

Gold Chapter 30

Chapter 30

As the three chatted, they had started walking on the road that lead to town. When they passed the foot of the mountain, a thin figure with a small bag could be seen walking in front of them from afar.

With keen eyes, Little Shitou had recognized the person in the distance, "Second Sister, the person in front of us looks like Brother Qian Wen. He must be returning to town because his break had ended."

"Brother Qian Wen—Brother Qian Wen—" Without waiting for his sister's response, the little fellow had already cupped his mouth with his little hands and shouted.

That figure stopped in his tracks and turned around to look towards them.

As they gradually walked closer, Yu Xiaocao could see the young boy's face more clearly. He had fair skin and delicate facial features. With gentle and refined manners, he was handsome young boy with a fair and clean complexion.

"Older Brother Zhao, Little Shitou... Is this your second sister?" Qian Wen's lips curled up slightly as he curiously looked at young girl with pale skin and big eyes in front of him. Little Shitou was a good friend of his younger brother, Qian Wu. In the last two months, the kid had frequently mentioned his second sister.

Little Shitou grinned, "That's right, Brother Xiaowen. Doesn't my second sister really look like my eldest sister? People usually mix them up. How did you recognize her immediately?"

Qian Wen took the little fellow's hand and continued walking to town, "Although I haven't seen your eldest sister many times, the children of a fishing village usually have darker skin because they frequent the beach. Your second sister seldom goes out, so she has a lighter complexion."

Little Shitou carefully examined his second sister's complexion and firmly nodded, "That's right! Second Sister definitely hasn't fully recovered yet since her face looks so pale."

The little fellow had heard that sick people generally had a more pallid complexion. He didn't have a clear understanding of 'pallid' and just thought that it was unhealthy to be pale.

Yu Xiaocao had a big 'awkward [1]' character within her heart! 'Qian Wen, as a scholar, was it really alright to be openly discussing a young lady's skin color?' As for her foolish younger brother, 'Your sister has a fair complexion because she used mystic-stone water to wash her face every day, alright? When did you see me being ill? This was called being pale with a rosy glow, which was very healthy!'

On the other side, her ignorant younger brother had already started chatting with someone else, "Brother Xiaowen, are you going back to town for your studies? We're going with Brother Han to sell game. Let's travel together!"

"We'll have to walk quite a distance to reach town. Can you keep up, little guy?"

"I can! I'm really amazing. Even Second Sister isn't as good as me!" Uh, she just suffered another blow.

"Shitou, if you're tired, let me know. Brother Xiaowen will carry you."

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Yu Xiaocao never thought that the first person to become exhausted wasn't the five year old Little Shitou, but herself. Her physical body had never travelled a long distance by foot. She had become much healthier after being nourished by the mystic-stone water. However, after only walking such a short distance, her legs were already sore, and her entire body felt weak.

They had only walked less than a quarter of the way, but Yu Xiaocao's little face was already turning wan. She wiped the sweat on her forehead, gritted her teeth, and kept on staggering forward.

The tall and burly Zhao Han was naturally fine, and even the seemingly weak Qian Wen didn't seem tired. He wasn't breathless and his face wasn't flushing, while he strode ahead vigorously. Little Shitou had been running around the mountains and seashore ever since he learned to walk, so walking on this road was rather easy for him. He was hopping and chirping throughout the trip, as if he was a cheerful little sparrow.

Qian Wen heard a wheezing sound, which was similar to the sound of a bellows. He turned around and looked at Xiaocao with concern, "Xiaocao, give me your bamboo basket. I'll help you carry it."

There were only two steamed buns within her basket, but it felt like someone was deliberately pulling down on her basket. Moreover, her legs were so sore that she could barely lift them. Qian Wen's bag didn't look very big, but was filled with heavy contents such as books and an inkstone. Besides, she wasn't very close with him, so wouldn't it be rude for her to let him carry it for her?

"No need. I'll be fine after resting for a bit!" Xiaocao shook her head and wiped the sweat on her forehead. She sat on the side of the road, gasping for air.

Little Shitou bit his thumb and said, "Second Sister, with your speed, we might not be able to get back before it gets dark!"

Xiaocao gritted her teeth and forced herself to stand up. She nodded and said, "Let's hurry up then! We don't want to delay Brother Xiaowen's studies..."

At this time, an ox cart came from afar, while squeaking the entire way. After taking a closer look, they realized that the driver was Old Zhang from Xishan Village. When Old Zhang saw them, he smiled good-naturedly and asked, "Aren't you the kid from Dongshan Village's Qian Family? Are you guys going to town?"

Every two days, Old Zhang would transport a cart of firewood to town, which seemed to be a reservation made by a blacksmith in town. A load of firewood would cost over fifty copper coins. As long as the family helped out, this was a rather good deal for the Zhang Family, who owned an ox cart.

"Grandpa Zhang, Xiaocao has a weak constitution and had never walked so far before. Can you please let her sit on your cart's shaft?" Qian Wen saw that there was no room for people to sit on the ox cart, since it was stacked with firewood. Thus, he asked about the cart's shaft instead.

"So this is the Yu Family's Xiaocao! I've heard from your maternal grandfather that you've injured your head. Are you fully recovered now? How can your parents be so at ease with letting you kids go to town by yourselves?" Old Zhang lived close to Madam Liu's maiden family, so he swiftly agreed. He lifted Xiaocao onto the cart with his big hands.

Even though she would occasionally feel the pain of being jabbed by the firewood behind her, but it was still much easier than walking on foot. Xiaocao watched as her younger brother excitedly guide the ox after being placed on its back by Old Zhang.

"Brother Han, your basket is pretty heavy. Let me hold it." After all, Zhao Han was only thirteen, so it was quite tiring to travel while carrying so many game. There were over ten game in his basket, which probably weighed over a dozen catties all together. His forehead was already covered with sweat.

He looked at Yu Xiaocao who was wobbling as she sat in the cart. His lips twitched and he shook his head, "It's not heavy. I can carry it myself."

Riding on the ox cart, the group finally arrived in town at around half past ten in the morning. Tanggu Town was still bustling with excitement like last time.

After Xiaocao and her younger brother thanked Old Zhang, he warmly arranged a meeting time with them for the trip back to the village. If the siblings wanted to ride on his ox cart on the way back, they could meet him outside the town gate at dusk.

After parting with Qian Wen, Zhao Han handed the ceramic pot back to Xiaocao, and then held each of the siblings' hands as they walked on the busy street. The street was wide enough for two horse carriages to run side by side and they could see horse wagons filled with cargo from the wharf rushing through the streets from time to time. In Xiaocao's opinion, as an essential route for transporting ocean freight to the capital, this was a small town with great potential for future developments.

"There aren't many people at the market in the afternoon. Should we go ask Fulin Restaurant first?" Zhao Han had followed his father to sell game several times in the past. He knew that his father had business with the two biggest restaurants in town, so he asked for the siblings' opinion first.

Yu Xiaocao recalled how she parted on bad terms with Fulin Restaurant when she was selling abalones last time, so she suggested, "I reckon we should go to Zhenxiu Restaurant first!"

Zhenxiu Restaurant was slightly farther away than Fulin Restaurant, which was one of the reasons that Zhao Han wanted to visit Fulin Restaurant first. However, Zhao Han was quite surprised to hear Xiaocao's remark.

"Xiaocao, you've also heard of Zhenxiu Restaurant? In recent months, Zhenxiu Restaurant's business has indeed exceeded Fulin Restaurant. Thus, they must need a lot of game. I heard that Zhenxiu Restaurant seems to have learned a method to make a special sauce with oyster from someone. Vegetables sautéed with that whatchamacallit sauce are even tastier than meat dishes!"

"Oyster sauce! Hailizi is also called shenghao in the south!" Hearing that Zhenxiu Restaurant's business was prospering due to oyster sauce, Yu Xiaocao was extremely proud inwardly and could hardly resist from beaming with joy.

"That's right! It's called oyster sauce!" Zhao Han bowed his head, looked at her, and asked, "Xiaocao, how did you know? Did Uncle Yu tell you?"

Of course, Yu Xiaocao wouldn't explain to him that the recipe for the oyster sauce came from her. Thus, she just nodded evasively.

After walking for about fifteen minutes, Zhenxiu Restaurant's magnificent sign appeared before their eyes.

"Wow! It's such a tall building!" Little Shitou gaped in amazement. It was his first time seeing a three-story building after walking so far. Zhenxiu Restaurant's magnificent charisma and luxurious décor left a lasting impression on the little fellow.

Noon was the busiest time for a restaurant. In front of Zhenxiu Restaurant, there was an endless stream of customers dressed in lavish silk brocades. There were also many posh horse carriages parked nearby. The tall horses were unsaddled and leisurely eating forage.

"Second Sister, we... we should come back when there's less people." Little Shitou noticed that all the people entering and exiting the restaurant were affluent people dressed in fancy attire. Looking at his own patched-up clothing, he felt somewhat inferior and was unable to move forward.

Zhao Han grabbed his little hand and calmly said, "Little Shitou, we didn't steal anything or rob anyone, so there's nothing to be ashamed of! You guys wait here and don't wander off. I'll go over to ask."

Looking at the young man's tall and handsome back, Yu Xiaocao felt as if she was looking at a young general who was preparing for his first battle...

The entire Zhao Family, from Grandpa Zhao to the thirteen year old Zhao Han, gave her the impression that they weren't a simple hunter's family. They would unconsciously radiate an imposing aura and a soldier's demeanor that a mere hunter's family wouldn't possess.

The tall and handsome youth took up a conversation with the server who was greeting the customers. He put down the carrying basket, took out a wild hare that was still twitching, and said something to the server. At first, the waiter shook his head incessantly, as if they weren't going to take their game.

In fact, big restaurants usually had their own means to obtain supplies, which were all imported goods. So, they naturally wouldn't accept goods from any random person.

"Young brother, we just caught these game this morning, so they're all fresh. Look at this hare, it's still so lively!" Zhao Han tried his best to sell his game. They can't come all the way in vain.

The young waiter shook his head and said, "Sorry, but our restaurant doesn't need anymore game. It's still really hot right now, so if we have too much, it will be hard to preserve them."

"Most of the game we brought over are still alive. Even if you keep them overnight and sell them tomorrow, they will still be very fresh. It was difficult for me to come here with my younger brother and sister, so please make an exception." Zhao Han gestured towards the direction that Xiaocao and Shitou were standing.

"We're really not taking them..." The server abruptly stopped in the middle of his rejection when looked towards the direction Zhao Han indicated.

His eyes beamed when he saw the appearance of the little girl in the distance. He walked around Zhao Han and swiftly walked over with a smile,

"Miss Yu, I'm so happy to see you again! Ever since you left last time, our young boss had asked about you several times. He was afraid that some idiots wouldn't recognize you the next time you sent game over, so he specially transferred me over to greet the guests..."