

## All Hail 501

### Chapter 501: Defeated

The emperor in the high seat stared at him and said word by word, “On account of the fact that he had also contributed a lot to the Imperial Court, he will be stripped of his title as the second-grade Marquis of Ningyuan, his meritorious deeds will be taken back, and he will be demoted to the third-grade if Earl Ningyuan.”

The hall was so quiet that one could hear a pin drop!

Hiding the military intelligence was a huge crime, but the emperor had only demoted him moderately. That was because even though Earl of Ningyuan had committed a heinous crime, he had never directly harmed the emperor’s interests.

Earl of Ningyuan’s face was ashen as he bowed down to thank the emperor.

“This subject thanks the emperor for his kindness. Long live the emperor.”

The Emperor said in a low voice, “At ease!”

Earl of Ningyuan trembled as he stood up, but he couldn’t help but take a glance at Yin Huaixi, who was sitting in front of the hall. Fear suddenly rose in his heart!

Ye Hanyuan angrily knocked on the drum and did not mention anything about him.

As soon as Yin Huaixi entered the imperial court, he immediately turned against the Marquis of Changxing, as if everything that had happened back then had nothing to do with him.

Earl of Ningyuan was well aware that if he were to target Yin Huaixi, it would be targeting the emperor’s interest. The emperor would never give him up, so he didn’t place Yin Huaixi in his eyes.

To him, it was indeed a pity to abandon the Marquis of Changing. However, the Marquis of Changing was not good enough. He could not defend You Prefecture, nor could he control the 100,000 soldiers there. He even caused trouble. In order to avoid being implicated, he gave up.

If the emperor wanted to protect him, even if Yin Huaixi defeated the Marquis of Changxing, he wouldn’t be able to defeat Earl of Ningyuan.

But after that, Li Qiguang started a rebellion, causing him to panic.

He had refused to fight because of the current dynasty and had angered the emperor. However, he had made a mistake and every step he took was wrong.

Yin Huaixi’s request to fight with his crippled body was even more unexpected.

After Yin Huaixi went to Shandong, everything was out of his control. The Cabinet of Ministers used him to resist the war, causing the emperor to be displeased. They used the case of King of You to wantonly eliminate his henchmen in the imperial court.

After that, Shandong achieved a great victory, and the world was filled with gossip!

Before he knew it, Yin Huaixi’s blade was already at his neck.

By the time he realized it, he was already too powerless to resist.

Only then did Earl of Ningyuan realize that Yin Huaixi's knife wasn't aimed at him.

Yin Huaixi merely lent the knife in his hand to the cabinet.

Using the Cabinet to weaken his power step by step.

He had also manipulated the emperor and made the emperor lose his trust in him step by step. He made the emperor feel that he was useless and had lost his value in front of the emperor.

Who was the one who said that the heart of a ruler was unpredictable?

From the first-grade Marquis of Weining to the second-grade Marquis of Ningyuan, and then to the third-grade Earl of Ningyuan.

Yin Huaixi had forced him into a corner step by step. From the beginning to the end, Yin Huaixi had been manipulating the emperor!

Yin Huaixi didn't do anything to him personally, merely lending the blade to the emperor.

The person who stabbed him was also the current emperor!

After the court session, Earl of Ningyuan returned to his residence limply. He arrived at the residence right after the imperial edict.

The residence was filled with gloom.

Earl of Ningyuan personally brought Eunuch Zhu to the ancestral hall.

Eunuch Zhu did not go in. "Earl of Ningyuan, I'm waiting outside. Hurry up and take out the imperial title and hand it to me so that I can return to the palace to report to the emperor." At this point, he stared at Earl of Ningyuan with a faint smile and said in a neutral tone, "The emperor is still waiting." Earl of Ningyuan hated the sharp-tongued face of this eunuch Zhu.

Thinking back to the past, when Concubine Lan was still Imperial Concubine Lu and he was still the powerful Marquis of Weining, which of these eunuchs did not bow to him when they saw him?!

Seeing that he had now lost his power, they treated him differently.

It was really hateful.

Earl of Ningyuan hated him in his heart, but he still maintained a polite expression. "Thank you for waiting, Eunuch."

Upon entering the ancestral hall, Earl of Ningyuan felt that he was too ashamed to face his ancestors. He first burned three incense sticks for his ancestors in the ancestral hall. After confessing his sins, he took out the imperial title in the ancestral hall. He looked at it with a complicated expression for a long time before carrying it out of the room.

He handed the document to Eunuch Zhu.

Eunuch Zhu did not delay for a moment and brought his men back to the palace to report.

The edict to confer the title of Earl of Ning Yuan would only be issued on a certain day. At that time, they would have to choose an auspicious day and wash the entire family. After paying respects to their ancestors, they would then consecrate them in the ancestral hall.

This cannot be done carelessly at all.

After sending Eunuch Zhu off, Earl of Ningyuan felt as if his spine had been pulled by someone. His body immediately became defeated.

With a complicated expression, he instructed his wife, "Send someone to keep an eye on the palace. Let me know as soon as there's any news."

After waiting anxiously for an entire day, there was still no news from the palace, which was good news. Earl of Ningyuan finally heaved a sigh of relief.

The Emperor did not vent his anger on Concubine Lan in the palace, so it was not irreversible.

Concubine Lan had served the emperor for many years, and this was the best solution to the emperor's temper. As long as Concubine Lan did not fall from

power in the palace, Earl of Ningyuan's residence would one day rise again.

At the same time!

The truth of the Di army's wanton invasion of the Northern Territory four years ago was also revealed to the world.

Prince Yin Huaixi, with 3,000 troops, defeated 8,000 elite troops led by the leader of the Di army, Ha Meng, annihilating more than 7,000 enemies and chasing Ha Meng 500 miles outside the narrow Yu Pass.

Under the emperor's instructions, news of this battle spread throughout the capital.

In a few days, it would also spread throughout the world.

It was this battle that dealt a blow to Ha Meng's prestige in the Di army, causing the Di army's morale to be unstable.

It laid the foundation for King of Zhouli and Yin Huaixi to recover the lost lands in the north.

At that time, Marquis of Weining and Marquis of Changxing, who were in charge of the battle, hid the military information and stole the battle achievements of Yin Huaixi, the heir of King of Zhouli.

It was simply hateful.

At this point, everyone finally understood why Yin Huaixi had invited himself to Shandong to quell the rebellion.

There were even literati who borrowed the Tang Dynasty's Louren's "The Undercut Song" to mock Harmon and praise Yin Huaixi. "...The moon's black geese flew high in the sky and fled alone in the night. They wanted to chase away the light cavalry, and bows and swords filled the heavy snow."

In just a few lines, Ha Meng was forced to flee. Prince Yin used "light cavalry" to chase after him, and the scene of Ha Meng being beaten up was vividly portrayed.

"In the past, I thought that it was already very powerful for Prince Yin to quell the rebellion in Shandong. Now, I know that Li Qiguang is nothing. He's not worthy!"

"In the past, I thought that Prince Yin had defeated a mob of people. How powerful was he? Now, I know that I'm nothing. I'm not worthy!"

“In the past, I thought that Prince Yin just won a battle. He was just bragging.

Now, I know that it’s nothing. It’s not worthy!”

This winter seemed to be exceptionally cold.

Ever since they entered November, the sky had been gloomy and there was no sun.

Under the abnormal weather, after the emperor issued a decree for King of Zhouli, many scholars and calligraphers blatantly wrote many eulogy poems and eulogies for King of Zhouli.

His death caused the sun and moon to lose their light, the mountains and rivers to lose their color, and the heavens and the earth to grieve.

The entire court was also preparing for the funeral of King of Zhouli.

King of Zhouli had been conferred the highest title, standing shoulder to shoulder with the emperor. The funerals were all organized according to the rules of state funerals. Everyone in the court and the countryside was thrown into chaos..

Chapter 502: Through Thick and Thin

Yu Youyao had also read the emperor’s edict.

It was filled with talks on his benevolence, righteousness and virtue. He kept silent about major charges while admitting that he had been deceived by the traitors and had wrongly killed a meritorious general, which in turn let the country, dynasty and his ancestors down.

Humans were not saints. This small mistake was already insignificant compared to the merits of his benevolence in the beginning.

Yu Youyao was filled with sarcasm. “How completely worthless, he was just too slow to act!”

Ever since the founding of the dynasty, there had never been a precedent of a King with more than one syllabus in their title. King of Zhouli could be considered to have set a precedent, which was already a great honor.

The emperor even bestowed the Great Zhou Dynasty with the “country title” and allowed King of Zhouli to be crowned with the word “Zhou” as a sign of the emperor’s great kindness. It showed that the “King of Zhouli” had contributed greatly to the country and his achievements would last for thousands of years.

Such an honor was rare in the history books.

After the Qin Emperor Hanwu, only the emperor could have the country title.

The emperor conferred the title of King You on the king side by side, and no ministers in the court objected.

When he was given the title “King of Zhouli”, there were many voices of opposition from the cabinet. However, these voices of opposition did not stop the stubborn emperor.

It was also because of this that the decree was delayed for three days before it was announced to the world.

Yin Huaixi lowered his eyes as he sipped his tea, seemingly unbothered by all this.

Yu Youyao looked at her cousin and couldn't help but ask, "Everyone in the court is preparing for the funeral. Do you really not have to appear personally?"

Yin Huaixi shook his head. "There's no need. Three years ago, I set up a cenotaph for my father and buried him with my mother. I think that was the best place for him. I suggested bringing him back to Youzhou because I didn't want him to enter the imperial mausoleum and be buried in the capital, so that he could rest in peace."

No matter how casually he said it, she could see through the complexity and sadness in his eyes even if it could be hidden from the rest of the world.

Her cousin had always been brooding over the calamity in King You's residence back then.

Yu Youyao's heart ached. "Cousin, King of Zhouli's funeral ceremonies are all governed by the country's rules. The emperor, ministers, and commoners will mourn with the entire country. When the mourning is over and the heads of everyone in the Marquis of Changxing fall to the ground, this matter should come to an end. Cousin, you..."

He should stop brooding over it.

She pursed her lips and did not say it out loud.

She clearly wanted to comfort her cousin and persuade him, but every time she spoke, she felt powerless. Everything was in vain.

Zhou Linghuai smiled faintly. "Just as you said, although his life was short, he was successful at a young age. He had a beautiful wife by his side, built a common business, and was a hero for the rest of his life. It can be considered a win-win situation. There's nothing to feel bad about."

However, he couldn't help but feel sad.

His master had once said that he was destined to die and be alone. People who are not of great virtue and fortune cannot stand shoulder to shoulder with him.

He scoffed at this and stubbornly believed that his parents were people of great virtue and fortune in the world.

He did not hesitate to train his troops in secret so that the Northern Territory would be stable and his father would be invincible. He thought that by doing so, his family would be able to live a stable life.

The speculations of the officials and nobles in the North were not wrong.

He had long planned to get rid of them one by one. Once the Di Army, it would be the best time to deal with them.

However, in the end, he still underestimated the unfathomable heart of the ruler and lost to the emperor's scheme

His father's death was caused by the old ministers of the Cabinet. Marquis Weining, Marquis Changxing, the officials in the North, and the nobles had only fulfilled the emperor's wish.

Otherwise, why would he ever have to care about those clowns?

At the thought of this, Yin Huaixi said in a faint voice, “When I was young, my father often mentioned to me about his brotherhood with the current emperor. Many things were repeatedly broken up and told to me in detail. I often scoffed at it, but I was inevitably affected when I heard it often.”

If he had been more scheming, King You’s residence would not have ended up like this.

Everything was predestined.

Even if one could not go against heaven’s, Yin Huaixi would still have to wield his saber and slash through all the evil in this world.

Heaven, earth, gods, and ghosts alike~

Yu Youyao was silent for a moment before saying, “I heard from Grandmother that when the emperor was in seclusion, he indeed had a deep relationship with the King of Zhouli. When the emperor first ascended the throne, he was also diligent in politics. At that time, the court was relatively stable. It was only after he suddenly fell seriously ill that he became obsessed with Dao techniques and did not think about court politics. The emperor did not go to court, think about politics or treat anything diligently. He was blind, deaf, and could not distinguish between right and wrong...”

In other words, the emperor had only become so muddle-headed and immoral later on.

The calamity of King You’s residence was not his cousin’s fault.

Cousin shouldn’t blame himself either.

Yin Huaixi smiled. “I’m already past the age where I would force all the blame on myself.”

On the battlefield, he was ambushed by the Marquis of Changxing and dismounted from his horse. When he woke up, more than a month had passed.

King You’s residence was burned to the ground. His mother, eldest sister, the servants in the house, and the 2,000 elite soldiers were all buried in the sea of fire. Their corpses were all gone.

His father had colluded with the enemy and betrayed the country, intending to rebel. He had been secretly executed.

At that time, he was extremely indignant.

He believed that it was because he killed the officials and nobles in the North in order to ease the situation there that they could take advantage of the situation and kill his father. That was why King You’s residence was in trouble.

Later, he gradually understood.

If he had not done that back then, once the Di people broke through the narrow Yu Pass, King You’s residence would still be doomed.

Yin Huaixi said indifferently, “It’s just fate!”

This sentence almost made Yu Youyao cry on the spot.

Thinking about how her cousin’s family had been destroyed and how the world would be so vast from now on, Yu Youyao’s heart suddenly ached

“Cousin, the King of Zhouli and the Princess Consort have been benevolent. From now on, I’ll accompany you through thick and thin. I won’t leave you.

How about that?”

She did not know what this promise meant.

However, just because she was unaware did not mean that Zhou Linghuai did not know either.

The wild thoughts that he had suppressed in his heart grew like vines because of this sentence. It wrapped around his heart tightly and suffocated him, almost making him unable to breathe.

Zhou Linghuai was greedy, angry, and infatuated.

For some reason, he thought of what Mr. Xian Yun had said when he came to the Yu Residence to visit him and happened to see the “Bodhisattva” he had drawn—

“Bodhisattva originally did not have a tree, and the mirror was not a platform.

It originally did not have anything, so how could it cause dust!”

“Bodhisattva represents you. You have nothing to begin with, and you’re the only one left.”

“You originally had nothing but yourself, but you have a purpose in your heart.”

“This painting is nothing more than the greed, anger, and obsession in your heart. You should have nothing to live besides the desires of your heart. All living beings have the wisdom and virtue of Tathagata, but they can’t prove it with their delusions.”

“Kid, Buddhism emphasizes that the body is like a tree, and the heart is like a mirror.”

“Kid, you only did the opposite. You hold onto things, thoughts and desires. All for the sake of protecting one person..”

Chapter 503: Slaying the Ten Clans

At that time, Zhou Linghuai didn’t think much of Mr. Xian Yun’s words.

Naturally, he did not take his words to heart.

But now that he thought about it, Zhou Linghuai suddenly understood!

He was confused by the situation, while Mr. Xian Yun was a bystander. He had a mystery in his heart. This mystery was an obsession. This obsession was Bodhisattva, and this Bodhisattva was Yu Youyao.

He held onto his greed, anger, and obsession with Yu Youyao.

Zhou Linghuai’s heart was in turmoil, and there was a dark tide in the depths of his eyes. However, his face was as calm as a mirror.

Seeing that her cousin was only looking at her and not saying anything, Yu Youyao panicked.

“Cousin?

“Okay!” Zhou Linghuai leaned forward and gently tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. His fingertips gently caressed the phoenix tassel pendant by her temple. The green pearls swayed beautifully.

He was still a little immature.

Zhou Linghuai retracted the wild thoughts in his heart and leaned closer. His clear breath almost landed beside her ear as his fingertips gently rubbed against her ear. “I’ll wait for you.”

Wait for you to grow up a little

Her cousin’s breath landed beside her ear, and every breath seemed to be filled with warmth and love.

Yu Youyao suddenly hugged her cousin’s waist. “All the things in the past, such as yesterday’s death, and moving forward, such as today’s birth, will give birth to a new beginning.” Although her cousin’s chest was not thick, it was very firm. The thin material of his clothes could not stop the strong heartbeat in his heart. The words that had been buried in his heart for a long time suddenly had the courage to speak. “Cousin, let the past be the past!” On impulse, she hugged her cousin because she wanted to comfort him.

After saying that, she quickly let go of her cousin.

However, Zhou Linghuai raised his hand and suddenly grabbed her slender waist. “Okay, I’ll listen to you.”

Her slender waist was in his hand, and he let go of it with a single grip.

“Cousin has agreed, so let’s pinky swear.” Yu Youyao smiled and hooked her cousin’s pinky with her tender little finger. She shook it gently. “Hook it and it’s a promise. You can’t change it for a hundred years.” After saying that, she pulled her cousin’s thumb with her other hand and covered it with her thumb.

“We have a deal.”

Such a childish action was just a joke to Zhou Linghuai.

However, he knew that this was a very serious agreement for Yu Youyao.

The little girl naively thought that if she made a pinky promise and stamped it, this promise would be witnessed by the heavens and earth and would never be broken. Every time she thought that a promise was very important, she had to make a promise to him like this before she felt at ease.

The next day, the sentence for persecuting the King of Zhouli and company was also handed down.

Within the ten families of the offender Changxing Marquis, anyone who had reached the age of seven was sentenced to be beheaded as a warning to others. Their descendants would never be allowed to enter the court as officials and would be commoners for generations.

Within the two courtiers and the three races, anyone who had reached the age of seven was sentenced to be beheaded as a warning to others. Their descendants would never be allowed to enter the court as officials and would be commoners for generations.



All the high-ranking officials and nobles in the North had lost their wealth and were sentenced to be beheaded. All the men who were at least 12 years old were sentenced to be conscripted into the army, and the women were sent to the Education Department to comfort the army.

The rest of the people who were implicated were exiled to Shangyang Castle and could not enter the capital without an edict.

After the King of Zhouli's funeral

Execution!

None of the courtiers dared to say anything.

The case had offended the heavens and the imperial family. Although the

Marquis of Changxing was despicable, was the Emperor not doing the same? Was he trying to use this opportunity to intimidate the vassals and cause chaos?

After the verdict was given, there was another uproar in the capital.

How cruel was it to exterminate ten clans?

Throughout history, the most famous thing was that the previous dynasty's founder had usurped the throne and asked an extremely prestigious old official to draft an imperial edict.

This old minister was also a tough nut to crack, one tough cookie. He would rather die than submit.

The founder threatened to exterminate his entire family, and wrote in the edict: "The usurper dog is not worthy of his position!"

In a fit of anger, the founder exterminated his nine families and his friends as the tenth family.

The heads of over eight hundred people fell to the ground.

As a result, thousands of people were imprisoned and exiled into the army.

The emperor was merciful. At least, he spared the children who were not even seven years old.

However, these children had lost their parents and relatives. What will happen in the future? Wasn't that another kind of cruelty?

Throughout the history of the dynasty, those who colluded with the enemy to betray the country, those who rebelled, those who persecuted the royal family, and those who wreaked havoc with witchcraft were all regarded as offending the imperial power. Their crimes should be punishable by nine generations.

As for how this crime would be judged, it still depended on the person in power.

There was nothing wrong with the Emperor's actions.

Yu Youyao could not help but feel bold. "The Marquis of Changxing offended the imperial power. It can be said that he deserved this outcome, but how many of the more than 600 people in his ten clans deserve it? How many innocent people were implicated?"

She did not even dare to imagine the scene of blood flowing like a river.

She did not dare to think about how many corpses would be strewn all over the place on the way to Shangyang Castle.

How many people would be lucky enough to make it to Shangyang Castle?

After arriving at Shangyang Castle, how many people could endure the hardships that followed?

Zhou Linghuai pursed his lips. "Do you think..."

He had just started when Yu Youyao suddenly leaned closer and reached out to cover his lips. "I sympathize with those innocent people who were implicated, but I also know that no matter how innocent those people are, it has nothing to do with Cousin. Cousin just did what he had to do. Whether he lives or dies, it's just the imperial power. I won't blame all of this on Cousin."

Back then, wasn't the King of Zhouli, who had outstanding military achievements, innocent?

Wasn't the Princess Consort and the Princess who committed suicide by taking poison innocent?

How could a sickly cousin not be innocent?

Weren't everyone in King You's residence, including the 2,000 elite soldiers, innocent too?

Also, those people in Youzhou who were implicated in King You's case, were they not innocent too?

But who would let them off just because they were innocent?

Now, it was just that the world's morals were deteriorating day by day. Fortune changes and they have to pay the price for their sins. However, the price was too tragic.

However, this was just karma!

No matter who was to blame, it would not be her cousin.

Hearing this, Zhou Linghuai was not surprised. He looked into the little girl's clear eyes. "Yaoyao, this world is coming to an end soon."

Yu Youyao's heart skipped a beat. She didn't know if she was happy or sad.

Such a topic was too heavy, and it was not something she could handle now. Yu Youyao avoided it and changed the topic. "I plan to open a charity in the capital and take in those orphans, women, and children who have no one to rely on. I'll teach them how to read and write, as well as some ways to make a living. I won't let them eat and live for free. I have many shops, restaurants, and manors in the capital. I can arrange for them to work there and exchange work for money.."

#### Chapter 504: Mourning

It was better to teach a man to fish than to give him one.

A charity hall was nothing, but she also wanted to do something for this difficult world.

Zhou Linghuai was slightly stunned before reacting. "That's great."

The young lady's thoughts were always so simple and pure. She did not have any unrealistic sympathy, but she could really do good deeds at the moment.

Old Madam Yu was also kind-hearted, but she was not as much as her.

The decree for a new funeral was issued the next day—

From that day onwards, the King of Zhouli would be buried strictly following the rules of the country.

On the twenty-first day of mourning, the memorials were not written in red but blue;

All the writings in the government office were changed to blue seals;

During the mourning period, monasteries and Daoist monasteries would chant sutras and pay their respects every day and ring the bell 21 times;

The civil and military officials, as well as the people, had to abstain from rituals, music, slaughter, marriage, and so on;

After being encoffined at an auspicious time, he stayed in the Fuyan Palace for eleven days;

The officials and wives had to wear mourning clothes and cry for three days;

After the funeral, etiquette envoys, ceremonial envoys, imperial envoys, bridge clerks, and so on helped the spirit of the King of Zhouli travel back to You residence to perform burial rituals and funeral rites.

The family members in the inner courtyard had also taken off their luxurious clothes and jewelry and changed into plain white clothes. There was no wine or meat in the house.

White sails were hung everywhere on Chang'an Street. The commoners queued up and went to the government office to receive their mourning cloth.

The government office sent people to spread the news of the King of Zhouli's achievements.

After crying for a day, Old Madam Yu got up at midnight. She changed into her makeup and put on mourning clothes. Before dawn, she entered the palace with Madam Yao.

When they passed by Chang'an Street, Old Madam Yu lifted the window curtain and looked out.

The long street was covered in white mourning clothes, and the world paled in comparison.

The white lanterns walked along the long street like a long winding dragon.

The bright lights illuminated the long street, making it look cold and lonely.

Old Madam Yu's heart was filled with sorrow. "Since ancient times, loyalty has never been repaid. Heroes have always been treated heartlessly."

When they arrived outside the palace gate, the sky had just lit up. There were already many carriages parked outside the palace gate. Many officials and their families were lined up in a row, waiting for the eunuchs to sing their names and enter the palace.

Seeing the Yu Residence's carriage, the guards at the palace gate didn't stop them. Old Madam Yu and Madam Yao's carriage didn't stop. They drove all the way to the second palace gate before stopping.

The Zhenguo Marquis Residence's carriage had just arrived.

Old Madam Yu and Old Madam Song met. Both of them had solemn expressions and didn't even say anything. They looked away and waited for the eunuch to sing before entering the inner palace one after another and being brought to Fuyan Palace.

At this moment, there were already many courtiers kneeling in Fuyan Palace. The room was filled with mourning clothes and cries that shook the sky. The scene was also indescribable.

The women were all in the side hall.

The internal servant maids, led by the family members of the sect, were arranged at the front. Behind them were the external maids, led by Old Madam

Yu, Old Madam Song, and the others.

Those who are reserved pinched their handkerchiefs and sobbed softly.

Those who were thick-skinned would cry at the top of their lungs.

Under such circumstances, there was no shame. There were special palace maids and eunuchs who stared at him. Every day, they had to cry and report to the higher-ups. The louder they cried, the more they could show their condolences to the King of Zhouli.

Old Madam Yu had also seen big scenes before. As soon as she knelt on the praying mat, her eyes turned red. As she cried, she even sang about the King's merits.

In less than an hour, Old Madam Yu couldn't take it anymore.

At this moment, there was a commotion from the noble's family. Someone shouted, "Oh no, someone come quickly. Madam Song of The Marquis of Zhenguo, has fainted from crying..."

Mourning were hard work to begin with. Everyone who had experienced it knew that there were people who fainted every time they cried. It was not rare.

The palace had also made preparations early in the morning. Immediately, eunuchs and palace maids brought the female doctor over to check. After confirming that there were no major problems, they could move to the inner room to rest.

Old Madam Yu was a little worried.

Old Madam Song's health wasn't good to begin with. Previously, Song Mingzhao had vomited blood and fainted. She had already gone through a lot. It wasn't easy for her to find a capable female doctor and nurse her back to health for a while. Her body had just recovered a little. If even she couldn't take it after crying for three consecutive days, Old Madam Song would definitely suffer.

After a while, a palace maid came over. "Is Madam doing well?"

Old Madam Yu had entered and left the Empress Dowager's palace in the past and recognized her as her female official. "Thank Empress Dowager for her concern. I'm doing well."

The palace maid continued, "The Empress Dowager has ordered that anyone who is old and weak will be exempted from crying. They can just kneel for two hours. Every half an hour, they can rest in the inner chamber for fifteen minutes. The inner chamber has prepared ginseng tea, snacks, and soup. The female doctor is also on standby at any time. If you are not feeling well, you can look for the female clinic to take a look. You can't slack off."

Old Madam Yu immediately bowed in gratitude. "Thank Empress Dowager for her benevolence."

The female official hurriedly helped Old Madam Yu up.

After kneeling for more than an hour, Old Madam Yu was indeed a little tired. She went to the inner room with the female official.

The moment she entered the house, she saw Old Madam Song leaning against a couch with a haggard expression.

Old Madam Yu hurriedly went over and asked, “Are you alright?”

Although she was worried, she knew that Old Madam Song was a smart person. She definitely wouldn’t really cry and faint. She probably felt that her body couldn’t take it anymore, so she pretended to be weak.

Everyone knew that Old Madam Song wasn’t in good health.

Even if the doctor found out about it after a checkup, it was understandable.

Old Madam Song didn’t look too good. She sighed. “I’m old, but I’m not like this anymore. I’m useless.”

Old Madam Yu took out an incense pill from her sachet and handed it to her.

“This is the ginseng nourishing pill Yao Yao prepared for me. I brought some today. You can use it too.”

After the edict was issued yesterday, Yao Yao had prepared some incense pills for emergencies and asked her to bring them with her.

The palace did not allow people to bring other things with them. The sachet was also an accompanying item, which was why it could be brought into the palace.

Old Madam Song took the incense pill, but she didn’t use it immediately. Instead, she got the palace maid who was taking care of her to call the female doctor over and handed the incense pill to the female clinic for examination.

Although the ginseng pill was relatively precious, it was commonly used by wealthy families to nourish their bodies. This pill was more complicated to pair with. It was also a little different from the commonly used prescription, but it was not a hindrance.

The female doctor scraped the pill lightly and tested its medicinal properties.

She smiled and said, “It’s a top-notch ginseng nourishing pill. Old Madam Song’s qi and blood are deficient, so it’s the right cure.”

With that, she returned the pill to Old Madam Song.

Old Madam Song hurriedly thanked her.

The palace maid had already prepared warm water to help Old Madam Song take her medicine.

Ten-year old wild ginseng had been added to the pill. Ginseng was nourishing to begin with. Once the pill entered her stomach, Old Madam Song’s heart settled down. She did not know if it was a psychological effect..

Chapter 505: The Emperor’s Grace

Old Madam Yu drank some soup and a cup of tea before going outside to continue kneeling.

As there was no need to cry, it was much easier.

It was already 2pm when they returned to the Yu Residence.

When Old Madam Yu asked Madam Yao to help her out of the carriage, her body trembled and she almost lost her balance.

Yu Youyao was worried about her grandmother and hurriedly went forward to help her. "It's the first day of the crying session today. Grandmother must be tired. I ordered someone to prepare some medicinal cuisine. Have some before you rest."

Although Old Madam Yu's body was fine, she was exhausted. "Don't worry, the Empress Dowager is considerate of women and has taken good care of us old things. I didn't suffer much."

However, she had still suffered quite a bit. It was inevitable.

Yu Youyao was a little relieved. She and Madam Yao helped Old Madam Yu back to An Shou Hall.

As they walked, Yu Youyao even asked about the situation in the palace.

Old Madam Yu didn't have the energy to answer, but Madam Yao did.

When they arrived at An Shou Hall, Yu Youyao and Madam Yao helped Old Madam Yu take off her official uniform and change into plain mourning clothes with a white sash tied around her waist.

When she came out after washing up, Nanny Liu had already prepared the medicinal cuisine.

Yu Youyao had always been meticulous, so she prepared a portion for Madam Yao too. "It's already very tiring to cry and mourn. Auntie still has to take care of Grandmother. You must be tired after a long day. I won't let Auntie stay here for long. I've prepared some medicinal cuisine to eliminate fatigue for you. Have some as well."

She was considerate and understanding, and every word she said touched Madam Yao's heart.

The next day, Yu Youyao prepared medicinal cuisine. "The Empress Dowager is sympathetic to the women. The medicinal cuisine is for your own consumption so perhaps you can bring it into the palace."

Yesterday, she had asked her second aunt about the situation in the palace and knew that all the arrangements in the palace were very thorough and not unreasonable.

There was no harm in giving it a try.

If it didn't work, she could leave it in the carriage. After mourning, she could heat it up with a stove in the carriage. It was also possible to heat it up and eat it on the way.

Old Madam Yu patted her hand. "You've thought it through."

Yesterday, when Yao Yao kept asking Madam Yao about the situation in the palace, she had thought that Yao Yao had never experienced this and was curious about everything.

Who knew that she would prepare these?

The carriage entered the second palace gate. The maidservants and nannies were not allowed to enter the palace. They could only wait at the carriage.

Old Madam Yu took the medicinal cuisine and looked for the female official. “I’m not in good health. Usually, I have to continue taking the medicinal cuisine at home. Could you make an exception for this?”

Surprisingly, the female official took the medicinal cuisine and said with a smile, “The Empress Dowager has long instructed that mourning is a loyal matter. It’s not meant to be a torture. Madam, don’t worry. The medicinal cuisine will be handed over to me first. In a while, it will be sent to the female doctor for examination, registration, bookmaking, and storage. When Madam wants to eat it, I’ll go to the female doctor to get it.”

As long as the item was in the booklet, there would be someone to take care of it. There would not be any mistakes.

Of course, not everyone was qualified to bring things into the palace. A few people with high statuses were excusable, so there was no hindrance.

Wouldn’t it be a mess if there were too many people allowed to do this?

Old Madam Yu lowered her eyes. As expected, Yao Yao had predicted it.

After going back and forth for three days, she was finally done.

Old Madam Yu had suffered. However, with the incense and medicinal cuisine that Yu Youyao prepared every day and the Empress Dowager’s special care, she did not suffer much.

She heaved a sigh of relief. “Finally, I don’t have to enter the palace anymore. Otherwise, my old bones won’t be able to take it.”

Yu Youyao handed her a cup of ginseng tea. “After mourning, there’s nothing left for us women to do compared to the previous dynasty.”

If he did not make the funeral glorious, how could he show the Emperor’s benevolence?

How could he express his brotherhood with the King of Zhouli?

How could he hide the fact that he had accidentally killed a meritorious general and his own brother?!

It was important to know when to correct one’s mistakes.

What the Emperor was doing now was to make up for his mistakes.

However, what exactly did the Emperor do wrong?

He had only been deceived by traitors and mistakenly killed a meritorious general.

It was understandable!

Now that the Emperor was pursuing a grand burial, wasn’t it also because of his great kindness?

Look, this was the Emperor’s Grace!

No matter how big the mistake was, he could still make light of it and whitewash the peace. What was left for the history books was always an indistinguishable truth and a vague word.

The King of Zhouli was returning to Youzhou to be buried, so there was no need for him to stay in Fuyan Palace for 21 days.

On the eleventh day.

The Four Great Envoys majestically supported the King of Zhouli's spiritual return and set off for Youzhou.

Wherever they passed, officials would kneel in mourning. The commoners would cry non-stop.

At this point, the funeral of King of Zhouli had come to an end. The funeral ceremony and the rites would be held in Youzhou. Besides continuing to mourn, there was nothing else to do in the capital.

Everyone in the court finally heaved a sigh of relief.

The various departments flipped through the accounts and their hearts ached so much that they were about to bleed.

The "national funeral" had cost the imperial court a year of their budget. If they needed money in the future, they had to rack their brains and find ways to compensate for it.

However, there was nothing they could do.

For the sake of the dignity of the royal family and the reputation of the Emperor, no matter how much money they spent, they could only brace themselves and do it. Only when the Emperor and everyone in the world were satisfied would this matter be completely resolved.

Yu Youyao was not in the mood to pay attention to the undercurrents in the court.

This winter was colder than usual. The weather was cold, wet, and freezing. Yu Youyao was worried that her cousin's leg would hurt. She had continuously made nourishing medicinal cuisine, incense to ward off the cold, and medicinal tea every day.

The Green House had long started burning charcoal, and the heated brick bed was also set ablaze.

But even so, Zhou Linghuai's leg still acted up. His leg, which was usually numb, was swollen and painful because of the cold. The pain was piercing.

Yu Youyao's heart ached for her cousin. Even if she added more spiritual dewdrop to her cousin's medicinal cuisine and medicinal oil, it could only relieve the pain.

Seeing that she was depressed, Nanny Xu comforted her. "Almost all incense materials have the effect of exorcizing evil and revitalizing the right. They are fragrant and moist, and can treat illnesses and nourish the body. At this rate, Master's leg can be treated with incense."

Although Yu Youyao had only studied incense for a short period of time, her foundation was not inferior to hers.

Young Master Zhou and the Xie family doted on her and gathered a lot of notes on incense and some lost recipes for her.

Her words were a wake up call for her!

Yu Youyao's eyes lit up. "The fragrance of the cold-repelling incense gives humidity, and the medicinal oil can activate meridians. Although it can't have a healing effect, it can indeed relieve Cousin's leg pain. Can I try to improve the formula of the cold-repelling incense and medicinal oil to achieve the effect of treating injuries?"

Improving the incense was not easy, but it was not impossible.



The incense recipes that existed in this world were also created by predecessors. They searched far and wide, constantly researching and innovating the recipes.. If others could do it, why couldn't she?

## Chapter 506: The First Snow

She had only studied incense for a short period of time.

On the path of incense creation, talent and hard work were always more important than time.

At the very least, Yu Youyao had been learning to make incense medicine for almost a year. She could make more than half of the hundreds of incense recipes recorded in the Heavenly Fragrance Records. Even Nanny Xu was full of praise for her.

She was talented and did not lack hard work. With Nanny Xu's guidance, she could avoid many detours.

Apart from the Heavenly Fragrance Records, she also had various incense manuals, incense scriptures, remnant recipes, and even ancient books on witchcraft medicine that the Xie family and her cousin had gathered from all over the country.

She was already standing on the shoulder of the giant. The path of success was right in front of her. Although the future was unknown, as long as she worked hard and continued to explore, she would definitely gain something.

In the end, she would definitely be able to achieve her goal.

Nanny Xu looked at her deeply and said meaningfully, "With your talent and hard work in the field of incense, I believe you can do it."

Yu Youyao did not lack talent or foundation, but she did not have much ambition. She had a large number of incense recipes in her hands. If she needed any incense, she could just follow them.

Because she was talented and intelligent, the incense she made was often more effective. There was no need to spend time studying it.

Unexpectedly, because of Young Master's leg, this young lady's ambition for incense medicine was triggered.

This was a good thing!

It was always good to learn more, but if a person could do the best in a certain aspect and reach a height that others could not reach, they would often benefit from it endlessly.

Yu Youyao suppressed her worry and calmed down to learn about incense. Learning with goals and achievable targets often resulted in faster learning efficiency and greater gains.

Under Nanny Xu's guidance, Yu Youyao quickly had an idea of improving the incense recipe.

In the blink of an eye, they arrived at Laba.

The first snow of this winter had finally scattered through the heavens and the earth, and it fluttered about in the wind, causing the scene to be extremely beautiful.

However, Yu Youyao was not in the mood to admire it. She stood under the porch and reached out her hand. The bone-piercing wind and rain blew on her hand, making her feel like she had been pricked.

The snow fell into her palm and turned into water.

After a while, Yu Youyao felt that her hands were already numb from the cold.

“It’s so cold. Why don’t you stay in the house?”

A concerned voice sounded in her ear. Yu Youyao suddenly turned around. Chang An was pushing her cousin towards her. She couldn’t seem to hear the wheels.

Her cousin was wearing a cloak with a black fox fur collar. His neck was tightly wrapped, and his hands were hidden in the sleeves of the cloak. There was a thick velvet blanket on his legs.

His face, which had finally recovered some qi and blood in the past few days, had turned sickly pale again.

Yu Youyao’s eyes turned red, but she quietly turned her head away. She sniffed and forced back the tears in her eyes.

“It’s already snowing outside. Why are you still coming to find me? Didn’t we agree previously that if Cousin has anything to say, Chang An would come over and tell me or that I’ll go to The Green House to look for you. Why aren’t you obedient? Cousin, are you cold? Are you freezing? Is your leg in pain again? Let’s go in quickly.”

After chattering non-stop, Yu Youyao did not dare to delay and quickly entered the house with her cousin.

It was warm in the house with a fire burning over charcoal.

Yu Youyao hurriedly called the maidservants over and instructed, “Seal the windows tightly. Bring the charcoal cages in the house over and burn two more. The ginseng chicken soup in the kitchen is almost done cooking. Go and bring it over to warm Cousin up. His hand furnace needs new charcoal too...”

As soon as she opened her mouth, she sent the maidservants running in circles.

Zhou Linghuai was helpless. “Cousin, I...”

Yu Youyao glared at him. “Cousin, are you trying to say that you have the power to practice martial arts and have internal energy to protect yourself?”

And that it was only because the bones in your legs were damaged previously, blocking your meridians and preventing you from circulating Qi, which was why your leg’s condition was so serious? And now your body has recovered lots where you can already mobilize the meridians in your legs and it’s much better than before?

Zhou Linghuai opened his mouth. “Indeed, compared to before...”

Yu Youyao placed her hands on her hips and looked at him from the corner of her eye. “Are you still going to say that in the past, the pain in your leg flared up as soon as October arrived. This year, your body is recovering better, and your leg only acted up in November, so it’s already considered

good. And that this pain is nothing. You can still tolerate it so I don't have to worry too much." Faced with the little girl's angry gaze, Zhou Linghuai consciously shut up.

After using the spiritual dewdrop to recuperate for more than half a year and receiving Uncle Sun's acupuncture treatment, his body was indeed much better, and his leg illness was not as serious as before.

At this rate of recovery, it wouldn't be long before Uncle Sun could use the "The Inner Qi Acupuncture" to break open the blood vessels in his legs.

Perhaps his leg would recover in less than three years.

However, no matter how he explained or said it, Yu Youyao did not believe him.

She kept feeling that he and Uncle Sun were avoiding the main point and coaxing her.

He was already prepared for her to fly into a rage, but unexpectedly, as soon as she finished speaking, Yu Youyao's eyes turned red. "I know that your leg condition is much better, and that you can endure it, but aren't you still suffering the same way from four years ago? Just because you can endure it doesn't mean that it doesn't hurt. If it doesn't hurt badly, it's only because you've already grown used to tolerating the pain. I don't want you to suffer."

Cousin wasn't a talkative person, but in this matter, he seemed especially insincere.

She knew that her cousin only wanted to comfort her and not worry her too much.

But the more her cousin was like this, the more her heart ached.

Zhou Linghuai pursed his lips. He had everything under his control, but the moment Yu Youyao's eyes turned red, he was already at his wit's end before her tears even fell.

He just didn't know what he had done wrong and kept wanting to beg for mercy.

The room fell silent for a moment.

Zhou Linghuai held her hand. It was cold to the touch. "How long have you been outside? Why are your hands so cold? Be careful not to get frostbite."

He unconsciously held her hand and rubbed it gently.

Yu Youyao sat obediently. After a while, she felt the feelings return to her frozen hands. "I saw that it was snowing outside, so I went out to take a look.

Unlabeledly, I stayed for too long and forgot the time."

"Next time you go out to watch the snow, remember to keep warm."

Zhou Linghuai took out a small silver box from his pouch. Inside was a light yellow paste. He picked out some paste and smeared it on Yu Youyao's hand, rubbing it away.

The paste was soft and smooth when rubbed on his hand. With the addition of fragrant herbs, the smell was not unpleasant.

Yu Youyao quickly felt her hands warm. "What is this?"

Sensing that her hand had warmed up, Zhou Linghuai stopped rubbing it and placed the small silver box in her hand. "Uncle Sun made snake ointment to prevent frostbite." At this point, he paused and said in a fawning voice, "Today is the Laba Festival, so I came over to celebrate with you.."

## Chapter 507: The Only One

After living in the Yu Residence for so long, Zhou Linghuai was already used to spending the holidays with Yu Youyao.

Only then did Yu Youyao realize that during this period of time, she had been making all kinds of incense recipes. Apart from that, she had not been involved in anything else in the residence.

This morning, Chun Xiao even mentioned, "It's the Laba Festival today. The palace rewarded us with Laba porridge yesterday. Old Madam distributed some to the various courtyards. As we are still in mourning for the King of Zhouli, all the banquets have been abolished. We only prepared a ceremony for the Laba Festival and will not be holding a banquet. Everyone will celebrate it simply with just some Laba porridge."

Those words had entered her one ear and out the other.

During breakfast, she was thinking about ways to improve the incense recipe. She only knew to eat porridge. Later on, when she entered the incense room, she completely forgot about this matter.

It was not until it snowed outside that Yu Youyao left the incense room, worried about her cousin.

It was probably because her cousin was waiting to celebrate the holidays with her, but because she did not go to The Green House, he came over himself.

Yu Youyao smiled. "I forgot that it's the Laba Festival today. Calculating the days, it'll be the 21st day of the King of Zhouli's funeral tomorrow. It's time to move on."

In the past, during the Laba Festival, the family would be busy preparing a table for the Laba banquet. The family would then gather together and chat about the auspicious meanings of the snow.

This year, the day passed by coldly. She did not feel the atmosphere of the Laba

Festival at all, but did not take it to heart.

However, Yu Youyao was still very happy.

When the King of Zhouli's funeral completes, this matter would really come to an end. Everything could be turned around again. She hoped that from then on, her cousin would be reborn.

Zhou Linghuai understood what she meant and said meaningfully, "From now on, I really have nothing to hold on to and worry about in this world."

Upon hearing this, she knew that her cousin was really planning to let it go.

Yu Youyao was delighted. She held her cousin's hand and smiled brightly. "Why won't you have something to hold on to? Don't you still have me?!"

Since she had delivered herself to his door, Zhou Linghuai naturally had no reason to reject her. "Alright, from now on, you're the only one in my world."

He had changed his words to “the only one”. The greed, anger, and obsession in his heart were like vines that wrapped around him.

Yu Youyao did not hear the difference and only felt happy. “Then Cousin, you have to remember at all times that from now on, no matter if it’s close or far away, I’ll always be worried about you. Firstly, I wish for Cousin to be living a long life. Secondly, I wish for you to always be healthy. Thirdly, I wish that we’d be like swallows on a beam and we’ll always be together.”

The original sentence should be: “Firstly, I wish for you, my husband, to be living a long life. Secondly, I wish for myself to always be healthy for you.”

Yu Youyao liked the beautiful hope of eternal companionship in this poem, but she felt that the original sentence did not seem accurate when used on her and her cousin. It was even a little strange, so she changed it.

With this change, it was more in line with the relationship between her and her cousin. They were pure and sincere and wanted to accompany each other.

Yu Youyao smiled brightly and happily. Her eyes were sparkling, pure and clear.

The exquisiteness of the poem was that when the same poem was used on different people in different environments, there would be different interpretations and understandings. One could consciously change the lyrics accordingly.

But in Zhou Linghuai’s ears, that was not the case at all.

He was proficient in poetry. The first thing he thought of was that Yu Youyao might have changed the words to “cousin” and “you to always be healthy” to make the poem be about cousins.

However, Yu Youyao had forgotten that they were not real cousins.

Putting aside the fact that they were not cousins, they were two people not related by blood who wanted to be together...

Zhou Linghuai took a deep look at Yu Youyao. The young lady was smiling mindlessly, not knowing that she had sold herself with just a poem.

The words “young and ignorant” were most suitable for her.

Zhou Linghuai sighed in his heart. This girl was shrewd and intelligent when it came to dealing with people, but sometimes, she was muddle-headed and foolish. It made him feel a little helpless.

This was too much. Zhou Linghuai suppressed his thoughts and smiled. “I prepared a gift for Cousin.”

He had said that he would prepare a gift for her every New Year and festival.

He had always remembered that he could not miss even the Laba Festival. Yu Youyao’s eyes lit up and she quickly asked, “Let me see it.”

As soon as she finished speaking, Xia Tao ran into the house. “Miss, there are several carts of large rocks outside. They said that the Dragon Resting Stones

were transported from Wutai Mountain. The Young Master specially found them. Even Old Madam and the Second Master were alarmed...

Yu Youyao smiled and turned to look at her cousin. "Is it the Dragon Resting Stones?"

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "That's right. The journey to Shanxi is long, and it's going to be autumn and winter. It was not easy to travel. It took a long time to get here. Although the stones have been transported into the capital, they still have to be carved. After that, they'll be placed in an icehouse to hide for the winter. When the weather is hot next year, it'll be cold for the summer."

Yu Youyao was overjoyed. "I'll go out and take a look too."

Zhou Linghuai was about to say that they would go together.

Yu Youyao seemed to have guessed that he would say that. She glared at him again. "Just wait for me in the house obediently. I'll be back soon. I won't make Cousin wait too long."

Zhou Linghuai was helpless, but with the little girl's delicate and fierce expression, he could only nod and agree.

After receiving the guarantee, Yu Youyao stood up from the stool, picked up her skirt, and was about to run out.

Zhou Linghuai frowned. "Come back and put on your cloak. Take the hand furnace with you too."

Yu Youyao retracted her foot and returned to the house resentfully.

Xia Tao had already brought over a long cloak with a fur tie and hat, as well as a jade hand furnace to warm her hands. After Yu Youyao put on her clothes, she was allowed to leave by her cousin.

The snowstorm outside had gotten heavier. Yu Youyao tightened her fur-collared hat and walked along the corridor to the front of the hanging flower door.

There were already quite a number of people gathered around the three large rocks in front of the hanging flower door, pointing and talking

"The weather is so cold. The journey to the west of Shanxi is long and stretches for 100,000 miles. The mountain path is rugged and difficult to walk on, and there are many bandits around. Young Master has really put in a lot of effort for a few rocks."

"These aren't ordinary stones. They're Dragon Resting Stones produced by Wutai Mountain in Shanxi. They're also called cooling stones. One stone is worth tens of thousands of gold. They were delivered into the capital by an escort company:

"I heard that this stone was mined at a high place on Mount Wutai, a place where it's covered in snow all year round so it's cold. When it's placed in the house in the summer, it can reduce the heat and dryness."

"I know, our Eldest Miss is even more afraid of the heat than Old Madam when it's summer. I'm afraid this stone was specially found by the Young Master to give to Eldest Miss!"

"Young Master dotes on Eldest Miss the most. It's most likely the case..."

As soon as the stone was transported into the residence, everyone in the residence knew that it was for the Eldest Miss.

Yu Youyao smiled secretly and quickly looked at the stone.

The largest piece was six feet tall (two meters). It looked like a mountain and was dark green in color. The stone had the patterns of flowers, birds, and insects. It was extremely beautiful..

## Chapter 508: Secret Recipe (1)

Zhou Linghuai immediately pursed his lips.

As soon as she took off her cloak, she ran out casually. Even though she was wearing a thick jacket, it could not block the wind and snow outside. If she was not careful, she would fall sick from the cold.

She was already so old, but she still made people worry.

Yu Youyao left and returned quickly. “Cousin, look. This is the ointment I made after modifying the incense recipe.”

As if presenting a treasure, she handed the blue and white porcelain box in her hand to her cousin.

Zhou Linghuai did not take it. He pulled her to sit in front of the charcoal cage and handed her a cup of red date ginger tea. “Why are you running out without even wearing a cloak?”

The red date ginger tea was already brewed and had been simmering on the charcoal fire. It was always hot when he drank it.

Yu Youyao did not like the taste of ginger. No matter how much red dates and brown sugar were added to the ginger tea, she was not willing to drink it. She only drank a cup just now because she had stayed outside for too long and her cousin was worried that she would catch a cold.

Yu Youyao looked at her cousin bitterly with disdain on her face. “Cousin, I’m wearing thick inner wear and a jacket outside. I only went to the incense room just now and didn’t go to the courtyard. There’s no need to drink this!” She reached out to pull her cousin. “Look, my hand isn’t cold at all.”

The corridor was covered with bamboo curtains to block the wind. It only took a few steps to arrive at the incense room.

Her hands weren’t cold, but they weren’t warm either. Zhou Linghuai coaxed her patiently. “You have to drink at least two mouthfuls. You’ll catch a cold in such weather.”

Yu Youyao pouted and pinched her nose. She reluctantly took the cup and took two sips, unwilling to drink more than one. “We agreed to take two sips.”

Zhou Linghuai was also helpless. He took the cup and placed it aside. He took the porcelain box that she had been holding in her hand. “Have you been working on this all this time?”

From the name, one could tell that the effect of this ointment should be similar to medicinal oil.

It was for him to use.

Although Yu Youyao was talented in the field of incense, she had only studied incense for less than a year. No matter how much foundation she had, she still needed time to slowly settle down.

It was just like a jar of high-quality Shaoxing Wine. No matter how good the brewing process was, it had to be buried in the ground to rest for some time. Only when it was opened could the wine fragrance be intoxicating.

Yu Youyao was talented and hardworking. She had also learned a lot about incense. What she lacked was this patience.

It was not easy to improve the incense recipe.

Yu Youyao nodded. "That's right. Such a long winter will last until February or March next year. I can't let Cousin endure the pain in his leg all the time, so I want to try and see if I can improve the incense recipe and make a better medicine than the medicinal oil and cold-repelling incense that Cousin is using now."

Zhou Linghuai gripped the porcelain box in his hand tightly and forgot to open it.

At the mention of the areas she liked and was good at, Yu Youyao had endless things to say. "It's indeed too difficult to improve the incense recipe. For a long time, I was like a blind person who had no clue at all. Nanny Xu said that my foundation is not bad, but I lack patience. She asked me to rearrange the incense book I learned and deepen my learning."

Zhou Linghuai pursed his lips again.

After returning to the Yu Residence for a few days, he tested Yu Youyao's homework.

In addition to the "Four Books and Five Classics", there were also calligraphy, zither skills, "Heavenly Works", "Zizhi Tongjian", and some historical materials.

Zhou Linghuai wanted to see if Yu Youyao had missed her classes after being away for a few months.

As he had prepared annotations, it was easier for Yu Youyao to learn. If there were any questions she didn't understand, she could ask Ms. Ye for guidance. Yu Youyao's studies had improved a little.

However, in order to prevent her from being arrogant and complacent, he definitely had to balance between giving her the carrot and the stick.

While he said some praises and encouragement, it was inevitable that he would mention her shortcomings. He did not criticize her, but he was a little stricter. x

After a few days, he heard that Yu Youyao had been studying very hard recently. She spent most of her time in the study and did not even care much about the matters in the residence

He even thought that Yu Youyao had suffered a blow and was motivated.

As a young lady, how could she spend all day talking about the trivial matters of the internal affairs? It was better to study more. He was happy to see this happen.

Little did he know that what he thought she was learning was something else.

Yu Youyao did not know that her cousin's heart was filled with thoughts. "From the remnant recipes that you helped me gather, I found a recipe for ointment. Cousin, you don't know, but this remnant



recipe came from a foreign country. It records a secret recipe for ointment that can circulate blood and relieve pain.”

Zhou Linghuai rubbed the blue and white porcelain box in his hand.

Hearing the little girl’s chattering voice, he said, “Although I don’t know how effective this ointment is, since this prescription has been spread to the Central Plains, it must have something extraordinary about it. I want to study it. However, the medicinal materials used are all foreign, and the Great Zhou Dynasty can’t produce them.”

At the mention of this, Yu Youyao couldn’t help but frown, looking troubled. How stressed she must have been when she faced such a predicament previously.

Zhou Linghuai said, “Even a clever woman can’t cook without rice. How was it resolved later?”

Yu Youyao smiled. “I just thought that ever since the prosperity of maritime trade, the Great Zhou Dynasty and the foreign countries have been mutually beneficial. The incense materials of the foreign countries have always been very popular in the Great Zhou Dynasty. Perhaps there will be records in the medical books. I’ve also looked through many medical books and found detailed records in the Essential Herbs and the Theory of Medicine.”

Seeing her smile, Zhou Linghuai also smiled. “The mountains and rivers are heavy, and there’s no way out. There’s a bright light in the dark.”

Yu Youyao nodded repeatedly. “There’s a medicinal ingredient called Myrrh. This medicinal ingredient enters the four organs- spleen, kidney, heart, and liver. The four organs of the human body are mainly biochemical and storage of our essence, Qi, blood, and spirit. According to the Theory of Medicine, Myrrh can treat conditions like blood stasis, bone stasis, pain in the joints, and blade wounds. It can help with unbearable pain. It promotes blood dissipation to remove the stasis, reduce the swelling, stabilize the pain, and ease the fascia. It’s the effect of blood circulation. It’s right for Cousin’s illness. ”

At this point, her tone was already very thrilled, and her fair face was flushed with excitement.

Zhou Linghuai only listened and did not interrupt her.

“In addition to Myrrh, there’s also a kind of incense called Frankincense. Its effect is similar to Myrrh. The magical thing is that if the two are combined, their effect will be boosted. According to the Compendium, Frankincense can circulate blood and Myrrh can dissipate the blood. Both can reduce pain and swelling, so they are great to be used together.”

Myrrh and Frankincense were foreign medicinal ingredients. They were rare in the Great Zhou Dynasty and were not widely used.

Even though Zhou Linghuai was knowledgeable, he was not proficient in medicine, so he naturally did not know.

Zhou Linghuai listened carefully. The young lady had spoken casually, but he could still tell what difficulties she had encountered and how much effort she had put in to improve the incense recipe.

She had overcome all the difficulties..

## Chapter 509: Secret Recipe (2)

At this point, Yu Youyao changed the topic. “After figuring out the Myrrh and

Frankincense, I started to worry. This is a foreign medicinal ingredient. I don’t think it’s common in the Great Zhou Dynasty, and its uses are not widespread. Otherwise, I would have heard of it before. The problem now is how to get these two medicinal ingredients and where to get them?”

Not only had she never heard of it, but even the knowledgeable Nanny Xu hadn’t either.

She had just made some progress, but there was an even bigger problem in front of her.

Yu Youyao finally understood the difficulty of improving the incense recipe.

“I originally wanted to write a letter to the Xie family to ask for help, but later on, I thought of something. There are a lot of incense materials piled up in my herbal warehouse. Some were gathered by the Xie family, some were gifts sent by the Zhenguo Marquis Residence a while ago, and some were brought to me by my cousin when he returned from Shandong. Because there were too many of them, I didn’t take a closer look. After I handed them to Liu’er to register and make a book, I placed them in the warehouse. I also only ask Liu’er to retrieve whatever incense materials I need for me.”

Seeing her expression light up, Zhou Linghuai couldn’t help but laugh.

“I checked the booklet in the herbal warehouse and found a type of antidote on it. At first, I thought that the Myrha and Myrrh were two different things. Later, when I flipped through the Essential Herbs, I knew that this was actually the Myrrh I wanted. There were the antidote and Frankincense in the warehouse, and there were quite a lot of them.”

The Xie family and her cousin couldn’t wait to gather all the best things in the world and give them to her.

Previously, the Zhenguo Marquis Residence had sent gifts of gratitude because they were afraid of neglecting them. They had chosen the most precious and rare medicinal materials.

Being transported from other countries, they were all precious and rare items in the Great Zhou Dynasty. Even if they did not know their specific uses, they had to keep them. There was no lack of them.

Every word showed her painstaking efforts. Zhou Linghuai’s heart trembled slightly. “Nanny Xu is proficient in pharmacology and probably knows about the Myrha. It’s just that she’s in the palace and is cautious and wary of foreign things. Naturally, she won’t pay attention to research and only knows about the Myrha, not the Myrrh. As a result, you ended up taking lots of detours.”

The Myrha and Myrrh, they could be worlds apart with just a difference in one letter.

Nanny Xu had always been wary of foreign things, so she did not understand them. Naturally, she did not think of this.

She probably did not help much with the ointment formula. Everything depended on the young lady, who had worked hard to figure it out.

Yu Youyao nodded. “Nanny Xu said the same thing. Later on, in order to understand more about the medicinal properties of Myrrh, I checked all the medical books and found that there were detailed records of the use of Myrrh in the Tang Dynasty. Later on, because of the war, the sea ban, and many other reasons, Myrrh gradually became unknown. It was also after the Great Zhou Dynasty reopened the sea ban that Myrrh was used by foreign countries as an incense ingredient to exchange supplies and appeared in the Great Zhou Dynasty again.”

Foreign medicinal ingredients were very precious. They were rare in the Great Zhou Dynasty, and their uses were not widespread. They were directly used for incense, and many nobles would directly burn them.

The palace was more interested in the rare and unique objects offered as tributes from foreign countries. Things like food were basically taboo.

After all, it was not something from the dynasty. It had always been covered in a mysterious veil.

No matter how interested they were in the unknown, they would not risk their lives.

Zhou Linghuai opened the porcelain box. The red ointment has a slight yellow tint and is condensed into lard. It didn't smell like ointment, but a faint bitter fragrance and the smell of milkwood. It smelled very good.

His throat was slightly dry as he said hoarsely, “This is really an ointment!”

Yu Youyao nodded. “Because the recipe is incomplete, I could only improve on the original recipe. I tested it many times before making it. It's similar to the ointment recorded in the incomplete recipe.”

In the improved formula, there were more than ten incense ingredients, such as agarwood, fragrant cinnamon, cardamom, and cassia. All the incense ingredients had been prepared with spiritual dewdrop, so the effect would definitely be better than before.

Zhou Linghuai didn't know what to say for a moment. “Thank you, Cousin!”

Yu Youyao did not know about his complicated feelings. She shook her head and said, “Actually, it's not that difficult. Although it's just a remnant recipe, with a clear study direction, I'm also familiar with the effects of various incense materials. As long as I strictly follow the regulations in accordance with the palace and make it achieve the effects of medicine, incense, and healing, I'll be fine after testing it a few more times.”

What she didn't say was that in order to make better ointment, she had experimented with the combination of more than 200 kinds of medicinal ingredients in the past month.

Fortunately, she had trained a few girls who knew about incense in her room and had helped a lot. Otherwise, the ointment wouldn't have been made so quickly.

Just because she didn't say it didn't mean that Zhou Linghuai couldn't guess.

“It's not easy to test the medicinal properties either.”

Yu Youyao quickly changed the topic. “Actually, the ointment was done three days ago. It’s just that Cousin’s body is a little weak, so I didn’t dare to give it to him.”

After Nanny Xu examined the ointment and confirmed that it was not poisonous, she could give it to her cousin. However, although she was not afraid of foreign things, she was still cautious.

“Liu’er’s godmother, Old Madam Ma, broke her leg a few years ago and didn’t recover. She’s still ill. Every time the weather is wet and cold, her leg hurts. I brought the ointment for her to try. After Old Madam Ma used it, her pain eased a lot. I originally planned to observe for a few more days before giving it to Cousin.”

The ointment for Old Madam Ma was not added with spiritual dewdrop so the effect was a little unexpected.

However, considering that Old Madam Ma’s leg could not compare directly to her cousin’s leg, she planned to see the situation again.

It was also because she had received her cousin’s gift today that she realized that she had not prepared a gift for him. After thinking about it, she decided to give the ointment to her cousin.

How could Zhou Linghuai not understand Yu Youyao’s good intentions? “I’ll have to trouble you to help me use it!”

Yu Youyao’s eyes lit up. How could he not accept? She quickly called out to Chang An, “Go to The Green House and get the medicine bag for Cousin’s foot bath.”

It would be more effective to use it after soaking.

Chang An immediately went.

Yu Youyao smiled proudly as she held the ointment. “The ointment can be used as medicinal oil. It can also be added to water and placed on an incense burner to burn. It’s fragrant and moist. It’s much better than the cold-repelling incense. ”

The essence of incense was to use both incense and medicine to nourish and heal.

Zhou Linghuai smiled. “Cousin, you’re amazing.”

Yu Youyao asked Chun Xiao to bring over the incense steamer. She added charcoal to the incense burner and added some warm water. She picked a small spoonful of ointment and condensed it into a high oil that melted in hot water.

After a while, the fragrance of the mist spread out. There was a faint milkwood fragrance that was slightly bitter, like the fragrance of resin.

Zhou Linghuai leaned closer and smelled it. He immediately felt comfortable. “It smells good.”

Yu Youyao tilted her head and smiled. “I like this smell too. It’s as if I’m in a forest in spring and there’s a fragrance of trees.”

Zhou Linghuai nodded. This was the smell of vitality..

Chapter 510: Superior

Yu Youyao leaned closer to her cousin. "Cousin, the benefits of Myrrh and Frankincense are great. As the foreign country's medical care is far inferior to ours, they've used the effects of Myrrh and Frankincense to the extreme. As long as it's not a critical disease, ordinary illnesses, such as cold, injuries, and so on can be treated through Myrrh and Frankincense. They have a wide range of uses, so they are treated as divine medicine. As the production of these two ingredients are decent, they're treated as precious herbal ingredients and came to us through sea trade."

It was also because of this that she was interested in Myrrh and Frankincense and even spent a lot of effort researching them.

Fortunately, all her efforts were worth it.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "Each place nurtures its own inhabitants. It's like agarwood. It's an expensive medicinal ingredient and most incense recipes and prescriptions use this medicinal ingredient."

The cold-repelling incense was made of agarwood.

Yu Youyao agreed deeply. "I found out in the medical book that using Myrrh to brew wine, it can help to strengthen Qi and circulate blood. It can also reduce the cold and dissipate pain. It is as effective as the ointment. I followed the recipe and brewed some. It will take another three days before it can be drunk. "

By consuming the medicine internally and using it externally, her cousin's leg will definitely get better.

Not long after, Chang An brought the medicine bag over.

As long as the medicine packet was placed in water and boiled, it could be used after drying for a while when the temperature was suitable.

Zhou Linghuai took off his shoes and socks, lifted his inner leggings, and soaked his legs in the wooden bucket.

His leg was very red and swollen. After being properly taken care of for more than half a year, it did not look as dry as before, but it was still so thin that it made one's heart ache.

Tears welled up in her eyes!

Yu Youyao wiped it casually and held back her tears. However, her voice was hoarse and trembling, making it hard for others to bear. "Did Uncle Sun say when your leg will completely recover?"

Zhou Linghuai's gaze darkened. "Two years at most!"

When Yu Youyao heard this, her eyes turned red again. She sniffed hard and said in a low voice, "It's still going to take so long. Is Uncle Sun even reliable..."

It wasn't that she had underestimated Uncle Sun, but sometimes, he was really quite unreliable.

Previously, the Essence Protection Pill was only made after her reminder.

Zhou Linghuai stroked the top of her head. "Even if he's not reliable, don't I still have you? The medicinal oil that Cousin made previously healed my leg a lot. I think the effect of the ointment will be even better."

He already knew that Yu Youyao understood his personality and would not fall for his evasive approach, so he comforted her in another way.

Indeed!

Yu Youyao, who had been a little dejected just now, immediately perked up.

“You are right. Cousin, use the ointment and the medicinal wine brewed with

Myrrh first. If it doesn’t work, I can modify a better prescription.” The success of the ointment undoubtedly gave her great confidence.

“Okay!” Zhou Linghuai smiled.

The young lady squatted in front of him and took a handkerchief. She carefully wiped his leg, as if she was afraid of hurting him. Then, she gently massaged his leg according to the acupoint massage method she had learned from Nanny Xu.

He could already feel some sensation in his leg. After being massaged by her, he felt that his entire leg was sore, numb, and painful.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly tightened his grip on the armrest of the wheelchair. Only then did he barely control his trembling body and swallow the moan that was about to reach his mouth.x

However, in this way, his breathing inevitably became heavier.

“Cousin, you have to relax. Don’t tense up.”

In the past half a year, Yu Youyao had not often massaged her cousin’s legs. Occasionally, she would do it. She was much more familiar with the technique and was no longer as inexperienced and strenuous as the first time.

The force gradually increased from slow to fast, and then to light and heavy.

After a while, Zhou Linghuai’s breathing became tighter and tighter. Soon, he snorted softly and couldn’t help but say, “Cousin, that’s enough.”

He was worried that if this continued, he would definitely lose his composure on the spot. Although this was nothing, he did not want her to see him lose control and be in a sorry state.

Yu Youyao pinched her cousin’s leg. It was not as swollen and stiff as before, so she lifted his leg and placed it on the small stool. She took a dry towel and wiped it clean.

“After the massage, the meridians in your leg are relaxed. I’ll give you some ointment. If you feel uncomfortable, you must tell me in advance.”

Zhou Linghuai nodded in agreement.

Yu Youyao picked up a spoonful of red ointment and rubbed it in her hand. She applied it evenly on his legs and massaged his acupuncture points again.

Not long after, Zhou Linghuai felt that something was different.

His leg was hot and spicy. It was as if he had eaten a handful of peppercorns. It was pungent and numb, burning his throat until it burned into his bones. His swollen and painful leg suddenly felt much easier.

Half an incense stick of time had passed. Zhou Linghuai's face was as red as a cooked shrimp, and there was bean-sized sweat on his forehead.

He clenched his fists tightly. The veins on the armrest of the wheelchair bulged out, and the intersecting meridians and blood vessels on the back of his hand could be seen.

Yu Youyao pushed the ointment while paying attention to her cousin's condition. Seeing her cousin's huge reaction, she was a little worried. "Are you feeling unwell?"

If she had known, she would have used the ointment without the spiritual dewdrop on her cousin first.

After there were no problems, she would then try to use the ointment with the spiritual dewdrop. Only after confirming that the ointment had a good effect on her cousin, she would increase the use of the spiritual dewdrop.

Zhou Linghuai opened his mouth and snorted softly. He barely held back the moan that followed. "The ointment is indeed very effective. It's the first time I'm using it, but I can feel that the pain has lessened a lot. The reaction is probably a little stronger since it's the first time. It's fine. Don't be nervous."

Myrrh was an antidote for pain, and Frankincense was used to circulate blood. Yu Youyao said that this medicine was extremely good and was correct about his leg disease. He believed her, but also not too much.

However, after using it, he realized that this medicine was far better than he had imagined.

This could only mean that Yu Youyao had spent a lot of effort on the ointment.

Yu Youyao relaxed a lot and finally smiled. "Cousin, you're sweating a lot. Unbutton your cloak a little to dissipate the sweat so that it won't enter your body and chill your body."

Zhou Linghuai did as he was told.

When the incense stick was gone, Yu Youyao's hands were sore. She quickly helped her cousin wrap up his leg, put down his pants, and was about to help him put on socks...

Zhou Linghuai took the sock from her hand. "I'll do it myself."

Yu Youyao did not insist. She asked Chun Xiao to bring hot water over. She cleaned her hands and applied flower dew on them before applying goat's milk cream.

Thinking of the snake oil her cousin had given her just now, Yu Youyao took it out of her purse and applied a layer of snake oil. Her hands felt much fresher now..