Farmhouse 1141

Chapter 1141: Delivering a Baby

Yue Rujing’s expression stiffened as she said, "Why don’t you hurry up and give birth to one for them to hold?"

"I..." Yue Ruxue’s face instantly turned red from his teasing. How could her older brother joke with her like that?

"How could the one I give birth to be the same? It would have the surname Yi, not related to the Yue family."

After speaking, she huffed onto her horse, which actually eased the tension.

A smile appeared on Yi Qiuping’s face when she mentioned that the baby would have the surname Yi.

Perhaps it was time for them to settle down and have a child.

"Axue is becoming more and more thoughtless, being so outgoing," Yue Rujing chuckled and shook her head.

Though she said this, her heart felt a lot more relieved.

She was just afraid that Yue Ruxue’s affections were still with her senior brother, but it seemed she had moved on.

Watching two horses, one black and one white, travel further and further away until they were out of sight, Yue Rujing finally withdrew his gaze and looked at Jin Zijin with burning curiosity and boldly asked, "Who exactly is the pregnant woman Axue mentioned seeing? You two..."

He refused to believe there were issues in the relationship between Jin Zijin and Gu Youyou.

Jin Zijin turned to look at him, and said indifferently, "That's Miss Du. The child is Jie Zhonglin's. Don't tell anyone."

Having said that, he mounted his horse and hurried back to the city.

Yue Rujing was left standing there, stunned.

"It's all such a mess," he said.

He had heard about Miss Du's situation; that sensational case where she was the first in Beijing to divorce her husband.

Weren't they both divorced? How did she end up pregnant again?

It's one thing for her to be pregnant, but to hide in his senior brother's house, causing such misunderstandings.

Ah, wait, wasn't Jie Zhonglin killed by a chaotic blade?

Ah, yet another pitiful woman.

...

Miss Du was about to give birth.

Gu Youyou, with her big belly, was instructing Xiang Chun and Cuiya to help out.

In the Crown Prince Residence, not many knew about Miss Du, and the only ones who could be used were the few of them.

Gu Youyou was in no condition to help Miss Du give birth, and since the situation didn’t allow for a midwife, it had to be Searcy assisting with the delivery.

As soon as Searcy heard about it, she brought surgical tools and clenched the scalpel tightly, looking utterly confident.

"Miss Du is screaming so fiercely, she definitely won’t cooperate. I should give her an anesthetic injection first."

Gu Youyou rolled her eyes and said, "Who told you to take a scalpel? It’s not needed."

"Didn’t you do the same for Prince Qin’s Consort last time?"

"That was a special case; she was drugged and couldn’t deliver on her own."

Searcy had never helped deliver a baby before; Gu Youyou had told her to learn properly last time, thinking with her smart mind she’d get it after watching once, but now Gu Youyou said there was no need for a scalpel, which meant she was lost.

"Then what should we do?"

Gu Youyou was speechless, standing by the bed with her big belly, she told Searcy, "Miss Du’s baby is in the correct position, and her physical condition is also very good; she can completely have a natural birth."

Gu Youyou felt that merely talking it through was not clear enough, so she said, "Forget it, just watch for now. Let her give birth on her own. If she can’t do it herself, then you help."

Miss Du’s belly hurt in waves; Gu Youyou bent down with difficulty, put on the sterilized gloves, and checked if it was time for her to push.

The cervix was not dilated enough; Gu Youyou shook her head and said, "Hang in there. You can’t push now; save your strength for when it’s time to use it."

Chapter 1142: Having a Child is So Tiring

Cuiya was almost in tears from frustration and said, "Who says you shouldn’t push during childbirth? Doctor Gu, I really trust your medical skills, but... but I’ve never seen anything like this. Isn’t childbirth about continually pushing? That’s what all the midwives say."

Gu Youyou had no choice but to educate Cuiya, "Their method is incorrect, it’s pointless to exert force before the right time. If the birth is fast, then it does not matter. But if it’s slow, and you use up all your strength too early, you will have none left when you truly need it, and then both the mother and the baby will be at risk."

Cuiya seemed to half understand, and now with no midwives around, she could only listen to Gu Youyou.

"Hey, Xiang Chun, quickly give Miss Du her ginseng soup."

"Alright, coming right up."

Xiang Chun hurriedly brought the perfectly warmed ginseng soup to Miss Du.

Miss Du, drenched in sweat, took advantage of a momentary lapse in her pain to drink the soup, and then asked, "How much longer will I need to give birth?"

Gu Youyou replied, "It’s hard to say, you should be mentally prepared. It could be very quick, or it could last three days and three nights. Judging by your situation, it doesn’t look like it will be quick, so don’t be anxious. Childbirth can’t be hurried!"

Miss Du felt a chill of fear.

Searcy, rarely outspoken, complained, "Are you really meant to scare a pregnant woman like this? Look how you’ve made Miss Du sweat all over."

Gu Youyou sighed, stepped aside, and said to Searcy, "You put on gloves too, and try to feel the size. I'm telling you, her cervix has been dilating for two or three hours and it's still less than three fingers wide. She really is having a slow labor."

Searcy was skeptical but tried it like Gu Youyou.

She asked, "How wide does it need to be before birth can happen?"

Gu Youyou, glancing at the near-fainted Miss Du, said, "I'll tell you in a bit, you need to feel it yourself."

Hearing Searcy say that, she was actually afraid of scaring Miss Du.

"Xiang Chun, have the kitchen prepare another ginseng soup."

If it takes a long time, one bowl of ginseng soup might not be enough.

Gu Youyou sighed, she had now become an obstetrician.

Miss Du's face turned pale, enduring waves of contractions, even Searcy felt exhausted watching.

She said, "It's really troublesome, she suffers so much, it would be better to just make an incision on her stomach and take the baby out. Even childbearing for Prince Qin's Consort wasn't this difficult."

Gu Youyou said helplessly, "That may be true, but you can't say that. It was a dire situation for Xie Qinyun, but if Miss Du can give birth naturally, then let her do so."

Gu Youyou felt she had done her ethical duty towards Searcy, teaching her everything she knew when the time was right.

Mainly because Searcy was fast to learn; she understood everything after being taught just once.

But that wasn’t necessarily a good thing. Seeing Gu Youyou conduct a surgical delivery on Xie Qinyun last time, she got too eager to try it herself.

Cuiya was trembling with fear as she listened, positioning herself in front of Miss Du, "I won’t allow you to perform surgery on my young lady."

Gu Youyou reassured, "Don’t worry, as long as your young lady gives birth quickly, there won’t be any need for surgery."

Cuiya cried out, "Miss, please give birth quickly. Searcy is ruthlessly eager; anyone opened up by surgery will lose a layer of skin if they don’t die."

Miss Du tearfully said, "I really want to give birth, but the baby won’t come out..."

Gu Youyou said, "Just wait a little longer, conserve your energy..."

Searcy, hand on her forehead, muttered, "Why is giving birth so exhausting?"

Chapter 1143: Help You Go Back and Give Birth

Gui Yunxi said a few days ago that she was considering having a baby? Seeing how distressed Miss Du looked, she decided not to go through with it. If he dares to bring up the topic of children with her again, she’ll castrate him.

It has been a whole night without giving birth; if it weren’t for Gu Youyou’s professional midwifery skills, she probably would have collapsed by now.

By morning, everyone had kept vigil with Miss Du all night long, and finally, they heard Gu Youyou say that it was time for the baby to be born.

Searcy hurriedly put on gloves to feel the size; it would be good for her to be prepared the next time she assisted in a delivery.

"Push hard, keep it up miss."

Cuiya’s face turned red, looking like she was exerting more effort than Miss Du.

"Just push like you’re constipated!"

Cuiya successfully disgusted everyone.

But what she said made sense; that’s indeed how babies are born.

An hour later, the baby’s head finally emerged.

Searcy gently cradled the baby’s head, encouraging her to keep pushing, and Cuiya, overjoyed, asked, "Is it a boy or a girl?"

Searcy replied irritably, "Can’t you see only the head has come out? How would I know the gender?"

Cuiya said, "How can you not tell? Can you not tell if my head is male or female?"

"Get out, can a child be compared to an adult?"

Perhaps due to having been up all night, Gu Youyou felt extremely exhausted.

She said, "Stop arguing, do you want her to give birth or not?"

The baby was finally born; it took nearly ten hours, not quite a full day and night.

Miss Du was so overwhelmed after giving birth that she didn’t have the strength to even ask if it was a boy or a girl.

Cuiya took the baby, looked at its little legs and almost jumped for joy, exclaiming, "Miss, it’s a son, a baby boy! Ah, the Lord can rest in peace now, the Du Family has a successor."

In her eyes, since the Miss had already divorced Master Jie, naturally, the child would carry the Du surname.

"Congratulations to Miss Du, on the joy of having a precious son."

Xiang Chun said with a smile, "After all that trouble overnight, this little master surely resembles his father..."

Everyone looked at her, and Xiang Chun, realizing she misspoke, immediately shut her mouth.

But such a big joy wouldn’t be overshadowed by Xiang Chun’s slip of the tongue; everyone quickly forgot her senseless remark and continued to dote on the newborn baby.

"Let me... let me see!" said Miss Du weakly.

Cuiya hurriedly brought the baby over, but Miss Du only managed to glance before her eyes closed from exhaustion.

Gu Youyou instructed, "Let her have a good rest. Even a strong person can’t handle such turmoil, let alone her after giving birth for a day and a night. Miss Du, your child will always be by your side. You sleep first, and you can take your time looking at him when you wake up."

Miss Du faintly nodded her head.

The baby’s cries were too loud; Gu Youyou frowned and said, "Close the windows tightly, don’t let outsiders hear."

Gu Youyou herself had been in that especially sharp state of hearing, and she had forgotten what normal people's hearing was like; she didn't know if ordinary people could hear the baby's cries.

But just then, she felt a chill in her lower body as a large amount of amniotic fluid flowed out.

She thought to herself, this is bad, she was also about to give birth.

"Ah, Xiang Chun, I'm about to give birth too."

As soon as Gu Youyou finished speaking, the crowd, which had just relaxed, tensed up again.

Searcy looked at the only large bed occupied by Miss Du and said to Gu Youyou, "I'll help you back to your room to give birth."

Chapter 1144: Why is She Here?

Gu Youyou sensed something was wrong—her water broke first, unlike Miss Du's case.

She said urgently, "No, I'm one of those who has a fast labor; there's no time, help me to the couch quickly."

At this moment, how could Miss Du, tired as she might be, manage to sleep? She busily struggled to sit up in bed to watch Gu Youyou.

The contractions started quickly, the pain coming at a very fast frequency. She hadn't guessed wrong; she was indeed the type to give birth quickly.

Cuiya, holding the baby, at a loss whether to turn left or right, said, "What do we do now? Should I help?"

Miss Du said, "Put the baby on the bed, and hurry to boil some hot water."

No outsiders were allowed in this yard; they had to deal with it by themselves.

Xiang Chun urgently said, "I... I'm going to notify the Eldest Prince."

Gu Youyou stopped him, saying, "There's no time, bring me the ginseng soup."

Besides, Miss Du was still here. How could they let him in?

Although, Gu Youyou actually really hoped he would be by her side, holding his hand as she gave birth.

Because Miss Du was giving birth, everything had been well prepared, so there was no need to panic like at the beginning.

The ginseng soup had been stewed and kept warm on the small stove.

Gu Youyou drank a bowl and began to give birth with all her effort.

Soon, the baby's cries could be heard, loud and clear, which made Cuiya feel envious.

Why was Gu Youyou able to give birth so quickly, seemingly effortlessly, whereas her own mistress had been in labor for a whole day and night, nearly dying from the pain?

Even the crying was louder than that of her mistress's young master.

"Is it a boy or a girl?" Xiang Chun hurried to take a look.

Searcy, with a smile on her face, stepped aside to block Xiang Chun and brought the baby to Gu Youyou, saying, "What are you, a maid, peeking at? Let Youyou see first."

She asked, "Would you be disappointed if it's a daughter?"

With minimal strength, Gu Youyou replied, "Stop blabbering, just let me see."

"You haven’t answered my question yet?" Searcy insisted.

Gu Youyou rolled her eyes and said, "To me, it’s all the same, I don’t favor sons over daughters."

Xiang Chun, getting increasingly anxious, said, "You may not favor sons, but others do. Hurry and tell us, it has to be a little Prince."

If one were to be hopeful, indeed having a son would be more beneficial for them—not to mention making the Empress spit blood with rage would be worth it. However, since it was her own child, when Searcy asked if she would regret having a daughter, her natural answer was no.

"How boring!" Searcy lifted the baby to show Gu Youyou the gender, saying, "Here, having a son just to infuriate Jin Zijin’s stepmother."

Gu Youyou took the baby and said, "It’s silly; whether I have a son or daughter, I can infuriate her. After all, King Jin can’t have children himself, haha..."

Gu Youyou teased malevolently, indeed it turned out to be a son!

Xiang Chun was finally assured and ran out excitedly to announce the good news.

But she had only just stepped outside when she returned, her face as pale as death and panic-stricken.

Searcy had just finished wrapping the baby and was putting it beside Gu Youyou when she turned and saw Xiang Chun’s expression, asking anxiously, "What’s wrong? I sent you to inform the Eldest Prince. Why do you look as if you’ve seen a ghost?"

Immediately after, an imperious female voice sounded at the door.

"How dare you lowly slave not kneel upon seeing this Palace?"

Gu Youyou, startled, quickly propped herself up to look towards the outer chamber.

The Empress, in her gold and red phoenix robe, had already approached the entrance, her eyes angrily glaring at Gu Youyou.

Chapter 1145: Surrogacy?

Gu Youyou subconsciously withdrew her hand, tightly embracing the baby in the swaddle.

The Miss Du across the bed was so frightened that her face lost all color, clutching the bedding tightly.

Her body was already worn out, in desperate need of rest.

But one thing after another kept her propped up, not daring to sleep.

Xiang Chun knelt under the Empress's authority, paying her respects.

Searcy glanced at Gu Youyou, bit her lip, and also had to kneel down.

The Empress snorted coldly, lifting her steps haughtily as she walked past them without bidding them to rise.

She entered the inner room, glanced at Gu Youyou on the soft couch, then turned her gaze to Miss Du lying in the middle of the room, on the large bed.

Cuiya, trembling with fear, resolutely decided to stand in front of Miss Du, like a hen protecting her chick. Although she appeared fragile and delicate, she was obstinately shielding her, not letting anyone get close.

The Empress signaled a palace maiden with her eyes. Two palace maidens immediately stepped forward and pulled Cuiya away.

Cuiya was exhausted from the entire night and was extremely weary. But thinking of her young mistress and the newborn behind her, she refused to yield no matter what, exerting all her strength to resist. However, what she got in return was a slap from the Empress's attendant, Mama Li.

That slap from Mama Li was heavy, and following it, Cuiya's face swelled, blood trickling from the corner of her mouth.

"You disrespectful wretch, step aside immediately," Mama Li said as she raised her hand again.

Miss Du couldn't bear to see this and hurriedly said, "Cuiya, step aside."

With a face full of grievance, Cuiya covered her cheek without uttering a sound.

Gu Youyou signaled Searcy with her eyes, hoping she could find a chance to run out.

Jin Zijin was nowhere to be seen, but since the Empress had come in, he must not be in the residence.

Gu Youyou had told him that she was close to giving birth. If it weren't for an emergency, he wouldn't have left the residence.

It was just that she didn't know what kind of emergency it was that made him leave without telling her.

Fortunately, she and Miss Du had already given birth to their children, otherwise, if they were both in labor at the same time, and Jin Zijin wasn't home without anyone in charge, then the Empress would certainly take control of the entire residence – that would truly be a hopeless situation where neither heaven nor earth would respond.

One should know that it is quite common for something to go wrong during childbirth in this era.

"Who are you?" The Empress approached Miss Du, looking at her kindly.

The last time Mama Li went to the Crown Prince Residence, she returned saying there was something fishy about the residence. The Empress took great pains to discover what was peculiar in this courtyard.

Yue Ruxue and Yi Qiuping left the Crown Prince Residence seemingly without reason, how could there be no reason? At that time, she suspected it may be related to the oddity in the Crown Prince Residence.

Gu Youyou was too guarded against her, and she couldn’t find out what the oddity in the residence was, so she started with Yue Ruxue and finally, her efforts revealed the secret.

In the main courtyard of the Crown Prince Residence, there lived a pregnant woman.

The Empress always knew Gu Youyou was ill, almost dying from sickness; she didn’t believe she could bear children, so she speculated that Gu Youyou somehow mesmerized Jin Zijin, letting him agree to play a play together.

A play about surrogacy.

Early on, keeping a pregnant woman in the house, hoping to use her womb to bear a child.

"I..." Miss Du was both weak and panicked, and this anxiety made her even weaker.

Chapter 1146: Gave Birth to Twins?

She looked at Gu Youyou, unsure of what to do.

Her identity could not be revealed, yet now...

Gu Youyou hurriedly said to the Empress, "Mother Empress, this is a friend of your son. I wonder why Mother Empress is interested in my friend?" She gently patted the little one beside her, saying, "This is your grandson, Xiang Chun. Come, let’s bring him to Mother Empress to see."

Xiang Chun was so anxious he was on the verge of tears, thinking to himself: Aren't you being too loyal? To save Miss Du, do you dare to put the newly born little prince into the hands of that venomous Empress?

The Empress glanced at the child beside Gu Youyou and then at the child beside Miss Du on the bed.

This made her puzzled. If it is a surrogate birth, why is there one child on each side?

"It might be twins!" Wet Nurse Li whispered in the Empress's ear.

With a raised eyebrow, the Empress nodded slightly.

That could be possible. Didn't the consort of Prince Qin just have twins last year?

"You are indeed blessed," the Empress said to Miss Du with a warm smile.

Miss Du nodded slightly in response, saying, "Thank you, Empress, for your concern."

A palace maiden brought a stool over for the Empress, who sat down beside the bed, took Miss Du's hand, and whispered words of comfort, "Don't be afraid, this palace will make a stand for you. What is yours will remain yours, and no one else can even think of taking it away. We, Zhuzhao Country, are a law-abiding and courteous nation, no one should think to step beyond bounds."

This left Miss Du somewhat dumbfounded. Not just Miss Du, but everyone in the room was dumbfounded, except perhaps Wet Nurse Li who was always in tune with the Empress.

Could it be the Empress has taken the wrong medicine? What is she trying to do?

Gu Youyou hugged the child tighter, feeling alarmed.

Normal people aren't to be feared, it's the abnormal madmen that are.

"Empress, I do not quite understand your meaning," said the girl timidly.

The Empress smiled and said, "You will understand soon enough, don't be afraid. Come, let me see your child."

Miss Du was terrified and clutched her child tightly.

But what strength did she have? The Empress effortlessly snatched the child away.

The Empress held Miss Du's child and upon noticing that the child did not resemble the men of the Jin Family, lacking their deep-set eyes and eyebrows, she felt reassured.

She had guessed correctly, it indeed was not the seed of the Jin Family. Gu Youyou wanted to use a surrogate to deceive the Emperor.

King Jin cannot have children, and she would not allow Gu Youyou to have any.

Just as well, since she dared to undertake this surrogate scheme, she couldn't blame the Empress for being impolite.

After putting down Miss Du's child, she turned her head, her piercing gaze fixating on Gu Youyou, her eyes lighting up with even more excitement when she looked at the child beside Gu Youyou.

"Wet Nurse Li, bring that child over as well."

Given her experience, couples living together day and night could conceive within a couple of months at most, but it took Gu Youyou several months to get pregnant, and it was she who brought up the possibility that King Jin could not father children, leading the Empress to suspect Gu Youyou's pregnancy might be fake.

Now, the woman who just gave birth lay weakly here, providing conclusive evidence. Let’s see how Gu Youyou would argue her case.

The room was filled with the Empress’s people - palace maidens, wet nurses, eunuchs, about a dozen, with no sign of any disturbance outside. It seems the people in this mansion had already been subdued by the Empress.

Gu Youyou had no choice but to give the child to the Empress.

She smiled and said, "Be good baby, your royal grandmother wants to have a look at you."

But the smile did not reach her eyes, which betrayed a glint of murderous intent.

Chapter 1147: Searcy Ran Away

Just like a fierce beast that had just given birth, that look in her eyes made Madam Li tremble visibly.

Gu Youyou, with a smile that wasn’t quite a smile, handed the child to Madam Li, yet she was resolute in her decision.

If they dared to harm her child, she would risk her life to perish together with them.

The room, seemingly cozy with its scenes, was pervaded by an intense smell of gunpowder.

The Empress took the child and furrowed her brows.

The other child had clear features and one could discern its appearance, but why was this one all wrinkled? Why were its eyes tightly shut?

Comparing the two children side by side, they didn’t look like twins at all.

This made her somewhat anxious. Could it really be that Gu Youyou gave birth to this child?

But how could it be such a coincidence? Two people giving birth at the same time.

Moreover, before coming in, her informers had already told her that yesterday Gu Youyou had hurried into this courtyard with Xiang Chun and Searcy and hadn't come out since.

Although they couldn't enter this courtyard, they could hear sporadic screams of a woman from inside, sounding like childbirth.

And the lights in this courtyard hadn't been turned off all night.

The Empress had someone call in a maid of Gu Youyou and asked, "Was the noise you heard last night from the Crown Prince's wife?"

That maid glanced at Gu Youyou, then quickly lowered her head, saying, "No... it wasn't."

Since that was the case, she felt reassured.

Perhaps it's twins where one resembles the father and the other the mother. This wrinkled one must be the younger; bullied by that fair and tender one to the extent that it couldn't even open its eyes.

Of course, indeed, some newborns do not open their eyes.

Everyone still didn't grasp what the Empress was up to.

But seeing that the Empress had no intention of harming the children, they gradually felt relieved.

Whatever you decide as an adult is fine, just don't entertain thoughts of harming the children.

Moments later, the Empress suddenly stood up and walked towards Gu Youyou, looking down at her with an intensely excited, almost terrifying expression.

Everyone’s gaze followed the Empress to Gu Youyou, and just then, Searcy suddenly burst into action, stabbing two needles into two palace maidens watching her.

Both maidens immediately collapsed to the ground.

Then she took the opportunity to run outside, not leaving the courtyard because she saw the guards stationed at the courtyard’s gate weren’t from the Crown Prince Residence.

All of this occurred in the blink of an eye, and seeing the two maidens down, the Empress was profoundly shocked, momentarily forgetting how to speak.

By the time she came to her senses, Searcy was already gone.

Searcy didn’t run through the courtyard’s gate but instead turned and ran to the back of the house, where a peach tree grew against the courtyard wall. The tree’s branches were widespread and numerous, well-spaced and at a good height, which she used to climb over the wall.

The Empress was alarmed and shouted, "Catch her!"

The guards outside rushed into the courtyard, and following the direction the Empress pointed, they quickly pursued.

The Empress’s face turned ashen, under her watchful eye the only person who could escape was Searcy.

Madam Li whispered in her ear, "That woman is the poison doctor."

The Empress’s chest heaved violently, looking at the two maidens lying on the ground, her eyes devoid of any emotion.

These maidens were her close attendants, and now their life and death were uncertain, yet she didn't care about their welfare.

Gu Youyou's heart raced, Searcy had escaped, and she wondered if she could make it out.

Chapter 1148: Lun Tong's Letter

She is far more familiar with this residence than the guards brought by the Empress; one can only hope she can make her escape.

Jin Zijin was nowhere to be found. At the times when she needed him the most, he was always absent. Once or twice might be excusable, but it's always the same story. Even if there are a thousand or ten thousand reasons, they can't prevent the resentments growing in her heart.

The Empress came with bad intentions, and Searcy had already fled, angering her. Gu Youyou felt there was no need to keep up the pretense any longer.

She had given birth quickly and recovered swiftly; having just consumed a ginseng soup, she still felt somewhat spirited.

Gu Youyou sat up, legs crossed, and addressed the Empress, "What is your purpose in coming today? Just speak plainly."

The Empress was momentarily stunned before bursting into laughter, saying, "What's this? No more acting?"

Gu Youyou snorted coldly, "If you're not pretending anymore, why should I, right? If nobody wants to save face, then so be it. I am but a village girl with neither father nor mother, and have no breeding to speak of. I fear even so, I'm better than the high and noble Empress."

"Humph!" The Empress looked at Gu Youyou coldly. "It seems you won't cry until you see your coffin. I'll make you cry, but you'll have no tears left."

She took a seat on a chair brought over by a maid, exuding the imposing demeanor of a queen, and commanded, "Summon the Emperor to come here."

Summon the Emperor?

Gu Youyou was confused.

She didn’t know what the Empress was up to.

But summoning the Emperor was fine with her; she wasn’t afraid of open confrontation, only of covert schemes.

Since the Emperor was coming, there was nothing for her to fear.

With that in mind, she might as well save her energy, especially having just given birth.

Gu Youyou fortunately lay back down, pulling the blanket over herself, and whispered lowly, "Empress, I am quite exhausted from childbirth and will not serve you for now. I’ll take a nap, and you can call me when the Emperor arrives."

The Empress was so angry she gnashed her teeth, saying, "It seems you indeed won’t give up until you’re at death’s door."

...

At this moment, Jin Zijin was at the Sanqing Temple; he had just left when the Empress arrived with her entourage.

"Where’s Lun Yu?" Jin Zijin asked, pulling a young novice aside.

Lun Yu left the last time after receiving news from his junior sister Yi Yan about the possible whereabouts of his mother, Lun Tong. Thus, he hurriedly left the Crown Prince Residence, leaving only a letter behind.

Lun Tong had not surfaced for over ten years, and with her skillful art of disguise, finding her was no easy task.

"Hey, I'm here!" Lun Yu heard Jin Zijin's voice and hurried out from inside the house.

Accompanying him was Yi Yan.

Jin Zijin asked anxiously, "Did you find your mother?"

Lun Yu replied, "Before asking about my mother, let's talk about your master first. It's said there's news of your master in Rucheng, and Yue Rujing has already rushed there. We were here waiting for you. Quickly, let's head to Rucheng. I'll explain everything on the way."

The three mounted their horses and hurried towards Rucheng.

As they traveled, Lun Yu said, "Ah Yan said my mother has returned. I hurried over to meet up with her, but we didn't find her. However, in the old residence in Jinxiu City, we found a letter she left behind. From that letter, we learned news of your master, so we hurried here to inform you."

"Show me the letter," said Jin Zijin.

Lun Yu made a sound of confirmation and took out a letter from his chest.

Jin Zijin stopped his horse and opened the envelope.

Inside was Lun Tong's handwriting, mentioning that she had encountered Tian Jizi in Nanzhao Country, who said he would go to Rucheng to retrieve an important item.

Chapter 1149: Please, Your Majesty

Rucheng took something important, Jin Zijin faintly remembered that Rucheng indeed had something important.

However...

Jin Zijin was momentarily distracted, feeling that something was off.

"How could your mother suddenly leave such a letter?"

Lun Yu laughed, "Don't forget, she has a nickname called 'Busybody'. Although she has been drifting around these past years, she is very aware of what's happening here. She's cold on the outside but warm on the inside, just wanted to give us a hand. Well, whether it is true or not, let's just go to Rucheng and see?"

Jin Zijin held the letter but did not move, thoughtfully staring ahead.

Yi Yan also seemed thoughtful, looking at the letter in Jin Zijin's hand.

She asked, "Do you think this might be a trap?"

Lun Yu said amusedly, "But who would bother setting such a trap? Tricking us into running a trip to Rucheng? It would take us only a day to go and return, but setting up this plot would take more than a day. Also, my mother's handwriting is not very good, but it's not that easy to..."

Before he could say 'imitate', Lun Yu felt something was wrong.

He abruptly took the letter and looked at it, saying, "No, this isn't right. My mother always pauses slightly after finishing the final stroke, and the last stroke is always heavily inked, but this 'tong' character is drawn without any sense of lifting the brush free from the ink."

Jin Zijin suddenly thought of something, his expression darkened, he leapt onto his horse, turned the horse's head towards Beijing and rode off.

Lun Yu shouted, "Hey, hey, what's going on exactly, slow down..."

Yi Yan pushed Lun Yu and said, "Stop asking, just go and see what happened, I'll go to Rucheng and meet Yue Rujing."

...

The Emperor received news that the Empress had gone to the Crown Prince Residence, and the Crown Prince had left early in the morning, narrowly missing her by moments.

He felt something was off, and immediately ordered Wan Decheng to prepare to leave the palace.

He was all too aware of the Empress' ruthless streak from her younger years, as the women she dealt with all deserved their fates, so he had always watched from the sidelines, never interfering.

And these years, besides Sheng Qiaoyue, there were no other women around him who could threaten her, hence her claws had gradually been withdrawn.

But this time... she went to the Crown Prince Residence, was she going to make a move on Gu Youyou?

He knew too well Jin Zijin's feelings towards Gu Youyou, should something happen to Gu Youyou at the hands of the Empress now, it might stir up unknown turmoil.

And inside Gu Youyou, there was also his grandchild with Xiao Qinqin, he absolutely would not allow the Empress to wreak havoc at this time.

"Go to the Duke's mansion and call Xiao Jinyan!"

"Summon everyone from the Imperial Medical Bureau!"

"Go to Chengqian Palace, call for Sheng Noble Consort..."

A string of commands issued, Wan Decheng was considerably shocked.

For many years, he had not seen the Emperor this anxious.

At this moment, a Palace Maiden from the Empress's side also arrived.

"Greetings, Your Majesty."

Walking too hastily, the Emperor's face looked a bit flushed.

Seeing the Palace Maiden beside the Empress, his heart skipped a beat.

"Dispense with the formalities!" Suppressing the anxiety in his heart, the Emperor tried to calm himself.

"Your Majesty, the Empress is currently at the Crown Prince Residence, the Crown Prince's wife has given birth, it's a little prince. The Empress asks you to hurry over."

The Emperor paused, unsure of what trick the Empress was playing now.

He hummed softly, still, he led his people to continue leaving the palace.

He turned back and instructed, "Bringing the Imperial Physician will suffice."

"Are the Crown Prince's wife and the little prince alright now?" the Emperor asked, masking his own nervousness.

Chapter 1150: Complaining

If something happened to her and her son, Jin Zijin would want her life, and he would not stop it.

The palace maiden returned with a smile, "Mother and child are safe, all is well."

Hearing that, the Emperor was even more puzzled.

Mother and child are safe, did she rush to the Crown Prince Residence early in the morning just to see Gu Youyou giving birth?

No one would believe that.

When the Emperor arrived, the residence was very quiet.

He moved into this residence when he was fifteen and stayed until the late Emperor passed away and he ascended the throne, only then did he leave.

There are too many memories of his youth here, and in the courtyard of the backyard, it is filled with her presence.

Back when she was still alive and the Grand Master Residence had not yet fallen into decline, those two years were the happiest for her, and the happiest for him as well.

This residence was always very lively.

But ever since she left, it changed; although the number of people increased, he felt it became more desolate, as quiet as hell, which is why he never returned after becoming the Emperor.

"Why are there so few people?"

Today, he felt the mansion was somehow too desolate; aside from the gatekeepers, he saw no one.

The palace maiden beside the Empress said, "Your Majesty, they have all been locked in the back courtyard. The specific reason, Her Majesty the Empress will inform you afterward. This servant dares not speak carelessly."

Heh, surely something happened.

He wanted to see what kind of trouble Jin Yushu was stirring up this time.

The dignity of Jin Moning would not allow him to trouble a palace maiden. Since she dared not speak rashly, he didn't ask further and simply followed the palace maiden straight to a side room in the main courtyard.

Not the main room?

The room was very quiet. Through the glass windows made by Xiguang Residence, he saw the people inside.

The Empress sat at the seat of honor. Upon seeing the Emperor arrive, she quickly stood up and, along with a group of servants, performed a salute to the Emperor.

"This concubine greets Your Majesty!"

"Dispense with the formalities!"

Gu Youyou, wanting to sleep but unable to, rubbed her sleepy eyes.

With the arrival of the Emperor, they were still safe. Now she could rest easy.

However, she was curious to see what exactly the Empress intended to do.

"Is Youyou inside?" The Emperor looked towards the inner chamber's curtain.

The Empress smiled and said, "Yes, they are inside. Your Majesty, please take a seat first. This matter today is indeed infuriating, but don't be hasty, please listen slowly to what this concubine has to tell you."

Gu Youyou stood up with Xiang Chun's support and hurriedly straightened her appearance.

Hearing the Empress's words, she then sat back down on the bed.

What could it be that would anger the Emperor? Since she was not called upon, she decided not to go out yet.

Miss Du at that side had already fallen asleep. She had been tormented for a whole day and night and could no longer withstand it.

The two children were sleeping by her side, quiet and undisturbed, probably resting securely.

The Empress stood beside the Emperor and suddenly sighed deeply, saying to him, "I know you like holding your grandsons, especially Zijin's, as he is the legitimate eldest son. His children are naturally different from those of King Jin and Prince Qin!"

The Emperor interrupted, "Hey, how can you speak like that? To me, their children are all the same."

The Empress, touched to tears, quickly corrected herself, "Yes, they are all the same, but no matter who gives birth, they must truly be imperial grandchildren, right? But Youyou and Zijin are being reckless. Just to please you and make you happy, they actually brought in a common woman to have a child on their behalf."

"What?" The Emperor stood up abruptly.

He had also looked into Gu Youyou, knowing that she used to be a medicinal subject, but whether a medicinally afflicted subject could have children of her own was an unknown.