

Folly 20

Chapter 20: The Mu Family's Dinner

"What? You still want to eat pig knuckles? Should I get a pig head for you to boost your brain?"

Old Mrs. Mu, as if she heard something unbelievable, shouted sarcastically at Mrs. Lin.

"Mother, really? You agreed? Agreed to give me..." Realizing she misspoke, Mrs. Lin quickly corrected herself.

"You agreed to buy pig knuckles for our Gou Dan, and pig head too? I knew it, Gou Dan is your eldest grandson, of course you'd agree."

The pig head was an unexpected delight to Mrs. Lin; she thought it was just pig knuckles. This old lady was being too agreeable today.

Mrs. Lin was still immersed in the joy of food, completely oblivious to how Old Mrs. Mu's face had turned into a palette of anger.

Mrs. Lin continued daydreaming, feeling a bit lightheaded. Seeing she hadn't repented, Old Mrs. Mu became furious and extended her finger with long nails.

She pressed Mrs. Lin's forehead forcefully while cursing loudly.

"You wasteful woman, what are you saying? Eating pig knuckles and a pig head? I bet you broke your brain while pooping.

How could the Old Mu Family have such a wasteful creature like you? I should've pressed your head into the poop bucket and ended you."

Mrs. Lin's face changed instantly; she thought her son was Old Mrs. Mu's favorite grandson, who knew her words were all sarcastic?

She panicked for a moment, letting Old Mrs. Mu's hand press her forehead like cotton seeds.

The forehead throbbed painfully, along with her rear, which felt like it had been burned, hurt badly.

Mrs. Lin, wanting to suffer less, quickly begged for forgiveness like a grandchild.

"Mother...let go, let go, I know I was wrong, I won't eat anymore, I won't eat ever again..."

Another drama unfolded in the Mu Family for a while.

Having finished setting the table, Liu Jinhua timidly approached Old Mrs. Mu, "Mother, dinner's ready. Anything else to do?"

Unexpectedly, this sentence angered Old Mrs. Mu again.

"Are you a pig? So many things at home but you don't know what to do, are you blind or crippled?"

Should I chase you with a stick to tell you what to do? If I don't say 'eat', will you not eat in the future? You're a piece of mud that can't stand on a wall."

Liu Jinhua's face turned blue and white. Being scolded so harshly, she dared not rebut, standing still, not even daring to move an inch.

She gazed at the outside yard wall, hoping her husband would come home now.

Fortunately, after a day's work, the men finally returned, stepping into the last rays of sunset.

Mr. Mu walked in front, slightly hunched forward, but his steps were steady, almost like with the vitality of a young man.

Upon seeing Mr. Mu, Old Mrs. Mu settled down, withdrawing the hand poking Mrs. Lin's forehead.

She also clamped her mouth shut, which was full of spit aimed at Wang Jinhua, and hurried forward.

"Xiangxiang's father, you're back! Was the work in the field smooth?"

"All right!" Mr. Mu's attitude was mild. Before entering, he heard his wife cursing the daughters-in-law, guessing everyone in the village heard it. He was sulking.

"Is the food ready? Today, Mu the Third worked hard; go fry him an egg."

"What? Fried egg, are you crazy? Eggs are so expensive, eating them will cost the silver needed for the eldest's exam!" An egg caused Old Mrs. Mu to snap back.

Mr. Mu glared hard at Old Mrs. Mu. "I told you to go, so go. Otherwise, give Mu the Third three copper coins to buy something in town."

Mu the Third hurriedly waved his hand. "Forget it, Dad, it's what I should do, not hard at all."

"No, I said to give, so I will give. If everyone were like your second brother, squatting in the field's pit all day when working, who will harvest the rice?"

Today, Mr. Mu, Mu the Second, Mu the Third, and Mu the Fourth were the four men cutting the earliest ripe rice. Harvest time is similar, but some fields mature a few days earlier; Mu Family's rice is the earliest, meaning the busiest "Double Grabbing" period had another five or six days.

Only four people, yet Mu the Second wanted to slack off.

After resting at noon, everyone regained strength. Yet, upon reaching the field, Mu the Second claimed stomach pain, needing to defecate. He didn't return all afternoon, making Mr. Mu almost break the sickle in anger.

Fortunately, Mu the Third did the work, finishing the task meant for two, allowing the Old Mu Family to close early.

"What did I do? My stomach hurt! It's natural, can't hold it, at worst let Mu the Third defecate next time, I'll work for him then."

Mu the Second was righteously indignant, isn't that just not working, what's the big deal? He really didn't know why his dad was upset.

"You worthless brat, it's your fault again. You go harvest the remaining rice, don't come back for dinner until it's finished."

"Dad, don't be mad, second brother wasn't intentional, tomorrow we'll finish together." Mu the Third jumped first to defend his brother.

Hearing Mu the Third, Mr. Mu's expression softened.

"Mu the Third, those three coins are yours, use them to buy the kids something to eat, or save them if you prefer."

Three coins, three meat buns, six vegetable buns, if going to town, could also be a treat; but Mu the Third was honest.

"Dad, what are you saying, we're all family, the money has always been managed by Mother, I don't want anything, let's not take the money."

Mrs. Mu's expression finally eased, "Exactly, one family, why say two things, Mu the Third does more work, isn't it better for him? He eats too, doing more work is right."

Nice words, yet from Old Mrs. Mu's mouth, they became like stones in a cesspit, dirty and unpleasant.

Mr. Mu snorted coldly, ignoring Old Mrs. Mu, heading directly into the main room, where the two Eight Immortals tables were set, dishes neatly arranged.

Old table, few dish bowls, a plate of black dried bamboo shoots, a plate of fermented beans from several days ago, three full bowls of vegetarian dishes, and cucumbers stir-fried with half a spoon of pig oil.

A dozen mouths, yet six dishes weren't nearly enough; Old Mrs. Mu claimed the rice was cooked with wild veggies, thus making every bowl come with vegetables, even if no dishes, filling with rice was enough.

"Go call the kids to eat, Mu the Third serve Shuang a bowl of rice and take it to her."