

# Chapter 48: Nursing the Sick 4 (侍疾4)

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Meng Sangyu was shocked speechless. It was a while before she raised a hand to touch her moist cheek. Was this person a dog? She wouldn't care if he just kissed her, but he actually licked her too? *This b\*stard!*<sup>1</sup>

Slightly bowing her head and gently pressing down the popping veins on her forehead, she gave a beaming smile. For Father's sake, she was willing to risk everything. *If you want to trifle with me, go ahead! Since my body hasn't fully healed, I can't sleep with you anyway!*

"This concubine requests teaching, Your Majesty." Her pair of sharply contrasting phoenix eyes slightly narrowed as she turned her snowy white neck to cast a sidelong glance at the man who was holding her from behind. She brilliantly captivated him with a single glance.

Emperor Zhou'wu lost his breath for a moment. Even if he was aware that this charming act was only pretense, he still couldn't stop himself from falling under her spell. Until the day that Sangyu would truly love him, even a false show of affection was enough to bring him elation. In this moment, he couldn't help but rejoice in the fact that he held the highest position, so that even if his woman thought little of him, she wouldn't show it on her face. This kind of mentality was loathsome. They say that the person who falls in love first is the one who loses, and he was the indisputable loser.

"Zhen will teach you sitting posture first." He gave a smirk and grasped the woman's shoulder to press her down onto the Imperial Seat.

Meng Sangyu was shocked and hastened to grasp his sleeve to pull herself to her feet. In a panicked voice, she cried, "Your Majesty! How could this concubine be allowed to sit in this spot!?"

Emperor Zhou'wu's pitch-black eyes showed an expression of glee. Stroking her fair and clear cheeks, he said in a low voice, "Zhen said you may sit, so you may sit. However, this chair is too

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<sup>1</sup> I just realized that I haven't been translating whenever Sangyu swears properly. ^^; The actual word here is worse than what I put as a substitute... Here's [a helpful article](#) on this topic listed in order of offensiveness. I'll probably continue to tone down the swearing for the sake of Google Ads.

high for you. It's no good for practicing calligraphy. Sit on Zhen's lap then." He smoothly grasped the woman's slender waist so that she was sitting on his lap as he embraced her. One of his hands held her smaller hand and wielded the Imperial Brush.

*I might as well have sat directly on the Imperial Seat!* Meng Sangyu was trapped within the man's embrace and surrounded by his musky ambergris smell<sup>2</sup>. His blazing hot body heat steadily transferred into her from the small of her back and her buttocks. All of this caused her to feel as if she were sitting on pins and needles.

Controlling his beating heart, Emperor Zhou'wu rested his chin on the woman's thin shoulders and breathed in her refreshing and pleasant fragrance. In the past, she had always been the one to hold him. He had yearned to hold her in his own arms. This feeling was just like a blissful dream. As his chest was full, his empty heart was also filled. There was no room for others.

"Don't move!" Feeling the woman's plump, soft buttocks shifting on his thighs, he sucked in a breath of air. His voice was ragged beyond recognition. In his arms was the person he missed deeply, and his tenacious willpower withered to almost nothing, unable to withstand the slightest blow.

The man's deep voice became low and rough. The lust that passed between them could cause their hairs to stand on end. Meng Sangyu immediately froze and sat quietly for a long time. Becoming aware of the unremitting hardness beneath her buttocks and the man's increasingly heavy breathing, she pursed her lips and took the initiative to hold the imperial brush. She tugged on his sleeve and cutely asked, "Your Majesty, didn't your honoured self say that you would teach this concubine calligraphy?"

"Relax your arm and straighten your back. Zhen will teach you how to hold the brush." Emperor Zhou'wu smiled wryly as he was forced to shift his attention. He had always been aware of Sangyu's ability to captivate others. Today he could only look, unable to take a bite.

Sighing inwardly, he wrapped a hand tightly around the woman's slender waist while the other hand held the woman's small hand. The two of them held the weasel hair brush and slowly glided it across the paper. Sangyu, Shao'ze; these four large characters in running script<sup>3</sup> were side by side, seeming harmonious and intimate.

Meng Sangyu lowered her eyes and smiled bashfully. Her shiny dark eyes were actually hiding her scorn.

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<sup>2</sup> 龙涎香 (lóngxiāng xiāng) Ambergris, a.k.a. Whale vomit. When dried, it gives off a musky scent and has been used to make perfume for centuries. [Read more about it.](#)

<sup>3</sup> 行书 (xíngshū) Running script, a style of calligraphy. Read more about calligraphy in [Held in the Lonely Castle~](#)

Lifting up her chin and catching a glimpse of the frosty gaze that she hadn't had the chance to conceal, Emperor Zhou'wu's face did not show any change, but a barrage of needles continuously and unrelentingly stabbed at his heart.

"Sangyu..." *What should Zhen do with you? How can Zhen break through the ice in your heart?* He called out in a low whisper, seeming to heave a sigh and pour out his heart until the sound faded away in the tight space between their pressed together lips.

Meng Sangyu was stunned. Soon after, she lightly opened her red lips to let him invade. Life and death were held in the palm of this man's hand, what power did she have to go against it? She might as well comply since the man wasn't too shabby looking and she could enjoy herself a little.

Sensing her willingness, Emperor Zhou'wu's eyes darkened. His palm caressed her cheek as he continued to deepen the kiss. With his frenetic movements and swirling tongue, he explored every corner of the woman's mouth and swallowed her sweet saliva. It was as if he was a parched, hungry traveller in the desert who had reached his limit. He didn't know how many days and nights he had spent hungering for this little mouth.

Chang'xi had long dismissed the hall's servants. Only the sound of intermingling lips and tongues and breathless gasps could be heard in the open and spacious hall.

"Your Majesty, this concubine's body hasn't fully healed." Meng Sangyu carefully avoided his wound as she lay against his chest gasping for air. She caught the man's hand that had reached into her clothes.

Emperor Zhou'wu stiffened and gradually retracted his willful hand, resting it instead on her back. He lightly patted her back, as one would to a child in need of diligent care and protection. It also resembled how Sangyu used to comfort A'Bao.

Taking advantage of the fact that his lust had not yet faded, Meng Sangyu tactfully spoke up in a playful voice, "Your Majesty, this concubine would like to ask Your Majesty for something."

"What is it? It's fine to speak plainly." Emperor Zhou'wu voice was rough as he kissed her cheek.

"This concubine beseeches Your Majesty to dispatch people to the Muddy Shores to search for Father. This concubine has a feeling that Father and General Han are definitely safe and sound."

She raised her head and seriously continued, "Though the Muddy Shores is a wetland with miasma circulating everywhere, it is now winter. Without cover from the foliage, the marsh has already frozen, significantly reducing the danger. The miasma isn't as thick as it was during the

height of summer. If one uses a wet cloth to cover one's mouth and nose and supplements it with a diet of reed rhizome stems<sup>4</sup>, it wouldn't be a problem to survive in the boggy wetland for ten days or half a month. Furthermore, Father has experienced living beyond the Great Wall and is well versed in wilderness survival skills, therefore this concubine thinks that they are definitely still alive." "

"Understanding so much, Zhen's Sangyu is actually such a clever person with good sense." Emperor Zhou'wu frowned and used a finger to massage her temples<sup>5</sup> with eyes full of tenderness.

"This concubine has heard her father talk about life at the frontier so she knows a little bit." Meng Sangyu lowered her eyes, feeling somewhat uneasy. This person's loving expression was too genuine.

"You have no need to request Zhen. Zhen has already increased the number of people to search the Muddy Shores. If they find something, Zhen will definitely let you know right away." He wrapped an arm around the woman's shoulder, his heart a block of ice. No wonder Sangyu was so willing and enthusiastic! It turns out that she wanted to ask a favour of him! Asking him for something was fine. His greatest fear was her asking nothing of him and not giving him the slightest chance.

His icy heart warmed again. He bowed his head and used his tongue to trace the shape of the woman's exquisite lips.

"Your Majesty, it's time. This concubine needs to go pay her respects to the Empress Dowager. This is the Empress Dowager's first time returning to the palace in ten years. She has already exempted this concubine from giving morning greetings because of nursing duties but it would be disrespectful to miss the evening greetings too." Meng Sangyu allowed him to lick as he pleased for a while before glancing at the hourglass in the hall and softly reminding him.

"You ungrateful little thing!"<sup>6</sup> Emperor Zhou'wu bit her tender lower lip. His face showed a helpless expression but his eyes were unmistakably brimming with pampering love.

Meng Sangyu's cheeks aptly reddened. Having entered the Palace for three years, she understood when she should smile, when she should cry, when she should act coy; a thousand feelings and ten thousand attitudes were at her fingertips. Without feeling moved or falling in love, she was a natural deceiver.

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<sup>4</sup> [This](#) - it's a herb used in Traditional Chinese Medicine to reduce internal heat/inflammation.

<sup>5</sup> It actually says he massages her eyeballs but that's weird! Temples make more sense!

<sup>6</sup> 过河拆桥 (guòhé chāiqiáo) An idiom meaning to abandon one's benefactor upon achieving one's goal. Burning bridges~

“Go on then.” Emperor Zhou’wu sighed and supported her to stand. He attentively straightened her unkempt clothes and skirt. His movements were as intimate and natural as if he had practiced this a thousand times before. That strange feeling of familiarity came again.

“This concubine excuses herself.” Meng Sangyu curtsied and paid her respects.

“Wait, this smell is strong. Give it to Zhen.” The man’s slender forefinger pointed to her waist.

Meng Sangyu looked down. It was a newly sewn perfume sachet that was diffusing a light plum blossom scent. “Another day, this concubine will personally make one for Your Majesty.” She replied in a knowing, tactful manner as she untied the perfume sachet.

“Okay.” Emperor Zhou’wu smiled. It was unexpectedly sincere.

Meng Sangyu also smiled slightly and left for Ci’ning Palace, supported by Chang’xi’s attentive service. The man stood by the doorway for a while and watched her figure completely disappear as she rounded a corner before strolling back inside the hall.

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A crowd of concubines had gathered in Ci’ning Palace. Most of them regarded Shen Hui’ru as their leader. There were also a few unfavoured concubines sitting quietly in the corner of the side hall. There was a clear difference between the two groups.

Despite having not yet ascended to the position of Empress, Shen Hui’ru’s influence already permeated the Inner Palace behind the scenes. It was no wonder why the Fake Emperor conferred the Empress’ Treasured Seal to her so that she could govern the Six Palaces on his behalf. Everyone thought that she was a shoo-in to become Empress.

When Meng Sangyu entered, Shen Hui’ru’s hand covered her mouth as she laughed at something someone said to her. A crowd of Imperial Concubines were trying to ingratiate themselves with her and the sound of laughter filled the hall.

“This concubine greets Your Ladyship Virtuous Consort.” A bunch of low-ranked concubines noticed her crossing the threshold and hurriedly stood to pay their respects. Shen Hui’ru sat calmly in a seat of honour. She glanced over with an enigmatic expression, her lofty and steady posture showing her powerful position.

*A grasshopper at the end of autumn*<sup>7</sup> Meng Sangyu returned her gaze and gave a contemptuous smile. She continued walking to her seat of honour and called out for a servant to move a chair before taking a seat. *So what if you're in charge of palace affairs or possess the Empress' Seal? In terms of position, you still rank below me.*

Everyone understood her soundless provocation and the hall fell silent. Shen Hui'ru's hands balled into fists. She tightened and relaxed her grip repeatedly. In the end, she still remembered that this was Ci'ning Palace, a place that wouldn't tolerate her unbridled behaviour. Finally, she smiled and bowed her head, her lowered lids hiding the flash of killing intent in her eyes.

The mood of the room soured. A while later, only Nurse Jin pulling aside a beaded curtain and inviting the concubines into the main hall to pay their respects broke the tense atmosphere.

The Empress Dowager sat up straight in the host's seat, dressed in magnificent robes with a solemn expression. Just a glance from her could overwhelm someone from the pressure. Her majestic and dignified manner immediately eclipsed Shen Hui'ru in comparison. This fake phoenix was no better than mud.

Shen Hui'ru's facial muscles stiffened somewhat, revealing her fear of the Empress Dowager. Catching sight of Nian'ci by the Empress Dowager's side, she gave her a meaningful glance and her heart immediately calmed. For the time being, she would endure for ten more days. After ten days, no matter if it was the Imperial Court or Inner Palace, everything would be under her control.

The Empress Dowager glanced at her indifferently. Her expression was neither happy nor angry and even her eyes were utterly still. Once everyone finished paying their respects, she first looked at Meng Sangyu with a solemn expression and asked in a slightly gentle voice, "How are the Emperor's injuries?"

"Replying to the Empress Dowager, it is better than yesterday. It should completely heal after recuperating for five or six more days." Meng Sangyu didn't try to please her nor curry favour and gave a simple explanation.

The Empress Dowager's expression softened as she held her hand and beckoned her to sit beside her, yet she completely ignored Shen Hui'ru. This woman would soon suffer the consequences of her actions. There was no need to waste time with fake niceties.

The concubines' expressions were splendid. Everyone threw a subtle glance in Shen Hui'ru's direction. The Empress Dowager obviously favoured Virtuous Consort more. The Emperor felt

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<sup>7</sup> 秋后的蚂蚱 (qiūhòude màzha) Lit. A grasshopper at the end of autumn meaning that one was nearing one's end.

very remorseful towards the Empress Dowager. With the Empress Dowager's interference, it was unclear who would wear the Empress' crown in the end.

Shen Hui'ru lowered her eyes and thinly smiled, unperturbed. However, very soon the sudden entrance of a woman with dishevelled hair and shallow features broke her composure.

The woman broke free from the servants around her like a crazy woman. She threw herself before the Empress Dowager's feet. A horrifyingly haggard face emerged through the tangled mop of hair. It was Noble Consort Li who had been banished to the Cold Palace.

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## TL Team Thoughts:

Ahem, here lies [redacted], who upon completion of translating this chapter, died of cringe.  
\*cough\* >////<

It's Christmas Eve~ We hope that Santa is good to you this year!! <3

Until next time,  
The Nyanovels Team

**Thank you for reading!**

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