

### **Fields of Gold Chapter 13**

Third Young Master Zhou dusted off the lapels of his clothes and laughed, "Actually, I wasn't purely speaking up for you guys! As Zhenxiu Restaurant's young boss, I wouldn't miss out on any chance to attack Fulin Restaurant! It was a pity..."

When Yu Xiaocao heard that this young man was the young boss of Zhenxiu Restaurant, she looked out from behind her elder brother with a bright smile, "You're the young boss of Zhenxiu Restaurant? Can you make decisions?"

Yu Hang knew his youngest sister's intentions, so he quietly pulled on her sleeve.

There was a slight trace of arrogance that was typical to young people on Third Young Master Zhou's handsome face, "Zhenxiu Restaurant was specially gifted to me by my family so that I can use it as a form of training. Thus, I naturally have the rights to make decisions."

They had unknowingly arrived at the street where Zhenxiu Restaurant was located. Zhenxiu Restaurant's tall and magnificent entrance could be seen from afar.

Yu Xiaocao was completely speechless, "This restaurant was comparable to a five-star hotel, but the owner had actually given it to a young child to use as training. This Zhou Family was seriously rich!"

"Third Young Master, why did you come at this time?" Zhenxiu Restaurant's manager was a competent assistant that the master of the Zhou Family provided for his son.

The master of the Zhou Family had three sons. When they reached a certain age, they began working to gain experience under one of the

family's businesses. However, the youngest son chose to return to their ancestral home and build a new restaurant. Even his two older brothers didn't have such courage.

Zhenxiu Restaurant had very few customers a year ago, but it was difficult to even find a seat nowadays. Thus, the manager sincerely acknowledged his young boss. He was determined to follow the third young master and pursue a successful career with him.

Third Young Master Zhou was rather satisfied with this capable and loyal manager. The first step of success for members of the Zhou Family was to be able to win the loyalties of the people around them. This was something that he had already achieved! He will do even better in the future! He will let those people watch as he becomes successful!

"Manager Jiang, how are the preparations for County Magistrate Wu's birthday banquet?"

"Everything's ready and here's the menu. Third Young Master, can you check if there's anything that needs to be taken out?" Manager Jiang personally held the birthday banquet's menu for Third Young Master Zhou to look over.

County Magistrate Wu had always placed great emphasis on his reputation as a government official. This banquet wasn't intended to be extravagant and was just a simple family dinner. Therefore, there were ten people in attendance at most.

County Magistrate Wu was born in an aristocratic family, which had served as officials for generations. Moreover, his wife was the daughter of Marquis Zhongyi. Thus, they wouldn't be impressed by ordinary dishes. County Magistrate Wu was a major reason for Zhenxiu Restaurant's success in Tanggu Town, so they must serve him well.

The dishes for the banquet were decided after Zhou Zixu had a thorough discussion with the kitchen. Most of them were specialty dishes and popular dishes of the restaurant. However, Third Young Master Zhou was still unsatisfied with the menu. He felt that it was still missing a top-notch dish that was high-end and elegant.

"I need to discuss business with these siblings, so prepare a quiet place for us." Third Young Master Zhou didn't take the menu and instructed the manager. After that, he turned around to greet Yu Hang and his sister.

Discuss business? With these two? Manager Jiang examined the young siblings, who were dressed in old and shabby clothes. There wasn't any contempt within his eyes, just curiosity--These two little fellows had attracted his young master's attention, what was so special about them?

While Yu Xiaocao followed behind Third Young Master Zhou, she curiously looked at Zhenxiu Restaurant's furnishing. It was worthy of being a rising star who competed with the established Fulin Restaurant. There was an expected majestic atmosphere in all aspects of the restaurant, but the details of the decor also made people feel warm and comfortable.

Xiaocao gasped in admiration inwardly, but her every move had fallen into the eyes of Third Young Master Zhou. These siblings had aroused his interest. Although the older brother was young, he could make rational choices and quick decisions. The younger sister was in the grand and upscale Zhenxiu Restaurant, but there was only curiosity and admiration in her eyes, without any trace of unease and timidity.

Were they not born in a poor fisherman's family, but actually hiding a secret? Zhou Zixu felt somewhat uncertain in his mind.

Seeing the wariness within Yu Hang's eyes, he knew that Yu Hang was still being cautious due to the unintentional remark the little girl made earlier.

Zhou Zixu smiled and said, "Our Great Ming Dynasty is different from the previous dynasty's belief that 'the people's speech needs to be suppressed like the flood'. Our current emperor is especially open-minded and advocates for freedom of speech. Your younger sister didn't say anything wrong. His majesty is an excellent ruler, so how was she being disrespectful?"

Advocates for freedom of speech? Yu Xiaocao felt that it was rather strange to hear this phrase from someone from the ancient times. However, she finally found out that she was in the Great Ming Dynasty.

In her impression, people of the Ming Dynasty were rather fortunate in terms of eating. Numerous ingredients and seasonings had been imported from abroad. As an expert in braised foods, how could she go without any of these?

"Is Jianwen Emperor, Zhu Yunwen, in power now?" Yu Xiaocao didn't filter her mouth and carelessly blurted out her knowledge of history. However, as soon as she spoke, she knew that she was in trouble. In ancient times, if she directly called out the emperor's name, would she be beheaded?

Zhou Zixu looked at her and spoke with a slightly surprised tone, "It is currently the reign of Jianwen, but... who's Zhu Yunwen?"

Yu Xiaocao carefully observed Third Young Master Zhou's expression and determined that her little life was probably safe. Thus, she cautiously asked, "Isn't it currently the reign of the second emperor of the Ming Dynasty?"

At the fishing village, she had vaguely heard that the current emperor was the second emperor of this dynasty. The second emperor of the Ming Dynasty was Zhu Yunwen! Did she make a mistake with history?

"You're right! The first emperor the dynasty passed the imperial throne to his grandson and went on a sightseeing trip. All this had already been compiled into a storytelling and spread throughout the entire Great Ming Dynasty. However, though our emperor is also surnamed Zhu, his name isn't Zhu Yunwen. The personal name of our respected Jianwen Emperor is Junfan!"

The personal name of the emperor of the Great Ming Dynasty wasn't necessarily a taboo. Jianwen Emperor had personally set an example for freedom of speech. It was said that a minister had been overly agitated during court and directly called out the emperor's name. Not only did the emperor not blame him, but he also called him 'comparable to Wei Zheng [1]' for his courage to give direct criticism.

Zhu Junfan? Was there an emperor during the Ming Dynasty called Zhu Junfan? I don't think so? The first emperor of the Ming Dynasty passed his position to his grandson, but that grandson wasn't Zhu Yunwen? Was this Great Ming Dynasty the same as the Ming Dynasty recorded in history?

"The personal name of the founder of the Ming Dynasty..." Yu Xiaocao bravely continued to ask.

"The founder of the dynasty was Zhu Huaiyong. He had conquered the world with his military force and established the Great Ming Dynasty, which is well-known throughout the world. Are you really a citizen of the Great Ming Dynasty? How can you not even know this?" Zhou Zixu looked at her with disbelief, as if she was an alien.

Yu Hang immediately helped his younger sister explain, "My youngest sister had been sick and bedridden ever since she was young. She had only begun to gradually recover recently..."

Zhou Zixu's gaze lingered on Yu Xiaocao's pale face. He slightly nodded and said, "It seems like Little Sister Yu is quite interest in the Great Ming Dynasty, so I'll be a good person and tell you about it."

Third Young Master Zhou's next words was a major shock to Yu Xiaocao. Although the Yuan Dynasty was also overthrown by the Ming Dynasty and the emperor's surname was also Zhu, but this Ming Dynasty wasn't the same as the Ming Dynasty in history that she was familiar with.

It wasn't Zhu Yuanzhang who overthrew the last emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, but the retired emperor, Zhu Huaiyong. The retired emperor had lived in poverty and was allegedly an unsuccessful person in his youth. However, when he was twenty-two years old, he suddenly became an entirely different person.

[1] Wei Zheng (魏征) - a politician and historian during the Tang Dynasty, a notorious critic who was a frank and honest adviser to the emperor