Farmhouse 1491

Chapter 1491: Crisis

With the help of Jin Zijin and others, Xiao Jinfei's forces broke through the West City Gate, and soon, the battle situation at the West City Gate experienced an overwhelming reversal.

Xiao Jinfei's troops, with unstoppable momentum, slaughtered the guards at the West City Gate, leaving none alive, and they marched towards the Imperial Palace directly to the east.

"Great Prince!"

Jie Zhonglin came out from that uncle's house, holding a spear he picked up from the ground.

"Second Young Master Jie, how is the situation now?"

Jie Zhonglin hurriedly said, "They have controlled the ministers loyal to the Emperor. I sneaked out from my home. Judging by the situation in the Imperial Palace, it seems dire. Today, they are forcing their way into the palace; I'm afraid the Emperor is in grave danger!"

Yue Rujing slapped his thigh and shouted, "That group of madmen must be rebelling, the Emperor is really in danger! Senior Brother, we must hurry."

Jin Zijin tightly gripped the long halberd in his hand and strode towards the direction of the Imperial Palace.

The advance of the soldiers in front gradually slowed down and even began to retreat.

Yue Rujing grabbed one of the soldiers and urgently asked, "What's going on?"

The soldier said, "Many enemies have appeared ahead!"

Yue Rujing's eyes darkened, he leapt up, treading on the heads of people to quickly check ahead.

Moments later, he returned, cursing angrily, "The Beiping Army has arrived, they entered through the North Gate, confronting us directly.

Senior Brother, don't hesitate, kill without restraint, if we delay any longer, the Emperor will be in danger."

Jie Zhonglin disapproved, "These people are all from Zhuzhao Country. If we fight recklessly in a street battle, corpses will be strewn everywhere. Great Prince, we had better come up with a plan, preferably to win without bloodshed."

Yue Rujing's eyes lit up and said, "Yeah, Senior Brother, don't you have the Zhuzhao Pearl? Take out the Zhuzhao Pearl, it's even more effective than the Jade Seal. With the Zhuzhao Pearl in hand, who would dare not obey?"

Jin Zijin grandly took out the Zhuzhao Pearl and casually threw it to Yue Rujing, saying indifferently, "Look at them, they've gone mad with killing. You try and see how many will still acknowledge this Zhuzhao Pearl?"

Yue Rujing: "…"

"What should we do then? In this situation, even if the Emperor came, I'm afraid no one would acknowledge him!"

Jin Zijin's eyes darkened gradually, and he said in a low voice, "To catch the thief, first capture the king. Ajing, don't mind these fighting soldiers for now; find Jin Tianyuan first!"

"Alright, I'm going now!" Yue Rujing nodded and quickly disappeared into the crowd.

"Jin Yan!" Jin Zijin called Xiao Jinyan, who was fighting nearby, to come over.

“What is it, Cousin!”

Jin Zijin said, “Tell your brother, no matter what, hold on until we capture Jin Tianyuan!”

“Yes!”

The Beiping Army entered the city at this time, combining forces with other guards to form a pincer attack against the soldiers who broke through the West Gate. Seeing the soldiers who had struggled to enter the city die and suffer countless casualties, everyone looked grim.

We could only hope that Jin Zijin and Yue Rujing could quickly find Jin Tianyuan among the three armies.

…

Inside the Imperial Palace, Jin Tianzhong searched everywhere but couldn’t find the Jade Seal, and there was no trace of King Jin and Lin Qianqing.

Lin Xingyi and Madam Lin had been brought to the palace, with Madam Lin crying non-stop. Every time Jin Tianzhong asked, she cried even louder.

Lin Xingyi sighed, “No matter how many times you ask, our answer remains the same. We really don’t know where Qianqing went. Since she tearfully entered the Zongrenfu to see King Jin that day, she hasn’t returned. People say she refused to leave and wants to stay in the Zongrenfu forever with King Jin.”

Chapter 1492: The Empress Dowager’s Life-Saving Talisman

“Indeed!” Madam Lin cried, “I thought, when you marry a chicken, follow the chicken; marry a dog, follow the dog. Since she was set on King Jin, it was fine for her to go with him. Being shut in the Prince Jin Residence is a lifetime, being shut in the Zongrenfu is also a lifetime. As long as she doesn’t regret herself, but I didn’t expect… I didn’t expect she’s no longer in the Zongrenfu…”

She looked towards the emperor suffering from a stroke and said, “The emperor has become like this now, who else knows their whereabouts? Whether they are still alive is unknown. I only have this one daughter, and if I die in the future, there will be no one to mourn me; my fate is so miserable…”

Jin Tianzhong finally realized that bringing Lin Xingyi and his wife here was a mistake.

Now the two were hugging their heads in suffering, making such a racket that his head felt like it was splitting.

If it weren’t for the fact that he had few relatives left, and his elder brother had instructed him to ensure their safety, he thought he might not be able to control himself and cut her down with a sword.

Unable to get any useful information from Lin Xingyi and his wife, with the noble concubine deceased, the emperor struck with madness, ordinary concubines in the palace couldn’t possibly know such important news—only the Empress Dowager remained?

“Empress Dowager…” Jin Tianzhong stepped towards the frail old woman, seeing the corpse on the ground, the Empress Dowager was already terrified of Jin Tianzhong.

Seeing him coming towards her, she grabbed Li Gugu’s hand even tighter.

“Empress Dowager, don’t be afraid, ah…” Before Li Gugu could finish speaking, she was grabbed by Jin Tianzhong and tossed aside.

The Empress Dowager’s legs were bad; without a cane, without anyone to support her, she couldn’t even stand up, helplessly watching Jin Tianzhong approach holding a blood-stained knife.

“You… what are you going to do? I don’t know anything!”

The Empress Dowager, flustered, held onto the life-preserving charm given by the emperor.

The emperor had said to open it when absolutely necessary, isn't now the absolutely necessary time?

Fumbling, she took out the small box from her sleeve, only for Jin Tianzhong to see it keenly and snatch it up.

"What is this?"

The Empress Dowager was startled and cried out, "Give it back to me…"

Jin Tianzhong watched the Empress Dowager's expression, seeing her so nervous, he suspected it must be an important treasure.

A palm-sized box, could it be… Jin Tianzhong's eyes widened, laughing loudly, "Could this be the long-lost sacred object of Zhuzhao Country, the Sun Zhuzhao?"

The Empress Dowager didn't know what it was, but hearing what Jin Tianzhong said, she thought it was possible.

Oh heavens, if it truly was the Sun Zhuzhao, the emperor entrusted such an important item to her, yet she hadn't even had the chance to look at it before it was snatched away by Jin Tianzhong; even in death she would have no words for the ancestors of the Jin Family and the royal lineage…

"Haha, it must be, it must be. With this, why do I still need the Jade Seal? Whoever possesses the Sun Zhuzhao is the monarch of Zhuzhao Country, why still need the Jade Seal? Hahaha…"

Everyone stared at the box in Jin Tianzhong's hand, thinking that if the Sun Zhuzhao was truly in that box, coupled with the brute force of Jin Tianzhong and his brothers, should they claim the throne, truly no one would dare say anything.

Jin Tianzhong laughed loudly, convinced the treasure cherished by the Empress Dowager was the long-lost Zhuzhao Pearl, laughing as he held high and opened the box…

With a sudden whoosh, as the box opened, something inside suddenly flew up into the sky.

Everyone craned their necks to see what had flown out of the box.

Chapter 1493: Fifty Thousand Troops Have Been in Beijing

After a long, loud bang, it exploded in the air like a firework.

A bright red lotus appeared in the sky, lingering for several breaths before vanishing.

This didn’t just resemble a firework; it was clearly a firework.

A firework made from special materials!

Jin Tianzhong was stunned for a moment, holding the empty box and murmuring, "How could it be a firework? No... impossible, how could it be a firework? No, where is my Sun Zhuzhao? Where is my Sun Zhuzhao?"

He angrily grabbed the Empress Dowager’s arm and loudly questioned her.

The Empress Dowager also didn’t understand why the important item the emperor handed her was a firework, but of course, she couldn’t say that at this moment.

She shook her head and said, "It was a firework all along, what Sun Zhuzhao? It was a firework all along!"

Jin Tianzhong wished he could kill her.

"You’re treasuring that broken firework so much?"

"This... this was something the late Empress Dowager bestowed upon me, of course, I cherish it!"

While the people in the Imperial Palace were arguing endlessly over a firework, in Beijing, every corner was undergoing tremendous changes.

With the appearance of the red lotus firework, ordinary people who had been immersed for decades gradually put away their usual appearances, changing into unfamiliar expressions and transforming into different people.

"Red lotus firework, I thought I would live peacefully for the rest of my life, but it has still appeared."

A middle-aged man from a blacksmith shop put down the heavy hammer in his hand and pulled out a sword from the bellows beside the stove.

His wife, in a panic, looked at him and said, "What are you doing? How... how do you have such a sword?"

The middle-aged blacksmith's appearance was no longer the same as usual, lacking the rustic simplicity and instead his eyes were sharp, his voice calm.

"Wife, I never got the chance to tell you, I am actually a soldier!"

"A soldier?"

Clearly, he had been just an honest blacksmith from the time she knew him!

The blacksmith smiled and said, "Our kind of soldier is somewhat special, not obeying the general's orders, nor the emperor's mandates, but only the red lotus... Wife, you saw that red lotus in the sky just now, as soon as the red lotus appears, it is our time to fulfill our mission."

Although the blacksmith's wife didn't quite understand what he was saying, what she could confirm was that her husband was not an ordinary person.

Her heart raced, and she trembled as she asked, "Will you... will you still come back?"

"I don’t know!" the blacksmith said, "Perhaps I will if I’m still alive!"

In the tailor shop, the master with exquisite tailoring skills put down the scissors, took off the long robe that refined scholars would wear, and changed into an outfit for competitions!

The chubby shopkeeper of the Bun Shop was actually very agile, wielding a sword and effortlessly performing beautiful sword moves.

And the clerk at the pharmacy, the brick-moving laborer earning a living through hard toil, the wealthy merchants of one area...

Countless people suddenly became someone else, and even their closest bed companions didn’t know they had another identity.

The Red Lotus Army.

Everyone knew that Zhuzhao Country had a million soldiers, but no matter how they calculated, there were only nine hundred and fifty thousand. Some speculated that the remaining fifty thousand were in the emperor’s hands, yet no one knew where those fifty thousand were.

It turned out that the emperor spent years secretly integrating those fifty thousand soldiers into ordinary citizens.

Some of them became blacksmiths, some became tailors, some opened bun shops, and some even became wealthy merchants of a region...

They didn’t go anywhere, but were instead hidden among the ordinary people of Beijing.

The tightly closed doors of the citizens gradually opened, yet the people who walked out were unlike ordinary citizens.

Chapter 1494: The Legendary Team

The men are still the same, but now their demeanor is much more formidable than those soldiers locked in battle.

“Protect the emperor, slay the traitors, kill…”

Everyone was stunned by this sudden appearance of commoners.

How could these be ordinary citizens? They were far more ruthless at killing than these soldiers, almost like a specially trained elite force.

With the Red Lotus Army joining, Xiao Jinfei’s troops immediately felt the pressure lessen significantly.

They were headed to protect the emperor, and Xiao Jinfei’s people were also breaking through toward the Imperial Palace, so their objectives did not conflict.

Instead, the ones trying to stop them became the enemy of this force.

“Who are these people?” Xiao Jinfei asked in astonishment.

“No idea, but they seem like the city commoners, hey, isn’t that Boss Niu?” Xiao Jinyan exclaimed loudly.

“City commoners?” Xiao Jinfei mused thoughtfully.

Xiao Jinyan laughed heartily, “Haha, have the commoners finally had enough? Big brother, look, they’re here to help us!”

Ordinary citizens? People who looked like citizens, yet somehow didn’t.

Jin Tianyuan hid in a restaurant, looked at the situation outside through the cracks in the windows, and angrily said, “Who are these people?”

These ferocious individuals all seemed to appear out of nowhere.

Those below replied, “They are just the commoners of the city!”

“Common people? Have you ever seen common people more ferocious than soldiers?”

The shopkeeper glanced over, saying, “General, they really are the people of the city, look, isn’t that the owner of the Satin Store?”

“Oh dear, there’s even the Bun Shop owner!”

“And that one, the tailor from the clothing store!”

Jin Tianyuan’s face had turned as black as the bottom of a pot.

Though he grew up following his father in the Beiping Army Camp, he returned to Beijing every year, but he had no idea that the people of Beijing could be like this?

Even a tailor could take up a knife and kill, how was this battle still to be fought?

But suddenly, he thought of something and abruptly gasped.

He stood back up excitedly, pushing open the window.

“It’s them, it’s them!” he muttered.

Jin Tianyuan’s soldiers pulled him back inside, shutting the window tight, “Great General, be careful!”

“Who are they?”

Jin Tianyuan collapsed into a chair, saying, “It’s them, the fifty thousand Red Lotus Army in the emperor’s hand.” He exclaimed with wide eyes, “Yes, that red lotus in the sky just now, it is the Red Lotus Army. Grandfather searched everywhere for that fifty thousand Red Lotus Army, but in vain. So all along… they were in Beijing all along, hidden among the ordinary people.”

“Or rather, maybe they actually are just these common city people. Well done, Jin Moning, Jin Moning…”

Jin Tianyuan looked ashen!

His subordinates hurried to console him, “Great General, don’t fret, as long as King Jin becomes the Crown Prince, becomes the emperor, we won’t fear these fifty thousand Red Lotus Army!”

“Really?”

But just as he finished speaking, the window suddenly shattered into pieces, and in the next second, a bright red dagger was already at Jin Tianyuan’s throat.

The speed was too fast, and despite his extensive battlefield experience, Jin Tianyuan found himself completely powerless, already at the mercy of the enemy.

Consequently, a torrent of murderous intent engulfed them, shocking even those who had witnessed countless bloody battlefields!

“Jin Zijin?”

Jin Moning executed a perfect strategy. Without the ruthless decision of sending Jin Zijin to the Dao Family back then, how could such unparalleled skills that ordinary people only dreamed of have been honed?

Chapter 1495: The Final Struggle

Zijin coldly watched him and said to the approaching Yue Rujing, “Arrest him, enter the palace!”

No one could stop them from entering the palace. Outside Renshou Palace, Jin Tianzhong, who had been eagerly waiting for Jin Tianyuan, finally awaited his arrival.

Jin Tianyuan, dressed in armor and looking imposing, entered the palace. Jin Tianzhong was overjoyed, as were the ministers who supported them.

Although it was not as seamless as passing the throne to King Jin, at least it was a success!

However, Jin Tianyuan’s actions left everyone puzzled.

Jin Tianyuan stepped down from the carriage, removed his helmet, and knelt before the emperor’s bed, prostrating himself, saying, “Sinful minister Jin Tianyuan greets the Emperor!”

What is happening?

The crowd was collectively stunned.

A line of people slowly ascended the steps, and as everyone turned to look, their eyes widened in surprise.

Over there, the Empress Dowager, with tears in her eyes, was momentarily stupefied, then cried even harder.

“Zijin, is that you, Zijin? Oh, your father, your father…” The Empress Dowager had reached her limit, and upon seeing Jin Zijin, her rescue had arrived, and she could no longer hold on, fainting on the spot.

“Ajing!” Jin Zijin looked at Yue Rujing, who nodded slightly and hurried to support the Empress Dowager and diagnose her ailment.

Beside them, several Imperial Physicians were kneeling. Seeing this, even a fool understood who had won and who had lost.

If they don’t express their loyalty now, when else would they?

Everyone swiftly approached the Empress Dowager and began providing her with emergency care.

Xiao Jinfei coldly looked at Jin Tianzhong, who was dumbfounded and unresponsive, smirked slightly, and said, “Arrest all these rebels.”

Seeing the armored soldiers approaching him, Jin Tianzhong finally realized.

He was closest to the Emperor and suddenly sprang up, reversing to seize the Emperor, placing his knife on the Emperor’s shoulder.

Is this a desperate act of defiance?

The crowd was so frightened they cried out repeatedly in alarm.

Jin Tianzhong knew they had failed, but he still couldn’t believe it, turning to look at Jin Tianyuan, asking, “Brother, what is this?”

Jin Tianyuan maintained his prostrated position, not daring even to look at him.

Jin Tianzhong understood in his heart; they were finished, completely finished.

When Jin Zijin appeared before him, he knew they were utterly done for.

“Hahaha…”

He laughed maniacally, saying, “Brother, you said, if this action fails, we would perish. Even if we had to fight to the last soldier, we should never become their captives. You said, we would rather die standing than live kneeling. What are you doing now? Tell me, what are you doing now?”

Jin Tianzhong’s hand holding the knife trembled, and although the weather wasn’t that hot, he was already drenched in sweat.

Compared to death, what he feared more was Jin Tianyuan’s kneeling.

He called himself a sinful minister, so what did that make all their actions? Would kneeling forgive such a grave sin?

“Brother, get up!” Jin Tianzhong shouted loudly.

Everyone watched him, witnessing how the once high-spirited Jin Tianzhong now resembled a defeated stray dog.

Jin Tianyuan remained silent, letting Jin Tianzhong curse him in anger.

Jin Tianzhong closed his eyes in despair, completely giving up on this coward afraid of death.

He was not afraid; he had the Emperor in hand, and even in death, he would drag the Emperor down with him.

He had made a military pledge; if he failed, he would give up his life.

Chapter 1496: Death

Jin Tianzhong’s face twisted with madness, he bared his teeth as he looked at Zijin and laughed, "You’re still too late. Look at the Emperor, he’s already crippled. What did the Imperial Physician call it? A

stroke? He’s just like a living dead man. There’s no point in him living like this; why don’t I help you all kill him?"

Zijin replied calmly, "You can try killing him!"

"You think I dare not?"

"Oh, you dare!"

Zijin’s calmness was identical to the Emperor’s, making Jin Tianzhong a bit uneasy.

Zijin said lightly, "As you said, he’s already crippled. Living is just suffering. You might as well carry another crime of regicide. Then I can properly destroy you!"

Madam Lin cried out urgently, "Tianzhong, stop it, will you keep making mistakes now?"

Jin Tianzhong suddenly looked downcast and said, "Even if you still consider yourself a Jin, recognize yourself as someone who walked out of the Ducal Residence, at this point, you shouldn’t cling to survival. You should, like your other sisters, take your own life to comfort the hundreds of souls from the Ducal Residence!"

Lin Xingyi stepped forward, pulled Madam Lin behind him, and said sternly to Jin Tianzhong, "You are indeed incorrigible, bringing disaster upon yourself, that’s exactly the kind of person you are."

Jin Tianzhong’s face grew colder, he tightened his grip on the Emperor’s neck and threatened everyone coldly, "So what? With the Emperor backing me, I won’t lose!"

Unexpectedly, Jin Tianyuan suddenly stood up and whispered, "Tianzhong, let the Emperor go, for the sake of hundreds of thousands of soldiers!"

"Big brother?" Jin Tianzhong widened his eyes, "What are you saying, big brother? Killing the Emperor would avenge the family, how can I let him go?"

"But they’re already dead, and so many people are still alive. Do you want everyone to die with you?"

"But isn’t it you who said? Either succeed or die trying, fight to the last soldier!"

Jin Tianyuan took a deep breath, tightly closed his eyes for a moment.

"No, I can’t watch those brothers who have been with me for years go to their deaths with me!"

Jin Tianzhong shouted, "We all swore to live separately but die together as brothers, what are you afraid of? You fear death, but I do not!"

Truly a madman.

On the other side, the Empress Dowager had already awakened under everyone’s assistance, though she was still weak, groaning softly.

She looked over at Jin Tianzhong, who held a large knife to the Emperor’s neck, her eyes wide open, and shouted, "If you have the guts, come at me, this old woman. Let the Emperor go!"

Jin Tianzhong sneered, "You a mere wench, how can your life compare with the Emperor’s?"

"I... I know where the Jade Seal is, I’ll give you the Jade Seal..." The Empress Dowager shouted loudly.

Jin Tianzhong was furious, wanting her to take out the Jade Seal earlier. This old woman was quite the actress, saying she didn’t know.

Now he had become a fugitive, what use was the Jade Seal? To smash his own head and commit suicide?

This anger nearly made him spit blood.

"Hmph, no need for that, today I'll kill the Emperor right in front of you all and die with him..."

With that, he fiercely moved the knife towards the Emperor's neck.

Everyone gasped in shock.

The dagger in Zijin's hand had already flown out.

Yue Rujing's Soft Sword shot towards Jin Tianzhong's neck like a swimming dragon.

In that brief instant, the Emperor, who had already had a stroke and couldn't move, suddenly turned his head, and a delicate little knife ejected from the ring on his hand, stabbing towards Jin Tianzhong's abdomen.

Chapter 1497: Gu Youyou Is Back

And Jin Zijin's dagger, knocked away the knife in Jin Tianzhong's hand, slicing it in two.

Yue Rujing's soft sword left a light wound on Jin Tianzhong's neck.

In this moment, everyone present held their breath.

A stabbing pain came from his lower abdomen, and Jin Tianzhong looked down at his own abdomen.

The small, sharp knife was pulled out, and his abdomen immediately gushed blood.

"You... you were... faking?"

The next second, his head suddenly tilted to one side in a strange manner and he completely lost his breath.

Only then did everyone notice that Yue Rujing's sword, which appeared to have left a shallow wound, had actually sliced off half his head!

Jin Tianzhong's legs buckled, and he knelt on the ground, his head hanging partly on his shoulder, yet his body did not fall.

This sight was truly terrifying.

There was a cry of alarm from the crowd, especially among the concubines of the harem, who had seen the dead before, but not such frightening ones.

Only Jin Zijin, who had withdrawn his dagger, looked at him indifferently and said, "Kneeling, you die just the same!"

...

After this battle, the streets and alleys of Beijing were piled with corpses and blood.

The common people emerged from their courtyards, joining in the cleanup efforts.

Numerous bodies were thrown to the outskirts of Beijing, to be either burned or buried in mass graves.

For ten consecutive days, the cries of women, children, and the elderly could be heard from time to time, and yellow paper could occasionally be seen blown by the wind on the streets.

That was the paper money used by the living to mourn those who had died.

Until, a heavy rain washed away all the blood and drowned out all the cries, so they could no longer light the yellow paper...

Ten days later Gu Youyou arrived, dragging her exhausted body through the gate of Beijing, only to be scooped off her horse by a man who placed her into a carriage that had long been prepared.

"Zijin? How is everything?"

Jin Zijin poured her some water and softly said, "The rebellion has been quelled, but Father truly doesn't have long."

Gu Youyou was slightly stunned, looked at him, and only then noticed that his complexion was somewhat haggard.

This was the first time Jin Zijin addressed the Emperor as Father in front of her. Before, he would only call him that in unavoidable public situations; privately, he always referred to him as the old man or the Emperor.

It seemed that with the Emperor's illness, the knot in their father-son relationship had finally unraveled.

The carriage sped towards the Imperial Palace, while behind them, Duan Xiaomei, almost collapsing on her horse, shouted loudly, "Hey, hey, wait, there's still me..."

Gu Youyou rode faster and had more endurance than she did, which was quite disheartening for her.

Once in town, someone had personally helped Gu Youyou off her horse, while she hadn't even seen a ghost, leaving her feeling quite aggrieved.

Duan Xiaomei dismounted, her legs trembling as she stood.

At this time, a young soldier approached her, saying, "Excuse me, are you Miss Duan?"

Duan Xiaomei leaned against the horse and nodded slightly.

The young soldier, with a joyful expression, said to her, "Miss Duan, please come with me."

"With you?" Duan Xiaomei straightened her body to examine the man and asked, "Who are you?"

The soldier explained, "This is arranged by the Crown Prince. The Crown Princess has entered the palace; you are to wait for them at the Prince Residence first!"

Duan Xiaomei, now utterly exhausted and without the energy to clarify the reason, could only follow the young soldier to the Crown Prince Residence to wait for them.

On the way, Jin Zijin spoke to Gu Youyou about the rebellion and the Emperor's condition.

Chapter 1498: Where's the Son?

"Father Emperor has been ill for a long time. Initially, it wasn't serious, but he insisted on holding out, worsening his condition. Since the day he killed Jin Tianzhong, he fell into a coma. It has now been ten days, and the Imperial Physicians are helpless. It all depends on you now."

"I will do my best!" Gu Youyou said.

If it were any other doctor saying such words, Jin Zijin might not have been pleased, but he knew that when Gu Youyou said she would do her best, she meant it with all her might.

The carriage quickly reached the Imperial Palace. They did not disembark, but drove directly to the Qianqing Palace.

Gu Youyou was led into the palace and ate something in the carriage, rested a bit, and now felt slightly more rejuvenated.

The Qianqing Palace was filled with the pungent scent of medicine. Dozens of Imperial Physicians and doctors summoned from among the populace gathered in one place, discussing with worried expressions. Upon seeing Gu Youyou, they looked as if they'd seen their linchpin, their eyes lighting up as they gathered around her.

Jin Zijin had already informed her of the Emperor's condition on the way. Facing the enthusiastic Imperial Physicians and doctors, Gu Youyou only nodded slightly as a greeting and hurried into the inner chamber.

The Emperor was getting older, and upon hearing Jin Zijin's account, she was deeply concerned.

It had been a long time since she'd last seen the Emperor. Seeing him again, she found he was terribly thin, almost skeletal.

As one ages, illness strikes like a collapsing mountain.

She quickly started to diagnose the Emperor, and moments later, Shopkeeper Hu from Jisheng Hall brought out a set of tools she had left behind.

Shopkeeper Hu said, "Doctor Gu, we have been maintaining these tools carefully and they can be used directly."

"Hmm!" Gu Youyou softly acknowledged and took out a set of long needles.

"Take off the clothes and help the Emperor sit up!" Gu Youyou instructed.

Surrounded by the Imperial Physicians and doctors, Gu Youyou began to perform acupuncture on the Emperor in front of everyone.

After using dozens of needles, more than two hours had passed.

A palace maiden brought a towel to wipe her sweat, changing it one after another.

After a while, Gu Youyou removed all the long needles from the Emperor's body one by one, and the previously comatose Emperor suddenly coughed and spat out a mouthful of clotted blood!

Gu Youyou let out a breath of relief and said, “Thankfully, it came out!” If it hadn’t, it probably would have required surgery, but without the necessary conditions here, she wasn’t confident.

After expelling the clotted blood, the Emperor slowly began to wake up, and smiles of relief spread among those present.

“The Emperor is awake, the Emperor is awake!”

“Indeed, the Emperor has finally awakened.”

“Doctor Gu is remarkable, her skill is incredible!”

The Emperor’s gaze swept over everyone, finally resting on Gu Youyou’s somewhat pale face.

Gu Youyou said, “There is no longer any threat to his life. Tomorrow, I will apply another set of acupuncture and couple that with some medication, and he will recover.”

On the other side, the Empress Dowager, who hadn’t had a good night’s sleep, was overjoyed and in tears, “Emperor, now you can rest assured. Look, Zijin has returned, the rebels have been put down. Now Youyou has returned, and your illness can be treated.”

The Emperor glanced at everyone, still extremely weak. He just lightly nodded his head.

Gu Youyou was also exhausted. Jin Zijin helped her to Zhongcui Palace to rest, but just as she got up and walked a few steps, she suddenly stopped.

“Where’s Xuyao?”

Xuyao?

Jin Zijin’s face darkened slightly and said, “You should go rest first; have a good sleep. Once you wake up, I’ll take him to see you.”

Gu Youyou stared into Jin Zijin’s eyes, which were usually calm and unmoved, now showing a hint of panic.

She then looked towards the Empress Dowager, who avoided her gaze and looked away.

Chapter 1499: In the Secret Room

Gu Youyou felt a chill down her spine, judging from their expressions, Xuyao was in trouble.

She said, "I won’t sleep, I need to see him right now!"

Fully aware of Gu Youyou’s temperament, Jin Zijin knew there was no fooling her, and he was not skilled at deception.

He had no choice but to say slowly, "We haven’t found him; I’ve heard that the palace maiden Long Yi took him out of the palace and went to Xining, probably to seek help from my uncle."

"Does your uncle have people there?" Gu Youyou tightly grasped Jin Zijin’s sleeve.

Jin Zijin gently shook his head and said, "The people we sent have not returned yet, let’s wait a bit longer!"

Gu Youyou felt it couldn’t be that simple, as she tightly clenched her fist.

In fact, Jin Zijin also had doubts. Why go to Xining? Why not go directly to Jinxiu City and find Xiao Jinfei?

But they searched the entire Imperial Palace and still couldn’t find anyone, and the only person who knew their whereabouts, Consort Sheng, was dead.

Meanwhile, the weakened emperor gently said, "Go to Qiaoyue's bedchamber, there...is a secret chamber there. If Qiaoyue intended to hide someone, that chamber would be the best place."

Only the emperor and Consort Sheng knew about the secret chamber. After Consort Sheng's death, the emperor was in a coma, so they had no idea about the chamber until now.

Jin Zijin and Gu Youyou rushed to Consort Sheng's bedchamber, where they found the mechanism mentioned by the emperor. Once opened, it revealed a secret chamber.

Inside was a middle-aged woman holding a child in her arms.

When Jin Zijin and Gu Youyou last saw Jin Xuyao, he was still an infant, but now he was a toddler over two years old.

His face was very different from what she remembered, but even so, Gu Youyou recognized him instantly.

The men of the Jin Family Imperial Family all have similar eyes—Jin Zijin, Jin Ziyuan, Jin Xiaoran...

With just one glance, you can see their familial bond.

Gu Youyou suppressed the turmoil within her heart, controlled her emotions about to burst forth, and tried her best to approach him calmly.

"Xuyao!" Gu Youyou crouched down, smiling warmly, and beckoned to him.

Long Yi put down Jin Xuyao, bowed, and greeted Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin.

"Greetings to the Prince and the Princess Consort."

Jin Zijin raised his hand to let her stand up.

Jin Xuyao no longer recognized Gu Youyou, looking at her, he held Long Yi’s hand tightly.

This hurt Gu Youyou deeply.

Long Yi crouched down and whispered to him, "Little Highness, that’s your mother, go ahead!"

Jin Xuyao looked at Gu Youyou and then at Jin Zijin, and suddenly said, "Then you must be my father?"

These words left everyone feeling a bit surprised.

Jin Zijin, who stood a bit behind, had intended to let Gu Youyou have some intimate time with their son first, but did not expect that their son was not very interested in Gu Youyou, yet recognized him at first glance.

His heart was filled with joy, though he felt a bit guilty seeing Gu Youyou’s stiff smile.

He stepped forward, crouched in front of Jin Xuyao, and smiled, "Yes, Xuyao, do you remember your father?"

Jin Xuyao shook his head.

Jin Zijin asked, "Then how did you recognize me?"

Jin Xuyao said, "Because the Imperial Grandmother said that although you look like my third uncle, you have similar eyes!"

Jin Zijin laughed heartily and lifted him up.

Jin Xuyao held onto Jin Zijin's neck and giggled, the two of them were loving and harmonious, leaving Gu Youyou's heart aching as she was left aside.

Her child whom she gave birth to, the child she raised, was ultimately defeated by the strong genes of their family.

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Chapter 1500: Cleaning Up Courtiers

The Emperor had recovered well in half a month and was finally able to attend court.

The atmosphere in the court was somewhat eerie, with half of the ministers kneeling bare-chested with twigs on their backs, faces ashen. This was because they had been influenced by Jin Tianzhong of the Beiping Army and entered the palace to force the Emperor to abdicate, nearly causing his death.

They thought that no one is punished if the number is large, so they came up with this method.

Now that the Emperor was well, he was ready to settle scores with them in the autumn.

Looking at those slicked-back bare-chested individuals, the Emperor nearly fainted again in anger.

He knew that Jin Tianyuan and Jin Tianzhong would have quite a number of supporters, but he never expected them to rally so many to their cause.

Is this his empire, his ministers?

The usually calm Emperor, upon taking his seat on the Dragon Throne, could not hold back his temper and smashed an ink stone on the desk.

"Hmph, I have raised a group like you? To conspire with traitors against the throne!"

No one spoke, bowing their heads, obediently kneeling on the ground.

After all, there were as many involved as half the court, they did not believe it, could the Emperor kill half of the court directly?

They had already discussed it secretly and decided to kneel together, allowing the Emperor to say what he wished, to scold as he pleased, and they would say nothing.

However, some loyal ministers thought differently, such as Jie Huanzhi who stood out and straightforwardly said, “Your Majesty, I earnestly request that Your Majesty hand them over to me for interrogation!”

The Emperor glanced at Jie Huanzhi with indifference but smiled and said, “What is there to interrogate? I saw clearly how they acted against me, they are all traitorous ministers!”

Jie Huanzhi said, “Although they are all guilty of great rebellion, there are still distinctions to be made. Your Majesty, I propose to thoroughly interrogate them and classify their crimes into gradations, so you may decide whether they should be punished or executed based on the severity of their crimes!”

This made the ones kneeling in penitence uneasy.

Rebellion is a crime punishable by extermination of the family, and they had not heard that rebellion could be classified into gradations; everyone had committed the same crime of rebellion, the outcome would be the same, so they had been unified.

But now, with Jie Huanzhi proposing to classify them, some would live and some would die, and with these differences, how could they remain calm?

Especially the leaders, their faces changed.

The Emperor looked coldly at the crowd and said, “Hmm, Minister Jie speaks reasonably. Very well, this matter shall be entrusted to you!”

“Yes, Your Majesty!”

The Emperor looked at those guilty ministers kneeling and in a bad mood, he angrily ordered, “Guards, take them all to the Ministry of Punishment’s Prison!”

At this, half of the court was emptied, looking at the remaining ones, the ones unyielding even unto death, the Emperor’s heart was mixed, he stood up, descended the steps, standing on the same level with them.

The Emperor raised his hand and said to everyone, “Ministers, you have suffered much!”

The ministers were fearful and hastily knelt to return the salute to the Emperor, pledging loyalty.

“We swear to be loyal to Your Majesty until death!”

“We swear to be loyal to Your Majesty until death!”

Such voices echoed throughout the Taihe Hall, elevating the previously low atmosphere.

The entire scene was one of unity between sovereign and ministers.

The Emperor appeared joyful and laughed heartily, saying, “Good, with such loyalty from my ministers, what is there to fear?”

The Emperor returned to the Dragon Throne and sat, waving his hand, “Bring Jin Tianyuan up!”

Soon, Jin Tianyuan, the main leader of the Beiping rebellion, was escorted up by several guards.