

ALL HAIL COUSIN BROTHER

Chapter 4

Stepmother Yang

Once they were out of the room, Old Madam Yu's expression instantly turned cold. She said in a deep, low voice, "Investigate carefully. Find out who's spreading the rumor that Yao Yao pushed Yu Jianjia down. These lasses must really think that I'm old and no longer in charge, so they don't take me seriously."

Such idle gossip would seem harmless at first.

But if new gossip was spread every day, adding up day by day, it would eventually destroy her reputation due to years of accumulation. Yao Yao would have a ruined reputation by the time she became an adult.

That was unacceptable.

Old Madam Yu said the name "Yu Jianjia" with a cold tone repeatedly, looking rather enraged.

Nanny Liu was experienced and ruthless. In less than an hour, she had tied up two maidservants and brought two older servants to the side courtyard of the An Shou Hall.

Old Madam Yu was sitting at a stone table in the courtyard, sipping tea.

Upon seeing Old Madam Yu, the four of them finally surrendered. Instantly, they peed their pants and cried while kowtowing and begging for mercy.

Old Madam Yu did not like loud noise, so Nanny Liu ordered coldly, "Shut up!"

The courtyard finally quietened down. Matriarch Yu put down the teacup in her hand and said lightly, "Go, call all the servants in the Residence over. Don't

forget to invite Madam Yang over as well. Let her have a good look at how an old woman like me manages the family. She's young and doesn't know the severity of the matter. As her mother-in-law, I have to give her some advice.”

Not long after, the small courtyard was filled with people. The servants stood in place obediently with their heads lowered, not daring to even breathe too loudly.

After a while, Yang Shuwan finally arrived.

She had a shapely figure and was wearing a dark brown, peony-patterned skirt. She had combed her hair into a high bun and had a large hairpin that was studded with gold and red gems. She also wore an extremely exquisite green jade bangle on each of her wrists. She looked dignified and gentle, beautiful and elegant.

Yu Youyao's mother, Xie Roujia, was born in the wealthy Xie family of Quanzhou. Her body became unwell after giving birth to Yu Youyao, and she passed away within a month.

It had not even been a hundred days since Madam Xie had passed—in fact, it had only been less than two months—when Yu Zongzheng was already eager to marry Yang Shuwan, the daughter of a concubine of the Imperial Censor's Residence, into the family as a second wife.

After their wedding, she took a lot of anti-contraction medications, managing to keep the baby up to seven months before giving birth to her daughter, Yu Jianjia.

On closer thought, this meant that Yu Jianjia was actually less than seven months younger than Yao Yao.

Old Madam Yu realized that the two of them had shamelessly hooked up with each other while Madam Xie was pregnant, and had even secretly gotten

pregnant themselves. Old Madam Yu was so angry that she almost fainted, yet she still had to help cover up the matter to avoid shame to the family.

Luckily, Yu Jianjia was skinny and weak when she was born. The Yu Residence announced to the public that Madam Yang had given birth prematurely, and it actually managed to fool the outsiders.

Because of that, Old Madam Yu never liked Madam Yang, and she did not like Yu Jianjia either.

As a matter of fact, it had been almost nine years since Madam Yang had married into the family. Apart from her daughter, Yu Jianjia, she also gave birth to her first son, Yu Shansi, who was six years old this year.

Yang Shuwan glanced at the servants standing in the courtyard, then at the old maid servants who had their hands and feet tied. Her eyes flickered slightly, then she smiled nonchalantly.

Seeing that Old Madam Yu was about to pour her some tea, Yang Shuwan quickly reached for it first and poured the tea for Old Madam Yu, saying gently, "Old Madam, please have some tea."

Old Madam Yu raised her eyes and looked at Yang Shuwan wordlessly, making her heart skip a beat and she felt uneasy.

After that, Old Madam Yu picked up her teacup slowly and shifted her gaze away. Yang Shuwan breathed a sigh of relief, but then she saw that Old Madam did not drink the tea, and instead placed the teacup back on the table. Perhaps it was unintentional, but she had set it down with a little more force. There was a loud "clang" as the base of the teacup hit the stone table, producing a clear sound.

Everyone in the small courtyard kept quiet and held their breaths in fear.

The smile on Yang Shuwan's face stiffened, and she broke out in cold sweat even on such a cold day. "Mother, I heard from the maidservants that Yao Yao woke up earlier and managed to eat some food. It's good that she's fine now. I still have a box of premium bird's nests in my room. I'll personally bring it over later, for Yao Yao to nourish her body."

Yu Youyao had knelt in the temple hall for more than an hour, and even became ill because of it, almost losing her life. The Old Madam always doted on Yu Youyao, so it was inevitable that she would feel angry at Yang Shuwan. As her daughter-in-law, she had to placate her.

But the bird's nest was very precious, and this box of it had been specially brought back by her husband for Jia Jia. Therefore, she couldn't help but feel a slight pinch.

"You're too kind," Old Madam Yu said lightly.

Madam Yang quickly replied, "Yao Yao calls me Mother, and I treat her as my own daughter. My heart aches for her when she's sick, so it's only right that I show more concern for her."

Old Madam Yu did not reply to this. Instead, she changed the topic and asked, "Back when Jia Jia's fever hadn't subsided, and then Yao Yao also fell ill, I had forgotten to ask, what exactly happened with Jia Jia's fall? Have you investigated clearly?"

Madam Yang's eyebrows trembled, and she subconsciously tightened her grip on the handkerchief in her hand. She mumbled, "Well, Jia Jia had a high fever for a few days in a row, then Yao Yao too... I was so worried that I had completely forgotten about it. It's my fault. I'll get someone to investigate immediately."

Her excuse was flawless, but Old Madam Yu did not fall for it. "Is Jia Jia's feeling better now?"

Madam Yang glanced at the trembling maidservant on the ground and felt a little unnerved. "She can digest some light porridge now. The doctor said that she needs to recuperate well."

Old Madam Yu suddenly stared at her with a heavy gaze, making her feel panicked. "Jia Jia has been awake for two to three days, but she hasn't mentioned it to you? Why did she suddenly fall, and how was she startled? Everyone in the residence says Yao Yao pushed her to the ground. Because of this, Yao Yao was punished to kneel in the temple hall and even had a high fever for an entire day and night. As her younger sister, didn't she have anything to say?"

Cold sweat appeared on Madam Yang's forehead, "Mom, it's all my fault. I was really worried about Jia Jia's health, so I didn't tell Jia Jia about what happened in the residence these few days. I also ordered the servants in the courtyard not to bring it up in front of her. She was completely unaware of it, so..."

Old Lady Yu grabbed the teacup in front of her and smashed it at Madam Yang's feet. "Clang!" Fragments splattered all over the ground. "Madam Yang, who are you trying to fool? I may be old, but I'm not old enough to be muddled."

Faced with the Old Madam's fury, Madam Yang did her best to restrain herself from crying out in alarm.

"Tie up Jia Jia's personal maidservant, Zhi Zi," Old Lady Yu ordered in a low voice. Even if her Jia Jia did not know, surely the maidservant who followed her around should know everything clearly?

It was such a serious matter that Yu Jianjia had fallen down. As her mother, how could it be that she did not find out what happened from Yu Jianjia's maidservant?

Madam Yang exclaimed, "Mother, what are you doing..."

"Jia Jia's health is not good, so the maidservants around her naturally need to be extra careful and meticulous. However, she couldn't even catch her when her young mistress fell right in front of her. Furthermore, she even hid the truth and pushed all the blame to the Eldest Miss of the Residence. How hateful."

Old Madam Yu glared at Yang Shuwan sharply.