

Gold Chapter 671

Fields of Gold Chapter 671

The sun's rays were harsher in the south and they were out longer as well. Zhu Junya had once written a letter to her lady mother, complaining that she had gotten tanner there. Her mother then sent her a set of brightening skin care items. After using it for less than a year, the effects were very obvious. Not only was her skin brighter but the texture of her skin had also perceptively improved. The other married matrons within her circle all asked her about her skin care routine.

She would have never expected that the mastermind behind 'Blossoming Beauty', the blazingly popular shop that all women under the heavens clamored to buy from, was actually a young maiden who hadn't even reached the age of eighteen. Furthermore, this legendary figure was also going to become her future younger sister-in-law.

Yu Xiaocao was currently helping Pei'er hold onto his box of sweets. The little fellow stretched out a plump little hand and picked out an orange colored gummy candy that smelled of tangerines. He plopped it into his mouth. It was soft with a sweet and sour taste. He immediately fell in love with the flavor of the candy.

When she heard the request, Xiaocao raised her head and carefully observed her future older sister-in-law's face for a bit before she finally smiled, "Older Sister Junya's skin foundation is very good as the texture is quite fine and tender. However, you probably didn't protect it from sun exposure in the past, so your skin is on the duller side. My shop has just made a set of brightening and hydrating skin care items. On another day, I'll bring it over for Older Sister. Added onto some suitable medicinal cuisine, I guarantee that Older Sister's skin will become brighter and more tender in less than three months!"

"Will it be as white as Auntie's skin ah?" Lu Jiapei, who had been preoccupied with eating his new candy, suddenly made his presence known. Third Maternal Aunt's face resembled a freshly peeled boiled egg and he wanted to feel if it felt as soft and slippery as it looked...

Zhu Junyang's expression immediately darkened. He reached over and grabbed his nephew's hand, which was sticky with saliva. He couldn't allow him to touch his little lass's tender and fair face, 'Stinky brat, men and women should not touch when they give and receive things! Only I, your maternal uncle, have the rights to touch her face!'

Yu Xiaocao looked down and pinched the little guy's bun-like face and grinned, "That's right ah! It'll be as white and tender as my own face. Wouldn't that be great ah?"

When Zhu Junya heard this, she felt her own face. Her future third younger sister-in-law's skin had to be the best she had ever seen in her life and it didn't have a single flaw that she could see. In actuality, before she married and was still a young maiden, she often liked to spend a lot of time outside exercising and playing around. Thus, her complexion was often tanner compared to other young maidens. If these products truly were as efficacious as her sister-in-law claimed, then she'd be able to smile happily in her dreams. After all, who else had to endure the pressure of having a husband who was fairer and prettier than herself?

It was very easy for women to become closer to each other when they started to talk about cosmetics and skin care routines. In a short period of time, Zhu Junya now saw her future sister-in-law as a close younger sister and was pouring out all of her thoughts to her.

The little radishes from the Lu Family finished their daily quota of five gummy candies and one dessert under the supervision of their eldest brother. They were all completely conquered by their Third Maternal Aunt's culinary talents. When they came out to perform the formal greeting, Xiaocao took out her greeting gifts to the children—exquisite little animals carved out of glassy blue jade. The children all loved the carvings and immediately strung them around their necks.

Only Lu Jiayu, the shrewd little kid, sidled over to Xiaocao as he asked in a perplexed manner, “Third Maternal Aunt, you've already given us meeting gifts, why did you give out a second set to us?”

“I did? I don't think so ah. These jadeite carvings are the greeting gifts that I'm giving to you all ah!” Yu Xiaocao looked at him with a flabbergasted expression, waiting for his explanation.

“That box of sweet and sour candies ah! If I had to choose between the candies and animal carvings, I would definitely choose the candies. Third Maternal Aunt's candies are really tasty and Yu'er has never eaten such tasty candies before. If the box was just a little bit bigger, then that would be the best!” The little fellow hemmed and hawed for quite a bit of time and finally reached the true subject matter!

Yu Xiaocao stifled back her laughter and replied, “Not to worry. When you finish, I'll make other kinds of candies for you. They will definitely taste good too!”

Lu Jialong also scurried over. He still had some egg tart crumbs leftover on his face and his lively little tongue swiped back and forth to sweep them up. He chuckled, “Third Maternal Aunt, your egg tarts and cream puffs are also very, very delicious ah!”

“I'll make them all! I also know how to make pudding, flavored gelatin, frozen dairy desserts...when I have the opportunity, I'll bring them all for you to try!” The children all swallowed down saliva when they heard Yu Xiaocao's words and their eyes were so bright that they could scare a person.

Lu Jiayu muttered, “Third Maternal Aunt, quickly marry over ah!” In his eyes, the earlier she married over, the earlier they'd be able to see her at the residence. At that time, whenever she made something delicious, he'd be able to eat it faster.

Zhu Junya pulled her son over and grinned until her spotlessly white teeth were shown to the world. She didn't have the grand and dignified demeanor of most noble women as she said, “Your Third Maternal Uncle and Aunt have their own residence. Even when she marries over, they wouldn't be living with us. That being said, we can't spend all of our time at your maternal grandmother's home. Once our estate in the capital has been renovated, we'll be moving there!”

When Princess Consort Jing heard this, a shot of happiness went through her heart and she smiled, “You are planning on renovating the Lu Family's Estate? Does that mean you are planning on staying at the capital for a long time and won't be returning back to the south?”

“That's right ah! Zijin has been instituted at the Imperial College as a special teacher. In the next few years, he'll be taking a post there!” Zijin was Lu Nianhua's courtesy name. In the Hubei and Hunan districts, the Lu Family was famous for their scholarly achievements. Lu Nianhua, who was skilled in both scholarly and martial fields, naturally had many people admiring him. Jiangnan's famous Donglin Academy and Yuelu Academy had both extended out invitations for him to teach there. However, who would have thought that the Imperial College would strike first and claimed him before all of the other schools?

Pure joy filled Princess Consort Jing's heart when she found out that her daughter, who had previously lived far away from her and could only meet up every few years or so, would be staying in the capital. However, she still asked out of confusion, “Didn't Old Lu set down a family rule that the next four generations of the Lu Family were not allowed to enter officialdom ah? What changed?”

“Zijin is only a 'visiting scholar' and only lectures, so he's not actually entering officialdom as he wasn't given an official rank and posting.” Without an official rank or post, it didn't count as entering officialdom. Thus, it didn't conflict with the family's rules. Before they had traveled to the capital, they had already obtained the old patriarch's permission.

The happiest person here naturally was Princess Consort Jing. The Lu Family's residence in the capital wasn't very far from Imperial Prince Jing's estate, so her daughter would be able to come over often to chat with her. However, when she thought of her youngest son moving out as soon as he was married, a feeling of reluctance entered her heart.

Although her youngest son didn't spend much time at home these past few years since he often had tasks to do, he always came back to pay his respects to her when he was done with his affairs. If he moved out, that meant they would have fewer interactions with each other in the future. What made her more sad was that she had originally thought that Xiaocao was entering the estate and would keep her company; who would have thought...

However, she very quickly regained her spirits. Her husband was right. When the children grew up, they all had their own lives to live. She had a husband who loved her with his whole heart and all of her children were sensible and filial. Thus, she should be satisfied with this lifetime.

After she got back from Imperial Prince Jing's Estate, Xiaocao became busy again. Not only did she have to prepare for her upcoming wedding, but her youngest brother would also be attending the metropolitan civil service exams a few days earlier. Originally, ever since the Tang Dynasty, the spring exams were set on the ninth, twelfth, and fifteen day of the second month for a total of three sessions separated by three days. However, during that time, the capital was very cold and many of the students who attended these exams did poorly because of nerves, getting ill, or the cold conditions. Thus, once Zhu Junfan ascended the throne, he pushed back the exams by one month and had them held in the third month. The exams were ending only three days before Zhu Junyang's wedding with Xiaocao.

On the ninth day of the third month would be the first session, which consisted of three whole days. The second session was on the twelfth day and the third session was on the fifteenth. The students sitting for the exams needed to spend nine days and seven nights in the cramped and stifling exam stalls. After entering the exam hall, the candidates needed to bring a prepared exam basket. Inside these baskets they were allowed to bring some dried rations, ink, brushes, ink stones, and other necessities.

Yu Xiaocao had prepared some special dried rations for her younger brother. These foods were all well preserved, which prevented them from spoiling while he was at the examinations. There were instant noodle blocks that were about the size of a square inch each and small and exquisite biscuits. The newest type of rations she came up with was a type of dried soup dumpling. Inside these dumplings were dehydrated vegetables and seasonings. As long as he used some hot water to soak these dried dumplings when he was about to eat, it would create a bowl of delicious vegetable soup. If he also added the instant noodles to the soup, then he would have a bowl of tasty and delicious vegetable noodle soup!

In order to avoid the candidates smuggling in cheat sheets within their food, the rations they brought in could not surpass a square inch per ration. Thus, the instant noodle blocks she made used thin and slender noodles that were piled into blocks about the size of a copper coin. A regular bowl of noodles required about a dozen coin sized noodle blocks to be rehydrated. Xiaocao had packed more than half of the basket full with instant noodles. When Great Scholar Yuan saw the food basket that his little disciple had, he also asked Xiaocao for some instant noodle blocks too, so he could give them to his youngest grandson, Yuan Yunxi, to bring along.

The examinations in ancient times were truly too horrifying! Each exam stall was only about a meter and a third in length. About two thirds of a meter above the ground, there were two brick props which allowed wooden planks to be placed on them.

During the day, the upper plank was the table and the lower plank was the seat for the examinees as they answered the questions. At night, the plank on the top could be put on the bottom, making a hard bed for the exam takers. However, the stalls were very narrow, so Little Shitou, who was already over 1.75 meters tall, could only sleep with his body curled up. Furthermore, who could possibly sleep well on the hard wooden planks? Luckily, Xiaocao had packed some instant coffee powder for him. The exam grounds provided a ready supply of hot water for the examinees, so when he was feeling fatigued, he could make a cup to perk himself up.

During the exams, Little Shitou ate pretty well. When he wanted to eat sweets, there were all sorts of fragrant and tasty biscuits and cookies for him to eat. When he was tired of sweet foods, he would make a bowl of delicious vegetable noodle soup. From time to time, he would even make a cup of instant and fragrant coffee for himself. The students on either side of him, however, were truly suffering an odious ordeal. Not only did they have to endure the vile and horrible exam stalls, but they also had to smell the delicious food from their neighbor. When they looked at the dried rations, which resembled pig food, that they brought along, they truly felt sad inside!

The students who participated in the preliminary rounds of the imperial examinations, which lasted nine whole days, became completely different people when they left. Many of them had to be carried out by other people and a lot of them ended up becoming extremely ill post-examination. The metropolitan civil examinations were still tolerable as the temperatures were still cool. Thus, the food they brought along wouldn't spoil. However, during the autumnal examinations, the weather was blistering hot. Oftentimes, the examinees would faint from sunstroke after eating and living in the tiny and narrow exam stalls or end up getting food poisoning from eating spoiled rations. In fact, it wasn't unusual for people to die during the exams either.

The precautions to prevent cheating in these ancient times were quite strict. Other than the fact that they could only bring in food that was cut up into pieces no bigger than a square inch in size, if any person was caught bringing in cheat materials, then their scholarly achievements would be erased and they would never be permitted to take an exam again in their life. Furthermore, they would be bound in front of the exam hall and publicly exposed for two months.

Fields of Gold Chapter 672

However, because the preliminary round of the imperial examinations had a direct impact on one's path to officialdom, attempts at cheating continued without end. Among the candidates, a joke about 'pigeon messenger' was passed around. It was said that, in the last dynasty, there was a student whose family had trained a pigeon. Every night, that pigeon would fly into the student's exam stall and the student would write all of the questions from the exam in tiny handwriting and have the pigeon bring the tied up note on its leg back. The family had hired an expert at answering questions and had him write all of the answers to the questions before having the bird bring it back. Because the pigeon couldn't bring back anything too heavy, both sides of the paper had been used to write the answer. Since the hired scholar was afraid that the candidate might miss the back side, he had written 'there is more on the back' on the front side of the paper. Unfortunately, that candidate had copied that phrase without realizing it and had gotten caught by one of the graders...

Although no one was able to verify the authenticity of this story, it caused many of the candidates to begin to raise pigeons at home. It truly made the lives of the soldiers guarding the exam hall hard. At night, they needed to increase their precautions and they even added on some archers to their ranks. When birds flew over the area, they shot them down. It was rumored that one of them had even shot down the messenger pigeon of a young noble maiden, who was exchanging love letters with her sweetheart.

After the nine days of the metropolitan civil service exam passed, Little Shitou came out of the exam hall with an exhausted and sallow face but he was in good spirits. The only people outside waiting for him were his older brother-in-law, Zhuang Xiaomo, and his personal assistant. Little Shitou looked quite flabbergasted for a moment before it dawned on him as to what had happened.

Zhuang Xiaomo took his exam basket from him and smiled, "Today is the fifteenth and is the day that they're adding to your second older sister's dowry. Originally, she wanted to personally come here and wait for you to come out but she was stopped by everyone in the family. Your second older sister's godmother had actually said: 'How is it suitable that the female host isn't there for her own dowry adding day?' Furthermore, she needs to be there to receive her good friends. Quite a lot of people have arrived for this and their statuses are quite high and noble. Everyone at home is incredibly busy. When your eldest sister saw that it was about the right time, she sent me over to pick you up and also explain what was going on."

Zhuang Xiaomo didn't ask his younger brother-in-law how he thought the exams went. In his eyes, with Great Scholar Yuan as his teacher and his younger brother-in-law's talents, it'd be surprising if he didn't do well!

“Then let's head back faster! I need to see if I can help out in any way!” Little Shitou felt a bit sad and conflicted about his second sister's marriage that was occurring three days later. His second sister would very quickly enter someone else's family and begin her own household. Never again would she be able to spend all of her time around him like before. When she had her own children, he was pretty certain that he would be forgotten by her!

After thinking that, he felt a bit embarrassed! He was about to become an imperial official and would be taking up a post at court, yet he was still acting like a child, clinging onto his older sister. He was even trying to strive for favor against his future nephew. Was he truly the youth that everyone admired for being talented and having boundless opportunities in the future ah?

Little Shitou went through the corner gate to enter his own courtyard. After washing up and changing into a clean set of clothing, he went out to help receive the guests.

There truly were a lot of people present today for the dowry adding ceremony. Although the empress herself hadn't left the palace, she had sent one of her personal palace maids out to deliver a mutton-fat jade scepter carved into reishi mushroom. In the middle was a peanut carved out of jadeite. The meaning behind this scepter was 'have a gratifying and satisfactory life and may you have heirs soon'.

The grand princess royal was quite advanced in age but personally appeared at the Yu Residence to participate. She gave an inky black jade scepter that was carved into the shape of a flower and had gold threads tied around it in the shape of the character for 'double happiness'. The meaning behind this gift was that one hoped that the married couple would always be linked together in their hearts.

Marchioness Dingyuan and her eldest daughter-in-law each gave a set of expensive and valuable hair decorations. One was the product of Treasure Pavilion. It had bright and flashy diamonds set into it, and they sparkled enough to dazzle a person's eyes. The other set was from Wisdom Jade Pavilion. It was made out of crystal-clear red jadeite. The color was lustrous and shiny, and it was incredibly gorgeous. It wasn't surprising that these two sent such expensive gifts to Xiaocao's dowry. After all, if it weren't for Xiaocao's help in fixing the heir and his wife's fertility problem, then Marquis Dingyuan's residence would not have any grandsons in the legitimate line. How else would they be able to have a bunch of little radishes running around now?

After the wife of the heir gave birth to the eldest grandson, she became pregnant three more times during the following four years and had even given birth to a set of dragon-phoenix twins. Marquis Dingyuan's Household now could lift their heads proudly in society. Marchioness Dingyuan became a lot more energetic after helping to take care of her grandsons and granddaughters, and her complexion had improved boundlessly compared to before. She also started to become interested in preserving her own health and had reserved medicinal cuisine from Medicinal Cuisine House. Every day, she would get a delivery of food for her to eat. In her own words, she needed to keep herself healthy as her daughter-in-law had five young children to take care of and it was too much to handle for one person. She needed to stay alive to watch all of her grandchildren grow up and marry their own spouses. Then, she might even live long enough to see her great grandchildren!

Marchioness Dingyuan had long wanted to find an opportunity to thank the great benefactor of Marquis Dingyuan's Household. However, Xiaocao had been linked to Royal Prince Yang for a long time and Royal Prince Yang had achieved great military merits and ended up being promoted to Imperial Prince Xu. In order to avoid other people maliciously gossiping about their estate trying to climb the latter, other than occasionally encountering her at social events, she did her best to not get too close. Now, she finally had her opportunity at Xiaocao's wedding to show just how much she appreciated the young maiden.

Marchioness Dingyuan's daughter, Xiaocao's close friend, He Wanning, had also arrived. She had just finished her confinement month and looked a lot more curvy compared to before. In addition, she seemed to have added on an aura of maternal gentleness to herself. He Wanning also gave a set of hair ornaments to Xiaocao's dowry and it was inlaid with sparkling pink crystals that added life to the jewelry. It was also a product of Treasure Pavilion.

Although crystal wasn't an expensive material in the modern world, it was a material imported by international ships in this time period. The rarer something was, the greater its value. Furthermore, crystal was transparent and clear with bright and beautiful colors. Young maidens loved pink crystals the most. A single pink crystal hairpin from Treasure Pavilion cost around a thousand or so taels and was something that everyone clamored for. Thus, a complete set of hair ornaments made out of it was even more precious.

Xiaocao's other close friend, Yuan Xueyan, had just discovered she was pregnant and there was a superstition in ancient times that a pregnant woman should not see a bride. Thus, she couldn't personally come. She also gave a set of exquisite jewelry made out rubies that was worth a thousand taels.

Yuan Xueyan had gotten herself married off last spring and the groom was actually Duke Rongguo's Second Young Master, Ning Donglan. This event caused both Xiaocao and He Wanning's eyes to pop out

of their heads. When did these two begin to see each other in a different light? How come there wasn't any hint of this before?

When the two of them interrogated Yuan Xueyan, she unexpectedly replied, "Since women cannot escape the fate of being married, as long as I found someone I didn't hate, marrying anyone is about the same. I have a colder personality while Ning Donglan makes other people feel warm. Spending the rest of our lives together shouldn't be an issue."

Xiaocao had once poured out her worries to Zhu Junyang about this and had especially spent some time observing the newly married couple. The newlyweds were respectful to each other and treated each other like honored guests. They seemed to be getting along well. From Xiaocao's reckoning, she would have thought that with Older Sister Yuan's personality, it would take a bit more time before they were comfortable with each other. However, Ning Donglan had always been smooth when he wanted to and always did things well. As long as he wanted to do something, there was nothing he couldn't achieve, let alone conquer an iceberg, right? She would have never expected that they would be anticipating a future baby so soon. It was likely after having a child that the two of them would have nothing wrong with their relationship, right?

Following that, more and more of her friends arrived to add to her dowry. Royal Princess Minglan, Yu Wanqing, and the two sisters, Li Mengru and Li Mengqi, had all shown up. In addition, there were some relatives of the Fang Family who brought along their daughters to take the opportunity to show their faces to the future Princess Consort Xu. Furthermore, more noble young maidens from the capital, who usually were mere acquaintances with her, had also arrived to add to her dowry.

That evening, when she saw how many good objects she obtained, Yu Xiaocao deliberately revealed a greedy expression and repeatedly said, "I'm rich, I'm rich! If I could get married a few more times, then wouldn't I become the richest woman in the whole capital? ...OW!!"

Before she could finish her thought, her head had been knocked by two fists. When she turned ahead to look at the offenders, she saw her mother and godmother both looking at her with a complicated expression on their faces.

Madam Liu sighed, "Older Sister Xia, just look at her. She's about to become a married woman but still speaks thoughtlessly. If she was marrying an ordinary person it'd be one thing, but she's marrying into Imperial Prince Xu's Residence. I really can't help but worry over her!!"

Lady Fang sent a look at the young maiden who was rubbing her head with an embarrassed expression and comforted the other woman, "I think you're thinking too much about this! For one, Imperial Prince Xu truly treats our daughter with sincerity. Furthermore, don't you know our daughter's personality? She only speaks like this in front of people close to her as that is when she relaxes. When she is out and about, when has she ever committed a faux pas? However, Lass, you need to keep your tongue in cheek for the next couple of days in order to avoid bringing bad fortune along! How could you possibly blab about getting married more than once?"

Her last two sentences were said in a much more serious tone, so Xiaocao obediently lowered her head to show her regret. Xiaolian and her eldest sister-in-law, Liu Huifang, thought that she looked a bit pitiful, so they hurriedly spoke up in her defense.

Madam Liu once again warned her a few times and then looked at the entire room full of items to add to the dowry with worry, "These past few days we've fretted about the dowry until half of our hairs have turned white. We just barely managed to stuff all of her items into a hundred and twenty chests. Now we have so many more dowry items, so what are we supposed to do ah?"

Lady Fang also frowned out of worry as she looked at the items piled up in the room. She sighed and said, "It looks like that having too many good connections is also a burden ah! It's one thing that her friends have added to the dowry. But the empress, grand princess royal, Duchess Ronguo, Marchioness Dingyuan, the wife of the prime minister...these all need to be put into one chest...it looks like that we need to redo a dozen or so chests in order to contain everything!"

"Then what are we to do? We racked our brains to get down to a hundred and twenty chests, stuffing as much as we could into each one. How are we supposed to find this much space to add all of this?" Other people fretted over the fact that they didn't have enough dowry. Apparently having too much dowry was also a worrisome thing!

Yu Xiaocao, on the other hand, acted as if this problem had nothing to do with her and casually said, "If we can't fit it all, then leave some behind ah! It's not as if we're counting on the dowry to bring down the gates! Who doesn't know that I am the equivalent of the God of Wealth now? Marrying me is the same as marrying a giant mountain of gold...OW!! Mother, you hit me again! If you end up breaking me, what are you going to say to Imperial Prince Xu?"

"Is there anyone else as shameless as you to brag so much ah? Mother is worrying for whose sake, ah? For you, right? Imperial Prince Xu sent over such a big amount of betrothal gifts to us, so if we send over a smaller dowry, how would the people outside gossip about us?!" Madam Liu had taken great offence to the malicious rumors about the Yu Family clinging onto Imperial Prince Xu's legs for their own gain. In

just what way was her daughter not a good match for him? The fact that she didn't disdain him for being too old or for having such a weird personality was a good thing! If it weren't for the fact that he was very sincere towards Xiaocao, she wouldn't be happy that her daughter was marrying him!

“Those wagging tongues live in other people's mouths, so who cares what they want to say ah? In my opinion, you should leave the shops and residences for my eldest brother and youngest brother. One of them will be inheriting the family's business while the other will be entering officialdom, so don't both of them need more assets?” Yu Xiaocao had always been opposed to her parents splitting their assets into four fractions and giving one fraction to herself as a dowry. Her eldest brother and youngest brother were the family's future. Her parents had painstakingly worked to gain their wealth, so they should be giving them to her brothers and future grandsons.

Fields of Gold Chapter 673

Madam Liu glared at her and snorted as she remarked in a sour tone, “What's that ah? Do you think that the shops from your parents aren't worth much and not up to standard? Mother knows that compared to your businesses, which bring in gold every day, we can't compare! You're capable now, like a fully fledged bird, and can make your own money, so that's why you're looking down on what we prepared for your dowry ah...”

As she spoke, she felt a feeling of sorrow enter her heart and her eyes turned red. Madam Liu turned around and showed her back to everyone. When she saw that her mother was truly upset, Xiaocao immediately panicked and hurried over. She apologized regretfully, acted spoiled and acted cute before she finally finished comforting her mother. Madam Liu loved this youngest daughter of hers a lot. Thus, on the night before her wedding, she felt quite sad and tried to use other methods to hide her true feelings.

She remembered back to the day when her youngest daughter was born. She was so small and thin, and could only let out a tiny noise like a small kitten. In her childhood, her youngest daughter was extremely weak and often fell ill. There were a few times when she almost passed away. The whole family did all they could to withstand Madam Zhang's pressure to preserve her little life. In the blink of an eye, that frail medicine pot had matured into a slender and elegant young maiden who was free-spirited, optimistic, and extremely competent...however, this young maiden, who everyone in the family spoiled and loved, was about to become someone else's wife the day after tomorrow. As her mother, how could she not feel at a loss or sad?

Her youngest daughter had done so much for her family. Before she got married, as her mother, she wanted to do something for her and add more dowry. However, her daughter wasn't grateful and always attempted to push stuff away so that she could leave it to her eldest and youngest brothers. Such a sensible and sweet daughter was about to get married, boo hoo hoo hooo...just thinking about it

made her feel sad, 'Darling daughter, I wasn't getting angry at you, I just don't know how to control myself!'

Lady Fang watched the mother and daughter pair worry over the dowry issue. She came up with an idea, "In any case, we love our daughter and we're doing this out of love not because we need to show off. How about this? We'll still go with a hundred and twenty-eight chests of dowry. Everything that was given to us today will be added. As for the stuff that gets displaced, we can secretly send it to the estate after the formal presentation of the dowry. We can also prepare two lists; one will be for the formal presentation while the other one will be the true dowry."

Madam Liu was very satisfied with this solution and repeatedly nodded her head, "Older Sister Xia, thank you for coming up with such a good idea. I'm going to rearrange the dowry again. Shitou, come with me as I need you, the future first place examinee of the imperial service examinations, to transcribe the dowry list for me!"

Wow! He had worked on his exam for nine days straight and didn't even get a chance to take a sip of water before he began to help his father and eldest brother take care of the guests. Now, at night, Little Shitou was still being put to work. However, for the sake of his second older sister's dowry matter, he didn't say a single peep and got up to follow his mother.

The next day was the day to send and present the dowry. A full a hundred and twenty-eight chests of dowry were all displayed on red platforms with servants dressed completely in festive red carrying them along. The red platforms were also decorated with crimson red silk flowers. Drummers and flute players merrily played in the front as the dowry train followed them from behind as they left the Yu Residence.

At the front were all sorts of official caps: ones made of sable fur and fox fur, hats decorated with dragons, hats made of velvet that were embedded with precious pearls...all in all, the court hats took up twelve chests.

Then there was the jewelry. There was jewelry shaped into flowers, phoenix shaped jewelry inlaid with green jade, gold and silver hairpins crafted into auspicious shapes, hairpins carved into longevity shapes, silver jewelry shaped into the character for 'double happiness', silver jewelry shaped into 'as one wishes', peony shaped jewelry, Chinese flowering crab-apple shaped jewelry...it was enough to dazzle a person's eyes.

In terms of ornaments, there were four crafted of jadeite, four crafted from white jade, and four crafted of green jade.

There were ten sets of hairpins. There was a pair of long pure gold hairpins decorated with delicate threads of gold, a pair of pure gold hairpins engraved in the shape of waves, a pair of pure gold hairpins that were enameled, a pair of jadeite hairpins, a pair of white jade hairpins, a pair of hairpins made of white jade inlaid with gems, a pair of blueish-green hairpins shaped into longevity symbols, a pair of hairpins shaped into 'double happiness' and 'as one wishes' characters...

Then there were the bracelets: a pair of pure gold bracelets that were engraved, a pair of pure gold bracelets that were inlaid with jewels, a pair of pure gold bracelets decorated with golden threads, a pair of pure gold bracelets enameled with blue-green coloring, a pair of round white jade bracelets, a pair of white jade bracelets carved with flowers, a pair of round jadeite bracelets, a pair of jadeite bracelets carved with flowers...

Then there were the smaller beaded hairpins, hair clips, dangling hair ornaments. In addition, there were all sorts of earrings, jade pendants, rings, nail covers, hair decorations and other miscellaneous goods...all was in great abundance. Each jewelry type had a lot of different varieties present and they were all done in pairs or in even numbers. The jewelry in her dowry had ended up taking up twenty chests of space.

In her dowry, there naturally wouldn't be a lack of clothing materials. There was mink furs, yuan fox furs, red fox furs, snow fox furs, woven silk with fox fur, woven silk with weasel fur, and all sorts of damasks and silk fabrics. In fact, many of these fabrics had never been seen before and were made of materials no one had heard of before. The vast majority of clothing that she brought along was from Exquisite Garments and Modiste Jiang herself had made twelve of them. All of the young maidens and noble matrons were extremely envious when they saw this.

Furthermore, she had two tiger pelts, six silver fox pelts, six otter pelts, six black fox pelts, six wolf pelts, a black giant squirrel pelt, a sable pelt, and about two hundred bolts of a variety of highest quality silks. Then there were two hundred colorful satin bolts, two hundred flower brocade bolts, two hundred silk damask bolts, two hundred and twelve cloud brocade bolts, and two hundred and twelve Sichuan brocade bolts. Then she had a hundred and twelve bolts of silk scarves, a hundred and twelve bolts of velvet woolens, two hundred palace silk bolts, two hundred palace satin bolts, two hundred palace cotton bolts, and four hundred bolts of cloud satins. Then there was python satin, shantung satin, gold brocade, cicada's wing muslin, soft smoke gauze, pomegranate damask, etc. As for the embroidered pouches, the dowry contained four hundred of them. All of the cloth and pouches were packed into ten chests.

As for the furniture and decorations, any one of them was enough to shock a person. There was a pair of standing screens that were carved out of red sandalwood and inlaid with foreign glass, a pair of red sandalwood foot stools, twenty small boxes that were carved out of red sandalwood, twenty chests made of red sandalwood, a pair of large armoires made of carved red sandalwood, an intricately carved bed frame made of red sandalwood...a carved four-poster bed made of fragrant rosewood, an enclosed bed frame with a circular framed door that was carved out of fragrant rosewood, a set of carved fragrant rosewood screens inlaid with glass and a matching bed frame...

In addition, there were all sorts of curios, brush paintings, decorations, articles for daily use, and medicinal ingredients in the dowry. These items filled another few dozen chests. The most eye-catching chests were the ones containing the deeds for the estates and shops: over a hundred thousand mu in farmland, more than a dozen shops, and six residences. The residences included four three-courtyard estates and two five-courtyard estates. Then there were six farmsteads and two farmsteads next to hot springs...the properties that were worth the most money were the businesses under Xiaocao's name: the pharmaceutical factory, the brewery and winery, the medicinal and flower teas factory, the canned goods and candied fruits workshop, the desserts shop, the medicinal cuisine shop, and 'Blossoming Beauty'...

This was absolutely the most extravagant dowry that had ever been seen in the Great Ming Dynasty. The Yu Residence wasn't very far from Imperial Prince Xu's estate, but they deliberately made the dowry train take a roundabout route. The entire procession went along the western side of the city before circling back. Even after they did this, by the time the dowry first entered the prince's estate, there were still more chests within the Yu Residence that hadn't been carried out. This amount of dowry had long surpassed the record from when Imperial Prince Jing married off his daughter ten years ago and was now the new record for the most extravagant dowry.

For decades after, whenever people in the capital saw a dowry procession, they couldn't help but think of what happened when Princess Consort Xu got married and the grandiose dowry procession she had. Five kilometers of dowry was no longer enough to describe this occasion. Some people were incredibly envious of the Yu Family for having so much wealth to create such a dowry and being willing to part with so much. Others sourly remarked that the Yu Family was trying to make themselves look important in order to ingratiate themselves with their great patron, Imperial Prince Xu. How could these people understand that everyone in the Yu Family dearly loved this daughter of theirs and were reluctant to part with her?

After all of the dowry arrived at Imperial Prince Xu's estate, the entire inner courtyard and front courtyard had been stuffed full with chests. The people who had come over earlier to watch the dowry procession arrive were the friends and family of Imperial Prince Jing and Xu. Naturally, their statuses and positions were quite high and they had seen quite a lot of grandiose and extravagant processions in

their lives. However, when they saw this whopping dowry, they couldn't help but become speechless either.

Zhu Junyang's good friend made fun of him despite the risk of retaliation, "Looks you picked up a treasure here! You need to treat your future wife well. Look at how much her family loves her. If you treat her poorly, her family will definitely do all they can to get back at you ah!"

"Stop being such a wet blanket! How could he possibly be willing to treat his wife poorly? Haven't you seen how he acts around Royal Princess Jinan and how he treats her like the most precious treasure in the world? You only see this massive dowry in front of you but you didn't see how he gave up pretty much half of his assets as a betrothal gift. If he could have, he would have wrapped himself up and sent himself to Royal Princess Jinan!" The person who replied was that fellow Lu Hao. He had seen with his own eyes just how much of a slave Zhu Junyang was for Xiaocao.

No matter how much his good friends poked fun at him, Zhu Junyang continued to keep a giant smile on his face, like a simpleton. The silly look of pure happiness on his face had truly given the people around him a whole new image. Apparently, the 'cold-faced prince' could also become a soft and tender gentleman ah! Royal Princess Jinan was truly very skilled to tame such a calamitous demon as Zhu Junyang!

Zhu Junyang looked at the chests of dowry but his mind was on one particular fact alone: Tomorrow, the lass would truly be considered his and his alone. His heart filled with glee. Custom dictated that the bride and groom should not see each other the three days before marriage. He had been thinking about her constantly during this time, tormenting himself. He just needed to be patient for one more day and then he could completely celebrate being hers alone! His wife, his princess consort, the person who he was going to grow old together...

On the night before the wedding, Madam Liu slept in the same room as her daughter and spoke a lot. She reminisced about their past memories, instructed her daughter on how to become a good wife and daughter-in-law, and obscurely went over the event that was going to happen on the wedding night. People in the ancient times tended to be quite conservative. Thus, Madam Liu only told her daughter to go along with her husband and to not allow him to harm herself too much!

As a modern woman who had lived for almost thirty years, Yu Xiaocao had read quite a few descriptive novels and seen some mature comics. Although she had still been an unmarried woman on that day she had her accident, she wasn't unfamiliar with the relations between a man and a woman. If she was truly a well-bred young lady in these ancient times, judging by what Madam Liu had sketched out, she would have been completely clueless of what was to come.

The two of them finally fell asleep at a late time that night. Before the sky turned bright, Xiaocao was woken up unceremoniously. She was stuffed into a bathtub and was washed clean in a groggy stupor. After getting some sweet smelling lotion rubbed into her entire body, she was pushed into the chair at her dressing table. The complete fortune matron, who they had invited over, began using a cotton thread to clean up her face.

The complete fortune matron repeatedly praised Xiaocao when she saw her fair and tender face, which was as flawless as a chicken egg, “Look at this skin that is as beautiful as porcelain. I can't even find a single hair. This old one has helped many noble ladies clean up but this is the first one I've seen such a tender face!”

As she spoke, she only symbolically went a few passes across Xiaocao's face with the thread and then picked up the duck egg powder. She spread on a thick layer of powder and then colored Xiaocao's lips a bright red. Following that, she colored in her eyebrows a deep black. In the end, Xiaocao resembled a geisha from a certain island country and everyone was underwhelmed by her finished makeup. Even Xiaocao's personal maidservants couldn't stand it—was this called makeup ah? Obviously it was clown makeup instead ah! Wutong, Yingchun, and the other maidservants all wanted to speak up but were afraid to do so.

Fields of Gold Chapter 674

In order to personally attend their young miss's wedding, all the Yu Family's shops were closed for the day and had signs that said 'the owner has an event for celebration'. The managers of these businesses, Yingtao, Yangliu, Hechun, and Xichun, were usually so busy every day that they rarely had the time to sit and rest their feet. Despite that, they all needed to congratulate their mistress on her special day.

As the complete fortune matron took a bold and resolute approach to her makeup, these loyal maidservants could only helplessly watch as their sweet and lovely young miss was turned into a white-faced, red-lipped blood-sucking monster.

Hechun's makeup skills were good and she wanted to come forward and give her young miss a beautiful makeover. Unfortunately, she was an orphan and was a servant bought by the Yu Family. For auspiciousness, all the people invited to do the makeup for the bride were all people who were fortunate in all corners of their life. Sadly, this era's makeup could only be described in one way: not flattering!

The complete fortune matron praised Xiaocao for having soft and silky black hair as she braided it and wound it around her head. She put on the head ornaments and was stopped by Xiaocao just as she was

about to put on the headpiece, "It's only morning. It's still too early for me to get picked up. If I wear that for half a day my neck will break. How about waiting until the afternoon and let the maidservants put it on for me? Madam, you've worked hard. Ying Chun, please take the madam to the side hall for some tea and pastries!"

When the complete fortune matron heard there was good tea and pastries, her heart was full of joy. Who didn't know that the tea and pastries of the Yu Family were the best in the capital? Unfortunately, with her identity, she would never reach the level of Royal Princess Jinan. She got really lucky to be invited over to do makeup for Royal Princess Jinan, the future Princess Consort Xu. There was even tea and refreshments, how flattering!

Once the complete fortune matron left, Yu Xiaocao turned to Hechun and said, "Quick, help me wash this foundation off. How thick is this powder? It's like I rolled out of the flour jar!"

Hechun was hesitant. Yu Xiaocao stared at her and said, "Is it because I'm getting married now so you don't have to listen to my orders? I'm just telling you to wash it off and let you do my makeup, what are you worried about? You've followed me for so long, so when have I ever cared about societal views? If a couple's happiness is affected by the status of the person who puts on your makeup, what's the significance of such a fragile marriage?"

Wutong heard this and her expression changed slightly. She looked around the room and saw that the ones left in the room were all close servants. She breathed a sigh of relief and said in a placating manner, "Let's not talk about such sad things! Today is your wedding! Hechun, you can do what the young miss tells you to do. When has our young miss's decision ever been wrong?"

Seeing this, Hechun no longer hesitated. She picked up the cosmetics on the dressing table and gave her master a thin foundation layer. Her young miss's skin was bright and clear, so using too much powder would appear thick and unnatural. The young miss's eyebrows were very stylized, so just a slight sweep with the eyebrow brush was enough. For the area around the eyes, Hechun expertly drew on a fine line of eyeliner and blended in a faint pink eye shadow. This was paired with a pink blush and the corresponding lip color. This was the most suitable spring peach blossom makeup, natural and transparent, with a bit of sweet charm.

It had to be said that Hechun's makeup skills were better than the one who taught her. No wonder the newly launched cosmetic products for Blossoming Beauty were selling so well! Hechun also sighed that her young miss's base was so good that she didn't need too much makeup to achieve the ideal effect.

Yingtao, who had just given birth to her eldest son, was a little plumper in shape. Her round face was full of joy, and she said with a smile, "Young Miss doesn't normally dress up. With the make-up, she's become a peerless beauty. It's too bad that Imperial Prince Xu has gotten such

Yangliu glared at her and scolded with a smile, "Only you know how to be cheeky when the person in question is not around. When his highness comes to pick her up, if you dare to say that, then you're my biological sister!"

Yangliu and Yingtao were born in the same year on the same month, so the difference in age between them wasn't any more than a few days. Yingtao relied on her earlier birth by a few days and called herself the older sister all the time. Yangliu seemed honest but she wasn't easy to fool. They had been quarreling about it for seven to eight years but they still hadn't come to a conclusion. Yangliu's words today were a dare that Yingtao wouldn't dare to mess around in front of Imperial Prince Xu like this.

Sure enough, at the thought of the prince whose gaze could make hearts stop, Yingtao's plump expression collapsed and she pouted unwillingly!

"Alright! You guys are all managers yet are still fighting so childishly. Be careful that your subordinates might see this! This might damage your image in front of them." Wutong persuaded the two maidservants.

Pipa was as quiet as ever, cleaning her young miss's makeup box at the side with a small smile on her face. Yingtao, Yangliu and Pipa were the first to follow the young miss. Now Yingtao and Yangliu had become Xiaocao's assistants in business, while Wutong and Pipa were in charge of the many matters in the courtyard. All of them had indispensable roles.

There was also Hechun, who was in charge of Blossoming Beauty and Xichun who was in charge of the cold storage and the canned preserved fruits workshop. There was also Yingchun and Tanchun, who were both the head maidservants in the courtyard and acted as the left and right hands of Xiaocao. These people were all going with her along with their businesses as part of her dowry once she married over.

The mistress and her servants were chatting and laughing in the inner courtyard but it was very lively outside. The whole street where the Yu Family was located was shrouded in a festive atmosphere and was filled with people. There were many people waiting to see the festivities. The dowry lineup yesterday had shocked the entire capital. To be able to witness the marriage of Royal Princess Jinan and Imperial Prince Xu was a once in a lifetime opportunity!

Among the people who came to give congratulations, there were those who came to give the couple their sincere blessings, those who came because of the two's power and influence to gain some publicity and flatter them, and also those who came with the crowd to maintain their reputations... Everyone's intent was different but they all had the same festive, happy smile on their faces.

As time went by, Xiaocao's good friends gathered around her to congratulate her and appreciate her makeup. Those of them who had already gotten married especially admired her makeup.

He Wanning put out her hand and poked Xiaocao's face twice, pouting unhappily, "Xiaocao, you're too sly, hiding such a beautiful bridal makeup from us. When I got married, I had a pale white face and lips that looked like I just drank human blood. I didn't even dare to look at myself in the mirror. Lu Hao's surprise and dislike when he lifted the veil was clear to me. Hmph! I even thought of you like a sister, but you've actually hid such beautiful makeup."

Yuan Xueyan was alright. When she got married, the complete fortune matron revered her so she went with her requirement of having a lighter makeup, the lighter the better. However, all that could be said was that the makeup at least didn't make her look worse.

Royal Princess Minglan and Li Mengqi were both older than Xiaocao by one or two years, and had gotten married in the past two years. Their makeup was also done by the complete fortune matrons...Ah, it was best not to mention the results!

"It's not that I'm hiding it. In the past two months, our Blossoming Beauty has just come out with a new cosmetic line, right? Manager Hechun learned a few new makeup skills. Originally, we were originally planning to gain publicity using public activities. Today, I tried it on my face using this opportunity. You should know that I have no taboos, not like your families, sticking to traditions! Even if you guys didn't get married first, and learned how to do this makeup, would your families allow Hechun to do your makeup for you?" Yu Xiaocao said this to save herself from her friends' complaints.

When they heard this, they looked at one another, and didn't say anything more! Xiaocao was right, if just anyone could do their makeup then there wouldn't be any need to invite some complete fortune matron over!

Li Mengqi and Yu Wanqing, who had set down their engagements, quietly squeezed in and talked to Xiaocao, "Elder Sister Yu, Manager Hechun's makeup was taught by you right? So...when we get married, can we ask Older Sister Yu to help with our makeup?"

Yu Xiaocao pinched them on their red faces and said with a smile, "Do you know what a complete fortune matron is? In addition to the parents being alive and in a loving relationship, their brothers and sisters must be in harmony, and their various children must be still alive! If you can wait, maybe in three to five years, seven to eight years, when my son and daughter are born, I will do your makeup. The point is, can your fiance afford to wait that long?"

Yu Wanqing's eyes were disappointed, but she said naively, "Maybe your first pregnancy will be twins that are boy and girl? Then next autumn, when I get married, you can help me with my make up... "

"I thank you for planning my first pregnancy as a girl and boy pair! The main thing is that having a child also depends on fate. How can they appear like when and how you want?" Yu Xiaocao couldn't help pinching the young girl's tender face, and she laughed until she cramped.

After Royal Princess Minglan married, she became much more mature. She looked at the two girls who didn't know shame and said, "The two of you are unmarried girls. Talking about having children or not having children, don't you know shame? It's almost time for the escort group to arrive. Quick, put on the phoenix headpiece and wedding robes."

Xiaocao, who put on the whole set of clothing, surprised everyone present. The phoenix headpiece on top of her head was different from the traditional one. The gold base was in the unique and exquisite shape of a phoenix. It was decorated with festive rubies and fine diamonds, which were blinding. Before her forehead hung a few wisps of gold twisted tassels, which had glittering rubies dangling at the ends. This made Xiaocao's delicate face seem even more charming and alluring.

The red wedding dress was an improved wedding dress in the Qi-style with a small collar, delicate buttons, and was made of cloth that had a pattern of a noble peony in golden silk threads. The waist area was designed to look slender and elegant and the crystal ornaments at the neckline and sleeves made it seem even more elegant and luxurious. This wedding dress was carefully embroidered by Modiste Jiang for two months. After finishing the embroidery, Modiste Jiang was reluctant to send it out. She repeatedly said that this wedding dress was the pinnacle of her weaving and embroidery career!

Just as they were all complimenting it, a sound of joy came from the front courtyard. "Coming, coming!" There was a stir coming from the outer courtyard.

Fields of Gold Chapter 675

Outside the Yu's Residence, the wedding procession had entered the street with beating gongs and drums. In the middle of the crowd, the bridegroom, who was shining with happiness, rode on a high horse. Wasn't the person dressed in red and wearing a big red flower on his chest Zhu Junyang, Imperial Prince Xu?

Before entering the sedan chair, Yu Xiaocao kneeled to her parents to bid farewell with the help of Wutong and Pipa. Through the hazy red veil, she could still clearly see her mother's tearful smile and her father's reluctant eyes. She recalled her first arrival to this home. Her parents still gave her the warmest love even in their most difficult times and tried their best to protect her...

She turned her eyes to the side to look towards her elder brother, younger brother, and twin sister, who was very similar to herself. They were all gazing at her. At that time when she first transmigrated over, they lived in a single room that had very poor conditions. Despite being children themselves, her siblings always left the best things to her. Xiaolian, who was only a few minutes older than herself, took good care of her like a big sister. In this life, she made up for the lack in her previous life and was able to bask in her family's affection. This was her biggest harvest, but also her deepest desire and sentimental attachment.

Madam Liu tried to keep the smile on her face, but the wet corners of her eyes showed her deep reluctance to let her daughter go. In the beginning, the little girl, who was now getting married, wasn't as big as her palm and was as weak as a newborn kitten. Her little daughter, who was like a medicine pot that she tried her best to take care of, finally grew up and was about to marry someone. She didn't know if that person, like her family, could give her a free and happy living space and give her a happy home...

"Cao'er, when you get to Imperial Prince Xu's residence, you will be a daughter-in-law and someone's wife. Between husband and wife, there should be considerations toward each other, so remember to talk about any problems... It's most important to live your own life well. Don't worry so much..." Even though there were thousands of words in her heart, it only turned into a voice of exhortation.

Yu Hai's heart ached. Since his second daughter was the one closest to him, she liked to pester him. Every time he came back from hunting, she always tried her best to ask him for his captured prey. When she was a little older, she learned to replace the captured prey with copper coins and hide the money. Later, with her own abilities, she gradually accumulated wealth as he looked on.

He was an incompetent father. Otherwise, why else would his youngest daughter take the burden of the family as her responsibility when she was young? Over the years, he had been trying to keep up with his daughter, to lighten her burden and shoulder the burden of their family. However when his efforts were successful, his little daughter was about to leave his wings and become someone else's bride.

"...Live your life well, there's still your brother and I at home! If you are wronged outside, don't bear it. Father will make sure to support you one hundred percent!" Although her father's words were simple, they were full of deep affection for his daughter.

Yu Hang said with a nasal voice, "Little Sister, we don't have much else, but we have lots of seafood. If you have anything you want to eat, please send a message back, and I will send it over to you. Wutong and Pipa, you are both loyal, take good care of your miss." The two servant girls agreed.

Little Shitou's eyes were red. If so many people weren't watching, he would have taken his second sister's hand and begged her to not get married! However, his future brother-in-law was eyeing him fiercely. He could only glare at Prince Xu who robbed him of his second sister and say in a reluctant voice, "Second Sister, just you wait! After a few years, I will become someone you can be proud of. Then, I will be your backer, that way someone wouldn't dare to bully you!! You must not think that our family background is inferior to someone else's and endure everything! We will always keep the door open to welcome you, and no matter what decision you make, we will support you! Don't wrong yourself... "

Zhu Junyang, who was quietly listening to his wife saying goodbye to her family, wanted to express that he was the one being kicked after falling down. He wasn't reassuring? They already had a way of retreat, and could welcome his wife home and kick him away at any time! 'Humph! I won't give you a chance!! I devoted all my patience and guarded her for seven to eight years. He finally was about to marry his wife. Of course, he would love her, and wouldn't bear to let her suffer any injustices. Brother-in-law, your plan is doomed to fail!'

Zhu Junyang gave a look to the complete fortune matron beside him. The matron said with a smile, "It's late. It's time to get on the sedan chair, so as not to miss the auspicious time."

"Little Sister, I'll carry you to the sedan chair!" Yu Hang bent down and waited for her to come up his back.

Yu Xiaocao lay on her big brother's broad back. Her heart was full of sadness and reluctance. At that time when she first transmigrated over, her eldest brother was just a thin and weak boy about ten years

old. In order to lighten the burden on the family, he followed Madam Zhang's arrangement and went to the carpenter's shop to be an apprentice. He was tortured and nearly killed by the cruel shopkeeper.

The weak and sensible young man from back then had grown into a tall and strong man that was gradually becoming the future master of the Yu Family. She believed that with her own well-paved road, her elder brother will be able to develop the Yu Family into one of the best in Tanggu.

Yu Hang's heart was also not calm. As a child, he often carried his frail little sister on his back to allow her to see the scenery outside. His little sister was so thin back then that he could hardly feel the weight of her small body. She stayed on his back obediently, which made him feel pity and heartache. After many years, his mood was more complicated when he picked up his younger sister again. From today on, his sister would become someone else's wife. He hoped that the person she married would be kind and considerate. All the sufferings should have already passed for her, leaving only happiness and joy!

Zhu Junyang, who walked by his brother-in-law, endured and endured before he managed to press down the idea that he wanted to snatch his wife and put her on the sedan chair himself. He did not want his lass to be intimate with another man, even if he was her older brother. Humph! Soon the little lass would completely belong to him, so he only had to endure for one last time...

Madam Liu watched her eldest son carry her youngest daughter out. She could no longer hold back her tears as they rolled down her face. Liu Huifang, who was supporting her, had red eyes. Yu Hai and Little Shitou, the father and son pair, quietly looked at the Xiaocao's back until the curtains of the sedan chair blocked their sight.

Firecrackers went off, while gongs and drums rang in the sky. The procession of welcoming relatives was gradually moving away, leaving a trace of sadness and loneliness in the house. On the other hand, Imperial Prince Xu's residence was full of excitement, with an endless stream of guests. Almost all of the high and powerful people in the imperial court came. There were also some capital officials who weren't fourth ranked or above, who gave their gifts, to have a sense of existence in front of Prince Xu, and wisely left. Otherwise, even a large estate like Imperial Prince Xu's would not be able to hold so many people!

None of the members of the imperial family were missing. As the grandfather of the groom, the emperor emeritus acted as the host and warmly exchanged greetings with those who came to congratulate him. Imperial Prince Jing, who was almost robbed of the limelight by his father, was also busy entertaining his colleagues. Imperial Prince Duan and Imperial Prince Sa were also pulled in to help with the guests.

Zhu Junyang's eldest brother was also so busy that his feet didn't stay on the ground and he didn't even have time to drink water. There were too many guests, and many of the guests were even the same generation as him! Zhu Junyang's second older brother had finally left the border and managed to arrive in the capital yesterday, just in time. Today, he also didn't get to rest. With Zhu Junyang's cousins, he joined the welcoming procession of relatives. Among them was Royal Prince Guo, whose identity Xiaocao had once borrowed, who was now quite healthy.

After removing the curtain and kicking in the door of the sedan, Zhu Junyang leaned into the sedan and did what he wanted from the beginning under the whistling of his cousins and brothers. He picked up his little bride and crossed the brazier and strode into the assembly hall on the red carpet.

The auspicious time had arrived, and just when he was about to bow to heaven and earth, a sudden "The emperor has arrived——" made the originally lively scene turn completely silent. The officials present looked at each other and they could all see surprise and admiration in each other's eyes. Imperial Prince Xu and Royal Princess Jinan were really blessed. Even the emperor himself came to attend their wedding!

Zhu Junfan not only came personally, but he also brought his wife and son. The family of three were all in regular clothes. Accompanied by the maids, the empress went to the inner courtyard, but the emperor stayed in the assembly hall. The two master seats were taken up, one for the emperor emeritus and the other for the emperor.

Argh! It was their son's marriage, but they couldn't even sit at the master seats. It was a bit hard to swallow. Imperial Prince Jing gave a complicated look to his father and his imperial nephew. He was feeling a little discontented!

"Go on, go on! Don't miss the auspicious time because of me!" Zhu Junfan was aware of the complex look in his imperial uncle's eyes, and he felt the thrill of playing a prank on someone.

"One, bow to the heavens and earth——" Imperial Prince Sa stole the responsibilities from the master of ceremonies, and raised his voice and called out every process of the ceremony. The master of ceremonies, who was pushed aside, was helpless. The other was a member of the imperial family, how could he win over him?

Covered with a red veil, Yu Xiaocao felt like a puppet, following other people's orders, meticulously doing everything. Fortunately, it was not a one-man play. The big hand that carried her in the hall and put her down had not let go, which made her feel less frightened and gradually settled her down. It was nice to have him beside her!

When "Enter the bridal chamber——" was announced by Imperial Prince Sa, Xiaocao let out a breath in relief. She should be able to rest for a while!

Then she was sent to a wedding room in the inner courtyard. Zhu Junyang had been holding onto her with the red silk, but when the red silk had become a decoration, the guy directly held onto the tender hands of his little bride. He was coaxed by his friends and subordinates. Today was his wedding day. Many of his subordinates who were afraid of him were bolder and joined in on the fun.

Not only this, but they all also crowded into the wedding room. The process of the wedding was still going on. Zhu Junyang picked up a small scale made of red gold. When the woman employed to wait on the bride on her wedding day said, "May your wishes be granted", he raised up the slightly coarsely embroidered red veil top of the Xiaocao's head, revealing her red face. After so many years, Xiaocao's embroidery hadn't improved much..

Fields of Gold Chapter 676

Her skin was fair and translucent. Her eyebrows were curved, and her eyes were as clear as a clear pond. With a tall nose and rosy lips, two shallow dimples appeared on the sides of her face when she smiled shyly, making people intoxicated and unwilling to wake up.

Most people were used to seeing bridal makeup with thick powdered faces and bright red lips, so they were amazed by her refreshingly light but brilliant peach blossom makeup. The rough army men didn't hesitate to praise her:

"Leader's wife is so pretty ah! She's simply a little peach blossom that just bloomed, looking fair and tender..."

"Leader, how did you manage to get such a tender little peach blossom? This is the prime example of 'an old cattle eating tender grass' ah!"

"I didn't expect that the leader's wife, who's an expert in farming and business, to be different from what I had imagined. She's a delicate and beautiful young woman! You have good eyes, Leader!"

“Leader's Wife, do you have any sisters in your family? You should consider me. I come from a well-known family. I'm also tall, strong, and good-looking. Most importantly, I have a good character and good temper. I'm definitely the best candidate for a perfect husband...”

.....

Had it been another noble maiden, she would either be too shy to raise her head, or very angry. Xiaocao, on the other hand, looked openly at each person who spoke with a smile. She knew that these people were fellow soldiers of her husband, and they all had a rather close relationship.

The face of the young military official who spoke last flushed red upon her staring. He touched the back of his head and chuckled. In actuality, he was actually quite serious about the question. The leader's wife had such excellent cooking skills, so her sisters also definitely wouldn't be too bad. Last time, when he went on a mission with Leader, he had risked his life to snatch the last piece of dried meat that Leader's Wife packed. That taste was truly unforgettable ah! If he could also marry a wife with such skills, would he still have to steal from the leader and risk the chance of being beaten and going through intense training?

“I have an older sister!” Yu Xiaocao looked at the young military official's eager face and deliberately paused for a moment. Under the dazzling gaze of the other party, she slowly added, “We're twins!”

All of the military officials in the room let out enthusiastic howls, which made Zhu Junyang so angry that he threw eye daggers at each of them. What did they mean? Why were these guys so excited about the lass's older twin sister? What were they thinking about? It seemed like he had been so busy with the wedding preparations recently that these brats were too idle and relaxed!

All of the military officials, 'Why did the temperature in the room suddenly drop a few degrees? What is this chilly feeling?'

“But...” Yu Xiaocao took the tea, which was just the right temperature, that Zhu Junyang handed her and drank a small sip of it. Then, under everyone's anticipating gazes, she finally said, “But she got married last year!”

“Ah...” A series of pitiful cries sounded!

The wedding attendant, who had been pushed to the side, took advantage of this opportunity to squeeze to the front. She cut a lock of Xiaocao's and Zhu Junyang's hair with scissors, tied them together, and said with a smile, "Forever united."

Then, they had to drink the nuptial wine. Amidst the cheers of the crowd, Yu Xiaocao and Zhu Junyang held the celadon cups, intertwined their arms, and drank the wine in the cups.

The wedding attendant took the plate of dumplings from the maidservant beside her and handed a pair of silver chopsticks to Xiaocao. The dumplings were small and exquisite. Xiaocao hadn't eaten since the morning, so she had been hungry for a long time. She picked up a dumpling and put it into her mouth. She chewed on it, and then frowned, "It's raw?!"

The wedding attendant chuckled merrily on the side, "May you soon be blessed with a child!"

Seeing a trace of disappointment on the lass's face, Zhu Junyang whispered in her ears, "Hungry? This prince will tell Ying'er and Yan'er to prepare some snacks so that you can eat something first. I have already ordered the kitchen to make your favorite dishes, and they will be sent over shortly!"

After that, the wedding attendant told them to sit side by side on the wedding bed. She sprinkled some longan, peanuts, and dates on them. After another bout of laughter in the newlywed's room, the young guests finally withdrew from the room.

Zhu Junyang still needed to return to the front courtyard to entertain the guests. He clasped Xiaocao's hands and said, "Let Wutong and the others help you change into comfortable clothes, eat something, and then rest on the bed for a while. This prince will return quickly."

After that, he looked reluctantly at his wife's lovely face. He took a deep look at her again, and then immediately turned around to leave. At this time, he seriously wanted to drive out all the guests in the front courtyard so that he could stay with his bride.

When Yu Xiaocao, who was originally sitting obediently on the bed, heard the sound of the doors closing, she let out a heavy sigh of relief. Then, she started to look around the room curiously. The room was very spacious, and the decoration was gorgeous and elegant. Most of the furnishing were similar to

her room at the Yu Estate, but the standards at the Yu Estate were definitely incomparable to the furnishing here.

Wutong smiled and brewed a cup of tea for her mistress with the tea leaves that she brought over. Then she picked up the snacks on the table and carried them to her young miss. She teasingly said, "His Highness is just worried that Young Miss would be unaccustomed to the new environment, so he arranged the room according to your preferences! His Highness cherishes you dearly and wants to give you all the best!"

Yu Xiaocao withdrew her gaze from the pair of large, red candles on the candlestick. It was apparent that this candlestick was made by Zhu Junyang. With exquisite patterns, it was made with pure gold and inlaid with a thumb-sized ruby. One may not even be able to buy this ruby with over a thousand taels in Treasure Pavilion. So extravagant!

She lowered her head to drink two sips of tea. She had gotten up early in the morning, and it was now evening. However, she hadn't eaten anything at all. Brides in the ancient times were really pitiful. They were afraid of making mistakes during the wedding, so they simply didn't eat since the morning. In the morning, her mother felt bad for her and cooked two poached eggs for her to eat, but she didn't dare to let her drink too much water. She was dying of thirst ah! She finished the flower tea in one go, and then ordered Wutong to pour her another cup.

She finally noticed that there were two unfamiliar maidservants standing by the door. She reckoned that they were Ying'er and Yan'er, who Zhu Junyang had mentioned earlier. They appeared submissive as they stood there motionless, like two statues. In other people's eyes, there was nothing to nitpick about such good discipline, but Xiaocao just raised her eyebrows and didn't make any comments.

After wearing the phoenix coronet for most of the day, Yu Xiaocao felt as if her neck wasn't hers anymore. Since there wasn't anyone else in the room now, she told Pipa to help her take off the golden coronet that was inlaid with gems.

Pipa carefully took off the phoenix coronet on her master's head, and then massaged her stiff neck and shoulders. She pressed the acupuncture points on her head to help her relax, and then she combed her hair into a simple bun style. It was a simple and refreshing style without too many hair accessories.

Even though Pipa was usually very quiet and didn't have much sense of presence, she was actually the most attentive one. She also had skillful hands. Over the years, she had been responsible for the young miss's dress and makeup. She had learned a lot of different hairstyles, but it was a pity that she seldom

had the chance to use them on her young miss. The young miss mainly wore clothing that were comfortable and neat, and she preferred simple hairstyles. At most, her hair ornaments were embedded with simple pearls. Pipa could change the simplest hairstyle into a different style every time. It was apparent how attentive she was.

Xiaocao had put down the plate after just eating one piece of snack. She leaned lazily on the quilt to rest. When people stayed hungry for too long, they would lose their appetite. At this time, a light knocking sound came from the door. Xiaocao said 'come in', and then the door was immediately pushed open. Meixiang, whose hair was combed into the style used by married women, walked in with a smile on her face. Several young maids followed behind her with food boxes in their hands.

“Meixiang greets Your Highness!” Meixiang bowed a greeting, and then told the young maids to put the food in the boxes on the table.

It might be due to the difficulties of supporting her younger siblings in her previous life and the hardships that her family endured in her childhood in this lifetime, but everyone around Xiaocao knew that she wasn't a picky eater and she also thought the same. However, the foods on the table were indeed food that she normally favored. She hadn't expected that Zhu Junyang, who usually appeared cold and daunting, had such a considerate side. Perhaps, in his heart, every detail concerning Xiaocao was worthy of his careful attention.

Xiaocao liked to eat shrimp and crab, but she didn't like to peel the shells. She liked to eat fish, yet she disliked picking out the bones. Thus, she rarely touched these dishes when they appeared on the table. Her close friends, as well as her family, all thought that she didn't like these dishes. As a result, dishes with shrimp, crab, and fish rarely appeared on her family's dining table.

On the table, there were 'crystal shrimp', 'crab roe soup dumplings', 'steamed eggs with crab meat', and the completely boneless 'fish fillet porridge'...which were all her favorites. They were also light and easy to digest. Anyone who had missed two meals wouldn't feel well after eating a lavish meal.

Yu Xiaocao sighed again that she had found a treasure. She was 'causing trouble' for such a warm and considerate man. Most importantly, a man in ancient times who was willing to spend time on his wife was indeed rare and hard to find!

Seeing the smile in her future mistress's eyes, Meixiang said with a smile, “His Highness specially ordered the small kitchen to prepare these. Although the cooking skills of the kitchen maids in the estate aren't as good as that of Your Highness and your maidservants, His Highness spent great efforts

to find them. I heard they are descendants of the imperial chefs of the previous dynasty, and they had mastered the cooking techniques of their ancestors!”

Yu Xiaocao picked up the bowl of fish fillet porridge and drank a mouthful. It was indeed very good. The fish meat was tender and smooth and tasted delicious. It was apparent that the people who made this had excellent control of the heat. After she drank a few more mouthfuls, she picked up a crab roe soup dumpling. Spring wasn't the best time to eat crabs, so she didn't know where Zhu Junyang managed to get crab roe!

With thin skin, it was tasty and fragrant. When the soup entered the mouth, it didn't taste too salty or too mild. The taste was just right. The soup went directly to the stomach, and there was still a trace of residual fragrance in one's mouth, leaving a rich aftertaste. Yu Xiaocao couldn't help but praise it. The remaining dishes also had their own characteristics, which showed the skills of the kitchen maids.

The tasty dishes had aroused Xiaocao's appetite, and thus she overate unknowingly. After the dishes on the table were removed, Yu Xiaocao lay on the bed contentedly while holding her bloated tummy.

“It seems like my younger brother's worries are unnecessary. Younger Sister-in-law doesn't need my company ah!” Zhu Junya came in from outside, and she was followed by two kids——Lu Jiayu and Lu Jiapei. Zhu Junyang was worried that his little wife would be bored if she had no one to speak to in this new environment, so he asked his older sister to accompany her.

Fields of Gold Chapter 677

“Third Maternal Aunt! Mother said that, from today on, you will be my real third maternal aunt!” Lu Jiapei worked hard to climb onto the wedding bed. He hugged Xiaocao's neck, leaned in her embrace, and touched her face intimately with his own face.

Zhu Junya felt slightly jealous. Since her youngest son could walk, he frolicked like a little monkey and never stayed still. It had been a long time since he had acted so close with her. She couldn't help but sigh at the fact that Xiaocao had a natural affinity with children. Her sons all seemed to quite like this younger sister-in-law of hers.

“Fourth Brother said after you marry Third Maternal Uncle, we can come visit you whenever we miss you. You will make a lot of tasty food for us!” Lu Jiapei glanced at the Chinese-style pastries on the table and immediately looked away. Although the pastries at Third Maternal Uncle's house were also delicious, the small cakes and little egg tarts made by Third Maternal Aunt were still the best. Third Maternal Aunt also said that she could make pudding. What was pudding? What did it look like? Was it good?

Lu Jiayu was worried about his younger brother's intelligence. Didn't he already tell that fellow to only say that he missed their aunt and not to mention food? Why did that fellow let that slip?

Yu Xiaocao swept a glance at Lu Jiayu's exasperated expression, and then pinched Lu Jiawei's small face. She said with a smile, "Did you miss Aunt, or the pastries that Aunt makes?"

"Both! I miss the fragrant scent on Third Maternal Aunt's body. It smells even better than candies and pastries!" Her body had been transformed by the mystic-stone water, so there weren't any impurities. Even if she sweated, there was still a refreshing scent. Only when one got close enough to her would they be able to detect a special scent. The perception of children and animals were very similar, and this was one of the reasons why Xiaocao was so popular with children.

Zhu Junya pulled her chubby son off her younger sister-in-law's body and said, "Third Maternal Aunt has been tired for a day, so let her rest for a while. Sit on the chair obediently and chat with your third maternal aunt."

With the two cute little guys accompanying her, time passed very quickly. Familiar footsteps soon came from outside the door, but the pace was slightly hurried. Zhu Junya stood up and picked up her youngest son, who had begun to rub his eyes and looked tired. She said with a smile, "Younger Brother is here, so I won't stay and be an eyesore."

When she went out the door, she came face-to-face with her younger brother. Zhu Junya couldn't help but tease her ice-faced younger brother. She hadn't expected that her youngest brother, who worried the whole family the most, had gotten married before her second brother.

With the sound of the door being opened again, Yu Xiaocao felt somewhat nervous and shy as she held her hands together with her fingers entangled together. Uh...despite living as a human for two lifetimes, she had no experience of intimate contact with men. How should she spend this wedding night?

The rays of light swayed as the red candle flickered. Under the candlelight, there was a hint of a shy blush on Xiaocao's smooth and delicate face. She appeared like peach blossoms in March—beautiful beyond measure. Zhu Junyang was stunned, and he couldn't help but step forward to pull her petite and dainty body into his arms. As soon as he entered the room, Meixiang and Wutong had tactfully left the room, closing the doors and windows.

“From today on, you will belong to this prince completely.” Zhu Junyang's heart felt fulfilled as if there were countless fresh flowers blossoming one after another, and the gorgeous flowers seemed to make one feel giddy and intoxicated. Was this the taste of happiness?

Yu Xiaocao was so nervous that her entire body stiffened. She was like a little lamb caught by a tiger and didn't dare to move. In order to relieve the tension, she complained in a low voice, “Your whole body smells of alcohol. So stinky! Stay away from me!”

Zhu Junyang buried his face in Xiaocao's hair and took a deep breath. He lifted Xiaocao's face, which still had makeup on. He couldn't suppress the smile on his face as he said in a rascally manner, “Wife still hasn't bathed yet. Are you waiting to bathe with me, your husband? There's no way that this prince can reject you, so I'll reluctantly take a 'mandarin ducks bath' with Wife, okay?”

Yu Xiaocao's face turned even redder. She angrily pushed him away, “Who wants to take a bath with you! Shameless...how did you know about 'mandarin ducks bath'? Speak honestly, have you personally experienced it?”

Zhu Junyang had seen through his little wife with one look. She was covering up her shyness and nervousness by acting irritated. At this time, Xiaocao had changed into a fitted qipao embroidered with golden peony flowers, which made her waist look very slim. She had a slender figure and enchanting face. Her eyebrows were faintly drawn, and she had light rouge on her cheeks. Her skin was very smooth and soft...Zhu Junyang's phoenix eyes suddenly dimmed, and there was a restless flame in his deep eyes.

“Wife has misunderstood me. My heart is very, very small. It can only accommodate you and can't see anyone else. You don't understand men. There are certain things that men can learn without a teacher, such as...” His deep voice carried a bit of sexy huskiness. His seductive voice stirred her heartstrings and caused her heart to palpitate.

The warm breath lingered around Xiaocao's ears. Her delicate earlobes instantly turned red because of the suggestive atmosphere. With his warm, thin lips, he sucked on the delicate flesh of her ears. He slightly teased the earlobe with the tip of his tongue, causing the owner to shudder.

His soft, thin lips moved along her earlobe, cheek, and chin. Then it stopped at her red lips that exuded an alluring fragrance. It wasn't the first time that Zhu Junyang had kissed her, but this time was

obviously different. Xiaocao's breathing stagnated, and her face became burning hot, like a raging fire. As their kiss became increasingly intimate, the fire gradually covered her entire body.

"I...I haven't washed up yet. You have eaten all the powder on my face..." When Xiaocao felt nervous, she couldn't help but talk, as if this was the only way for her to ease the tension in her heart.

Zhu Junyang also noticed this. He gently bit her slender neck, leaving a red mark. Then he said with a hint of laughter in his voice, "It's okay. This prince doesn't mind. I'm not only going to eat the powder, but also the rouge on your face..." In the end, I would devour you as a whole!

Her clothes left her body one by one, and they piled up on the ground. It was hard to tell which ones were hers and which ones belonged to him. Xiaocao, who was pulled into the curtains, struggled hard and said, "No, I want to take a bath first!"

"..." Zhu Junyang, who felt a swollen pain in a certain area, looked speechlessly at her face for a moment. Then he picked her up and said, "Since this prince's little wife is so eager to experience the pleasure of taking a 'mandarin ducks bath' with me, this prince will fulfill your wish!"

In the bathing room, there was a large bathtub with a depth that reached up to Xiaocao's chest, and there was still steam coming out of it! After Xiaocao, who had already been stripped to nothing but her undergarments, was put into the tub, she worked hard to push the thick-skinned man who also wanted to get in, "No, you go out first! With you here, I'll be so nervous that I don't know what to do!"

"It's fine as long as this prince knows!" How could her cat-like strength be able to stop the wolf? In a flash, he had taken off all his clothes. Under the shy and evasive gaze of the lass, the wolf successfully entered the bathtub and imprisoned a certain lamb in his arms. 'Mhm? Why is there still a layer of clothes? Take it off! Take it off!'

Yu Xiaocao shrank to one side of the bathtub, trying to distance herself from a certain wolf. However, the bathtub was only so big. It was hard to avoid a certain person's long arms and legs. In the splashing water, the struggling Xiaocao couldn't avoid the fate of being stripped of the last piece of clothing on her body and forced to 'meet openly' with a certain wolf.

Yu Xiaocao folded her arms in front of her chest and glared angrily at that dangerous person. Although there was a layer of flower petals, he could still vaguely see his wife's exquisite figure under the water.

Zhu Junyang's breathing became heavy. Yu Xiaocao felt cowardly and didn't face the meaning behind his deep gaze.

“You...didn't you say that you will listen to everything I say after we got married? Right now, I'm ordering you to turn around. You're not allowed to look!” Xiaocao's voice sounded weak and lacked her usual imposing force.

A certain wolf's eyes darted around, and then he shamelessly said, “Wife, you must be tired today, right? Why don't your husband, I, take on the task of helping you bathe?” As he said that, not only did he not turn around, but instead, he moved even closer. His action provoked the little lamb to splash water at him as her final resort.

But, no matter how much the little lamb struggled, there was a great disparity in their strengths. The wolf's physical strength completely dominated the little lamb's struggles. Under the pretext of helping her bathe, he touched the little lamb's entire body from head to toe. Their 'mandarin ducks bath' finally concluded when the water turned cold.

“Bad guy!” Xiaocao wanted to pull away the big hands that were on her chest. Her face was so red that it looked like she used a whole box of blush. Although they didn't reach the final step in the bathtub, he had touched and kissed all that should, or should not, be touched and kissed. She had been thoroughly taken advantage of by a certain wolf.

A certain wolf stood up from the waters and picked up the little lamb, carrying her out of the bathtub. He wrapped her up with a large towel, and then walked quickly to the wedding bed. He felt that if he didn't relieve a certain area, he was about to explode!

“Wife, your husband, I, will let you know what's a real 'bad guy!'” The crimson red nuptial bedding made the little lamb's skin appear even more radiant and fair. Zhu Junyang suddenly felt his body and heart heating up.

He casually wiped the water on his body. Then he pinned the lass, who was covering her eyes yet peeping from the gaps of her fingers, under his body and said with a voice full of laughter, “How is it? Are you satisfied with what you see?”

Satisfied! Very satisfied! A certain lamb, who was about to be eaten, nearly revealed her inner thoughts. He had wide shoulders, a thin waist, narrow hips, and long legs. His eight-pack abs were also very apparent. With well-proportioned and strong muscles, he looked even more perfect than the artworks carved by western sculptors. Ahem...of course, that was if you ignored a certain person's arrogant and proud words!

With his strong-built body, he trapped the little lamb within his arms. Zhu Junyang lowered his head and kissed her delicate neck. He moved downwards and arrived at the small, exquisite area of her chest. He sucked on it, licked, and teased her... His hands wandered on her smooth skin, and as if there was electricity, it made Xiaocao tremble.

The little lamb's clear eyes were shrouded by a layer of hazy mist. When she looked at him with a seemingly intoxicated gaze, she seemed to be able to lure out one's soul.

Fields of Gold Chapter 678

Zhu Junyang couldn't hold back anymore. He took action and immediately experienced an unprecedented feeling...the incomparable feeling rushed from the tip of his toes to the top of his head.

“Groan...” Zhu Junyang stopped all of his movements when he heard a suppressed cry of pain.

“Does it hurt?” Zhu Junyang lowered his head and kissed his wife's slightly creased brows.

Yu Xiaocao bit her lips, and with a flushed face, she nodded. But, then, she shook her head. It was inevitable for women to experience this, so things that should come would eventually arrive. For him, this pain was nothing.

The red candles were brightly lit outside the curtains of the bed, and the silhouette of the couple on the bed could be seen. There was a beautiful scenery in the room... Wutong and Meixiang, who were on duty outside the room, heard the faint sound of movement coming from the room. They looked at each other with blushing faces, and then swiftly shifted their gazes.

In the dark blue sky, the vast Milky Way was shining with brilliance. Altair and Vega stood on opposite sides of the Milky Way, looking at each other from afar. Like scattered pieces of jade, the flying stars looked gorgeous. In the yard, the breeze swayed the flower branches, sending wisps of fragrance over. The gentle moonlight shone on the ground...

The wolf, who had devoured the little lamb, personally helped the exhausted lass clean up. Then he stuffed her into the quilt and hugged her tightly. A certain wolf felt restless with the soft, petite person in his arms. However, considering that it was the lamb's first time, he suppressed the little flame in his heart.

“So good!” Zhu Junyang sighed, and then gently brushed the hair on the lass's face behind her ear. He softly whispered, “Knowing that you will belong to me completely in the future feels even better than eating hotpot around the stove in the freezing cold weather and eating a slushie during the hottest days of the summer.

Yu Xiaocao, whose face was still hot, couldn't help but said, “You also have to remember that you belong to me completely! You're not allowed to use your charming phoenix eyes to flirt with young maidens! You're not allowed to attract little beauties with your sexy voice! When you're outside, you can't smile like right now! Your gentleness is exclusive to me only!!”

“Understood! I, your husband, dare not disobey Wife's orders! This prince is taken now, so the cold-faced prince's smile, gentleness, and love...can only belong exclusively to Princess Consort Xu! I guarantee!” Hearing a trace of uncertainty within the lass's voice, Zhu Junyang hugged her with an aching heart. It turned out that this young lass, who had always been full of confidence, also felt uncertain about the future!

“That's more like it! I want to sleep—sing a lullaby for me!” Yu Xiaocao's dimples reflected her happiness. She hugged her husband's strong waist and rested her face on his chest.

“Sing?” Zhu Junyang was stumped by this request. He struggled for a long time, but he still couldn't think of a suitable song. When he lowered his head to look at the lass in his arms with an apologetic expression, he found that she had unknowingly fallen asleep.

Her breathing sounded very even and relaxed. With thick and curled eyelashes, she had a small face that was red like an apple, and a sweet smile on her face. When the lass was asleep, she was as obedient as a kitten!

Xiaocao slept very comfortably. The weather in mid-March was still chilly at night. But, since she was hugging a big, warm brazier, her limbs weren't cold anymore. After a long stretch, she noticed that her body felt sore and tired. When she recalled that she had evolved from a young maiden to a young matron last night, she felt a sense of sweetness within her bashfulness. She turned her head and saw that she was the only one left on the bed. She touched the other side of the bed and noticed that there

was no warmth on it anymore. That fellow Zhu Junyang had left without her knowledge. After making an inquiry, she found that Zhu Junyang had gone to train at the training arena. Didn't they say that men exhausted more energy in the matter between men and women? Why did her whole body feel as if it was scattered, yet that fellow was still filled with energy and completely fine?

She suddenly froze, and then asked the people outside the room, "What time is it now?"

"In reply to Your Highness, it's a quarter past seven." Pipa voiced a reply. Yu Xiaocao immediately breathed a sigh of relief. It was just slightly past seven in the morning ah. Good, she wasn't too late. Today, they were going back to Prince Jing's Estate to offer tea to her father-in-law and mother-in-law. She was really afraid that she would sleep until the late morning— that would be so embarrassing!

"Is the princess consort awake?" Zhu Junyang's voice sounded from outside the door. Then the sounds of the maidservants' greetings could be heard. Pipa replied, "In reply to Your Highness, the princess consort is awake!"

The sound of the door being pushed opened was accompanied by the sound of footsteps. After walking around the glazed, red sandalwood four-season folding screen, Zhu Junyang's figure appeared in the inner room. Yu Xiaocao, who was still in bed, only wore a thin piece of clothing. She didn't know how to face the man who now had a physical relationship with her. Thus, she lay straight on the bed, pulled the quilt up to her nose, and pretended to sleep with her eyes closed.

Zhu Junyang chuckled and sat on the edge of the bed, looking at the lass's slightly fluttering eyelashes. Her breathing was also somewhat rushed. How could he not know that the lass was pretending to be asleep? He pinched her nose and pulled the quilt down a bit. Then he said with a voice so gentle that it could drip out water, "It's time to wake up, you lazy cat. The sun is about to reach your butt!"

Yu Xiaocao pretended not to hear him and continued to pretend to sleep. Zhu Junyang's laughter sounded again, "Alright, since you don't want to get up, this prince will accompany my princess consort to sleep for a while...but should we do something to express our love before sleeping?"

When Xiaocao heard his words, she immediately got up and opened her eyes wide without any trace of sleepiness, "I'm up! You go out first and tell Wutong to come in to help me change!"

“In actuality, I can help you with that!” From the opening of the lass's collar, Zhu Junyang could see the marks that he had left behind. His gaze became deep and fervent again.

Yu Xiaocao followed a certain wolf's eyes and looked down to see the red marks around her fair neckline. She grabbed her collar, glared angrily at him, and said, “I dare not accept the service of Imperial Prince Xu! Wutong, Pipa, your miss needs to change clothes and wash up!”

“Miss? You're not one anymore after last night! My princess consort, if you don't recognize your own identity, then you shall be lightly punished!” After he said that, he bent down and held his little wife's chin. He kissed her with his thin lips and gently bit her lower lip. He quickly let go of his angry little wife before the two maidservants came in.

With their heads lowered, Wutong and Pipa ignored their masters' actions and swiftly helped their mistress wash up and get dressed. Zhu Junyang's phoenix eyes lit up when Xiaocao appeared in front of him again.

Today, Xiaocao was dressed in a complicated palace attire. She wore a fitted red silk dress embroidered with linked-flower patterns, and a light bluish-green fine gauze cardigan inlaid with silver threads. She had on a short light pink jacket with water lily patterns, and a pastel pink gauze tied around her waist. Her glossy, black hair was arranged into an exquisite flying cloud bun. In the loosely twisted bun, there was a gilded swaying phoenix hairpin inlay embedded with rubies, jade bits, and pearls. There was an exquisitely carved diamond necklace around her neck. She looked very elegant and gorgeous.

Looking at the western table clock in the outer room, it was already getting late. Xiaocao and her husband hastily ate the breakfast carefully prepared by the kitchen maids, and then went to Prince Jing's Estate on the same carriage.

Princess Consort Jing had already drunk two to three cups of tea. She looked outside somewhat anxiously and muttered to herself with a frown, “Why aren't they here yet?”

Zhu Junya, who was sitting beside her lady mother, tittered with her hand over her mouth and said, “Lady Mother, you should be considerate of Younger Brother's feelings. After guarding her for nearly ten years, he has finally married his beautiful wife. How can he not cherish her? I really didn't expect that the person who seemed the most violent and impatient in our family turned out to be the one with the most endurance. Younger Brother is indeed a devoted lover ah!”

“I'm just worried that there aren't any elders by their side who can guide them. That lass Cao'er is delicate and weak, so if your younger brother goes overboard...ay! I don't know what your lord father told your younger brother about the matter of consummation, and whether he warned Yang'er to take it easy!” Now, Xiaocao had already become a threat to Zhu Junyang's status in his mother's heart. Princess Consort Jing expressed concern for her youngest daughter-in-law with both her words and thoughts.

Zhu Junya silently sighed that her youngest sister-in-law's charm was too great—she was loved by both the young and the old. Not only was she able to get her five sons to talk about her nonstop, but she had also conquered the big boss of the Prince Jing's Estate—her lady mother. It seemed like Third Younger Sister-in-law didn't have to worry about the issues between in-laws, which was the biggest concern for women when they got married.

However, when Zhu Junya thought about her own mother-in-law, she wasn't envious of her third younger sister-in-law at all. Her mother-in-law was also quite good and treated her like her own daughter. She personally taught her how to manage the household, breaking down all the principles for her. Even one's mother wouldn't be so thorough. She was fortunate to have met a loving husband, a clever and gentle mother-in-law, and an open-minded father-in-law...

“They're here! Third Young Master and Third Young Madam are here!!” Lanxiang, whose hair was combed into a matron's hairstyle, pulled open the curtains and came in. Her voice was full of joy.

Soon, Zhu Junyang and Xiaocao appeared in the courtyard. When they were walking over the threshold, Princess Consort Jing noticed that her youngest son had attentively helped his wife. Looking carefully at Xiaocao, Princess Consort Jing finally felt relieved when she saw that she had a ruddy complexion and appeared fine.

Xiaocao blushed slightly as she kowtowed respectfully to Imperial Prince Jing and Princess Consort Jing. She followed Zhu Junyang to greet her in-laws. Xiaocao had frequently visited Prince Jing's Estate in the past, so she had seen Imperial Prince Jing and Princess Consort Jing numerous times. They also got along very well. However, this time, Xiaocao, whose identity had changed, was somewhat reserved and shy.

Chunxiang, Princess Consort Jing's personal maidservant, held a red begonia carved tea tray and stood respectfully beside her. On the tray, there were two white porcelain teacups painted with hibiscus flowers. Yu Xiaocao picked up one of the cups. Just when she was about to serve the tea to Imperial Prince Jing, a clear and resonant voice sounded from outside, “Wait! My granddaughter-in-law just joined the family, so as her grandfather, she should pay respect to me first!”

Imperial Prince Jing almost rolled his eyes at him. 'Imperial Father, what are you doing here? Why didn't you come to drink tea when the heir's wife married into the family?' The emperor emeritus didn't care about whether his son was happy or not. He glared at his son to have him add another chair in the middle of the host seats, and thus Imperial Prince Jing and Princess Consort Jing sat on his left and right, respectively. Then he looked at Xiaocao with satisfaction and nodded, saying, "Okay, let's start!"

Xiaocao pursed her lips into a smile, raised the cup of tea above her head, and called out in a crisp voice, "Grandfather, please have some tea!"

Fields of Gold Chapter 679

"Good!" The emperor emeritus took the teacup and lowered his head to drink a sip. He took the wooden box that the elderly head steward handed him and placed it into Xiaocao's hands. He said with a smile, "This is a meeting present from Grandfather. We will be a family in the future. Grandfather knows that you're filial, so when you make delicious food in the future, remember to send a portion to me..."

Imperial Prince Jing: ...

He seriously didn't want to admit that this gluttonous, old urchin was his biological father! Was there anyone who would immediately ask for tasty food upon seeing his new granddaughter-in-law?

The heir's wife, who originally felt somewhat uncomfortable inwardly because of the fact that the emperor emeritus gave face to Xiaocao, wasn't envious anymore now. It turned out that the emperor emeritus had come for the delicious food ah!

Yu Xiaocao was used to the foodie nature of the members of the imperial family. She took the wooden box that looked ordinary but was made of Phoebe zhennan wood. When she opened it, she saw two jade-colored balls that were the size of baby fists.

Seeing this, Zhu Junyang asked with slight surprise, "Imperial Grandfather, where did you get this pair of luminous pearls?"

"Uh...this lord doesn't remember when I got it. Maybe it was from the time when I was fighting for the empire. I probably found it at the house of one of those corrupted officials of the previous dynasty. I

found them in the corner when I searched through the storage this morning. This lord doesn't need these things, so I brought them here as a gift for you two!"

When Zhu Huaiyong was fighting battles throughout the country, he had collected many goods and kept them in his private storehouse. Some of these rare treasures were covered with a thick layer of dust, and this Phoebe zhennan wood box was one of those items buried in dust.

It was the legendary luminous pearls ah! They were priceless treasures!! It was said that the luminous pearl buried with Empress Dowager Cixi was worth 800 million RMB!! Oh my, she hadn't expected to be able to see the luminous pearl with her own eyes. Xiaocao still needed to serve tea to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, so she couldn't take a closer look. She handed the wooden box to Wutong. Anyways, he had given it to her now, so she could look at it as much as she wanted when she got home!

Next, she offered tea to Imperial Prince Jing. Xiaocao received a box of thumb-sized East pearls. When she served tea to her mother-in-law, Princess Consort Jing, she was given a pair of top-quality mutton fat jade bangles. It appeared to be an old item, so it should be one of the items in Princess Consort Jing's dowry. In ancient times, many jewelries were handed down from mothers-in-law to daughters-in-law, as family heirlooms to be passed down from generation to generation. Although Xiaocao didn't lack bangles, she accepted it respectfully.

After that, as the eldest brother and sister-in-law, the heir and his wife also gifted jewelry to their younger sister-in-law as a meeting present. Zhu Junya, who was the elder sister, knew that Xiaocao could concoct medicine and didn't lack accessories, so she gave her a hundred-year-old ginseng. The second brother, Zhu Junxi, hadn't gotten married yet, so he wasn't required to give a present. However, he had also prepared a complete set of Miao silver accessories, which had characteristics of the southwest. Although they weren't as valuable as the previous gifts, Xiaocao liked them for their uniqueness.

Xiaocao had also prepared gifts for the heir's and Zhu Junya's children, all of which were precious items such as brushes, ink, paper, and inkstones. Lu Jiapei, who was the youngest, felt somewhat unhappy as he held the valuable inkstone. For the young fellow who had yet begun studying, an inkstone that cost several thousand taels wasn't as good as a pastry or candy made by his third aunt!

Of course, Xiaocao had also taken time before the wedding to make some candies that were easy to keep. She brought them with her today and gave a box to each child. Seeing the fragrant and sweet candies, Lu Jiapei's wrinkled-up face finally eased. With a fawning expression, he kept calling her 'Third Aunt'.

Lu Nianhua, who claimed to come from a family of literati, couldn't bear to look at his youngest son— to be such a foodie, who exactly did Lu Jiawei resemble? He shifted his gaze and saw the emperor emeritus sitting at the main seat. He was currently taking advantage of the heir's youngest son's filial piety to con candy from his great-grandson ah! Could it be that his youngest son had inherited his love for food from his great-grandfather?

They had lunch at Prince Jing's Estate. The whole family sat together and ate merrily. The emperor emeritus had also stayed for the meal. As he ate, he complained about the culinary skills of the Prince Jing's Estate's cooks, saying that they were inferior to the cooking of his granddaughter-in-law, Xiaocao.

Zhu Junyang also didn't give any face and said as he helped his wife pick out the fish bones, "The cooking skills of the cooks in the kitchen are quite ordinary. It seems like our estate's kitchen maids, who we hired with a high salary, are quite good in comparison! They can't compare with you, but they are at least not inferior to that of the chefs of Zhenxiu Restaurant!"

Yu Xiaocao didn't eat a lot in the morning. She ate the delicious fish with relish. Seeing the glare that Imperial Prince Jing shot at her man, she held back her laughter and said, "How's the taste ordinary? No matter if it's the taste or control of the heat, they have managed them quite well."

"What's good about it? There's barely any taste—so plain! Just eat a little bit, and when we get home, I'll have the kitchen maids make crab roe steamed buns for you. We saved the crab roes from last autumn, so they're very plump. I know that you like to eat them, so this prince stored a lot in the icehouse at home, which will be enough for you to eat until this autumn!" Zhu Junyang tasted all the dishes on the table. He picked a few that were just passable and considerately put them into the bowl in front of his wife.

Except for Zhu Junxi, who had not returned home in nearly ten years, all of the other masters of Prince Jing's Estate were already used to Zhu Junyang's perfect husband image. With a look of disbelief, he asked, "Lady Mother, did Younger Brother get switched when I wasn't around? This gentle and considerate man isn't the same person as the cold and ruthless third young master of the Prince Jing's Estate, who was feared by the entire capital, right? Right?!"

Princess Consort Jing glared at her second son, gave him a piece of sparerib, and snorted, "Just like your lord father, the men in our family are all good men who are considerate to their wives! Your younger brother was really worrisome in the past, but as soon as he fell in love with someone, he would treat her wholeheartedly. You, on the other hand, are almost thirty, yet there's no signs of a romantic relationship

at all. Do you think that's proper? While you're back this time, we must settle the matter of your marriage. Otherwise, you're not allowed to leave the capital!! Tomorrow, attend a blind date with me!”

In a leisurely manner, Zhu Junxi slowly finished the sparerib that his lady mother gave him. Then he picked up a glutinous rice pearl and ate it with relish. It wasn't until Princess Consort Jing's patience had run out that he finally opened his mouth to say in an unhurried manner, “Lady Mother, you don't have to worry about my marriage! I already have someone in mind. There are two reasons for my return this time. On one hand, I want to attend my younger brother's wedding; on the other hand, I want to ask you to help me send a marriage proposal and settle my marriage.”

When Princess Consort Jing heard this, the concern in her heart had completely vanished. Among her sons, her lord husband had long decided on her eldest son's marriage. The two families had reached a consensus early on that the children will get married as soon as they reached marriageable age. Everything was a matter of course.

Her daughter's marriage was also settled under the silent operation of that big-tailed wolf, Lu Nianhua. Their feelings grew naturally day by day, and thus resulted in marriage.

Her youngest son had been eagerly waiting for the young maiden even before she had reached the age of ten. As if he was a beast guarding his territory, he had long marked his ownership on the lass. He was just waiting for the young maiden to agree so that he could marry her.

She didn't have to worry much about these children. The only exception was her second son. He was already at the age to talk about marriage, but he had run off to the borders to join the army. Princess Consort Jing felt so worried ah. The troops at the borders were full of rough men without a single female in sight. When would he be able to bring a wife home? She had originally wanted to find a wife for her second son in the capital, so she wrote him a letter to ask him to come back. He, on the other hand, regarded the barracks as his home and didn't return for nearly ten years!

Oh right! Second Son had been staying in the barracks the entire time, so where did this wife come from? He wouldn't...wouldn't bring a man back as his wife, right? Princess Consort Jing's imagination went wild, and she immediately looked at her second son with a horrified expression!

Zhu Junxi felt uncomfortable with the look that his lady mother was giving him. He thought that she was unhappy that he had chosen a wife himself, so he hastily explained, “Lady Mother, as you know, the southwest borders had been unstable in the past two years and there were frequent wars. General Mu

and I had been busy fighting the bandits, so we couldn't come back to see you. This son is at fault, so please don't blame Mumu!”

General Mu? When Princess Consort Jing heard this name, she couldn't help but clutch onto the clothes in front of her chest, feeling as if she was unable to breathe. Seeing this, Imperial Prince Jing was startled and immediately went to stroke her back. He repeatedly asked, “What's wrong? Where are you not feeling well? Quickly call for Imperial Physician Zheng...”

After several years of care, the princess consort's health was no different from ordinary people. But, her current wan complexion caused Imperial Prince Jing to recall the scene of him being helpless when his princess consort fell ill several years ago. He couldn't help but hold tightly onto her hands and anxiously ask about her well-being.

Princess Consort Jing waved her hand at him and shook her head to express that she was fine. However, she looked at Zhu Junxi with a gaze filled with disappointment and sorrow.

Zhu Junxi had a confused expression on his face—his lady mother had always been open-minded ah! Younger Brother's wife had come from a farmer's family, and his mother could readily accept her. Mumu's paternal grandfather was one of the founding veterans who fought along the emperor emeritus to conquer the empire, and her father was the great general stationed at the southwest borders. They didn't have much contact with his family, but there also wasn't any grudges between the two families. Why was his lady mother's reaction so big?

Imperial Prince Jing finally realized that his wife was mad at their second son. He immediately pulled a long face and glared angrily at his second son, “You unfilial son, you're making your lady mother angry as soon as you come back! Hurry up and apologize to your lady mother and promise that you won't anger her anymore!”

Since Zhu Junxi was a child, his parents had never needed to worry about him. Although he was jealous of his younger brother before he joined the army, as well as slightly sad and disappointed with his mother's bias, he was still filial in nature. He didn't know what he did to cause his mother to be unhappy, but he still admitted his mistake and apologized to his lady mother with a good attitude, asking her not to be angry.

Princess Consort Jing gradually collected herself. She took a deep breath and asked, “What exactly is your relationship with that General Mu?”

Zhu Junxi felt even more astonished. Based on his lady mother's tone, she really did seem to oppose his relationship with Mumu. What exactly could be the reason? Could it be that there was a deep grudge between the Han Family and the Prince's Jing's Estate, or his lady mother's maiden family, that he didn't know about?

Phoebe zhennan wood was considered so valuable that only royals could afford to use them. It was used to create the pillars in the Forbidden City.

Fields of Gold Chapter 680

Despite his confusion and doubts, Zhu Junxi, this hapless child, honestly explained how he and 'General Mu' got to know each other. This was the story of a beauty rescuing a hero. During an operation to eliminate bandits, a young general, who had just been transferred to the southwest, fell into the enemy's trap and got lost in the deep mountains because of his unfamiliarity with the dangerous and mountainous environment of the southwest.

The dense forest, miasma, poisonous insects, and mysterious enemies caused the young general, who was a superb military commander, to fall into a dilemma. Just when he had run out of supplies and driven into a corner, General Mu led a group of elite soldiers, like a god descending from the heavens, and saved the young general from the dangerous situation...

"Just because General Mu saved your life...you and the general..." Princess Consort Jing gnashed her teeth as she imagined General Mu's, the fellow who liked men, 'crime' of taking advantage of the life-saving grace. She inwardly swore at this perverted general.

Recalling the scenes of the past, Zhu Junxi chuckled foolishly and said, "It was indeed Mumu who expressed interest in me first. At the beginning, I was afraid that others would say that I got my military merits through connections, so I rejected the confession. But, later..."

A virtuous maiden was afraid of a pestering man, and it was the same when the roles were flipped. Han Xiaomu had grown up in the military camps and developed a straightforward personality. She had always been open to expressing her feelings to the man she liked. There were naturally many young military officials under General Han who were interested in Han Xiaomu. Seeing that this beautiful and resourceful sweetheart, who was also skilled in martial arts, had actually fallen in love with this foreign wolf, all sorts of open and covert attacks were directed at Zhu Junxi.

Han Xiaomu was aware of the 'conspiracies' of these people and helped Zhu Junxi many times to overcome the 'schemes' of his colleagues. In the next few battles, the two became increasingly compatible, and they worked seamlessly together. They accumulated great military achievements by repeatedly defeating the enemy troops with a force inferior in number. When faced with the undisguised admiration of Han Xiaomu, who was jokingly known as 'General Mu' among the troops, Zhu Junxi could no longer remain calm, and he gradually fell for her.

When Zhu Junxi joined the army, he hid his family background. There were few in the army who knew about his identity as the second young master of Prince Jing's Estate. However, his surname was 'Zhu' and he had the generation name of 'Jun'. There was no way that he could hide his background from General Han, who was known to be an old fox. He pondered over the sons of the imperial princes. The only one who matched his age and appearance was the second son of Imperial Prince Jing.

His father spoke highly of Imperial Prince Jing, saying that he was upright, selfless, good-natured, and capable. Thus, General Han was quite happy with his daughter's choice.

General Han had quite a headache with his only daughter. General Han was deeply in love with his wife. After his wife passed away while giving birth to their daughter, General Han never planned to get married again. General Han had always doted on his daughter, who was looking more and more like his wife. She didn't want to stay in the capital, so he bought her along and raised her by his side.

But, as a military official, how was he supposed to raise a delicate young girl? He had inadvertently raised his daughter into a tomboy who was a capable and crafty 'little fox' with superb skills in military operations. Seeing that his daughter was already twenty years old yet she still didn't seem to be interested in romance and only knew about fighting, General Han felt very worried. He felt that it wasn't a good idea for his daughter to stay in the military camps with a group of rough men! He should send her back to the capital and let her grandfather worry about her!

General Han's wife had passed away for many years, and his youngest son, who was over thirty years old, didn't even have a wife yet. There wasn't a mistress at home to manage the household. Old General Han had invited a senior servant, who used to work in the Imperial Palace, to teach his granddaughter etiquette and rules.

At the borders, Han Xiaomu was just like a wild horse that had never worn a harness. When it suddenly had to put on a rein and a saddle, it would feel unaccustomed as if it was tied with a thick layer of shackles. This child had always been an independent thinker, so while her grandfather wasn't paying attention, she left a letter and ran back to the borders. After that, no matter what General Han said, she never left the borders and the garrison.

General Han had wanted to find a good husband among his talented subordinates. However, his daughter treated them like her brothers, colleagues, and comrades in arms. She completely ignored the expression of interest of many of the young generals. The young generals didn't dare to frequently approach her because Han Xiaomu liked to get others to spar with her. She was highly skilled in martial arts, so if they weren't careful, they would get beaten up. It would be so embarrassing to come out looking battered.

General Han was so worried that his hair had turned white, and his beard was almost completely pulled out by him. At this time, Zhu Junxi, who had transferred over, appeared in front of the father-daughter pair.

After Zhu Junxi was saved by Han Xiaomu, he was often coerced into practicing martial arts with her under the pretext that she had saved his life so he should be grateful and repay her. Although Zhu Junxi's martial arts skills weren't as good as his devilish younger brother's, he had studied hard with the martial arts expert hired by the estate. Coupled with his years of experience at the borders, his skills could be considered extraordinary.

Because Han Xiaomu was a girl and his life savior, and for fear that she would feel embarrassed, Zhu Junxi always went easy on her and pretended to lose when they practiced together. Han Xiaomu had challenged nearly all the military officials in the garrison and had rich experience in actual combat, so how could she not see his yielding? Instead of being grateful, she was furious. She thought that Zhu Junxi didn't show his true strength because he didn't respect her and looked down on her. So she pestered him every day, like a shadow!

With no other choice, Zhu Junxi used some of his real skills and defeated the bothersome young maiden. Unexpectedly, the more frustrated Han Xiaomu was, the braver she became. She viewed him like a boss and challenged him every few days. After repeated practices and battles, the youth and maiden developed good feelings for each other. Their feelings gradually warmed up, and they came together naturally.

With their harmonious combination and good teamwork, they obtained many military merits in the southwest. Han Xiaomu was respectfully known as 'General Mu', but she wasn't an official member of the army. Thus, their achievements were credited to Zhu Junxi. This was one of the reasons why he was promoted to a fourth-rank official so quickly.

Imperial Prince Jing interrupted his son's recount, pondered briefly, and asked, "Is this General Mu that you're talking about the granddaughter of Marquis Zhongwu, Old General Han? The daughter of General Han, the commanding general of the southwest troops?"

"Uh? General Mu is a woman?" With a slightly opened mouth, Princess Consort Jing stared at them round-eyed.

Imperial Prince Jing and Zhu Junxi: ...

"In reply to Lord Father, you're right! Lady Mother, of course, Mumu is a woman. Did you think that your son will find a man as his wife?" Zhu Junxi had imaginary black lines on his head. He hadn't expected that his lady mother would think that he was gay. Even if he fell in love with a man, he wouldn't foolishly bring 'him' back to see his parents and marry 'him'!

Princess Consort Jing's expression changed very fast, and she said with a smile, "That's good, it's good that she's a woman! Second Son, it's all your fault. You didn't make it clear at the beginning and gave me a false alarm! So, based on what you're saying, the lass also came back to the capital with you? Why didn't you bring her back for me to see?"

'So, it's my fault now! Lady Mother is always thinking about all these nonsense, yet Lord Father isn't doing anything about it!' Zhu Junxi felt very helpless ah!

"Mumu also came with Old General Han to attend Younger Brother's wedding yesterday. At that time, Lady Mother was busy greeting the guests, so I didn't introduce her to you guys. Mumu said that she would pay a visit on another day. Lady Mother, what day would you prefer?" She was indeed worthy of being the descendent of a family of generals. She was straightforward and generous, and she didn't act coy at all. She had already felt a good impression in Princess Consort Jing's heart.

"How about...tomorrow?" Princess Consort Jing couldn't wait to meet the female general, whose bravery wasn't inferior to that of a man. How capable was she, to be able to subdue her second son?

Zhu Junyang, who had acted like a background for a long time, suddenly spoke up, "Tomorrow is the day that my wife and I go back to visit her maiden home..."

Princess Consort Jing really wanted to say, 'You guys can just go, and I can meet my second daughter-in-law.' But, when she saw that Xiaocao had a face full of curiosity as if she wanted to join in the gossip, she held back her words and said, "Then...the day after tomorrow!"

Zhu Junya looked at Xiaocao. Then she looked around and said, "Second Younger Brother and Miss Han have mutual affection for each other, but the two families have yet to meet. If we just invite her to our house like this, would the Han Family think that we have slighted them?"

Princess Consort Jing thought about it carefully and also felt that it was somewhat improper. Then she casually asked her daughter, "Then what do you think is the appropriate way to handle this matter?"

"Lady Mother, don't you often hold flower appreciation gatherings, garden parties, and so on? Why don't you organize a food tasting banquet? You can invite the noble maidens of the capital to tour the garden and try some pastries. At that time, you can also send an invitation to Miss Han. In this way, wouldn't you be able to see her without being too obvious?" As Zhu Junya said this, she looked at Xiaocao.

Of course, Zhu Junyang could tell what was on his older sister's mind. He pulled a long face and said unhappily, "What does the food tasting banquet have to do with my wife? It wouldn't be that you guys want my newly wedded wife to work hard to make pastries for you guys, right? No way, I don't agree!"

"It doesn't matter if you agree or not. What matters is whether Third Sister-in-law agrees!" Zhu Junya knew very well that her youngest brother was just a paper tiger in front of Xiaocao. As long as her youngest sister-in-law spoke up, her youngest brother's opinion could be ignored.

Yu Xiaocao thought about it, and then said with a smile, "We can build several big ovens in the garden. We'll prepare the materials for making pastries in advance, so that noble maidens who are interested can make pastries themselves." In her previous life, DIY chocolates, cakes, and cookies were very popular among young men and women. There was a sense of achievement when one ate the pastries made by oneself!

"That's a great idea, Third Sister-in-law! But, I'm afraid that those noble maidens who have never done any chores will make a complete mess when making the pastries!" Zhu Junya was a terrible cook herself. After hearing the plan, she was eager to try it out herself. However, she still had some concerns in her heart.

Yu Xiaocao also had a sudden flash of inspiration. She wondered if she should set up a DIY pastries workshop in the back courtyard of her family's pastries shop. If this food tasting banquet was successful, then it would be the same as promoting her new project! Why not go ahead with it when it could kill a few birds with one stone?

She ignored her man's long face, and said excitedly, "On that day, I'll select a group of apprentice pastry chefs from the pastries shop to come assist them. For the simple pastries, as long as the ingredients are properly prepared, even if the appearance isn't very good, the taste won't be affected!"