

Fields of Gold Chapter 14

Zhu Huaiyong, who was originally timid and cowardly, raised a rebellion under the tyranny of the Yuan Dynasty. He was a brilliant strategist with outstanding abilities, so he quickly became the leader of the rebels and achieved glorious results on the battlefield. In less than ten years, he had subverted the rule of the Yuan Dynasty and established the Great Ming Dynasty.

Afterwards, it took nearly ten years to calm the chaos within the country that was caused by the war. They also had to drive other hostile nations around them far away from the borders, beating them until they didn't dare to fight back again.

The retired emperor, Zhu Huaiyong, could be regarded as a military genius who only appeared once in a century. However, his ability to govern the country was mediocre. At the beginning of the establishment of the new dynasty, there were endless battles and chaos. As a result, there was a loss of crops and lack of farmland, which caused famine and a price inflation for grain. Thus, people lived in misery and poverty.

The current emperor was the eldest legitimate grandson of the first emperor. He was a young genius, who had led a group of boatmen to build ships for ocean voyages at the age of twelve. He also personally went on a trip and brought back crops like chili peppers, sweet potatoes, and peanuts. Furthermore, he exported tea, porcelain, and silk to the New World for trade with the native people.

The high-yielding sweet potatoes were able to provide the war-weary citizens with food to fill their stomachs. The common people merely strived for survival, so when a source of food was guaranteed, society gradually stabilized.

After the current emperor came of age at twenty years old, the first emperor retired from his position and passed the imperial throne to him. After that, the retired emperor lived a leisurely life of traveling and sightseeing.

After Jianwen Emperor ascended the throne, a series of reforms were carried out to reduce taxes, encourage farming and sericulture, and support the development of industry and commerce. In just five years, he was able to organize and keep the country in good order. It was historically recorded as 'the rule of heaven'...

Yu Xiaocao was confused. Did she transmigrate back in time or to another world with a similar history?

Ay! What was the point in being bothered by this? Since she was already here, she should just go with the flow. First, she needed to solve the problem of obtaining enough food to eat and warm clothing to wear!

Yu Xiaocao turned her gaze towards the handsome young boy, Zhou Zixu. This gullible little sheep might be the first step to improve her current living conditions.

Although they were in the middle of the three hottest days of summer, Third Young Master Zhou suddenly felt a gust of cold air and the hairs on his arms stood up. He inwardly wondered, 'Feeling chilly even when there was a scorching sun in the sky. Did I catch a cold?'

"That... Young Master Zhou, you're in charge of Zhenxiu Restaurant, right? Do you want these abalones?" Yu Xiaocao asked candidly.

While Zhou Zixu was telling them about the history, he had pretended to unintentionally glance at the earthenware jar within her hands

several times. He had been waiting for the right time to ask about it, so he hastily replied, "If they're high quality abalones, then our Zhenxiu Restaurant will definitely offer you a reasonable price. Can... Can I take a look first?"

The abalones that Yu Hai caught this time were indeed rare. Moreover, they seemed to have grown after being nourished by the mystic-stone water overnight. They appeared to be even more fresh and juicy.

Zhou Zixu wasn't very knowledgeable about seafood, so he invited Manager Jiang and Head Chef Wang over. After they saw the abalones, they praised them fervently. Head Chef Wang had been cooking seafood for nearly thirty years. Such big and fresh abalones were comparable to a king abalone, which he had seen only five years ago after a stroke of luck. Moreover, the abalones were all about the same size and abnormally plump.

"Zhenxiu Restaurant will take these abalones!" Zhou Zixu decisively said, "How much do you want? Just state a price!"

Based on Manager Jiang's and Head Chef Wang's eyes and expressions, Yu Xiaocao already knew that these abalones were very rare. After a moment of deliberation, she said, "We have nine abalones. It costs one tael for each abalone. No bargaining!"

Yu Hang widened his eyes in shock as he looked at his youngest sister. One tael for each abalone, then that would be nine taels. He had originally thought that two or three taels would be the most that they could earn from selling the abalones. But, nine taels! His youngest sister had actually dared to state this price!

Manager Jiang furrowed his brows slightly. It was understandable for abalones to be expensive in the capital and some inland regions, since scarcity makes things valuable. However, Tanggu Town was a small

coastal town that didn't lack seafood. Thus, it was rare to see the price of one tael per abalone.

When he was about to start bargaining for a lower price, his young boss had already swiftly made a decision. He readily agreed with a wave of his hand, "Manager Jiang, pay!"

Head Chef Wang had already eagerly carried the earthen jar filled with abalones away. For a renowned chef, what else would be more pleasing than obtaining good ingredients?

Manager Jiang didn't say anything more and took out two small ingots, which were worth five taels each. He muttered inwardly, "Third Young Master Zhou doesn't manage the household expenses, so he doesn't know the cost of living. One tael for one abalone! It's impossible to find such a price within the entire Tanggu Town! Ay, he's still too young..."

"Manager Jiang, we don't have any change..." Yu Hang looked at the shiny ingots on the table. He secretly gulped his saliva and didn't dare reach out his hand to take them.

Zhou Zixu was in a good mood since he worked out the main dish for the banquet in the afternoon. He directly said, "Keep the change! If your family has any good seafood in the future, remember to send them to Zhenxiu Restaurant first! We can negotiate a good price!"

Yu Xiaocao smiled until her eyes turned a crescent-shaped. She happily took the two ingots and said, "No problem! Our Yu Family are skilled fishermen. In the future, if we catch things like shark fins and sea cucumbers, we'll definitely send them to Zhenxiu Restaurant first!"

"Yu Family? Is it Yu Dahai's family from Dongshan Village?" Manager Jiang had heard the rumors about Yu Hai hunting sharks. For a large restaurant, all sorts of delicacies were equally difficult to find.

It seems like Third Young Master has a keen eye for people. If they can have a good relationship with the Yu Family, then they wouldn't suffer any losses either.

Yu Hang just recovered from the unbelievable shock. He took a deep breath, then gently exhaled. Ten taels! That was several months of income for their family!

After Yu Hang finally steadied his emotions, he answered Manager Jiang's question, "Yes, Yu Hai is my father. He caught these abalones when he dived under the reefs. However, marine treasures like shark fin and sea cucumbers aren't as easy to obtain. Don't listen to my youngest sister's reckless remark!"

"They're difficult to obtain, but not impossible! It's fine as long as you do as your younger sister promised and think of Zhenxiu Restaurant first when you have good seafood--especially the valuable ones!" Zhou Zixu patted his shoulder and said with a smile.

Yu Xiaocao smiled brightly like a flower, while fiddling with the two ingots, "That's right! I'll tell my father when we get back. Third Young Master Zhou, thanks a lot!"

Zhou Zixu smiled even more widely when he saw that the young girl's expression. She looked like a money-grubber who just hadn't bitten down on the ingots yet.

The young girl suddenly raised her head and asked Manager Jiang with a stern expression, "Manager Jiang, can you help me change these ingots to silver bits?"

Manager Jiang felt that this little girl was rather interesting, so he purposely teased her, "Are you sure? If I change them to silver bits for you, then I'll only give you nine taels?"

Yu Xiaocao didn't mind this since the price she had requested was nine taels. The extra tael was an unexpected bonus. However, it would be inconvenient if they didn't change them to silver bits. She and Yu Hang were both children dressed in shabby clothes. If they go shopping on the streets with two small ingots, they would obviously attract thieves!

"Nine taels, so be it! If it's not too troublesome, it would be best if you can also change some into copper coins!" They could have purchased so much white rice and flour with one tael, so Yu Hang was somewhat bewildered that Yu Xiaocao had given up on it so easily.