

## Folly 62

### Chapter 62 What to do with Pigskin

Near noon, Zhang Yutou finally returned from the fields. Without taking a break, he called a close friend to help carry a spare bed to the Old Mu Family's house for Mu Shuangshuang. By the time they set up the bed, it was already noon and the sun was at its hottest, leaving both men drenched in sweat.

"Uncle Yu, Uncle Zhuangzi, have some tea. Thank you for your help today."

Mu Shuangshuang didn't use the chipped teacups from home but instead used the ones borrowed from Zhang Yutou's house last night, thinking she would return them later but might as well use them for now.

"No need to thank me, but you don't have any wooden planks here. Since your father needs rest, do you need me to go to the woods and chop some wood for you?" Zhang Yutou asked, taking the tea offered by Mu Shuangshuang.

"No need, Uncle Yu. You've been working hard all morning. It's just a small task; no need to trouble you. I'll take Xiao Han and Little Zhi to the woods later to gather some small logs and bring them back."

Zhang Yutou nodded and drank the tea. By then, it was already lunchtime. Since the Old Mu Family hadn't split into separate households, the third branch had no reason to keep Zhang Yutou and Zhao Zhuangzi for a meal. Mu Shuangshuang returned the bowls to Zhang Yutou's house, then left with Xiao Han and Little Zhi.

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By mid-morning, the weather was the hottest, especially when heading towards the mountain in the north. Passing by the village pond where clothes were washed, Mu Shuangshuang picked a lotus leaf for each of Xiao Zhi and Xiao Han, placing them atop their heads to shield them from the blazing sun, which made them feel somewhat better.

"Sister, are you really taking me and Little Zhi to the mountain?" Mu Xiaohan was full of excitement. In his heart, the mountain, which others described as terrifying, didn't seem scary at all. Instead, he felt a strong sense of attraction to it.

In his heart, he believed that a true man should go where others fear to tread.

"We're just going to the shallower woods to pick some wild herbs and such. We'll venture deeper into the forest after a while."

Mu Shuangshuang understood, with her current abilities, she was only fit for the more accessible parts of the woods. To venture into the deeper mountains, at least tools like bows and arrows, and knives needed to be ready.

"That's still better than staying home all the time."

"Second Brother, I've been up the mountain before. It's not dangerous at all, and there are lots of tasty things there." Little Zhi said proudly to Xiao Han, following closely beside Mu Shuangshuang and Mu Xiaohan.

"You're so smug, little guy. Hurry and keep up with sister's pace. Let's go enjoy some treats." Mu Shuangshuang lightly tapped Little Zhi on the nose, reaching out, and Little Zhi immediately grabbed her hand.

When they got to the stream's edge, Lu Yuanfeng and Little Yuanbao had been waiting there for some time. As before, Lu Yuanfeng had a few game animals tied to the carrying pole he brought. Alongside the game was his small iron pot.

Perhaps it was due to the hot weather, this time Mu Shuangshuang only saw that he had caught two white rabbits. There were no wild pheasants or deer.

"Shuangshuang, you're here. Is Uncle Dashan feeling any better?" Upon seeing Mu Shuangshuang, Lu Yuanfeng's face immediately lit up with a smile, almost entirely different from his previously solemn self.

"Yes, thanks for your concern. He's all right now." Mu Shuangshuang grinned, genuinely grateful to the person in front of her.

"Uh, are you carrying an axe, planning to chop wood? Did your family ask you to do such heavy work?" Lu Yuanfeng pointed at the axe in Mu Shuangshuang's hand with a frown.

The person before him was so skinny, why were they asked to do such heavy labor?

Could it be, as the villagers said, that in the entire Old Mu Family, only Mu Dashan does the work?

"It's not for chopping firewood, I'm only chopping some planks for a bed..." Before she finished speaking, the axe in her hand was taken by Lu Yuanfeng.

"You wait here; I'll go up the mountain to chop some for you. The trees around here are too small to make bed boards."

"Hey, no, it's so hot now. You should wait until it's cooler in the afternoon to go!" Mu Shuangshuang looked anxious. Even though this person might be a bit overbearing, he was helping her!

"It's fine; I'm already used to the mountain weather. You wait here for me, it'll only take half an hour."

With that, Lu Yuanfeng went up the mountain alone. Meanwhile, Yuanbao chatted with Little Zhi, and Xiao Han examined the two rabbits to see how they differed from the ones at home.

"Xiao Han, Little Zhi, Yuanbao, you three behave yourselves. Sister is going to gather some wild herbs and fungi; I'll cook something delicious for you later."

Picking up the bamboo basket Mu Xiaohan had put on the ground, Mu Shuangshuang quickly followed in Lu Yuanfeng's footsteps. She couldn't keep troubling others with her matters time and again.

"Shuangshuang, why did you come up? I told you to wait down there."

"I haven't had lunch yet. I'm going to pick some wild herbs and fungi and later need to go down to cook for them."

As she said that, Lu Yuanfeng's stomach growled loudly.

"Haha, you haven't eaten either?" Mu Shuangshuang couldn't help but laugh in front of Lu Yuanfeng.

Lu Yuanfeng had a similar situation as Mu Shuangshuang; after breakfast, he went hunting in the mountains. By noon, he still had to cook for Yuanbao.

At home, the woman never left meals for him and Yuanbao. Even if he went back, he could only eat something simple to not go hungry.

"How about this? I'll gather some wild herbs and head down the mountain to cook. You come down early to eat."

The simple mention of eating from Mu Shuangshuang's mouth made a strange feeling flow through Lu Yuanfeng's heart.

And just as she said, Mu Shuangshuang headed into the deeper part of the woods to pick fungi and wild herbs. Lu Yuanfeng trailed behind her without calling her back or stopping. Only after Mu Shuangshuang found some wild herbs did he select a tree nearby to start chopping.

Soon, Mu Shuangshuang's basket was filled with wild herbs; she didn't find much fungi this time since it wasn't the part of the woods she'd explored before.

"Lu Yuanfeng, be careful yourself, I'm going down to cook!"

By cooking, it meant catching a fish, boiling a few green vegetables. The fish from the river tasted sweet; even without oil and salt, it was quite delicious with simple boiling.

Lu Yuanfeng watched the small figure descend the mountain alone, and only when she was out of sight did he continue chopping wood. After a couple of strikes, he suddenly realized he forgot to ask her what she needed the wild boar skin for.

Lu Yuanfeng had taken the wild boar skin home and stuffed it with coarse grain husks, but wasn't sure how to process it. Normally, the animal pelts he harvested were roughly stuffed to prevent rot and then sold cheaply to a fur trader in town or processed with a fee.

"Oh well, I'll just ask her when I get down the mountain later!"