

Chapter 51: Getting Along 1 (相处1)

Translator: **Nyamachi**

English proofreaders: **JimmyfromIT**, **247reader**

The man had a strong grip, as if he were afraid of losing something. As he lay on his side against the pillow, his face showed a contented smile. His knitted brows had long smoothed out, making him appear somewhat childish and vulnerable. *This was definitely not the Emperor she once knew in the past!*

Meng Sangyu controlled her breathing and carefully examined the man's handsome features. Her eyes followed the line of his jaw to behind his ears, trying to find traces of a disguise. Although his wolfish actions told her that this man was the genuine article, she couldn't help but still doubt the other party's authenticity because of his occasional irrational behaviour.

Little by little, she carefully stretched out a hand and felt under the man's chin. The newly grown stubble felt prickly and the coarse hairs tickled her delicate palm. It gave off a pleasing feeling. There were no traces of makeup, and he wouldn't be able to grow a beard if he were wearing a mask. She breathed a sigh of relief and moved to retract her hand.

Coincidentally, the man awoke just at this time. A pair of pitch-black eyes stared fixedly at her. They did not contain any of the drowsiness or confusion from just waking up. He was extremely vigilant by nature and it was easy for him to be startled awake, but Sangyu was a special existence to him. His body automatically relaxed in her presence. Nevertheless, no matter how sleepy one was, they would have no choice but to wake up after having their face touched nonstop.

Seeing the woman's pretty face, so close within reach, it was almost as if the two of them had returned to the time where they were together from morning until night, inseparable as two peas in a pod. His eyes instantly sparkled with a terrifying brilliance. Just as he had done every morning in the past, he held her face and licked and kissed her cheeks from her tender lips to her snow-white teeth. His tongue pushed between her pearly white teeth to impatiently hook her savoury, slippery tongue. Emperor Zhou'wu gave a satisfied sigh. This was undoubtedly his most splendid morning since his soul had returned to his body.

"Your Majesty, your honoured self's shoulder is still wounded and this concubine's body still has not fully recovered!" After extricating herself from his feverish kisses, Meng Sangyu called out a reminder, gasping for breath. She could feel the man's thick erection growing harder against her leg.

Since her body remained unsullied, she could infer that she would monopolize Imperial favour in the coming days. She didn't feel any humiliation and instead rejoiced somewhat. If something happened to her father, the favour bestowed to her would let her mother and elder brother live better and prevent the Meng family from falling into decline. It was an equal exchange, that was all.

"Zhen's injury is fine. When will your body recover?" Emperor Zhou'wu asked with a husky voice, reluctantly pecking the woman's alluring scarlet lips once more.

"Imperial Physician Du said that it will improve after drinking a few more doses of herbal medicine." Meng Sangyu turned her head to evade and the man's kisses fell on her delicate pale earlobes. The man recognized the opportunity and used his teeth to gently nibble her earlobe with an indulgent expression.

"How long will it take to drink a few more doses of medicine?" Seizing her chin and making her face him, Emperor Zhou'wu persisted in his questioning.

"About seven or eight days." Meng Sangyu had no choice but to meet his eyes. Facing the deep, enigmatic emotion in his eyes, she suddenly felt somewhat apprehensive.

"In seven or eight days, Zhen's shoulder will have fully recovered too. Just at the right time." Emperor Zhou'wu sighed deeply and tightly embraced the fragrant, bewitching, delicate body in his arms. It was a while before he reluctantly let go.

"Your Majesty, it's time to get out of bed. This concubine will help you change." Seeing that he finally stopped, Meng Sangyu let out an imperceptible sigh. She sprang off the Imperial bed at lightning speed.

"Mm." The man gave a low reply, his voice sounding extremely happy. Noticing that her lapel was slightly wrinkled, his body moved on its own to smooth it out, and he conveniently planted a kiss on her cheek. This scene so resembled how a couple would behave around each other in modern times, affectionate with mutual respect, that Meng Sangyu was momentarily lost for words.

In the short time she was absent-minded, Emperor Zhou'wu had already taken the clothes from her hands and changed into them himself with a light smile. Meng Sangyu blinked and hastily wrung a handkerchief for him to wash his face and hands.

"Your Majesty, would your honoured self still like this concubine to feed you?" asked Meng Sangyu as she walked over to the table where a piping hot breakfast was prepared.

"Sit down and eat together with Zhen." Emperor Zhou'wu smiled and pulled her to sit beside him. Their seats were so close that they could feel each other's body heat. This brightened his

mood even more. Do not support theft! Support the translator and read this free at Nyanovels.com! This cat bows in thanks.

“They are all dishes that you love, eat more. You’ve lost a lot of weight these last few days.” He served Sangyu while expressing concern over her slightly thinner cheeks after close examination.

We haven’t seen each other for five months. How do you know that I’ve gotten thinner recently? As expected, sweet and honeyed words are a scumbag’s God-given skill! Meng Sangyu criticized him in her mind, but her face displayed a shy expression as she thanked the man and focused on eating. Taking another look, she discovered that every dish on the table was, in fact, food she normally loved to eat.

“Eat up, it won’t taste as good once it’s cold.” Emperor Zhou’wu smiled and added another piece of pastry to her plate while he himself had only eaten a few bites. His pair of deeply serene eyes were practically glued to the woman’s body, with no sign of looking away. He missed these commonplace but comforting moments too much.

Meng Sangyu had already found a way to deal with the irrational Emperor, which was *‘Let him thrash, the cool breeze brushes the hill. Let him go crazy, the bright moon illuminates the Great River.’*¹ She only needed to be concerned with her own matters and he would return to normal after a while.

Sure enough, after finishing breakfast Emperor Zhou’wu began to review memorials. The man sat behind the Imperial desk with knitted brows, looking completely focused, the picture of an awe-inspiring, hard-working, and conscientious monarch who showed promise. There were no signs of the lovesick fool from just a moment ago. He had returned for no more than three days but the news of several important matters had already broken out in the Imperial Court.

The first was news that Gansu’s Provincial Commander, Xie Zheng’hao, had been assassinated. Just before Great Zhou’s troops headed into battle, they had switched Generals and directly assaulted the barbarians’ Imperial seat.

The second piece of news was that the commander(s) of the Imperial guards and the Forbidden Dragon guards and the Provincial Commander of the Nine Gates were successively demoted and had been replaced by newly-appointed lesser-known officials.

¹ This is a play on words on a line of poem from [Jin Yong’s \[Heavenly Sword and Dragon Slaying Sabre\]](#). The original text is: “他强由他强，清风拂山冈。他横任他横，明月照大江。” Both mean to ignore the enemy - treat them like air - and only worry about your own matters. No matter how strong or fierce an enemy is, their actions can’t affect you. Man’s greatest enemy is worry, unease, weakness, ignorance etc. which all come from within.

Third, the Imperial Court would establish a new government office who will be known as the Embroidered Uniform guards. Its authority would be leaps and bounds higher than the Six Ministries and the Emperor would be the one to appoint a Commander. This would greatly centralize Imperial power.

Fourth, a scandal broke out that Imperial Preceptor Shen, who was in charge of the autumn examinations,² had leaked the questions in advance. The results of this year's autumn examinations would be invalidated. Next year, the New Year and spring examinations would be held at the same time.

Several major changes were decreed in succession and the negative effects of the previous Fake Emperor's incompetence and indulgence in women were thoroughly eliminated. The imperial courtiers could see the wise, mighty and commanding monarch from the past. The ministers who were loyal to the imperial family rejoiced; those who sought to benefit from the confusion anxiously ran about like headless chickens; and the brown-nosing ministers who simply followed the crowd began to worry.

Meng Sangyu sat erect in the seat to the right of the Emperor.³ She pondered over Emperor Zhou'wu's recent actions and couldn't help but acknowledge that if Great Zhou didn't have this man at the helm, the country would surely fall into chaos.

Seeing that the man was wholly focused on governmental affairs, she stood up and curtsied to excuse herself, "Your Majesty is busy with governmental affairs. This concubine will take her leave first. Please remember to care for your health, Your Majesty, and take a break every other hour."

"Sangyu, don't leave. Stay and keep Zhen company." Having been accustomed to being in the same room as Sangyu, Emperor Zhou'wu only just realized that this was Qian'qing Palace. If he were busy with governmental affairs, Sangyu would appear very awkward with nothing to do.

"Help Zhen organize the memorials." Seeing Sangyu clearly look over with questioning eyes, he patted the stack of memorials beside him and spoke.

"How can memorials be something that this concubine can be allowed to see? This concubine doesn't dare." Meng Sanyu hastily refused. A woman had almost robbed him of political power and she didn't believe for a minute that it hadn't left a shadow in this man's heart. If she so much as touched those memorials, in the future when this person was in a bad mood and brought up

² 秋闱 (qiūwéi) One of the three annual imperial examinations at the provincial level in the Ming and Qing dynasties.

³ In ancient times, the left side was considered higher or more important than the right. This applied to seated positions as well as governmental posts e.g. Left Chancellor > Right Chancellor.

this matter, suspicion would fall on her. Do not support theft! Support the translator and read this free at Nyanovels.com! This cat bows in thanks.

Emperor Zhou'wu blanked out for a moment before immediately understanding her misgivings. He held his forehead and couldn't help but give a low chuckle. His Sangyu had always been on guard like this, constantly looking a hundred steps ahead. It was true that he felt it was taboo for women to meddle in state affairs, but this did not extend to Sangyu. He trusted Sangyu as much as he trusted himself.

"Nevermind. In that case, help Zhen trim this bonsai then." Not wanting to make things difficult for Sangyu, he pointed at several small bonsai that were sitting on the desk.

"Yes." Meng Sangyu agreed and picked up the bonsai and gave it an evaluating look. Suddenly, she remembered a scene from when she was together with A'Bao. One pruned while the other tidied, cooperating smoothly in complete tacit understanding. Those were her most fulfilling and joyful days since she had entered the palace.

Emperor Zhou'wu narrowed his eyes, clearly lost in some memory as well. He promptly took away the bonsai and said in a low voice, "Once Zhen has some free time, Zhen will trim this bonsai together with you. You..." He paused and his eyes brightened, "You sew a perfume sachet for Zhen, you promised last time."

"But this concubine does not have any tools or materials." Meng Sangyu loosened her hands. She was already immune to the man's irrational behaviour.

"Chang'xi, head to Bi'xiao Palace and fetch Her Ladyship's needlework box." Emperor Zhou'wu looked towards Chang'xi, who had been standing quietly in the corner for a long time.

The needlework box was delivered to Meng Sangyu's hands with the utmost speed. The man rummaged around in the needlework box. He didn't find a piece of cloth that suited his taste and called Chang'xi over again to fetch a bolt of bright yellow brocade from his personal storage.

"Use this material and make two identical sachets. One for you and one for Zhen." The man gestured with his hands to show the size and shape as he enthusiastically made suggestions.

"Your Majesty~" Meng Sangyu grumbled flirtatiously. Her raised phoenix eyes made one's heart skip a beat, "This satin is bright yellow. Is Your Majesty trying to harm this concubine [by having

this concubine use material that exceeds her rank]?⁴ *Here this man goes again, wanting to push her into the heart of danger.*

“How could that be?” Emperor Zhou’wu’s voice was hoarse and he had a bitter taste in his mouth. The Empress of a nation was also entitled to use bright yellow, but if he said it outright, would Sangyu believe him? She was too clever, and precisely because of this, everything would become more complicated. His attitude suddenly changed. *Perhaps from her perspective, this could be seen as harbouring ill intentions!* He truly did not know how he could make things better, and could only slowly wear down her guard bit by bit and gradually make Sangyu aware of his feelings.

“It was Zhen’s mistake. Use this deep purple cloth instead, and make the two of them exactly the same.” Tossing the bright yellow brocade to one side, Emperor Zhou’wu’s smile faintly revealed his bitterness.

“Alright, should the scents be the same as well?” Meng Sangyu asked with a grin, satisfied.

“Yes, and not ambergris but your favourite floral scent that you normally use.” Forcibly rousing himself, Emperor Zhou’wu caressed her beaming face. *Forget it, it’s fine so long as you’re by Zhen’s side. Zhen has a lifetime to tear down your heart’s defenses.*

“Sit closer to Zhen. It’s warmer this way.” He pulled the woman to the vacant space beside him. In the past, he had always been directly nestled in Sangyu’s bosom and had gotten used to there being zero distance between them. He wasn’t used to seeing Sangyu sit so far away. If it wasn’t inconvenient for him to write with a person in his embrace, he would have wished to hug Sangyu all the time.

“Will this concubine disturb Your Majesty reviewing memorials?” Her buttocks were pressed up against the side of the man’s strong thighs. Scorching hot bodily warmth could be felt through their clothes. Meng Sangyu shifted uncomfortably. She discovered that the crazy Emperor really liked to stick to her, as if he were starving for touch.⁵

“It won’t.” The man smiled and bent down to lick her soft lips. Only then did he start to read over memorials.

Meng Sangyu was already quite composed in the face of the man’s surprise attack. She gracefully wiped the wetness from her lips and lowered her head to concentrate on making the

⁴ There were restrictions for what everyone could wear in the Palace. Yellow or gold was reserved solely for the Emperor and red was reserved for the Empress. The Empress might be permitted to wear yellow as well in some cases. Anyone else could be punished for just having that colour material in their residence, let alone working with it.

⁵ I learned that 皮肤饥渴症 (pífū jīkě zhèng) is [a real condition](#) and maybe something we’re all feeling to some extent right now. Sending everyone a big virtual hug!!

perfume sachet. For a moment, the hall was so silent that one could hear a needle drop. A strong, sweet atmosphere lingered about the two of them.

Standing in the corner, Chang'xi stole a measuring glance at the two people who were wholly absorbed [in their work]. He inwardly pondered: *His Majesty and Virtuous Consort really have a good relationship. Like this, they seem just like an ordinary old married couple.*

TL Thoughts:

"Since her body remained unsullied, she could infer that she would monopolize Imperial favour in the coming days. She didn't feel any humiliation and instead slightly rejoiced. If something happened to her father, the favour bestowed to her would let her mother and elder brother live better and prevent the Meng family from falling into decline. It was an equal exchange, that was all."

My heart broke while translating this part. I know this was mentioned previously but reading this hits harder somehow?! She's so blasé about exchanging sexual favours for security ;A; I can't--

The part with the bonsai was cute though~ They were both reminiscing about the same memory without realizing it. Ah, those chapters were so sweet...

Until next time,

Nyamachi

Thank you for reading!

[Head back to Nyanovels](#) to continue **Why Harem Intrigue**.

Please leave a like or comment for this chapter if you enjoyed it!