

# E6 - The Garden Party

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**SIGN** The Apothecary Diaries

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**SIGN** This story is a work of fiction. The names of all of the characters, organizations, and so on are imaginary. It also bears no connection to any specific real-life events.

## **[01:34] Lady-in-Waiting 1**

There's just no sense of decency.

## **[01:37] Lady-in-Waiting 2**

So picky with her food.

## **[01:41] Kanan**

It's not like it's going to  
kill her or anything.

**SIGN** Episode 6: The Garden Party

## **[01:48] Yinghua**

So cold!

## **[01:48] Ailan**

The pocket warmers certainly help, but...

## **[01:51] Maomao**

Not having anything to do  
in this cold is quite an ordeal.

## **[01:56] Guiyuan**

The wind is so cold!

## **[02:00] Maomao**

*Couldn't we get a tent or something?*

## **[02:42] Maomao**

This arrangement seems made to instill  
rivalry between the four concubines.

## **[02:51] Guiyuan**

Look, that's the Empress Dowager.

## **[02:54] Maomao**

She seems very youthful.

## **[02:57] Guiyuan**

She is young. She gave birth  
to the emperor when she was...

## **[03:03] Maomao**

*Wow, she must have worked*

*really hard to give birth...*

**[03:05] Guiyuan**

The Empress Dowager has two children,  
the emperor and his younger brother.

**[03:12] Guiyuan**

The rumor is that the brother is  
too sick to leave his house.

**[03:18] Guiyuan**

I think he was here until  
a few moments ago, though...

**[03:21] Maomao**

I see.

**[03:22] Yinghua**

Huh?!

**[03:24] Yinghua**

Who are you calling basic?!

**[03:25] Yinghua**

We ladies-in-waiting serve our mistresses!

**[03:28] Yinghua**

What's the point in dressing up?!

**[03:30] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 2**

Pfft. Did you hear that?

**[03:33] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 3**

Having ugly servants hurts  
the mistress, obviously.

**[03:38] Yinghua**

Grr!

**[03:41] Maomao**

*Those are Lady Lihua's ladies-in-waiting.*

**[03:44] Guiyuan**

Oh, Yinghua. And so, the proxy war begins.

**[03:49] Guiyuan**

Let's go.

**[03:51] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 2**

I guess you can't help it, seeing  
how you hired that ugly girl.

**[03:55] Maomao**

*"Ugly girl?" Does she mean me?*

**[03:58] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 3**

Having someone like that  
around is truly a shame.

**[04:01] Yinghua**

What did you say?!

**[04:04] Ailan**

Yinghua!

**[04:05] Guiyuan**

Calm down!

**[04:07] Maomao**

*They haven't noticed? And after all the fun  
we shared at the Crystal Pavilion, too...*

**[04:13] (Flashback) Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 3**

If you keep acting up,  
I'll tell my father about you!

**[04:21] (Flashback) Maomao**

I'll have to do things to your body that  
you'd never tell your father about, then.

**[04:26] (Flashback) Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 3**

N-No!

**[04:31] Maomao**

*It was just a bit of courtesan-style humor.*

**[04:37] Yinghua**

Apologize to Maomao!

**[04:46] Maomao**

Heh.

**[04:50] Yinghua**

Wh-What, nothing to say all of a sudden?

**[04:52] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 3**

W-Well, I guess that's enough for now!

**[04:57] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 3**

You should thank me!

**[05:00] Yinghua**

What's her problem?

**[05:02] Yinghua**

Hey Maomao, are you all right?

**[05:05] Yinghua**

Your real face is so pretty,  
but those bullies...

**[05:08] Maomao**

It doesn't bother me. That aside, isn't it  
time to change your pocket warmers?

**[05:14] Ailan**

*Not only did she grow up in poverty,*

**[05:16] Ailan**

*her distrust of men is strong enough  
to make her ruin her own face...*

**[05:20] Guiyuan**

*She endured two months of awful  
bullying at the Crystal Pavilion...*

**[05:25] Yinghua**

*Yet she won't complain at all,  
and instead looks after us...*

**[05:30] Ailan; Yinghua; Guiyuan**

*It's only natural that the benevolent  
Master Jinshi looks after her!*

**[05:36] Maomao**

*They're being delusional again.*

**[05:43] Ah-Duo's Lady-in-Waiting 1**

Have you no decency? A crimson dress?

**[05:47] Maomao**

Another proxy war.

**[05:50] Yinghua**

Ah, the Virtuous and  
Pure Consorts' servants.

**[05:52] Yinghua**

They don't get along, either.

**[05:55] Yinghua**

The Virtuous Consort is  
fourteen and arrived later,

**[05:58] Yinghua**

the Pure Consort is thirty-five  
and has been here the longest.

**[06:01] Yinghua**

No wonder they don't get along.

**[06:03] Guiyuan**

Besides, they used to be  
daughter- and mother-in-law.

**[06:06] Maomao**

Daughter- and mother-in-law?

**[06:08] Guiyuan**

Um... It's a bit complicated.

**SIGN** Ah-Duo

Pure Consort

**SIGN** Previous

Emperor

**SIGN** Empress Dowager

**SIGN** Current Emperor

**SIGN** Lishu

Virtuous Consort

**[06:11] Guiyuan**

Before, one was the previous  
emperor's concubine,

**[06:14] Guiyuan**

and the other was our  
current emperor's concubine.

**[06:18] Guiyuan**

But the previous emperor passed away, right?

**[06:21] Yinghua**

The previous emperor's concubine  
left the palace once,

**[06:24] Yinghua**

but returned as the current

emperor's concubine.

**[06:28] Maomao**

The previous emperor  
passed away five years ago.

**[06:30] Maomao**

Back then, Concubine Ah-Duo  
was thirty years old,

**SIGN** 30 years old

**[06:34] Maomao**

and Concubine Lishu was nine.

**SIGN** 9 years old

**[06:38] Maomao**

*I guess it's all politics, but becoming  
a concubine at nine? Wow.*

**[06:41] Yinghua**

Unbelievable, right? Being  
a mother-in-law at nine years old.

**[06:45] Maomao**

Nine... Mother...

**[06:49] Maomao**

M-Mother?!

**SIGN** Ah-Duo

Pure Consort

**SIGN** Lishu

Virtuous Consort

**SIGN** Empress Dowager

**SIGN** Current Emperor

**SIGN** Previous

Emperor

**SIGN** Ah-Duo

Pure Consort

**SIGN** Lishu

Virtuous Consort

**[06:54] Maomao**

The one who was the previous emperor's  
concubine was Lady Lishu?!

**[07:16] Maomao**

So that's the young mother-in-law?

**[07:19] Hongniang**

As you probably saw,  
Lady Lishu is still very young.

**[07:25] Maomao**

Yes, I see that.

**[07:27] Maomao**

*Normally, a white dress would  
suit the Virtuous Consort,*

**[07:30] Maomao**

*but that dark pink color...*

**[07:32] Maomao**

*It obviously clashes with  
Lady Gyokuyou, the Precious Consort.*

**[07:36] Maomao**

*Maybe she can't read the room?*

**[07:42] Hongniang**

Thank you for the pocket warmers.  
We'll certainly need them again.

**[07:45] Maomao**

Yes.

**[07:49] Lihua's Ladies-in-Waiting**

It's freezing...

**[07:56] Maomao**

Hold these if you're cold.

**[08:03] Maomao**

Here.

**[08:05] Maomao**

Here!

**[08:14] Yinghua**

You're too kind.

**[08:16] Yinghua**

Suggesting sharing the warmers with  
the Crystal Pavilion ladies-in-waiting...

**[08:20] Ailan**

And getting Lady Gyokuyou's permission, too.

**[08:23] Maomao**

Well...

**[08:27] Maomao**

A hairpin?

**[08:29] Yinghua**

It's how they try to recruit talented  
workers hidden in this flower garden.

**[08:34] Maomao**

Huh.

**[08:35] Yinghua**

It has another hidden meaning, though.

**[08:38] Maomao**

I see.

**[08:40] Yinghua**

I said, there's a *hidden meaning!*

**[08:44] Maomao**

Meaning, huh?

**[08:53] Lihaku**

Please have this, young lady.

**[09:00] Maomao**

*I guess he's handing them out to everyone*

*to make sure no servant feels ashamed.*

**[09:08] Maomao**

Thank you.

**[09:09] Lihaku**

I'm Lihaku! Good to meet you!

**[09:15] Maomao**

Like a big dog...

**[09:16] Lihaku**

Woof! Woof!

**[09:18] Yinghua**

Did he give you that? Let me see!

**[09:20] Maomao**

Just a participation award.

**[09:23] Lihua**

I believe you should have more.

**[09:30] Lihua**

It's been some time.

**[09:31] Maomao**

Yes, my lady, it has been a long time.

**[09:40] Lihua**

That's all for today.

**[09:42] Lihua's Lady-in-Waiting 2**

Lady Lihua...?!

**[09:44] Lihua**

We'll take our leave. Have a pleasant day.

**[09:51] Guiyuan**

Lady Gyokuyou won't like this.

**[09:54] Yinghua**

What an understatement.

**[09:57] Ailan**

What will you do with all these hairpins?

**[10:11] Maomao**

*Oh.*

**[10:15] Maomao**

*He looks pretty good there.*

**[10:19] Maomao**

*I guess he's higher up than I thought.*

**[10:21] Maomao**

*He doesn't seem out of place  
among the military officers.*

**[10:26] Maomao**

*Oh look, that officer from earlier.*

**[10:29] Maomao**

*He's at the very edge, but given  
his age, I guess that's still impressive?*

**[10:34] Maomao**

*Our glittering eunuch*

*isn't there, but who cares?*

**[10:44] Maomao**

*More importantly, food tasting.*

**[10:50] Maomao**

*No clouding on the contact point.*

**[10:55] Maomao**

*No strange smells.*

**[10:58] Maomao**

*But swallowing is part of the job as taster...*

**[11:05] Maomao**

*Now to rinse out the mouth with water... Hmm?*

**[11:20] Maomao**

*The life of the food taster is expendable.*

**[11:24] Maomao**

*I guess I'm the only one  
that enjoys eating poison.*

**[11:28] Maomao**

*You know what would be good? Puffer fish.*

**[11:30] Maomao**

*Sneak in some innards in the soup...*

**[11:34] Maomao**

*That stinging sensation  
on the tongue is so wonderful.*

**[11:43] Maomao**

*Oops. Must concentrate.*

**[11:44] Maomao**

*This vinegar fish-and-vegetable dish  
is the emperor's favorite.*

**[11:48] Maomao**

*I saw it a few times at the rear palace.*

**[11:50] Maomao**

*Usually it includes blueback,  
but it's jellyfish today.*

**[11:56] Maomao**

*The cook responsible for the emperor's food*

**[11:58] Maomao**

*would never mistake  
the emperor's favorite ingredient.*

**[12:01] Maomao**

*Lady Gyokuyou has no prominent  
likes or dislikes, either.*

**[12:05] Maomao**

*Seems like the server messed up.*

**[12:24] Maomao**

*I guess she doesn't like fish.*

**[12:27] Maomao**

*She can't refuse to eat it.*

*Not in front of the emperor.*

**[12:38] Maomao**

*I wish I hadn't seen that.*

**[12:42] Military Official 1**

Did you see that, Lihaku?

**[12:44] Military Official 1**

One of the food tasters  
is really excitable.

**[12:47] Lihaku**

Where's the fun in watching  
someone eat while terrified?

**[12:52] Military Official 1**

Come on, just look.

**[12:55] Lihaku**

Huh? That taster... it's that girl from earlier.

**[13:23] Lihaku**

J-Just how delicious is that?

**[13:35] Maomao**

This is poison.

**[13:43] Crowd**

The Precious Consort's soup was poisoned?!

**[13:45] Minister**

Poison?! Are you sure?

**[13:45] Crowd**

Concubine Gyokuyou?!

**[13:47] Minister**

The taster swallowed it!

**[13:49] Crowd**

Minister!

**[13:50] Crowd**

What are you doing?!

**[13:52] Jinshi**

*Formal attire is too tight.*

**[13:56] Lihaku**

Hey! The minister drank  
the soup and collapsed!

**[14:03] Jinshi**

The apothecary...

**[14:08] Maomao**

Phew.

**[14:10] Jinshi**

Apothecary!

**[14:12] Maomao**

Good day, Master Jinshi.

**[14:15] Jinshi**

Your day seems better than mine.

**[14:18] Maomao**

*Oh no, I got too excited about  
the poison. It's like I smiled at him.*

**[14:25] Maomao**

What are you doing?

**[14:27] Jinshi**

Taking you to the infirmary!

**[14:29] Maomao**

I coughed up the poison. I feel quite well.

**[14:34] Maomao**

*I would have loved to swallow it, though.*

**[14:37] Maomao**

*If I did, the poison would have coursed  
through my body by now, and...*

**[14:42] Maomao**

Master Jinshi, uh...

**[14:45] Jinshi**

What is it?

**[14:46] Maomao**

Give me the rest of the soup.

**[14:50] Jinshi**

You're an idiot.

**[14:52] Maomao**

I'm just eager to improve.

**[14:56] Jinshi**

After you left, someone tried the soup to see  
if it was really poisoned, and collapsed.

**[15:01] Maomao**

Who was that stupid?

**[15:04] Jinshi**

A minister. Now it's become a huge incident.

**[15:09] Maomao**

Use this, then.

**[15:12] Maomao**

It's an emetic agent.

**[15:13] Maomao**

I made it strong enough to  
turn your stomach inside out.

**[15:17] Jinshi**

Isn't that *also* a poison, then?

**[15:27] Maomao**

*A new hairpin?*

**[15:29] Maomao**

*So the eunuchs gets hairpins, too?*

**[15:32] Maomao**

*His collar is a little disheveled, too.  
Plus his normal glitter is gone.*

**[15:39] Maomao**

*Is that why he wasn't at the party?*

**[15:44] Maomao**

*But right now, he's acting  
his age more than usual...*

**[15:48] Maomao**

*Or rather, he looks quite a bit younger.*

**[15:54] Maomao**

*I prefer him like this, somewhat.*

**[16:03] Maomao**

*Really does the trick!*

**[16:04] Maomao**

*The palace infirmary has some good drugs!*

**[16:08] Jinshi**

*Are you all right?*

**[16:12] Maomao**

*Yes, I'm all empty.*

**[16:17] Jinshi**

*Well, let's talk about who  
poisoned Concubine Gyokuyou.*

**[16:23] Maomao**

*I'd like for you to bring  
someone to talk about that.*

**[16:27] Jinshi**

*Who?*

**[16:28] Maomao**

*Lady Lishu, the Virtuous Consort.*

**[16:34] Lishu**

*Master Jinshi, how may I be of service?*

**[16:37] Jinshi**

*I'm sorry to bring you to this inelegant place.*

**[16:40] Jinshi**

*This lady-in-waiting wanted to speak with you.*

**[16:45] Lishu**

*Huh?!*

**[16:47] Lishu**

*Hmph. A lady-in-waiting?*

**[16:53] Maomao**

*Excuse me.*

**[16:58] Maomao**

*I knew it.*

**[17:01] Maomao**

*Is it fish that you can't eat?*

**[17:06] Jinshi**

*What is this?*

**[17:08] Maomao**

*Some people have things they cannot eat.*

**[17:11] Maomao**

In my case, I can't have buckwheat.

**[17:15] Jinshi**

Yet you eat poison?

**[17:17] Maomao**

Leave me alone. I tried to build a tolerance.

**[17:22] Maomao**

However, it made my throat swell  
and it was hard for me to breathe.

**[17:27] Maomao**

Even a little bit caused rashes,  
so it was hard to adjust the amounts,

**[17:32] Maomao**

and I took a long time to heal.

**[17:34] Maomao**

That's what I mean by "cannot eat."

**[17:37] Maomao**

Lady Lishu, how is your stomach?

**[17:41] Maomao**

I can get you a laxative if you....

**[17:47] Lishu**

How did you know?

**[17:49] Maomao**

It was clear that the rear palace  
prepared the food for the garden party.

**[17:54] Maomao**

However, the vinegar dish used  
a different ingredient from the usual one.

**[17:58] Maomao**

It seems like Lady Lishu's dish got swapped  
with Lady Gyokuyou's dish by mistake.

**[18:04] Lishu**

I see.

**[18:05] Maomao**

Is it mackerel that you can't eat?

**[18:10] Lishu**

Yeah...

**[18:15] Maomao**

This isn't about just liking  
or disliking certain foods.

**[18:18] Maomao**

It was just hives this time, but sometimes,  
it can cause difficulty in breathing.

**[18:25] Maomao**

Feeding her this knowingly...

**[18:28] Maomao**

would be the same as poisoning her.

**[18:39] Maomao**

You're her food taster, correct?

**[18:42] Kanan**

Y-Yes!

**[18:45] Maomao**

I've taken note of what to be careful of in an emergency.

**[18:51] Maomao**

Of course, avoiding these foods entirely is best.

**[18:57] Maomao**

Please take a look.

**[19:02] Maomao**

It's not difficult.

**[19:04] Maomao**

However, if something goes wrong, not even the palace doctor could fix it.

**[19:11] Maomao**

It could become deadly.

**[19:15] Maomao**

Please keep that in mind.

**[19:22] Maomao**

*That should have scared her enough.*

**[19:33] Jinshi**

What was that about?

**[19:36] Maomao**

I am of lowly birth. Please don't touch me.

**[19:41] Jinshi**

You're the only one that says that to me.

**[19:43] Maomao**

Well, everyone's just being kind to you.

**[19:48] Maomao**

Anyway, I must report to Lady Gyokuyou. So...

**[19:53] Jinshi**

Wait. Why did you call the food taster in, too?

**[19:59] Maomao**

What do you mean?

**[20:00] Jinshi**

Don't play dumb. You asked me to bring her.

**[20:03] Maomao**

To tell her what to be careful of.

**[20:06] Jinshi**

So, you're saying the servers made the error?

**[20:11] Maomao**

I don't know. I'm a mere lady-in-waiting.

**[20:17] Jinshi**

At least answer me this.

**[20:21] Jinshi**

The target was the Virtuous  
Consort, Lady Lishu, right?

**[20:26] Maomao**

Assuming none of the other  
dishes were poisoned.

**[20:29] Jinshi**

I see.

**[20:48] Maomao**

What a day.

**[20:50] Gaoshun**

Is this related to the matter of  
the wooden tablets from the other day?

**[20:55] Gaoshun**

The lady-in-waiting who came earlier  
had no burns on her.

**[21:01] Jinshi**

Who could it be...?

**[21:06] ---**

Not just some superficial sweetness

**[21:12] ---**

I want more warmth than I can even use, oh

**[21:18] ---**

Having these selfish idealistic thoughts

**[21:23] ---**

I swallowed them again today  
before putting them into words

**[21:28] ---**

Still in my memories,  
the scent of fragrant olive

**[21:33] ---**

The color of twilight in the city

**[21:36] ---**

We were laughing...

**[21:41] ---**

Filled with sadness,  
the tears welled up in my eyes

**[21:53] ---**

I found a glow during those days

**[22:01] ---**

I guess I took everything for granted

**[22:06] ---**

The wind was so loud I covered my ears

**[22:18] ---**

I gotta stop being like that

**[22:26] ---**

Even if I stumble over the words of love

**SIGN** Next Time

**[22:46] Narrator**

*Next time: "Homecoming."*

**SIGN** Episode 7: Homecoming

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Revision #1

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