Farmhouse 101

Chapter 101: Leave When the Illness Is Cured

Hearing that ancient men were all rather chauvinistic, Gu Youyou thought Jin Zijin might be the same.

With that thought, Gu Youyou suddenly smiled and said, "We have only a little silver left, we can't just sit around until it's all gone, right? I know you're very capable, but I don't want to be a burden to others all the time. Treating the sick is something within my ability. Besides... the only doctor in Qingshui Town is gone, and when the residents fall ill, they have nowhere to turn for help. They can't just stay sick!"

Jin Zijin looked at her calmly as she spoke earnestly, explaining her reasons.

She was right, but... he paused for a moment, then said in a deep voice, "Have you thought about yourself?"

"What?" Gu Youyou was somewhat confused.

Jin Zijin gave a bitter smile and said, "Forget it, do what you like! You're right, you always have to take care of yourself, and that's good, too!"

Gu Youyou didn't say a word for a long time after Jin Zijin finished speaking.

Reflecting on Jin Zijin's words, Gu Youyou suddenly shivered!

His words... were telling her to take care of herself! Yes, once her illness was cured, she would have to take care of herself, but what about him?

Gu Youyou tentatively asked, "If my illness is cured, does that mean... you won't take care of me anymore?"

Upon hearing this, Jin Zijin raised his head, but his eyes didn't meet hers; instead, he stared at the dishes on the table and sighed, "The future... I don't know!"

Gu Youyou became anxious, suddenly stood up, and looking down from a higher position at Jin Zijin across the table, she said excitedly, "That won't do, you are my husband, from the moment you carried me into your thatched cottage, you shouldn't even think about getting rid of me, unless I die!"

Gu Youyou finished shouting resolutely, then felt that she was somewhat being unreasonable, even a bit strange!

Was she clinging to him?

But how could Gu Youyou cling to someone else? As long as Gu Youyou was alive, as long as she had breath in her body, no matter where she was, she didn't need anyone and could live well. That's what her modern-day grandfather used to say to her.

Yet the thought that Jin Zijin might leave Lotus Village after taking care of her for some reasons, that he might disappear from her life forever once he has completed those things, made her feel extremely uncomfortable!

She even thought that her illness had indeed recovered too quickly.

"Zijin!" Seeing that Jin Zijin remained silent for a long time, Gu Youyou softly called his name!

"Is that so?" she asked.

"Is it that once I'm cured, you're going to leave?"

Jin Zijin avoided the topic, looked down, and started eating his rice, mumbling, "Don't think too much, let's talk about it once you're cured!"

Gu Youyou closed her eyes in disappointment, feeling a sudden pang in her heart!

It seemed to be the case.

A moment later, as if she had come to an understanding, when she opened her eyes again, they had returned to normal, with a faint smile on her face!

She said, "Alright, your matters aren't settled, and you won't be leaving anytime soon. We'll talk about it later!"

Whether it was Gu Youyou of the past or the Gu Youyou of now, there was a pride in her bones!

It's just a man, after all. He took care of her for so long, she was grateful to him, and unwittingly, she admitted to herself that she liked him.

But it wasn't as if he was irreplaceable, right?

Even if she wanted to keep him, there was plenty of time ahead; she had plenty of opportunities. Once she recovered, she would open her own doctor's office, and once she earned enough silver... she would support him!

Chapter 102 The Stranger in the Rain

Heh heh...

If it weren't for her time-traveling, she had planned to marry a man and have children.

At night, Gu Youyou felt cold, as if falling into an ice cave. She tightened the quilt around her, and in her drowsy state, she heard the sound of spring thunder and rain outside, mixed with voices that sounded somewhat familiar.

Jin Zijin?

Gu Youyou was startled and hurriedly reached out beside her.

There was no one beside her, just empty space.

No wonder she felt cold.

Gu Youyou turned on her side, listening intently to the noises outside.

The rain that night was not light, accompanied by bursts of spring thunder. The voices of people talking in the yard were not loud, and had Gu Youyou's ears not been exceptionally gifted, she wouldn't have noticed at all.

"Is everything taken care of over there?" Jin Zijin's voice was colder and calmer than she had ever heard, an unfamiliar feeling for Gu Youyou.

If she wasn't certain the man was Jin Zijin, she might have thought he was someone else.

"All is ready, just waiting for you to return!" A strange man's voice, respectful in tone, which seemed young, probably about the same age as Jin Zijin.

Gu Youyou listened somberly, this stranger was likely tied to Jin Zijin's true identity.

So late at night, under thunderous weather, they met and had this cryptic conversation.

Definitely up to no good!

Was this his secret?

Gu Youyou silently got up and lay beside the window, peering through the slightly open window to observe the situation outside.

Two men stood in the courtyard, indifferent to the rain pouring down on them.

With thunder and lightning intermingling, standing in the courtyard was truly unsafe, they seemed not to fear accidentally being struck by lightning.

The man opposite Jin Zijin was dressed in black, wearing a straw raincoat and a bamboo hat, obscuring his face.

He was slightly shorter than Jin Zijin. Gu Youyou saw him pat Jin Zijin on the shoulder and murmured in a low voice, "If there is nothing else, I should leave. Take care!"

The stranger's words sounded somewhat helpless, treating Jin Zijin like a friend rather than the respectful tone of a subordinate as before.

This only compounded Gu Youyou's confusion about their identities.

"Alright, we'll talk about everything when I return," Jin Zijin's voice softened too.

The stranger turned to leave, but Jin Zijin called him back.

"Hold on!"

The man stopped and turned back.

"Something else?"

"Yes," Jin Zijin nodded slightly and said, "Doctor Zhou from Jisheng Hall in Qingshui Town has gone to Beijing. Find a way to get him back as soon as possible!"

The man looked surprised and paused, but without asking further, he nodded slightly.

Just then, a powerful flash of lightning streaked across the sky, illuminating the secluded little courtyard as if it were daylight, startling Gu Youyou, who also glimpsed the man under the bamboo hat.

It seemed the man also saw Gu Youyou inside the house behind Jin Zijin.

In just a glance, darkness fell again.

But at that moment, Gu Youyou saw a silver object flying rapidly towards her.

Startled, she saw it was something thrown by the stranger, and intuition told her it was dangerous and should be avoided.

However, the silver object flew so fast, there was no time to dodge. She could only watch as it flew towards her.

Gu Youyou's heart jumped to her throat.

But just then, the color in Jin Zijin's eyes darkened, and he kicked a puddle on the ground.

Chapter 103: Discovered

The string of water droplets flew towards Gu Youyou ahead of the silver dots launched by the strange man, striking the window where she was. With a plop, the window fell shut in response.

At the same time, a small silver bead shot out by the man also lodged in that door and window.

Gu Youyou was so frightened that her face turned pale, and she fell to the ground.

When she saw Jin Zijin chasing after the wild man on the back mountain and running faster than a rabbit, she knew that the place she had traveled to contained things like martial arts.

Now, seeing that strange man using something shot from his fingers, comparable to a modern gun, once again confirmed her suspicion.

Of course, the man who hugged her to sleep every night was even more terrifying; the water droplets he kicked with his feet actually plopped the window shut.

One should know that this window was broken, long-neglected, somewhat deformed. During the day, with all her might, Gu Youyou wasn’t able to close it, so she had no choice but to give up.

But now, it was shut with a plop by the water droplet kicked up by Jin Zijin’s foot!

Separated by a wall, a dispute arose between two men in the pouring rain.

"She has discovered us, she must be killed!"

"The rain is too heavy, she won’t hear, hurry and go!"

"No, that flash of lightning, she saw me! Get out of the way!"

Jin Zijin extended his strong arm, blocking the path of that strange man, and said with a deep voice, "I can’t let you touch her, this is an order!"

"You..." The strange man seemed somewhat angry but powerless, he sighed deeply, "I don’t understand why you would marry a completely useless village girl?"

"That’s none of your concern."

"But by doing so, you’re putting me in danger. Who is she exactly, to be worth such risk?"

Jin Zijin didn’t speak further, and the other man fell silent too. The stalemate persisted for a while until the stranger eventually said, "Fine, I trust you."

As he turned to leave, the strange man paused, adding, "That Taoist is not to be trusted!" After dropping this cryptic remark, he left without lingering, striding away!

Jin Zijin still did not speak!

The conversation between the two men in the pouring rain did not miss a single word as it fell into Gu Youyou's ears, unknown to anyone, her hearing was much keener than the average person, this was her own secret.

So even though she was frightened by what she heard, she could only pretend to be unaware of anything.

She heard the man rapidly leave, heard the sound of his footsteps on the roof tiles; he was leaving via the rooftop, very quickly.

She also heard Jin Zijin lifting his heavy footsteps, stepping in the water, slowly approaching the door!

Each step, as if stepping into her heart, caused her a start!

Gu Youyou suddenly missed her bodyguard team from modern times, which protected her from those who didn't want to see her in power, making her feel secure with their high-quality service.

But now she was alone.

Jin Zijin returned, and seeing Gu Youyou sitting on the ground, he stopped by the door and didn't move forward. Instead, he went to a corner and took off his soaked clothes.

Gu Youyou glanced at him out of the corner of her eye, not daring to turn her head.

Her vision was also quite good; although she couldn't see clearly in such a night, she could make out a blurry silhouette.

This, like the secret of her ears, was unknown to anyone.

Gu Youyou could not let him know these secrets of hers.

He said she didn’t hear the conversation with the strange man in the rain, then she didn’t hear it.

After a while, Jin Zijin changed his clothes, and Gu Youyou also stood up.

Chapter 104: We Can Go Back Now

She trembled with cold, yet she still had to keep acting!

Gu Youyou took one step at a time, gradually quickening her pace, groping her way to Jin Zijin, before hugging his waist and resting her head on his chest.

She took a deep breath, trembling as she said, "In the dead of night, who were you out with? That person was wrapped in black, not even coming inside. It scared me to death!"

Jin Zijin gently stroked her hair, whispering, "You were sleeping, I was afraid of disturbing you, so we didn’t come in!"

Gu Youyou nodded in submission, allowing him to hold her as they returned to bed to sleep.

...

In the following days, Gu Youyou worked as a resident doctor at Jisheng Hall. She cured the neighboring illnesses, and her reputation began to grow. More and more people sought her medical attention, and she no longer lacked silver.

These days, Jisheng Hall provided her with free meals and the medicine she needed.

After eating well for a few days, her discriminating taste returned. The dominant queenly temperament from her previous life also came back to some extent; she least liked disobedient subordinates!

At noon, frowning at the squab pigeon on the dining table, her tone less than pleasant, she said sternly, "The squab I asked for should be steamed with herbs, not stewed ..."

Qin Changlin hastened to explain, "I thought, with the weather still cold, drinking some soup would be good for warming the stomach and the health. Sister Youyou, look, could you make do with this for now?"

Now, Gu Youyou was not only the lifesaver for Jisheng Hall but also for the whole Qingshui Town. If they did not secure her well, what would happen to the many patients?

Seeing his cautious manner, Gu Youyou suddenly felt she was being a bit unreasonable. She was no longer the old Gu Youyou, after all, she was in someone else's place and, although she was there to help, it wasn't right for her to be too demanding. She laughed, "Steaming ensures the medicinal properties are preserved to the fullest, allowing me to drink fewer bowls of bitter medicine. Did you think I really wanted to eat these things just because I'm craving them? Fine, stew it then, but keep stewing that medicine for me tomorrow!"

Realizing he had inadvertently made a mistake, Qin Changlin's face showed his distress as he hurriedly said, "Oh no! I've been so foolish. Now I understand Sister Youyou's intentions. I won't make the same mistake again!"

...

Half a month flew by, and today Jin Zijin came back, saying he was there to take Gu Youyou back to Lotus Village.

It just so happened that the other day Qin Changlin mentioned that Doctor Zhou was already on his way back and should arrive in a day or two. The journey from Beijing to Qingshui Town usually took about ten days, but Doctor Zhou, being older, might take a couple of days longer.

So soon? She hadn't even said goodbye to her colleagues at Jisheng Hall yet.

Gu Youyou said, "I'll go to Jisheng Hall tomorrow morning to inform them!"

Jin Zijin, however, said, "You don’t have to go, I’ll do it!"

Gu Youyou: "..."

When she came to town, Jin Zijin carried her, but she wouldn’t need that on the way back.

After recuperating for half a month, Gu Youyou’s health was excellent!

But what Gu Youyou couldn’t understand was why he chose to leave at dusk; by the time she returned to Lotus Village at her pace, it would surely be dark.

Jin Zijin walked very fast, and Gu Youyou found it extremely difficult to keep up with his pace. But she gritted her teeth and bore it, not allowing him to slow down and wait for her.

With their quick pace, by the time they reached Lotus Village, it was indeed dark. In ancient times, without even a flashlight, people like them living on the edge of subsistence couldn’t afford lanterns, so they went in the dark.

Chapter 105 Still the Thatched Cottage.

Under the pale moonlight, she could vaguely see that a new straw hut had risen in the place where their previous one stood, as if the shape hadn’t changed at all.

Embarrassing...

After all this time, it was still a straw hut. Why was he so keen on straw huts?

Gu Youyou, having traveled a long way and out of breath, was too weary to bother anymore and simply followed Jin Zijin directly into the hut.

Once inside, Jin Zijin lit an oil lamp, and by its faint glow, Gu Youyou saw that the inside of the hut had undergone substantial changes.

From the outside, it looked almost identical to the old straw hut, but the inside was vastly different.

Not to mention anything else, just take the floor for instance.

In the past, it was all mud. It was fine on sunny days, but once it rained, everything was ruined. The whole hut would be full of sludge, and one could easily slip and get covered in mud.

Gu Youyou had never seen such a hut before and was so shocked that she dared not step inside. It took her a long time to adapt.

Now, fortunately, the ground was covered with wood and raised about a foot off the ground, so even on rainy days, the inside of the hut wouldn't get damp.

Gu Youyou looked at Jin Zijin with complex emotions in her eyes!

He must have put a lot of effort into making the floorboards just to make her stay more comfortable.

Jin Zijin always made her want to get closer to him when she thought about it, yet he also made her feel the need to keep her distance and be cautious. And when she was being wary of him, he made her unable to resist the desire to get close to him.

Seeing him now, Gu Youyou's heart was a mess, truly fitting the saying, "The heart is like a net of silk threads, filled with countless knots!"

Sensing her unusual behavior, Jin Zijin couldn't help but ask, "What's wrong?"

Gu Youyou collected her thoughts and replied with a helpless smile, "You are truly difficult to understand, causing me some... troubles I've never had before!"

Jin Zijin's expression was always enigmatic, hard to decipher. He seemed to understand her words, yet also as if he didn't. Gu Youyou didn't want to probe further. She simply gestured towards the cold stove and said, "I'm hungry. Are we going to have dinner?"

Jin Zijin smiled, nodded, and headed toward the stove.

...

Ever since that night when she encountered that strange man, Gu Youyou had become more cautious, afraid to sleep too deeply at night, and intermittently alert to the surroundings of the house.

With her keen hearing, she would definitely be aware of anyone approaching.

However, since that night, she hadn't noticed anyone coming to see Jin Zijin at midnight again. But that didn't mean he hadn't been in touch with those people. He had plenty of opportunities to contact outsiders, while hunting or going into town.

That stranger had wanted to kill her that night, and Gu Youyou didn't want to die for no apparent reason.

And then there was Jin Zijin by her side. She didn't know his intentions; whether he was trustworthy was also a question. For the time being, she was of use to him, so he probably wouldn't harm her, but what about when she was no longer useful?

That was hard to say!

Thinking that Jin Zijin might one day turn on her, Gu Youyou felt deeply sorrowful.

Looking back on her life in this world, the only one who had truly been kind to her was one person, Grandpa Gu!

Time flew, and the weather had warmed up. The peach and plum trees in the distance were bearing fruit, but the peach tree in front of the house was withering and close to death.

There would be no peaches to eat this year!

Because at the time when its blossoms were in full glory, Gu Youyou had set the house on fire. The tree, being close to the house, had not escaped unscathed and was half-dead from the heat, suggesting that even next year's blossoms might not flourish.

In Jin Zijin's yard, there was plenty of open space, and under the guidance of Auntie Wang, Gu Youyou also planted some fresh vegetables!

Chapter 106: Encountering the Savage Again

Whenever she had free time, she dug up the entire open space in the backyard, firstly to exercise, and secondly, to grow some herbs to sell for silver.

In the three years Gu Youyou had lived at her aunt's place in modern times, her uncle's family made their living growing medicinal herbs. The weather in early March, the Grain Rain season, with its long daylight hours, was the best time to plant various herbs.

Gu Youyou didn't have any seeds and could only stroll around the mountain. Whatever seemed suitable for planting, she would dig some up!

In the rainy season, there were plenty of different mushrooms on the mountain after the rain, and she could also pick up some mushrooms to bring back!

Jin Zijin made Gu Youyou a basket for gathering herbs. He didn't object to her earning some silver in her own way; this was how mountain people lived.

When Jin Zijin went up the mountain to hunt, or rather, used hunting as a cover, actually going up the mountain to look for someone, Gu Youyou also went up the mountain.

Of course, before this, Gu Youyou had asked Aunt Wang from the town to help her buy some herbs from Jisheng Hall; she prepared some things for self-defense.

There were wild men on the mountain, and she had to be wary in case she was unlucky enough to encounter that guy again!

Better safe than sorry, right? Being careful never hurts!

Gu Youyou had a good memory. Although the mountain paths were hard to remember, she found the cave she had stayed in before.

There was a broken quilt still there, neatly folded, and a burnt-out campfire—it seemed that Jin Zijin had been there too.

This area was particularly rich in herbs!

Dandelions, Motherwort, Lysimachia, Sterculia lychnophora...

And various mushrooms?

The Honeysuckle she had seen last time was also nearing its harvesting season; in about ten days, it would be just right to come back for it.

Gu Youyou filled a basket full, overjoyed with her collection!

These wild-grown things were simply better; she felt these herbs tasted much better than the ones her uncle grew.

With her basket brimming, Gu Youyou, on her way down the mountain, encountered that wild man again!

It had to be said, she was just too unlucky!

Jin Zijin had been looking for him for years without success, yet she encountered him twice in just two visits.

Gu Youyou slipped her hand into her sleeve, gripping the item she had prepared, as she watched the wild man approach closer.

He moved quickly, and only when he got closer did she realize he wasn’t chasing her, but a rabbit!

Such bad luck!

Gu Youyou grimaced, not knowing what to say anymore.

This darned rabbit!

Where did it come from and why did it have to run in her direction?

And the wild man, following the rabbit, was quickly drawing near her too!

The rabbit ran into the brush behind Gu Youyou, burrowed with a dive, and was gone; in the brush, there seemed to be a rabbit hole!

Gu Youyou: "..."

The wild man had already seen Gu Youyou behind the tree, and she couldn’t help but give a bitter smile, saying with a wide grin, "Hey! Long time no see! The rabbit you were chasing has gone into its burrow!"

The wild man paused, then stared at Gu Youyou, his mouth curving into a bloodthirsty smile.

Gu Youyou tightly clutched the object in her hand, her back to him, but her hand was trembling slightly!

It was her first time doing something like this, and she hadn’t expected to be so nervous!

The wild man slowly approached Gu Youyou, his gaze as that of a bloodthirsty predator!

Gu Youyou appeared calm on the surface, her lips curling into a slow smile.

Her pounding heart reminded her just how nervous and scared she really was!

He was close now, three steps, two steps. The wild man kept his focus on her, as if she were a helpless rabbit!

Oh no, not a rabbit, rabbits at least could run on their four legs, but she couldn't flee; she was like meat on the chopping block, ready to be butchered!

One step...

The wild man made his move towards Gu Youyou, his hand reaching out to grab her throat directly!

Chapter 107 I Caught Him

He probably felt that Gu Youyou no longer had the strength to resist, the smile at the corner of his mouth deepening, a depth that was terrifying.

But Gu Youyou was also smiling, the curve of her lips turning into an ever-deeper smirk!

The savage showed a slight expression of surprise.

At that moment, Gu Youyou's hand hidden behind her back stretched out, clutching a fist that smashed toward the savage!

Within that fist, a thin needle was unexpectedly clutched.

Soundlessly, the fine needle easily pierced into the savage's waist!

The smile on the savage's face froze, then instantly became rigid!

His grip loosened, unable to exert any force, and the hand that had been on Gu Youyou's neck also went limp. Bending his head down, he looked at his waist in shock! Then, he fell straight to the ground!

It turned out he had met his match, luckily she was well-prepared. Gu Youyou broke into a cold sweat, and slumped to the ground!

This was the only life-saving measure she could think of at the moment, the first use of it turning out to be even more nerve-wracking than she had imagined.

She comforted herself, "The first time is always tough, the second will be easier. Next time, I must act more naturally."

Once her nerves had settled, Gu Youyou scrutinized the savage more closely!

Though his clothes were dirty and tattered, they were not the coarse cloth commonly worn by peasants but rather consisted of seldom-seen fine silks and satins, upon closer inspection, even embroidered with patterns.

Only the rich or noble could afford such garments; this man's identity was no simple matter, and if Jin Zijin was seeking him out, Jin Zijin's identity couldn't be simple either!

The more complicated it became, the more Gu Youyou learned about him, the more uneasy she felt in her heart!

Gu Youyou tied the unconscious savage to a tree behind her, noticing it was getting late, she took her basket and went down the mountain to find Jin Zijin!

No matter what Jin Zijin's secret was, since he helped her out of the little black room and brought her back to life, she should also help him finish the business in Lotus Village, right?

Jin Zijin had already returned and was cooking!

He seemed to be a genuinely good man! Especially in this male-dominated ancient society!

Seeing Gu Youyou return, he finally looked up.

"Did you go up the mountain today?"

Gu Youyou set down the basket and said urgently, "I've caught the man you were chasing that day; I've tied him up on a tree on the mountain!"

Upon hearing this, Jin Zijin immediately stood up, looking at her incredulously, and asked, "Really?"

"Would I lie to you? Of course it's true, he's near the cave we used to live in!"

Jin Zijin looked at Gu Youyou with a cold expression, which again made her puzzled!

Having caught the man you've been looking for years, shouldn't you be rushing to the mountain? Why are you glaring at me?

Moments later, Jin Zijin grabbed the half bucket of water and poured it directly into the burning stove, extinguishing the fire instantly, with a hissing sound!

Then, he grabbed Gu Youyou and ran toward the mountain!

Gu Youyou was slow to react; once they were out of the village, he tucked her under his arm like a briefcase, sprinting through the mountains with unbelievable speed!

Gu Youyou had never experienced anything like this; terrified, she clung tightly to his clothes, afraid to let go.

The speed was too fast, more thrilling than a roller coaster ride, making her feel as if her stomach was churning.

Aside from the sound of the wind, Jin Zijin’s pleased laughter reached her ears: "Don’t be so nervous, you need to get used to it!"

Gu Youyou felt like crying without tears; she realized there were indeed many things she still had to get used to!

They quickly reached the spot, but upon seeing the severed ropes, Gu Youyou felt even more like crying without tears!

Picking up the broken rope, Gu Youyou frowned and said, "He was drugged with an anesthetic, I didn’t expect him to wake up so soon. If I had known, I would’ve tied several more knots. Zijin?"

Chapter 108 I Have No Time Left

Gu Youyou turned around and saw Jin Zijin completely stunned, with an expression of despair which she had never encountered before!

She sighed, figuring that the person must be really important to him!

Not knowing how to comfort him, she whispered, "Anyway, he’s still in this mountain. We let him escape this time, but there’ll be a next time. Don’t worry, we’ll catch him sooner or later..."

"No..." Jin Zijin suddenly growled angrily: "Six years, I’ve been searching here for six years. The mountain is so vast, and he’s so good at hiding..."

Gu Youyou stood frozen in shock, staring blankly at the ferocity in Jin Zijin’s eyes.

His hands gripped her shoulders like iron bands as he growled lowly, "You don’t understand because I don’t know how much time I have left!"

Gu Youyou looked at him in shock, feeling that such a beast-like expression did not belong on his face—he was always so calm, and such a disposition couldn't be cultivated overnight.

She asked softly, "What do you mean you don't have much time? If we can't find him in a day, we'll search for a year, and if not in a year... If this really matters to you, then we'll search for ten years, and keep searching! No matter how long it takes, I'll search with you... Isn't that alright?"

Gu Youyou suddenly felt that if finding that person was their endpoint, she'd rather they never find him!

That would be good, she had recovered from her illness, she could earn money, and she could make them rich! He could spend more time on that important thing.

She suddenly felt that this was quite nice!

But Jin Zijin didn't think so.

He stared blankly at Gu Youyou, suddenly feeling a fire burning in his chest, his gaze heating up as he looked at her!

Indeed, with her presence, as long as she was there, he would still have some time.

But those searching for her were closing in!

Furthermore, his life wasn't meant to be wasted in this small mountain village; he had many things to do, and six wasted years had almost reached his limit, so his temper had become increasingly difficult to suppress!

Jin Zijin's intense gaze scared Gu Youyou, making her heart thump wildly!

As her heart nearly leapt into her throat, he suddenly cradled the back of her head, his calloused, large palm rubbing against her neck, making her tense and flustered!

Then, he lowered his head, his breath growing closer to her, and he leaned down to kiss her.

The unique warm breath of a man neared her, his hot lips pressing down, and Gu Youyou felt her heart was about to burst out!

Having lived twice, this was her first kiss...

Her mind went blank, with no time to ponder why Jin Zijin would treat her this way!

"Mmm..."

Just as Gu Youyou's brain shut down, Jin Zijin suddenly pushed her away, looking at her in shock, his face filled with horror.

"I..." He opened his mouth, trying to explain something, but after uttering a single word, he swallowed back the rest of his words.

Jin Zijin took a few deep breaths, the unnatural flush on his face slowly subsiding as he said, "Since he's escaped, let's go back."

Gu Youyou came to her senses from her daze, just about to say something, when he swiftly scooped her up and dashed down the mountain!

It was indeed more thrilling than a roller coaster ride! Adjusting to it seemed quite difficult, and she felt like vomiting!

Gu Youyou endured the discomfort, cursing non-stop internally!

Thinking: You've already kissed, so why act like nothing happened?

Chapter 109 The Best Relatives Come Knocking

Jin Zijin was such a killjoy, sleeping with her as if nothing had happened; after all, it had occurred both times without her knowledge.

But this kiss—she was entirely lucid for it! Are you trying to deceive me, or yourself?

If it was about pretending, nobody could probably beat Jin Zijin!

After he returned, he really didn't say anything and just honestly went to cook!

The entire evening passed without a word between them, and even when it came to sleep at night, they turned in opposite directions!

...

Gu Youyou sorted the herbs that could survive planting, with the majority being Atractylodes and Rehmannia; both of these herbs bloomed with small purple flowers, which would look very pretty!

Fearing their medicinal properties might conflict, Gu Youyou allocated two separate plots to plant them!

She had fewer of the other herbs and was too lazy to plant them, so she processed them all, waiting to sell them in the market.

When Jin Zijin came back in the evening, Gu Youyou discussed with him whether they should make a few bamboo winnowing baskets, which could be useful for drying mushrooms, herbs, and making pickled vegetables!

Jin Zijin agreed readily, and the next day, he didn't go into the mountains but fetched Shunzi instead; the two went to cut some bamboo and also a tree.

Jin Zijin left the task of making winnowing baskets to Shunzi, while he himself crafted a drying rack out of wood.

Gu Youyou watched in amazement—could it be that he was also skilled in carpentry?

How could there be such a man in the world, with all life skills leveled up?

She just didn’t know whether he could embroider!

As evening approached, the sound of footsteps and hushed voices traveled up from the foot of the mountain, and Gu Youyou’s cheerful mood from the day instantly soured.

It was Grandma Huangshi leading her Huang Family’s second aunt here!

These two unbearable relatives hadn’t bothered her in quite a while, and she wondered why they were here again.

Whenever they came, it was never with good intentions.

Wang Shun was weaving the fourth winnowing basket when he saw the Huang women arriving—one old and one young—busily he smiled and greeted them, "Gu Family’s Grandma, Gu’s second aunt! Have you come to visit Brother Jin’s home?"

Wang Shun was rather naive, always greeting everyone with a smile.

Unfortunately, his warm greeting met with a cold response!

Grandma Huangshi glanced at him coldly and then huffed at Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin, "Even an outsider knows how to greet people, yet you two say nothing. Gu Youyou, with your mother dying early and no one teaching you, is it that you’re waiting for this old lady to teach you?"

Gu Youyou, who had been collecting the dried mushrooms, heard Grandma Huangshi scold her for having no manners, and her face fell instantly as she retorted with a sneer, "Right, everyone in the village knows my mother died early, so I can only learn from Grandma here! What do you think of how I’m doing?"

Well, you've come spouting sarcasm and insults, so I might as well learn right now!

Grandma Huangshi's face fell in shock, and behind her, Huang Xiangwen, eager to show off, scolded Gu Youyou, "Youyou, how can you speak to your grandma like that? Is this how you talk? So disrespectful. Your grandma is teaching you, you must greet people when you see them!"

Gu Youyou responded with a faint smile, "Alright then, Huang Xiangwen, what brings you here?"

"You... how can you call me by my name?"

Huang Xiangwen was so agitated that she stamped her foot; she had never expected Gu Youyou to address her by her full name directly, and she looked at her in surprise and anger!

The others hadn't anticipated Gu Youyou addressing Huang Xiangwen by her name either and were equally taken aback for a moment.

Jin Zijin merely glanced at Gu Youyou indifferently before lowering his head once more, continuing to thump away at the wood.

Wang Shun put down his work, hesitating to speak.

But upon receiving a meaningful look from Jin Zijin, he bowed his head in complexity and continued weaving the winnowing basket!

Chapter 110: Conscience?

Other families' matters, especially with Old Madam Gu present here, everyone knows she's not easy to speak with, and they dare not say too much.

Old Madam Huang was infuriated beyond words, she hadn't even spoken yet when Gu Youyou made her so angry she couldn't even get the words out.

With Gu Youyou's mannerisms, they would be lucky to get even a winnowing basket from her!

In the afternoon, when she heard from the neighbors that Gu Youyou's family was making winnowing baskets today, quite a few of them at that, she thought her own family was in need of winnowing baskets, so she took the opportunity to come and ask in the evening. But just as she arrived, before she even said anything, she could feel Gu Youyou was not easy to talk to; what was she to do?

Huang Xiangwen, both ashamed and enraged, her neck reddening, shouted, "You little wretched girl, have your wings grown strong? Daring to call me by my name, I am your Second Aunt!"

"Oh, so you know you're the Second Aunt?" Gu Youyou mocked as she looked at her.

Huang Xiangwen was taken aback, and then wailed, her voice filled with sobbing accusations, "You ungrateful little wretch, you were sick for ten years, and all this decade, I took care of you, pouring my heart and soul into it. Ah, now you're married and cured, I didn't ask for anything from you. But look at you, as soon as you turn your back, your conscience got eaten by a dog, not even calling me Second Aunt anymore, but directly calling me Huang Xiangwen!

Are you even entitled to address me by those three words, Huang Xiangwen? Mother, look at this, the eldest granddaughter of the Gu Family, cherished and doted on by our father, does she have any respect for us elders? It's more like our family raised an ungrateful mutt!"

Old Madam Huang felt Huang Xiangwen's words made sense, and thinking of the many years she spent taking care of the sickly girl, only for her to act this way once she was better, was trembling with fury.

She patted Huang Xiangwen's hand, comforted her in a low voice, then turned to roar at Gu Youyou, "Gu Youyou, are you revolting? Apologize to your Second Aunt at once."

The roar of Old Madam Huang was like that of a lion, incredibly loud, startling Shunzi so much that the green bamboo strips he was holding fell to the ground.

Gu Youyou looked indifferently at the two women opposite her, with an unexpectedly calm voice, she said, "My uncle provided the silver, you looked after me, it was a deal agreed upon by us both, nobody forced anybody. Huang Xiangwen, if you were unwilling, you could have said so earlier. As long as there is silver, plenty of people would be willing to do it, so don't feel like I owe you anything.

It’s rather you, taking the silver yet secretly betraying me, do I need to air all the things you did to me over those years? And that medicine on the morning of my wedding day... how did it taste, I wonder?"

What concern did she have to be polite to an aunt who had once harbored murderous intent toward her, who displayed not a scrap of familial affection?

Gu Youyou struck right at where Huang Xiangwen felt guilty, causing her to halt her wails and stare blankly at Gu Youyou!

The matter of mixing in Rat Poison was only known to her and Gu’s Second Uncle, and he would never speak of it, so how could Gu Youyou have known about the Rat Poison in that medicine?

Recalling the day Gu Youyou got married, it all seemed so strange to her. She dared to spill the medicine on herself, saying such bizarre things... Did she know?

At that thought, Huang Xiangwen felt overwhelmingly guilty and hid behind Old Madam Huang, stammering, "That bit of silver was taken by father and mother, I didn’t get anything! It might even have gone into your dowry! Regardless, I took care of you for over a decade, that’s the truth. Even if you’re unsatisfied with how I looked after you, you can’t treat me like this!"

She saw Gu Youyou, looking clean and fair, dressed in neat, pretty clothes, and her stomach filled with fire again.