

Folly 14

Chapter 14: Turn the Tables (1)

After using the third bowl of water, that branch of acacia tree had already changed color from Mu Shuangshuang's use. Her teeth were still sticky, thinking she should use some salt after brushing, so she spoke up.

"Mom... salt..."

Yu Si Niang was momentarily stunned, her face, already red, turned even redder.

Before Mu Shuangshuang could speak, whispers came from the kitchen, "Mom, aren't I clever? Knowing Yu Si Niang wanted to rinse the stinky girl's mouth, I took the salt jar away early. Just now, you didn't know, Yu Si Niang was like a fool, searching for salt everywhere but didn't find a fart."

Mu the Third's room was closer to the kitchen, and it happened that the second daughter-in-law of the Mu Family had a loud voice, any small matter could be known by everyone.

Only then did Mu Shuangshuang realize why Yu Si Niang's face was so red, probably disappointed for not finding the salt.

Mu Shuangshuang became aware, so naturally, Yu Si Niang did too. She rolled up her sleeves and said, "It's that second sister-in-law again, I'm going to confront her."

Mu Shuangshuang hurriedly tugged at Yu Si Niang's sleeve. She had figured it out; Yu Si Niang behaved dutifully in front of Mr. Mu and Old Mrs. Mu, for the sake of filial piety. But she never feared others. This was a good trait, but she was too impulsive. Mrs. Lin liked to tattle, and if Yu Si Niang rushed out, she might win the argument, but it would be inevitable to be scolded by Old Mrs. Mu.

Such a strategy of harming one thousand enemies but losing eight hundred of one's own wasn't worth it.

Mu Shuangshuang wouldn't do it either.

Having spoken too much already for one day, Mu Shuangshuang stopped speaking. She waved her hand in front of Yu Si Niang, signaling her to hold back.

"Shuangshuang, mom can't swallow this anger. That second sister-in-law bullies us too much. Whenever I'm not around, you're..."

Even Yu Si Niang couldn't continue. Every time she came home, her eldest daughter was covered in injuries. When she asked Little Zhi, she found out it was Mrs. Lin's doing. But whenever she confronted Mrs. Lin, she would go off to tattle.

Mu Shuangshuang grasped Yu Si Niang's hand. Just after rinsing her mouth, she washed her hands in the basin. Though still dirty, she finally dared to touch Yu Si Niang, extending her hand and shushing at Yu Si Niang.

Actually, Mu Shuangshuang wouldn't recklessly get up given her poor health, but Yu Si Niang's impulsiveness would surely lead to a loss, so she decided to strike while the iron was hot.

At that moment, Old Mrs. Mu was still loudly cursing in the kitchen, each curse harsher than the last, making everyone's ears hurt. Mu Shuangshuang closed her eyes, listening to the sounds outside. It was just past lunch, around the time for dishwashing. After this, it should be time for a little rest.

During this time, she figured she should do something.

As she thought, Mu Shuangshuang sensed someone approaching and quickly tugged Yu Si Niang's sleeve, signaling her to help lay her down.

Yu Si Niang, thinking her daughter was tired, didn't think much. Who knew, just as they lay down, Old Mrs. Mu kicked the door open.

"Old Third's wife, still dawdling inside, waiting to have a child? Haven't you seen the pile of dirty clothes in the yard? Are you waiting for this old lady to serve you? Get out and wash the clothes quickly, or I'll peel your skin!"

Old Mrs. Mu glared, her mouth rattling off curses like a stream of beans, spitting all over Yu Si Niang, who didn't dare wipe her face. Mu Shuangshuang lay turned away from the door, eyes slightly open, her mind racing, thinking about the next steps.

"Mom, Shuangshuang hasn't taken her medicine yet. Uncle Zhang said she should take it an hour after eating, I want to prepare it for her first, and then..."

Before she could finish, Old Mrs. Mu yelled in anger. "Are you dying? Am I unable to command you now? Is this rebellion? Old Third, Old Third..."

Yu Si Niang guessed her husband should be home by now, maybe eating in the kitchen. If he were called, he wouldn't even get to eat, so she gritted her teeth.

"Mom, I'll go, I'll go. Isn't that okay? Don't call the head of the house. He's worked hard all morning; he should rest now."

"What? You're suggesting I'm abusing her? Yu Si Niang, you heartless thing, may lightning strike you. You're making up stories about me..." Old Mrs. Mu cursed and stomped her feet.

Even someone like Yu Si Niang was frightened and shrank her neck. In the entire Old Mu Family, Old Mrs. Mu was an unchallengeable presence. Not only Yu Si Niang and Mrs. Lin, even the sons of the family would shrink from her like mice seeing a cat.

Yu Si Niang hesitated, looking at her daughter lying on the bed. She thought for a while, deciding to stay a little longer, at least until Old Mrs. Mu left.

"What are you standing here for? Are you dying?"

"Mom, Shuangshuang is sick and needs rest, you see..."

"Oh, you wretched thing, are you rebelling now? If you don't leave, I'll have Old Third divorce you. All you do is protect your child. Did I eat her or something?"

At this point, Yu Si Niang had no choice but to leave. It was the height of the sun, and stepping out of the house, a wave of heat hit her. She instantly broke into a sweat. Yu Si Niang walked into the yard, basked in the sun all morning, occasionally looking back at her house, praying for Old Mrs. Mu to come out quickly.

As soon as Yu Si Niang left, Old Mrs. Mu's eyes showed a cold glint. She finally found her chance. With Yu Si Niang always staying inside, it was impossible to discipline this stinky girl. Anyway, she wouldn't make a sound, and even if she got beaten, no one would know.

After scanning the room, Old Mrs. Mu finally found a stick behind the door of Mu the Third's room. It was a stick Mu the Third had picked on the mountain during New Year, metaphorically representing fortune. Picking up "fortune" on New Year meant a fruitful year ahead.

"Pfft, with this broken house, how can there be fortune? No way."

Old Mrs. Mu picked up the stick and, carefully stepping, approached Mu Shuangshuang's bed.

Mu Shuangshuang was aware of Old Mrs. Mu's intentions. This old woman was mean enough to send away the daughter-in-law just to beat the granddaughter.

Luckily, Yu Si Niang left in such a hurry, she hadn't cleared the little wooden table or the leftover rinse water on it. Poor thing, her little frame had to exert itself again.

Old Mrs. Mu moved almost silently. Luckily, the wall showed her approaching shadow. When her shadow on the wall showed Old Mrs. Mu raising the stick, ready to smash down on her, Mu Shuangshuang secretly applied force with her foot, still covered by the quilt, kicking the little table off the bed.

The small wooden basin on the table tilted, directly hitting Old Mrs. Mu's head with a clang, with the water inside splashing all over her, causing a sharp pain in her head.

"Ouch... It's killing me!"