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Fields of Gold Chapter 611 – Top

The golden kitten stopped in front of a piece of fist-sized raw jade ore and glanced at Xiaocao. When it saw that she bent over to pick up the material, it continued to walk forward. It didn't take Xiaocao much effort before she picked four to five pieces. There were some large ones, small ones, exquisite-looking ones, and even some crude-looking ones.

The raw jade ores selected by Yu Xiaocao were all in Zhu Junyang's hands. He was reluctant to make his little lass do all the work, so whenever she picked up one from the ground, he would take it from her and carry it. Both of his hands were now full of ores, luckily, none of the rocks selected by the little divine stone were overly large, so he could still handle the ones he was currently holding.

In the end, the golden kitten stopped in front of an ore that was covered in tiny little dots, similar to the tiny pores on a human's face. The kitten's golden dark eyes flashed with joy when it sensed the rich aura inside the rock. The aura the rock was exuding was some comfortable and warm that all it wanted to do was lay on top of the ore.

Shopkeeper Zhang saw that Miss Yu's gaze had landed on top of the raw jade ore that was as large as a millstone and hurriedly gone over to explain "Don't judge it by its appearance. Although the surface of this rock is bumpy and full of holes, this type of ore falls under the 'sandy, rough, and bumpy' category of jade. The rough exterior of this raw jade ore is classified as one of the 'finer jades', and it has a relatively high chance to develop into a quality jade. If you like this one, then I'll have someone get it out for you."

"This piece is rather large, so moving it out will be too troublesome. Why don't we break into it right here?" Yu Xiaocao marked a few lines on the stone under the little divine stone's guidance and then nodded her head at an experienced master to break it out.

After thirty minutes had passed, the stone cracked open and a piece of smooth, exquisite, and mutton fat white jade was exposed. This piece of mutton fat jade was white and flawless in appearance; it was as moist as milk. It was even slightly warm to the touch.

The experienced master who was brought over to extract the jade held the mutton fat jade that was bigger than the size of a regular basketball. His eyes shone as he exclaimed in admiration, "I have worked in this field for decades and I have never seen such high equality mutton fat jade before!"

It was well known that jades were expensive and can support people financially, this was especially true for quality-jades, which can fetch a higher price than regular jades. Quality jade was hard to come by, but there was no doubt that the jade in the experienced extraction master's hand was a top-notch jade. Based on its color, texture, and appearance, it was impeccably perfect.

Even a small jade pendant or jade tassel made from this variety of mutton fat jade would cost a fortune. This jade exceeded the quality needed to make a jade bracelet. It was not an exaggeration to say that this jade was priceless. If any of the family had a jade bracelet made from this jade piece, then it could even be regarded as a family heirloom and pass it down through the generations!

It would be more than enough to carve ten jade bracelets from this large mutton fat jade and still have some remaining jade leftover. The remaining material from this piece of jade could be sculpted into small flower decorations. This piece of jade was worth enough to produce the amount Wisdom Jade Pavilion could earn in three years! If they carved this large piece of jade into a larger object instead of bracelets, then it would definitely become one of the great treasures of the capital. There were only a few people who could afford such a jade sculpture in this world!

The final product of the jade was based on the 'material', 'craftsmanship', and 'meaning' behind the jade. The price could increase by ten times when the material was made from the finest jade material and it could increase by ten times again if the craftsmanship was done by a first-class craftsman. The quality of this jade was definitely the best among the best. There were many excellent jade craftsman masters in Wisdom Jade Pavilion. There were only a few craftsmen in the entire Great Ming Dynasty who had surpassed the mastery of the craftsmen in Wisdom Jade Pavilion. Those craftsmen rarely took the initiative to openly carve for others. As for the 'meaning' behind the jade, as long as Master Wu from the Wisdom Jade Pavilion sculpted the jade, then there would be no problem.

Shopkeeper Zhang cautiously took the mutton fat jade from the extraction master. He narrowed his eyes in admiration at the extremely rare treasure in his hands. He had worked in the jade industry for over thirty years, and this was the first time he had seen such a perfect and beautiful piece of raw jade. He loved jade, so it was impossible for him to contain his excitement while holding this piece jade in his hands.

A voice suddenly broke him away from his trance, "Master, did you extract the jades from the other rocks?"

Shopkeeper Zhang suddenly snapped out from his trance. His master had already promised to give this piece of rare jade to Miss Yu. Based on how much his master doted on Miss Yu, he would never ask her to pay a huge sum for the jade. Instead, he might even give the jade to her for free as a sign of his

affection. This was a rare treasure from the Wisdom Jade Pavilion! Yet it was already destined to be given away! If the jade could be stored in the Wisdom Jade Pavilion, then he would be able to admire the jade every day. However...his dreams were bound to fail!

Zhu Junyang glared at Shopkeeper Zhang in contempt for how lacking he was currently acting. He didn't even feel distressed as the owner of the Wisdom Jade Pavilion, yet Shopkeeper Zhang acted like someone had carved his heart out from his chest.

"It seems like I'm quite lucky today and managed to have a good start! Let's strike the iron while it's hot and extract all the jades from these rocks!" Yu Xiaocao leaned over and looked at the mutton fat jade. She didn't know much about jade, but she could tell that the jade looked flawless and it was warm and smooth to the touch!

Zhu Junyang stared at her profoundly and thought, 'Continue pretending! Do you think I'm blind? You chose whichever ore that the golden kitten stopped in front of. The longer the golden kitten stood in front of it, the higher the quality the jade will turn out to be. The golden kitten stood in front of this piece of jade the longest, and it turned out to be a top-notch treasure. As a result, all the pieces of ores she picked out must all be quality jade!'

Just as he expected, there were two more pieces of mutton fat jade from the remaining pile of jade. Although the quality and value could not compare to the first mutton fat jade they found, they were still of rare quality. However, the two mutton fat jades were not as large as the first one. One piece of jade was enough to be carved into a pair of jade pendants and small decorations while the other one could be carved into a pair of mutton fat jade bracelets. The remaining jade were all white jade, which were also very valuable.

Shopkeeper Zhang's heart bled as he watched! If these jade were sold in the Wisdom Jade Pavilion, then this year's profit would definitely soar and his bonus as the shopkeeper would also be extremely generous. But now...it will all be gone!

But Shopkeeper Zhang was somewhat doubtful. How could this young girl's luck be so good? She was able to extract good quality jade from every raw ore she picked up. Could she be a master in discerning jade? No, that was impossible because the jade experts that Wisdom Jade Pavilion hired all had decades of experience. Yet, none of them were able to extract a jade from every piece of rock they chose, let alone a high-quality jade each time! Even if she was a young girl who learned how to identify jades from the moment she was born, it was still impossible for her to be more experienced than those jade experts. It seemed like...he could only reluctantly attribute all of this to sheer luck!

“Little lass, do you still want to choose more jade?” Zhu Junyang asked the little lass softly when he saw that his little lass was fiddling with the mutton fat jade that was large enough to sculpt two pieces of jade pendants from it. When he saw that his little lass shook her head in response, he turned to Shopkeeper Zhang and said, “Bring these jade rocks to Miss Yu's private room!”

Shopkeeper Zhang hesitated for a moment and asked, “Do...do I bring all the jade to her private room?”

Yu Xiaocao pursed her mouth and jokingly asked, “What's the matter? Are you afraid that I don't have enough money to pay for them? Don't worry, even though I didn't bring enough money today, I will have someone send the full amount tomorrow! Or, is it because Shopkeeper Zhang is unwilling to part with the top-notch mutton fat jade?”

Zhu Junyang's expression immediately darkened. What was wrong with this manager? The shopkeeper was usually very capable and clear-minded, so what happened to him today? Why was he acting so muddle-headed? Didn't he see that his master was the one who invited this guest over? Didn't he realize that he was causing him to lose his face in front of his little lass?! He was even willing to give her the entire shop as well as all the workers of the shop over to his little lass! He wouldn't even feel the least bit unwilling or distressed!

So what if she didn't bring enough money? This prince didn't lack money! Besides, she was going to become his wife in the future, so how dare a mere shopkeeper babble so much when the future female head of the house came over to choose a few ores? It seemed like Shopkeeper Zhang was getting bored of working in the Wisdom Jade Pavilion as a manager! They lacked a shopkeeper in the western border jade exchange, so maybe he should send Shopkeeper Zhang there to work for a few years.

His master's gaze was as sharp as a knife. Shopkeeper Zhang immediately sobered up after he received a glare from Zhu Junyang. What was he doing? Since his master took the initiative to invite a guest over, that meant his master valued the guest a lot. The whole shop was owned by his master and since his master didn't feel heartbroken by this, then why would a mere shopkeeper like him interfere in his master's personal matters? He had to quickly find a way to make amends quickly because if he had accidentally angered his master, then it would be the end of his career as the Wisdom Jade Pavilion's shopkeeper. His master might even send him to the west border out of anger; if that happened, then he wouldn't even have enough tears to cry!

Although Shopkeeper Zhang had only worked in the Wisdom Jade Shop for three years, the business of the shop soared to new heights each year. His master also changed the shop's business model, causing

the annual profits to greatly exceed their expected amount. All the employees would receive big bonuses because of the increased profit. Even the young clerk working at the shop received two hundred taels as a bonus, much higher than usual. Since a small-time clerk had received such a large bonus, it was unimaginable how much the manager received!

It was almost the end of the year now and the shop accountant had begun to calculate this year's profits. He knew that this year, the shop had made more profits compared to the previous years, so the bonus the employees would receive would definitely exceed that of last year. Last year, he received two thousand taels of silver as a year-end bonus!

At the end of the year, when he reported Wisdom Jade Pavilion's accounts along with the other managers to his master, none of the other properties could compare to how much Wisdom Jade Pavilion earned except for Treasure Pavilion and the plantation. The other shopkeepers could only stare at them enviously because it was impossible for them to earn the same amount of profits as they did. Being the manager of Wisdom Jade Pavilion was a lucrative job and many people were eyeing his job. He couldn't lose his cushy job over something minor!

When he noticed that his master was unhappy, Shopkeeper Zhang hurriedly tried to make up for his mistake, "Miss Yu, you must be joking with me! You are the one and only distinguished guest that master has ever personally invited over. Let's not discuss money because that would be too formal! This servant was just asking whether I should bring it all the jade to your private room first or have the master craftsmen look at the jade first. Then, you would be immediately able to discuss the style you want them to carve it into. As for this piece of top-notch mutton fat jade, would you like it to be carved into a bracelet? Or would you want to carve some ornaments or decorations from it? The experienced craftsmen from our shop can give you some good suggestions..."

"Oh...is that so? I thought Shopkeeper Zhang was reluctant to sell this jade!" Yu Xiaocao smiled sweetly at Shopkeeper Zhang who was sweating profusely. Zhu Junyang had a gloomy and displeased expression on his face while Yu Xiaocao secretly pulled on his hands.

"Miss Yu must be joking! The jade and the shops are all under my master's command, so how could a mere servant like me make such decisions? But I have to say, Miss Yu, you have a great eye for discerning jades. You managed to discover such a high-quality mutton fat jade that could only appear once in a century. This servant has been selling jade for no less than twenty years and this is the first time I have seen such a fine piece of jade!"

Shopkeeper Zhang keenly noticed that Miss Yu was the key to determining his master's mood based on their earlier interactions. He noticed that the young girl merely tugged on his master's sleeve and gave

him a warning look, and the expression on his master's face immediately improved. His master's gaze no longer felt like a sharp knife aimed at him. Shopkeeper Zhang felt like he was reborn again after this calamity passed.

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Yu Xiaocao didn't know much about jade because, in her previous life, she was just a regular citizen struggling at the bottom of the pyramid. She struggled to feed herself and her younger siblings every day. She would occasionally visit the mall and hang around for a few moments by the jewelry stores. She would merely glance at the beautiful sparkling jewelry and jade that were way out of her price range.

She looked at the smooth and radiant jade in her hand with interest. Although the jade had not yet been polished, the jade still exuded a beautiful white color. It was no wonder that the prices of these jades remained as expensive as ever, even in the future. People still flocked to shops to buy unattainable and rare jade!

The top-notch mutton fat jade that was larger than a regular-sized basketball was placed on the table of Xiaocao's private room. The golden kitten hurriedly jumped onto the table and climbed on top of the jade. It laid on the jade on its stomach and started cultivating. It was unwilling to delay its cultivation even for a few seconds! However, to other people, they merely thought that the young little kitten really knew how to find a place to sleep. It chose the most expensive place to sleep!

Shopkeeper Zhang was shaking at his core when he saw the kitten jump on top of the jade. He feared that the young kitten would damage the jade. However, he was being too worried! If the jade was that fragile, then no one would want to buy it!

If Yu Xiaocao was still ignorant of the mutton fat jade's value based on Shopkeeper Zhang's reactions, then she would be stupid. She guessed that she had probably chosen all of the best jades from this batch of jade. In the next month or so, Wisdom Jade Pavilion would probably not have any quality jade to sell! Naturally, she would not take all the jades she found from him. After all, Zhu Junyang owned Wisdom Jade Pavilion, so she should leave some leeway for him to survive, right?

“Shopkeeper, I heard that we have recently found a top-notch mutton fat jade. Can this old man have a look?” An old but enthusiastic voice could be heard from outside the private room. Shopkeeper Zhang's eyes immediately lit up. Why would this old gentleman be suddenly willing to take the initiative to come here?

He hurriedly walked outside and greeted the esteemed old man with an enthusiastic smile, “Old Lin! We're honored with your presence. Your presence brings light to our humble shop!”

“Humble shop? If Wisdom Jade Pavilion is a small humble shop, then the other jade shops in the capital are even less worth mentioning! Hurry up and show me the top-notch mutton fat jade, so this old man can take a look!” Old Lin had a petite build, grizzled hair, and a ruddy complexion. He was a hearty and small old fellow.

It turned out that the top-notch mutton fat jade had lured Old Lin out! Old Lin was the best jade craftsman in the capital. He had retired many years ago and unless there was something that caught his interest, he wouldn't step a foot outside his house. Old Lin had been in the Wisdom Jade Pavilion before and told the employees to inform him if any quality raw material was found. The obedient and good-natured clerk had probably run over to inform Old Lu about the new jade.

“Old Lin, I'm sorry, but that piece of raw jade has already been bought by someone!” Shopkeeper Zhang apologized to the old man.

Old Lin glared at him, blew his beard, and said, “Could it be that you guys already decided on a jade craftsman since the jade has already been bought? If this piece of jade meets my expectation after I have a look, then I am willing to make an expectation and carve this jade!”

The manager was extremely surprised. Old Lin was one of the leading figures in the jade carving world. Even the jade carved from ordinary jade would fetch a high price after going through his hands. Numerous people begged Old Lin to help them carve a piece of jade, but he declined them all! It was unthinkable that this old man would come here after hearing the news and even promised to sculpt the jade if it caught his interest before even seeing the actual jade.

“It's a once-in-lifetime blessing to have you carve for them. I don't think that anyone would refuse this offer, right?” The shop manager politely asked Old Lin to wait. Then, he entered the private room and informed his master as well as Lady Fang and her daughter of the news.

Yu Xiaocao did not know of Old Lin, but Lady Fang had heard of the old gentleman's name before. As soon as the shopkeeper mentioned the old gentleman's name, Lady Fang didn't even ask her daughter's opinion before immediately agreeing. She would be foolish if she didn't immediately accept the offer. A piece of raw jade that was worth two hundred taels of silver could have its value increase by ten folds or even more after being carved by Old Lin! Only an idiot wouldn't take up on this chance!

As soon as Old Lin entered the private room, his eyes immediately landed on the raw jade on top of the table. Just at this moment, the golden kitten had just finished cultivating and lazily jumped off the jade. Old Lin's heart pounded rapidly and he shouted, "How can you let a kitten trample on such a precious piece of jade? If the jade is even slightly damaged, then even skinning the kitten wouldn't even be enough to make up for it!!"

The little divine stone was comfortably stretching itself when it heard the old man's words. The little divine stone's fur stood on its end in anger and immediately screamed at the old man [I am a divine stone that has cultivated for tens of thousands of years! I am the ancestor of all stones, so how can I be inferior to a broken piece of jade like this one? If you start beeping your mouth off again, then this divine stone will push this broken piece of rock from the table and break it!!]

It walked up to the mutton fat jade and put one of its paws on top of the stone. Its dark golden pupils had turned into slits due to anger as it stared at the old man threateningly.

Yu Xiaocao was amused at the little divine stone's reaction, but she was also angry for the little divine stone. A top-notch jade like this one was indeed rare, but it was a dead object. She was opposed to taking the life away from a living thing for a dead object!

Xiaocao reached out her hands, took the kitten, and gently stroked its fur that was standing on its end. She looked at Old Lin disapprovingly, "Old gentleman, what you had just said is wrong! I was the one who picked up this stone and Royal Prince Yang has already agreed to sell this piece of jade to me. This means that I have full right over how I use this jade, so it's none of your concern. Little Glutinous Dumpling has been raised by me for five to six years already, so how could my affections for a living being exceed that of a stone? If the jade was destroyed, then at most, the value of the jade would decrease. However, even the humblest life has the right to live and to be respected by others!! What do you think?"

Shopkeeper Zhang was afraid that Miss Yu would cause Old Lin to leave in anger, so he wanted to interfere. However, when he received a sharp glare from his master, he immediately changed his mind. Got it! Since the jade belonged to Miss Yu, then she had full right to do with it as she liked. Why should he interfere?

Old Lin was not a stubborn old antique who was bound to his old fashioned ways. When he saw that the jade was not damaged in any way, he breathed a sigh of relief and said with a smile, "I cherish this jade a lot, so I accidentally made an inappropriate analogy, so I blurted out something crude. If young lady is still upset by what I said, then this old man will gladly take back what I just said. However, this old man

has to remind you that this jade is among the best mutton fat jade I've ever seen. Have the two of you discussed the price yet?"

"Oh, that's right!" Yu Xiaocao turned to look at Zhu Junyang who had a poker face on. She blinked her eyes playfully and asked, "Royal Prince Yang, how much do you plan to charge me for this piece of jade?"

"..." Zhu Junyang silently stared at her charming and adorable appearance. He fell silent for a moment before he raised his index finger and then shook his head lightly.

"One million taels of silver?" Old Lin cried out in alarm and promptly started to talk, "Royal Prince, please think twice about this! This piece of jade is extremely valuable. I believe one million taels of silver is too low!"

"I won't charge even one tael of silver!" Zhu Junyang had an unhappy expression on his face. Didn't he tell her that what he owned was going to be hers in the future, and what she owned would always be hers? Didn't speaking about the price of the jade make the relationship between the two of them too awkward and unfamiliar?

"Uh..." The words that Old Lin wanted to say next were stuck in his throat. He turned to look at the young lady carefully and realization suddenly hit him when he recalled the rumors he heard. "It would be a pity if this piece of jade is made into jewelry. However, if it's carved into an auspicious ornament such as 'Lovely Flower, Round Moon', 'Amidst the Flowers Under the Moonlight', and 'Hundreds of Children and Thousands of Grandchildren', etc., as a betrothal gift, then it would be the first of its kind in the entire Great Ming Dynasty!"

Betrothal gift? Zhu Junyang's heart skipped a beat. After the New Years ended, he was definitely going to head over to the Yu Family to propose. The little lass residing in his heart deserved the best of the best. He would make Old Lin carve this piece of top-notch mutton jade and send it as the defining piece of his betrothal gift. His gift would definitely cause a big sensation in the capital! He had set his mind; this mutton fat jade will belong to his little lass no matter what. But this gift will just be sent to her later than he had originally planned.

Zhu Junyang no longer pretended to be cold and domineering. He looked at Old Lin earnestly and asked, "Based on your experience, what do you think the theme of this jade should be?"

Old Lin's eyes were still focused on the jade and he answered without hesitation, "Based on the shape of this piece of jade, I believe it would be best if we carved it into 'Amidst the Flowers Under the Moonlight'. In addition to that, 'Amidst the Flowers Under the Moonlight' is more appropriate and suitable for your highness's needs. When you grow old, you can always reminisce about your youth when you look at the jade carving. Wouldn't that be great?"

"Okay! Let's do as Old Lin said! Old Lin, will you be able to finish the final product within two months?" Zhu Junyang already came to his decision, but if he planned on using it as a betrothal gift, then it needed to be completed on time!

"Why? Is the Royal Prince planning to propose in two months?" Old Lin looked down and pondered for a moment. Then, he nodded his head vigorously and said, "This old man will release the vigor from my youth and finish the jade carving for you in two months! I will make sure I won't delay your matter!!"

Yu Xiaocao rolled her eyes; he had just told her that the jade belonged to her and that she could do whatever she wanted with it. After a span of a few minutes, he selected the jade craftsman for the jade, the theme of the jade, and even the deadline for the completion. He decided everything on his own initiative! Didn't he tell her that he was going to listen to her?

"Ahem ahem!!" Xiaocao cleared her throat, reminding him of her existence.

Zhu Junyang suddenly turned to look at her and smiled apologetically and said, "Little lass, I'm sorry but you can't take this piece of jade by for the time being. Rest assured because this piece of jade belongs to you. However, it will be delayed by two months. Oh right, little lass, what do you think about the theme of the jade carving being 'Amidst the Flowers Under the Moonlight'?"

'You have already decided on everything, so what's the point of asking me?' Could she slap him on his face in public and make him lose face? Yu Xiaocao pursed her lips and said with no interest, "It's fine as long as you believe it's fine. Is my opinion even important?"

"Your opinion is important! Of course, your opinion is important! If you don't like the theme, then we can replace the theme with something else...what do you think of the theme, 'Hundreds of Children and Thousands of Grandchildren'?" He asked in a fawning manner. Zhu Junyang saw that she was unhappy, so he hurriedly became a filial and devoted dog.

“Scram!”

'Why would you give a jade carving with the theme 'Hundreds of Children and Thousands of Grandchildren' to an unmarried girl? Royal Prince Yang, did you have a brain spasm? Or are you deliberately trying to get scolded?' Yu Xiaocao took in a deep breath and suppressed the curse that she was about to spit out. She rolled her eyes at him and said, “Let's go with the 'Amidst the Flowers Under the Moonlight' theme. As long as it's something that won't arouse suspicion, then it'll be fine.”

Old Lin watched the young couple with interest as they 'blatantly flirted' in front of him while he held the twelve catty jade. He didn't feel the weight of the jade in his arms at all; he wouldn't mind holding another ten pieces of jade with similar qualities!

However, the young girl from the Yu Family was as the rumors had described; she was a fascinating person. The interactions between her and Royal Prince Yang were very natural. The communication between the two seemed to have stemmed from their spirits and was not restricted by the morals of the secular world. It was particularly pure and innocent!

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Since Yu Xiaocao was unable to stop Zhu Junyang's ridiculous behavior, she decided to ignore him and said to Shopkeeper Zhang, “How much would it cost to buy all the remaining jades?”

“Uh...” Shopkeeper Zhang secretly looked towards his master. His master had already given away a top-grade mutton fat jade worth over a thousand taels, so would he still care about this 'little money'? Although these added up to over six figures...just thinking about it made his heart ache!

“Why are you looking at this prince? Just accept what you're supposed to take!” Although he said this, Zhu Junyang avoided the lass's line of sight and secretly made an implicit expression at Shopkeeper Zhang. They definitely had to collect some money; otherwise, the lass would get angry and leave without taking any of the jades. As for his betrothal gifts, it would probably be difficult to even send them out after the New Year.

Shopkeeper Zhang received his master's signal and said with a polite smile, “Miss Yu, for the two mutton fat jades in your hands, the smaller one cost 10,000 taels and the bigger one is 15,000 taels. I'll just take 5,000 taels for the remaining white jades and green jades. Thus, it's a total of 30,000 taels. You're bought over by the master himself, so I'll offer you the best discount available at the store. You just need to pay a total of 15,000 taels!”

Yu Xiaocao didn't continue to argue. After all, if Zhu Junyang went to shop at her stores, she would also give him the best discount. After she swiftly paid the money, she felt an aching pain as she looked at the several pieces of unimpressive looking jades.

'People often say that gold is valuable and jade is priceless, but this is too expensive ah!' Yu Xiaocao sighed in her heart. If she didn't have the money-making business 'Blossoming Beauty', there was no way that she would spend over ten thousand taels for several worthless rocks!

"Miss Yu, rest assured, this old servant will definitely pick the best craftsman to process these jades for you. Do you have any special requests?" Shopkeeper Zhang spoke in a very humble and polite manner. His master had that he would send the betrothal gifts after the New Year, so it was certain that status of the future lady of the house belonged to this young maiden.

When Shopkeeper Zhang first saw Yu Xiaocao, he was confused by her casual and indifferent attitude. He had originally thought that when a peasant girl entered the grand and imposing 'Wisdom Jade Pavillion', she would feel uneasy and slightly nervous. However, this young maiden wasn't like that at all. Furthermore, the bearing of Lady Fang and the two maidservants behind her gave him the wrong impression that his master had changed the target of his pursuit. (Author's note: If Zhu Junyang knew what he was thinking about, he would definitely want to crack open his head to see what was inside!!)

But, afterwards, his misconception was broken by the name 'Miss Yu'! Was there anyone who didn't know that the Yu Family were a nouveau riche family in the capital? They came from a low origin and had a low-ranked official's position and an awkward status, but no one in the capital dared to publicly offend the Yu Family.

One should know that in the winter, they had control of the meals on the dining tables of the noble families in the capital! Even if one didn't care about the food, there was no guarantee that one's wife and daughter didn't love beauty ah.

Loving beauty was a woman's nature. Due to the excellent quality of the products and services at 'Blossoming Beauty', many ladies with troubled skin had obtained satisfactory results after using their products. These results were spread by word of mouth, and now, most of the noble madams and young misses in the capital had a 'Blossoming Beauty' membership card.

Even if they couldn't apply for a card due to lack of financial resources, they would use their long-time savings to buy a set of skin care products suitable for their skin. During the winter, the climate in the

capital was cold and dry. If they tried to use other products after using Blossoming Beauty's products, their skin would feel dry and uncomfortable as if they were wearing a mask.

Recently, Blossoming Beauty had launched skin care products for children, which were naturally non-irritating and could protect the child's skin. This was good news for the children in the capital.

One must know the strong influence of bedside whispers. Even if there were officials who were dissatisfied with Yu Xiaocao being an official, they wouldn't be able to take up the idea of going against the Yu Family due to the gentle advice from their fierce wives and precious daughters.

It was just that Shopkeeper Zhang hadn't expected that Miss Yu had such poise and composure. She didn't seem rustic at all and might be even more graceful than some of the noble young misses in the capital. What he admired the most was that such a small person was able to tame his master, who was such a big monster. She could get Royal Prince Yang, who was known for his ruthlessness and cruelty, to be so obedient and vowed to marry no one else but her. How skilled was that? It seemed like, in the future, he must do his best to please his mistress in order to secure his status!

Shopkeeper Zhang had actually thought about so much in this short period of time. Xiaocao, on the other hand, was still discussing with Lady Fang about what the jades should be carved into and how to carve them!

"This smaller piece of mutton fat jade can be carved into a pair of dragon and phoenix pendants. It's quite fitting to gift a pair of dragon and phoenix pendants for Third Young Master Zhou's upcoming marriage!" Lady Fang thought about the hairpin that Third Young Master Zhou gave last time and felt that a ten thousand taels jade pendant should be considered presentable. Yu Xiaocao nodded her head and decided to also give the bride a pink pearl bracelet. In this way, the wedding present wouldn't seem stingy!

"This piece can be made into a pair of bangles. Cao'er, I noticed that you don't have much jewelry, so let's make it according to the size of your wrist!" It was difficult for women to resist jewelries, and Lady Fang was no exception. However, it was hard to find exquisite jades. As a mother, how could she try to take a fine piece of jade from her daughter?

She didn't have much jewelry? How was that possible? One should know that the man in front of her, in order to gain her reassurance, did everything he could to send her gifts from time to time, and most of them were jewelries worn by young maidens. As long as there was something that he liked at Treasure Pavillion, it would be sent over to her. There were things like diamond earrings, diamond necklaces,

diamond bracelets, and jewelry made of ruby, sapphire, and emerald. There were also a lot of jades and corals... There was barely any space left in her little treasure box.

After Xiaocao expressed that she had enough jewelry, Lady Fang looked at her and said, “Even if you're not going to wear them, it's good to save it as your dowry in the future!”

Royal Prince Yang had sent such valuable betrothal gifts over, so their family naturally had to enrich her dowry. It was difficult to come across high quality jade, but it shouldn't be too late to start saving up now.

Yu Xiaocao rolled her eyes in her head, 'Do I need these to make my dowry look more ample? Blossoming Beauty, pastry shops, pharmaceutical workshops, and the wine distillery...which of these aren't golden hens that produced money? Isn't just any one of these more valuable than the top-grade mutton fat jade that can't be eaten or drunken?'

“Godmother...why don't we both get one each—mother-daughter bangles! I reckon that the quality of this piece of jade is quite good. You can pass on your bangle to my younger sister-in-law as a family heirloom that can be passed down generation to generation. It can be considered a memento of the ancestor for the descendants. What do you think?” Yu Xiaocao urged Lady Fang as she looked at Fang Haolin, who was eating pastries and playing with the new toy that Zhu Junyang gave him.

Upon hearing himself being mentioned, Fang Haolin nodded his little head hard and said, “Okay! One for Older Sister and one for Little Linlin!”

“It's for your wife, not you!” Yu Xiaocao helped him wipe the crumbs on his face and laughed as she tapped his little head.

With a matter-of-course expression, Fang Haolin said, “What belongs to my wife also belongs to me!”

“Wrong!” Zhu Junyang came out to show his presence again, “It should be 'everything that belongs to you also belongs to your wife'! What are men earning money and working so hard for? Isn't it for their wife and children? Little Linlin, you must quickly change your thinking, lest you can't find a wife in the future. At that time, you won't have any tears left to cry!”

When Shopkeeper Zhang heard this, he felt even more firm about his decision to curry favor with his future mistress. Even his master had said that everything he owned belonged to his wife, which meant that Wisdom Jade Pavillion and himself, a servant, were no exception. It seemed like his master would be changed soon!

Fang Haolin, the little fellow, felt troubled for a moment, and then reluctantly said, "Alright! Everything that belongs to Linlin belongs to my wife, and everything owned by my wife is also Linlin's, okay?"

"No! What belongs to you also belongs to your wife, and everything your wife owns belongs to herself only!" Zhu Junyang firmly abided by Xiaocao's words. He indeed had the potential of being a completely devoted husband.

Fang Haolin's little face scrunched up even more as he looked at the delicious pastry in his hands. When he thought about how there would be a young girl fighting for food with him in the future, his mood immediately turned bad. With an expression as if he was about to cry, he looked at his mother and older sister, and pitifully said, "Getting married isn't fun. Linlin don't want a wife anymore!" Everyone in the room was immediately amused by his words!

In the end, Xiaocao made the final decision to make two bangles—one for her godmother and one for herself. The rest were made into jewelries or jade pendants to be given as New Year gifts to every member of the family. Even Little Linlin was given a jade amulet!

After that, the mother and daughter strolled around the shop again. Xiaocao noticed that there wasn't a single jadeite accessory in the store. When exactly was jadeite introduced into China? In her previous life, Yu Xiaocao hadn't graduated from middle school and didn't know much about jades. Thus, she naturally didn't know about this. However, it seemed like jadeite wasn't very popular at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty!

Her eyes suddenly lit up at this thought! The business opportunity was self-evident. Perhaps, she and Zhu Junyang could be the first to endeavor in this business. With this thought, she pulled Zhu Junyang aside and whispered, "Ruizhi, I thought of a way to make money that will need your help. Are you willing to help me?"

"Of course! Only a dumbass would refuse to earn money!!" Zhu Junyang had heard this phrase from Xiaocao by chance!

“Don't you have a team specialized in foreign trade? In the southwest of our Great Ming Empire, there's a small, undeveloped country. There's a lot of mountain forests in the country, but they produced a kind of jade called 'jadeite'. There are various colors such as green, purple, red, blue, yellow, and black. Good quality jadeites are as transparent as glass, and glossy like mutton fat jade. It's similar to nephrite and also good for people's health!” Yu Xiaocao stopped for a moment and looked at Zhu Junyang with a gaze full of expectation.

Zhu Junyang was inwardly curious about how she, who rarely left home, knew about everything around the world. Was it that cultivated stone who told her? Perhaps that place was the hometown of the multicolored stone? The little divine stone, who was in its master's embrace, rolled its eyes, 'Dude, you're thinking too much!'

“You mean...you want this prince to gather a group of merchants to do jadeite business with a small, unknown country?” Zhu Junyang asked as he looked at the young girl's face, which brightened up as soon as she talked about making money.

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“Mhm! Not only can we do a jadeite trade, but we can also set up a stone betting shop near the stained glass factory! The jade rocks transported from there can be put on site for people to buy with a marked price. Like gambling, if the value of the jadeite is higher than that of the original jade rock, then you win the bet! If not, then you lose! One shall know that it's hard for even immortals to break jade. The jade stone is mined in the mountains and wrapped within a thick layer of stone. Is there jade inside? How much? How's the quality? It's all based on luck or experience...”

In her previous life, Xiaocao had seen a movie about stone betting. She knew a little about stone betting, and thus sounded quite believable. In actuality, she didn't know the slightest about stone betting. But she had the little divine stone as her cheat ah! If this was her previous life, she might have gotten rich overnight with a trip to Tengchong!

[It's a pity that you were so stupid at that time. You had this divine stone beside you for so long, yet you didn't initiate the process of recognizing the master. What an idiot!] The little divine stone roasted her.

[Who knew that there would actually be a little sprite hidden within an unassuming, little multicolored stone. I used to be an atheist, so I never expected that there would be so many immortals and demons in the world!] Yu Xiaocao roared back in her mind. At that time, she had picked up the little divine stone by chance and tied it onto her wrist with a red string. Who would have thought that such a cute, little thing could be summoned with one's own blood!

[You're the one who's cute, your whole family is cute!!] It was the dignified divine stone who could be ranked among the deities if it cultivated up another level. But it was actually called cute by a young human girl, and she even called it a little thing. There was no way that it was going to tolerate it!

Yu Xiaocao replied in a matter-of-course manner, [Of course I'm cute—everyone loves me. It's pitiful that no one loves you. You got abandoned by your master and punished by your master's friend to cultivate in the human realm. If you hadn't encountered me, who knows how many more years it would take for you to see the light of day again!]

[This divine stone exhausted all my spiritual power in order to save your soul, lest you have to suffer the cycle of reincarnation. Is this how you should treat your life savior?] The little divine stone was angered because of her teasing.

[Ok, ok, ok! You have worked hard and achieved great merit. You're the best. You're the most amazing, okay?] Yu Xiaocao comforted the angry golden kitten perfunctorily. Seeing its cute and proud appearance, she couldn't help but kiss its little ear.

She saw the color of the golden kitten's face gradually darken, and it was close to a light pink color. It turned out that the proud divine stone would also be shy. Yu Xiaocao felt that it was very interesting. When she moved closer to kiss its small head, she suddenly noticed that her hands were empty. Someone had snatched the little kitten away!

She looked up and found Zhu Junyang glaring at her with a displeased expression...to be exact, he was staring at her red lips. Perhaps it was the effect of the mystic-stone water on her body that caused her lips to appear pink like a spring peach blossom. It looked glossy and moist as if she had put on a layer of pink lip gloss. Her mouth was very small yet plump. After looking at them for a long time, one would have the urge to kiss her.

At this time, it felt like this for Zhu Junyang. However, his future mother-in-law and younger brother-in-law weren't too far away. He had this thought in mind, but he didn't have the guts to act upon it. He could only glare fiercely at the little lass and silently threatened, 'I'll deal with you in the future!'

'Such a huge vinegar jar—he's even jealous of a kitten!!' Yu Xiaocao felt very speechless.

The little divine stone felt very embarrassed, 'This divine stone was harassed by a weak human girl. Will those shameless immortals laugh at me when I return to the celestial realm? No way, I must cover up this matter and never let others know!'

Yu Xiaocao glanced at Zhu Junyang and asked, "I'm telling you something serious. What nonsense are you thinking about? Stone betting and jadeite are definitely profitable businesses! But it's an inhospitable environment there. So I reckon that it won't be peaceful on the road."

"Leave it to this prince. I guarantee that you will get a satisfied answer in a few days!" Although Zhu Junyang didn't know much about jadeites, the lass was very excited when she mentioned it. Therefore, it must be a profitable business.

As for stone betting, he was more optimistic about this. In the capital, there were a bunch of profligate sons of wealthy families who had money on hand and no place to spend them. They would be very interested in gambling. An example would be the entertainment club in the suburbs. Horse racing was the most popular and profitable activity. He pondered about it in his heart. If the stone betting business was managed well, it would earn money faster than horse racing! After all, who could resist the temptation of getting rich overnight?

After they left Wisdom Jade Pavillion, the group went to eat at the nearby Zhenxiu Restaurant. Originally, they had wanted to meet the groom and congratulate him. Unfortunately, the decoration of Zhenxiu Restaurant's main hall was in full swing. It was all managed by a steward, and Third Young Master Zhou was nowhere in sight. There were only a few days before his wedding, so that guy was probably very busy!

Yu Xiaocao glanced at the main hall, which was decorated in a very festive manner. It seemed like Third Young Master Zhou didn't forget to promote his own business even on his wedding day. He was inspired by her hairpin ceremony and decided to hold his wedding at his own restaurant! Her hairpin ceremony was one of the first in the capital to be so grand and unique. Since then, many families followed suit and held their daughter's hairpin ceremony at Zhenxiu Restaurant.

The cost of holding a hairpin ceremony wasn't cheap, but more importantly, it saved a lot of work and gained a lot of face. It didn't matter that it was expensive because there were plenty of families in the capital who didn't lack money.

In the twinkling of an eye, it was the day of Third Young Master Zhou's wedding. The guests of the wedding naturally had to dress more festively. Yu Xiaocao wore a moon-blue colored beaded top-jacket

with narrow sleeves and a pinched waist red outer gown with embroidered hems. It was embroidered with soft, elegant patterns using silver silk threads. On the bottom, she wore a lake colored silk gauze pleated skirt. There were faint multicolored flowers between the pleats, and golden flowers woven on the azure stripe on the hem. She was covered with a pale mauve colored ferret fur cloak with plum blossom patterns. She didn't have a lot of accessories on her head. The red coral hair-ornament inlaid with diamonds was particularly eye-catching. The bright red color was embellished with bits of broken diamonds that looked like stars falling from the sky. When complemented with the lass's fair jade-like skin and pair of big, bright eyes, she looked as delicate and dazzling as a porcelain doll.

Zhu Junyang, who came to pick Xiaocao up to go to the wedding together, saw that she had 'carefully' dressed up for another person, but that person wasn't him. Moreover, it was for another man. He couldn't help but feel extremely jealous. He wished he could hide this delicate and beautiful maiden so that he would be the only one who could see her beauty.

“Why are you just standing there foolishly? It's getting late, so let's go!” Seeing the flash of amazement in his eyes and his dazed expression, Yu Xiaocao's vain heart felt an unprecedented satisfaction. This ugly duckling could also turn into a swan when dressed up!

However, compared with the handsome man in front of her, her appearance was only 70% as good as the other party's. But she already felt very satisfied. Ay...this guy's looks was too law-defying. The heavens were too partial towards him! She was originally a delicate beauty, but when she stood beside him, she had directly turned into an ugly duckling.

It was thanks to her careless attitude and strong heart that she didn't feel inferior and despair under his radiating aura. 'Ay...this man must have saved the entire galaxy in his previous life, and thus he was able to meet such a great woman like me in this life—pfft!' She couldn't hold back and laughed.

“You...do you need to wear more clothing? I heard that it's cold today!” Seeing the lass's slender waist and delicate figure under her cloak, Zhu Junyang had an urge to wrap her up tightly with clothes.

Was it cold...today? Yu Xiaocao looked up at the bright sun in the sky. Compared to a few days ago, today was a rare day of fine weather! Then she looked at her clothes. She wore a jacket on the inside, and the cloak she had on was extra thick... She shook her head and said, “I'm wearing more than enough! I'm wearing two layers of woolen trousers inside the dress, so I'm not cold at all! If I add on more clothes, I'll feel so heavy that I won't be able to walk properly!”

'If you can't walk, then this prince can carry you!' Zhu Junyang almost said that out loud, but he knew that if he did, the lass would look at him with an angry expression and roll her eyes at him. "Alright! Then hold this brazier. Wrap it with a piece of cloth to avoid burning your hands... Also, when you go out, put on your hood and scarf."

"Aren't you being too over? It only takes a few steps to reach the carriage, and then I'll enter the house again after getting off the carriage. How cold would I be?" Although Yu Xiaocao said this, she felt very pleased inwardly that she had trained such a warm man for herself. In the ancient times, when male chauvinism was so widespread, there was such an attentive and considerate man waiting for her love. What more could she ask for?

Mhm...she must swiftly take in this pretty boy, so as to not be intercepted by others who noticed his good qualities! When he mentioned the matter of the marriage proposal in the upcoming year again, she would stop keeping him in suspense and go along with him. Her parents and family members should probably arrive in the next few days, right?

"What are you thinking about? You're not even looking up. Did you almost trip on the threshold?" She felt a strong hold on her hand. The warmth of the warm and strong palm transmitted to her hand through the cotton gloves. Under his help, Yu Xiaocao crossed the high threshold and reached the carriage. Yet he was still unwilling to let go of her hand and directly supported her onto the carriage.

"Have you...settled on Royal Prince Yang?" Lady Fang, who had entered the carriage first, looked at her daughter with a slightly complex expression. On one hand, she was very happy to see Royal Prince Yang being so considerate and good to her daughter. On the other hand, they weren't an official couple after all. If they acted so intimate in public, would it lead to people gossiping about them?

Yu Xiaocao nodded her head without any hesitation. She wasn't really someone from ancient times, so it wasn't her style to be reserved.

Lady Fang smiled helplessly and said, "In this case, tell him to quickly come to propose the marriage!" This was to avoid bad rumors about her daughter if it got dragged out for too long.

"Mhm! He plans on getting someone to calculate a good day to have his elders come over to propose the marriage after the first month..." It was just a marriage proposal. They would have to wait at least until she reached the age of eighteen for the actual wedding. She had already held her hairpin ceremony that represented adulthood, but in her mind, one would only be considered an adult when one reached

eighteen. It was very dangerous for girls, who weren't fully developed, to get married and give birth too young, okay?

However, that guy, Zhu Junyang, wasn't that young anymore. He didn't seem to oppose the idea of her getting married after the age of eighteen. Could it be that the emperor, who was also a transmigrator, said something to him? If that guy could wait, what was her rush? She thought that it was too early to get married at eighteen! In her previous life, a young girl of this age was still a senior in high school ah!

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The wedding ceremony was grand and novel, and nothing was out of the ordinary. Everything was carried out according to the ancient traditions. Before the groom, Third Young Master Zhou, went to escort the bride to the wedding, he saw Xiaocao and her party and hastily came to greet them. After that, he would be very busy. Even after he completed all the procedures of the wedding, he still needed to come out to toast and entertain the guests.

Royal Prince Yang's arrival had caught the Zhou Family by surprise. They had no connection with Royal Prince Yang, and thus there was no way that they could invite him. Why did the prince deign to come here? But the Zhou Family members instantly understood when they saw the young maiden beside him who he was carefully protecting.

In addition to Lady Fang's status of a noble-titled madam, Xiaocao had a position as an official and was personally bestowed the title of 'royal princess' by the emperor. Thus, they were invited to sit at the main table, which was surrounded by the most respected members of the Zhou Family. The group of old men were afraid that Xiaocao, a young girl, had no one to talk to, so they specially got Third Young Master Zhou's mother, Second Madam Zhou, who was originally unqualified to sit at the main table, to accompany and talk with Xiaocao. After all, when they were at Tanggu Town, Xiaocao often visited the second branch of the Zhou Family and the two had a decent relationship.

When the groom came over to toast the table, Xiaocao watched as he, who was dressed completely in red, drank several cups of wine and his handsome face flushed with a healthy glow. There seemed to be a strong sense of happiness in his smile. She joked, "As the saying goes: 'People are in high spirits when involved in happy events.' Third Young Master indeed looks radiant today ah!"

The elders of the family all knew about Yu Xiaocao's relationship with the Zhou Family, or to be exact, Third Young Master Zhou. It could be said that if he hadn't met Yu Xiaocao, the current young head of the household might still be the third young master of the second branch who had great ambition but lacked opportunities to display them.

People often said that Third Young Master Zhou was a business genius, but without Xiaocao's recipes and methods of making vermicelli, seasonings, and century eggs, his Zhenxiu Restaurant would probably just be an inconspicuous restaurant in Tanggu Town. It would just struggle under the exclusion of the long-established Fulin Restaurant.

With his abilities, he might still be able to become successful. However, there would be a lot of hardships and obstacles in the process, making his road to success even longer. By that time, the position of the head of the Zhou Family might have already fallen into the hands of his 'eldest uncle'. There wasn't anyone who was amazingly talented among the legitimate descendants of the first branch, so, perhaps, the Zhou Family would have slowly disappeared in the business industry after struggling to stay afloat for several generations.

With the success of the young head of the household, the Zhou Family had a resurgence that was closely related to the delicate and weak-looking Royal Princess Jinan in front of them. Who would have thought that an inconspicuous girl from a fisherman's family would become acquainted with the third young master of the Zhou Family because of selling seafood. Furthermore, she used her ability to help Zhou Zixu, who wasn't successful at the beginning, to succeed step by step, allowing the Zhou Family to regain its glory.

This young girl looked unassuming, but no one would have thought that, with her own abilities, she first gained the trust of Royal Prince Yang and boldly attempted to grow high-yielding corn kernels brought back from the western hemisphere. The output had shocked the imperial court.

After that, she cultivated the high-yielding winter wheat, which caused the emperor to make an exception to promote her to become the first female official in history. She also repeatedly made great achievements, such as greenhouses for vegetables and fruits, delicious canned fruits, nourishing fruit wines, and amazingly effective medicinal pills...

Each and every one of them were achievements that caused people to feel envious. However, they could only be covetous because she was no longer a mere peasant girl without any support. She now had very strong backing ah!

It was said that the emperor emeritus was fond of her craftsmanship and character, and wanted to take her as an adopted granddaughter, but she rejected the offer. Not to mention that the emperor had attached great importance to her and bestowed her the title of 'royal princess', but he also gave her a dragon shaped jade pendant that symbolized the 'golden token that saved one from the death penalty'. Most importantly, the cold-faced killer, Royal Prince Yang, who was feared by all of the children of noble

families in the capital, had actually fallen in love with this young girl. He had pursued her for many years, yet their status was still unknown.

People in the capital had been speculating the relationship between the two for many years. At the beginning, they all said that the little peasant girl clung onto Royal Prince Yang in order to gain a firm foothold in the capital. Later, it was said that Royal Prince Yang liked the little peasant girl's capability and wanted to take her as a concubine, but the little peasant girl wasn't satisfied. Thus, Royal Prince Yang gave her the cold shoulder and refused to give her a formal status. Now, with the affirmation of the young girl's abilities, the rumors had changed again. Royal Prince Yang had long been interested in the young girl, but her family didn't easily agree because she was still too young. He was now waiting for the young maiden to reach the age of eighteen to marry her...

The members of the Zhou Family and guests who came to celebrate the happy occasion were lucky enough to see Royal Prince Yang personally accompanying Miss Yu to congratulate the young head of the household. In their hearts, they had all tacitly approved the third speculation. Royal Prince Yang showed a very meticulous attitude towards Miss Yu. When they entered the door, he personally held her cloak. He handed warm tea right into her hands. With the advantage of having long arms, he filled her bowl with the dishes that young girls liked to eat at the banquet. It seemed like this Miss Yu had remarkable means. She was able to train the fierce horse—Royal Prince Yang—to be so docile and obedient!!

Looking at the natural and harmonious interaction between Xiaocao and Royal Prince Yang, Lady Zhou maintained a polite smile but her heart wasn't as calm as she seemed. As his mother, there was no way that she didn't know her son's feelings. At that time, when Xiaocao was still the daughter of an ordinary fisherman's family and first revealed her talent in cooking, Lady Zhou had been silently observing her. She felt that, despite having an inferior background, if the young girl could help her son, it wasn't impossible for her son to marry her.

However, others had noticed the young girl's beauty and talents before she had even grown up. Moreover, this person was a royal prince with a prestigious status. Even if her son was the head of the Zhou Family, he still couldn't compete with a member of the imperial family. What merchants feared the most was to get into a conflict with government officials.

She had originally thought that Royal Prince Yang only wanted to try something new. Perhaps, after two years, he would give up on this idea and listen to his elders' advice to marry a noble maiden of equal status. However, she was surprised to find out that he was a devoted lover who silently waited on the side for the young girl to blossom into her most beautiful side.

Her son just had that thought in mind. On the one hand, in order to ensure a better future for the second branch, he was busy with family matters. With the expansion of Zhenxiu Restaurant, he seldom returned to Tanggu Town. When he had the rare chance to return, he still had to accompany her—his mother. The chance of the two interacting gradually decreased. On the other hand, her son had also shared similar thoughts as her. He felt that the girl was too young, and he wasn't in a rush to express his feelings, lest he scared her.

However, he had never expected that someone with a strong presence appeared beside the young girl. With his patience and efforts, he won the lass's approval and love.

“Miss Yu, this cup of wine is a toast for you! Thank you for helping me for so many years. Without you, there wouldn't be today's Zhenxiu Restaurant, and the current me! I shall finish my cup first to show my respect!” Zhou Zixu drank all the wine in the cup in his hands. The young girl in front of him, who was like a small bud, had slowly blossomed into her most beautiful times. However, the one who witnessed her growth wasn't him. The wine in his mouth was clearly good wine from The Yu's, yet the taste had instantly turned bitter!

Let this be the last time for him to be enamored by this young maiden who could never be his. After today, he would have his own life partner, so he must treat her wholeheartedly. Although he might not be the best husband, he could give his loyalty to her.

Didn't the young girl in front of him admire 'one partner for a lifetime'? He wanted to show her that he could do it. Unfortunately, that person wasn't her!

“Third Young Master, you're speaking as if I'm an outsider! Speaking of this, had you not generously helped us, how could the Yu Family develop so smoothly? In my heart, I regard you as my older brother and good friend, yet you act like a stranger and call me 'Miss Yu'. Ay...I'm hurt. I can't drink this cup of wine!” In the weddings in her previous life, there was a custom of teasing the newlyweds. Yu Xiaocao pretended to put down the fruit wine in her hands with a 'this baby is unhappy' expression on her face.

Xiaocao was still the Xiaocao in Tanggu who liked to tease, laugh at, and annoy him. Perhaps, it was only his state of mind that had changed. Third Young Master Zhou shook off the emotions in his heart and showed a joyful smile, “Since you regard me as your older brother, I'll accept this honor and dare to call you 'Younger Sister Xiaocao'. Alright, no need to say anymore. Everything goes without saying. Younger Sister Xiaocao, give Older Brother face and drink this cup of wedding wine.”

“That's more like it! Third Brother Zhou, I wish you a lifetime of mutual, unchanging love. On the wide land and high sky, two pairs of wings fly side by side. May you two grow old together, live in conjugal bliss, and be blessed with a child soon!” Yu Xiaocao had no qualms at all as she presented the congratulatory phrases that she plagiarized from the weddings in her previous life.

“Thank you very much, Younger Sister Xiaocao! I still need to toast at other tables, so please excuse me. You should eat more. Mother, please help me take care of her.” After Third Young Master let go of the beautiful dream in his heart, his words and actions had become much more natural.

Lady Zhou looked at her son with relief and nodded, “Go, I'm here! Don't drink too much...”

“Today is Third Brother Zhou's good day. Even if he wants to drink less, it's still unavoidable. However, in order to prevent him getting dead drunk and being disliked by Older Sister-in-law, I have a sobering pill here. I guarantee that he won't get drunk after taking this!” Yu Xiaocao had wanted to say 'be careful that Older Sister-in-law would punish him to kneel on a washboard for getting drunk', but this was the ancient times when one had to respect their husband. Thus, it was better not to act too unconventional.

Third Young Master Zhou felt that he had a decent alcohol tolerance. However, with certain business partners and bad friends here, he wasn't confident that he could leave the banquet sober! Since Xiaocao said that, then the sobering pill must be very effective. After he thanked her, he took the pill and directly swallowed it.

After toasting the elders' tables, it became very lively when he came to the table with people of the same generation! Although several people were arranged to help him block the alcohol, Third Young Master Zhou was still forced to drink a lot of alcohol.

Looking at the bustling scene in the main hall, Xiaocao sighed, “These people really know how to look for trouble. Getting married is so tiring ah!”

While no one was watching them, Zhu Junyang quietly whispered in her ears, “Don't worry, this prince will be there! You just need to rest in the bridal chamber. If you want to eat something, then just have someone go make it. This prince will take care of everything outside. You won't be tired!”

“Go away! Did I say that I'll marry you?” Yu Xiaocao made sure that no one was paying attention to them as she glared at him fiercely and pinched the flesh on his thigh with her hands under the table. 'Damn! Is this guy's flesh made of iron? My hands are sore, but he still looks fine.'

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Seeing that the kitten was baring her claws, Zhu Junyang quickly coaxed her, “Isn't this prince just worried that you will be traumatized by weddings? Who would you marry other than this prince? If you dare to marry someone else, then I will rush over to steal the bride and demolish the family while I'm at it.”

“Bandit!” Yu Xiaocao withdrew her sore hands and scolded lightly.

Zhu Junyang grinned at her and said, “Yes, this prince is a bandit. A bandit who only steals your heart...”

'Damn!! There's something wrong with the cold-faced royal prince today ah!' Yu Xiaocao had goosebumps all over her body when she heard his cheesy remark. Would it be too impolite if she puked right now? 'Hey, the guy surnamed Zhu, can you act like a normal person? You're ruining my appetite!'

Zhu Junyang, who probably saw the unpleasant expression on Xiaocao's face, stopped while he was ahead. He quickly reached out to grab some of Xiaocao's favorite dishes and put them into her small bowl. Yu Xiaocao felt like she had lost her appetite, and it was all thanks to this guy!!

That night, after Third Young Master Zhou lifted the bride's veil and drank cross-cup wines, he took out the dragon and phoenix pendants that Yu Xiaocao gave them. Then, he handed one of them to the bride. Huang Shuya looked bashfully at the handsome and gentle man in front of her. He didn't have the air of a sordid merchant, but instead appeared like a refined groom. Her heart slightly palpitated as he thoughtfully helped her put on the jade pendant.

Although it could be said that she had agreed to this marriage herself, they had only seen each other two or three times before the wedding. Her husband's appearance was well-known in the business industry, and some people privately gave him the nickname of 'Jade-faced Lord Mengchang' .

She had heard about him a long time ago. He was handsome, a business genius, and a philanthropic man... Because of her curiosity, she had once dressed up as a man to peep at him without her family's knowledge. His handsome looks and unique disposition left a deep impression on her. When the middleman came to propose marriage, her mother had quietly told her that the person who proposed

marriage was actually the future head of the Zhou Family. At that time, she had inwardly jumped with joy.

Huang Shuya was a competitive woman. Otherwise, she wouldn't have studied business with her older brothers at a young age. Furthermore, she acted like spoiled brat and asked her father for the management rights of several shops. She also declared that she wanted to compete with her older brothers to see who was better. Facts had proven that she indeed had her own knacks in business. The shops that she managed thrived, which caused her father and brothers to look at her in a new perspective.

She was the youngest child in the family and the only girl after her mother gave birth to five boys. At home, she was loved by her father and pampered by her older brothers. Otherwise, they wouldn't have let her 'monkey around' and study business as a woman.

As for her marriage, her family had also asked for her opinion. Her parents had even agreed to her 'absurd' request to meet Third Young Master Zhou before the engagement. So, accompanied by her parents, she met him in a private room at The Yu's Tea and Pastries Shop.

At that time, Huang Shuya had wanted to pretend to be an elegant lady. However, when her father and Third Young Master Zhou mentioned the founder of The Yu's—her idol Miss Yu—she couldn't help but join in the conversation. She expressed her respect and admiration towards Miss Yu, as well as familiarity with her 'great achievements'. She solemnly stated that Yu Xiaocao was the person who she admired the most beside her father!

Huang Shuya had a lively appearance when she spoke excitedly, which reminded Third Young Master Zhou of Yu Xiaocao. He had thought that he wouldn't meet another young girl, who was independent and ambitious, except for Xiaocao. He hadn't expected that the wife chosen by his family was such an interesting person. Third Young Master Zhou's impression of the daughter of the Huang Family had deepened. Perhaps, this unanticipated marriage alliance would bring him unexpected gains!

“Thank you, Husband!” Huang Shuya looked at the dragon shaped jade pendant on Third Young Master Zhou's waist. It was obviously made of the same piece of jade as her pendant. She had a jewelry box that stored jewelry made of gold, silver, and pearls. There were also some jade hairpins, jade bangles, and jade pendants. The texture of this pair of jade pendants was absolutely exquisite. It was apparent that they were carved by an expert craftsman, and they were worth a lot.

“Husband, did you buy this jade pendant from Wisdom Jade Pavillion? It's really rare to find such an exquisite jade accessory shop in the capital!” Huang Shuya originally had a generous and straightforward temperament. After getting over her shyness at the beginning, she had gradually opened up.

Third Young Master Zhou took out a pink pearl bracelet, pulled on her fair, soft hands, and gently put it on for her. With the pink pearl bracelet, her pale and slender wrist looked even more clear and smooth. He retracted his gaze and looked at his bashful wife, saying, “I think so? This pair of jade pendants is a wedding gift from Younger Sister Xiaocao. She also specially instructed me to give this pink pearl bracelet to her older sister-in-law...”

Upon hearing the title of 'Older Sister-in-law', Huang Shuya's face flushed bright red with embarrassment, as if pink clouds had drifted onto her lovely face. To be honest, she preferred the pearl bracelet on her wrist to the jade pendant. It wasn't difficult to find pearls the size of a joint of a pinky finger, but it was hard to find pink pearls. Furthermore, no matter if it was their size, roundness, or color, this string of pearls seemed to be identical, which was even more rare. There were very few young girls who didn't like soft pinkish colors. Hence, Huang Shuya really liked this pearl bracelet.

“A gift from Younger Sister-in-law? Isn't this too expensive? I have only heard of the older sister-in-law giving presents to the younger sister-in-law. Would it be bad for me to accept such a valuable gift from my younger sister-in-law?” Huang Shuya had heard a little about Third Young Master Zhou's background. She thought that it was a gift from the younger sisters-in-law of the first branch, so she hesitated whether she should accept it.

“She's not those younger sisters you're thinking about. How could they be so considerate?” Third Young Master Zhou didn't know how he should treat the first branch, let alone those so-called siblings. So it was better not to mention them. He held his wife's hands and said, “Younger Sister Xiaocao is Yu Xiaocao ah! Haven't you always wanted to meet her and ask her for tips on how to manage a shop?”

“Miss Yu? You mean Miss Yu is your younger sister?!!” When Huang Shuya heard that her idol was so close to herself, she couldn't sit still anymore and immediately stood up. Then she felt a slight disappointment within her heart. If it wasn't her wedding today, wouldn't she be able to see her idol? However, Miss Yu had sent her gifts—an exquisite jade pendant and precious pearl bracelet! No, she had to carefully cherish two items, lest her heart ache because something happened to them!

“Wife, what are you doing?” Third Young Master Zhou looked strangely at his new wife. After she wandered around the room, she solemnly opened her dowry box. She carefully took off the bracelet, wrapped it in a silk handkerchief, and gently put it inside the box. After that...she started to untie the jade pendant on her waist. He felt puzzled and couldn't help but ask what she was doing.

“I need to put it away so that it won't be broken! This was a gift from Miss Yu!! I actually received a gift from Miss Yu, who had started from scratch and established 'The Yu's'!! I must put it away carefully!” Huang Shuya focused on untying the jade pendant on her waist. Perhaps it was tied too tightly, but after trying for a long time, she still couldn't untie the jade pendant. She couldn't help but pout.

“Wife, calm down for a moment! Sit down and listen to me!!” Third Young Master Zhou didn't know whether he should laugh or cry. The most important person in his newlywed wife's heart wasn't him. There was actually a slight unpleasant feeling in his heart!

Huang Shuya seemed to have accepted being addressed as 'Wife'. She might have also been too focused on the fact that her idol had given her a present, and thus she didn't notice what he had called her. Unable to untie the jade pendant, she couldn't help but ask a certain person for help in a tone that she usually used when she acted spoiled with her family, “Help me untie it~”

“Who am I? If you're asking for one's help, you must properly address them. What do you call me?” Third Young Master Zhou suddenly wanted to tease his new wife. He looked at the naïve and cute young maiden in front of him with a smile. He had heard the young maiden had a unique insight in business, so he had thought that she would be a calm and clever woman. He hadn't expected that she was gentle and adorable in private. Could this be that all capable women had two sides? This was true for Xiaocao, so was it also like this for his little wife?

“Hus...Husband...please help me, okay? Okay?” Huang Shuya lowered her head with a blushed face as she was too embarrassed to look at him.

Third Young Master Zhou held the young maiden's soft hands, and said with a smile, “My silly wife, you don't need to act like this. After you interact more with Younger Sister Xiaocao in the future, you will know that she isn't as lofty as you think. She's also just an ordinary young girl. You two are about the same age and both like to earn money, so you two will definitely get along in the future!”

“You mean...I can meet Miss Yu in the future, and I even get to speak with her? She seems to be very busy with the assignments from the imperial court and matters of The Yu's. How would she have the time to meet me? Husband, you aren't trying to coax me, right?” Huang Shuya's face flushed with excitement, and her cheeks were even redder than when she was shy earlier.

Third Young Master Zhou's sense of helplessness deepened a little bit. It seemed like he didn't have to worry about another man stealing his wife, but he had to prevent his wife from being stolen by his younger sister!

“Younger Sister Xiaocao is a business partner of Zhenxiu Restaurant. You have also heard the rumors about the success of Zhenxiu Restaurant, right? Those special seasonings, as well as many of the best-selling dishes, were all made by Younger Sister Xiaocao. It can be said that we wouldn't have the current Zhenxiu Restaurant without her.” Third Young Master Zhou informed the young maiden about his relationship with Xiaocao.

“Wow! Miss Yu is so amazing! She actually created so many new dishes! It turns out that my favorite 'fruit-scented roasted duck' is made by Miss Yu ah!! I'll be happy to death if I can try the dishes made personally by Miss Yu!!” Huang Shuya's eyes became even brighter, and the expression on her face was full of admiration.

“Don't mention that unlucky word on this auspicious day. Quickly knock on wood!” Third Young Master Zhou felt very powerless. His wife didn't worship him, her husband, but instead regarded another person as her idol. How should he fix this?

Huang Shuya suddenly frowned, looked at him puzzledly, and asked, “ But why didn't Miss Yu open her own restaurant when she knew the recipes for so many popular dishes? If Miss Yu opened a 'The Yu's Restaurant', your family's Zhenxiu Restaurant definitely can't compete with her! Why did she give such a profitable business to you?”

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Upon seeing his wife's questioning gaze, Third Young Master Zhou didn't know whether he should laugh or cry. Whose side was his wife on?

He patiently held his wife's hands and explained, “At that time, when the Yu Family just separated from the main family, they were impoverished. Even if they wanted to open a restaurant, they didn't have the capital. Younger Sister Xiaocao sold the recipes to me, and slowly accumulated the funds to do what she wanted to do. You wouldn't think that everyone is like you, with a family to prepare the shop and goods for you to freely utilize, right?”

Huang Shuya's face slightly heated up when she heard his words. She had always thought that her shops flourished because she had the talent to do business. Now, it seemed like she wouldn't be able to accomplish much without her father and brothers. From the bottom of her heart, she seriously admired

this young girl of the Yu Family, who was younger than herself but had started from scratch and created one miracle after another.

“I heard that Miss Yu started to earn money to support her family before the age of ten. It's really not easy ah!” Huang Shuya's heart couldn't help but ache for her idol.

Third Young Master Zhou was glad that he had married a wife with such a lively, sincere, and naïve character. He had long inwardly made up his mind to treat his wife well, but if the other party was difficult to get along with, or had a personality that he didn't like, then there was nothing he could do. Because, as the head of the Zhou Family, he was destined to sacrifice most of his time on the family and business. How would he have the spare time to become compatible with the other person?

Well, now, his heart throbbed for the young maiden's sometimes shrewd and sometimes naïve personality. The smile on his face became even more genuine. Looking at the young maiden's blushing face, he suddenly had the urge to tease her. So he looked at her with a seemingly plaintive expression and said, “Wife, can we not talk about Younger Sister Xiaocao?”

“What else would we talk about other than Miss Yu? Quickly help me take it off. What if it breaks? This is something Miss Yu gave me ah!” Huang Shuya was still struggling with the jade pendant's dead knot with her head lowered and didn't want to lift her head at all.

Her personal maidservant, who was serving by her side, felt very anxious. 'What is Young Miss doing? Is it really alright for her to ignore the young master and focus on her own matters? What should they do if the young master is displeased with the young miss? Before the wedding, the madam repeatedly reminded the young miss to restrain her temperament and prioritize her husband. How can she forget it as soon as she leaves home?'

The maidservant tried to remind her young miss several times, but she was stopped by Third Young Master Zhou's gaze. In order to shift his wife's attention back to himself, he had no choice but to use Xiaocao's name, “Usually, there will be maids serving you when you're dressing up, so how can it get broken? Moreover, that lass has made a lot of money over the years. If it got broken, then let's just have our younger sister replace it!”

“You make it sound so easy. It's hard to even buy this jade pendant without at least ten thousand taels. Such a high quality jade would be reserved before it appeared in public. People can't vie for it even if they wanted to! Don't take advantage of Miss Yu just because you two have a close relationship.” Huang Shuya defended Yu Xiaocao.

“After you return from your maiden home on the third day, I'd planned to take you to the Yu Estate and introduce you to Younger Sister Xiaocao! If you put away the jade pendant and bracelet, Younger Sister Xiaocao might mistakenly think that you didn't like her gifts. She will be so heartbroken ah! Using the gifts given by others is the proper way to show respect and appreciation to the giver. Don't you agree?” Third Young Master Zhou threw out a small bait.

Sure enough, the little fish got hooked! Huang Shuya was so excited that she grabbed his arm and shook it vigorously. With excitement in her voice, she said, “Really? You're not lying to me, right? You're taking me to meet Miss Yu? That's great! I can finally talk to Miss Yu!! I need to tell her I love the pastries at her shop, especially the newly launched chocolate mousse. I buy all my skin care products from 'Blossoming Beauty'. After using them, my skin has become brighter and softer. I also like her family's fruit wines. The sweet fruit wines taste really good!! I even asked my parents to include a lot of her family's medicinal pills and syrup in my dowry...”

The young maiden was elated and chattered endlessly with him. Third Young Master Zhou didn't know he should react to her words. He had originally thought that he had gotten the lass's attention, but now, the other party was still focused on his younger sister. Ay...he really wanted to ask, 'Wife, if you can only pick one between me and Younger Sister Xiaocao, who would you choose?' But he didn't dare to ask, for fear that she would blurt out an answer that he didn't want.

Third Young Master Zhou could only vaguely agree, “Mhm, Father-in-law and Mother-in-law are quite scrupulous. They even prepared commonly used medications for you. But, Wife, our family don't lack medicinal pills and syrups. Furthermore, they are all personally made by Younger Sister Xiaocao. The effects are even better than the ones sold at the pharmacy...”

“Wow! Medicinal pills and syrup made by Miss Yu herself?? Can you show me? Can you give me two pills? Let me taste it to see if it tastes the same as the ones sold at Tongren Medicine Hall...” The young maiden's eyes shone brightly as she looked at him expectantly. Her expression made it hard for one to refuse her request.

Third Young Master Zhou immediately pulled a long face, 'It's medicine, not candy. You even want to try it!' He couldn't let his silly wife, who became foolish when she heard Younger Sister Xiaocao being mentioned, continue on like this!

“Wife, did you forget something?” Third Young Master Zhou leaned forward and lowered his head to look at the pair of sparkling eyes and small face.

“What?” Huang Shuya blinked several times and thought hard. Before she got married, she had brought along everything that she needed ah! Her parents and older brothers had prepared a rich dowry for her. The shops that she managed were also included in her dowry. Mhm...she had even taken along her favorite white Pekingese. It seemed like she didn't forget anything, right? Even if she did forget something, she could just send Huaying back to fetch it!

Huang Shuya thought seriously for two seconds, and then gave up. She looked at today's groom with a slightly confused expression. Mhm...when dressed in red, he appeared more charming than usual and gave off a different feeling.

“No, you forgot what day it is tonight!” Third Young Master Zhou moved closer again and their bodies were almost touching each other. Huang Shuya had to lean her upper body backwards to avoid her chest being squashed.

However, Huang Shuya didn't instantly understand what he meant and resolutely said, “I didn't forget. Today's the day of our wedding! Look, we haven't even taken off our wedding attires yet!”

Third Young Master Zhou chuckled, put his arms around her slender waist, and said in a low voice, “Since it's our wedding night, let's not talk about irrelevant matters! Wife, you want to take off your wedding dress? Why don't I, your husband, help you?”

When Third Young Master Zhou moved closer to Huang Shuya, the maids in the room had tactfully taken the young madam's maidservant out of the room. At this time, only the newlyweds were in the room.

Huang Shuya's face suddenly flushed red, and she shyly shifted her gaze. On the night before the wedding, her mother had vaguely told her about the matters between a married couple. However, in front of her newlywed husband, she was still at a loss and didn't know where she should look.

Every moment of the wedding night was precious. How could Third Young Master Zhou waste such a beautiful night and beauty? After that, Huang Shuya no longer had time to think about her idol. She spent her wedding night in the joy of shyness and pain.

Afterwards, she had to offer tea to the elders, as well as get to know the complex relationships and relatives in the family. On the third day of the wedding, she had to visit her maiden home. She also had

to take over managing the affairs of the second branch. The New Year was approaching, so she had to discuss details of the New Year celebrations with her mother-in-law... When everything was on the right track, she finally remembered that, on their wedding night, her husband had once promised to introduce her idol to her. More than two months had already passed.

After much longing from her parents at Tanggu, Xiaocao had returned home after the wedding. As the new year approached, the greenhouse vegetables business at Tanggu was even more prosperous. Fortunately, the steward that Royal Prince Yang sent over was very capable. Now, Yu Hai and his son only had to send one person over to inspect the operations daily. No matter if it was the greenhouse vegetables or breeding base, Steward Ding had everything arranged in good order.

No kidding, Steward Ding was one of the most capable stewards in Prince Jing's Estate. Xiaocao had once inadvertently mentioned to Zhu Junyang that her father was in charge of the breeding base and greenhouses, and he was so busy that he often missed meals and had gotten a size thinner. She had a rather gloomy expression when speaking, so as a considerate and devoted man, Royal Prince Yang naturally couldn't bear to see his little lass unhappy. Thus, he sent Steward Ding over.

Well, of course, Steward Ding was only temporarily helping out. When he found a capable person to take his place, he would return to the capital and manage some of the businesses under Royal Prince Yang's name.

After Zhu Junyang obtained new ideas for business opportunities from Xiaocao, he sent a team of explorers to the barbarian lands in the southwest. He had never doubted Xiaocao's ability to know all matters of the world, despite the fact that she had never left home. Since it was her mystical stone that told her, it was definitely right. But this business couldn't be established in a short period of time.

However, he could foresee that, as long as it was done, it certainly wouldn't be inferior to the entertainment club in the suburbs of the capital. After all, getting rich overnight was a fatal temptation for many people. Steward Ding was the talent he had reserved to manage the stone betting house. By the time the stone betting house was completed, Steward Ding should be ready to let go of the affairs in Tanggu and officially take over the matters of the stone betting business.

His considerate arrangement greatly relieved the Yu Family's father and son. Although Yu Hai was considered quite capable in the village, his abilities were limited after all. With Steward Ding's assistance, the father and son had learned a lot of management skills from him. Yu Hai finally gained some confidence in managing such a large project for the first time.

Yu Hang was still the one who learned the most seriously! He was originally a clever person, and under Xiaocao's careful supervision, he had read a lot of books. Thus, he learned faster than his father. His younger siblings all had their own futures. As the eldest son, he must stay in their hometown to protect their old residence and roots. Therefore, he was left in charge of the breeding base and greenhouses in Tanggu.

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In Yu Hang's opinion, most of the family businesses were his younger sister's credit. He never thought about taking the properties in Tanggu Town for himself. He wanted to help his younger sister as much as he could so she wouldn't have to worry about everything.

However, he didn't know that Xiaocao regarded the money made from the greenhouse vegetables in Tanggu Town and thirty percent of the profits from the seed breeding farms as income for the family. In addition, all of this would be inherited by him, the eldest son of the family, in the future.

Xiaocao naturally wouldn't treat her other siblings badly. The pharmaceutical workshop in Dongshan Village had expanded to three times the original size and was used to just supply the Tongren Medicine Halls in the region south of the Yangtze River. Ever since Yingtao transferred to the capital to develop a new pharmaceutical workshop, Xiaolian had been in charge of the workshop in Dongshan Village.

Every year, forty percent of the annual profit of the Dongshan Village Pharmaceutical Workshop was taken out by Xiaocao and deposited in the bank account Xiaolian had opened. When she saw a good shop, she didn't just buy it for herself but also bought several for Xiaolian. Every year, there were several thousand taels of income just by collecting rent.

Xiaolian was kept in the dark about all of this. That is to say, Xiaolian unknowingly had an annual income of more than ten thousand taels and was now a rich woman!

As for Little Shitou, who had the best relationship with Xiaocao, she naturally wouldn't be stingy towards him. The fruit and medicinal wine business in her hands had thirty percent taken out for her little brother. In the future, her younger brother would take the path of an official. With his teacher Headmaster Yuan, there definitely wouldn't be a shortage of connections. However, in the official's circles, without the backing of money, it was difficult to do anything.

With the large share of annual income every year, her little brother would be able to become an upright official without any worries. Xiaocao helped him plan this in secret!

In the middle of the twelfth month, the family gathered in the capital and surrounded Yu Hai and Madam Liu, gossiping about their daily lives. Xiaocao took out a few papers from her room and gave them one by one to her parents and siblings.

Yu Hai looked at the title deed with his name on it. He frowned slightly and looked at his daughter with disapproval, "The property in Tanggu Town is the business that Cao'er bought with money you saved up cent by cent. I'm just managing it for you. In the future, it will be for your dowry. You...How could you secretly change the name on the title deed to mine?"

"Father, I don't agree with you if you say it like that! Our family's property was clearly bought by the little bit of money we accumulated from the watermelons and vegetables we worked hard to grow. It should be counted as shared. You put all the credit on me, but be careful as Older Brother and Older Sister may say that you are biased!" Yu Xiaocao quickly gave a sweet smile when she saw that her dad was upset with the decision she made on her own. Yu Hai, the perfect example of a good father from the Twenty-four Filial Exemplars, couldn't stay upset faced with the cute smile of his youngest daughter.

Madam Liu laughingly looked at her man, who was coaxed by their little daughter, and hurriedly said, "Cao'er, the methods of planting the early maturing vegetables and fruits were thought of by you. We can't take that credit. Also, when you bought the land for the property, the money you obtained from your recipes, and your share of the Zhenxiu Restaurant went into it."

"Mother! I'm your daughter. It's my duty to contribute to the family. We're family, so why do we have to be so clear on this? Father, Mother, I've seen a lot in the capital these past few years and naturally thought further in the future about things. Many of the officials in the capital go home to worship their ancestors every year as they all have ancestral homes."

After a pause, Xiaocao looked at her younger brother who was holding the piece of paper with a look of opposition and continued, "In the future, Younger Brother's prospects will certainly be not bad! To be an official is to be in the slaughtering house. Tanggu and Dongshan Village are his roots, so there must be an ancestral home and property right? The house in Dongshan Village can be the ancestral home of the Yu Family. The properties between Tanggu and Dongshan Village can be our ancestral property! Not only that, but all the money we earn in the future and the property we invest in will also be in our Yu Family!"

Then she looked at Xiaolian, who looked similar to her, and smiled, "Xiaolian and I will have to marry in the future. No matter who we marry and where we go, Tanggu and Dongshan Village is our maternal home. As long as our maternal home is strong, then you can support us as married daughters! In the

future, our family will certainly become one of the richest families in Tanggu Town and then we will be able to stand upright in our husband's home! Don't you think this is reasonable?"

Madam Liu listened to this and had nothing to say. She looked at her husband. Yu Hai's frown loosened and he sighed, "Alright! I'll take the title deed for the time being. In the future, the production of the properties will be divided into five parts, one for each of you four siblings and one for your mother and me. I'm gonna say this first, Cao'er, when you get married, your mother, and I will definitely give you more help financially to make up for it. The rest of you can't have any complaints then!"

Yu Hang opened his mouth first and said, "How can we have any opinions? We are already taking advantage of our sister! Little Sister, Tanggu Town's other businesses are part of the ancestral property so we are getting the advantage. However, the seed breeding farm is the investment that you and Royal Prince Yang made. Currently, it's mostly managed by Head Steward Ding. Why are you giving me thirty percent of the share? As an older brother, how can I take advantage of my sister so clearly? Do you still want me to have respect as a man when I go out?"

"Older Brother! What are you saying? Zhu Junyang has other plans for Head Steward Ding. He is only staying in Tanggu Town temporarily. You should learn as much from him as possible while he's here. As you know, I have my own assignment. There are a lot of trivial matters in the capital, so I don't get to come back to Tanggu Town often every year. Father is getting older. In the future, I will have to rely on you to manage and operate the farm! Financial matters should be settled clearly even between biological brothers. If you help me manage the farm, then you're basically half owner. Thirty percent of the share is considered too little!" Yu Xiaocao had a good point.

Yu Hang didn't think so. Each of the managers, regardless of their level, of the farm had their own duties. He only went over when it got busy to take a look. He couldn't even help much. Besides, siblings helping each other shouldn't have benefits being linked in. Otherwise, wouldn't it be too impersonal?

He was about to continue refusing but Xiaocao stopped him, "Older Brother, do you think that we have a good relationship as siblings? Wouldn't you do your best to help even without a share? But, you haven't thought about it clearly. In the future, you will have to take a wife and have your own children. Over time, would they become dissatisfied because you are busy with other people's businesses all day? When that time comes, how do you want me, this married younger sister, to face my sister-in-law and nephews?"

Yu Hang was turning nineteen after the New Year. He and Liu Huifang's love for each other was something the family elders noticed. The Yu and Liu Families already had a private discussion and agreed to have the marriage of the two occur after the New Year.

Although Liu Huifang had a good relationship with Xiaocao, they would all have their own families and would think of their own family first. No matter who, seeing their husband being busy for someone else's business, and leaving their own business behind, it would be ok for one or two days but after a while, they would definitely be in a bad mood. Yu Hang knew about the matters of the world. Xiaocao's pointers made him unable to speak.

Yu Xiaolian, who was in charge of the pharmaceutical workshop in Dongshan Village, also listened to her younger sister's words at this time. She knew that, in addition to the shares that she deserved, her younger sister also wanted to supplement her.

When she was a child, looking at her weak little sister, Xiaolian's young heart made a wish to take good care of her and protect her from being wronged. However, as her little sister got better and better every day, she became more and more like an older sister and ended up taking care of her instead.

Not only her, but the whole Yu Family, unknowingly had thought of the young and small Yu Xiaocao as the backbone of their family. Her younger sister used her weak body to pick up the burden of their family. She brought the Yu Family from a small farming family to a nouveau riche of Tanggu Town in one leap. Even in the capital, they could have a foothold.

Xiaolian knew that, even if she refused, her little sister would have a lot of reasons to persuade her. So she solemnly put away the deed paper, looked at her younger sister, and said, "I, this elder sister, will have to shamelessly accept this important gift."

With a smile, Xiaocao put her arms around her neck and said, "We've been together since we were born. You took care of me when we were children, and now you have helped me so much. This is what you should get. Xiaolian, if you treat me like an outsider, see if I acknowledge you as my sister!"

"Second Sister! Elder Brother and Elder Sister can help you, so you can give them a share. I didn't help with anything, so why did you give me shares of the winery?" Little Shitou couldn't help but put his head between his two sisters to ask in doubt.

Xiaocao hadn't pinched the boy's face in a long time and her hands itched to do it. She reached out her hands, held the face of the little bun-shaped face of the scholar who passed the county level exams, and pulled it to both sides before laughing, "Does an older sister need a reason to give a younger brother gifts? What do you say?"

"Well, whatever you say. I'll take the contract, so are you satisfied? Second Older Sister, be merciful!" Although Little Shitou wasn't at home all year-round, he still adored and stuck to his second sister. He listened to what she said and had no intention of refuting it.

When he was little, his second older sister liked to pinch his cheek. He was almost fourteen years old now. Next year, he was going to take part in the prefectural examination, yet he was still being pinched by his second sister. If his classmates knew about it, wouldn't they laugh at him? However, only his second sister could wreak havoc on his face. If it was anyone else trying, he or she would be killed by sharp words!

"Shitou, you've lost weight. The flesh on your face doesn't feel as good. Studying abroad must be hard right? Elder Sister will fill you up at New Years. That way, you'll have the spirits to deal with the autumn exam. How about it?" Yu Xiaocao had learned about her younger brother's situation from her friend, Yuan Xueyan. She knew that Great Scholar Yuan thought highly of him and there would be no problem for him to pass the small provincial exam.

When Little Shitou heard that his sister would cook delicious food for him, he showed an expression of salivation, "Second Sister is the best. When I go out, the most painful thing is that I can't eat the food made by you. It's all I can think about! Second Sister, don't worry! At this time next year, you will be the elder sister of a provincial official!"

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"Good! Today, Older Sister will do her best for her dearest younger brother!" Yu Xiaocao rolled up her sleeves and put her hands on her hips, striking a very heroic pose.

Madam Liu held back a smile to glare at her youngest daughter and said, "What do you look like right now? You don't look like a girl at all. Careful, you won't be able to get married..."

Yu Hai wasn't happy at this and immediately said, "Do you have to say such a thing about your daughter? How can our daughter not get married when everyone loves her when they see her?"

Little Shitou came out reminding everyone he was still there, "Second Sister, it doesn't matter! I think you're very nice right now; you are true to yourself and have no pretenses! If someone doesn't like you because of this, he has no sense! Don't worry, if you can't get married. I'll support you!"

"Go, go, go!" Xiaolian gently pushed her younger brother. She looked at her younger sister playfully and snickered, "Our family's Xiaocao has been thought about by someone for a long time. They are just waiting for her to bloom and take her home! How could it ever be your turn to raise her?"

Madam Liu heard this and frowned slightly in worry, "Cao'er, after these years of observation, I know that Royal Prince Yang is sincere towards you. However, the prince's status is too high, and marriage is about the right family. Our family's condition can still be counted on in Tanggu Town, but in the capital, we won't be able to know anything since it's so far. I'm afraid that you'll be wronged if you marry into the prince's estate..."

"Mother, you must tell Royal Prince Yang when you see him. See how he responds. If he can't guarantee happiness for Second Sister, then he shouldn't continue courting her! Humph, my second sister's food is so good. For her to be stolen by a lump of ice, I feel that it's a loss for her!"

Speaking of Zhu Junyang, Little Shitou, the protective maniac, would get angry thinking of him. In his opinion, his second sister should find someone who was gentle, considerate and could take care of her rather than a person who had a scowling face all day, as if someone owed him several hundred taels! How could he be worthy of his sweet, lovely, cute, smart, and capable Second Sister?

"Master, Madam, Second Miss, Royal Prince Yang is here..." Speak of the devil and he shall come. Zhu Junyang had come over in a hurry. Who was he kidding, this was the real father-in-law coming to the capital, how could he, the future son-in-law, not come over to give a good impression?

Before Yu Hai could open his mouth, Little Shitou took the lead and said, "Invite him to the study outside and serve him with good tea and water. I'll be over with my father in a bit."

Xiaolian covered her mouth and secretly enjoyed herself. She looked over at her younger sister, who was beside her as if nothing had happened. To Little Shitou, she said, "He didn't come over to see you. What are you going over for? To be annoying?"

Little Shitou raised his eyebrows and said with a face full of smiles, "Is my second sister a random person that he can see whenever he wants? Right now, Second Sister isn't alone. As brothers, shouldn't we make trouble for those who have evil designs on her?"

"Come on? You'll be afraid to say a word once you see the face of Royal Prince Yang!" Xiaolian was afraid of Zhu Junyang with his cold face. She didn't know how her little sister could always talk and laugh around him. Sometimes she even had a little temper. Her little sister was too brave to not be afraid of him at all.

"What is there to be afraid of? Can he eat me? If he dares to do anything to me, Second Sister will avenge me!" Although Little Shitou said it like that, he still lacked some confidence. To tell the truth, he was a little afraid of Royal Prince Yang!

"Who is it? Who dares to bully my future brother-in-law? Where did he get the bravery? Shitou, with me, your second brother-in-law as your backing, you can walk across the capital without any problems!" Zhu Junyang, who didn't treat himself as an outsider in this situation, had already arrived in the inner courtyard after the servant girl reported. He heard half of Little Shitou's words in a half trance and thought there was some blind son of a noble family who had offended his brother-in-law so he spoke up to support him. If he wanted to take the beauty home, then he must put in a great amount of effort!

"This is the inner courtyard of Yu Estate! How can an outsider come in and out at will? How did you guys become servants? How can we leave Second Sister in your care in the future!" Little Shitou heard Zhu Junyang's voice and felt a little guilty. However, his desire to be protective over his elder sister made him ready for war again.

Zhu Junyang was not stupid. Naturally, he heard that his brother-in-law's words were aimed at himself. But he pretended to be an idiot and agreed, "Your second young master is right! The inner courtyard mustn't allow outsiders to enter at will. Chunhua, Qiushi, you must protect your young miss. If there's someone who doesn't have eyes, just beat them out. It doesn't matter if they become broken. I'll take care of it! "

Little Shitou frowned and looked at the shameless man entering the hall naturally to greet his parents. Where did he think the Yu Estate was? His backyard?

"I'm talking about you! You're the one who's going to get kicked out of here!" Little Shitou saw him smiling and walking toward his second sister. He hurriedly went over to his second sister and stopped in front of her, glaring at Zhu Junyang.

Zhu Junyang looked down at youth, who was a head shorter than himself and had a childish looking face. Despite that, the young man was clearly resolute in shielding his elder sister's body from him. Zhu

Junyang smiled at him and rubbed his head, "Shitou, I'm your second sister's future husband, your future second brother-in-law. How can you regard me as a stranger?"

"Don't ruin my second sister's reputation! Without a matchmaker and without an engagement, who would admit that you are my second brother-in-law?" Little Shitou didn't like his confident appearance and deliberately challenged him.

Zhu Junyang didn't want to get on the same level as him, the little guy who was in the middle school phase. He looked at his future father-in-law and his mother-in-law with a smile and said, "I'm here today. Besides treating Uncle Yu and Aunt Yu for dinner on arriving, I also want to discuss with you about the marriage proposal after the new year..."

"Marriage proposal? I don't agree! Don't think you can steal my second sister away!" Yu Fan, who was normally polite and courteous to schoolmates and people outside, currently turned into a middle school student. He jumped out and glared at Zhu Junyang with hatred. If he didn't know he couldn't beat him in a fight, he would've jumped and bit him already.

Zhu Junyang gently frowned and looked down at his future brother-in-law. He couldn't help but silently curse the younger man, 'Are all youths this annoying? If this was my son or younger brother, I would have slammed him off to one side already. However...if he was a son who looked like Xiaocao, I'm not sure I could do that, seeing a small face that is similar to hers...'

"Did you ask for your second sister's opinion? If your second sister is in love with me, the way you are acting would destroy your sister's marriage. She would've loved you for nothing!" Zhu Junyang reminded himself to remain calm as he did not need to get on the same level as a child that was half the size of an adult.

Little Shitou was still glaring at him, biting his teeth, "My second sister wouldn't be so blind!"

"Alright! Then let's talk. What kind of man, do you think, is worthy of your second sister?" Zhu Junyang asked.

"My second sister is worthy of the best person!" Little Shitou felt that his second sister, who loved him and saved him from poverty and hunger, was going to leave him, and the bitterness and pain in his heart gushed out.

Zhu Junyang positively said, "Can you name someone more suitable for your second sister than me? With your sister's talent, what kind of consequences will it bring if there is no one to protect her? You've been reading books for so many years, so you can tell by using your brain! And my identity, ability, and methods are enough to protect your sister's safety and let her do what she wants to do without worry! "

At this point, he paused. He saw the young boy's hands gradually clench, and he knew that he had understood. Then, he lowered his voice into a gentle voice and softly said, "Can you guarantee that other people can tolerate her capriciousness and will not interfere with what she is doing now and in the future like me?"

No, he couldn't! Over the past two years, Yu Fan had followed his teacher to and from and had seen many different situations. He had a very clear idea of what men were like. They looked down on women and couldn't stand to see women be better than them. In their eyes, the meek and obedient women who followed the three injunctions and four virtues were the best candidates for wives. He couldn't even stand the sight of men like them, let alone his second sister! He didn't want his second sister to be like a bird with its wings clipped, forever trapped in the small space of the inner courtyard...

However... "Can you promise to treat my second sister like what you just said forever though?" Little Shitou's tone loosened. If Royal Prince Yang could do it, then he was willing to give some consideration.

"Of course!" Zhu Junyang looked at the lass who had been smiling at her younger brother, who was putting him in a difficult position. The guarantee of those two words was not only for his future brother in law but also for her to hear the words from his heart.

"Humph! If you break your promise in the future, I will take my second sister back and support her!" Little Shitou finally let it go. He knew very clearly in his heart that Royal Prince Yang was correct in what he said. If Second Sister didn't have anyone to back her up and met someone inhumane, she would end up very miserable...

These few years, Second Sister was alone in the capital and ran her few shops smoothly. Without Royal Prince Yang looking after her, it wouldn't have been as easy. He hated that he was too young and grew too slowly to be a powerful support for his second sister. Well, after waiting for Second Sister for so long, Royal Prince Yang, at present, could be considered a qualified choice. As long as he was good to her, then he wouldn't have that many opinions!

Seeing that his little brother-in-law was finally not so against him, Zhu Junyang felt relieved. He steadfastly said, "Don't worry! I won't let you have that chance! So...can we sit down and talk about the marriage proposal and engagement?"

"My second sister just had her hairpin ceremony. Isn't proposing right now too early?" Little Shitou always thought that once his second sister got married, she would be someone else's family, so he still opposed it.

"Not early! Once the New Years is over, the lass will be sixteen! If she goes through the three letters and six rites, another year and a half would have gone by. Are you going to keep your sister until she's an old lady before you let her marry?" Zhu Junyang was speechless at this child. Who was the master of the Yu Family? No one else has come out to say a word about this little guy's actions.

"Alright!" Yu Hai, who was silent for a long time, finally said something. "Marriage is a matter of two families. What does your family think of this situation? Would they think our family is marrying to climb into a higher position? After all, our family's door is much lower than your family's..."

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"Uncle Yu, please don't worry about it! If my parents opposed, then they wouldn't have treated her that well at her coming of age ceremony! I have been chasing after the little lass every day for a while now, so my lord father and lady mother have already acknowledged it. You have no idea how much my lady mother cherishes her. She has long urged me to marry her!"

Princess Consort Jing worried that her son wouldn't be able to find a suitable woman to marry due to Zhu Junyang's violent and cruel temper. She even feared that even if he did, he might accidentally injure his wife or even worse...

But Xiaocao's appearance finally allowed Princess Consort Jing to see the light. The little girl was able to stop her son from losing his temper and as a result, her son's violent temper gradually became more and more gentle. In the past two years, Zhu Junyang didn't even lose control of his temper once. Princess Consort Jing would pray in the estate's ancestral hall multiple times over the years. She believed that Xiaocao was someone sent by the heavens to help redeem her son and that they were a match made in heaven. She was extremely relieved that her son didn't have to live the rest of his life in solidarity!

If it weren't because of Xiaocao's young age, she would've urged the two to get married a long time ago. Then, they would be able to give birth to a few small buns for her to play with. When her son was still young, he was extremely clever and cute, so she believed that her grandchildren wouldn't be lacking! She dearly wished for her son to give her beautiful and clever grandchildren soon!

It didn't matter what your identity or status was because once you reached a certain age, you would definitely look forward to having more grandchildren and a peaceful family. Princess Consort Jing was reaching fifty years old, but under Xiaocao's careful hands, she didn't look a day over thirty. Even so, it was impossible for her not to become envious when she saw others play with and spoil their grandchildren.

It was a pity that her only grandson from her eldest son was taught by the strict Imperial Prince Jing. As a result, her grandson acted like an old man even though he was still tender in age, so he wasn't cute at all. Her second son, who was twenty-five years old now, was still in the military. She didn't even see a shadow of a potential daughter-in-law from her second son. She was worried to death about his future!

She was originally most worried about her youngest son, but he managed to find himself a potential wife early on. It was a pity that his potential daughter-in-law was still too young. She had eagerly waited for her for six to seven years, and now, her potential daughter-in-law finally reached marriageable age. But why did her youngest son have to listen to the emperor's idea and wait until she was eighteen to get married?! When would she finally be able to carry her sweet and adorable little grandchild in her arms?!

She wasn't concerned about Xiaocao's family background and whatnot. Imperial Prince Jing will unconditionally like whatever Princess Consort Jing liked. Once Zhu Junyang got married, he would move into the royal prince estate that was bestowed to him by the emperor. As such, the opinions of her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law didn't matter!

Zhu Junyang had taken care of all the potential problems for Xiaocao. He had been guarding her for so many years, so how could he allow his soon-to-be wife to receive the slightest injustice? Therefore, all the concerns that the Yu Family had for Xiaocao's future was unnecessary.

The Yu Family secretly breathed a sigh of relief after all their worries were resolved. They agreed that on the second day of February, Imperial Prince Jing's Household could come to propose marriage

While Zhu Junyang was discussing his marriage proposal with the Yu Family, Xiaocao led her maid out of the room and headed for the main kitchen. She instructed them to make Little Shitou's favorite dishes. When she looked up at the sky and saw that it was getting dark soon, she realized that Zhu Junyang was probably going to stay for dinner too. So, she instructed the kitchen staff to include a few dishes that Zhu Junyang liked to eat.

Although she cooked it herself, the truth was that all the ingredients were prepared by the kitchen staff. She would instruct and correct them while they prepared the simpler dishes, but for the more complicated dishes, she rolled up her sleeves and made the dish herself.

They were able to finish preparing a dozen or so dishes in less than half an hour. During the meal, Little Shitou was unhappy because he believed that his older sister had been snatched away by his future brother-in-law. Thus, not only did he childishly eat all his favorite dishes, but he also ate a lot of Zhu Junyang's favorite dishes. Little Shitou wasn't careful and didn't pace himself, and as a result, he was overwhelmed by the large amount of food he consumed. His face turned pale as he laid on the kang bed while groaning in pain. He would only reveal his childish side in front of his family. To his fellow classmates and strangers, Yu Fan was a talented, clever, quick-witted, gentle, polite, and elegant youth!

Yu Xiaocao found the situation to be quite funny. She stuffed a pill into her younger brother's mouth that will aid his digestion and then urged him to head to the back garden to play with Tiny. Zhu Junyang, who had finally received the approval of Xiaocao's family, left after having a short dinner with them. Xiaocao walked him to the door.

Zhu Junyang turned around and straightened the hood on her head. Xiaocao was wearing gloves when Zhu Junyang held her hand and smiled brightly at her. His smile was as brilliant and beautiful as the sun in the spring of March, "After the New Years, you will be marked by me exclusively. You should obediently wait for me to propose to you!"

"When was I ever disobedient?" Yu Xiaocao's eyes widened to express her dissatisfaction.

Zhu Junyang raised his head and tucked a strand of her hair behind her ear. His seductive phoenix eyes were gleaming with emotions. His thin pink lips parted slightly as he said, "You have never behaved yourself. Every day, you would hop around my hearts, making it impossible for me to not think about you for even a mere second!"

Damn! When did the people from the ancient era become such smooth talkers? For a moment, Xiaocao almost believed that the devilish-handsome man standing in front of her was someone who had transmigrated here from the modern era, just like her!

Xiaocao's small heart was pounding rapidly as she stared at him with her round, apricot eyes. Her small cherry red lips formed a small 'o' shape, and her clear black pupils reflected his handsome smiling face.

Zhu Junyang reached out and stroked the top of her head. Then he helped her retie the cloak that was slowly loosening. The smile on his handsome face deepened, "You should head back. I'll come to visit you again in a few days. I really liked the dishes you cooked for me today, but in the future, you don't need to cook anymore. You can leave these tasks to the kitchen maids; you don't need to personally cook."

Yu Xiaocao was a little touched by his concern. She smiled mischievously and blinked her eyes innocently at him, saying, "I was going to make 'Buddha Jumps Over the Wall' for you the next time you visit me. But since you feel so distressed for me, then..."

"Uh...the recipe for the Buddha Jumps Over the Wall is complicated because there are many steps to the recipe. It's also very troublesome to make...but I believe it's okay to make it once in a while! I will visit you again in three days and I will also bring a New Year gift for your family..." The little lass had been busy with the task that the emperor assigned to her ever since she returned to the capital. She was busy earning money, so it had been a while since she had personally cooked.

It had been nearly a year since Zhu Junyang had eaten a delicious meal that was personally prepared by her. Buddha Jumps Over the Wall was a dish that needed a lot of preparation to be made. He was only about to eat it last time thanks to the emperor emeritus! Although he was reluctant to make his little lass prepare something so tedious in the winter, he was unable to resist the delicious temptation of Buddha Jumps Over the Wall.

Xiaocao knew that the cold and lofty man in front of her was secretly a foodie. Even so, she enjoyed feeding such a devilishly handsome man like him, "I understand! If I open a restaurant with Buddha Jumps Over the Wall as the signature dish, do you think the restaurant will be profitable?"

"Of course, it will be profitable! If you open a restaurant, then it will definitely outcompete Zhenxiu Restaurant!" Zhu Junyang felt indignant for Xiaocao because the man with the surname Zhou was profiting off his little lass's recipes. He would unconditionally support his little lass if she wanted to open a restaurant. Once she opened the restaurant, she would only need to train a few cooks to overlook the restaurant and he would take care of the rest for her. If she had free time, then she could go inspect the restaurant to see how well the business was doing. If she didn't have time, then she didn't have to go.

Even though Yu Xiaocao proposed the idea of opening a restaurant, she still regarded Third Young Master Zhou as a friend and a business partner. Opening a restaurant wouldn't be fair to him, "Forget it! I already have to manage a lot of properties, so I probably won't have the time to run a restaurant. I think it's better for me to sell recipes instead!"

“Didn't you tell me that you want to run a medicinal cuisine restaurant? Didn't you tell me that the Buddha Jumps over the Walls dish has the ability to slow down aging and strengthen a person's immunity to diseases? We can set Buddha Jumps Over the Wall as the main attraction of the restaurant while simultaneously launching delicious yet healthy medicinal cuisines to the menu. We'll just open one location in the capital, so it won't be considered as a direct competitor to the Zhou Family's business.”

Zhu Junyang proposed his idea. The main reason he was persuading her to open a restaurant was that he loved eating Buddha Jumps Over the Wall, yet he was reluctant to make his little lass tire herself out to make it for him. It would be a perfect solution for them to have a place where he could eat the dish whenever he wanted to! He believed that if his imperial grandfather knew of his grand plan, then he would definitely agree with his idea.

Yu Xiaocao pondered over his business proposal seriously. The truth was that her shop, 'Blossoming Beauty', also offered a similar service. The shop offered its guests medicinal cuisines, and the business was booming. Many of the powerful and influential families in the capital would order medicinal cuisines from the shop daily tailored to their own needs. The rear court of the shop had been set up solely to provide medicinal cuisines. The service was overwhelmingly popular, but the supply was unable to meet the large demand. He was right; it was time for her to create a separate shop for medicinal cuisines.

“Okay...then let's discuss this again once I have met with Third Young Master Zhou. Since we're planning to enter the food and drink industry, it will be inevitable for us to have competition.” Yu Xiaocao was torn, she didn't want to lose a close friend, so she hesitated for a moment before she made her decision.

Zhu Junyang didn't try to conceal his dissatisfaction, “Little lass, don't you think you're too concerned about his feelings? He isn't related to us, and at best, he is just a business partner. He might not necessarily appreciate your kindness!”

“Huh? Where is this sour smell coming from? Did someone knock over the vinegar jar? Why are you jealous of someone who is already married?” Yu Xiaocao was helpless in front of his jealousy. This man was perfect in every aspect, except—he was a little petty.

“Humph! Do you think that I didn't know that he liked you before?! If I hadn't kept a tight watch over you, then who knows what he would've done?!” Zhu Junyang believed that he had a keen sense and he believed that the man with the surname Zhou had coveted his little lass before. Fortunately, his little lass was still young and innocent at that time.

Yu Xiaocao let out a long sigh in her heart. She coaxed him like she was coaxing a child and said, "That's enough! You're overthinking things. I don't have a beautiful face or a nice figure. I don't even come from a prominent family. You're the only one who would tightly guard me like I'm a treasure. No one else would even put me in their eyes!"

"Who said that you don't have a beautiful face and a good figure? Is he blind? My little lass is extremely beautiful! I think you're an amazing woman!!" Zhu Junyang was unhappy when he heard Xiaocao's words! Did his little lass overhear someone gossiping about her? He must ask Hou Xiaoliang to investigate this. He wanted to see who was bold enough to criticize his little lass!

Yu Xiaocao's eyes were smiling when she glanced at him. Her gaze was somewhat flirtatious when she smiled at him and said, "It's natural for you to attach more value to things that belong to you because those things belong to you! No one criticized me. It's merely because I don't have any confidence in my own figure. People with good figures have a big chest and a perky bottom, while I..."