not let me worry. In that case, what else can't she handle?" At this point, she couldn't help but sigh. "It's really hard on a half-grown child."

Chapter 346 Dragon Boat Festival

Nanny Liu agreed deeply. A half-grown child was equivalent to half of the Yu Residence. Now, nothing in the family could be separated from her. Which young miss in the capital worked as hard as her?

Not to mention Old Madam, even her heart ached when she saw this. She wished she could take on all the big and small matters in the residence so that Eldest Miss could bear a lighter burden.

Old Madam Yu's heart ached for her granddaughter. "Madam Yang has been locked up in the Tranquil Heart Residence. I'm old, and my body is useless. The family needs to rely on her to be safe in the residence during the Dragon Boat Festival. Yao Yao has liked to have fun since she was young. It's an annual Dragon Boat Festival. She's just a half-grown child, but she can't even leave the residence."

Nanny Liu advised, "That's why you should recuperate carefully. When you recover, you can go anywhere with Eldest Miss."

Old Madam Yu waved her hand, but she still listened to her and ate another small bowl of porridge.

Not long after, Qing Xiu came over to report that Madam Yao had arrived.

Old Madam Yu nodded. She had always been very satisfied with this second daughter-in-law of hers. Yesterday, the main family had caused such a commotion and she did not get involved. However, today, after the main family's matter, she came to visit. She was also sensible.

As he was still thinking about Yu Shansi, Yu Zongzheng left the government office at 4pm.

As soon as he entered the residence, he heard that not only had Yu Shansi caused a commotion all morning, but he had also smashed a lot of things. He had even scolded his eldest sister. Immediately, he was furious and rushed to Songtao Courtyard angrily.

When Xia Tao received the news, she came over to report, "Fourth Young Master complained to Eldest Master that you were the one who caused him to drown. He even said that you were vicious and refused to give him food... When Eldest Master heard this, he was furious. He pointed at Fourth Young Master's nose and scolded him for calling his eldest sister by her name without any respect for her. He was disrespectful to his legitimate sister and did not have any manners. He immediately asked Zhao Da to apply the family law, took off Fourth Young Master's clothes, and slapped his butt."

Yu Youyao was not surprised.

Her father had high hopes for Yu Shansi. Although he hated Madam Yang for teaching his only son badly, in the end, wasn't he also extremely disappointed in Yu Shansi?

As the saying went, the deeper one's love was, the more blame they would have. Her father was filled with anger. After seeing Yu Shansi fail with his own eyes, it was normal for him to completely erupt.

Yu Shansi's beating was inevitable.

The next day was the Dragon Boat Festival on the fifth day of May.

The residence was busy at dawn. The servants' arms were all tied with acacia ropes made of five-colored silk. They were busy inserting mugwort in front of the door and pasting it on the door. They used mugwort, calamus, and banyan branches. They used red paper with garlic and pomegranate flowers to weave "Wormwood People" and "The Herb Sachet" and hung them above the hall.

They were very busy.

Zhou Linghuai finally managed to finish the painting that he was going to give Yu Youyao on the Dragon Boat Festival. Although it was a little rushed, it was still presentable after he made a few adjustments.

At this moment, Chang An brought in an ebony box. "Young Miss sent Miss Xia Tao over to give you a gift."

Zhou Linghuai's lips curled up slightly as he took the ebony wooden box and opened it.

Inside, there was an acacia rope woven with five-colored threads—white, green, black, red, and yellow. There were even five-colored beads woven on it. Even though it was just a simple five-colored thread, she had made a variety of patterns. It looked generous and exquisite. It was going to be tied to his arm. She wanted him to "repel the army" and pray for peace so that war and plague would not happen.

Accompanying the acacia rope was an exquisite sachet. It was a dark black sachet, and it was embroidered with golden leaves and red flowers. The rope belt of the sachet was also made of five-colored silk.

He lowered his head and smelled it. He could tell that it was stuffed with medicinal herbs such as mugwort, calamus, vanilla, cinnabar, realgar, and angelica. It had the effect of repelling insects and poison.

The last item was a Herb Sachet. It had to be hung on his waist.

This time, he had everything he needed.

It had probably taken her a long time to prepare these. Zhou Linghuai chuckled and put them back into the box one by one. He looked down at the painting on the desk. It was already dry.

After checking one more time and confirming that there was nothing wrong, he filled the scroll and rolled up the painting. Then, he packed it in a box that he had prepared long ago. "Bring the gift I prepared for Cousin and go to the Jade Courtyard!"

Chang An looked at the time. "Isn't it a little too early to arrive at dawn?"

Wasn't it a little rude?

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "I can accompany Cousin for breakfast."

Chang An pushed Young Master to the courtyard.

The hollyhocks at the courtyard wall seemed to have bloomed even more brightly after the wind and rain. Zhou Linghuai recalled the day before yesterday when the little girl put a hollyhock in her hair

Suddenly, there was a feeling that a daughter in his family had just grown up and was already quietly revealing her beauty.

Zhou Linghuai turned his wheelchair over.

The hollyhock plant was as tall as a sunflower. He picked the brightest one and broke a few stalks.

All the way to the Jade Courtyard, the residence was filled with wormwood, calamus, and Zhong Kui statues. The servants were busy going back and forth, but they were orderly. There was a festive atmosphere everywhere.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly remembered that he had been busy painting these past few days and had actually forgotten about the portrait of Zhong Kui that he had promised to draw for the little girl.

He had never drawn Zhong Kui before, but it wasn't difficult.

If he returned to draw now, he would be done in an hour at most.

Just as Zhou Linghuai was hesitating if he should go back, he saw Yu Youyao leading Chun Xiao out from the corner of the corridor in front.

The little girl was wearing a green dress with narrow sleeves. She was thin and delicate, and her green clothes were as pure and bright as clear water. There was a "Acacia Rope" tied to her arm, and a sachet embroidered with acacia was hanging at her waist. There was also a small sachet hanging behind her waist.

Seeing her cousin, Yu Youyao immediately picked up her skirt and ran towards him. When she saw the handful of hollyhocks in her cousin's arms, her eyes lit up. "Cousin, are these for me?" As she asked the obvious, she couldn't wait to take the hollyhocks. "The hollyhocks in my courtyard are also open today, but they are not as beautiful as your gift."

Zhou Linghuai smiled.

Yu Youyao was very vain. Just like the day before, she pinched the most beautiful flower. "Cousin, help me put it on."

With that, she moved closer.

The little girl had combed her hair into a bun today, and she was only wearing a pearl flower on her head. Her crow-colored hair hung by her temples and ears, making her black hair look like clouds.

Zhou Linghuai placed the red hollyhocks in his hand into the middle of her bun. The red flower contrasted with her eyes, and they shone brightly.

“Thank you, Cousin.” Yu Youyao raised her hand and stroked the hollyhock in her hair. Her every move revealed the beauty of a woman.

Zhou Linghuai lowered his eyes and rubbed the incense beads on his wrist. “Where did you go just now?”

Yu Youyao smiled. “I picked a bunch of hollyhocks and sent them to Grandmother’s house to put in a bottle for her. At the same time, I went to the main kitchen to prepare a banquet. It’s the Dragon Boat Festival today, so we have to go to Grandmother’s house for lunch. There’s a small banquet at home tonight, so the main kitchen should be ready for it.”

Chapter 347 Cousin, You’ve Worked Hard

Zhou Linghuai nodded and entered the Jade Courtyard with Yu Youyao.

The hollyhocks that her cousin had given her the day before were already a little withered.

Yu Youyao replaced the water and flowers. She did not throw away the handful that was a little dry. She planned to make them into spices and stuff them into a sachet to repel insects.

Zhou Linghuai held a cup of tea and couldn’t help but smile when he saw the little girl busying herself in the house.

!!

After Yu Youyao put the hollyhocks into the bottle, she realized, “Cousin, didn’t I send something to you early in the morning? Why aren’t you wearing it?”

Zhou Linghuai took the sandalwood box from Chang An. “Since it’s a gift from you, please help me put it on.”

“Okay!” Yu Youyao quickly walked up to her cousin and opened the sandalwood box. She first took out the Acacia Rope and tied it to her cousin’s left arm. She said, “Avoid soldiers and ghosts and you will not fall sick.”

Zhou Linghuai tilted his head to look at the “Acacia Rope” on his arm, then at the little girl who had tied the same “Acacia Rope” on her arm. His smile deepened.

After Yu Youyao tied the Acacia Silk Rope, she tied an exquisite knot. “The Acacia Silk Rope is also known as a longevity strand or a life-extending strand. According to the ‘General Customs’, on May 5th, a five-colored knot will be used to extend one’s lifespan, bring advantages into one’s life. I hope that Cousin will live a long life and be in good health.”

Zhou Linghuai nodded softly. He could also imagine what kind of sincere expectations the little girl had for him.

At her cousin’s waist, there was still the pouch she had given him previously. The pouch had been worn for a while, but probably because its owner cherished it very much, the patterns on it were still as bright as new.

Yu Youyao hung the sachet on her cousin’s waist. There were two pouches, one green and one black that were placed together. The green pouch was a little bigger, and the other was a little smaller, but it revealed its exquisiteness. “In May, the weather suddenly became hot and humid, making it easy

to contract an epidemic illness. Wearing the sachet with insect repellent poison can ensure your safety. Cousin, you have to be safe.”

She had started preparing the sachet after giving the green pouch to her cousin. Fortunately, her embroidery skills were improving day by day. Now, it was no longer difficult to embroider these little things.

Zhou Linghuai stroked the exquisite embroidery on the sachet. The embroidery was smooth. It was obvious that the little girl had indeed put in a lot of effort. “Don’t embroider too much in the future. It’ll hurt your eyes.”

Yu Youyao smiled. “As the saying goes, a good Dragon Boat Festival can prevent illnesses for a year. It’s very meaningful to hang a sachet. I hope that Cousin can wear the sachet I embroidered myself. In the future, you’ll be safe and immune to all poisons and illnesses.”

Of course, she had to do it personally to feel at ease.

Zhou Linghuai’s heart skipped a beat. “Thank you, Cousin.”

Yu Youyao blinked at her cousin and hung the sachet behind his waist. “It wards off ghosts and evil. It’s impervious to all filth.” When she was done adjusting everything, she looked at her cousin carefully and smiled. “There has to be a sense of ritual to have fun during the Dragon Boat Festival.” She tilted her head and sized up her cousin again, smiling until her eyes curved. “That’s more like it.”

There were all kinds of customs during the Dragon Boat Festival. Actually, there was nothing new about it. He was used to it in the past.

However, this year, he was wearing the “Acacia Rope” that the little girl had personally knitted and tied for him. He was also wearing a sachet that she had embroidered with the spices that she had personally mixed.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly began to look forward to the Dragon Boat Festival next year. “I’ve also prepared a gift for Cousin.”

When Yu Youyao heard this, her eyes lit up. “Where’s the gift? Let me see it quickly. I was looking forward to the gift Cousin prepared for me a few days ago.”

Chang An handed two boxes, one big and one small, to Zhou Linghuai.

Yu Youyao’s eyes lit up. “Cousin has also prepared two gifts.”

Young Miss’s surprised and happy expression finally made Chang An understand what Young Master had said. “Double the gift and double the joy!”

Zhou Linghuai handed the box to the little girl. “Open it and take a look.”

This was a surprise specially prepared for her.

He was really looking forward to seeing her expression when she saw it.

Yu Youyao couldn't wait to open it. When she saw the portrait inside, she smiled until her eyes narrowed. "Is this the portrait of Zhong Kui that Cousin drew for me? However, the portrait of Zhong Kui in the residence has already been pasted. Cousin's gift seems to be a little late."

At the mention of Zhong Kui's portrait, Zhou Linghuai felt a little guilty. He clenched his fists and coughed lightly. "No!" As if worried that the little girl would be angry, he added, "I will draw for you the portrait of Zhong Kui next year."

"No? Then what is it?" Yu Youyao looked curious and did not care much about Zhong Kui's portrait. In any case, she was just joking with her cousin.

However, hadn't her cousin given her a painting of the Dragon Boat Festival?

That painting was hanging on the wall of the study now. Why was it given to her again?

Zhou Linghuai smiled but said nothing.

With a suspicious heart, Yu Youyao gently unfolded the scroll. The first thing that came into view were a few pavilions. Below them was an arched bridge with a few trees beside it. There were weak willows swaying in the wind. There was a crowd on the bridge. In the details, everyone's arms were tied with acacia rope and sachets hung around their waists.

She was only halfway through the painting when Yu Youyao felt a strong festive atmosphere from it.

Her eyes widened as she unfolded the painting to the end. In the huge moat, there were more than a dozen dragon boats of various shapes and sizes paddling in the river.

Yu Youyao was already about to faint from the huge surprise. She couldn't help but exclaim, "It's 'Dragon Boat Race'. Cousin, Cousin. Wow, you even specially drew 'Dragon Boat Race' for me. Oh my god, I'm so happy..."

The little girl held the painting, her eyes filled with joy. Even her eyes were smiling like crescent moons.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly felt that after being tired for a few days and nights, he also felt happy. "Although I can't personally bring you out of the residence to see the dragon boat race, I can still feel the excitement of the dragon boat race."

Yu Youyao recalled that two days ago, she had mentioned the Dragon Boat Festival to her cousin. At that time, she was still a little shocked that she couldn't leave the residence to take a look. She didn't expect her cousin to hear it and give her such a big surprise.

In just two to three days, he had drawn such a big painting. It seemed that her cousin had worked hard these few days.

No matter how exciting the dragon boat competition in the moat was, could it compare to her cousin's intention to paint personally?

Yu Youyao was overjoyed. Her eyes seemed to be filled with starlight, bright and resplendent. "Cousin, your painting is really beautiful. I like it very much. Thank you, Cousin..."

She spread the painting on the desk. It was a long scroll painting that covered half of the desk. The pigment made of mineral dyes made the entire painting look ancient. There were scenes and objects

in the painting. It was dense and exquisite, and there was a sense of freedom and uninhibitedness in every aspect. It seemed that when her cousin drew this, his heart was also wild. When he drew, his strokes were as rapid as the rain and the rivers, but he did not hesitate at all.

Chapter 348 Love and Joy

Even after Zhou Linghuai finished his tea, the little girl was still sitting in front of the desk, holding her cheeks in her hands and looking at the painting.

Zhou Linghuai put down his teacup and had just finished his tea. His voice was clear. "It's that good-looking?"

After looking at it for a long time without even moving his eyes, he actually had a vague feeling that he was not as good-looking as a painting.

Yu Youyao did not even raise her head. "Yes, it's beautiful. Cousin's painting was a little rushed, but this hastiness complemented the urgency, nervousness, and excitement of the dragon boat in the moat. It was very artistic. The brushwork is secondary, but the artistic conception is the rarest. If this painting is preserved well, it will definitely be famous for thousands of years."

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Painting aesthetics was secondary. The reason why she kept staring at the painting was because she was proud and happy.

Yes, Cousin was too amazing!

The little girl was not good at painting, but every time he painted, she could always appreciate it and praise it. This was probably what it meant to "seek a friend from a high place."

Zi Qi was originally a vulgar woodcutter, but he could understand music from Bo Ya's zither.

The little girl was a woman, but she could still appreciate the artistic conception in his painting.

Knowing each other was rare, and they cherished each other. Zhou Linghuai's hidden displeasure immediately dissipated. He chuckled. "I wonder how much this painting is worth?"

Yu Youyao finally looked up at him, and her lips curved. "In the outside world, it's naturally worth a thousand gold coins. When you meet someone who knows what's good for them, it's not impossible even if it's ten thousand gold coins. But with me..." She stopped talking and blinked at her cousin, smiling mischievously. "It's priceless."

It was drawn by her cousin. Good or bad, it was priceless.

For some reason, Zhou Linghuai's ears suddenly felt a little hot. He clenched his fists and coughed lightly. "Cousin, you're overestimating me."

Mr. Hu Shan and Mr. Xian Yun's paintings were probably worth this price.

The little girl's words were indeed exaggerated.

Yu Youyao blinked slightly, her lips revealing a mischievous smile. "Cousin, your painting skills are superb. If I fall from grace in the future, you won't have to worry about not being able to support me when you sell paintings!" She was just joking, but for some reason, she suddenly felt a little concerned. She added, "I don't eat much and I'm easy to feed."

Zhou Linghuai suddenly felt an itch in his throat. He couldn't help but clench his fists and cough a few times.

She ate very little?

Did he have some misunderstanding about her "eating very little"?

Perhaps because they had been living a good life for a long time, the noble families in the capital were used to being extravagant. It was popular for noble ladies to eat half a bowl with rice, and still a portion at the bottom.

They wanted to show off their small appetites, and their extravagant families.

However, Yu Youyao would not be like this.

Every time she ate, there was a bowl of soup before the meal. The rice was filled with more than half a bowl. She used one bowl and added another. After the meal, there were also snacks and fruits. She never stopped eating.

Even Nanny Xu said, "It's a blessing to be able to eat."

It wasn't unreasonable for her to eat so well in the past.

Therefore, the etiquette class that was supposed to stop in May had not stopped until now. Nanny Xu was mainly worried that she would gain weight from eating and that the class would train her.

Furthermore!

Zhou Linghuai patrolled the little girl's room. All of the items inside were expensive treasures.

Which of the clothes she was wearing wasn't worth a thousand gold?

If she fell into dire straits one day, he probably wouldn't even be able to afford a handkerchief of hers. How could he afford her expenses?

How could he afford to raise such a pampered girl?

It was clearly just a joke, but Zhou Linghuai suddenly felt a strong sense of danger.

He couldn't help but wonder if he should make time to ask about the profits of the businesses under his name over the years.

Did he have to manage them himself?

Seeing that her cousin was not saying anything and was only coughing hard, Yu Youyao pursed her lips. "Why? Are you still unwilling?"

If her cousin was down and out, she would definitely be willing to use the dowry that her mother had left for her to support him.

Zhou Linghuai almost choked on his saliva. Without even thinking, he quickly said, "No, no, I'm happy to. I'll definitely be happy."

After saying that, he realized what he had said and suddenly calmed down.

Since the little girl was on his territory, he naturally had to protect her for the rest of her life, regardless of whether she was poor or rich.

Yu Youyao pouted and refused to budge. "Then why didn't Cousin say anything just now?"

Zhou Linghuai couldn't help but stroke his forehead. He was completely defeated by the little girl's torture. "I'm thinking about how to not let Cousin suffer in the future."

Thinking about it this way, it was indeed time for him to pay more attention to the businesses under his name.

Yu Youyao smiled brightly. Her face seemed to be glowing, bright and beautiful. The red flower on her head made her face look even more beautiful. "Cousin, you're the best."

Zhou Linghuai suddenly felt that he couldn't continue this topic. He quickly changed the topic. "Cousin, have you forgotten that you still have a gift to open?"

At the mention of gifts, Yu Youyao tilted her head to look at the other flat square box on the desk. She quickly carefully rolled up the "Dragon Boat Race" and put it away before taking another gift.

Zhou Linghuai did not say anything and only chuckled at her.

Yu Youyao held the box and was in no hurry to open it. However, the smile on her face became brighter and brighter, and her eyes lit up.

"Cousin, you've already given me a lot of things during this period of time. There are paintings, calligraphy, brow powder, longevity peach blossom stone seals, golden steatite stone pendant... Just a few days ago, you gave me annotations to the 'Zizhi Tongjian', as well as the 'Dragon Boat Festival Auspicious Scenery' and the 'Dragon Boat Race'... There are too many anyway. I can't count them all."

Zhou Linghuai's expression paused for a moment. "There are too many gifts. Don't you like them?"

He wondered who had said that one had to receive gifts often to have surprises in life.

"Of course!" Yu Youyao hugged the box tightly, afraid that if she was any later, her cousin would take back the gift. "Cousin's gift to me is much more thoughtful than others. I can't wait to receive Cousin's gift every day. How can I not like it? I'm just worried about Cousin. It's not good for your health to work hard every day."

Zhou Linghuai shook his head and laughed. "I haven't been to school recently, and I don't have anything else to do. It's not a big deal."

After crippling his leg, if he did not want to rely too much on others, his hands would need to replace his legs, and he would need to do more. He had to carve out an hour every day to train his hands, eyes, heart, and Qi.

"Thank you, Cousin." Yu Youyao couldn't wait to open it.

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There was a crescent-shaped wooden comb in the box.

Chapter 349 Don't Go Back On Your Word

It was unknown what wood it was made of, but the color of the wooden comb was light yellow. It was quietly placed in a box, like beautiful jade, delicate and smooth.

The back of the wooden comb was thick and the teeth were thin. The teeth were fine and even. There were apricot patterns carved on the back. The light yellow patterns looked simple and elegant, but they were very exquisite.

Yu Youyao smiled happily. "Cousin, this wooden comb is the gift you wanted to give me for the Dragon Boat Festival, right? It's really beautiful. It's even carved with my favorite apricot patterns. What wood is it made of?"

The wood was delicate and warm, even more so than the rosewood.

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Zhou Linghuai smiled and said, "It's boxwood."

"It's actually boxwood?!" Yu Youyao looked surprised. She turned the boxwood comb over and over in her hand. "It's rare for boxwood to grow in a thousand years. According to the book, the boxwood grows an inch every year without anything extra at all. In leap years, it shrinks by an inch. It's hard to come by."

Yellow boxwood was known as "Thousand-Year Shortness" and did not have much potential to grow. Even so, it would take at least a hundred years to barely produce anything.

A good boxwood tree could last for hundreds or even thousands of years.

The price was more expensive than rosewood, comparable to ebony.

The boxwood comb that her cousin had given her was almost comparable to gold and jade.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "The boxwood grows in three years, but it's not long in leap years. I planted boxwood on the mountaintop of a manor in the suburbs of the capital and raised an old plant that's hundreds of years old. I found an obscure night without a single star and took this wood. It won't crack if it's cut. I tested it with water. It won't burn and it's heavy. It's an especially expensive item, so I made this wooden comb."

It wasn't easy to make a boxwood comb either. From the beginning to the end, it took more than 30 steps.

He was very particular about carving, tracing, scalding, carving, grinding, and so on.

He had also started making this early in the morning.

Yu Youyao felt as if she had obtained a treasure. The fragrance of the boxwood was very light and faint, but it exuded elegance. "Cousin, why did you suddenly think of giving me a boxwood comb?"

Zhou Linghuai was stunned for a moment before saying, "According to the 'Essential Herbs', boxwood is good for wood carving. It can be used as a comb to reduce heat, remove moisture and detoxify.." There was an old saying that said, 'A thousand years of combing is a hundred years of longevity.' The boxwood can remove wind and moisture, circulate qi, nourish blood, clear heat, and

detoxify poison. After combing a hundred times a day, it can also clear the meridians, awaken the mind, and extend one's life."

There was such a boxwood comb in his mother's makeup box. His father had also made it himself.

Every morning and night, his mother would comb her hair a hundred times with a boxwood comb.

When he was young, he often saw his mother sitting in front of the glass mirror with disheveled hair. His father, who had always been careless, was rarely gentle as he helped his mother comb her hair with a boxwood comb.

The wooden comb scraped gently down against her scalp until it reached the end of her hair.

He did it over and over again, tirelessly.

It was as if a wooden comb could be used until her hair turned white.

"From now on, I'll comb my hair with the boxwood comb that Cousin gave me every day. I'll comb it a hundred times every time." Yu Youyao smiled and lifted a strand of hair on her chest, then gently combed it with the boxwood comb.

The wooden comb was very smooth.

The way the little girl combed her hair stunned Zhou Linghuai.

He had given the little girl a boxwood comb that he had personally made because it was good for her health. The little girl was also very busy with her studies and managing the household.

Using a boxwood comb to comb her hair in the morning and night could also relieve her fatigue and nourish her blood.

However, he did not think about anything else.

However, at this moment, when he saw that the little girl was holding it in her hand and using the personally carved boxwood comb to comb her hair again and again. His hand that was holding the armrest couldn't help but tremble slightly. He wanted to personally take the boxwood comb and help the little girl comb her hair, just like his father had helped his mother comb her hair.

Zhou Linghuai lowered his eyes, and his grip on the armrest gradually tightened before slowly relaxing. After doing this a few times, he lowered his hand and rubbed the wooden rhinoceros incense beads on his wrist with his right hand. "Great!"

With that, he lowered his eyes.

The wooden rhinoceros incense beads on his wrist were yellow and warm, without a trace of roughness. They wrapped around his wrist circle after circle, as if even his heart was restrained. However, this restrained fragrance seeped into his heart, making him feel happy.

Zhou Linghuai looked up. On one wrist, the little girl was wearing the blood beeswax prayer beads that Old Madam Yu had given her. They shone brightly and were beautiful. On the other wrist, she was also wearing the same wooden rhinoceros incense bead bracelet as him.

He couldn't help but laugh when he heard the little girl's cheerful voice. "I simply like the gifts Cousin gave me today. They're too surprising. This is the happiest Dragon Boat Festival I've ever had. Thank you, Cousin."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "I have to thank Cousin too. This is also..." He tilted his head to look at the Acacia Rope on his arm and gently rubbed the sachet at his waist with his fingers. "I've had the most interesting Dragon Boat Festival."

The best Dragon Boat Festival was when two people meticulously prepared the best intentions for each other.

At this moment, Chun Xiao came over. "Young Miss, breakfast is ready."

Yu Youyao quickly smiled. "Cousin, let's go for breakfast."

With her cousin accompanying her, Yu Youyao felt that even breakfast had become more delicious, so she ate another bowl of porridge.

Zhou Linghuai couldn't help but chuckle. "You eat very little?"

Yu Youyao was embarrassed for a moment, but she had always been pampered in front of her cousin. She pouted and said, "I got up at dawn today and was too hungry, so I ate so much. I usually don't eat so much. At most, two small bowls of porridge." At this point, she puffed up her cheeks and glared at her cousin fiercely. "Cousin, do you dislike me eating too much?"

How could Zhou Linghuai dare to say "yes"? He quickly shook his head. "No, I just think that it's a blessing for Cousin to be able to eat and to be in good health."

He suddenly recalled the day he had first entered the Yu Residence. The little girl was a round little person with baby fat, but her heart was like glass, and her eyes were clear and flawless.

At that time, he did not expect the Yu Residence to hide such a little girl.

He also felt that the little girl was cute when she was round.

It seemed better for her to eat more?!

Yu Youyao tilted her head and looked at her cousin. "I don't care. Even if I eat too much, you can't go back on your promise!"

He had said that in the future, when she was down and out, he had to support her. He couldn't go back on her word.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly laughed. "I'll remember."

Yu Youyao finally felt happy. She scooped another bowl of porridge and placed it in front of her cousin. "Then Cousin, eat more. It's a blessing to be able to eat and to be in good health."

Zhou Linghuai had actually already eaten one more bowl than usual. Now, he was already full. However, when he saw the little girl looking at him with a smile, he felt that he could still have another bowl.

Chapter 350 Such a Foodie

After breakfast, the sun rose outside, so Yu Youyao went to An Shou Hall with her cousin.

Madam Yao had brought a large family over to greet them.

They were all from the same residence and were only separated by a wall. How could she not know what had happened in the main residence?

However, Madam Yang had been her sister-in-law for many years, so how could she not know what kind of person she was? This concerned the only son of the first branch, Yu Shansi. She did not want to get involved in this mess.

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Therefore, after Yu Shansi's dangerous situation was averted, he sent someone over to ask about her.

After that, when she found out that the eldest branch was not settled, she did not come over personally.

It was only yesterday that Madam Yao had brought a lot of supplements and medicinal herbs to greet Old Madam after the main branch's matter. She had also taken good care of her nephew. This was considered thorough.

She knew that Madam Yang had spoiled Yu Shansi, so Yu Zongzheng had used the excuse of having migraines to send him to the Tranquil Heart Residence, indirectly banning her.

As Yu Jianjia was seriously ill and needed to recuperate, her courtyard door was closed.

Everyone in the main house was changed one after another.

Old Madam was old and did not have much energy to manage the household. At most, she could manage it a little, but the main branch was in Yu Youyao's hands.

If it weren't for the fact that she had seen with her own eyes at the Flower Festival at the Marquis of Changxing's Residence, she wouldn't believe that Yu Youyao, a half-grown child, would actually take every step carefully. She had even schemed meticulously, and even the meritorious person in charge of the army was embarrassed.

She wanted to believe that Madam Yang and Yu Jianjia's fates were not planned by Yu Youyao.

However, the truth was that Yu Youyao had done her best. Everyone in the main family was still praising her for being loyal and caring. Not only had she tried her best to save Fourth Young Master, but she was also kind-hearted and fairly rewarded and punished people.

Not only that!

When she came over in the morning, she had even heard from the servants of the main house that Yu Youyao's biological mother, Madam Xie, was actually killed by Madam Yang. Since the servants dared to talk about this in the residence, this matter was probably not wrong.

This amazing method really took after Old Madam.

Madam Yao chatted with Old Madam Yu.

Yu Youyao brought Yu Shuangbai and the others to the courtyard to wrap Zongzi.

The sisters gathered together and there was a lively scene.

Yu Shanyan turned to look at Zhou Linghuai and saw him rubbing the beads on his wrist. His gaze landed on his eldest sister, Yu Youyao, and a rare smile appeared on his pale lips.

Yu Shanyan retracted his gaze. "You haven't been to school for a long time. A few days ago, Mr. Hu Shan even asked when you plan to go back to class."

Mr. Hu Shan did not hide his appreciation for Zhou Linghuai.

He had also said that Zhou Linghuai was a genius. Just like Song Mingzhao, he was an extraordinary person. If his leg wasn't broken, he would definitely be a capable person in the future.

Zhou Linghuai shook his head. "Cousin has been learning 'Heavenly Works' recently. I'm sorting out the relevant notes. Let's talk about it later!"

Everyone in the residence knew how much Cousin Zhou doted on his eldest sister.

Yu Shanyan was speechless for a long time, but when he heard "Heavenly Works", his heart couldn't help but skip a beat. "Since you've prepared annotations, can I make a copy too?"

Zhou Linghuai's notes were very popular in the residence.

He had originally helped his eldest sister write annotations to the Four Books and Five Classics to help her study. Later on, when his second sister saw it, she went to the main house every day to copy it. Her learning progress had indeed accelerated a lot.

When his second brother found out, he borrowed his second sister's notes and copied them. During this period of time, he was no longer called out and criticized by Mr. Hu Shan in class.

Seeing that it was rare for his second brother to improve, as his elder brother, he inevitably had to show some concern and ask for the reason.

He couldn't help but read the notes that his second brother had written. Even though he had learned it herself, after reading it, he couldn't help but feel that it was unique and make a copy.

In the end, even Third Brother copied it.

Zhou Linghuai said calmly, "Since it's given to Cousin, it belongs to her. You can just ask her yourself when the time comes."

When Yu Shanyan heard this, he knew that it was settled.

"Heavenly Works" was a must for the Yu Clan to learn. At his current age, he had to focus on his studies. He would only learn this when he became a High Scholar.

However, Zhou Linghuai's notes were rare, so he would not let them go.

At this moment, Yu Shanxin leaned over. "Cousin Zhou, Eldest Sister and the others are wrapping Zongzi. Let's go over and help too!"

Yu Shanyan tilted his head to look at him and frowned. "A gentleman stays far away from the kitchen."

Yu Shanxin scoffed. “Big Brother, have you become stupid from studying? The Book of Daoism even says that governing a large country is like cooking a small fish. If you don’t cook a small fish, how can you govern a large country?” After saying that, he felt that he had defeated his big brother and turned to look at Cousin Zhou. “Cousin, am I right?”

Yu Shanyan frowned. He also felt that his second brother had improved and was becoming more and more unruly.

However, Zhou Linghuai said calmly, “Everything in the world can’t be generalized. However, from the bottom of my heart, there was a great politician surnamed Su in the previous dynasty. Not only did he love delicious food, but he often cooked it himself.”

Therefore, don’t bite off more than you can chew.

Yu Shanyan immediately couldn’t refute, so he heard Zhou Linghuai continue—

“He has a carefree personality. He has experienced a few ups and downs in his life. When he was demoted to Huangzhou, because he couldn’t afford to eat the local mutton, he found cheap local pork that no one could eat. He cooked his own delicacies and created the world-famous Dongpo pork. He even wrote a recipe that recorded the method of cooking pork. After his method of cooking was spread, the local people fought to imitate him. As the pork was cheap and delicious, the people saved money on buying mutton and expenses. The local people became self-reliant and peaceful.”

When Yu Shanxin heard this, his eyes lit up. “I know that. Later on, this politician was demoted to the south of the mountain. He was so miserable that he didn’t even have to eat pork. He secretly brought the lamb spine that no one wanted home. After cooking it, he sprinkled some wine, salt, and other ingredients over the fire to roast it, creating a world-famous lamb spine. I heard that because the lamb spine was too delicious, even his dogs often competed with him for food...”

For some reason, Yu Shanyan continued Yu Shanxin’s words. “Later, he was demoted to the area of Danzhou (Hainan). It was very poor there, and he couldn’t even eat meat. He extended his hand to the oysters by the sea and even wrote a letter to show off to his younger brother and son, saying, ‘Don’t tell anyone. I’m afraid that those bastards in the capital will snatch my oysters...’

With that, he froze.

When he turned around, he realized that in a short while, they had already arrived at the stone table in the courtyard. His sisters were listening to his stories excitedly.

Yu Youyao was amused and quickly asked her cousin, “What happened after that?”

Zhou Linghuai’s lips curled up slightly. “He was also demoted to Huizhou. As the lychees there were too delicious, he stayed there and didn’t want to leave. Later, his younger brother tried to fish him out, and he even blamed him.”

Yu Youyao’s eyes widened, and she was speechless.

There was actually such a foodie in the world!

She conceded defeat!

