

Pill Maker 161

Chapter 161: Act Graceful

Song Ning looked at the middle-aged man who was standing in their way. He seemed familiar, but she could not put a finger on it, so she asked him in confusion. "And you are?"

"Madam wants to invite you to the café for a chat," said the middle-aged man.

Despite his polite tone and attitude, the pride in his eyes was unmistakable.

Song Ning narrowed her eyes and asked him. "Who is your madam?"

The Lu family butler replied without being humble or pushy. "She's Madam Lu, Miss Huo Yao's foster mother."

Song Ning's face sank a little when she heard it was the Lu family. She asked him with a frown. "What does she want?"

"I'm not sure, but you can find out once you go over," said the Lu family butler.

He stood beside them as though he was determined to take them along.

Song Ning frowned. She had a terrible impression of He Xiaoman. She found He Xiaoman's lofty attitude about being a married woman in high society absolutely pretentious and repulsive. Moreover, she had ill-treated her daughter.

She rejected him straight away. "Sorry, we have no time."

The butler seemed to have foreseen that they would turn him down, so he added. "Madam Lu wants to talk about Miss Huo Yao."

He successfully made Song Ning and Huo Jinyan swallow their rejection. Huo Jinyan patted her shoulder and turned to look at the butler. He said, "In that case, we'll meet her."

The butler pursed his lips and gestured for them to follow him, leading them to the café.

Song Ning glanced sideways at her husband and said somewhat angrily, "I really don't want to see that woman."

Huo Jinyan laughed and said, "Why don't you wait in the car while I meet her alone?"

"Forget it. I want to see what trouble she is up to this time," sneered Song Ning.

They walked into the café shortly after.

It was not too crowded at this hour of the day. He Xiaoman was sitting by the window on the right. The moment Song Ning and Huo Jinyan came close, they heard her speak up.

"Zhang, tell the manager not to let other patrons come and disturb us," said He Xiaoman.

With her exquisitely done up face, she ordered the butler calmly.

Song Ning glanced at He Xiaoman. All Song Ning had for her was one word: Poser.

“Yes, Madam Lu,” replied the butler reverently and bowed. He moved away and went to the counter.

After he left, He Xiaoman’s eyes finally landed on Song Ning, and a hint of jealousy swept across her eyes swiftly.

Song Ning had always been beautiful when she was young. Now that she was middle-aged, there were barely any signs of wrinkles on her face. She looked 30 years old at best and had an elegant demeanor. She had far more poise than any rich man’s wife.

That made He Xiaoman despise Song Ning even more. She was acting like a rich elite when the Huo family was impoverished.

He Xiaoman pursed her lips. She pointed at the empty chairs before her and said, “Have a seat. Let’s have a chat. You can order anything you like.”

Song Ning shook her head and found He Xiaoman rather hilarious for acting like the host. She walked over to pull out a chair.

Song Ning sat with both hands on the table without ordering anything. She looked at He Xiaoman calmly before getting right to the topic and said, “I don’t think there’s anything for us to chat about. Why don’t you cut to the chase?”

Chapter 162: An Ignorant Couple

He Xiaoman picked up the cup and sipped her coffee unhurriedly. Then she raised her head and said, “I hope you can get Huo Yao transferred out of No.1 Middle School. She can take her pick of any other middle school. I will make the necessary arrangements to help her transfer.”

Song Ning blinked and asked her in confusion. “Sorry, I don’t quite get it. Why does my daughter need to shift schools?”

“Because your daughter is affecting Xiaxia,” said He Xiaoman in an uncompromising voice.

Song Ning thought that He Xiaoman’s words were hilarious. With a smile, she said, “As I understand, our daughter isn’t in the same class as yours. How could she affect her?”

“You better ask your daughter about what she did to Xiaxia,” said He Xiaoman as her face turned darker.

Song Ning frowned. She opened her mouth and was about to speak when He Xiaoman’s voice floated out again.

“Since your daughter has lousy grades, she can’t keep up if she studies in No.1 Middle School. If you select a school which matches her intelligence, her self-esteem might improve as well.”

Song Ning stared at He Xiaoman in disbelief. Huo Yao was the top scorer across the level during the monthly test. How could she say that her daughter was a poor student?

This was truly the joke of the year.

He Xiaoman found the look on Song Ning's face somewhat odd, but she paid no attention to it. She removed a cheque from her purse and continued talking with a superior air. "This should be enough. Please keep an eye on your daughter and tell her to stay away from us."

Song Ning glanced at the numbers on the cheque. She raised her head to look at He Xiaoman. There was a smug look on He Xiaoman's face as though she thought Song Ning had never seen so much money in her life.

Was \$500,000 considered a lot of money?

Just those custom made outfits in her daughter's wardrobe cost more than this.

Oh, but wait... it was not about the money right now.

"I want to know how my daughter bullied Xiaxia," asked Song Ning, coming back to the main point.

He Xiaoman did not know how Huo Yao bullied her daughter. However, she was certain that Huo Yao had done something, considering how pitiful her daughter looked the other day.

So, she said impatiently, "Ask her yourself."

"You mean to say that you don't know?" said Song Ning in a mocking tone.

Song Ning had witnessed how unreasonable He Xiaoman could get, so she did not bother talking to her any longer. She stood up and said, "Sorry, my daughter will not transfer to another school."

Song Ning reached for the cheque and tossed it on the ground gently. She raised her brow and said in an arrogant voice, "This bit of money isn't enough for even my daughter's toys."

Then she pulled her husband and walked away unhurriedly, leaving a proud air behind her.

He Xiaoman's face turned livid, especially when Song Ning threw away the cheque. She was so infuriated that she wanted to pour the hot coffee on her.

"Fool! Stupid woman! Poser!" scolded He Xiaoman non-stop, gnashing her teeth.

The butler hurriedly bent over to pick up the fallen cheque and said, "Calm down, Madam. They are just a couple who haven't seen the world. There's no need to stoop down to their level."

He Xiaoman looked out of the glass window. From this angle, she could see Song Ning and Huo Jinyan getting into their crappy Volkswagen Santana. She instantly broke into a laugh.

"You're right. Why pick a fight with people who don't know better?" asked He Xiaoman as she twitched her lips. She glanced away as though she had seen something dirty.

Chapter 163: A Worthy Opponent

Back in the car.

The arrogance on Song Ning's face was replaced by anger as she said, "I'm so pissed. Who does He Xiaoman think she is? The first thing she said was to tell us to transfer our daughter. Does she think she owns the school or something?"

Huo Jinyan turned to see his wife all riled up. He could not help laughing. "You were super cool when you threw away the cheque."

Song Ning glared at him and said angrily, "That's not the point here! She said Yaoyao bullied Xiaxia. Yaoyao has such a great personality. How could she bully Xiaxia? Her words were absolutely unreasonable!"

Song Ning might not have fully grasped Huo Xia's personality, but she roughly knew what her daughter was like. She hadn't bothered to explain herself, even when her eldest brother misunderstood her. She was so indifferent that it was impossible for her to bully someone else. Instead, she would more likely end up as a target of bullying.

Huo Jinyan went silent for a few seconds before he continued. "I think Lu Xia must have said something to her family. Or else, the Lu family wouldn't have asked for this conversation."

Song Ning frowned and said, "No matter what, I absolutely don't believe that our daughter would bully Xiaxia."

Huo Jinyan crossed his arms and pacified her. "After the contest, we can just ask her when she comes out, right?"

"Mhm," said Song Ning and exhaled deeply. She could not help thinking about He Xiaoman's expression when she took out the cheque. She turned to ask Huo Jinyan rather gloomily. "Do you think we have been too low profile?"

Huo Jinyan touched his chin. He looked at the Volkswagen Santana logo on the steering wheel and agreed with his wife for the first time. "I think so."

How could someone throw money at them? How could something like this happen to them?

None of this made sense.

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The contest ended an hour later.

Huo Yao handed in her answer script and left the hall. An unrestrained air emanated from her exquisite face. She did not have a look of worry like the other students. It was plain to see how easy the contest questions were to her, this time.

When Huo Yao left the bathroom, she saw a tall, slender youth standing in the corridor. He kept looking down at his feet, so she could only see his profile.

Huo Yao glanced at him indifferently before shifting her eyes. The youth finally looked up when she walked past him. He called for her in a cold tone. "Huo Yao."

Huo Yao paused and looked sideways. She finally got a close look at the youth. He was a handsome young man with striking features, but his face was expressionless.

Huo Yao raised her brows and asked. "You are?"

He was not annoyed that Huo Yao did not know him. His lips curved upwards. His deep eyes instantly lit up and went ablaze with rivalry. He said, "You're pretty good. You are a worthy opponent."

Huo Yao, "..."

"But I won't lose to you again in this round," said the youth confidently. Then he stepped sideways and left.

Huo Yao stood there in a daze. After some time, she touched her nose. Did she just get provoked?

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After this delay, Huo Yao left the building. Most of the other contestants' parents had left, and she was the last one to come out.

Song Ning and Huo Jinyan finally saw her after waiting around for so long. They hurried over to her.

"Yaoyao, why did you come out so late today? Were the questions tough?" asked Song Ning worriedly. After all, she had been the first one to leave from the exam hall during the previous round.

Chapter 164: Did You Get Bullied?

Huo Yao looked at Song Ning and shook her head slightly. In a soft voice, she said, "Nope. I went to the bathroom."

Song Ning took her hand and said, "Let's go. Get in the car."

Huo Yao was startled for a moment and curled her fingers when she sensed the warmth in her hand. In the end, she did not pull her hand away and let Song Ning hold it.

After getting into the car, Song Ning asked about the contest in detail. Then she glanced at her husband and cleared her throat. "Yaoyao, are you having any problems adjusting in the school? Is anyone giving you a hard time?"

Huo Yao looked sideways at Song Ning and said, "Why did you ask this suddenly?"

Song Ning laughed awkwardly. "Mom and Dad have been too busy and forgot to check how you were doing at your new school. Just asking now that I remembered it."

"School's okay. No one's making things hard for me," replied Huo Yao lazily.

"Do you see Xiaxia a lot in school?" asked Song Ning. She acted as though it was a random question.

"We aren't in the same class, so I don't see her much," replied Huo Yao without telling her about the time Lu Xia looked for her. She found it unnecessary.

But Song Ning was not the sort to suddenly bring up someone. Also, her eyes were drifting a little, so she was clearly hiding something. Huo Yao waited for a few seconds and said, "Mom, what do you want to know? Just ask."

Song Ning looked at her daughter's bright, unsullied eyes. She suddenly felt angry at herself for getting influenced by what He Xiaoman had said.

If she asked her daughter about whether she had been bullying Lu Xia at school, it would truly hurt Huo Yao and make her feel as though her mother did not trust her.

Song Ning shook her head. She smiled and said, "Nothing, just a random thought."

"Oh," said Huo Yao. Since Song Ning did not want to say it, she did not keep probing.

When school was almost over in the afternoon the next day, Huo Yao's phone beeped from her pocket.

She fished it out and saw Min Yu's text.

Huo Yao recalled that he was here to give her tea. Her lips curved into a smile and she quickly texted two words: [Five minutes.]

After putting away her textbooks on the desk, Huo Yao picked up her bag and slung it over her shoulder before leaving class.

Meanwhile, in the car.

Zhuo Yun glanced at the backseat from time to time from the driver's seat to look at the beautifully packaged box of tea. He attempted again to persuade Min Yu to change his mind. "Yu, shall we return Old Master's tea?"

Min Yu sat languidly with his legs crossed. He glanced at Zhuo Yun indifferently and said, "When did you become such a coward?"

Zhuo Yun griped in his heart that Min Yu was not the one who stole the tea. If the Old Master caught wind of it, Min Yu's subordinates would be the ones to be punished severely.

Huo Yao appeared at the school gate exactly five minutes later.

Min Yu handed the tea to Huo Yao without the slightest hesitation or reluctance.

In Zhuo Yun's heart, he kept screaming as to how Min Yu could give the tea away without feeling a pinch because it was not his.

Huo Yao did not open the box to take a look. She merely pursed her lips and smiled at Min Yu. "Thanks."

Min Yu raised his brow slightly and replied in a warm tone, "You're welcome."

"You look a lot healthier," said Huo Yao casually after taking a few more glances at Min Yu.

Chapter 165: Let's See If You Can

Min Yu leaned his arm lazily against the car window with his sleeves rolled up to reveal his ivory wrist. He looked at Huo Yao with a meaningful smile and said, "Because your incense worked well."

Huo Yao raised her brow. Her face was glowing and she replied with an indescribable sense of openness and confidence. "That goes without saying."

Zhuo Yun interrupted them at this timely moment. "Miss Huo, are you friends with the shop owner? When I ordered from him two days ago, he even gave me a 50% discount."

Huo Yao was lost. She looked at Zhuo Yun and asked perplexedly. "What shop owner?"

Min Yu had already covered his forehead with his hand.

Zhuo Yun started the engine and said, "The online incense seller whom you recommended to Yu."

Huo Yao blinked. She finally realized who Zhuo Yun was talking about. "I don't know him."

"Oh, don't you know him? I thought he gave us the discount because of you," said Zhuo Yun instinctively.

Huo Yao narrowed her eyes. She recalled the messages she received from Min Yu the other day. She could not help asking airily. "So how much did you buy?"

Zhuo Yun scratched his head and said, "About 200 boxes. I bought all the stock he had."

Huo Yao glanced sideways at Min Yu with a teasing look in her eyes.

A slight uneasiness emerged on Min Yu's striking face. He cleared his throat to change the subject and said unhurriedly, "Huo Yao, what would you like to have for dinner?"

Huo Yao laughed. She placed her hands behind her head and leaned against the seat without the slightest concern for her image and answered. "I don't care as long as it's good."

Min Yu looked at the laid back teenager and said jokingly, "Aren't you worried that I'm going to sell you?"

Huo Yao had already closed her eyes and replied proudly. "Go ahead if you can."

"Heh..." laughed Min Yu with a shake of his head. He instructed Zhuo Yun about where to take them.

Min Yu did not continue with the conversation since Huo Yao was resting. Even Zhuo Yun subconsciously turned off the music playing in the car.

The car stopped outside a quiet and secluded restaurant roughly half an hour later.

Just as Min Yu turned to wake Huo Yao up, he noticed that her eyes were already open. Her bright, beautiful eyes did not seem sleepy at all. He said, "We're here."

Huo Yao nodded. She opened the car door and got off.

She looked at the ancient look of the main entrance. Harmonious rustic styled decoration sat on both sides of the door and gave it a rather carefree and refined flavor.

Huo Yao followed behind Min Yu and entered the restaurant. Despite the restaurant's humble appearance, it was charming, and its elegance became apparent as they went in.

"This place looks good," said Huo Yao as she looked around.

"But it doesn't have any customers."

Min Yu turned back to glance at her and explained. "It isn't open to the public today."

Huo Yao raised her head and asked him. "Is it your friend's restaurant?"

"You can say so," replied Min Yu indifferently.

A middle-aged man walked over. When he saw Min Yu, his face instantly became a lot more respectful as he said, "Mr. Min, you're here."

Mr. Min?

Huo Yao looked at the middle-aged man thoughtfully without missing the reverent look in his eyes.

The middle-aged man knew that Min Yu was coming with a friend when he received the call, but he was clearly surprised to see that it was a young girl.

Chapter 166: Only A True Connoisseur Would Know

The middle-aged man measured Huo Yao up quickly. Then he moved his eyes away and smiled at Min Yu. "Old Mr. Yi found out that you were coming and personally wanted to cook for you. He wanted you to know that he has created a new medicinal dish, but it takes a longer time to cook it. He has asked you to wait."

Min Yu looked at Huo Yao.

Huo Yao had heard the man and knew what Min Yu was driving at. She waved her hand and said, "I'm not that hungry, so I don't mind the wait."

Despite the middle-aged man's surprise when he saw Min Yu's attitude towards the girl, he did not dare probe. In a thoughtful manner, he said, "I will bring you some appetizers."

"In that case, thanks," said Min Yu as he bowed his head slightly.

"You're welcome."

The middle-aged man brought Min Yu and Huo Yao to a private room and left.

"This restaurant specializes in medicinal dishes. It has a special clientele and doesn't receive strangers," explained Min Yu to Huo Yao calmly after he sat down.

"Medicinal dishes?" asked Huo Yao with slightly more interest.

"Very few people are able to make them."

Min Yu was surprised to hear Huo Yao's reply and said, "You seem familiar with medicinal dishes."

Huo Yao shrugged and replied. "No, I'm not. I have only read about them in books. After all, most medicinal dishes were created in ancient times for royalty. Even though there are recipes, they aren't authentic since it has been so long."

Huo Yao warmed up to the topic and continued speaking without a thought. "Of course, if you're talking about recipes handed down through families that have specialized in medicinal dishes for generations, then that's different."

Huo Yao had unwittingly blurted too much. Min Yu only pursed his lips and smiled.

The middle-aged man returned with two plates of exquisite pastries in his hands, which he placed on the large table.

Huo Yao looked at the two plates on the table and arched her brow. She pointed at one of them and asked him. "Is that almond pastry?"

The middle-aged man looked up at Huo Yao in astonishment. He nodded and replied in a polite manner. "That's right. It's almond pastry."

Huo Yao picked up a piece and put it into her mouth. After sampling it, she looked pleased and said, "It melts in the mouth. The almond and perilla leaf taste sweet and smooth. Not bad."

The middle-aged man pointed at the other dish and asked her. "Do you know what pastry is that one?"

Huo Yao did not reply. Instead, she picked up a piece and said after taking a small bit, "This is yulu cake. Sadly, its ingredients didn't get baked until it was dry enough, so the cake's texture and efficacy were affected."

Huo Yao placed the rest of the cake back on the table with a slight look of disappointment.

Now the middle-aged man's expression was beyond surprise. Only a connoisseur could detect something as subtle as that, right?

"Miss, do you specialize in medicinal dishes?"

Huo Yao shook her head lazily and said, "No, I'm not. An elder in my family used to cook them in the past, and I tried them a few times."

Rather, she was forced to eat them.

The middle-aged man did not keep prying. He removed the plate of yulu cake, which Huo Yao had thought poorly of and left the room.

The middle-aged man bumped into Zhuo Yun at the door after he came back from parking the car. Zhuo Yun saw the plate of cake in his hand, so he took a piece and put it in his mouth.

"This cake tastes super," praised Zhuo Yun.

The middle-aged man glanced at him quietly before walking away.

Zhuo Yun, "..."

Zhuo Yun detected that there was something amiss with the way the man had looked at him.

Chapter 167: Food Therapy

The middle-aged man brought the cake back to the kitchen and told Old Mr. Yi about Huo Yao's comments while the latter was busy cooking.

Old Mr. Yi looked up with a solemn expression and said, "Even a layman could see what was wrong with the cake. You should reflect on it and don't embarrass yourself again."

Saying so, he went back to preparing the dish.

The middle-aged man nervously wiped the sweat off his brow and replied. "I understand."

He wanted to say how knowledgeable the young lady was but ended up getting scolded instead.

Meanwhile, in the private room.

Huo Yao took out a test paper given to her by her math teacher in the afternoon as homework.

Min Yu sat next to her quietly and drank tea without disturbing her.

Zhuo Yun stood behind Huo Yao and looked at her test paper from time to time. He did not understand a single question on it, but she was completing each question at an astounding speed without expending much energy. This speed was simply...

Zhuo Yun recalled his time during middle high. Even if he completed the test blindly, he could not have done it as quickly as her!

Zhuo Yun touched his chin. No matter the era, everyone went through their homework in the same fashion.

But Huo Yao had beautiful handwriting.

Even though she was randomly finishing the test, she could write neatly, so she must have a well-balanced temperament.

The private room door opened right when Huo Yao finished the last question and put down her pen.

When the same middle-aged man came in with a tray, the room was filled with a light medicinal scent.

An astonished look appeared on Huo Yao's face. With the fragrance, she could tell that it was cooked with seven to eight types of warm natured rare Chinese medicine and soft-shelled turtle.

The middle-aged man placed the white enamel bowl filled with medicinal soup on the table. He went around and set out white porcelain bowls in front of Huo Yao and Min Yu.

"This is Old Mr. Yi's latest creation. It's called the snow lotus turtle soup. It strengthens the spleen, improves appetite and energy."

Min Yu got up. He took Huo Yao's bowl and filled it with some soup and said, "Try some."

Zhuo Yun witnessed the romantic sight of his master filling another person's bowl. Anyone else who saw it would probably find it jaw-dropping.

Huo Yao failed to notice Zhuo Yun's expression. She took the bowl from Min Yu right away. After she picked up the spoon and tried it, her eyes held a glint.

She said, "This soup is good. The medicinal scent isn't too strong, it tastes perfect, and its heat control was excellent. You can tell that the cook is highly experienced."

Min Yu raised his brow. He turned to fill a bowl for himself and said, "It's usually tough to get to sample Old Mr. Yi's cooking. We got lucky today."

Huo Yao finished her soup. Then she reflected on it and could not resist adding. "If he added some common barley to it, the soup would be better."

Since Min Yu had little understanding of Chinese medicine, he did not grasp the meaning behind Huo Yao's words. However, the middle-aged man had a slight cognizance of pharmacology, so the moment she gave her suggestion, he subconsciously frowned.

When Huo Yao commented about the yulu cake, he had taken her to be an amateur. However, Old Mr. Yi did not make those cakes.

But Old Mr. Yi had worked on this snow lotus turtle soup for months before succeeding, so this dish was considered flawless. Yet this young lady still managed to find a problem in it?

Chapter 168: What Would A Little Girl Like You Know About Medicinal Dishes?

The Yi family's ancestors had been palace medicinal cuisine chefs for generations and were considered peerless in the industry. The middle-aged man might have accepted the remarks if someone with Chinese medicine knowledge evaluated the soup, but she was just a teenager.

The middle-aged man looked a little angry.

Even though she was Young Master Min Yu's guest, did she have to keep finding fault in everything?

The middle-aged man was about to speak, but Old Mr. Yi suddenly walked in with a look of shock on his face.

"Tell me why I should add barley?" asked Old Mr. Yi, looking straight at Huo Yao with subtle excitement in his voice.

Huo Yao looked at the old man. He was in an apron and wore oversleeves. He was probably the person whom Min Yu had mentioned about.

Huo Yao turned her eyes to the bowl of soup placed on the table.

She said in a soft voice, "Barley has slightly cooling effects, so it can offset the warmth of the other ingredients in the dish. Although barley is common in comparison to the other ingredients you used, a medicinal dish is all about pharmacology. Despite how common certain Chinese medicines are, they are really effective once properly paired."

When Huo Yao finished talking, Old Mr. Yi felt so agitated that he staggered. If he had not been holding onto the table, he would have tripped over.

The middle-aged man spotted something amiss with him and hurried over to help him up. He looked at Huo Yao and disregarded Min Yu's presence.

In a harsh voice, he said, "What would a little girl know about pharmacology?"

The man inhaled deeply. He could no longer suppress his fury and shouted. "Do you know how long Old Mr. Yi has been studying pharmacology for? His family has been in the medicinal cuisine industry for generations. No one has ever criticized his dishes for being poorly concocted!"

Huo Yao glanced at him indifferently and replied. "If I were a 70 year old Chinese medicine physician telling you that, would you then take me seriously enough?"

The man instantly froze after hearing her argument but muttered two seconds later. "You're being unreasonable."

Zhuo Yun was worried that they might get into a fight if this continued. He hurriedly stepped in and said, "Miss Huo was just talking generally. She means no harm, so please don't take it to heart."

The middle-aged man sneered. "Stop talking if you don't know better."

Min Yu frowned. He looked at the middle-aged man coldly and said, "Do you mean youngsters don't have a right to speak freely?"

It did not occur to the middle-aged man that Min Yu would suddenly intervene. Also, he was clearly on Huo Yao's side. The man's face flushed in sheer awkwardness.

Considering Min Yu's status, the man turned his head and said softly after some time, "Sorry, I shouldn't have been so blunt."

Despite his apology, he did not think he was wrong.

Min Yu saw Huo Yao's indifference. It was tough to perceive whether she was angry or not, but the atmosphere had been completely ruined.

"Sorry," he said softly.

Huo Yao looked up when she heard Min Yu's apology. She shrugged and replied nonchalantly. "It's okay. It's just my opinion, not everyone will accept it."

Min Yu looked at Old Mr. Yi who was still in a daze. He stood up.

Chapter 169: Apologize To Her

The middle-aged man instantly trembled when he saw Min Yu stand up with an expressionless face. It finally dawned on him that he had gone overboard.

This young girl did not matter, but if he offended...

The middle-aged man could not help shiver in remorse about losing his cool and quarreling with the girl.

So he hurriedly glanced at Huo Yao and apologized before Min Yu could say anything.

“Miss, you’re right. It’s your personal opinion. Anyway, all of us have different preferences. I’m sorry about speaking so rudely. Young Master Min, please forgive me.”

Huo Yao saw how cautious the middle-aged man appeared to be in front of Min Yu. She sighed in her heart quietly. This was all because her tongue had slipped up.

Huo Yao turned to pick up the ladle and took Min Yu’s bowl. She added more soup to it and said unhurriedly, “Have some more soup.”

Min Yu looked at Huo Yao and saw her beautiful amorous eyes blinking at him. Her languidness inexplicably eased up the awkward atmosphere.

In the end, Min Yu took the bowl from her. Huo Yao raised her brow satisfactorily.

Zhuo Yun quietly retreated a step. Sure enough, pretty girls were the best. Min Yu’s fury had dissipated so quickly.

The middle-aged man’s anxiety eased up as well when he saw Min Yu’s reaction. Fortunately, the conflict did not escalate any further.

Old Mr. Yi suddenly woke up from the stupor that Huo Yao’s words had sent him into. The middle-aged man helped steady him. He suddenly looked at Huo Yao with fire in his eyes.

“Although I’ve been researching Chinese medicine for decades, I was blind. I always thought that only dishes made of expensive Chinese medicine are fit to be considered a part of real medicinal cuisine. My view is sadly outdated.”

Embarrassment filled Old Mr. Yi’s face as he said, “Young lady, thank you for waking me up to the truth.”

Then he pushed the middle-aged man’s hand away and bowed solemnly to Huo Yao.

The middle-aged man was petrified as he looked at Old Mr. Yi in shock after hearing his words.

How could Old Mr. Yi thank a teenage girl?

Did he lose his wits after hearing the young lady’s bold words?

Why did he suddenly look enlightened? Instead of being upset, why was he overjoyed?

Huo Yao was caught by surprise when the old man suddenly bowed and thanked her.

After going into a daze for two seconds, she stood up and said unhurriedly, “There’s no need to thank me. I was just sharing my opinion. Please don’t take it so seriously.”

Old Mr. Yi glanced at the bowl of soup on the table, and bitterly smiled. “I always thought that something was missing in my new creation. I tried all kinds of expensive Chinese medicine, but the humble barley never struck my mind. You’re right. The use of Chinese medicine comes purely down to science. I was too narrow-minded previously.”

He turned to look at the middle-aged man and said with a slight look of disappointment, “You should apologize to this young lady. If you couldn’t even understand something as fundamental as this, then you have spent all these years learning about medicinal cuisine in vain.”

Although the man was not considered to be Old Mr. Yi's disciple, he was very talented in preparing medicinal cuisine.

He felt frustrated that Old Mr. Yi was scolding him and demanding an apology from him simply because of some random thing that Huo Yao had said.

The middle-aged man felt that the old man was overreacting. Even if he were doing it on account of Young Master Min, was it necessary to take it so seriously?

Chapter 170: Will You Be My Disciple?

Despite the middle-aged man's indignance, he hastily apologized to Huo Yao.

But Old Mr. Yi noticed how unwilling he was. He waved helplessly at him and said, "Have someone send the other dishes over."

The middle-aged man was trying to find an excuse to escape embarrassment, so when Old Mr. Yi told him to leave, he swiftly nodded. "Yes, Old Mr. Yi."

After he left, the old man looked at Min Yu and Huo Yao and said embarrassedly, "That disciple of mine is a fool. I'm sorry about the trouble."

Huo Yao smiled and sat down without saying a word.

Old Mr. Yi pulled out a chair and sat down next to Huo Yao and asked her. "Do you know anything about pharmacology?"

Min Yu's eyes landed on Huo Yao and she could not ignore his subtle stare.

She looked sideways at Old Mr. Yi and replied calmly. "I have read some books about health, so I know just a little."

Old Mr. Yi smiled with a shake of his head. "Just by reading some books, you were able to identify the problem. It goes to show how talented you are."

He paused as a thought crossed his mind and he asked her. "Do you want to learn how to make medicinal cuisine from me?"

It was Zhuo Yun's turn to look at Old Mr. Yi in surprise.

The Yi family had been palace medicinal cuisine chefs for generations. Since they served the emperor, they enjoyed a high status.

Even in the modern day, the Yi family remained one of the top families in City S. Moreover, Old Mr. Yi was a member of the Apothecaries' Association and was well connected. Anyone who became close to the family would have a whole new level of access to many things.

Old Mr. Yi was famous for being difficult. He had not accepted any new disciples in decades, except the two whom he had taken on when he was young. It was really hard to get into his good books.

Sure enough, his master had incredible foresight. Even Old Mr. Yi wanted to have her as his disciple the first time he met her.

“Not interested,” replied Huo Yao without hesitation.

Huo Yao finally had got the taste of a normal life. Would it not be torturous to learn all kinds of things again?

Zhuo Yun could not help coughing dryly. He dropped Huo Yao a hint and said, “Miss Huo, the Yi family has been in the medicinal cuisine industry for generations. If you become Old Mr. Yi’s disciple, you will have a bright future.”

Huo Yao remained more or less expressionless. She appeared as though the Yi family was like any other family to her. With a sincere expression, she said, “Although it sounds very tempting, sorry, I’m not interested.”

“Okay then...” said Old Mr. Yi sadly.

Two seconds later, he left the offer on the table and said, “You can look me up anytime if you change your mind.”

It was a promise worth its weight in gold. Anyone else who heard it would undoubtedly get a shock. After all, it was the first time Old Mr. Yi had met Huo Yao.

Before Huo Yao could say something, Min Yu, who had been sitting silently on the main seat, suddenly responded. “In that case, thank you for thinking so highly of her.”

Old Mr. Yi was caught by surprise. Although he was curious about Huo Yao and Min Yu’s relationship, he did not probe any further. Instead, he smiled and said, “You’re too kind, Young Master Min. Any friend of yours is a friend of the Yis.”

Huo Yao suddenly tilted her head and glanced at Min Yu thoughtfully. She tapped her finger gently on the table.