Farmhouse 1381

Chapter 1381: Going to Witch Doctor Village

There's another point: the Great Witch Doctor is as mysterious as a fairy walking out of the Divine Mountain, so no one can trace his origins.

As for himself, he only appears once every many years, and the length of each stay varies.

But no one actually considered that he might not be a native of Nanzhao Country.

Someone said, "Don't listen to that witch's nonsense. How could the Great Witch Doctor be a Zhuzhao person? How could the Zhuzhao people save us?"

"But Doctor Gu is also from Zhuzhao. Why would she help us?"

"Yes, that lady just said it. Doctor Gu came at the Great Witch Doctor's invitation, right? We can find out if we go to the Witch Doctor Village."

"Right, let's go to the Witch Doctor Village…"

…

Gu Youyou and the other two were captured but were not brought to meet the Nanzhao Emperor. What they had done wrong was just the subject of wild speculation outside.

The three of them were thrown into the dungeon, and soon, Jin Liuying was brought in as well, receiving the same treatment.

Searcy mocked those escorting Jin Liuying, "Has your majesty gone mad? Why don't you let us check his brain?"

The person snorted coldly, saying, “You’re about to die. Let’s see how long your tongue remains sharp.”

The man beside him pushed him and said, “Let’s move. We’ve been instructed not to speak with them.”

The two of them left, muttering, “I don’t understand what the higher-ups are thinking, even capturing the fifteenth princess.”

“Because she is from Zhuzhao Country.”

“Ah, are we really going to go to war with Zhuzhao Country? Why is this happening? Just a while ago, they were saying the two nations should foster good relations, which seemed pretty good. Why did things change so quickly?”

“What are you foolishly guessing about? Aren’t you afraid of inviting trouble with your words? Whatever the reason, his majesty will surely come out to explain to everyone.”

Gu Youyou listened as those people walked away, then spoke to Jin Liuying, “What’s going on? Why were you captured too?”

Jin Liuying shook her head and said, “I don’t know. Early this morning, people from the palace came and took the prince away. Shortly after he left, they came to capture me here.”

Jin Liuying looked at them in surprise and asked, “What about you? What happened that brought you here?”

The young girl didn’t seem afraid. She had never encountered anything that scared her in her life.

Faced with imprisonment, her feeling was more of curiosity.

That’s actually good!

Gu Youyou said, “Then let’s wait here; whatever the reason, someone will come and explain.”

…

Gu Youyou and the others were locked in the dungeon, while those curious about the Great Witch Doctor’s identity didn’t idle around. They went directly to the Witch Doctor Village to ask the Great Witch Doctor for clarification.

“The Great Witch Doctor is out, the Great Witch Doctor…”

After waiting a long time, they finally saw Yu Jizi stepping down from the second floor of the Stilted Building.

“Great Witch Doctor, we heard you are actually a Zhuzhao Country person, is that true?”

“Great Witch Doctor, they must be making things up, right? You are our guardian spirit; how could you be from Zhuzhao Country? If you were from Zhuzhao, you’d be guarding the Zhuzhao people; why would you be here in Nanzhao, right?”

“Great Witch Doctor, Doctor Gu was invited by you to help us, right? What’s going on with the emperor ordering her arrest?”

“Great Witch Doctor, will you save Doctor Gu? She’s actually helped us a lot.”

“No, no, Great Witch Doctor, that woman has ill intentions. It’s all their conspiracy; you can’t save them.”

Chapter 1382: Asking for an Explanation

Yu Jizi did not speak, and Zhiqiu, who followed him out, snorted coldly, "Who told you that Gu Youyou was invited by my master? She obviously deceived you. She killed my four senior brothers, and our enmity with her is irreconcilable."

"What?"

It seemed the plot took a dramatic turn again. Those in the crowd who supported Gu Youyou were speechless for a moment, while those against her, feeling vindicated, cursed her thoroughly.

"Hmph, I knew that woman had bad intentions."

"Yes, haven't you all heard? His Majesty issued an order to capture her because they harbor malicious intentions against our Nanzhao Country."

"But... but she cured the Empress Dowager. This is something even the Emperor admitted. How do you explain that?"

"Isn't it simple?" Zhiqiu snorted coldly, "That's because she wanted to gain His Majesty's trust. Without curing the Empress Dowager, how could she win over His Majesty? It's just a means to get everyone's trust."

"Yes, it's all a conspiracy. What do they want? It's merely the Emperor of Zhuzhao Country eyeing our land; they want to annex us..."

"We cannot let them succeed. Let's all go to the Imperial Palace and have His Majesty kill them."

"Right, we absolutely cannot let them leave Nanzhao alive."

The little boy with a broken hand held his mother tightly with his uninjured hand, saying, "Mom, Doctor Gu is not a bad person. Please tell them, Doctor Gu is not a bad person. She saved Xiaobao's hand."

The woman was quite anxious; now the opposition against them was strong. Because of the Great Shaman's words, few dared to stand up for Gu Youyou, but she firmly believed Gu Youyou was a good person.

She summoned all her courage and shouted, "Do you have any conscience at all? How many things has Doctor Gu done for us over the past few months? Have you forgotten so quickly? She hasn't done anything wrong, only captured by His Majesty. Yet you wildly speculate that her kindness hides other motives. Regardless, I only know she helped us; she hasn't done anything to betray us. This is purely conjecture, and it's unfair to Doctor Gu."

"Xiaobao's mother, I know she cured Xiaobao's hand, and you're grateful to her, but you can't be too naive. The reason why nothing bad happened is that His Majesty discovered their plot early. If she really did anything to us, it would be too late by then."

"Then tell me, what could she do to us? Even the Princess of Zhuzhao has married here. If they truly wanted war, why would they send a princess over? If Zhuzhao Country does invade, it must be because we broke faith and captured their Crown Princess Consort!"

Yu Jizi raised an eyebrow and looked at the child the woman was holding.

The child's hand was fixed with something and hung around his neck; the white cloth wraps were conspicuous. He noticed them at a glance.

He stood on the Stilted Building and said lightly, "Bring the child up for me to take a look."

The woman instinctively took a step back; she used to trust the Great Shaman wholeheartedly, but after the incident with Gu Youyou, she suddenly felt something was amiss about this seemingly kindly old fairy-like Great Shaman.

"Let me see the child's hand," Yu Jizi said with a smile.

Yu Jizi's smile and gentle voice seemed to have a magical power; the woman struggled internally for just a moment before carrying the child up the Stilted Building.

Chapter 1383: How to Connect Well

She followed the wooden stairs upstairs and stood in front of Yu Jizi.

"Great Shaman, please take a look."

"How did it break?" He raised his hand, reaching for the child’s arm.

Because touching this arm would cause great pain, the child instinctively protected it. When Yu Jizi approached, the child immediately turned around, hiding the arm between his mother and himself.

The woman was startled and hurriedly said, "Great Shaman, this arm can’t be touched. Doctor Gu said that if it’s touched, it might be ruined, and it could even threaten his life."

Yu Jizi frowned and said, "Can’t even touch it? How did she connect it?"

The woman shook her head and said, "We don’t know. At that time, the entire hand was severed. We originally just wanted to save the child’s life, but Doctor Gu helped attach the arm."

"The whole hand was severed and it could still be attached?" Yu Jizi looked at Zhiqiu.

Zhiqiu lowered his head and whispered, "Master, I’ve heard it is indeed like that."

Yu Jizi was incredibly surprised, even with a hint of barely perceptible excitement in his eyes.

He hurriedly asked, "Can the hand move?"

The woman nodded and said, "Yes, the fingers can move, but they’re not completely healed yet. Doctor Gu said it will take a hundred days to fully heal. After that, careful conditioning can restore normal function. However, it still can’t handle heavy work."

Yu Jizi looked at the child’s hand with surprise.

He wanted to reach out and pull, but the child was very wary of him. With so many people watching, he naturally refrained from doing anything that might scare the child, so he had to give up.

The woman was frantic, fearing the Great Shaman would say Gu Youyou was unreliable and would dismantle and redo the hand. She tightly protected the child, pulling her hoarse voice low and said, "Great Shaman, Doctor Gu's medical skills are very powerful. She has healed many illnesses that witch doctors couldn't cure, everyone saw it themselves."

"Oh? Really?" Yu Jizi indeed agreed with Gu Youyou's medical skills.

But he knew well that Gu Youyou's medical skills were not inherited from Doctor Zhou. Where exactly she learned these skills has always been a mystery.

The woman nodded and said, "Yes, Doctor Searcy also said that Doctor Gu can not only rejoin broken hands and feet but also replace damaged heart and lungs. In short, wherever there's damage, it can be replaced, and there's no illness she can't heal."

Yu Jizi's eyes suddenly darkened. Hearing the woman's words, he suddenly felt many unclear things in his mind become clear.

Gu Youyou was too peculiar. She was an anomaly in the entire chess game. Her appearance disrupted all his plans.

Her strange medical skills, her strange theories, the non-belonging-to-this-era things she exudes...

She... Replace where it's damaged, could it be...?

"Great Shaman, Great Shaman?" The woman was frightened by Yu Jizi's sudden change of expression, called out several times without response, as if he hadn't heard.

"Great Shaman, what's wrong?"

"Master?"

Seeing the dazed Yu Jizi, Zhiqiu also felt something was amiss.

"Master, what's wrong?"

Yu Jizi came back to his senses, suddenly smiled and said, "Nothing, Master is just thinking about some things, thinking deeply."

"Oh!"

He thought that a fairy-like personage like Master would easily enter a meditative state, right?

Yu Jizi turned to the woman and said, "You can go down now, take good care of the child."

The woman was relieved, repeatedly agreeing as she retreated.

Chapter 1384: Tearing Faces

But even though Gu Youyou reattached the severed hand for the little boy, she was accused of doing it with ulterior motives.

Soon, public opinion became one-sided, and those who spoke up for Gu Youyou were gradually silenced by helplessness.

Yet at this moment, a mocking voice rose from the crowd.

"Uncle Master, are you getting thicker-skinned as you age? Fine, we'll admit that Gu Youyou wasn't invited by you, so tell everyone how she came."

Yue Rujing's bright white clothes stood out, as he stood next to Jin Zijin, the aura of these two caused everyone to involuntarily make way for them.

They were hiding in the shadows, ready to act when the opportunity arose. They understood it wasn't wise to expose themselves to Yu Jizi at this time, yet they couldn't stand by and watch these shameless people slander Gu Youyou. She worked so hard for months to earn everyone's trust; that honor was so hard-earned, how could they allow those intentions to be denied?

If that's the case, then no one should expect things to go well. Jin Zijin had long said that ripping off the mask wouldn't do anyone any good.

Since Yu Jizi no longer cared, why should he bother covering for him?

Yu Jizi's eyes flickered slightly, then he suddenly burst into laughter.

"What do you want to say?" As the saying goes, plans can't keep up with changes. Gu Youyou is the anomaly in this whole game of chess; wherever she is, there's always something different.

Yu Jizi was internally excited; he felt his chances of survival increased a bit.

Yue Rujing was slightly stunned, angrily said, "Hmph, because you captured her." He pointed to one of the stilted buildings and said, "Speak with your conscience. Wasn't there once a woman locked in that building? Wasn't it Gu Youyou?"

Several witch doctors who knew the inside story lowered their heads in shame.

They knew full well a woman once lived in that stilted building, and that person was indeed Gu Youyou. But weren't they told Gu Youyou was invited by the Great Shaman to help?

But just now, why did Zhiqiu deny this claim, saying she killed their senior brother and that their feud was irreconcilable?

Zhiqiu snorted coldly, "That's right, but you took advantage of our master's absence and forcibly took her away."

“Haha, what a joke. She is my senior brother’s wife; wasn’t it right for us to take her away?”

“You, what do you intend to do today? Don’t forget, just like Gu Youyou, you’ll be in prison too soon.”

Jin Zijin raised his eyes indifferently and said, “May I ask, why are you arresting us? Or rather, what did Uncle Master offer the Nanzhao Emperor?”

Their words kept coming, and ordinary folks expressed confusion.

They needed to digest their words.

These two people were one the eldest Prince of Zhuzhao Country and the other the sole son of the Marquess Yue.

But why did they call the Great Shaman Uncle Master? Could the Great Shaman truly be from Zhuzhao Country, and if so, what’s the story behind that?

What’s the story behind Uncle Master capturing his own nephew’s wife and bringing her to Nanzhao Country?

Zhiqiu was furious and said to Yu Jizi, “Master, let’s capture these two babbling fools and hand them over to His Majesty.”

Yu Jizi naturally hated these two to death, and he gradually clenched his fist.

Jin Zijin’s eyes darkened, and he drew the dagger he hadn’t used in a long time, holding it tightly in his hand.

Seeing this situation, Zhiqiu hurriedly shouted to the crowd, “Everyone, back up quickly, don’t just stand here watching the commotion!”

Chapter 1385: Helping Gu Youyou Out

The chilling atmosphere in the arena left everyone stunned, and it was only upon hearing Zhiqiu's voice that people scattered in all directions.

Yu Jizi's figure flickered, and in the next second, he appeared in front of Jin Zijin.

The crowd gasped in surprise.

Jin Zijin raised his dagger to block, retreating several steps instantly.

"What are you all standing around for? This has nothing to do with you, hurry up and leave." Zhiqiu shouted at the crowd.

Initially, everyone wanted to stay and watch the spectacle, but they had just witnessed a stilted building being cleaved by a strange dagger in Jin Zijin's hand, igniting a raging fire immediately after, and they dared not watch any longer.

The next second, another stilted building was split in two by the Great Shaman's sword; had they not run quickly, it would have crushed them.

These people had no idea who these individuals were, but they knew this was a spectacle beyond their comprehension.

There's no point standing around; their lives were at risk.

The crowd dispersed in a hurry.

Soon, soldiers arrived and surrounded the Witch Doctor Village from afar.

Zhiqiu was no match for Yue Rujing; defeated in just a few moves, Yue Rujing tied him up tightly with a rope and cursed him as a fool.

After dealing with Yue Rujing, he went to help Jin Zijin.

Yu Jizi is an old fox who has practiced for many years, mastering the essence of the Dao Family to perfection.

This kind of skill, besides requiring effort and talent, grows stronger with longer practice, a fact they all knew.

Thus, even Yue Rujing together with Jin Zijin could not gain the upper hand.

Seeing that things were not going well, Jin Zijin said coldly, "You have your goals, we have ours. Are you really going to tear the facade of the Nanzhao Country, Uncle Master, force us into a corner?"

Yu Jizi paused slightly in his movements and said, "What I want has never conflicted with yours. You are the ones who keep troubling this old man. How could you say that I wish to tear the facade?"

Yue Rujing yelled angrily, "Why would we trouble you for no reason? Why did you have the Nanzhao Emperor capture Gu Youyou? You know very well."

Yu Jizi smiled faintly, "I just felt that you guys were a bit bothersome, and had the Nanzhao Emperor help to restrain you a little, so as not to ruin my big plans. I never intended to take her life."

He had never thought of taking her life before, and now Yu Jizi didn't want to take her life anymore. He laughed heartily, "How about this, you come with me to a place and stay for a while, and I will ask Gu Youyou for a favor. Once she completes the favor, I'll return her to you."

Jin Zijin's eyes darkened as something swiftly flashed through his mind; he seemed to see something peculiar in Yu Jizi's eyes.

With that, his hand movements slowed slightly, and one of his left shoulder blades was struck by Yu Jizi.

A searing pain spread from the injured area throughout his body, forcing him back ten steps before he could stop.

"Senior Brother." Yue Rujing, in anxious haste, was also struck by Yu Jizi, flung out in a parabolic arc, landing near Jin Zijin.

"Alas!" He angrily hammered the ground, immediately coughing up blood.

Even the two of them together were not Yu Jizi's match. The only person in this world capable of besting Yu Jizi was Master Tian Jizi.

But Tian Jizi seemed to have vanished, gone for so many years without a trace.

Fortunately, Yixi disappeared with him, leaving a note saying he had gone to take care of the master and reassured them not to worry, for their master was safe.

Chapter 1386: Tian Jizi Appears

But after so long, it's one thing that there's no news from Tian Jizi, but why hasn't Yixi secretly sent them any news either?

Yue Rujing grew angrier as he thought about it more. Why wasn't it Yu Jizi, that old fool, who got in trouble?

"You two, still want to fight?" Yu Jizi stood in front of them, laughing triumphantly.

"I tried discussing with you just now, you didn't want to. Now it seems you have no choice but to agree…"

“You… you dare not succeed, Youyou knows nothing.”

“Hahaha… whether she knows or not is her business, what you say doesn’t count. If she finds out you are in my hands, with your lives as a threat, I wonder if she’ll know then?”

“You old swindler, truly despicable and shameless.” Although Yue Rujing didn’t understand what Jin Zijin and Yu Jizi were talking about, he felt it was always correct to curse a bit.

“Where’s Master?” he shouted loudly.

“Senior Brother Tian Jizi, huh?” Yu Jizi raised an eyebrow and said, “It’s been so long and he hasn’t appeared, I think he’s probably done for.”

“Hmph, my master will kill you sooner or later…”

The soldiers saw that the Great Shaman had already captured Jin Zijin and the other, so they all gathered around.

“Great Shaman, His Majesty said to take them away together, what do you think?”

“Tie them up and hand them over to His Majesty for disposal.”

Just as these words fell, a drifting elderly voice came from afar.

“Wait…”

This voice seemed to come from a distant sky, breaking through the endless void. Just these two words made Yue Rujing already burst into tears.

“Master, you finally came.”

Everything was happening so unbelievably. They were just talking about how they didn't know where Tian Jizi was, and before they knew it, he arrived.

An elderly man with white clothes and white hair quickly approached from a distance, forming a white afterimage.

He was like an old fairy descending from the sky, stunning everyone present.

"Master?" Jin Zijin was also extremely surprised. He stood up, supporting his wounded shoulder.

Yue Rujing was even more battered, struggling several times before he could stand.

Tian Jizi looked at them and nodded gently.

"Come here, it hasn't been easy for you over the years, and you've made great progress. This makes me very pleased."

Yu Jizi's expression wasn't very good. This old guy, always shows up at the most crucial times.

His injury had long healed, but he hadn't dared make a move without getting any news about Tian Jizi.

He originally thought that after so many years without Tian Jizi appearing, he might really be finished. So he dared to start moving slowly.

Unexpectedly, he arrived at the most critical moment.

Yu Jizi sneered and said, "Brother, you seem to be doing well. After not seeing you for so many years, it seems your vigor is as great as ever."

Tian Jizi laughed heartily and said, “If you’re doing well, naturally, I’m fine too. Why? I just went overseas for a while, and when I came back, I found you bullying my disciples, what’s going on?”

Still had the mood to travel overseas?

Yu Jizi’s mouth twitched.

He raised his hand and said, “I wouldn’t dare, I was just joking with your apprentices. But this isn’t Zhuzhao Country, if you’re planning to start a massacre, you better think twice.”

The onlooking soldiers were quite scared; when Yu Jizi was fighting with Jin Zijin and Yue Rujing earlier, they already saw very clearly. At this level of fighting, the number of people doesn’t matter at all.

Chapter 1387: The Reason Why Tian Jizi Did Not Appear

They definitely don’t think they can beat this old man just because they have more people.

Judging from the Great Shaman’s reaction, it seemed he was quite wary of this old man, indicating that this old man might be even more powerful than the Great Shaman.

“Great Shaman, what do we do now?” the leader of the soldiers asked hesitantly.

If the Great Shaman didn’t help, they could only stand by helplessly.

Yu Jizi ignored him and merely watched Tian Jizi warily.

Tian Jizi smiled faintly and said, “Junior Brother, you are indeed overthinking. We all swore in front of Sanqing; how could I possibly start a massacre unless absolutely necessary?”

The first few sentences made everyone breathe a sigh of relief, but the last one tensed them up again.

‘Unless absolutely necessary’ meant that if forced, this old man might really start a massacre.

“Haha, that’s good to know. So, Senior Brother, what guidance do you have for us today?” Yu Jizi asked.

Tian Jizi replied with a gentle smile, “People like us don’t have children or grandchildren, only these two disciples to pass on our legacy. I’m old now, and I hope these two disciples can stay by my side to care for me in my old age. So, I won’t make things difficult for you; just let them go, and I’ll take my disciples with me. Otherwise…”

His expression darkened, and an overwhelming aura emanated from him, causing Yu Jizi to shudder.

Yu Jizi furrowed his brows tightly.

The soldiers looked at Yu Jizi, for if they let them go, the Great Shaman would have to explain to the emperor.

After a moment, Yu Jizi smiled slightly and said, “As Senior Brother wishes, how could this Junior Brother possibly go against it? My two nephews, go ahead.”

Jin Zijin and Yue Rujing helped each other retreat to stand behind Tian Jizi.

Tian Jizi turned and said in a low voice, “Let’s go.”

Yue Rujing urgently said, “Master, what about Gu Youyou? Gu Youyou is still in their hands.”

Tian Jizi turned his face away and said, “That’s none of my business. I just need to take you two back. Hmph, Yue Rujing, see how I deal with you when we get back.”

Yue Rujing: “… What did I do?”

Jin Zijin held Yue Rujing's arm and said, "Let's go. This is Nanzhao Country. We can talk about everything when we get back."

"Hey, but there's your wife, and your sister too."

"So what? Let's go." Tian Jizi said irritably.

The master and his two disciples quickly left the Witch Doctor Village, and after they had gone some distance, Tian Jizi suddenly stopped, bent down, and appeared extremely weak.

Yue Rujing and Jin Zijin were startled, quickly squatting down to support Tian Jizi.

"Master, what's wrong with you?"

Jin Zijin thought for a moment, and his face changed drastically, "Master, are you…"

Tian Jizi raised his hand, stopping him from continuing.

He nodded and said, "That's right. Your master's time is nearly up. Zijin, it's not that I haven't appeared to help you all these years, but I was helpless. Preserving my strength to live as long as possible and give you more time is the only thing I can do for you."

Yue Rujing was shocked and lowered his head in sadness.

It turned out that his master's time was almost up, and he had always blamed him for not appearing. So that's how it was…

He cried out softly, "So Master came out this time to save us? Master, but you…"

“No matter, no matter. Master can still hold on. Let’s go quickly. Things will be fine once we reach Zhuzhao Country. As for that female doctor, Yu Jizi finds her useful, so she won’t be harmed; at most, she’ll endure some hardships.”

“Mm, let’s go quickly.” No one mentioned rescuing Gu Youyou any further.

…

Chapter 1388: Not Letting Him Go Back

In the Nanzhao Imperial Palace, the Nanzhao Emperor and the Fifteenth Prince leisurely played a game of black and white chess.

However, the Nanzhao Emperor seemed to be in exceptionally high spirits today. He played continuously throughout the day, and before the Fifteenth Prince could even speak after finishing one game, he immediately proposed to play another.

This put the Fifteenth Prince in quite an awkward position. He didn’t have much fondness for this game of black and white chess himself. However, as a member of the Imperial Family, he needed to know some of these things so as not to embarrass himself when visiting other countries.

As the game began, he took the lead and said, "Royal Brother, this is something that people from Zhuzhao Country enjoy. Why have you taken a liking to it too? Let’s call it a day after this game; it’s getting late, and the Fifteenth needs to return to his residence. I’ll accompany you for another game some other day."

The Nanzhao Emperor gave a meaningful glance to the attendant beside him, who understood and quietly withdrew.

The Nanzhao Emperor cheerfully laughed, "Alright, alright, the last game. You’ve accompanied me for the entire day. You don’t seem to be irritated, do you?"

"Hehe, Royal Brother," the Fifteenth Prince laughed awkwardly.

The Nanzhao Emperor wasn’t upset. He laughed out loud, "Oh, you! Although we’re brothers, it feels like we’re from two different generations. Having you accompany an old man like me to play chess must have been hard on you. I won’t bother you tomorrow; I’ll get the Eldest, and the day after that, the Second..."

The Nanzhao Emperor, like a capricious child, ended up amusing the Fifteenth Prince, who had long lost his patience.

He thought to himself that a few nephews would be in for a bit of bad luck.

The game quickly concluded, and the Nanzhao Emperor felt embarrassed to suggest starting another game, so he allowed the Fifteenth Prince to leave.

The Fifteenth Prince bid farewell to the Nanzhao Emperor and left his quarters.

However, he hadn’t gone far before being stopped by the Empress Dowager’s maid.

"Fifteenth Prince, the Empress Dowager says she misses you and wants you to see her."

"Now?" The Fifteenth Prince looked at the time, which was indeed quite late. "Please tell the Empress Dowager that I’ll come to see her tomorrow."

"That won’t do. The Empress Dowager said she must see you immediately," the maid resolutely blocked the Fifteenth Prince.

"What happened? What’s going on?" The Fifteenth Prince asked curiously.

The maid replied, "The Empress Dowager just took a nap and said she had a dream about the former Emperor."

"Hmm?"

"The former Emperor had a long conversation with the Empress Dowager in the dream, all about the Fifteenth Prince. The former Emperor said he passed away early, and the Fifteenth Prince was still very young, so he asked the Empress Dowager to take good care of you..."

The Fifteenth Prince, feeling quite troubled, raised his hand to rub his forehead, having no choice but to follow the maid to see the Empress Dowager.

"Let’s go!"

In the Empress Dowager’s quarters, the maids had already lit the lamps, and the late-night meal had just been set.

The Empress Dowager was muttering, "Has he arrived? Has my Fifteenth arrived? Oh, check if the food has gone cold."

The maid responded, "He’ll be here soon, and the food hasn’t gone cold; it’s just been set out."

The Fifteenth Prince sat down with the maid, witnessing this scene, and could only helplessly say, "Mother, are you asking your son to dine with you?"

"Oh, oh, my son is here! Quickly, set a place for the Fifteenth Prince; all the dishes are served."

"Empress Dowager, everything is set."

"Fifteenth Prince, sit here!"

This joyful atmosphere made the Fifteenth Prince momentarily forget he was supposed to hurry back home.

"Come, quickly try this dish; it was your favorite when you were little." The Empress Dowager enthusiastically served him food.

Picking up his chopsticks, the Fifteenth Prince suddenly remembered that he had left home early in the morning and hadn’t returned by night, and that Liuying would be waiting for him to have dinner together.

Chapter 1389: Pulling One Hair Moves the Whole Body

He paused for a moment, looking at the delighted Empress Dowager, and reluctantly ate until he was half full.

"Mother, you should eat too." He picked up her favorite dish and placed it in her bowl.

"Ah, my son has grown up," the Empress Dowager said with relief, "When your father the Emperor passed away, you were but a tiny child. He was always worried about you, the youngest, losing out to your older siblings. Before he breathed his last, he repeatedly reminded me to keep you by my side at all times, so you wouldn’t suffer any grievances. Now that you’ve grown up and are taking responsibility, I’m sure you can withstand any injustice."

Prince Fifteen nodded with a smile, occasionally glancing at the sky.

"Eat a bit more. Ah, why are you putting down your chopsticks?" Seeing Prince Fifteen eat so little today, the Empress Dowager urged him to eat more.

Prince Fifteen raised his head and said, "Mother, I have eaten my fill. It’s getting late; how about I come back tomorrow morning to chat with you?"

"What? You’re leaving just as you arrived?" The Empress Dowager looked very disappointed and said, "Ah, everyone leaves. Is it because you find this old woman annoying and don’t want to talk with me more?"

"No, Mother. It’s just that it’s late now. I left early in the morning and haven’t returned. Liuying is surely waiting for me at home."

The Empress Dowager’s face fell, and she scoffed coldly, "Your wife is merely a Princess of Zhuzhao Country. Do you really regard her so highly? Even if you don’t return today, what of it? Could she possibly go complain to her father the Emperor?"

Prince Fifteen’s expression changed in surprise, "Why would Mother think this way? The two countries are on good terms now. Liuying marrying into our Nanzhao is a gesture of goodwill from the Emperor of Zhuzhao Country."

"Goodwill?" The Empress Dowager threw her chopsticks onto the table with a cold snort, "That’s just a scheme by the Emperor of Zhuzhao Country. They’ve come to our Nanzhao and are trying their hardest to win over the people’s hearts. What do you think their intentions are?"

Prince Fifteen felt something was amiss and asked in shock, "What does Mother mean? Didn’t you also acknowledge the talents of doctors from Zhuzhao Country? Mother, has something happened?"

The Empress Dowager was taken aback, her gaze evasive, "Nothing has happened; don’t overthink it. Stay here with Mother tonight. If you get tired, go to sleep in the place you used to sleep as a child. I’ve already prepared it for you."

"No, something must have happened." Prince Fifteen’s face went pale, "Is it about Liuying... What have you done to her? Even if there are issues between us and Zhuzhao Country, she is innocent."

"Fifteen..." The Empress Dowager looked at him with disappointment and said, "She is a Princess of Zhuzhao Country. If we go to war with Zhuzhao Country, she will be the first to be sacrificed."

"Why should we go to war with Zhuzhao Country?" Prince Fifteen pushed away the Empress Dowager and said, "No, you can’t do this. She is my Princess Consort."

With a cold turn, Prince Fifteen strode out of the palace.

The Empress Dowager was momentarily stunned, then shouted loudly, "Guards, seize him, don’t let him leave the palace."

The Empress Dowager had prepared in advance. People were already lying in wait inside and outside her chamber. Upon hearing her order, they immediately sprang from hiding and surrounded Prince Fifteen.

Prince Fifteen was now certain that something had happened to Jin Liuying. They had brought him to the Imperial Palace early in the morning just to make it easier to act against Jin Liuying.

She, a delicate and sheltered Princess, had never suffered such treatment. He couldn't imagine what they might have done to her.

Chapter 1390: Can't Hide It Forever

Thinking about this, his heart ached intensely. Although he still didn't know what had caused the Emperor and the Empress Dowager to completely break with Zhuzhao Country, in his heart, Jin Liuying was the wife he had married from afar; how could he let others bully her?

He stepped forward and directly grabbed the first person who rushed at him, reaching out to snatch the knife from his hand.

Soon he was fighting with those imperial guards.

The Empress Dowager came out supported by the maids, shouting loudly, "Fifteen, why do you persist like this? Mother did it all for your own good. Women from other countries are unreliable, do not resist."

Prince Fifteen's eyes were ice-cold, filled with hatred for people like them.

They were the ones who had initially ordered him to marry, yet now, do they want his home to be in shambles?

In their eyes, what was he but a tool to be used and sacrificed at any moment?

The Empress Dowager sighed, "Why do you insist on this? Even if you go back now, it won't matter; she is no longer at the Prince Residence."

Prince Fifteen paused in shock and was immediately slashed on the arm by a guard with a knife.

The Empress Dowager screamed in fright, “Oh dear, be careful, Fifteen, Fifteen, are you alright?”

The Empress Dowager pushed away the maids supporting her and hurriedly ran towards Prince Fifteen, saying, “What’s going on? Get back.”

Prince Fifteen, clutching his wounded arm, angrily shoved the Empress Dowager aside and walked step by step towards the palace exit.

The Empress Dowager staggered backward a couple of steps and was caught by the approaching maid.

She looked at the stubborn Prince Fifteen and sighed, “It’s truly a sin. Why did I believe their words in the first place, and why are they now reneging? This stubborn child… sigh, you quickly go and bring the Emperor here. I need to ask him what on earth is going on.”

The guards looked at each other, mustering the courage to ask, “Empress Dowager, Prince Fifteen has left. Should we pursue him?”

The Empress Dowager replied, “Forget it, forget it. You can conceal it for a while, but can you conceal it forever? Go, call the Emperor.”

…

Prince Fifteen rushed back to the residence. The servants, who had been tense all day, finally found their backbone when they saw him return.

“Prince, the Princess was taken away this morning.”

“Where was she taken?” Prince Fifteen disregarded his injured arm and grabbed a maid to ask.

The maid was so frightened by Prince Fifteen's pale and fierce expression that she shook her head vigorously, "I don't know. The ones who came were officers, they said they were acting under the Emperor's decree to take the Princess away. We didn't dare to stop them."

"The Emperor's decree?" Prince Fifteen closed his eyes in pain. These people… for what reason?

He pushed the maid aside, tore a piece of cloth to roughly bandage the wound, and ran back towards the Imperial Palace.

"Prince, your wound…" the maid called out to him worriedly.

"Get out of the way!" His shadowy eyes emitted a terrifying light, scaring everyone from blocking his path again.

In the Imperial Palace, the Emperor of Nanzhao was in the Empress Dowager's chambers.

The Empress Dowager sighed lightly, "What is all this about? Can you tell me now? Don't say they have other motives; I don't believe it."

The Nanzhao Emperor slightly lifted his eyes and said, "Since Mother does not believe it, why help me?"

The Empress Dowager replied, "That is because you are the Emperor, and Mother believes everything you say is right, and every decision you make is well thought out. But this time… this time, I am not convinced. Do you have solid evidence proving they have ill intentions towards our Nanzhao? If you cannot present a reason that will silence the people, how do you plan to handle it?"