

Folly 79

Chapter 79 Grinding Beans

Shuangshuang ate dinner quickly, gobbling down half a bowl of sweet potato rice in no time. Old Mrs. Mu shot her several glances, but she ignored them.

All she could think about was hurrying to Aunt Xiao Yun's house to turn those mung beans into mung bean starch.

Yu Si Niang returned in the afternoon, earlier than Mu Shuangshuang expected, so those mung beans had been soaking for a whole afternoon and it was time to start grinding them.

"Grandpa, Grandma, Uncles, Aunties, Sisters, I'm full. You all take your time eating."

Having said that, Shuangshuang didn't wait for Old Mrs. Mu to respond and dashed out of the main room.

Mrs. Lin snorted coldly and then spoke. "This little rascal is in such a hurry, what, is she rushing to get reincarnated?"

"Second Sister-in-law, Shuangshuang is just a child, why do you keep pestering her?" Yu Si Niang raised her head and glared fiercely at Mrs. Lin.

"How am I pestering her? You think she's a drumstick, and I have to cling to her?"

Speaking of drumsticks, Mrs. Lin was full of envy. That annoying girl from the main branch messed around and got her face pinched by a lobster. Her big uncle somehow got her a drumstick to eat.

This made her kid, Gou Dan, cry incessantly, insisting on having a drumstick. But can anyone just take things from his big uncle's hands?

Bah, Mu Dade is something else, eating alone, he'll choke on it sooner or later.

Mrs. Lin cursed Mu Dade in her heart but didn't dare to complain to Mu Dade, so she just bottled up her anger.

Yu Si Niang couldn't be bothered with her, and stood up herself, saying to Mr. Mu and Old Mrs. Mu who were still eating.

"Dad, Mom, I'm full, you take your time eating."

"Remember to wash the dishes later, don't think you can sneak off and laze around tonight," Old Mrs. Mu quickly added, afraid Yu Si Niang would leave and not come back.

"Grandpa, Grandma, we have also finished eating."

Xiao Han and Little Zhi stood up too, and in no time, the main room was devoid of any trace of the third branch.

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Mu Shuangshuang ran straight to Zhao Yun's house, and by then they had already finished dinner, just waiting for her arrival.

"Aunt Xiao Yun, did my mom talk to you? I'm here to..."

"Your mom has told me everything. Whatever you need, just use it. Anything we have, you are welcome to use."

"Thank you, Aunt Xiao Yun, without you, I wouldn't know what to do."

Mu Shuangshuang looked grateful, knowing she owed a lot of favors and was determined to remember Zhao Yun's family when she was capable in the future.

"Child, don't say such distant things. If anyone owes a debt, it's us. Da Long's life was saved by your mom, our family should be the ones repaying."

"Aunt Xiao Yun, let's not talk about it, alright? Anyway, hopefully, our families stay this close, and when Xiao Han succeeds, he will definitely not forget you."

In ancient times, unlike now, words like "success" were usually used for men who studied, and Mu Shuangshuang didn't want to waste time on trivial matters, so she went along with the custom and mentioned Xiao Han.

Zhao Yun's face lit up with a smile. After all, she only had one son, and the more help, the better.

"Well, I won't disturb you. Call me if you need anything."

Little Zhi and Xiao Han arrived at Zhao Yun's house just when Mu Shuangshuang was in the backyard preparing to grind the mung beans. After soaking all afternoon, the bean skins could now be separated by hand, which was the best time to grind the mung bean paste.

After carefully cleaning the millstone, Mu Shuangshuang started pouring beans into the millstone's opening.

"Sis, do you want to grind it yourself? Or should I do it?" Xiao Han stepped up willingly.

"You? You can't even reach the millstone, how can you grind?" Mu Shuangshuang teased, comparing Xiao Han's height with her hand.

"So what? I can stand on a chair to grind. Besides, I ate so much tonight, if I don't do some work, I'll burst."

"Afraid you'll burst, huh? That's easy. Help me pick the beans, it's an important task too."

"Alright!"

Before grinding the millstone, Mu Shuangshuang did a warm-up exercise, working up a thin sweat before starting to work.

Following her instructions, Xiao Han occasionally dropped some mung beans into the millstone opening, while Mu Shuangshuang pushed the wooden handle, walking round and round.

Not to mention, it was really tiring, her hands got a bit worn after a few rounds, yet not much mung bean had been ground.

Mu Shuangshuang paused to stretch her wrists. At this moment, Yu Si Niang walked in, her face sweaty, and her hair a bit messy, evidently having just done some work.

"Shuangshuang, take a break, I'll handle this."

Mu Shuangshuang stepped aside, handing the wooden handle to Yu Si Niang. After doing so much work recently, she clearly felt her strength increase, but grinding was still a bit taxing.

Resting for a while until her breathing steadied, Mu Shuangshuang stood up.

"Mom, let's do it together. You'll be working in town tomorrow, you shouldn't overexert yourself today."

Grinding three pounds of mung beans would take some effort, and there was still quite a workflow ahead. Grinding mung bean starch was just the first step; making cold noodles would be next, and Yu Si Niang would likely oversee it all, so she couldn't let her tire out.

"It's okay, Mom has plenty of energy. But you need to rest more, look how skinny you've become." Yu Si Niang's heart ached at the mention. Her older niece got injured and had a drumstick, while her daughter was skinny like this and had nothing...

"Mom, don't be like that. It might not be a bad thing to be skinny, we won't end up with high BP, high sugar, and high cholesterol, living to ninety-nine."

"Sis, what is high BP, high sugar, and high cholesterol? Are they foods?" Little Zhi suddenly chimed in, his innocent words making Mu Shuangshuang laugh out loud.

"High BP, high sugar, and high cholesterol mean big heads, thick necks, and round bellies."

High blood pressure, high blood sugar, and high cholesterol were humorously explained by Mu Shuangshuang this way, probably nobody else did. But Little Zhi seemed to accept it, gesturing at his head, neck, and belly. He looked a bit like a little hamster.

Even Yu Si Niang laughed out loud.

"Hmph, Mom and Sis only bully me. I won't play with you anymore; I'll play with Brother Xiao Han."

She turned to look at Mu Xiaohan only to see his hand shaking so much it looked like he was filtering rice.

"Mean brother, Little Zhi doesn't like you anymore." Little Zhi puckered his lips and turned his head away, refusing to look at Xiao Han.

Scaring Xiao Han so much that he dropped the beans and kept apologizing until Little Zhi finally "forgave" him.

The three laughed and joked, and finally finished grinding the three pounds of mung beans. Mu Shuangshuang found a sieve to filter the ground mung bean paste, leaving only the starch slurry.

To remove air bubbles from the starch slurry, Shuangshuang added two spoons of clear oil.

"Xiao Han, the sieved starch slurry still needs to settle; help sis get a wooden bucket." Mu Shuangshuang instructed while sieving the mung bean paste.

Quickly, Xiao Han brought a wooden bucket, filled halfway with clear water, and Mu Shuangshuang poured the separated starch slurry into the bucket.

After waiting for a moment's rest, the starch slurry settled at the bottom of the wooden bucket; Mu Shuangshuang removed the top layer of water, leaving the mung bean starch ready for making cold noodles.