

Fields of Gold Chapter 3

Yu Xiaocao, who was set down on the kang bed [1], stared at the affectionate Madam Liu. She didn't really know how she felt right now. Even though this mother seemed weak and unreliable, she finally had a mother to love her again after fourteen years.

Yu Hang stroked Xiaocao's hair while speaking to his mother, "Mother, Youngest Sister had been weak and often sick ever since she was born. This time, she even suffered a major injury... Grandpa You told us to feed her more nutritious foods to help her recover."

A brief moment of silence filled the entire room. Madam Liu thought of her stingy mother-in-law and went out of the room with an agonized expression on her face. After she left, Shitou came closer and caressed her face with his cold hands. He whispered into her ears with his tender voice, "Older Sister, rest well and get better soon. Tomorrow, I'll bring you an egg to eat..."

Yu Xiaocao sorted out her emotions, then smiled at the young child. She chatted with the cute kid for a while before she felt a wave of fatigue. Right before she fell into a deep slumber, she heard Madam Liu timidly saying, "Mother, the doctor said that Cao'er's body is weak and that she'll need to eat some nourishing foods. She only drank a few mouthfuls of porridge in the morning, so I want to make some egg soup for her."

"Eat, eat, eat! Even a wealthy family wouldn't be able to withstand the sufferings caused by all of you patients. Calling for a doctor and getting medications, which of these doesn't require money?! We still need to sell the eggs the next time the market opens. There's still some white rice inside the jar, so just take some to make a bowl of congee..."

Yu Xiaocao's body was originally weak and she had just suffered excessive blood loss. Thus, she finally couldn't resist the call for sleep and fell into a deep slumber.

She slept for a very long time this time. She didn't wake up even when they were feeding her the congee and medicine. She felt as if she had fallen into a bottomless darkness. No matter how much she struggled, she was unable to escape from the endless despair.

After an unknown amount of time, when she was about to give up and accept her fate, a glimmer of light shone within the darkness. A frustrated yet sweet sounding voice appeared in her mind:

[Darn it! How did I accidentally pledge my loyalties to a weak human-being? What should I do? What should I do now? Should I... I should just ignore her. If she dies, then our master-servant relationship will be void. However, I don't know when I would be able to come out again!]

That damned Goddess of Spirits. She actually sealed most of this mighty divine stone's spiritual powers, then abandoned it in some random human realm. It had waited for exactly eight hundred years before it was picked up by a human-woman. However, she had died before it was able to acknowledge its master...

It used up all its remaining spiritual powers to bring that human-woman's soul to another realm and found a suitable body for her to revive in. If it didn't save her with all its powers, then it might really have to experience another eight hundred years before waking up again.

Ay... It's better to be a little weaker than stay in endless darkness. However, the wound on her head... Seems like it would need to use the little spiritual powers that it still had to heal her...

While Yu Xiaocao was amazed by that talkative glowing orb, she suddenly felt a cool and refreshing feeling on the wound on her forehead. The painful sensation was also gone. As the darkness around her gradually faded, she slowly opened her heavy eyelids.

A dim lamp was lit inside the room. She could faintly see thin Madam Liu laying on the edge of the kang bed. Her breathing could be clearly heard in the silence.

Yu Xiaocao recalled that strange dream she just had. She lifted her arm and touched her forehead. It really didn't hurt anymore. Was that not a dream? Did that glowing golden orb, who calls itself a 'Divine Stone', really exist? Did it also cure the injury on her head?

Yu Xiaocao felt really hot and stuffy since she was tightly covered by a blanket. She took her arms out of the blanket and noticed a red string bracelet on her thin wrist. There was a multicolored stone threaded on the red string. Wasn't this the small stone that she picked up in a mountain stream near the Potala Palace, that only time she went on a vacation?

The stone was only about the size of a marble. It appeared smooth and round as it sat in the middle of the creek. She had picked it up because she thought that the colorful stone looked really beautiful at that time. After taking it back, she made a hole in it, threaded it on a red string, and wore it on her wrist. Later on, when she was preparing braised foods, she felt that it wasn't convenient to wear it while working. Thus, she just casually threw it aside and forgot about it. Why did it transmigrate and reincarnate with her?

"Cao'er, you're awake! You've slept for exactly three days. If you still didn't wake up, I was about to take you to town to see a doctor."
Madam Liu, who was lying on the kang bed, noticed the movement and raised her head. She cried out in happiness when she looked up and saw her daughter studying the rainbow stone.

Yu Xiaocao stared intently at Madam Liu. Her first impression of her mother was that she was thin. Although she had a beautiful and gentle face, it looked thin and pale. Her hands, which were fixing her blanket, were full of rough calluses and scars. With one glance at her hands, it was obvious that she was constantly performing manual labor.

"Mother..." Although Madam Liu wasn't that much older than her in her previous life, she was touched by the maternal love within her eyes. Thus, she couldn't help but call out to her. No one had looked at her with such a loving gaze ever since her mother passed away when she was fourteen. Yu Xiaocao suddenly felt like crying.

"Don't cry, Cao'er. Does your wound still hurt? Mother will blow on it for you..." Liu Muyun gently blew on her daughter's bandaged head, then she quickly turned around and wiped her tears with her sleeve.

When she was pregnant with the twins, she accidentally fell into the water while washing clothes and gave birth prematurely. Although Xiaolian was slightly underweight, she grew up with a healthy body. However, it was a different situation for Xiaocao. She couldn't even drink milk at first. Furthermore, she would frequently fall ill. There were even several times when she almost didn't survive.

Her child needed to take medicine throughout the year, but their family haven't split off yet. All the money that her husband earned from fishing and hunting must be handed to her mother-in-law. Every time she asked her mother-in-law for money to get medicine, she was always reluctant to give it to her and would say a bunch of unpleasant words. Her eldest sister-in-law would also make jeering remarks on the side.

She can endure anything for her child. However, she had never expected that her daughter almost died in the hands of her eldest sister-in-law. The doctor had clearly instructed them to nourish

Xiaocao with more nutrition, but her mother-in-law was unwilling to even give them an egg.

Liu Muyun's face was full of helplessness as she looked at the dark night sky outside the window. She had already married into the Yu Family for thirteen years. Every day, she had to be the first to wake up and last to sleep. She always exhausted because she was responsible for nearly all of the household chores.

She's not afraid of being tired, but her mother-in-law was never satisfied with her no matter what she does. She often had to suffer from her demanding gaze and mocking remarks. Even her children were treated poorly.

There was no one in the family who she could rely upon. Xiaocao was injured by Eldest Sister-in-law and was unconscious for three days, but Eldest Brother's family didn't even appear once. Her youngest sister-in-law and father-in-law were the only ones who came to check on Xiaocao...

"Cao'er, are you hungry? Your youngest aunt gave us an egg. I kept it warm with some hot water." Liu Muyun peeled the eggshell for her daughter. She had a satisfied smile on her face as she watched her daughter slowly eat the egg.

She continued, "My good daughter, you should rest some more. Mother will go prepare dinner. Your favorite congee [2] will be ready by the time you're awake. I'll be sure to make it thick and add some pickled vegetables in it. I'll bring a large bowl of it for our Cao'er to eat!"

Yu Xiaocao remembered what she had heard before she fell asleep. Her mother was rejected after she had asked this body's grandmother

for an egg. It seems like her family rarely had the chance to eat fine grains such as white rice and wheat flour.

For this bowl of congee, Madam Liu would probably have to endure people cruelly mocking her. Her heart somewhat ached for her, "Mother, I'll just eat whatever everyone else is eating. Don't separately prepare something just for me. Didn't I already eat an egg today?"

[1] Kang Bed (炕) - traditional long heated platform for general living, entertainment, sleeping, etc; usually used in northern China, where it's colder

Kang Bed

[2] This is probably similar to the congee that Xiaocao ate.