

## Rise 158

### Chapter 158: Eat it or Don't

After the scheming girl returned, the study room was quiet for a moment, then it started to fill with the sound of her incessantly asking about Zhu Ping'an's exams.

While Zhu Ping'an casually talked about a few things regarding the exams, the scheming girl appeared completely uninterested. However, from time to time, she would emit various disdainful nasal sounds.

After talking for a while, the maids and young girls lost interest. The exams and the long journey were matters for men, and while the novelty was there at first, the constant talk of "this and that" became rather boring. They then began pestering Zhu Ping'an to tell a story.

"Let's stop here for today. I'll tell you more when I return the book next time." Zhu Ping'an stood up, placed the borrowed book into his bag, and was about to leave.

"Ungrateful..."

At that moment, a light and airy "ungrateful wolf" floated from the mouth of a certain girl.

Feeling confused, Zhu Ping'an decided to let it go, thinking of Huanghua's face.

Zhu Ping'an smiled slightly, sat back down, took off his bag, and drank another glass of water.

"Hmph, I'll let it slide," the scheming girl, Li Shu, thought to herself, her face showing a look of satisfaction.

The old maids and young girls, seeing this, began to express their joy, the familiar rhythm of excitement returning. They each pulled out snacks like peanuts and melon seeds from their pockets and sat in a row.

"Spring outings are grand, it's the Cold Food Festival every year, and the pear blossoms bloom. The white silk without patterns is fragrant and blooming, the jade trees pile up snow. The still night is deep, the floating light is hazy, and the cold moon bathes everything. Both heaven and earth, the silver clouds shine through. It's like the immortal of Gu Ye, with heavenly grace, exceptional talent, and noble spirit. The myriad flowers are uneven, who would believe in the way, and they don't rank among the common flowers..."

After drinking another glass of water, Zhu Ping'an slowly began to recount another of Master Jin Yong's classic works.

"What's the name of this story?" The scheming girl interrupted Zhu Ping'an, asking in an arrogant tone.

Such an impolite girl! She has no sense of gratitude whatsoever. Her tone was entirely commanding, which really annoyed him.

"The Heaven Sword and Dragon Saber," Zhu Ping'an replied calmly.

As soon as Zhu Ping'an finished speaking, the scheming girl, Li Shu, mocked, "The Heaven Sword and Dragon Saber? What a big talk! You're just a little scholar, and you don't even know who you are... studying so hard that you've gone foolish, daring to slay dragons. How many heads do you have to chop?"

"I heard it in Yingtian, through hearsay. I'm just casually saying it, and you're casually listening," Zhu Ping'an replied nonchalantly.

The scheming girl gave him a glance, her eyes full of "I've seen through your lies." Hearsay in Yingtian? So fake!

Whether you believe it or not, I never expected to fool this little fox.

Zhu Ping'an continued his story. Of course, the background had changed, and now everyone, including the scheming girl, listened intently, entranced by Zhu Ping'an's depiction of the martial arts world.

Zhu Ping'an spoke for a short while, then heard the sound of footsteps from outside the study. Two young maids entered, carrying a variety of snacks prepared in the kitchen.

The scheming girl instructed the maids to place the snacks on the low table in front of the soft couch. Then, as if casually, she glanced at Zhu Ping'an. Seeing that he was looking over, she rolled her eyes and nonchalantly pointed at a plate, signaling for one of the maids to serve it to him.

"So you don't have to hear someone's swallowing sounds and get disgusted," the scheming girl said.

When the plate of snacks was brought over and placed in front of Zhu Ping'an, he finally saw what was on it. It appeared to be some kind of braised meat, though the presentation wasn't very appealing. Among all the snacks the maids had brought earlier, this one stood out as the least appetizing. The others all seemed to be visually pleasing and aromatic.

However, this piqued Zhu Ping'an's interest. Stinky tofu smells terrible but tastes delicious, and this dish could very well be one of those where the appearance doesn't do it justice but the taste is exceptional. After all, the cook at Li Da Caizhu's house was always excellent. He had never eaten anything bad there before, so he had reason to believe this dish wouldn't disappoint.

So, before continuing with his story, Zhu Ping'an reached for a piece with his chopsticks to give it a try.

The scheming girl, while dealing with her own snacks, couldn't help but glance over at Zhu Ping'an. When she saw him reaching for a piece with his chopsticks, she stared even more intently.

From her perspective, Zhu Ping'an grabbed a piece with his chopsticks, put it in his mouth, and began to chew.

Zhu Ping'an only chewed for a moment before his expression suddenly turned strange, and his eyes rolled back.

From the scheming girl's perspective, Zhu Ping'an then made another move. His expression became one of obvious pain as he stretched his neck, and it was clear from his throat that he swallowed with difficulty, making a noticeable "gulp" sound, his eyes rolling even more.

"Cough, cough, cough, um... did your family change cooks?" Zhu Ping'an asked with a pained expression.

What the hell, the presentation looked bad, but eating it was even worse. It was truly a waste of food, salty to the point it was hard to swallow. And it wasn't just simple saltiness—there were still un-melted peppercorns and some unknown spicy seasonings scattered on it. With each bite, a burst of overpowering flavors hit him. It was honestly inedible, so bad that he would rather eat mud from the Guanyin than this.

This cook needs to be kept in the back garden, as they are an invisible killer. If Zhu Ping'an didn't report this, he'd feel guilty.

"What's wrong?" The scheming girl, Li Shu, asked emotionlessly.

"I shouldn't be involved in your family matters, but since I encountered this, if I don't say something, I won't feel at ease," Zhu Ping'an said, lowering his head and casually poking at the food on the plate with his chopsticks, a look of dread on his face. "The food today is so bad, it's hard not to say something. It's unimaginable that something could taste this terrible. This isn't just bad, the cook seems completely clueless..."

As he spoke, he shook his head, loudly criticizing the new cook in Li Shu's family, concluding that the cook had no talent for cooking at all. For your safety, you should really consider replacing them.

Zhu Ping'an was getting into it when, all of a sudden, the plate he was poking at disappeared.

The next moment, he heard a loud "clang!"

The plate, along with the food, had been thrown onto the ground. The plate shattered, and the food scattered everywhere.

"Eat it or don't!"

The sound of the scheming girl suddenly throwing a tantrum reached Zhu Ping'an's ears.

Zhu Ping'an looked up and saw the scheming girl's delicate hand completing the motion of throwing the plate, her little hand flipping through the air.

Is she crazy? I was just trying to remind you!

Unappreciative!

Zhu Ping'an felt an overwhelming urge to grab the scheming girl, pull her onto his lap, and spank her with a few loud slaps!