

Folly 64

Chapter 64: Making Bags from Pigskin

Lu Yuanfeng expertly skinned the rabbit and, without needing instructions from Mu Shuangshuang, found a wooden stick, set the rabbit over the fire, and began roasting it.

Lu Yuanfeng wasn't skilled at cooking, but when it came to roasting fish or rabbits, it seemed like he was born to do it, as natural as breathing.

Mu Shuangshuang handed Lu Yuanfeng the salt and the remaining Ai Zi. Roasting a rabbit was different from boiling fish; the rabbit had its own fat, and as it roasted over the fire, the fat would drip out when it was done.

"We can eat the fish while we wait for the rabbit to cook."

By this time, lunch was nearly an hour late, and the three children were probably already hungry.

"But what will we use to eat with? We don't have chopsticks or bowls," Little Zhi asked Mu Shuangshuang in a childish voice.

"Sister will chop some small trees, peel them, wash them, and as for bowls, don't we have lotus leaves? We'll make bowls out of the lotus leaves."

The forest was full of trees and wood. Mu Shuangshuang selected some rather straight small branches, chopped them down, and made chopsticks. As for bowls, they could use a square mold made of some sticks to support the lotus leaf.

"Here you go, five bowls made from lotus leaves, one for each of us. In a couple of days, I'll go to town and buy some ceramic bowls and chopsticks."

Lu Yuanfeng was the first to take the bowl and chopsticks that Mu Shuangshuang handed over. The bowl made from lotus leaves was actually quite similar to a real bowl, with a concave middle and small supporting twigs on the outside, so you wouldn't burn your hands even when drinking soup.

Lu Yuanfeng secretly lifted his head and looked at the busy girl, who appeared just like a child—thin and dark-skinned. Although he knew the stuff on Shuangshuang's face was applied by herself, he couldn't help but wonder what she would look like without that soot-covered disguise.

Would others then recognize her and say that the Mu Family's third daughter's girl is actually a pretty young lady?

"Lu Yuanfeng, Lu Yuanfeng..." Mu Shuangshuang called out to Lu Yuanfeng several times, even waving her hand in front of his face, but he didn't respond.

When he finally snapped out of it, a few children were looking at him as if he were a fool.

Lu Yuanfeng's face turned red immediately, especially when he noticed that Shuangshuang was also watching him.

"Wha... What's going on..." Lu Yuanfeng awkwardly asked Mu Shuangshuang.

"Nothing, just wanted to tell you the fish is ready, hurry and eat."

In the little iron pot, the carp had been boiling for a while, and the fish soup was happily bubbling away.

Little Zhi and Yuanbao eagerly sniffed the air, thinking this fish smelled too good, better than anything they had eaten before.

"Why are you just staring? Eat, and watch out for small fish bones," Mu Shuangshuang reminded them since no one had started eating.

She first picked a piece of fish with her chopsticks from the belly area where the bones were larger and easier to remove, and after doing so, she handed the fish meat to Little Zhi.

"Little Zhi is the youngest, so I helped her. If any of you find it hard to remove the bones, I can do it for you."

Mu Shuangshuang naturally addressed the children, and Yuanbao, lacking restraint, immediately handed over his bowl, hoping for Mu Shuangshuang's assistance. Mu Shuangshuang didn't refuse, giving Yuanbao a piece from the belly as well.

"Xiao Han, do you want some?"

Mu Shuangshuang was never one to favor some over others, making sure Xiao Han didn't miss out on anything Little Zhi and Yuanbao had.

Mu Xiaohan barely nodded, and with Mu Shuangshuang offering him food voluntarily, the hostility he felt dissipated a little.

The capacity of the iron pot was limited, and Mu Shuangshuang had only caught two fish herself, with Yuanbao grabbing one. Now there were only three fish left in the pot, and none were large. Without Lu Yuanfeng's rabbit, the five of them would definitely not be full.

"Sister, this is so delicious. The fish is so tender. I've never had such delicious fish," Little Zhi exclaimed joyfully, holding up her small bowl to Mu Shuangshuang.

"Sister Shuangshuang, I think it's delicious too, much better than that woman at home cooks," Yuanbao added.

One mention of "that woman at home" by Yuanbao instantly cooled Lu Yuanfeng's face.

The woman in Lu Yuanfeng's home was not his birth mother. His father was what modern times would call a remarriage, and in ancient times, a continuation of the family line. Plus, the woman brought her own child along, so it was easy to imagine how much Lu Yuanfeng and Yuanbao disliked her.

The atmosphere became delicate, and Lu Yuanfeng's demeanor turned serious, as if he were no longer at a meal but on a battlefield.

"By the way, Lu Yuanfeng, what did you do with that pigskin?" Mu Shuangshuang asked, deliberately changing the topic.

Lu Yuanfeng's aura immediately softened, and he shyly glanced at Mu Shuangshuang.

"I don't know how to clean the pigskin, so I just applied a rough scrub on it, not sure if it will go bad."

"It shouldn't, right? So where do your usual hides go? You should have a lot of hides from hunting," Mu Shuangshuang was curious. A hunter not knowing how to process hides was quite interesting.

"There's a person in the village specialized in tanning hides. I sometimes ask him to help, paying him with copper coins or selling them directly at the market," Lu Yuanfeng explained.

Mu Shuangshuang nodded in understanding. According to Lu Yuanfeng, he probably didn't earn much silver from the hides, which seemed a pity.

In ancient times, just like in modern times, the wealthy liked to wear fur and animal hides as clothing because it was both distinctive and warm, especially when many ancient nouveau riche made it a status symbol.

This naive boy, why did he just give up on such an important aspect?

Seeing the person before him frown, Lu Yuanfeng thought she was disappointed in his inability to handle hides, so he made a resolve to handle all his hides by himself in the future.

"Shuangshuang, can you tell me what you need that pigskin for?"

"To make a bag," Mu Shuangshuang replied.

"A bag?" The term was unfamiliar to Lu Yuanfeng. Was it like a wrap?

"It's basically like a pouch, to hold silver or small tools."

In ancient times, people without money carried copper coins. A few were fine, but when you had to carry seven or eight hundred coins, not even an ounce of silver, you'd know what true suffering was. Your walk would echo with the clanging of coins.

"Anything Huan Huan makes will surely be beautiful," Lu Yuanfeng said sincerely, believing that someone clever enough to make these pretty bowls from lotus leaves would definitely make other things well too.

"You'll see," Mu Shuangshuang said, teasingly.

Mu Shuangshuang had roughly calculated that the pigskin could make three or four pigskin pouches. She planned to make at least one each for Little Zhi and Yuanbao. As for Xiao Han, she had other plans.

The remaining ones could be made into a large pouch for Lu Yuanfeng, so that no woman would mistakenly accuse him of groping after seeing silver coins.

With a silly grin, Lu Yuanfeng said to Shuangshuang, "Alright, I'll wait to see it. Just let me know when you need the pigskin, and I'll bring it over."