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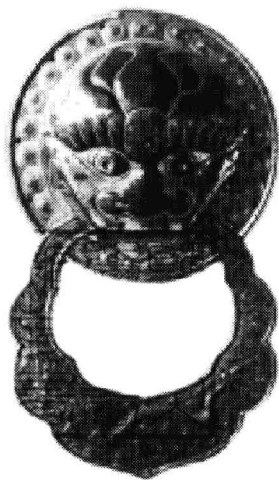
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# 儒林外史

## The Scholars

### II



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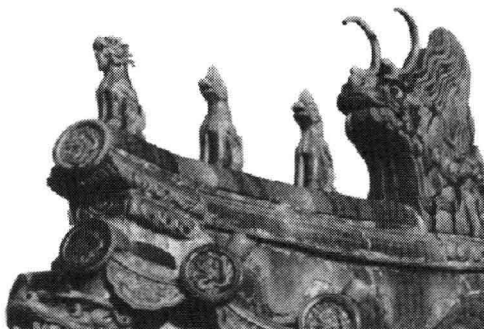
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## 第十六回

### 大柳庄孝子事亲 乐清县贤宰爱士

话说匡超人望见自己家门，心里欢喜，两步做一步，急急走来敲门。母亲听见是他的声音，开门迎了出来，看见道：“小二！你回来了？”匡超人道：“娘！我回来了！”放下行李，整一整衣服，替娘作揖磕头。他娘捏一捏他身上，见他穿着极厚的棉袄，方才放心。向他说道：“自从你跟了客人去后，这一年多，我的肉身时刻不安！一夜梦见你掉在水里，我哭醒来。一夜又梦见你把腿跌折了。一夜又梦见你脸上生了一个大疙瘩，指与我看，我替你拿手拈，总拈不掉。一夜又梦见你来家望着我哭，把我也哭醒了。一夜又梦见你头戴纱帽，说做了官。我笑着说：‘我一个庄农人家，那有官做？’旁一个人道：‘这官不是你儿子，你儿子却也做了官，却是今生再也不到你跟前来。’我又哭起来说：‘若做了官就不得见面，这官就不做他也罢！’就把这句话哭着，吆喝醒了，把你爹也吓醒了。你爹问我，我一五一十把这梦告诉你爹，你爹说我心想痴了。不想就在这半夜你爹就得了病，半边身子动不得，而今睡在房里。”

外边说着话，他父亲匡太公在房里已听见儿子回来了，

## Chapter 16

### **A Good Son Waits Upon His Father in Big Willow Village. A Good Magistrate Encourages a Poor Scholar in Yueqing County**

When Kuang Chaoren saw his home, covering two paces in one he hurried eagerly forward to knock at the door. At the sound of his voice, his mother came out to welcome him.

"Is it you, son?" she cried.

"I'm back, mother!"

He put down his luggage, straightened his clothes and bowed to her.

When his mother felt his clothes and found he was wearing a very thick padded jacket, a great weight was lifted from her mind.

"Since you left with that merchant over a year ago, I've been eating my heart out," she told him. "One night I woke up crying because I dreamed you had fallen into the water. One night I dreamed you had broken your leg. One night I dreamed that there was a big growth on your face; but when you showed it to me and I tried to take it off, I couldn't. One night I dreamed that you came home and stood before me in tears; and then I cried too until I woke myself up! One night I saw you in a gauze cap and heard you had become an official. I laughed and said: 'How can country folk like us become officials?'"

"Then a man there told me: 'This official is not your son. Your son, however, has also become an official; but he will never come back to you any more.'"

"That made me cry again and I said: 'If I shan't be able to see him again once he becomes an official, I'd rather he didn't become one.' I started sobbing so loudly that I woke up and woke your father too. He asked me what was the matter; and when I told him the dream from the beginning, he said I was crazy; but that same night he had a stroke which left him paralysed all down one side. He's sleeping now in the bedroom."

Old Kuang in the inner room knew by now that his son had come back;







登时那病就轻松些，觉得有些精神。匡超人走到跟前，叫一声“爹！儿子回来了！”上前磕了头。太公叫他坐在床沿上，细细告诉他这得病的缘故，说道：“自你去后，你三房里叔子就想着我这个屋。我心里算计也要卖给他，除另寻屋，再剩几两房价，等你回来做个小本生意。旁人向我说：‘你这屋是他屋边屋，他谋买你的，须要他多出几两银子。’那知他有钱的人，只想便宜，岂但不肯多出钱，照时值估价还要少几两，分明知道我等米下锅，要杀我的巧。我赌气不卖给他，他就下一个毒，串出上手业主拿原价来赎我的。业主，你晓得的，还是我的叔辈。他倚恃尊长，开口就说：‘本家的产业是卖不断的。’我说：‘就是卖不断，这数年的修理也是要认我的。’他一个钱不认，只要原价回赎。那日在祠堂里彼此争论，他竟把我打起来。族间这些有钱的，受了三房里嘱托，都偏为着他，倒说我不看祖宗面上。你哥又没中用，说了几句道三不着两的话。我着了这口气，回来就病倒了。自从我病倒，日用益发艰难。你哥听着人说，受了原价，写过吐退与他。那银子零星收来，都花费了。你哥看见不是事，同你嫂子商量，而今和我分了另吃。我想又没有家私给他，自挣自吃，也只得由他。他而今每早挑着担子在各处赶集，寻的钱两口子还养不来。我又睡在这里，终日只有出的气，没有进的气。间壁又要房子翻盖，不顾死活，三五天一回人来催，口里不知多少闲话。你又去得不知下落。你娘想



and this gave him a new lease of life. Kuang Chaoren went in to him.

"Father!" he said. "Your son is back!"

Then he stepped forward and kowtowed. His father made him sit on the edge of the bed while he told him the whole story of his troubles.

"After you left, your third uncle took a fancy to our house. I was thinking of selling it to him, too, because I reckoned that even after renting rooms somewhere else we'd have a few taels left from the proceeds to set you up in a small business after you came home. People told me: 'Your house is right next to his, so if he wants it you should make him pay a few taels more.' But although he's so rich he likes to drive a hard bargain; and instead of paying more, he offered less than the market price. He knew quite well, you see, that we had no rice left at home; so he tried to cut the price. Well, that made me angry and I refused to sell; but then he played a dirty trick on me by asking the former owner to buy the house back at the original price. As you know, the former owner is one of my uncles; and he took advantage of his position as an elder to claim that his family property should never have been sold."

"I said: 'At any rate, you must pay me for the repairs I've done all these years.' But he wouldn't hear of it: he insisted on buying it back at the original price. We were wrangling that day in the ancestral temple, and he even struck me; yet all the rich relatives supported him because your third uncle had spoken to them beforehand. They accused me of having no family feeling! Your elder brother was no use either: what he said didn't cut any ice. And I was so angry that I fell ill as soon as I got home. After that, of course, things became even harder for us, until your elder brother let himself be talked into accepting the original price for the house and signed a receipt. They paid him the money in several lots, and it was soon spent. Then he saw that things looked bad and talked it over with his wife; and now they don't eat with us any more. I've nothing to give him and he's working on his own, so I had to let him have his own way. He takes his wares out every morning to one of the markets around; but he doesn't make enough to feed even the two of them. I lie here getting worse and worse, and your uncle keeps trying to turn us out because he wants to repair these rooms. What does he care whether I live or die? People come every few days to order us out, and we have to put



着，一场两场的哭！”匡超人道：“爹，这些事都不要焦心，且静静的养好了病。我在杭州亏遇着一个先生，他送了我十两银子。我明日做起个小生意，寻些柴米过日子。三房里来催，怕怎的！等我回他。”

母亲走进来叫他吃饭，他跟了走进厨房，替嫂子作揖。嫂子倒茶与他吃。吃罢，又吃了饭，忙走到集上，把剩的盘缠钱买了一只猪蹄来家煨着，晚上与太公吃。买了回来，恰好他哥子挑着担子进门。他向哥作揖下跪，哥扶住了他，同坐在堂屋，告诉了些家里的苦楚。他哥子愁着眉道：“老爹而今有些害发了，说的话道三不着两的。现今人家催房子，挨着总不肯出，带累我受气。他疼的是你，你来家早晚说着他些。”说罢，把担子挑到房里去。匡超人等菜烂了，和饭拿到父亲面前，扶起来坐着。太公因儿子回家，心里欢喜，又有些荤菜，当晚那菜和饭也吃了许多。剩下的，请了母亲同哥进来，在太公面前放桌子吃了晚饭。太公看着欢喜，直坐到更把天气，才扶了睡下。匡超人将被单拿来在太公脚跟头睡。

次日清早起来，拿银子到集上买了几口猪，养在圈里，又买了斗把豆子。先把猪肩出一个来杀了，烫洗干净，分肌劈理的卖了一早晨；又把豆子磨了一厢豆腐，也都卖了，钱拿来放在太公床底下，就在太公跟前坐着。见太公烦闷，便搜出些西湖上景致以及卖的各样的吃食东西，又听得各处的



up with their insults. We didn't know what had become of you either; and whenever your mother thought of you, she cried!"

"Don't worry any more, father," said Kuang Chaoren. "You must rest quietly till you're better. In Hangzhou I met a gentleman who gave me ten taels of silver, and tomorrow I shall start working to support you. If Third Uncle asks for the house again, you needn't be afraid. I'll answer him."

His mother came in to call him to a meal, and he followed her to the kitchen where he bowed to his sister-in-law who offered him tea. After drinking the tea and finishing his meal, he hurried to the market-place and spent what remained of his travelling money on a pig's trotter for his father to eat that evening. No sooner had he returned home than in came his elder brother, Kuang Da, with his pedlar's kit. Kuang Chaoren bowed and knelt down, but his brother raised him up and made him sit in the hall while he told him of the hard times they had had.

"Dad doesn't seem quite right in the head nowadays," said Kuang Da with a frown. "He won't see reason. They want us to move out, but he won't give up the house; and so they take it out of me. You're his favourite; see if you can't talk him round."

This said, he carried his wares to his own room.

When the pig's trotter was cooked, Kuang Chaoren took it with rice to his father and helped him sit up. His son's return had put the old man in good spirits, and since there was meat that evening he made a hearty meal. Then, taking what was left, Kuang Chaoren asked his mother and brother in, and laid a table in front of his father's bed for their supper. The old man was pleased as he watched them eat, and Kuang Chaoren sat with him till nearly ten, when he settled him comfortably for the night. Last of all, he brought his own bedding and lay down to sleep at his father's feet.

The next morning he got up early, took the silver to the market and bought about a bushel of beans and several pigs which he kept in a sty. He killed one pig, cleaned it, cut it up and sold it during the morning; and after that he made beancurd which he also sold. Then, having put his takings under his father's bed, he sat by the old man's side and, to cheer him up, described the scenery of the West Lake and the different sweet-



笑话，曲曲折折，细说与太公听。太公听了也笑。

太公过了一会，向他道：“我要出恭，快喊你娘进来。”母亲忙走进来，正要替太公垫布，匡超人道：“爹要出恭，不要这样出了。像这布垫在被窝里，出的也不自在。况每日要洗这布，娘也怕薰的慌，不要薰伤了胃气。”太公道：“我站的起来出恭倒好了，这也是没奈何！”匡超人道：“不要站起来，我有道理。”连忙走到厨下端了一个瓦盆，盛上一瓦盆的灰，拿进去放在床面前，就端了一条板凳放在瓦盆外边，自己扒上床，把太公扶了横过来，两只脚放在板凳上，屁股紧对着瓦盆的灰。他自己钻在中间，双膝跪下，把太公两条腿捧着肩上。让太公睡的安安稳稳，自在出过恭，把太公两腿扶上床，仍旧直过来。又出的畅快，被窝里又没有臭气。他把板凳端开，瓦盆拿出去倒了，依旧进来坐着。

到晚，又扶太公坐起来吃了晚饭。坐一会，伏侍太公睡下，盖好了被，他便把省里带来的一个大铁灯盏装满了油，坐在太公旁边，拿出文章来念。太公睡不着，夜里要吐痰、吃茶，一直到四更鼓，他就读到四更鼓。太公叫一声，就在跟前。太公夜里要出恭，从前没人服侍，就要忍到天亮。今番有儿子在旁伺候，夜里要出就出。晚饭也放心多吃几口。匡超人每夜四鼓才睡，只睡一个更头，便要起来杀猪，磨豆腐。

过了四五日，他哥在集上回家的早，集上带了一个小鸡子在嫂子房里煮着，又买了一壶酒，要替兄弟接风，说道：“这事不必告诉老爹罢。”匡超人不肯，把鸡先盛了一碗送



meats sold there. He also repeated jokes he had heard in various places until his father was laughing.

"I want to shit," said his father a moment later. "Go and call your mother back here." His mother hurriedly came in to spread a nappy for his father.

"Don't do it like this any more," said Kuang Chaoren to his mother. "It's not comfortable for father to loosen the bowels with a nappy under him in a quilt. What's more, You have to wash the stinking nappy every day. I'm afraid this may turn your stomach."

"If only I could get up and go to stool all by myself!" said the old man. "I have no other way out."

"You don't have to get up." said Kuang Chaoren. "I've got a way."

He hurried to the kitchen and took an earthenware basin, filled it with ashes and put it before the bed, then, he laid a bench beside the basin. He got on the bed, helped his father move sideways towards the basin, put his father's feet onto the bench, and adjusted his buttocks right above the ashes. Then, he himself knelt down in between his father's feet, and put the feet on his shoulders. In this way, he waited till his father finished shitting; then moved his father's feet to the bed. It's really a good way of defecating: no smell in the quilt! He moved the bench aside and poured the ashes out side and, then, sat down before the bed.

In the evening Kuang Chaoren helped his father sit up again for supper, then arranged him comfortably for the night, tucking his quilt around him. This done, he fetched a big iron lamp he had brought from Hangzhou, filled it with oil and sat by his father's side to read essays. His father could not sleep well at night because he kept hawking or wanting to drink tea; so Kuang Chaoren read till after midnight in order to be at hand whenever called. In the past nights, when the old man had a call of nature he had to put up with it till daybreak when somebody came to give him a hand. Now he had his son at hand to help him out whenever needed, he felt relieved and had a better supper. He went to bed very late each night and slept for two or three hours only, since he had to get up early to kill a pig and grind beans.

Four or five days later Kuang Da came home early, bringing a pot of wine and a chicken which he ordered his wife to boil to welcome his



与父母，剩下的，兄弟两人在堂里吃着。恰好三房的阿叔过来催房子，匡超人丢下酒，向阿叔作揖下跪。阿叔道：“好呀！老二回来了？穿的恁厚厚敦敦的棉袄！又在外边学得恁知礼，会打躬作揖！”匡超人道：“我到家几日，事忙，还不曾来看得阿叔，就请坐下吃杯便酒罢。”阿叔坐下吃了几杯酒，便提到出房子的话。匡超人道：“阿叔莫要性急。放着弟兄两人在这，怎敢白赖阿叔的房子住？就是没钱典房子，租也租两间出去住了，把房子让阿叔。只是而今我父亲病着，人家说，病人移了床，不得就好。如今我弟兄着急请先生替父亲医，若是父亲好了，作速的让房子与阿叔。就算父亲是长病，不得就好，我们也说不得，料理寻房子搬去。只管占着阿叔的，不但阿叔要催，就是我父母两个老人家，住的也不安。”阿叔见他这番话说得的中听，又婉委，又爽快，到也没的说了，只说道：“一个自家人，不是我只管要来催，因为要一总拆了修理，既是你恁说，再耽带些日子罢。”匡超人道：“多谢阿叔！阿叔但请放心，这事也不得过迟。”那阿叔应诺了要去。他哥道：“阿叔再喝一杯酒。”阿叔道：“我不吃了。”便辞了过去。

自此以后，匡超人的肉和豆腐都卖得生意又燥，不到日



brother home.

"Don't tell the old man," he said.

Kuang Chaoren would not listen to him, however, but filled a bowl with chicken for his father and mother; and the two brothers were eating what was left in the hall when their third uncle came to demand that they move out. Kuang Chaoren put down his wine and bowed.

"Well, well! So you're back, eh?" said his uncle. "Wearing such a thick padded jacket too! And while you were away you've learned to scrape and bow with the best of them!"

"I have been so busy these few days since I came back, uncle, that I haven't been able to call to pay my respects. Please sit down and have some wine."

Their uncle sat down, and after a few cups of wine brought up the subject of the house.

"Please have patience, uncle," said Kuang Chaoren. "Since my brother and I are both at home, we don't intend to go on occupying your house for nothing; even if we can't afford to lease a house, we can at least rent a couple of rooms in order to leave this house to you. The thing is that our father is ill just now, and they say that when a sick man is moved it holds up his cure. We are anxiously inviting doctors to cure father; and if he recovers soon, we shall move at once. And if we hear that his illness can't be cured in a short time, we shall have no choice but to look for rooms and move away. For if we go on living in your house, uncle, not only will you be urging us all the time to move, but our own parents will feel uncomfortable about staying."

This frank yet polite way of talking left the uncle with nothing to say.

"We belong to one family and I don't want to hurry you," he replied. "It's just that all the repairs should be done together. If that's the way things are, you may stay here a little longer."

"Thank you, uncle!" replied Kuang Chaoren. "I can promise you that we won't be too long."

"Won't you have another cup of wine?" asked Kuang Da as their uncle rose to leave.

He declined, however, and went away.

Kuang Chaoren was soon doing a brisk business in pork and beancurd,





中就卖完了，把钱拿来家伴着父亲。算计那日赚的钱多，便在集上买个鸡鸭或是鱼，来家与父亲吃饭。因太公是个痰症，不十分宜吃大荤，所以要买这些东西。或是猪腰子，或是猪肚子，倒也不断。医药是不消说。太公日子过得称心，每日每夜出恭小解都是儿子照顾定了。出恭一定是匡超人跪在跟前，把腿捧在肩头上。太公的病渐渐好了许多，也和两个儿子商议要寻房子搬家。倒是匡超人说：“父亲的病才好些，索性等再好几分，扶着起来走得，再搬家也不迟。”那边人来催，都是匡超人支吾过去。

这匡超人精神最足：早半日做生意，夜晚伴父亲，念文章，辛苦已极；中上得闲，还溜到门首同邻居们下象棋。那日正是早饭过后，他看着太公吃了饭，出门无事，正和一个本家放牛的，在打稻场上将一个稻箩翻过来做了桌子，放着一个象棋盘对着。只见一个白胡老者背剪着手来看，看了半日，在旁边说道：“唉！老兄这一盘输了！”匡超人抬头一看，认得便是本村大柳庄保正潘老爹，因立起身来叫了他一声，作了个揖。潘保正道：“我道是谁，方才几乎不认得了。你是匡太公家匡二相公。你从前年出门，是几时回来了的？你老爹病在家里？”匡超人道：“不瞒老爹说，我来家已是有半年了，因为无事，不敢来上门上户，惊动老爹。我家父病在床上，近来也略觉好些，多谢老爹记念。请老爹到舍下奉茶。”潘保正道：“不消取扰。”因走近前，替他把帽子升一升，又拿他的手来细细看了，说道：“二相公，不是我奉承你，我自小学得些麻衣神相法，你这骨格是个贵相，将来只