Farmhouse 121

Chapter 121: Giving the Scented Sachet

He was simply accustomed to being cautious, instinctively holding a defensive attitude toward anything with a strange taste, ready to spit it out.

"I don’t like being forced to eat by others."

Having said that, Jin Zijin actually took the initiative to pick up some fish with his chopsticks.

Once he slowly got used to the taste, he began to eat it with relish.

Gu Youyou knew he had a large appetite, well, he had to for his size!

There was only one fish, and it wasn’t easy to prepare; she quickly set aside those weird thoughts in her mind and hurried to eat as well.

Jin Zijin tentatively picked up some of those minced chili pieces, which were indeed what created that unique taste.

As soon as he ate them, they were so spicy he almost spit them out.

"Chili?" he said.

Though he spoke with an inquiring tone, it was affirmative.

She hadn’t expected him to recognize it.

Gu Youyou smiled and replied, "Yes, chili!"

Jin Zijin frowned and spit out the food in his mouth.

Eating chilies directly was indeed too spicy, and this time Gu Youyou did not say anything.

But Jin Zijin said, "You have a cold constitution; if you can, eating more chilies might be good for you."

Yet after that, Jin Zijin didn’t touch fish or chili again, just single-mindedly scooping rice!

Jin Zijin’s body had problems, which he was very clear about.

But he didn’t trust Gu Youyou, so he didn’t let her examine him.

Gu Youyou also had her pride; after being refused the last time she offered to take his pulse, she never brought it up again.

Gu Youyou enjoyed her meal alone, when Jin Zijin suddenly took out a delicate sachet and handed it to her.

Gu Youyou swallowed a mouthful of fish and looked at the small sachet lying on Jin Zijin’s broad palm, tentatively asking, "You wouldn’t be giving this to me, would you?"

Jin Zijin said matter-of-factly, "Who else would I give it to? Is there anyone else here?"

"No!" said Gu Youyou, shaking her head, she accepted the small sachet, still finding it incredible.

She turned it over and over in her hands; the sachet was palm-sized, embroidered with a plum blossom pattern, very exquisitely made. Just as Gu Youyou was about to ask where it came from, Jin Zijin spoke up first.

"I saw it when I went to town to buy grains. Remembering that you’ve been married all this time and I’ve never even bought you a red hair string, I decided to buy it for you."

Gu Youyou looked at Jin Zijin and then down at the sachet, suddenly feeling a mix of amusement and disbelief!

This delicate object didn’t seem like something a rough-looking guy like Jin Zijin would buy. The kind of gift he ought to give should be a piece of coarse cloth, right?

And besides, wasn’t he stingy?

Yet, it was rare for him to be so thoughtful. No matter what, as Gu Youyou held the small sachet, the softest part of her heart was touched.

Inside was just ordinary plum scent, its faint aroma quite pleasant. She had received many gifts since she was young, but whether those people were trying to please her or had ulterior motives, none of the gifts, though more valuable than this small sachet, made her genuinely happy.

After secretly delighting for a while, Gu Youyou teased, "You’re not begrudging the silver, are you?"

Jin Zijin said, "It does hurt, it cost two wild chickens and a masked palm civet. So you’d better take good care of it and don’t lose it! Remember, the shopkeeper said it shouldn’t get wet."

Gu Youyou stiffened, watching him speak so earnestly, she really wanted to peel off his face to see if it was actually that thick or just a facade.

Chapter 122: Selling Hot Peppers

What should be a blush-inducing compliment sounded oddly mundane coming from his lips, as if he was discussing salt, soy sauce, vinegar, and tea.

Gu Youyou responded irritably, "I know, look at how much you care, huh, it’s just a sachet!"

Anyone who didn’t know better would think you were giving away a diamond ring.

Despite her sharp tongue, Youyou was secretly thrilled.

She had heard that in these parts, a woman gifting a man a sachet was like a token of love, but a man giving one to a woman... well, let’s just say it could serve the same purpose.

...

Lately, Gu Youyou had been very busy, gathering herbs in the mountains and picking chili peppers to make sauce at home.

The mountains stretched for thousands of miles, with occasional appearances from wild men. Given Youyou’s extraordinary luck, she dared not venture too deep alone, limiting her chances of finding good herbs and leaving her to collect only wild peppers to take home.

Ever since she successfully made a bowl of chili sauce, she had started picking large quantities of peppers.

When June rolled around, the weather turned hot, marking the perfect season for harvesting red chili peppers.

Freshly picked, the peppers only needed a day or two of sun to dry out.

In those times, without a specialized agricultural system, the handful of peppers on the mountain wasn’t much; even after collecting all she could, she only managed to make a potful.

Youyou planned to save some seeds to grow her own next year.

After all, "clothes make the man as gold makes the Buddha," and without decent packaging, even the best products won’t fetch a good price. She couldn’t very well sell her sauce by the spoonful in a basin—that would cheapen the whole affair. So after much consideration, she decided to make a trip to town to see if she could find some nice clay pots.

Since her last visit to Lotus Village from Qingshui Town, Youyou hadn’t gone back. The herbs she usually picked were sold by Jin Zijin, so this was only her second trip to Qingshui.

Youyou casually approached a woman selling insoles and asked, "Excuse me, ma’am, where can I find clay pots for sale in this town?"

The woman pointed and said, "Turn left at the junction up front—it’s the third shop."

"Ah, thank you so much!"

Just as the woman had directed, Youyou easily found the shop selling clay pots.

The shop mainly featured various fired clay jars and bowls. The type of pot she needed was not in abundance, so after some looking, she selected a few with decent appearances.

Covered in dust, she wiped them down to reveal their true form.

Apart from being a bit heavy, they were quite nice, some even decorated with patterns.

"Shopkeeper, how much for these pots?" she inquired.

The shopkeeper glanced at them casually. Those small pots weren’t in high demand and weren’t worth much. He said, "Take all six for fifty wen."

Youyou was surprised by how cheap they were!

She paid the money, tied the six pots together with the straw ropes the shopkeeper used for bundling bowls, and carried them off.

Back home, she washed them clean, dried them outside, and then filled them with chili sauce.

After filling the six small pots, there was some sauce left over for personal use.

The next day, she left the house early again, even before Jin Zijin had a chance to get going.

Zijin, who was washing dishes, saw Youyou leave mysteriously with a bamboo basket on her back. He sped up his work and soon followed her out.

This year, Youyou wasn't making these few jars of chili sauce to sell for money, but rather to penetrate the market—primarily targeting the wealthy. The real earning would begin next year once she started growing chili peppers on a large scale.

In that era, chili peppers were considered as rare as Chinese herbs for treating weak stomachs and cold spleens—and her business was the first of its kind.

Chapter 123 From Medicinal Treatment to Dietary Therapy

Having not seen her for so long, Qin Changlin was clearly taken aback when he arrived at Jisheng Hall. Hurriedly, he pulled Gu Youyou into the inner courtyard and said, "Sister Youyou, where have you been these past few months? We've been looking everywhere for you!"

Gu Youyou felt puzzled and asked, "Didn't anyone tell you I went back home?"

"No, not at all!" Qin Changlin was utterly confused!

This was strange. Jin Zijin had clearly said he would mention it! The man really was unreliable, not even bothering to let her know.

Gu Youyou gave a dry laugh and said, "Perhaps my family forgot to mention it!"

She set down the basket on her back and took out a small jar of chili sauce. Looking around, she lowered her voice and asked, "Where is your master, Doctor Zhou? Isn't he supposed to be back?"

Qin Changlin replied, "Master went on a house call today, to the Ma family in the neighboring town! If he had known that you would come today, he would have said nothing could make him go! It's such a pity he missed you!"

Gu Youyou was amused to herself, thinking it wasn’t a pity at all.

It was fortunate that Doctor Zhou wasn’t there, or she would have felt awkward asking Qin Changlin for help.

Gu Youyou handed the jar to Qin Changlin and said, "It’s an emergency, brother. I’m nearly broke, you have to help me sell these things!"

When it came to persuading people, Qin Changlin was second to none.

He looked just like Wang Shun, a simple and honest fellow. But while Wang Shun was genuinely simple, Qin Changlin was the type to wear an innocuous expression while harboring clever schemes.

Qin Changlin accepted the small jar Gu Youyou handed him with a surprised look, opened it to take a whiff, and was greeted by a spicy and pungent aroma, yet fragrant!

Being a medical student, he immediately recognized what it was.

"Chili?"

Gu Youyou nodded and said, "That’s right, making them into sauce took a lot of effort. Are you confident you can sell them?"

"Well," Qin Changlin looked over the several jars and said with difficulty, "It won’t be easy... Chili is warm and disperses heat, it warms the stomach and induces sweating. We understand its medicinal properties, but you need to find patients with the right symptoms to prescribe this. With so much here... I’m afraid it won’t sell quickly!"

Gu Youyou clicked her tongue twice and said loudly, "Come, let me give you a lesson on what it means to turn medicinal therapy into food therapy!"

With that, Gu Youyou entered the kitchen of Jisheng Hall and asked the old cooking maid to step aside for a moment.

The old cooking maid was in the middle of preparing a chicken, which meant they were planning to enjoy a chicken dish that day.

Seeing no other ingredients she could use, Gu Youyou personally went to the kitchen to prepare a dish... Spicy Chicken using the chili sauce!

Of course, although the Spicy Chicken wasn't quite authentic, it was enough to astonish them.

"Can you really eat more of this?" As a medical student of not long standing, Qin Changlin wasn't sure if this medicinally infused ingredient could be consumed in this manner!

Despite his words, he didn't stop eating, gorging down the dish and exclaiming how satisfying it was!

Gu Youyou laughed and said, "Aren't you continuously eating it? You tell me, can you eat more or not?"

"Hehe," Qin Changlin chuckled and said, "Can this really replace cornelian cherries?"

In ancient times, people would use cornelian cherries instead of chilies for spicier dishes. However, with the introduction of a wider variety of chili types, people stopped eating cornelian cherries and switched to chilies.

Gu Youyou said, "Actually, chilies have more value as a food ingredient than as a medicinal one. So those chilies... I think you understand what I'm getting at!"

Qin Changlin slowed his chewing of the chicken, thoughtfully pondering Gu Youyou's words.

Chapter 124: Hoodwinked the Rich Man

Gu Youyou said with a faint smile, "Remember, this stuff is a hassle to make, and it's not cheap!"

Qin Changlin’s amber eyes suddenly brightened as he blinked thoughtfully, then he nodded vigorously, "I get it, Sister Youyou, I understand now..."

Gu Youyou laughed, handed over the remaining five jars of chili sauce to Qin Changlin, and said, "Then it’s settled; I’ll leave these things with you. I’m counting on you and look forward to the good news in three days!"

Gu Youyou had long decided that Qin Changlin had chosen the wrong profession by becoming a doctor, and when she had sixty taels of silver in hand, she could hardly believe her eyes.

She quickly did some math in her head. The value of silver in this era was about the same as during the Wanli period of the Ming dynasty—one tael of silver could buy two shi of ordinary rice, with one shi being around ninety-five kilograms. That meant one tael could buy about one hundred ninety kilograms of rice, or three hundred and eighty catties.

Considering that the price of family rice ranged from two and a half to three and a tenth yuan per catty, one tael of silver would be roughly equivalent to a thousand yuan.

Uh...

After crunching the numbers, she realized that silver was quite a bit more valuable back then than it is now, inflation really has a far-reaching impact!

Six jars of chili sauce traded for sixty thousand yuan? The Gu Family was far stronger than Lao Gan Ma!

Gu Youyou almost couldn’t resist grabbing Qin Changlin by the neck to ask him how he achieved it.

Had he swindled some rich tycoon?

Qin Changlin was grinning like a cunning merchant, yet Gu Youyou found him adorably foolish and cute at that moment!

"Sister Youyou, are you satisfied?"

Indeed, surpassingly satisfied!

But Gu Youyou didn’t let her excitement show right away, and she asked calmly, "It’s fine! But I’m curious about how you did it?"

Qin Changlin took Gu Youyou aside, and in a low voice, he said, "My master has been out on a call and hasn’t returned, so I’ve been seeing all the recent patients."

"Mhm!" Gu Youyou could understand that.

He went on mysteriously, "Do you know about Master Fu from our town?"

Gu Youyou nodded her head; she didn’t get out much, so how could she know?

Wait, that sounded familiar!

Ah, right, her family’s eldest aunt used to belittle her by suggesting she become Master Fu’s concubine. That must be the same Master Fu, right?

Gu Youyou asked, "How many Master Fus are there in town?"

"Just one!"

That was him then, Gu Youyou’s mouth twitched.

"Did you sell them all to him?"

"Yeah!" Qin Changlin laughed and nodded, saying, "That Master Fu is in his forties, quite overweight, and also suffers from some deficiency-cold syndrome! I prescribed him over a dozen bitter prescriptions, but they were so bitter he couldn't stand it and came back the next day, asking if he could change a few herbs or if there was another way to treat it.

So, I took out Sister Youyou's chili sauce and made him a dish with it. Master Fu himself is a food lover, especially fond of spicy food, and once he ate it, he couldn't stop.

I told him that forgoing medicine was not an option, but I could decrease the number of prescriptions he had to take if we added medicinal food therapy.

The food therapy was to add Sister Youyou's chili sauce to his meals every day. He realized he could cure his illness while enjoying such a tasty treat, and was overjoyed. He bought all six jars on the spot."

Oh boy, this was not in line with Gu Youyou's initial plan. She had wanted to attract more wealthy customers. After all, she couldn't possibly sell her chili sauce to only Master Fu next year.

Well, never mind, in the end, Qin Changlin was a help after all.

Chapter 125: There's also a Commission

Gu Youyou asked, "So, is he really willing to spend that six thousand? Oh no, sixty taels of silver?"

Qin Changlin confirmed, "Of course, he's willing. That Fu, the wealthy patron, is the richest man in the nearby towns. I told him that this medicinal herb is hard to find and the production process is complex. I only have these few bottles left, and he won't be able to buy them again. Fu has more money than he fears death. As long as it can make him live a few more years, he's willing to spend whatever it takes!"

"Hehe, since it's a case of more money than sense, then we can't be blamed!" Gu Youyou said, beaming with delight.

Qin Changlin, who was sitting across from her, asked with a puzzled look, "Sister Youyou, there isn't something wrong with that stuff, is there?"

Why did she sound like a swindler?

Gu Youyou was taken aback and her face turned stern as she said, "What nonsense are you spouting? Could there possibly be a problem with what I make? If there was a problem, would I let you sell it?

This year, I only made these few bottles, originally intending to use them to break into the market. Now look, you've sold them all to that Fu. Next year when I make them, you will have to take responsibility for selling them!

Of course, you won't miss out on your share of the benefits!"

Gu Youyou took out ten taels of silver and handed them to Qin Changlin, saying, "I'm quite satisfied with this price. It's not easy for you, an apprentice. Consider this silver your commission! Ah, if you manage to sell more, that's all on you. I won't ask!"

"Oh my, Sister Youyou, if I took even one extra tael, I'd never be able to complete my apprenticeship!"

Gu Youyou laughed and said, "Alright, I'm being serious. What we make is high-end goods. In the future, I'll sell them in a drugstore, placed alongside ginseng and deer antler. It's a top-notch dietary supplement!"

Gu Youyou decided to sell only to the wealthy. Although it wasn't very honorable, wasn't there a saying, 'no merchant gets ahead without being savvy'? Those ancient rich people, if you didn't take them for a ride, how would they be willing to part with their silver?

Qin Changlin smiled naively, scratching his head while repeatedly nodding in agreement.

"I understand, Sister. From now on, I'll follow you!"

Suddenly, he seemed to remember something and asked, "Right, Sister, where do you live? In case I need something, I should know how to find you."

Gu Youyou said, "Forget it, as long as I know where you live, that's enough. Don't go spreading my business around; I have too many poor relatives at home!"

Qin Changlin was a sharp one, and with just a hint from Gu Youyou, he understood completely and didn't pursue the matter any further.

...

Gu Dabao from the Gu Family had reached the age to get married, and Erya was also at the age to be wed.

The Gu Family was, after all, the rich among the poor in Lotus Village. Not to mention anything else, they certainly had enough to eat, so the prospects for Gu Dabao, as the eldest grandson, were quite good.

Many matchmakers came to propose potential brides for him, but Huang Xiangwen, Dabao's mother, was quite picky and wasn't satisfied with any.

It seemed she was even boasting about marrying him to a girl from the town!

In the end, the one who came to make the match for the Gu Family was Matchmaker Zhang!

Matchmaker Zhang was familiar with both of the old folks at the Gu Family. She had successfully arranged the matches for several of the Gu aunts, two uncles, as well as for Daya and Gu Youyou herself, so they couldn't treat her like they did the other matchmakers; they had to give her some respect.

Matchmaker Zhang wiped her heavily powdered face, which looked as white as flour, and with a handkerchief embroidered with coarse cloth, she twisted her way to the door.

"Thump thump... Is anyone home?"

Huang Xiangwen had just returned from the field, her clothes still covered in mud that she hadn't changed out of yet. She had come back early to cook, so she was the first one at home.

Hearing Matchmaker Zhang's voice, she immediately guessed why she was there. What else could it be, if not to make a match?

What decent marriage prospects could a village matchmaker bring? It was always just someone from the nearby villages!

Chapter 126: Talking about Marriage Proposal

Huang Xiangwen wouldn't stand for it. In recent days, she had been trying to find someone in town to introduce a good family, so why would it be the turn of a village girl?

She called Gu Xiaomei, Sanya, in a low voice, "Sanya, would you like your big brother to find you a sister-in-law from town?"

Gu Xiaomei was only five years old, the youngest child in the family, what could such a small child understand? She only knew that there were delicious things to eat; beautiful clothes to wear; that everything from town was the best. Naturally, she was happy.

She hopped and said excitedly, "Yes, Mom, I want a sister-in-law from town!"

"Oh, my dear girl," Huang Xiangwen's laughter was so full she could barely close her mouth. "You also know a sister-in-law from town is good! Alright, Mom will find a wife from town for your big brother, and then you'll have a sister-in-law from town!"

"Good, I want a sister-in-law from town, a sister-in-law from town!"

"Alright, Sanya, you need to help Mom with something!"

"What do I need to help with?" Sanya asked, tilting her little head.

"Go, open the front door a crack, and tell the matchmaker who's knocking outside that our family has only you at home, and the others have all gone to work in the fields."

Sanya thought for a moment with her head down. Afraid she wouldn’t remember, Huang Xiangwen repeated it. Then Sanya went bouncing off to the front yard to open the door.

Matchmaker Zhang’s expression immediately sank when she saw a little girl open the door, but she still managed a smile, "Oh, it’s Sanya, where are the adults of your family?"

Sanya raised her head and said crisply, "My mom says that I’m the only one home, everyone else has gone down to the fields to work!"

"What?" Matchmaker Zhang’s face fell, her white powder almost sliding off as she craned her neck to look through the crack in the door, muttering under her breath, "What nonsense, thinking they can put on airs just because they are a big family in Lotus Village?"

Huang Xiangwen inside the house wanted desperately to drag the little girl back in and give her a good scolding on her little bottom!

She can’t even pass a message properly!

"Where did your mother tell you this?" Matchmaker Zhang continued to ask with a fake smile.

Sanya pointed back into the house and said, "In the backyard!"

"Stupid girl!" Huang Xiangwen cursed through gritted teeth.

Matchmaker Zhang gave a sinister sneer and raised her voice intentionally, "Madam Huang, are you really not in, or can you not make a decision regarding Dabao? If you can’t make a decision, I’ll just go directly to Old Gu in the fields!"

How could Huang Xiangwen let Matchmaker Zhang go to Gu Feng? If the old man agreed, her dream of a daughter-in-law from town would be shattered.

Reluctantly, Huang Xiangwen had to feign a cheerful face and come out.

"Oh! Auntie Zhang has arrived. Please come in, come in!"

Huang Xiangwen roughly pulled five-year-old Sanya away, using so much force that it hurt the girl's little arm, and Sanya looked up at her pitifully.

Huang Xiangwen opened the door wide and let Matchmaker Zhang inside.

"Oh, Madam Huang, you are home? I thought you weren't."

Huang Xiangwen internally cursed Matchmaker Zhang from head to toe.

She knew perfectly well what was going on and deliberately made Gu Yi speak disparagingly about her.

Holding back her anger, Huang Xiangwen forced a smile and said, "I'm here, Auntie Zhang. I was just in the outhouse earlier and didn't hear you, that's all!"

Matchmaker Zhang sneered internally, kept a pleasant facade, and said, "Alright, I'm here today to talk to you about an important matter, a joyful one..."

Huang Xiangwen's heart skipped a beat—here it came, they were going to talk about the marriage proposal!

She rapidly weighed her options. She couldn't let her say it. Matchmaker Zhang had some connections with the Gu Family and wouldn't be so easy to dismiss like the other matchmakers!

Chapter 127: Fall by Oneself

Huang Xiangwen turned her head and saw Sanya following behind her. Seizing the moment when Matchmaker Zhang wasn't looking, she stuck out her foot and tripped her.

The little girl was small, and she lost her balance immediately after being tripped, falling to the ground. She hit the ground hard, and her nose struck the stone-paved path in the yard, immediately starting to bleed.

Sanya cried bitterly from the pain, also interrupting what Matchmaker Zhang was about to say.

"Oh no, Sanya, how could you walk like that?"

Huang Xiangwen cried out in alarm and hurriedly crouched down to pick Sanya up.

Upon closer look, Sanya's face was covered in blood, mixed with dirt and dust.

She was startled and speechless with shock.

Initially, Huang Xiangwen had not intended for Sanya to fall so badly; she just thought if the child fell, it could be a good excuse to coddle her and also prevent Matchmaker Zhang from speaking. She hadn't expected such a severe fall.

Matchmaker Zhang took one look and was also startled, saying hastily, "Oh my, this is serious. Sanya has had a nasty fall, bleeding so much. We should quickly get Doctor Sun to look at her, a girl's face should not be marked like this."

At first, Huang Xiangwen thought it was just a nosebleed, but upon a careful look, there was a large gash from Sanya's nose up to her forehead. And that indeed meant her face was marred.

Sanya's crying was almost heart-wrenching, and only then did Huang Xiangwen truly become frightened, crying out, "This is terrible, my poor child, how could you fall so hard? This will be the death of me..."

Huang Xiangwen lost her composure and sat on the ground holding Sanya and wept while Matchmaker Zhang hurriedly said, "Huang Second Sister-in-law, don't cry now, it's more important to see the doctor. Quickly bring the child out; I'll go call for help!"

Matchmaker Zhang ran out of the Gu Family's gate in haste, coincidentally spotting Wang Shun from the village passing by, and she quickly called out, "Shunzi, go quickly to the fields and find Elder Gu, tell them Sanya's fallen and is covered in blood. They must hurry and think of something, or her face will be ruined!"

At that moment, Wang Shun saw Huang Xiangwen holding the blood-covered Sanya, her face filled with anxiety.

Huang Xiangwen also saw Wang Shun and cried out desperately, "Don’t go to the fields now, Shunzi, hurry to the town and call for Doctor Zhou. We must have Doctor Zhou from Jisheng Hall come!"

Sanya’s fall was so severe that it truly scared her; right now, she couldn’t care about anything else but to save the girl.

Only the large households from several neighboring towns could afford to call for Doctor Zhou of Qingshui Town—the amount of silver required was substantial, and Wang Shun was well aware of this.

But considering Sanya’s condition, the neighboring village’s Doctor Sun definitely wouldn’t suffice, no matter what, they had to try!

"Yeah!" Wang Shun responded and sprinted to the east end of the village to borrow a donkey cart, then rushed towards Qingshui Town.

The child was crying so fiercely that the neighbors were drawn out. Someone had gone to the fields to look for the Gu Family, and soon enough, members of the Gu Family, both old and young, had all rushed back.

"What happened to Sanya?"

When everyone saw Sanya’s wound, they were all shocked.

Huang Xiangwen, feeling guilty and scared, could only continue wailing uncontrollably.

Elder Huang, annoyed by the crying, scolded, "Are you mourning? I asked you what happened to the child!"

Matchmaker Zhang was also present at the scene. Since she did not see Huang Xiangwen intentionally stick out her foot to trip Sanya, she said, "The child wasn't walking carefully and fell on her own. It just so happened that she hit her head on a stone. No one expected her to fall so badly."

Gu Feng's face was stern as he said angrily, "Sanya is already five years old, could she really fall on her own like that?"

Gu Second Brother, distressed for his daughter, called out loudly, "Oh, father, mother, what does it matter how Sanya fell at this point? We should be thinking about what to do!"

Chapter 128: Qin Changlin Has Arrived

He was busy stopping the bleeding for Sanya; the wound was somewhat long, but not deep, making it not difficult to stop the bleeding. The real fear was that a scar might be left on her face.

Running from her nose all the way up to her forehead, a girl with such a long scar would find it hard to get married.

Matchmaker Zhang said, "Luckily Shunzi happened to pass by and saw. He's already gone to Qingshui Town to look for Doctor Zhou. If only Doctor Zhou could be brought here, we might still be able to save this girl's face!"

As soon as old Mrs. Huang heard this, her heart immediately sank into the Qingshui River. She let out a cry and wailed, "Oh, my poor Sanya. She might be destined to live as a girl with a scarred face! How can people like us afford to invite Doctor Zhou? Even if he were to come, we couldn't afford the consultation fee! Oh no, I can't let this be. Matchmaker Zhang, how long has Shunzi been gone? I need to chase him down and bring him back. I think it's better to go to the neighboring village and ask for Doctor Sun."

Gu Feng's face darkened. How could he not understand what old Mrs. Huang meant?

She wasn't worried about Sanya; she was clearly afraid of spending silver.

"Money-grubbing old women, what's more important? The latter half of Sanya's life or the money? You're always scrimping and saving, yet have you ever gotten rich?"

"Hey, you dead old man, what are you implying? Want to start a quarrel, do you?"

Huffed and puffed with annoyance, Gu Feng couldn’t be bothered to argue with her and simply said to Gu Laosan, "Laosan, run to the neighboring village and also invite Doctor Sun over! We may not be able to get Doctor Zhou!"

"Right away, Dad!"

Gu Laosan was quick to leave.

Gu Feng then instructed the other family members, telling Laosan’s wife to take Dabao to the field and bring back the farm tools to prevent them from being stolen and creating a dispute.

He told Erbao to bring home Sanya and the ox from the hillside, saying they would not graze the cattle today.

He also asked the twin daughters to go and boil water inside the house, since it would be needed when the doctor arrived.

Doctor Zhou couldn’t be invited, but Qin Changlin came instead.

When Qin Changlin saw that the person who came to find Doctor Zhou was Wang Shun, who used to help Gu Youyou gather medicines, he followed the clues and figured out who Gu Youyou really was.

Since it was Gu Youyou’s cousin who was injured, he naturally had to make a trip in person.

First, to verify whether the Gu Youyou he knew was just an ordinary village girl from Lotus Village.

Second... he thought, when Gu Youyou saw him, it would definitely be a surprise!

Of course, whether it would be a pleasant surprise or a fright remained uncertain.

Qin Changlin rode a horse, which was much faster than the donkey cart driven by Wang Shun. Considering Lotus Village wasn't too far from Qingshui Town, and the weather was good and the road was easy to travel, it didn't take him long to arrive.

He had never been to Lotus Village before and didn't know where the Gu Family lived. It was only after asking around upon entering the village that he found out.

Seeing that they hadn't managed to wait for Doctor Zhou, but instead, a young man had arrived, the faces of the Gu Family members weren't looking too good.

Qin Changlin, being a perceptive man, quickly noticed this and smiled, introducing himself.

"My name is Qin Changlin, and I'm also a doctor at Jisheng Hall. Doctor Zhou is my master. He's getting on in years and moves slowly. Fearing the delay might worsen the child's injury, I came ahead!"

Hearing this, Gu Feng ignited a spark of hope and hastily asked, "Does that mean Doctor Zhou might come, according to Doctor Qin?"

Qin Changlin smiled and said, "It's hard to say in this hot weather. If my master is free, maybe he'll come!"

"..."

"Ah, let's not talk about that for now. Let me see how badly the child is injured."

Based on Wang Shun's description, it sounded very severe, covered in blood, the face almost completely torn up. But when Qin Changlin saw the little girl lying on the bed, he couldn't help but show a wry smile!

Chapter 129: Looking for Gu Youyou

It wasn't as serious as they had said. The bleeding had stopped, and although the child was no longer crying, she still shuddered occasionally.

He stepped forward to examine her and then quickly set down the medicine chest he was carrying, taking out the disinfectant to carefully clean the wound!

Sanya started crying again from the pain, and Qin Changlin said, "Hold the child down firmly; don't let her wiggle around."

Huang Xiangwen and Meng Qiuju held down Sanya's flailing arms, one on each side. The heart-wrenching cries were distressing to hear.

The Huang Family matriarch kept lamenting about misfortune, exclaiming over the suffering of such a young child, while scolding Huang Xiangwen for not being able to care for a child properly and letting her fall like this.

"And now we've had to call a doctor from town. How much silver will this cost? It's like tearing her heart out!"

If it were any other time, Huang Xiangwen would definitely argue back, reasoning that children's legs can run on their own, and it's not her fault if they fall. However, she was at a loss for words this time; it was her negligence that had led to the child's fall!

Hearing the crying, Gu Hong got anxious and asked Qin Changlin in a hurry, "Doctor Qin, will the cut on Sanya's face leave a scar?"

Qin Changlin replied, "It's hard to say. I'll try to treat it as best as I can, but whether or not it will scar depends on how you take care of it afterward!"

Gu Hong agreed earnestly, saying, "Just tell us how to take care of it, Doctor Qin, and we will follow your instructions!"

Qin Changlin just smiled and continued to clean the wound.

A moment later, he added, "Previously, a woman with the surname Gu used to sell herbs at our Jisheng Hall. Her name is Gu Youyou. Do you know her?"

Gu Feng was aware of Gu Youyou selling the herbs she had picked, and he said, "Yes, I know her. That's my granddaughter, and she lives in our village!"

Qin Changlin wasn't aware that Gu Youyou was already married and found it strange that she didn't live with them. But he didn't think it was polite to inquire further into someone else's family matters, so he merely said, "In the past, she sold an herb at Jisheng Hall called Macrolepiota, which is good for treating wounds and is less likely to leave scars. I've run out of it, so I brought some other herbs, but they're not as effective as Macrolepiota. If you could get some from her, it would help the young girl's wound heal better."

Upon hearing this, the Gu Family, without waiting for Gu Feng to speak, Gu Hong hurriedly instructed Gu Dabao, saying, "Dabao, go tell your elder sister to bring the Ma... what was it again?"

"Macrolepiota!" Qin Changlin said.

"Oh right, tell her to bring the Macrolepiota!"

The matter-of-fact tone from Gu Hong made even Qin Changlin, an outsider, inwardly marvel.

Did he really know Gu Youyou well enough to expect her to obey so readily?

Of course, Qin Changlin had only wanted to find an excuse to see Gu Youyou, so the manner in which they fetched her wasn't his concern.

Gu Youyou hadn't gone up the mountain for several days, now busying herself in the backyard with the two plots of medicinal herbs and in the front yard with the two plots of vegetables.

Even if she went to the mountain, she didn't dare to venture deep, as Jin Zijin had his own business to attend to. He wasn't merely hunting, so it was not appropriate for her to accompany him.

But she couldn’t find anything worthwhile outside the mountain.

When Gu Dabao and Gu Hong found her, she was pulling weeds in the vegetable garden.

Without any fertilizer, the vegetables weren’t growing very well, while the weeds were thriving vigorously!

Gu Youyou had heard someone approaching. They were coming swiftly.

Only when they were close did she look up to see who it was.

"Dabao, is there an emergency?"

Chapter 130: I’m Here to Collect Money

Gu Dabao, panting and out of breath, rushed up to Gu Youyou and said urgently, "Big sister, something’s happened to Sanya; the doctor says we need Macrolepiota. Hurry, save Sanya with the Macrolepiota!"

The main effect of Macrolepiota is to stop bleeding. Gu Youyou furrowed her brow and said, "Slow down and explain clearly, what happened to Sanya?"

"Sanya fell and she’s bleeding a lot; the doctor said we need Macrolepiota!"

Gu Youyou pursed her lips silently, What kind of quack doctor is this? Could it be a swindler we’ve brought in? Although the hemorrhagic effect of Macrolepiota is good, what month is this? Where can we find Macrolepiota now?

There are plenty of herbs that can stop bleeding; it doesn’t have to be Macrolepiota.

"Just wait!" Gu Youyou said.

Then, she went to the winnowing basket at the edge of the yard to collect other herbs that could stop bleeding.

Gu Youyou grabbed two or three kinds of hemostatic herbs. Gu Dabao, out of curiosity, asked, "Big sister, which one of these herbs is Macrolepiota?"

"None of them!" Gu Youyou replied.

Hearing this, Gu Dabao became anxious and stood in Gu Youyou's way, saying, "That won't do, big sister, the doctor said only Macrolepiota can properly treat Sanya's wound, other medicines will leave a scar."

He was thinking that if his sister didn't use Macrolepiota but used other herbs instead, and if Sanya ended up with a scar on her face, their father and mother would blame the big sister again.

Gu Youyou twisted her mouth and said, "Don't listen to that good-for-nothing doctor's nonsense. If big sister says it's okay, then it's okay!"

"But..."

"No buts. Having this is better than nothing. Do you want to save Sanya or not?"

Upon hearing this, Gu Dabao nodded hurriedly and said, "Yes, we need to save her; come quickly with me, big sister!"

Gu Dabao ran ahead quickly with the herbs Gu Youyou gave him, returning first to the Gu Family home, while Gu Youyou followed behind. Before she could enter the house, she heard her second uncle, Gu Wen, complaining from somewhere inside.

"What? No Macrolepiota? The doctor asked specifically for Macrolepiota, didn't he make that very clear? What's the use of bringing back a handful of useless weeds? You can't even handle this simple thing, how can you be so incompetent?"

Gu Dabao said aggrievedly, "Big sister said these herbs would work."

Gu Wen snorted coldly, "It seems to me she is just too stingy to use it, right? That Macrolepiota must be valuable!"

Gu Youyou, fuming with anger, pushed open the room door and said coldly, "These herbs cost five hundred Wen, Uncle. If you want them, pay me five hundred Wen, or give the herbs back to me.

As for Macrolepiota, why don't you go harvest it yourself? It's only what month now? I'd like to see if you'll be able to bring back any Macrolepiota."

Gu Youyou walked into the Gu Family home as if she were conducting an inspection like a leader. Unfortunately, her frail and delicate physique robbed her of some of her imposing presence despite her beauty.

Her cold gaze swept across the room, and upon spotting that quack doctor, Qin Changlin, she instantly understood why Macrolepiota was demanded – they wanted to lure her out!

Gu Wen was stunned for a moment upon hearing Gu Youyou's words before he realized what was happening.

He had not expected Gu Youyou to arrive; he assumed his elder son would come back by himself with the medicine.

He forced a chuckle and said, "Youyou is here, huh!"

Gu Youyou responded with a grunt, "Hmm, I'm here. I had to come to collect the silver, didn't I?"

This comment infuriated Gu Wen enough, while Gu Wen's younger brother retreated to the side to enjoy the spectacle. Huang Xiangwen signaled Gu Dabao with her eyes. Hesitating for a moment, Gu Dabao then left the room and went to the backyard to look for his grandparents.

Xiangwen had underestimated Gu Youyou; only the old lady and the old man might have a chance to intimidate her.

Gu Youyou watched Gu Dabao leave without any expression, then turned her gaze to Huang Xiangwen.

That look with a faint smile made Huang Xiangwen, who was already feeling guilty, quite uneasy.