

All Hail 91

Chapter 91: Cousin, You Can't Be Polite With Me

At this point, Mr. Xian Yun felt helpless. "Forget it, forget it. I still have to stay in You Zhou for three days. Why don't you consider it carefully for another three days before answering me?"

Zhou Linghuai felt that he had won back the favor and was in a good mood, so he shook his head. "It won't affect your grand plan to take in a disciple."

After staring at the longevity peach blossom stone in his hand for a long time, Zhou Linghuai recalled Mr. Xian Yun's words, "The roots of the mountain are damaged," and "A dragon trapped in a shallow pool will be mocked by shrimp." However, he glanced at his legs and realized that they were indeed the right place. He pursed his lips slightly and calmed himself down, holding the Kunwu Knife and cutting the stone.

He cut it extremely slowly and accurately, revealing a rare sense of caution.

At this moment, there was a knock on the door. "Cousin, can I come in?"

The little girl deliberately lowered her voice, making it sound gentle, for fear of disturbing him.

The Kunwu Knife in Zhou Linghuai's hand paused for a moment. Then, he placed the peach blossom frozen stone back into the box and put away the carving tools one by one. "Come in!"

The door was pushed open with a creak. The little girl ran innocently in her apricot-red top and pink dress. "Cousin, did I disturb you?"

Zhou Linghuai's brows relaxed, but he shook his head. "I happen to be free!"

How were you free? Didn't she want to carve a seal just now? Chang An's mouth twitched, and an idea popped into his mind. He couldn't help but widen his eyes and look at Yu Youyao in shock—

Young Master suddenly wanted to carve a seal—

Could it be...

He was probably thinking the same thing!

At this moment, no one was paying attention to him. Yu Youyao had already sat down beside her cousin and said happily, "Cousin, the residence has invited Manager Sun from the Jinxiu Manor over to tailor-make clothes for everyone. Quickly give me your measurements. I'll get Manager Sun to make a few sets for you too."

Zhou Linghuai subconsciously wanted to refuse. "No need..."

Yu Youyao interrupted him. "Grandfather sends some fashionable materials over every season. I have a lot of materials in my box, but I can't use them all. Some of the materials are outdated after being stored for a long time, and it's not easy to make clothes out of them. Every year, I have to send out a lot just to give them to others. Cousin, you can't be polite with me."

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "In that case, we'll do as you say. As for the size..."

Just as he was about to ask Chang An, Yu Youyao quickly added, "Cousin, you don't know your own size, so just give me one of your ordinary clothes and let Manager Sun take a look. She'll understand in no time."

Zhou Linghuai turned to look at Chang An and instructed, "Go to my room and get me a set of clothes."

Chang An was puzzled when he heard this. He knew the size of Young Master's clothes. He could have just asked him, so why did he still need to get his clothes? However, since Young Master had already spoken, he could only obey.

Yu Youyao thought for a moment but was still worried. "I see that the clothes you usually wear are a little old. They're an old style. How long has it been since you last made clothes?"

Zhou Linghuai did not say anything. Chang An was the one who took care of his daily life, so he knew these things best.

Suddenly, he remembered that he had wanted to ask Chang An about the size of his clothes. Why had he asked Chang An to get his clothes?

Fine, he had been brought into a ditch by a young lady.

Yu Youyao frowned. "I see that Cousin's health has improved a lot recently. He must have grown a lot. I wonder if the size of his previous clothes is suitable. Why don't I measure him again?"

Zhou Linghuai almost choked on the tea he had just drunk. Just as he was about to refuse—

Without further ado, Yu Youyao walked up behind him. "Cousin, raise your hands."

Now, it was impossible to refuse even if he wanted to. Zhou Linghuai looked helpless. He could only put down his teacup and raise his hands accordingly. He tilted his head and saw the little girl's slender fingers measuring from his wrist to his shoulder. She looked very focused.

After measuring, Zhou Linghuai heaved a sigh of relief, but the little girl did not stop. She suddenly leaned towards him and said, "Cousin, raise your arm. I'll measure your waist."

After saying that, she really wanted to measure it. She did not think about those dogmatic rules about men and women being wary of each other.

She usually saw her second sister and second brother joking around and being very close. In front of her cousin, she could do whatever she wanted. Her cousin was very tolerant of her.

Zhou Linghuai suddenly held her hand. "Chang An is here. Just ask him."

Yu Youyao was stunned for a moment. When she saw that her cousin's hand was wrapped around hers, she couldn't help but think, 'Cousin's hand is really big and beautiful!'

The little girl's hand felt like cream in his palm, and it was smooth. Zhou Linghuai was also stunned. When he reacted, he felt as if his hand had been burned, and he suddenly let go.

However, her hands, which were hanging by her sides, suddenly trembled. For a moment, she did not know where to put them. She kept feeling that there was still a warm and soft touch in her palm.

Zhou Linghuai glanced at the cute and sweet little girl in front of him. She would only turn ten next month, and was still a child.

Yu Youyao hit her head lightly, feeling a little vexed. "Seriously, how could I have forgotten about Chang An? Chang An is Cousin's personal servant. He knows best about Cousin's matters."

Chang An, who had just walked to the study with his clothes, couldn't help but complain in his heart when he heard this.

Every time you see Young Master, you only see him. I'm invisible in front of you. Even if I stand in front of you, you won't see me.

Yu Youyao looked out the door. As soon as she saw Chang An, she asked, "Chang An, quickly give me Cousin's measurements."

Chang An glanced at the clothes in his arms and was speechless for a moment.

Fine, he had taken the clothes for nothing.

He even suspected that Eldest Miss Yu had deliberately sent him away to be alone with Young Master.

Under the young master's cold gaze, Chang An reported a few measurements.

Yu Youyao happily noted it down. She turned around and threw Chang An to the back of her mind. She held onto her cousin's arm. "Cousin, what color do you like? I see that you usually wear light green and dark green. No matter how you change, it's always green. Why don't you make two blue ones? Cousin, you're good-looking. You'll definitely look good in blue. Also, black and white aren't bad either..."

Zhou Linghuai smiled. "Then let Cousin arrange it!"

Hearing this, Yu Youyao was happier than anything else.

At this moment, Uncle Sun staggered in. "Young Master, there's still one last ingredient missing from the Essence Protection Pill. It's a very rare and unique insect. It feeds on precious herbs like ginseng, lingzhi, insects, and summer grass, and it excretes something that looks like oil. This thing is compatible with the medicinal properties of all kinds of precious herbs. It's a great supplement, but it doesn't have any side effects. I heard that Emperor Taizong of the previous dynasty had once obtained this insect's excretory substance and refined a special medicine that could nourish the body. It had once saved his life when he was in danger."

Chapter 92: A Mischievous Girl

Even though Zhou Linghuai was knowledgeable, he had never heard of this insect.

Yu Youyao knew that this Essence Protection Pill was a good medicine for her cousin, so she was a little curious. "Uncle Sun, do you know what this strange worm looks like?"

Uncle Sun shook his head. "I've never seen it before either. I've heard that this worm looks like a cicada and is completely brownish-black."

Yu Youyao noted it down seriously. "I'll write to Grandfather later and ask him to help find it too."

Uncle Sun was overjoyed and hurriedly said, "That's great. The business route of the Xie Residence in Quanzhou is smooth. Old Master Xie has traveled extensively and is knowledgeable. Perhaps he has heard of this insect."

Zhou Linghuai did not decline. "Thank you, Cousin."

Yu Youyao waved her hand. "Cousin, don't stand on ceremony with me. It's nothing. If you need anything in the future, you have to tell me. I can help you think of a way."

Seeing the little girl's serious expression, Zhou Linghuai's throat moved, and he nodded.

Yu Youyao said happily, "Then I won't disturb you anymore. I'll go back and help you pick out a few pieces of clothing."

The little girl came and left quickly, causing Zhou Linghuai to be a little stunned. He looked at the door of the study and forgot to look away.

When he reacted and was about to continue carving, a beautiful figure entered his sight again. The little girl stood at the door and did not enter.

"Cousin, you don't have to go to school today. It's rare that you're free, so have a good rest. You don't have to go to the Jade Courtyard to practice calligraphy with me in the afternoon. I'll practice calligraphy by myself and definitely won't slack off. Tomorrow, I'll bring it to you for a review. It's been hard on you these past few days."

For several consecutive days, her cousin went to the Jade Courtyard at noon every day to teach her how to write. Now, she could already write better. Even Ms. Ye praised her for her great improvement.

Zhou Linghuai nodded.

Yu Youyao laughed happily. "Cousin, I'll see you tomorrow."

Zhou Linghuai smiled. "See you tomorrow."

Yu Youyao turned around and was about to leave when she seemed to have thought of something and turned around. "Cousin, I've made some medicinal cuisine in my room. I'll get Qiu Xing to send it over at noon. Remember to eat it."

Every day, her cousin would teach her how to write, so she found a few good medicinal recipes in the book "Cauldron Food." She used the medicinal ingredients that were filled with spiritual dew to make medicinal dishes for her cousin every day. She had also shown Uncle Sun the recipes. Uncle Sun said that these were excellent recipes that were good for her cousin's health and could be used more every day.

Zhou Linghuai nodded. "Okay!"

Only then did Yu Youyao leave happily.

Seeing the little girl's figure disappear at the door, Zhou Linghuai smiled and took out the lacquered box. He took out the carvings one by one and continued carving with the peach blossom stone.

The little girl liked apricot flowers. The color of peach blossom jelly was light red and delicate, looking a little like apricot flowers. It had the artistic conception of "white is not white, but red is not red."

If he carved an apricot-shaped seal, she would probably like it very much.

When Yu Youyao returned to the Jade Courtyard, she went to her room to pick out some materials.

Nanny Xu looked at the various materials and said, "They're all exquisite materials. If they're kept for too long, the flowery styles won't be as bright as they are now. It'll be a pity if they're spoiled."

Her maternal grandfather's merchant ship was arriving at the end of the month. At that time, there would be a lot of new materials arriving in a box. Yu Youyao said, "In that case, tidy up and pick out the most expensive and best materials. Send five each to Grandmother and Father's house. Then, pick four more stable and dignified flowery styles and send them to Madam Yang."

Nanny Xu smiled when she heard this. "What a mischievous girl."

Madam Yang usually dressed like a mistress, but she liked bright colors and stable and dignified flowers. Most of them were dark and heavy, and were more mature. Even if she was given good materials, Madam Yang might not like them, let alone make clothes using them..

No matter how much she disliked it, she had to accept it with a smile.

Not only did she gain the reputation of having filial piety, but she also made Madam Yang feel like a fishbone was stuck in her throat.

Yu Youyao stuck out her tongue. "I don't want to let her have the best material. I'll give her the most valuable material, but I just have to let her see it for herself. I'll feel stifled if she doesn't wear it."

Nanny Xu smiled and said nothing.

Yu Youyao did not continue to bring this up. "Second Uncle and Second Aunt will also give three horses each. The eldest brother and sister-in-law in the family will get two horses each, regardless of whether they're the child of the first wife or second wife. However, we have to choose carefully. Eldest Brother, Second Brother, Second Sister, and Third Sister will have to choose more carefully."

On the surface, he could not favor one over the other. Otherwise, if he wanted to be a good person, he would have to compare who was superior and who was inferior. It would be a headache.

However, in secret, it was still necessary to distinguish between the legitimate wife and the concubines.

Nanny Xu nodded secretly. This arrangement was already extremely appropriate. "There are still some incomplete small items left, so I'll reward them to the servants in the courtyard."

Yu Youyao nodded. "Nanny, make the arrangements!"

Since they were making spring clothes in the residence, it was just right to give them away. It would not only help her gain fame, but also the hearts of the people. It was just right.

Nanny Xu led the maidservants to sort out the materials. Yu Youyao planned to personally pick out a few pieces for her cousin.

Dong Mei helped to pick out some clothes. "There's Moon Cloud Brocade in the box. It's a good-looking material. It's suitable to make clothes for Young Master."

Cloud brocade was a type of tribute material. It had always been known that "every inch of brocade is worth its weight in gold." It was named for its brilliant color and beauty, like the clouds in the sky. This moon-white cloud brocade was embroidered with clouds, but it looked elegant and noble, which was very rare.

Yu Youyao's eyes lit up. "I'll choose this Moon Cloud Brocade."

It was moon-white, but not pure white. It had a faint blue color, and there was a faint tinge of azure in the blue. It looked like white, but not really white. It looked like blue, but not really blue. It was an extremely beautiful color.

Then, Yu Youyao picked two more green ones: stone green and crow green. They were both colors that her cousin did not have. She also picked ones that were blue, white and one black.

Every color was carefully chosen.

Yu Youyao wrote down the measurements and handed them all to Dong Mei. "Get Manager Sun to make a few sets of clothes for Cousin. The moon-white ones will be for casual wear, while the black ones will be more formal and suitable for more solemn occasions. The green ones will be for going out, and the remaining ones will be for the most popular styles in the capital."

Dong Mei noted them down one by one and asked the maidservant to bring the materials to Manager Sun.

Yu Youyao returned to her small study to write a letter to her grandfather.

First, she expressed her longing and greetings to her grandfather's family. Then, she wrote about the recent situation in the Yu Residence. She also mentioned a few matters in the capital and vaguely mentioned the matter of "appointing a disciple". Finally, she asked about the strange insect that Uncle Sun had mentioned.

After writing for five whole pages, she finally stopped!

When the ink on the letter was completely dry, Yu Youyao took out an envelope and sealed it with wax. She called out to Chun Xiao, "Send this letter to the Xie Residence in Quan Zhou."

Her cousin's health was more important. It would take more than ten days to send it to her grandfather, and she would probably receive a reply from him at the end of the month.

Chapter 93: A Sting in the Throat

While Yu Youyao was practicing her calligraphy, everyone in the residence received gifts from her.

Everyone liked expensive and fashionable materials. Even Yu Qingning stroked the smooth and bright material happily. She was already thinking about what kind of clothes to make that would be outstanding and beautiful, and stand out in the residence.

Old Madam Yu was so happy that she couldn't close her mouth. "This girl has become a treasure distributor again."

Nanny Liu smiled and said, "Even so, you're right. Just now, Master even praised Eldest Miss. She is becoming more and more like a legitimate elder sister."

When Old Madam Yu heard this, how could she not be happy? "How could he not be satisfied? During the past few days of recuperation, Yao Yao has sent a lot of things to her house. There's no need to mention the food and necessities. Many of them were personally made by Yao Yao. Just this kind gesture alone was something that no one in the residence can compare to, let alone some antique calligraphy and paintings. It seems she's afraid that Eldest Son will be too frustrated recuperating at home, so she's playing to his taste. She's meticulous and thoughtful in everything. Even a fool can sense her intentions."

Nanny Liu agreed wholeheartedly.

As Old Madam Yu spoke, she pulled a long face. “Yao Yao has always been a generous person. The residence has benefited from her, but there are still some people who accept things from Yao Yao. Although they say nice things, they don’t think highly of Yao Yao. How shameless.”

Qiu Xing handed the carefully wrapped fabric to Yang Shuwan.

Yang Shuwan couldn’t help but smile. “I’ve made Eldest Sister spend so much. Quick, help me thank her.”

After Mu Jin sent Qiu Xing out, Yang Shuwan eagerly unwrapped the bag. When she saw the precious and rare materials inside, she almost tore the handkerchief in her hand.

There were indigo, purple-gray, ocher, and black-gold lotus patterns. They were all top-notch famous materials. Although they were all dark in color, they looked rich and generous, and did not look old-fashioned.

However, she had never liked dark colors. She preferred brighter colors.

Old Master usually liked her to dress more charmingly.

Most of the Old Madam’s clothes were of this color. No matter how good the material was, it was not easy to make clothes out of it. It would clash with the clothes of the Old Madam at home.

Yang Shuwan was exasperated. “That little b*tch must have done it on purpose.”

Nanny Li also felt that it was a pity. Not only was such expensive and beautiful material unable to be made into clothes, but it was also not appropriate to give them away as a gift. She could only keep it to herself.

Yang Shuwan panicked, so she asked Nanny Li to keep the materials. Out of sight, out of mind.

Nanny Li nodded and asked, “Madam, what gift do you plan to give in return?”

A gift in return! Yang Shuwan was so angry that she had forgotten about it.

At Nanny Li’s mention, Yang Shuwan was even more furious. “She only gave me these pitch-black materials, which only old women can wear, and wanted a gift from me in exchange...”

Nanny Li thought to herself that this was the most suitable material for the mistress of the household to wear. It could be made into a few sets of clothes that she could wear when she went to other houses. It would look grand and noble, and would also look very impressive.

A daughter couldn’t be too frivolous when it came to giving her mother clothing material..

However, Madam liked beauty. Even when she was outside, she still had to dress up so that she could surpass others.

Madam was born of a concubine and was also a second wife, so she was naturally inferior to others. Naturally, she lacked confidence. When she was outside, she wanted to show off more.

After being angry for a while, Yang Shuwan calmed down. “Bring the red jade Tian-tsui in my box over.”

No matter how much she disliked the gifts from her stepdaughter, she had to appear happy. She had to choose the best gift to give in return. Its value could not be lower than the gift from her

stepdaughter. Otherwise, if others found out, it would be seen as her taking advantage of her stepdaughter, and it would damage her reputation as a virtuous and magnanimous person.

Since her master was still recuperating in the residence, she had to act even more magnanimous.

Nanny Li was also shocked. "Madam, weren't you planning to keep it for Third Miss?"

Tian-tsui was a special item. It was already extremely difficult to make thin slices of gold and silver on it. Only a few extremely powerful old craftsmen could do it.

Then, he would have to pluck the feathers from a living kingfisher and stick them onto the gold and silver pieces, turning them into various types of jewelry. A kingfisher could only have 28 feathers at most, and among them, royal blue and emerald blue were the best, especially royal blue. A small hairpin was already expensive.

Furthermore, Madam's jade Tian-tsui was sapphire blue.

On the pattern of a peony flower, there was a sapphire butterfly perched on the flower. With a gentle shake, the butterfly's thin wings seemed to come alive, trembling slightly. It was bright and lively.

Two years ago, Madam had sent someone to capture Kingfishers and found an old craftsman to make it.

At the mention of this, Yang Shuwan was also annoyed. "If I don't give it to her, who else can I give it to? Not only did Yu Youyao give these materials to me, but she also did a favor for the entire residence. How could Old Madam let her down? She couldn't wait to give everything to Yu Youyao. Madam Yao from the second house is used to being a good person. She will probably use a gift to show off in front of Old Madam."

Nanny Li understood immediately.

However, Yang Shuwan gritted her teeth. "Old Master is still in the residence. As her stepmother, it's understandable that my gift is inferior to Old Madam's. However, if it's inferior to Madam Yao's, it'll really be embarrassing. This will be exposed. If Master finds out, will he still be happy?"

However, when she thought about how she had given Yu Youyao a pair of jade bracelets a long time ago, and now she will give her a jade Tian-tsui, she felt as if her heart had been cut off.

She used to be the daughter of a concubine in the family, so she had nothing in her hands. Even her dowry was brought to the Yu Residence.

It was also because she had married into the Yu Residence that she had managed to earn quite a bit of money from the government, which was why she had saved up some money. All these years, she had been managing her own private assets, and the profits were not bad either. That was why she had more money now. However, in terms of foundational wealth, she was still inferior to the legitimate daughters of wealthy families. With a large dowry, she would have more good things.

Nanny Li said, "Madam, you're really thoughtful. Not only is the jade Tian-tsui expensive, but it's also exquisite and rare. It is so outstanding that no one can pick on it."

"It's such a waste to give such a good thing to Yu Youyao for free." The more Yang Shuwan thought about it, the angrier she became. She couldn't help but scold,

“B*tch, now that you have a powerful nanny by your side to guide you, you’re scheming against me.”

However, no matter how aggrieved or angry she was, she could only accept it.

Not to mention that Yu Youyao had the Old Madam’s protection, and as her stepmother, she couldn’t interfere much. Even the second branch took good care of Yu Youyao.

There were many businesses in the clan, and they all had dealings with the Xie family in Quan Zhou. They were also very protective of Yu Youyao.

There was also the Xie Residence in Quan Zhou. One of the merchant ships sent to the capital every season was for Yu Youyao.

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Chapter 94: Tyrant Abusing Power

Ingredients, spices, jewelry, and other items were all the most popular items on the market. Even Yang Shuwan was intimidated by this. She realized that the Xie Residence in Quan Zhou was not an ordinary business.

After Yu Jianjia received the raw materials, she only glanced at them indifferently before letting Hui Xiang put them away.

Hui Xiang was a little unhappy, so she said bluntly, "I know that you usually like plain colors, and your clothes are mostly simple and elegant. You've never worn such beautiful flowers before. I wonder what Eldest Miss is thinking by giving you such colors."

Yu Jianjia said gently, "Even if it's a gift, it's not good to give something too plain, in case it's unlucky."

Giving gifts was also extremely important.

Hui Xiang said angrily, "Young Mistress, you're just too kind. That's why Eldest Miss doesn't take you seriously. Not only is she stealing your limelight in school, but she's also putting on an act in front of Master. Recently, even Ms. Ye hasn't asked Young Mistress questions in class. After school ends, you haven't been staying and receiving extra tutoring anymore. Master has been full of praise for her, and even asked you to learn more from her!"

At the mention of this, Yu Jianjia felt a lump in her throat and couldn't help but cough a few times.

She did not have Yu Youyao's generosity, nor did she have Nanny Xu, who could make all kinds of spices and medicinal tea to show filial piety to her father.

Therefore, she could only watch helplessly as Yu Youyao gained her father's favor day by day. This made her father, who originally did not like Yu Youyao much, view her with greater satisfaction.

Hui Xiang didn't seem to hear her young mistress's cough. She still looked angry. "It's just another powerful nanny. Who knows who made those filial things?"

Yu Jianjia took a sip of tea and said unhappily, "Don't say so much. It's a good thing that Big Sister is willing to study hard now. She's the eldest daughter of the first wife in the family, so it's only natural that Father values her more. Naturally, Ms. Ye has to give her more attention too."

Hui Xiang stomped her foot. "Young Miss, you've always been in the limelight in this residence. She's the eldest daughter of a widow and doesn't have any manners. What right does she have to climb all over you?"

Yu Jianjia's brows furrowed slightly, making her look even more pale and weak. "Don't say anymore."

Hui Xiang was indignant.

Yu Jianjia said with a pale face, "Send the pot of tea plums from the greenhouse to Big Sister."

Hui Xiang's eyes suddenly widened. "That pot of tea plums is extremely rare. How can we give it to Eldest Miss for no reason? Why don't we exchange it for a pot of spring orchid!"

Tea plum leaves were like tea, and the flowers were like plums. They were usually not an expensive camellia variety.

However, not only was Young Mistress's tea plum tea leaves beautiful and had elegant leaves, but their flowers were also red and white, complementing each other. They were beautiful and noble, and had always been Young Mistress's favorite.

Yu Jianjia frowned. "The material Eldest Miss sent over is also very expensive. How can I use an ordinary spring orchid as a gift in return? Don't make your own decisions. Just do as I say."

Hui Xiang opened her mouth and thought to herself, "How is that petty? Young Mistress likes flowers and trees, so First Madam built a small greenhouse in the courtyard. The flowers and trees in the greenhouse were all prepared by Young Mistress herself. Even ordinary spring orchids are not ordinary. How can the flowers and plants that Young Mistress spent so much effort on not be as expensive as a few pieces of cloth?"

Yu Jianjia flipped through two more pages of her book, but was still vexed. She suddenly asked, "Fourth Sister has also learned some manners from Nanny Qian. How is she?"

Hui Xiang did not expect her to suddenly mention Fourth Miss, so she said, "She was made by Nanny Qian to stay in the courtyard to learn the rules, and the guards don't even let her out."

Without Yu Qingning in the residence, she felt that Yu Youyao was living a more comfortable life. Yu Jianjia frowned and said, "Fourth Sister has been punished previously and has to learn the rules. The maidservants and old maids have to treat her well. Get Old Niu to secretly bring some silver taels and go to the Hanlu Courtyard to get some. Let them take care of Fourth Sister more."

Hui Xiang nodded. "I understand."

Old Madam Niu was a loose-tongued person and liked to gossip. However, in the first few years, when Young Mistress shocked the horse pulling the carriage, it was Old Madam Niu who had used all her strength to stop the horse and save her. Young Mistress remembered Old Madam Niu's kindness and handed over some miscellaneous matters to her.

Yu Youyao practiced writing for an hour before stopping and rubbing her sore wrist.

Dong Mei walked in. "Young Mistress, Old Madam, Eldest Master, and the others have all sent gifts to you. Do you want to take a look?"

Yu Youyao nodded. "Let's go take a look!"

There were many gifts piled up in the room. Yu Youyao looked at them one by one. The "red lacquered phoenix-patterned seven-treasure makeup box" that her grandmother had given her was the most expensive.

The makeup box was in the shape of a four-sided tower. It had five floors on all four sides, and there were tassels made of jadeite and jadeite hanging on the four corners of the eaves. It was also inlaid with precious pearls and jades. It looked gorgeous and expensive.

Dong Mei couldn't help but exclaim, "Old Madam really dotes on Young Miss."

The craftsmanship of the lacquer carving was even more complicated than that of green jade. Small pieces of lacquer carving were easier to make, but it would take at least a month or two, or at most half a year to make. Such large and exquisite pieces would take an ordinary person a year or up to five years to make. Additionally, they were difficult to find. Ordinary families could not get many of them.

Yu Youyao held the jade hairpin that Yang Shuwan had given her and thought that she was going to feel the pinch again. She couldn't help but burst out laughing. She asked thoughtfully, "It seems like it's been many years since I've seen jade carving in the capital."

Nanny Xu's eyes flashed. "Not even in the palace for the past few years."

Yu Youyao's lips curled up. "I'll wear this jade tomorrow. I can't waste it."

After saying that, she picked up the calligraphy piece that Second Aunt had sent over. After taking a closer look, she said happily, "It's a calligraphy piece from Wang Xizhi's early days. Although it's not a famous piece, it's still very rare."

As Dong Mei smiled, she interrupted. "The people following Second Madam said that this calligraphy book is part of Second Master's collection and is very precious. Young Master didn't even give it to him when he wanted it earlier. Second Master only gave it to you because he knew that you were learning from Cousin."

Second Master, on the other hand, doted on Young Miss very much. He thought of her everywhere and gave her the best gifts. Therefore, Eldest Miss was very close to the second branch.

"Second Uncle has always doted on me." Yu Youyao was even happier. She asked Dong Mei to put away the calligraphy piece and picked up the scroll that her father had given her. She carefully unfolded it. It was a painting of a mountain stream.

The artist had painted a strange stone with light ink. There was a black orchid between the rocks. The black leaves were long and beautiful, and an ink orchid bloomed quietly among the leaves. Although it was simple, it was drawn well using ink and looked a little artistic.

It should be a painting that her father was quite proud of.

Chapter 95: Silence

However, Yu Youyao was used to seeing good things, so she naturally had good taste.

Her father's calligraphy was strong and powerful, but his paintings were much inferior. This painting was far inferior to her cousin's.

What stood out was the word "personally".

In addition to the elders, Yu Shuangbai and the others also gave gifts in return. Although it wasn't anything special, they were still sisters.

The next morning, after Yu Youyao and Nanny Xu finished etiquette class and freshened up, Nanny Xu helped her pick out a set of plain clothes.

She was wearing an elegant dress with sapphire blue embroidery on the collar, sleeves, and sides. Coupled with the Tian-tsui that Yang Shuwan had given her, she looked elegant and beautiful.

One after another, the young misses went to school. As they had received gifts from Yu Youyao, they came over to thank her. They couldn't help but take a few more glances at the Tian-tsui on her head, looking envious.

Yu Jianjia also noticed this and said, "Big Sister, the jadeite you're wearing today is very unique." At this point, she bit her lip and continued, "I heard that the art of making a Tian-tsui is to take the feathers of the kingfisher alive. Kingfishers are rare birds, and there is one less each time you catch one. Such a Tian-tsui needs dozens or even hundreds of kingfisher feathers to make. There hasn't been any Tian-tsui jewelry on the market for many years, and it's very rare."

Her words implied that this Tian-tsui was rare, expensive, and exquisite. Anyone who heard it would think that she was praising Yu Youyao.

However, Yu Shuangbai and the others looked like they couldn't bear to see this. They felt that it was too cruel to kill hundreds of kingfishers with just a pickaxe.

Yu Youyao chuckled. "Mother gave it to me yesterday. I thought that I couldn't let her down, so I put it on today. I didn't know that Tian-tsui craftsmanship was so rare. Now that you've mentioned it, I don't dare to wear it again in the future, lest others think that I'm cruel."

Yu Jianjia felt a lump in her throat and her face turned pale. She hurriedly said, "Big Sister, don't misunderstand. I just think that a Tian-tsui is too rare..."

She hadn't expected that this Tian-tsui would be a gift from her mother. Now, the cruel person had become her mother.

Yu Youyao nodded. "I see. I originally thought that Third Sis was a kind person. When she saw this Tian-tsui, she naturally felt some pity for the kingfishers, so I said those words. I misunderstood Third Sis."

These words stabbed at Yu Jianjia's heart, making her speechless.

What could she do?

If she felt that the Tian-tsui was cruel, then wouldn't she imply that her mother was being cruel?

The atmosphere became awkward.

Yu Shuang rolled her eyes and said, "Even if this Tian-tsui was a gift from Eldest Aunt, it might not have been made by Eldest Aunt herself. It might also have been obtained from someone else. Don't say that it's cruel."

Yu Lianyu chimed in, "Eldest Aunt has always been gentle and kind. She naturally wouldn't do such a thing."

It was supposed to be a good thing, but when the words "gentle and kind" entered Yu Jianjia's ears, it seemed to be filled with sarcasm. Her chest tightened, and she opened her mouth to cough.

Hui Xiang was furious. She resented Eldest Miss for always making things difficult for her, but she had no choice but to help her.

Yu Youyao asked Chun Xiao to pour a cup of hot tea for her and hand it to Ai Ye, Yu Jianjia's second-in-charge. Ai Ye quickly gave it to Yu Jianjia.

This way, the matter regarding the Tian-tsui was over, and everyone returned to their seats.

Chun Xiao asked Yu Youyao softly, "Young Mistress, do you want to change to a new hair accessory?"

However, she did not expect that a single hair accessory would cause a commotion.

Yu Youyao stroked the Tian-tsui on her head and shook her head. "I'll just wear it. After all, it was a gift from Mother. I'll just wear it for a day today. It'll fulfill Mother's wishes."

Chun Xiao nodded. If First Madam heard about how she took it off after wearing it for a while, it would indeed not be good. She would not be displeased, so she did not persuade her further.

However, Yu Shuangbai moved closer to her. "Don't think too much about it. It's just a hairpin. If you want to talk about cruelty, Third Sister's ivory carving paperweight is made of elephant teeth. Also, my father gave me a set of bone porcelain the other day, but it was made of animal bones. Which family doesn't have such things?"

Only Yu Jianjia knew how to cause trouble, but she had shot herself in the foot and implicated her mother.

Her voice was neither too loud nor too soft. Unless Yu Jianjia was deaf, how could she not hear her? For a moment, she held the ivory paperweight in her hand and felt that it was burning.

Yu Youyao nodded. "I don't care about that. Hurry back to your seat. Ms. Ye should be here for class soon."

Today, when Ms. Ye was teaching *The Book of Rites and Records of Learning*, she emphasized the importance of studying diligently, as well as respecting teachers who were teaching them.

After that, Ms. Ye explained the book *College*. "Although women don't take the imperial examination and make contributions, you have to know that women also have to be wise, close to the people, and live with grace. In order to reach the foundation of moral cultivation, they also have to be knowledgeable, sincere, righteous, self-cultivated, have a good family, govern and bring peace to the country."

Yu Shuangbai couldn't help but ask, "Ms. Ye, do women also need to govern and bring peace to the country?"

Yu Youyao was also very curious.

Ms. Ye replied, "A man's ambition is to rule a large country, and that is to have a heart for governance and to bring peace to the world. When a girl is in a residence, she needs the breadth of mind to manage the family and ensure peace in the household. If the family is peaceful, everything will prosper, and there will be fewer disasters. To govern a country, one must first manage the family, and managing the family will be like governing the country. Therefore, in addition to letting women learn dogmatic rules like the 'Lessons for Women', big families also have to learn the 'Four Books and Five Classics'."

After school, Ms. Ye asked Yu Youyao to stay back.

Seeing this, Yu Shuangbai and the others couldn't help but gather together.

"Every day after school, Ms. Ye would ask Big Sister to stay for ten minutes. She would also often ask questions in class. Every time, she would answer fluently, which made Ms. Ye very satisfied. Even Third Sister had never experienced this before."

"Is Ms. Ye grooming Big Sister as her favorite disciple?"

"I think that's most likely the case. Big Sister has been under Nanny Xu's care for a while, and she's completely changed. It's like she's a completely different person. However, even Third Sister can't compare to her. She's really amazing."

After school, Yu Jianjia studied "University" again. Feeling a little tired, she asked Hui Xiang to help her to the side room. Just as she reached the door, she heard voices inside.

Every word and sentence was an insult to Yu Youyao and compared her to Yu Youyao.

Yu Jianjia froze on the spot for a moment. Her slender body couldn't help but tremble. She looked like she was about to faint and fall to the ground.

Chapter 96: A Stepping Stone

However, she had never expected that Yu Youyao would already have the dignity and demeanor of the eldest daughter of the first wife in the Yu Residence.

She, the most outstanding Third Miss, had actually become Yu Youyao's stepping stone.

Yu Jianjia bit her lip hard. Her pale lips quickly turned red, and a faint trace of blood spread along the delicate lines between her lips, making her lips look red. It was an indescribable beauty.

Hui Xiang's face turned green with anger. She looked at Miss worriedly and called out softly, "Miss..."

Just as Yu Jianjia was about to speak, she heard someone inside say—

"In the past, when Ms. Ye was teaching Third Sister, I could still understand a little. When I went back to my room to revise twice, I could still learn six or seven points. But now, when Ms. Ye is in class, it's much faster than before, and I'm still confused."

"Me too. I can still learn some of the Five Classics, but I don't know anything about the Four Books. What should I do?!"

"I don't understand either..."

These words were undoubtedly a stab to her heart. Yu Jianjia could no longer suppress the itch in her throat. She lowered her head, pinched her handkerchief, and covered her mouth to cough lightly.

This cough was like a thunderclap, causing everyone to be stunned. When they saw Yu Jianjia standing at the door, they revealed uneasy and awkward expressions.

The room immediately fell so silent that one could hear a pin drop.

Hui Xiang helped Yu Jianjia into the house and sat down. Ai Ye cleverly brought her a cup of hot tea.

When Yu Shuangbai saw this, she tried to help. "Third Sister, you've learned well. If there's anything you don't understand, you can also ask for guidance."

Yu Lianyu looked at Yu Jianjia. "Third Sister, there are many things I don't understand about the 'University' that Ms. Ye mentioned just now. Can you lend me your notes to copy?"

Her words were meant to help her out, but when they landed in Yu Jianjia's ears, they became a great provocation.

Just now, when their teacher was lecturing them about 'University', she had really taught it too quickly, so she hadn't learned it completely. Therefore, after school, she stayed behind to revise it.

Now that Yu Lianyu was asking to borrow her notes, how could she lend them out?

Second Aunt treated Yu Youyao more intimately, and Yu Shuangbai was also closer to her. They were only sisters on the surface. She even suspected that Yu Shuangbai was deliberately targeting her.

Yu Jianjia forced herself to swallow the tea in her mouth. For a moment, she felt a bitter taste in her mouth. "Fifth Sister, I was outside just now, revising Mr. Xi's lecture on 'University.' I have some new insights, but I haven't had the time to write them down. I haven't finished writing my notes, so it's not convenient for me to lend it to you. Can I lend it to you tomorrow?"

When she returned to the courtyard, she would probably be able to master it after learning it carefully for a while.

Yu Lianyu's eyes flashed, then she nodded. "Thank you, Third Sister."

Yu Shuangbai changed the topic again. As they chatted, the few of them spoke excitedly about how the residence was going to make spring clothes. Which girl didn't like to look beautiful? Who wouldn't be happy to have new clothes to wear?

As a result, it was inevitable that they would talk about the materials that Yu Youyao had given them yesterday and discuss what kind of clothes to make. In the end, they couldn't avoid talking about Yu Youyao.

In Yu Jianjia's ears, it was really ear-piercing and uncomfortable. She felt that even the air was suffocating, and she wished she could go out and breathe.

At this moment, Yu Youyao walked into the side room.

Yu Fangfei's eyes lit up and she quickly leaned forward. "Big Sister, I didn't understand the lesson that Ms. Ye was teaching just now. Can you lend me your notes to copy? I'll return it to you later."

Yu Youyao did not know what had happened, so she nodded. "Sixth Sister, feel free to copy it. After you're done, get someone to send it over."

With that, she asked Chun Xiao to take her notes and handed it to Yu Fangfei.

"Thank you, Big Sister." Yu Fangfei happily received a stack of notes. She looked at the neat handwriting on the paper. Although it wasn't as beautiful as the small handwriting written by Third Sister, it looked very imposing. Big Sister was really impressive. Even her handwriting was different from others.

She looked up at Big Sister, her eyes sparkling with admiration.

Yu Jianjia's breathing froze, and her breath was stuck in her chest. She opened her mouth, but no sound came out.

Yu Youyao agreed readily on the spot. However, she gave a vague explanation and only wanted to share her notes tomorrow. Under normal circumstances, it wouldn't have mattered, but once there was a comparison, everything changed.

Yu Youyao's straightforward attitude was also indirectly indicative that she had already learned everything that the teacher had taught. Her excuse of hesitation was proof that she was not as good as Yu Youyao.

Just as Yu Jianjia had expected, Yu Shuangbai and Yu Lianyu couldn't help but look back and forth between Yu Youyao and Yu Jianjia.

At this moment, Yu Youyao also sensed something and said, "I'll go back first."

After leaving the school, Xia Tao told her everything that had happened in the side room. Yu Youyao nodded in understanding and did not say anything else.

After returning to the Jade Courtyard, Yu Youyao did not even have time to change her clothes. She instructed Qiu Xing, "Bring over the medicinal cuisine from the kitchen. I'll send it to Father."

This morning, Yu Youyao had personally processed the medicinal herbs and instructed the small kitchen to brew them.

Her father had done his best. As his daughter, it was time for her to show her filial piety.

Qiu Xing quickly agreed and turned to leave the house.

Yu Youyao then got someone to bring out medicinal tea, tonics, calligraphy, antiques, and so on. She wrapped them up one by one and brought Chun Xiao and Xia Tao to the front yard.

Wen Zhu hurriedly greeted, "Hello, Eldest Miss."

Wen Zhu looked a little ordinary, but she was knowledgeable and had a scholarly aura. She was her father's personal maidservant. Yu Youyao helped her up and said politely, "Sister Wen Zhu, thank you for helping out. Father isn't feeling well. I've been troubling you to take care of him these past few days. You've worked hard."

When Wen Zhu heard this, she quickly said, "It's what I should do. Eldest Miss, don't make me look bad."

The corners of Yu Youyao's mouth curled up, and she changed the topic. "How's Father's health? I've brewed a medicinal soup that nourishes the body. It's a recipe from the palace, so I sent it over to nourish Father's body. I wonder if it's convenient."

Wen Zhu first glanced at the blue and white porcelain cup in Chun Xiao's hand, then at the bags in Xia Tao's hand. She quickly said, "It's convenient. Master got off the bed yesterday."

Yu Youyao cheered up. "Thank you, Sister Wenzhu."

Wen Zhu led Yu Youyao to the small hall in the front courtyard. "Eldest Miss, please sit here for a while. I'll go in and inform Master."

With that, she called for a maidservant and ordered her to serve tea before entering the inner room.

The maidservant quickly served the tea. Yu Youyao thanked her and took a sip of the tea.

Suddenly!

There was a shattering sound from the inner room, as if a bowl had accidentally hit the ground. Before the sound could fade, there was another scream.

Chapter 97: You've Become Rebellious

In the house, blue and white porcelain cups and bowls were shattered on the ground. It was a mess.

Yu Qingning was kneeling on the ground, one hand covering the right side of her face. Her hand was still stained with blood from when Yu Zongzheng smashed the cups and bowls earlier at her. The flying fragments had scraped her face, and she was bleeding.

Yu Qingning was originally very afraid, but she did not dare to contradict her father.

However, her face was injured. Not only was it bleeding, but it also hurt a lot. She didn't know if it would leave a scar. Yu Qingning was both panicked and afraid, so she lost her composure and started to ignore everything else

She straightened her neck indignantly. "Father, why do you say that about me? In the past, Big Sister often skipped school too, and she didn't go to school for a month. Why don't you punish her instead of me?"

How dare she still talk back? Yu Zongzheng was so angry that his face turned ashen. He said angrily, "Your big sister was naughty and mischievous in the past. The teacher punished her, but she never refused to be taught. Ms. Ye didn't chase her out of school."

Yu Qingning's eyes widened. "Father, you're making it sound so dignified. Eldest Sister is the eldest daughter of the first wife and has Grandmother's protection. Even Ms. Ye won't do anything to her. I'm just a concubine's daughter. I can't make any mistakes. Otherwise, I'll just be the daughter of a concubine. I have no manners and upbringing."

"You..." Yu Zongzheng suddenly stood up from his chair. He raised his hand and pointed at Yu Qingning angrily, scolding, "You vile creature, how can you speak like that? Although you're the daughter of a concubine, when have your grandmother, mother, and I gave you anything less? Look at the clothes you're wearing. Are they inferior to Jia Jia and the others? Your big sister gave them all the same gifts. Which concubine's daughter has such a good life like you?"

"It's just some superficial things." It seemed that she had learned the rules from a nanny for a while and had suffered a lot. Yu Qingning had lost a lot of weight, and her personality seemed to have become much more extreme. Her entire body exuded a sense of indignation.

Yu Zongzheng was so angry that his fingers were trembling. "Shut up. I originally thought that you had always been smart and quick-witted, and that you had only made a mistake because of a moment of folly. I didn't expect that not only did you have no respect for your elders, but you also didn't even know how to respect your teachers. You've completely forgotten about my usual principles and don't even take me, your father, seriously. Previously, I punished you to kneel in the ancestral hall for three days for nothing."

Seeing her father's furious expression, Yu Qingning calmed down and felt a little regretful. She shouldn't have contradicted her father just now. Not only had she completely angered him, but she had also displeased him.

She knew very well that she could enjoy the treatment of a legitimate daughter as the daughter of a concubine because her father doted on her very much.

However, Yu Zongzheng was still furious. “Even though you’ve made such a huge mistake, your mother is still thinking for you and helping you change your courtyard. Your grandmother is worried about your upbringing, so she spent a lot of effort to hire a nanny from the Education Department to teach you how to behave. However, you didn’t reflect on yourself and actually quarreled with the nanny, even hitting her. Are you trying to rebel?”

It would have been better if she hadn’t mentioned this. For a moment, Yu Qingning felt dizzy and her eyes turned completely red. “I’m stubborn? Father, why don’t you ask that old woman how she treats me?”

The words “old woman” were too unruly. Yu Zongzheng frowned when he heard this, but before he could say anything—

Yu Qingning broke down and shouted, “That old woman is not a good person. She put red beans, green beans, soybeans, and black beans into a big basket and asked me to sort out the beans in the basket one by one. If I didn’t pick them out, she wouldn’t let me sleep. If I picked the wrong one, she would ask me to pick from the beginning. I picked from morning to night, and then from night to night. My eyes were swollen, and the tips of my fingers were red and swollen from pinching the beans.”

As she spoke, Yu Qingning rushed forward and spread her hands in front of her father. Indeed, both her thumbs and index fingers were red and swollen.

Yu Zongzheng frowned.

Yu Qingning continued anxiously, “Also, she was picky about how well I learned the rules and deliberately made me kneel and learn how to serve tea. When I couldn’t learn it well, I kept kneeling and learning. My knees were broken from kneeling, and blood seeped out. My body was sore and painful, and I couldn’t even stand straight. She even asked me to learn how to walk with a book on my head. When I couldn’t walk well, she made me keep walking. I kept falling, and my body was bruised and swollen...”

Yu Zongzheng couldn’t bear to see her like this, so he thought of his eldest daughter.

Yao Yao used to be very naughty and mischievous, and had learned some rules from Nanny Xu. Now, she was behaving more and more like a legitimate elder.

Wasn’t a nanny from the palace less strict than a nanny from the Education Department?

Seeing that Eldest Master did not look well, Wen Zhu quickly served him a cup of tea.

Yu Zongzheng took it and took a look. The light brown tea was clear like amber. There was a faint medicinal fragrance to it. When he drank it, after the faint bitterness, his teeth and cheeks felt sweet again, and he felt much more refreshed.

He remembered that this was the medicinal tea that Yao Yao had sent over.

She had learned how to make it from Nanny Xu. It was a recipe from the palace. Her mother had also been drinking this medicinal tea recently, and she looked much better.

Why was Yao Yao able to endure hardship? Not only did she learn the rules well, but she had also learned many skills from Nanny Xu. Fourth Sis just couldn’t take the hardship and ended up making a fuss with her nanny. How was that reasonable?

Yu Zongzheng's expression turned cold. "This isn't an excuse for your lack of manners. The nannies in the workshop have good manners. Perhaps they feel that you're too unruly and unwilling to be taught, so they're stricter with you. In the future, you should learn from them obediently. If you don't learn well, don't leave the Hanlu Courtyard again."

"Father, you can't do this to me." Yu Qingning looked at her father in disbelief, as if she did not know him. He was like a father who doted on her.

Yu Zongzheng waved his hand. "Get out!"

Yu Qingning shouted, "Father, I don't want to learn the rules from the nannies in the Education Department. They're not good people and always try to torture me..."

When Yu Youyao heard her father shout, "Get out!" in the inner room, she was immediately shocked. Then, she saw Yu Qingning rushing out from behind the cloud-and-sea-patterned screen.

Yu Qingning did not expect Yu Youyao to be outside. She covered her face and shouted, "Yu Youyao, why are you here?"

Yu Youyao said calmly, "I came to see Father."

At this moment, Yu Qingning was ashamed and exasperated. How could she possibly have heard such words? She glared at her angrily. "Yu Youyao, are you very proud to see me being scolded by Father? Are you very happy? Do you think that if Father angers me, you'll have a chance to take advantage of it and use all sorts of methods to please him and snatch away his love for me?"

Yesterday, she had happily accepted the gifts from Yu Youyao. Just as she was thinking about what to make, she heard the maidservants in the courtyard whispering.

Chapter 98: Acting Good

"When Master was recuperating, Eldest Miss's tea, tonics, antiques, calligraphy, and toys were sent to the front courtyard every day. After receiving Eldest Miss's filial piety, Master only cared about Eldest Miss's well-being. How could he still remember that Fourth Miss was still suffering in the courtyard?"

"Isn't it? I heard from the maidservant in the front courtyard yesterday that Master was exaggerating about Young Miss's demeanor."

"Fourth Miss has been learning the rules from a nanny in her courtyard. She has suffered immensely, but Eldest Miss has benefited instead. In the past, Master used to dote on Fourth Miss so much that Eldest Miss couldn't even compare to her although she's the eldest daughter of the first wife. Now, she has snatched away all of Fourth Miss's former love."

"Fourth Miss is really pitiful..."

The maidservants' words made Yu Qingning's heart burn with anger. She was so angry that she was about to explode.

It was Yu Youyao who had caused her to suffer so much. Not only had she suffered so much, but she was also despicable and shameless. She had even snatched away her father's love for her when she was trapped in the courtyard to learn the rules.

Worried that her father wouldn't dote on her anymore, Yu Qingning was anxious, angry, and flustered. Therefore, in a moment of desperation this morning, she had quarreled with Nanny Qian and hit her.

All of this was caused by Yu Youyao.

Yu Youyao frowned. "Fourth Sister, have you lost your mind? You're shouting at me, but have you forgotten that this is father's courtyard. You can't be so undisciplined. I originally thought that although the nanny in the Education Department was a little strict, you could learn from her. That way, you would be able to curb your habit of shouting at the drop of a hat. I didn't expect that you would learn nothing."

Yu Qingning screamed, "Yu Youyao, what do you mean? I'm in this state now because of you. It's all your fault..."

Yu Youyao's face darkened. She slowly stood up and casually adjusted her clothes. Then, she raised her head and looked at her coldly. "Did I teach you to be undisciplined and ill-mannered? Fourth Sister, shut up. I can't bear this crime. If Father finds out, he'll think that you have no respect for seniority."

Chun Xiao held her breath.

However, Eldest Miss did not know that her nonchalant and cold appearance was very similar to that of the young master of the Green House. Not only was she extremely imposing, but she also made people panic.

"You..." Yu Qingning couldn't help but feel suffocated. Her blood-stained face was exposed. Although it was only a small wound, it was still a shocking sight.

Yu Youyao looked at Yu Qingning with a hint of sincerity in her eyes. "Fourth Sister, although the nanny from the Education Department is a little strict, she still has some tricks up her sleeve. It's good for you to watch carefully from the side and learn. Back then, it was very difficult for me to learn the rules from Nanny Xu. I had to walk for two hours with a book on my head. It's common for me to fall or trip. When I first learned how to walk, my body was covered in bruises, but after a few days, I felt better."

It was true that the nannies in the Education Department tortured people, but it was also true that they taught rules. If Yu Qingning was really willing to learn, she would benefit greatly in the future.

Therefore, her words were indeed meant to give her advice.

However, Yu Qingning refused to listen to this. She said angrily, "Stop making sarcastic remarks. Nanny Xu is the nanny in charge that Grandmother gave you. Even if she's teaching you the rules, she'll still know her limits. She won't torture you..."

Seeing that she wasn't listening, Yu Youyao didn't want to say anything else. She glanced at the wound on her face. "Fourth Sister, your face is injured. You should hurry back and let the doctor take a look. Be careful not to leave a scar. The appearance of a woman is very important."

At this moment, Yu Qingning, who was so angry that she was in a daze, finally remembered the wound on her face. She couldn't help but cover her face and cry.

Yu Youyao seemed to be unable to bear it. She turned to Xia Tao and said, "Go back first. Take a box of top-grade Jade Face Ointment from my box and send it to the Hanlu Courtyard."

Jade Face Ointment was also divided into different grades, but top-grade Jade Face Ointment was very rare. Yu Qingning definitely did not have it.

Yu Qingning was so angry that she wanted to rush up and fight. "Yu Youyao, stop pretending to be a good person. You..."

"Shut up." With a furious roar, Yu Zongzheng strode out of the cloud-patterned screen and looked at Yu Qingning with a dark expression. "You called your eldest sister by her name. Have you fed all your manners to a dog? Your eldest sister thinks about you all the time, and she's never forgotten about you. Your face is injured, but she's still thinking about you by giving you her medicine. How did you repay her?"

Just now, in the inner room, he had felt that he had lost his temper and scared Yu Qingning. Hence, he had wanted to ask Wen Zhu to go to the Hanlu Courtyard later to teach Nanny Qian a lesson so that she would know her limits and not be too harsh on Fourth Miss.

However, he had been standing behind the screen just now, listening to Yao Yao's earnest advice to Qingning. She had said that learning the rules was a little tough, but it was beneficial. She had even mentioned the hardships she had suffered from learning the rules in the past. Then, he had looked at Yu Qingning, who was shouting like a crazy woman, and felt that Nanny Qian had gone too easy on her.

Otherwise, why would Fourth Miss still have the energy to cause trouble in front of Yao Yao?

At this moment, Yu Qingning did not dare to argue with her father anymore. She lowered her head and did not speak.

Yu Zongzheng stared at Yu Qingning coldly. "You'd better learn the rules obediently. If you cause trouble with the nanny again, I'll send you to the clan and let the elders discipline you."

When Yu Qingning heard this, her body went limp and she almost fell to the ground.

Send her to the clan?

This was the outcome that only clansmen who had broken the clan rules would face. The clan rules were few, but the clan rules were more powerful than the heavens. If she were to break the clan rules and be sent to the clan, her life would be over.

Yu Youyao turned to look at Jin Ju, who was following behind Yu Qingning. "Help Fourth Miss back to rest!"

Jin Ju heaved a sigh of relief and quickly helped Yu Qingning out.

Yu Youyao said to Chun Xiao, who was beside her, "Go to the Hanlu Courtyard and pass on a message. Tell them that Fourth Miss isn't feeling well. She'll rest for today and continue learning the rules tomorrow. Fourth Miss used to be pampered and spoiled, but she has never suffered. Tell Nanny Qian to be gentler with the rules first. When Fourth Miss gets used to it, she can be stricter."

She had a grandmother and a mother. It was a little overboard for her to ignore her elders and let Chun Xiao pass on the message. However, as the eldest daughter of the first wife, she also had the responsibility of caring for and disciplining her sisters in the family. This was understandable.

Chun Xiao felt that it was all her fault that Fourth Miss was like this. Young Miss was too soft-hearted. However, since Young Miss had instructed it, she could only follow the instructions.

She bowed to Yu Zongzheng and left.

It wasn't that Yu Youyao was soft-hearted. Although she and Yu Qingning disliked each other, it was just a small fight between sisters. At the very least, it wouldn't affect her in any way.

Chapter 99: A Daughter Is Used as a Comparison

Yu Qingning had caused such a commotion without caring about anything else. If no one in the residence interfered, then Nanny Jin would have nothing to fear and would only become worse.

No matter how bad Yu Qingning was, she was still of the Yu family's bloodline. No one else could do as they pleased.

Yu Qingning was not a submissive person either. If Nanny Jin did as she pleased, she would cause trouble again and cause chaos in the house soon.

If news of this were to spread, the Yu Residence's reputation would probably be ruined.

She also hoped that Yu Qingning would stop, so that her grandmother could worry less.

However, Yu Zongzheng looked at Yu Youyao with a gratified expression. "Yao Yao, you've really grown up. You've become more and more like your grandmother."

Her mother was the same. She always carried herself well.

Yu Youyao felt a little embarrassed to be praised by her father. She pursed her lips and smiled, then raised her hand to touch the Tian-tsui in her hair.

It was an ordinary action, but for some reason, it attracted Yu Zongzheng's attention. He stared at the Tian-tsui on Yu Youyao's head and frowned. "Where did this Tian-tsui come from?"

Yu Youyao was stunned by the question. Seeing her father's dark expression, she said in a panic, "Yes, Mother sent it over yesterday. I thought that I shouldn't let her down, so I put it on today. I originally thought that Tian-tsui was precious, so I plan to put it away after today. It's also to show my appreciation for Mother's sincerity, and it's not good to hide it."

After hearing her explanation, Yu Zongzheng's expression softened a little, but his brows were still furrowed. "You have to pluck the feathers of the kingfisher alive to make it. Go back and keep it. Your grandmother is paying respects to Buddha, and she can't bear to see such an item."

Yu Youyao was shocked, and her face turned a little pale. "I didn't know that. Thank you for your reminder, Father."

Seeing her uneasy expression, Yu Zongzheng softened his voice and said, "You're a young miss who's been raised in a large household. How would you know anything about the Tian-tsui? You don't have to take it to heart."

Only then did Yu Youyao heave a sigh of relief. She quickly brought the bowl of food on the table over and changed the topic. "I was missing a month of classes previously, so Ms. Ye asked me to

make up for those that I had missed. Therefore, I didn't have time to come and visit Father during this period. I finally had time today, so I made some medicinal cuisine."

However, Yu Zongzheng knew that he had hurt his face and deliberately avoided the people in the residence until the injuries on his face had healed over the past two days.

However, his eldest daughter's words still made him feel at ease.

"Father, have a taste. This is a medicinal drink that nourishes the body and strengthens the bones. It's good for the bones. Although Father's leg has recovered, you still have to recuperate for a few more days." With that, Yu Youyao opened the bowl. It was slightly bitter, but there was a fragrance in the bitterness. Accompanied by a puff of smoke, it filled the room.

Yu Zongzheng couldn't help but sniffle. "Yao Yao personally brewed this medicinal drink. You have to try it."

Yu Youyao quickly scooped a small bowl of medicinal soup. The light brown soup had a faint layer of oil and a red sauce on it. There was some bone marrow and it looked light and not greasy. It was very delicious.

Yu Zongzheng took a sip from his spoon and found it to his liking. He praised, "Yao Yao has only learned from Nanny Xu for a while, but she's already so good at cooking."

In comparison, Yu Qingning was simply disappointing!

Yu Youyao pursed her lips. "As long as Father likes it."

After drinking a bowl of medicinal soup, Yu Zongzheng put down his spoon. "I heard that you've been learning calligraphy with your cousin recently. How's your practice going?"

When Yu Youyao heard this, she panicked. "In the past, my handwriting was ugly. After practicing for a while, I only managed to write a little more neatly, but it was still difficult for me to write elegantly."

Yu Zongzheng said happily, "Write a few words for Father to take a look."

Yu Youyao could only nod and follow her father to the small study room at the side.

This was where her father usually read and practiced his calligraphy. Her father dealt with official matters and discussed matters with his aides in the large study. No one was allowed to enter.

Yu Zongzheng was sitting and drinking tea.

Yu Youyao stood in front of the desk. She first spread out some rice paper and smoothed it with a paperweight. Then, she picked up a cup and bowl at the side, added some water to the inkstone, and rolled up her sleeves to start grinding the ink.

After learning from her cousin for a while, Yu Youyao also did the same. Yu Zongzheng put down his teacup and nodded to himself.

As soon as his eldest daughter stood in front of the long table, she exuded a calm aura. She seemed to be neither anxious nor anxious. Her every move was neither fast nor slow. She laid out the paper,

grinded the ink, and held the brush. It was originally an ordinary action, but there was a sense of elegance to it.

It could be seen that he had indeed improved a lot recently.

Yu Youyao picked a common brush, dipped it in ink, and began to write.

About ten minutes later, Yu Youyao stopped writing and waited for her brush to be washed. After washing the brush, she carefully picked up the rice paper that had already dried. "Father, I'm done."

With that, she walked over to her father and handed him the words she had written.

Yu Zongzheng took it and looked at it. On it was written a quote from Meng Zi: Born in trouble, die in peace.

It was the sentence that Yu Youyao had not finished reciting when Zhou Linghuai first arrived at the Yu Residence.

Yu Zongzheng looked at it carefully for a long time, but was very satisfied. "Although there's nothing special about the handwriting, the strokes are strong and gentle at the same time. It's already natural and beautiful."

Writing calligraphy was not limited to structure, neatness, and rigor. Instead, it pursued nature, convenience, form, and aura. Yu Youyao's handwriting was not good, but it was already formed and developed. It could be seen that she was also extremely talented in calligraphy. She was actually much stronger than many people who had practiced for years.

Yu Zongzheng's heart stirred.

He had practised the standard script of Liu Gongquan, and his calligraphy skills had even been praised by the emperor. "With a brush in your heart, your heart will be upright, and your handwriting will reveal your true nature. Your handwriting is frank and straightforward. Very good, very good!"

Yao Yao had learned Wang Xizhi's handwriting. Although her handwriting revealed the subtlety of a woman, her penmanship was just as strong as his. Although it was obvious that she had taken after him.

For a moment, he was overjoyed.

He actually felt that his eldest daughter resembled him the most.

Yu Zongzheng looked at Yu Youyao with even more satisfaction. "You're very talented in calligraphy. You have to practice more in the future. Don't slack off."

Yu Youyao nodded. "Yes, Father."

Yu Zongzheng remembered that his eldest daughter had been doing well at home recently. He had heard that she was often praised by Ms. Ye, so he asked Yu Youyao what Ms. Ye had been teaching recently.

Yu Youyao answered them one by one.

Yu Zongzheng nodded as he listened. He had also tested the homework that Miss Ye had taught her, and Yu Youyao had also answered him fluently. It was obvious that she had indeed been working hard during this period of time.

From the looks of it, his eldest daughter was not really stupid, but she had not been enlightened in the past. Now, when she worked hard, she was not inferior to Jia Jia.

Yu Zongzheng was really satisfied now. He immediately picked out a piece of calligraphy that he had written and gave it to Yu Youyao.

Chapter 100: Slapping Master's Face?

"Thank you, Father!" Yu Youyao felt as if she had received a treasure. She returned to the Jade Courtyard with the calligraphy her father had given her, then asked Chun Xiao's messenger to frame the calligraphy and hang them in the small study room.

After that, she took off the Tian-tsui on her head and handed it to Dong Mei. She said calmly, "Keep it!"

At this moment, Old Madam Yu also found out that Yu Qingning had caused a ruckus with Nanny Qian and had even beaten her up. Not only that, but Yu Qingning had also run to the front courtyard to complain to her father but was taught a lesson.

Old Madam Yu leaned against the couch and dozed off for a while. After a while, she said, "She's having a big attitude now. She's causing trouble and is afraid that I'll teach her a lesson, so she ignored me and went to look for her father."

Nanny Liu held the massage hammer and massaged her legs.

Old Madam Yu tightened her grip on her prayer beads. "I know Eldest Son's personality very well. His heart is filled with his obsession with official matters, but he doesn't care about managing students, let alone teaching them. What good can Yu Qingning get from him? Since her father has already taught her a lesson, I can't be bothered to care about her."

Seeing that Old Madam was angry, Nanny Liu could no longer pretend to be deaf and mute. "Children have their own blessings. Fourth Miss can't understand your grandmother's kindness because she's not blessed. Eldest Miss is a good person."

Old Madam Yu's expression softened. "You old thing, you only know how to use Yao Yao to fool me now."

Nanny Liu smiled and did not speak.

Old Madam Yu waved her hand. "Forget it. I can't control her anymore. Let her do as she pleases. It's just that Yao Yao cares about her relationship with her sister. With her muddle-headed personality, I'm afraid she'll hate Yao Yao."

Nanny Liu also felt that way. Eldest Miss had asked Chun Xiao to pass on the message out of goodwill, but Fourth Miss was not someone who appreciated kindness.

Old Madam Yu sighed slightly. "The nannies in the Education Department aren't easy to get along with. All of them are full of evil tricks. If Yu Qingning was willing to be disciplined, she would definitely be fine and could even learn some skills. However, after what she's done, I'm afraid Nanny Qian will bear a grudge against her. Her future won't be easy."

Although she said that she wouldn't care anymore, she was still her granddaughter after all. How could she really not care?

Old Madam had a sharp tongue but a soft heart!

Old Madam Yu sighed again. "That's why Yao Yao asked Chun Xiao to go to the Hanlu Courtyard to pass on the message. She had good intentions, but Yao Yao is raised in her own home, so she doesn't know that those people are very sly. How can a young lady like her deal with them with just a few words?"

Nanny Liu nodded. All the nannies from the Education Department were greedy for money.

As expected, Old Madam Yu waved her hand. "Get someone to send 20 taels of silver and some expensive supplements over as compensation. At the same time, give them a few words of advice. After all, they're of the Yu family's bloodline. No matter how bad it is, they can't be mistreated by outsiders."

Nanny Liu was not surprised

Old Madam Yu frowned again. "Call Madam Yang over. Does she think that I won't know about her underhanded methods behind my back?"

Nanny Liu quickly sent someone to call First Madam.

Not long after, Yang Shuwan rushed over. Her peach-colored makeup was embroidered with gold, and she looked radiant and beautiful. "Mother, do you have any instructions?"

Old Madam Yu looked at her coldly. "Eldest Son's injuries are almost healed. Come to my house tomorrow to continue making the rules."

When Yang Shuwan heard this, she was thunderstruck. The smile on her face froze. "Old Madam, this..."

Old Madam Yu's expression turned cold. "You don't agree? I'll get Eldest Son to tell you."

"That won't do." Yang Shuwan's face turned pale. It was her duty to be filial to Old Madam. If Old Madam really spoke to Master, she would become nothing. She couldn't let Master think that she didn't know how to be filial to Old Madam.

No matter how unwilling she was, she could only pinch her handkerchief and reluctantly agree. "I have to abide by the rules. How can I not agree?!"

Old Madam Yu waved her hand.

Yang Shuwan's face stiffened. "I won't disturb Old Madam's rest."

As soon as she left the north courtyard, Yang Shuwan was furious. She thought about how she had finally managed to avoid setting the rules because of her master's injury. However, she was only happy for a few days before she had to go to Old Madam's house to set the rules again!

This old thing couldn't stand to see her doing well!

Yang Shuwan was furious and aggrieved. Her eyes turned red. She had originally planned to return to the main courtyard, but then she remembered that she had suffered a huge grievance. Feeling indignant, she turned around and headed to the front courtyard.

During this period of time, she had been serving Yu Zongzheng inside and out, doing everything herself. Yu Zongzheng had also returned to his usual attitude towards her.

Unexpectedly, before she could speak, Yu Zongzheng said with a dark expression, "If you hadn't come, I would have gone to look for you too."

Yang Shuwan was stunned. She knew Yu Zongzheng well. Seeing that his expression wasn't good, she didn't dare to mention anything else and hurriedly asked, "What's wrong with Master? Did something happen?"

Thinking about it carefully, other than the commotion that Yu Qingning had caused in the morning, she hadn't made any mistakes during this period of time. However, Yu Qingning couldn't be blamed for this matter. Even if something had happened, it wouldn't implicate her. She couldn't help but feel relieved.

Yu Zongzheng's expression was serious. "Let me ask you, were you the one who gave Yao Yao the Tian-tsui?"

Yang Shuwan was stunned by the question. "I was the one who gave it to her. Yao Yao gave me a piece of cloth yesterday, so I picked out an exquisite Tian-tsui from my closet and gave it to her. Why are you suddenly asking about this?"

Yu Zongzheng's expression darkened. "How did you get the Tian-tsui?"

"I bought it from a jewelry store. I felt that it was rare, so I spent a lot of money on it!" Yang Shuwan also realized that something was amiss. How could she dare to say that she had ordered someone to capture the Kingfishers and hired an old craftsman to make it?

"Bam—" Yu Zongzheng slapped the table, his expression turning even uglier. "Nonsense!"

"M-Master..." Yang Shuwan was stunned after seeing him lose his temper. She had no idea how a Tian-tsui could make Master so angry.

Could it be that Yu Youyao, that little girl, had gossiped in front of Master?

She knew that in the past few days, Yu Youyao had been trying to curry favor with Master, but she was still inferior to Jia Jia. She was furious, but there was nothing she could do.

Since Master had benefited from Yu Youyao, he was even more satisfied with her. Just now, she had heard that Master had given Yu Youyao a calligraphy piece that he had personally written!

She cursed Yu Youyao in her heart!

Yu Zongzheng's face was filled with anger. "A few years ago, the Marquis's wife captured thousands of kingfishers and used them to make a beautiful feather dress for Imperial Consort Lu. The Imperial Court accused Marquis of Weining's Residence of currying favor and being arrogant and he was almost impeached. It was only because of Imperial Consort Lu's that this matter was suppressed and kept quiet."

No wonder Master was so angry. Yang Shuwan's eyes widened in shock.

Master was a member of the Imperial Inspection Institute, so he was definitely involved in the impeachment. However, she had secretly ordered someone to capture Kingfishers to make a Tian-tsui. Wouldn't that be a slap in Master's face?