Farmhouse 1581

Chapter 1581: Double Blessings Arrive

Gu Youyou brought the good news brought back by Madam to the Lin Family and told the Old Madam Lin and Madam Lin.

Madam Lin couldn’t help but cry with joy, and the Old Madam Lin cried along with her, wiping her tears and happily saying, "Finally, things are good. Qianqing is doing well with King Jin outside, and now has a child. They have their own little family and have completely separated from their identity in Beijing. Ayuan, this is good news, stop crying. Later, when Xingyi comes back, tell him too, let him share the joy."

"Okay, Mother, Xingyi will definitely be happy to hear this!"

"Oh, my dear granddaughter, now everything is fine." She excitedly held Gu Youyou’s hand, saying, "My granddaughter is also good. They all say King Jin is infertile, but Youyou managed to cure him. My Youyou is indeed capable!"

"Yes, Youyou is very capable!" Madam Lin echoed.

"Youyou, did they say when they will come back? Sigh! No idea where they are. Will they come back in time for the pregnancy?"

Gu Youyou felt embarrassed.

Madam Lin hurriedly said, "Mother, didn’t we agree not to ask where they are? When they have thought it through and want to come back, they naturally will. We just need to know they are doing well. Whether they return, it’s entirely up to them."

"Yes, yes, it’s all up to them!" The Old Madam Lin patted her thigh.

She then turned to Gu Youyou and said, "Our family is doubly blessed now, Shenxing’s marriage with the Tao Family is settled, at the end of this month. Youyou, this is all thanks to you!"

Gu Youyou smiled and said, "Actually, I didn't help much. I'm not familiar with the families in Beijing. It was all thanks to the efforts of the Second Madam from the Jie Family, she was the one who made the selections."

"Yes, indeed, the Second Madam from the Jie Family has a good eye. I very much admire her full embroidery!"

Gu Youyou chatted with the Old Madam Lin and Madam Lin for a while, then returned to the Ningwang Residence.

The factory in Yangguan City has already started construction, and the business will gradually move south. Everything seems so orderly. Once things settle, they might leave Beijing.

But Gu Wu was still enjoying good food and drinks every day, being treated well by the Zhang Chancellor. This was quite puzzling, and it weighed heavily on Gu Youyou's mind, becoming a nagging worry.

Searcy had developed a better antidote for the Soul-devouring Poisonous Insect and was planning to let Jin Ziyuan try it. Noticing Gu Youyou's gloomy demeanor, she casually asked.

"Have you encountered something troublesome again?"

Gu Youyou looked out the window, gently twisting a strand of her hair and said, "Yes, I have concerns."

"Oh? Let's hear it!" Searcy said with a look of interest.

Gu Youyou rolled her eyes at her and said, "You seem to be in quite a good mood despite my worries?"

"Yes, indeed!" she replied.

Gu Youyou: "..."

She stood up and said, "There’s something off with the Zhang Family. Chancellor Zhang has been under house arrest for a month, yet Gu Wu doesn’t seem affected at all."

"Hmm?"

"Sigh! Do you think someone like Chancellor Zhang would nurture an idle person without reason and even give him a lot of silver daily, allowing him to socialize and drink?"

Searcy thought for a moment and said, "Chancellor Zhang has no connection with Gu Wu, right? A person wouldn’t treat another person well without reason, that’s certain. The reason he’s spending so much silver on Gu Wu is purely because Gu Wu is your uncle, and the Zhang Family wants to target you."

Chapter 1582: Feeling Uneasy

"Yes!" Gu Youyou nodded and said.

"Do you know how they plan to deal with you?"

This was precisely what Gu Youyou couldn’t figure out. It’s just an uncle, a poor relative, so what if she, Gu Youyou, was snobbish and looked down on poor relatives, what could they do?

Besides, she, Gu Youyou, was not that kind of person. There were reasons why Erya and her brother did not acknowledge their father.

If she couldn’t figure it out, she would just put it aside. Gu Youyou sighed and said, "When the troops come, we’ll counter with generals; when the water flows, we’ll block with earth. Anyway, it’s not my Silver being spent; let’s see what Prime Minister Zhang plans to do with me?"

Counting the days, there should be about ten days left before Prime Minister Zhang’s house arrest is lifted, right?

He cannot leave his residence now. Before his house arrest is lifted, he cannot cause any trouble.

"Let’s go, we’ll first deliver this medicine to Madam Ru, and then check on how Jin Ziyuan is doing."

...

Zhang Shiyu was astounded to hear that Prime Minister Zhang surprisingly registered that little beggar to partake in the imperial examination.

She hurriedly found her father and said, "Dad, aren't you being too kind to those two beggars? The old beggar keeps taking Silver from the Accountant's Office every day, and it's increasing day by day, do you know that?"

Prime Minister Zhang responded indifferently, "I know!"

Zhang Shiyu rolled her eyes and said, "Fine, the old beggar is for our grand plan. Dad already mentioned that this money is considered spent on big matters, so let's leave it at that. But why did you register that little beggar for the imperial examination? What can a beggar possibly achieve by taking the exam? Can he demand more Silver by participating in the imperial examination?"

Prime Minister Zhang cast a cold glance at his daughter and said, "Since when did you become so petty? It's just a small effort on my part."

"Why help him? Look at that beggar father and son, strutting like they own the place in our home, almost the equals of the masters."

"This is only temporary, Shiyu, you must hold your patience!" Prime Minister Zhang said calmly.

"But a beggar taking the imperial examination, and recommended by you, Prime Minister Zhang? If he fails, wouldn't that be so embarrassing? Dad, you rarely recommend anyone for the imperial examination, and even the worst one you've recommended became a successful laureate. You can't let your lifelong reputation be ruined because of your sympathy for a beggar. Dad, are you getting more muddle-headed with age?"

Prime Minister Zhang burst into a proud smile and said, "Since you know your dad is formidable, what is there to worry about? Your dad's judgment has always been accurate, there's no mistaking it!"

Zhang Shiyu looked at Prime Minister Zhang incredulously and said, "So, does that mean Dad thinks that little beggar has some scholarship? But isn't he a beggar?"

"Silly girl!" Prime Minister Zhang slowly said, "There is no such thing as a born beggar. Look at Gu Shuisheng, how does he look like a born beggar? He fell into destitution only after experiencing some mishaps. Judging by his appearance, I believe he led a wealthy or noble life, and his knowledge isn't too bad. He's quite talented. This year's candidates don't have anyone exceptionally brilliant. Maybe if he's lucky, he could even become the top scorer."

Zhang Shiyu detested that beggar father and son, but has been tolerating them because of the need to deal with Gu Youyou.

Now, hearing her father praise that little beggar so, she felt uneasy.

She originally had a sense of superiority in front of the two beggars, but if the little beggar really lucked out and became the top scorer of this imperial examination, how could she flaunt herself before them?

Prime Minister Zhang naturally understood what his daughter was thinking, and merely said, "If he indeed becomes the top scorer, he will naturally be grateful for your dad's recognition and guidance. It would only benefit us with no harm."

Chapter 1583: An Unexpected Arrival

"Huh, some people just become successful and then act all high and mighty. He probably even thinks he was wronged at our residence!"

"He's not that kind of person!" Zhang Xiang said: "From the way he repaid Gu Wu, it's clear that he's a person of deep feelings and righteousness. Shiyu, you're judging him with a petty mindset."

Zhang Shiyu was taken aback, stomped her feet in anger, and said haughtily, "In your eyes, even a beggar is more important than your own daughter. Father, my life is so miserable. First, I was betrayed by my sister and mother, and now I'm in my late twenties and still unmarried. If you don't care, fine, but you're actually concerned about some beggar's future—that really drives me mad!"

From time to time, Zhang Shiyu would complain, and Lord Zhang had grown accustomed to it.

Initially, he would console her out of guilt, but now he just watched with indifference.

He would only speak to her once Zhang Shiyu's tirade had subsided.

"Did I hear that Madam Ru came back with Jin Yi?"

Zhang Shiyu stopped crying and said, "Their return has nothing to do with us, right? Even the Emperor hasn't said anything. Are you planning to report them, Father?"

"What kind of nonsense are you thinking, child?" Lord Zhang said irritably: "I'm currently under house arrest, where would I have the ability to report them? Besides, I have no grudge against Madam Ru and her son."

"Then why suddenly ask about them?"

Lord Zhang stroked his beard and squinted, saying: "I heard that Jin Yi is now a living dead man, and Madam Ru found Gu Youyou to treat him?"

Zhang Shiyu nodded and said, "That's true, but Gu Youyou is a doctor. Isn't treating people a normal thing for her?"

Of course, for anyone else, it wouldn't be normal. Who would still treat patients after becoming a princess? But Gu Youyou was different—she's always been unconventional. Even if she becomes Empress, patients will still call her Doctor Gu; she won't abandon her medical skills.

Lord Zhang pondered, stroking his nose, and said: "I feel something's not right. When you have time, try to find out if there's anything suspicious going on between them."

Zhang Shiyu: "…"

Her father always has more ideas than others, but she had grown used to it.

“Alright, Father, just take this time under house arrest to rest well. Stop overthinking. If there’s anything that must be done, just leave it to me.”

“My daughter has grown more sensible!”

…

In a quiet and tidy courtyard, Gu Youyou had just administered a new medication to Jin Ziyuan through intravenous injection.

The conditions here were limited, and this was the only set of utensils she had crafted with skill. The new drug was also being tried for the first time, so she dared not take any chances and stayed by his side after administering it.

“How long do you plan to stay?” Searcy asked while tidying up.

Gu Youyou replied, “Adverse reactions to these drugs tend to occur in the first four hours, so I’ll stay for four hours.”

Searcy looked up at the sky and said, “It’ll be dark in four hours. Why don’t you have Madam Ru watch over him? If there’s any issue, she could send someone to inform you.”

Gu Youyou sighed helplessly and said, “In emergencies, every second counts. By the time Madam Ru sends someone to fetch us, he might not make it.”

Searcy rolled her eyes and said, “Fine, stay if you want. I’m leaving!” She packed everything into a box and slung it over her back.

“Hey, wait with me.”

Gu Youyou got up and grabbed her, saying, “What’s the rush? I know what you’re thinking. In any case, stay with me, so you don’t run your mouth and stir up more trouble.”

Chapter 1584: Who Will Be the One to Awaken?

Searcy let out a cold chuckle.

Soon after, Madam entered with a maid carrying some pastries.

She smiled lightly and said, "Thank you, both doctors, please have some pastries first!"

It was mid-afternoon, and there was a slight hunger. The delicate pastries brought by Madam were very appetizing.

Neither Searcy nor Gu Youyou were picky people, so when invited to eat, they did.

Gu Youyou asked softly, "How often does he react?"

Madam paused for a moment and sighed, "Well, it’s uncertain. Two days ago, he moved a finger, and I thought he was waking up, but he didn’t. Three days ago, when I talked about something I mentioned before, he cried again, and then the time before that..."

Madam seemed made of water, and as she spoke, she began to cry heavily.

Her stunning face couldn’t hide the severe dark circles from crying so much, and her eyes looked much older than her face.

Gu Youyou had to put down her pastry and comforted her, "Madam, there’s a saying that crying blinds the eyes, and it’s not an exaggeration. Crying too much can truly blind you. Anger hurts the liver, joy hurts the heart, sorrow hurts the lungs, overthinking hurts the spleen, and fear hurts the kidneys. If you fall ill, who else in this world can take care of Jin Ziyuan?"

Searcy also put down her pastry and looked at Gu Youyou in surprise. She quickly moved her lips to swallow what was in her mouth, as she had something to say.

Gu Youyou quickly grabbed a piece of pastry and stuffed it into her mouth.

What comes out of her mouth would not be pleasant, so it’s safer to block it with pastry.

Madam sighed softly and said, "Alright, alright, I won’t be sad, and I won’t cry, as long as Ziyuan can wake up. Doctor Gu, when will Ziyuan wake up?"

For patients who are in a vegetative state, no one can clearly say when they might wake up.

Gu Youyou sighed lightly, "Soon, I hope. Each person’s situation is different, so it’s hard to say. Since Jin Ziyuan moves his fingers occasionally, it shows that he’s close to waking, so please, Madam, be patient!"

Madam nodded; patience? Patience was the only thing she had left now.

Four hours later, Jin Ziyuan’s physical condition was no issue, so Gu Youyou and Searcy went back.

It was already dark, and lanterns were hanging on the carriage.

Madam escorted them out and watched them get into the carriage.

Gu Youyou waved and said, "Madam, please go back. It’s late, and the night air is heavy with dew. It would be best to have someone watch over Jin Ziyuan throughout the night."

"Alright, I will. You two be careful as well."

"Okay, if there’s anything, send someone to inform me."

Inside the carriage, Searcy slowly said, "It seems like Jin Ziyuan is really about to wake up. Have you had any strange thoughts?"

Gu Youyou’s face darkened, and Searcy hurriedly explained, "I mean, who exactly is the person waking up?"

Gu Youyou’s heart skipped a beat and asked, "What do you mean?"

"What else do I mean?" Searcy lowered her voice and said slowly, "Last time in the desert, wasn’t that eerie enough? You tell me, when Tian Jizi was about to die, was it merely a return of consciousness or a real soul switch?"

This was a secret, a truth that no one knew. Anyone who witnessed that scene stayed tight-lipped about it. One could say that the mad old man who couldn’t distinguish his identity in the end, whether he was Yu Jizi or Tian Jizi, had become a taboo no one dared to mention.

"Bringing that up all of a sudden, what do you intend to do?" Gu Youyou lowered her voice, her heart filled with great doubt as well.

Chapter 1585: Leaving a Backdoor

Speaking of which, she was more terrified than anyone.

No one knew better than she herself how she came to this world.

Others might say it was Tian Jizi’s dementia acting up; they might not believe such a vital thing could happen, but as someone who experienced it firsthand, how could she persuade herself not to believe?

Searcy’s expression darkened as she gazed at Gu Youyou’s face, knowing the answer in her heart. She said, "I’m really afraid that the person we worked so hard to revive would be that old foul Yu Jizi. Even more terrifying is if he uses Jin Ziyuan’s body for his own purposes, while a whole crowd of stubborn fools stop me from killing him."

Gu Youyou remained silent, feeling deeply worried.

Searcy sighed, "Last time when I returned from the desert, I went back to the ruins of the Ghost Doctor Family and burned incense, telling them the family’s great vengeance had been avenged." She sneered

and continued, "Indeed, I haven’t met them, but it’s not good to deceive them with joy, right? Since I’ve said the vengeance was avenged, if it hasn’t, I would spend my life making sure it does."

Gu Youyou sighed and said, "Why think so much? Let’s talk about it when he wakes up!"

Searcy tilted her head and said, "You also can’t be sure that the one who wakes up will definitely be Jin Ziyuan, right? If the one who wakes up is actually Yu Jizi, you won’t stop me from killing him, will you?"

Gu Youyou smiled bitterly and said, "If the one who wakes up really is Yu Jizi, do I need to stop you? He could wipe you out in minutes. Don’t worry, with your venomous mouth, I won’t stop you from sending yourself to die."

"Ha, who’ll be crying by then is yet to be known. At least he hasn’t woken up yet, his little life is still in my hands."

Seeing Searcy so smug, Gu Youyou’s heart skipped a beat and said, "What do you mean."

Searcy squinted, a hint of venom sliding through her eyes.

"I trust you understand my meaning."

Gu Youyou: "..."

"Don’t tell me you poisoned him."

"Sure did!" Searcy didn’t deny it, still looking very pleased with herself.

Gu Youyou, extremely infuriated, said, "Jin Ziyuan’s body condition is already very dire now, and you poisoned him too—do you want him dead?"

Searcy said indifferently, "No choice, I had to take precautions. If the one who wakes up is not Jin Ziyuan but that old bastard, none of us will be his match. I had to preemptively set him up to feel secure!"

"You... you'd be better off not defending at all—poison Jin Ziyuan with one dose, then burn the corpse to ashes, and you'd be satisfied." Gu Youyou covered her forehead, saying, "We are doctors, not going down the path of a tyrant who'd rather kill a hundred mistakenly than let one go."

Seeing Gu Youyou getting increasingly agitated, Searcy had to explain impatiently, "Don't worry, this poison has a long incubation period, a whole month. If it's confirmed he isn't Yu Jizi, I will neutralize the poison before it acts. Anyway, he has to take medicine every day, I can secretly detoxify him without being discovered, so don't worry blindly."

Gu Youyou: "..."

"You didn't even discuss it with me before poisoning, what else can I say? Let's hope what you've done is the right choice."

...

For several days in a row, Gu Youyou and Searcy stayed during the day in the courtyard rented by the Madam, watching over Jin Ziyuan's medication, only leaving when no special reactions occurred, usually when it was already dark.

This matter was seen by the servants of the Zhang Family and reported to Prime Minister Zhang and Zhang Shiyu.

Chapter 1586: Something's Off

"Master, Second Miss, there's definitely something off about Gu Youyou. She goes out for consultations every day, heading to Madam Ru's place to treat her son."

Zhang Shiyu immediately said, "That Gu Youyou doesn't just go on consultations for anyone. For a destitute household like Madam Ru's to have Gu Youyou going day and night without complaint, that's quite something."

“Face? I fear there’s something fishy!” Chancellor Zhang said slowly.

“Go, continue monitoring, and see what they’re up to.”

A moment later, the maid’s voice rang out from outside: “Master, Master Gu requests an audience!”

Zhang Shiyu’s eyebrows furrowed as she said, “What’s that old beggar doing here?”

Her voice wasn’t quiet, and standing just outside the door, Gu Wu’s brow furrowed deeply upon hearing it.

Coming to Beijing and to the Chancellor Residence had indeed been a blessing; an endless supply of silver and servants to command—these were things he couldn’t have even dreamed of before.

But regardless of how freely he spent money, treating those fair-weather friends to meals and drinks almost every time, they still looked down on him. They would call him brother on the surface, but behind his back, they’d say he was a beggar and wonder what madness possessed Chancellor Zhang to take in such a beggar.

Such is human nature; when one’s needs are unmet, one’s focus is on survival, but once full, the mind drifts to other desires.

Now, what Gu Wu wanted was for his noble status to be recognized as soon as possible so he could tell those who looked down on him that Chancellor Zhang treated him well to win favor because he was the Emperor’s in-law!

So today, he came to ask when Chancellor Zhang planned to take action.

Gu Wu was invited in, leaving only Chancellor Zhang, his daughter, and Gu Wu in the room.

“Brother Gu, what brings you to see me? Could it be you’re running out of silver?”

Gu Wu froze for a moment, hastily replied, “No, no, Chancellor is so generous, the silver is sufficient. It’s just that after spending so much silver, I wonder when I’ll be able to repay it. My heart feels quite guilty. May I ask Chancellor Zhang, when can I reunite with Youyou as father and daughter?”

Zhang Shiyu sneered at Gu Youyou having such a father, but also found it amusing.

Ultimately, a chicken coop doesn’t breed a phoenix; just look at her father. With a father like that, how could Gu Youyou come out unscathed?

She looked at her father and couldn’t help but marvel at the skill of being born into the right circumstances—in this matter, Gu Youyou truly lost out.

Chancellor Zhang paused for a moment, then burst into laughter, saying, “Brother Gu, why are you in such a hurry? Could it be that you’re not comfortable living in my residence?”

Zhang Shiyu, more than anyone, wanted Gu Wu to recognize his kin as soon as possible, and she quickly said, “Father, the man longs for his daughter; keeping him here like this isn’t good, is it?”

Chancellor Zhang glared coldly at Zhang Shiyu, and she immediately fell silent.

Gu Wu smiled wryly, saying, “Chancellor, it’s not that I’m impatient; it’s just that… staying in your residence, eating and drinking for free, and even taking a lot of your silver makes me uneasy!”

“Oh! It’s just making friends,” Chancellor Zhang said with a generous smile. “If that’s how you think, then I might think that you’re looking down on me.”

Seeing Chancellor Zhang’s expression, both profound and with a hint of anger, Gu Wu dared not say more and promptly laughed along, saying, “As long as you don’t mind, Chancellor, I’ll follow your lead.”

Chapter 1587: Inquiring About Childhood Events

Chancellor Zhang’s complexion finally improved somewhat, and he said, "That’s better. When the time is not ripe, you should eat and drink as you please. Although my Chancellor Residence is not as grand as

the Ningwang Residence, I can still afford to give Brother Gu some money for drinks. Don’t feel embarrassed; I consider you a friend!"

Gu Wu was no fool; he was quite clear who was truly a friend.

But it didn’t matter. After all, each was seeking what they needed, and they all wanted Gu Youyou to have bad luck.

"By the way, Brother Gu, are you not busy at the moment?"

Gu Wu hesitated slightly, not knowing what Chancellor Zhang, with his hidden agenda, intended. He merely replied, "I’m just an idle person, not busy with anything."

Chancellor Zhang nodded with a smile and said to Zhang Shiyu, who stood nearby, "Shiyu, go out and play. Father wants to have a word with Brother Gu."

"What could you possibly say that your daughter can’t hear?" Zhang Shiyu asked, clearly displeased.

"Be good, now go!" Chancellor Zhang said patiently.

Ever since his eldest daughter and his wife passed away, he had been exceptionally lenient with this second daughter, who was difficult to marry off and was now his only legitimate daughter.

He was so lenient that Zhang Shiyu often took advantage of his favor.

But there was no helping it—after all, she was the only legitimate young lady in the residence.

Zhang Shiyu pouted, glared angrily at Gu Wu, and then left the room.

With the door closed, the light in the room remained bright.

Because several tiles on the roof were made of glass tiles from Gu Youyou’s Xiguang Residence, arranged in a fashionable floral pattern.

And the windows, too, were made of transparent glass. With the curtains drawn back, the sunlight poured in with a unique charm.

Gu Wu sat somewhat uneasily opposite Chancellor Zhang, who smiled as if to say something, but seeing Gu Wu’s unease, he simply said,

"Brother Gu, please have some tea!"

Gu Wu took a sip from the teacup, just enough to alleviate some of the pressure.

Chancellor Zhang looked around, and his gaze finally landed on the window opposite. He laughed and said, "Brother Gu, what do you think of my French window?"

Gu Wu put down his teacup, still unsure of Chancellor Zhang’s intentions in keeping him alone. But since Zhang had asked about the window, he decided to offer a few compliments.

"It’s great—grand, transparent, and beautiful!"

It was rare for a rough fellow like Gu Wu to string together several words of praise, even if they were somewhat clichéd.

Chancellor Zhang laughed heartily and said, "Indeed, this window is wonderful. It’s all thanks to this large piece of glass. Without glass, no one would dare to install such a large window."

Gu Wu nodded, still nervously watching Chancellor Zhang.

Chancellor Zhang gave him a sidelong glance and said, "Do you know what glass is? And where it came from?"

Gu Wu hadn’t spent a month on the drinking tables of Beijing in vain; he knew quite a bit now.

Especially about someone as famous as Gu Youyou. Not long ago, Chancellor Zhang had deliberately spread stories about Gu Youyou, causing another stir about her.

The tales about her had long been topics of great interest among the citizens of Beijing.

He said, "It originated from... my daughter’s Xiguang Residence. It’s a blessing that Chancellor Zhang appreciates it!"

Gu Wu had learned to speak more literately, though it was a bit awkward like a parrot mimicking human speech, making the genuinely cultured and refined Chancellor Zhang show a constipated expression.

Chancellor Zhang coughed into his empty fist and said, "Brother Gu, could you tell me what the Princess Consort of Ning looked like in her childhood?"

"In her childhood?" Gu Wu thought for a moment and said with some difficulty, "She fell ill at a very young age and moved into a separate room. It was said that her illness couldn’t be exposed to sunlight, and no males in the family were allowed near her. I have forgotten what she looked like in her childhood."

Chapter 1588: Back When Jin Zijin Was a Poor Hunter

Minister Zhang raised an eyebrow and said, "So, the first time Princess Ning left the house was when she got married?"

"Yes, back then Ning Wang wasn’t the Emperor yet. He was a poor hunter from our village with no parents, no big house, and no one was willing to marry their daughter to him. My father thought Youyou couldn’t survive any longer, so he married her off hoping to bring good fortune and even promised a hefty dowry! Oh, who would’ve thought he had such a status? If we had known, I... I would have..."

Gu Wu initially wanted to say that he would have married Erya to him, but upon seeing the crafty, somewhat sarcastic look on Minister Zhang’s face, he swallowed his words and said instead, "We should have treated him better. Back then, living off hunting in the mountains wasn’t easy; it was a tough life."

Minister Zhang naturally knew some of the reasons behind it. He paid no mind to what Gu Wu said about Jin Zijin, focusing instead on Gu Youyou.

How did an ordinary farm girl, kept at home for years, come to know so much?

"And what about Princess Ning? What kind of person did she become after marrying?"

"Her?" Gu Wu's eyes evaded slightly as he replied, "Due to her chronic illness, the family didn't treat her very well either."

"Hmm!" Minister Zhang expressed his understanding, "As they say, 'In long sickness, no filial children exist by the bedside.'

"Indeed, especially since both my elder brother and sister-in-law are dead, and I... I couldn't acknowledge her. My wife and second sister-in-law both treated her badly, and the rest of the family wouldn't let anyone visit her. Naturally, she harbored some resentment towards our family, except for her grandfather, who always protected her, and my father."

"Oh...?" Minister Zhang's expression was somewhat profound.

"Later, she became successful, apprenticed under Doctor Zhou in town, and then became a doctor at Jisheng Hall. Doctor Zhou praised her intelligence, saying she could learn anything instantly." At this point, he suddenly choked up a bit and said, "I remember her mother was also very clever, quick to learn anything, even inventing things others couldn't."

Minister Zhang knew a bit about Doctor Zhou, who was the Imperial Physician from the palace back then.

The family of Imperial Physician Zhou had met a tragic end, with the entire family wiped out. In the last imperial examination, Doctor Zhou's adopted son participated, and the Emperor made an exception, granting him the title of Tanhualang.

Originally, they wanted to retain him in Beijing for management, but he was unwilling and insisted on returning to Yangguan City, Qingshui Town.

Qingshui Town had no suitable official position for him, so later they arranged for him to be a low-ranking, seventh-grade official in Yangguan City.

After chatting with Gu Wu for a long time, apart from his puzzling portrayal of Gu Youyou and her mother as child prodigies, Zhang didn't glean any useful information, leaving him somewhat disappointed.

Seeing that it was getting late, Minister Zhang let Gu Wu go.

Gu Wu, full of concerns, returned to his own courtyard, where it was already dark, and heard the voice of a woman speaking.

Oh, no, it should be said it was the sound of quarreling.

"Little beggar, if you don't come up with a matching couplet for this today, you can forget about staying in this courtyard. Hmph, my biggest regret was taking in you two beggars."

The person inside remained silent, but outside, Gu Wu was furious.

This young lady of the Zhang Residence went too far. Yes, they had once been beggars, but they were no longer beggars now; what right did she have to look down on people like that?

I heard that this adopted son was going to take the Top Scholar examination and his excitement rivaled that of becoming the Emperor's in-law.

His own two biological sons' attitudes towards him were really disheartening, but of course, he had expected this. Their mother committed suicide, and their grandfather died, and the two children blamed all of it on him.

Chapter 1589: Dreaming Sweet Dreams

But as for Gu Youyou, he turned to her out of necessity, with little hope.

However, this adopted son was different. When they found him, he was wearing luxurious clothes, and his features were refined, clearly not an ordinary person. Of course, the most important thing was that he was grateful and repaid kindness; he was filial. If he became the Top Scholar, he would surely repay him well.

Then he would be the father of the Top Scholar.

No matter what happens with Gu Youyou, he still might have a son who is the Top Scholar.

Heaven truly has not been unfair to him!

Just as he stood there, he heard humiliating words coming from the house.

“I think you’re just a swindler, cheating for food and drink, aren’t you? How did you and your father trick my father into supporting you? Oh, you, a beggar, want to become the Top Scholar? Hmph, you can’t even solve my couplet, and you want to become the Top Scholar? You should look in the mirror and see yourself clearly, like how Xiguang Residence is a demon-reflecting mirror, showing your true self so clearly.”

Then, there was the sound of something being thrown to the ground. The person being scolded still remained silent.

Gu Wu endured and endured, but couldn’t bear it anymore. He strode into the courtyard, only to see that Gu Shuisheng’s door was wide open, and the servants were bending over at the door to sneak a peek, while inside, Miss Zhang was yelling like a shrew who had eaten gunpowder.

And his adopted son was steadfastly holding a pen, sitting at the desk and writing something.

Gu Wu, unable to contain his anger, shouted, “Shuisheng, are you just going to sit there and let them insult you like that?”

It was disgraceful.

Gu Shuisheng glanced up at Gu Wu, and calmly said, “A man of virtue tolerates all, his chest swallows broad rivers.”

Gu Wu: “…” Anyway, he didn’t understand.

Zhang Shiyu: “… Are you saying this lady’s tolerance is small?”

Gu Shuisheng ignored her and continued writing.

Zhang Shiyu couldn’t let it go and continued questioning, “Little beggar, what do you mean by that? Do you look down on me? Why do you have the right to look down on me? I am the only legitimate Miss of the Zhang Residence, while you’re just a beggar. Now you can sit here because of my father’s charity, understand?

Today my father is in a good mood and gives charity to you, but if my father gets upset tomorrow, you’ll be kicked out immediately and become beggars again, understand?”

Gu Shuisheng was like a deaf person with no response.

But Gu Wu couldn’t stand such humiliation and angrily shouted, “Miss Zhang, have you forgotten one thing? We didn’t ask to come here; you brought us here. Yes, we used to be beggars, but even as beggars we have dignity.

We don’t steal or rob. If others are willing to give us food, we eat it. If not, as long as you, Miss Zhang, say so, I’ll immediately take my family, Shuisheng, back to being beggars. Hmph, even as beggars, we wouldn’t cling to you; you can be a hundred percent assured.”

Miss Zhang’s face turned ashen with anger, thinking she didn’t want to drive these two beggars away, but her father wouldn’t agree, would he?

As always, she regretted the most in her life bringing these two beggars home, adding to her own annoyance.

“You… What do you two beggars have to be arrogant about? You want to be beggars, huh? Hmph, you dare talk to this lady like that? You just wait, I’ll go tell my father now to have him kick you out as beggars.”

Finally, Miss Zhang stomped off angrily, and only then did Gu Wu, frustrated, tap Gu Shuisheng’s head and say, “I know you’re not ordinary, you can study. Fine, they say scholars are gentle, but you’re too gentle, aren’t you? They’ve insulted you to your face.”

Chapter 1590: Stifled

Gu Wu watched as Gu Shuisheng continued to write, and he couldn’t help but grow impatient, shouting, “Write, write, write! Even when people scold you, you’re still writing. Can you actually write anything?”

Gu Shuisheng, writing all the while, slowly responded, “Serenity leads to profundity.”

Gu Wu: “…”

He didn’t understand a single word.

“Shuisheng!” Gu Wu wanted to say something but hesitated, then sighed and waved his hand, “Forget it, just keep studying!”

Gu Wu returned to his own room and gave Xixi a good scolding.

Today, by chance, Zhang Shiyu was teaching Gu Shuisheng a lesson, and Gu Wu increasingly felt uncomfortable living under someone else’s roof.

He liked money, liked the endless wealth found in the Zhang Residence, but he also liked power.

Having lived well these days, money alone could no longer satisfy him.

He felt he was born to be extraordinary, definitely not just some common local tycoon.

A few days ago, he saw Lin Xingyi, riding in an official sedan. Even though he merely passed by him, it made him extremely envious.

He still remembered when Lin Xingyi was a boy, they weren't much different. Yet Lin Xingyi had spent most of his life in the bustling city of Beijing. Such wealth and glory made him envious beyond measure.

He had such a good opportunity in front of him, so many chances. If Lin Xingyi could do it, why couldn't he?

…

Gu Wu outwardly held a handful of silver and looked for people to drink and feast with, appearing carefree; but inside, he felt greatly depressed.

In the Zhang Family, from top to bottom, those people looked down on him, and he could see it clearly. But he believed his identity was much nobler than the Zhang family's. He should be akin to royal kin, and the Zhang Family should be trying to curry favor with him. Why did they look down on him?

In anger, today he drank a lot more booze.

"Brother Gu, I heard the owner of this restaurant has a bottle of Daughter's Red Wine that's been stored for twenty years. We've been craving it for a long time, but the owner just won't sell it. Do you have the face to get the owner to sell that twenty-year-old Daughter's Red Wine so we can taste it?"

Gu Wu had already been half-drunkenly swayed, hearing a rotund man say this, the phrase 'face' stung his heart. He immediately shouted, "Sell! Make him sell it! I have money, I have plenty of money. Just yesterday, Zhang's Accountant's Office sent me silver notes. Is there anything I can't drink with the money I have?"

With that, he slapped a stack of silver notes on the table, making the eyes of the group of cronies go wide.

It's truly infuriating to compare oneself to others. How could someone like Gu Wu earn the favor of Chancellor Zhang? Was Chancellor Zhang out of his mind, giving him endless silver to squander?

Truly, heaven is unfair; why hadn't they come across such good fortune?

The likes of Chancellor Zhang, a fool with money, they wished for a cart full of him.

The rotund man exchanged furtive looks with a long-robed man sitting nearby, who immediately understood and sneakily slipped out.

What intrigued them most was what exactly went wrong with Chancellor Zhang to treat Gu Wu so well?

Of course, Chancellor Zhang couldn't truly be out of his mind; there must be some unspeakable reason. But Gu Wu kept his mouth tightly shut, refusing to say anything every time they asked.

Even when drinking, he never drank more than seventy to eighty percent. This time things were different; they had to seize this chance to get the answers they sought.