Farmhouse 161

Chapter 161: The Gate of Life of the Innate Eight Trigrams

Gu Youyou looked at the stone disk and deduced that all she needed to do was to find a Life Gate immediately!

Kun is Death, Gen is Life, Li above and Kan below, Kun and Xun signify shoulders, Zhen and Dui mark the central path, while Gen and Qian are situated to the left and right respectively.

"Found it!" exulted Gu Youyou, her eyes shining with excited light. She rotated the stone disk to position the Gen trigram at the Life Gate.

Soon, a rumbling sound echoed through the tomb chamber.

But contrary to Gu Youyou's expectations of the tomb door opening, the top of the tomb chamber started making increasingly loud thumping sounds, as if it could collapse at any moment.

As the noise grew louder, chunks of stone mixed with dust began to fall, and the chamber's walls started to show web-like cracks!

Gu Youyou was terrified!

What was happening? She had clearly found the correct Life Gate.

Suddenly, Gu Youyou had a realization.

She muttered softly to herself, "No, this isn't right!"

She had calculated the Life Gate of Chen according to the Acquired Bagua, but the owner of this tomb had otherworldly ambitions; he intended to become a fairy, so he must have used the Innate Eight Trigrams instead.

Instantly, two Eight Trigrams appeared in Gu Youyou's mind, and she compared them. In the Changtian Eight Trigrams, Qian is above and Kun below, with the Life Gate of Chen located at the lower right, while she had opened the lower left, which according to the Innate Eight Trigrams would be the Gate of Zhen.

Gu Youyou quickly adjusted the Bagua to the correct position. She patted her chest, relieved that at least it wasn't the Death Gate; otherwise, the tomb door would never open!

The tomb chamber's door did open, revealing a narrow and long corridor.

Yet the shaking of the chamber did not stop. Stones kept falling and the man inside the coffin still stood there. Gu Youyou, startled, wrestled with her conscience momentarily, not wanting to see a living person die before her eyes.

With gritted teeth, she dashed into the shaking chamber and vigorously pulled the man's hand, dragging him out.

"Come with me, quickly, this place is collapsing."

The chamber shook violently, but the man remained unmoved, making Gu Youyou both anxious and angry. What a fool!

"Hurry up, do you want to be buried alive?"

Although she had eventually found the Life Gate, the Gate of Zhen she had previously triggered had already begun to activate—sooner or later, the chamber was doomed to be destroyed.

The man still looked dazed, and in her urgency, Gu Youyou grabbed his hand and bit it hard.

Out of anger and haste, she bit fiercely, immediately drawing blood.

The intense pain shocked the man, coursing through his brain.

His mind sharply cleared, and he grunted in pain.

"Who are you?" the man asked in surprise, looking at the woman currently biting his arm.

Gu Youyou lifted her head abruptly and exclaimed, "You're not dumb? Nor mute?"

This was the first time Gu Youyou had heard the man's voice, which sounded raw and husky, perhaps from not speaking for a long time.

"What?"

A larger stone fell from above, hitting Gu Youyou's shoulder. It didn't strike bone but scraped her skin, causing such pain that she gritted her teeth.

Summer clothes are thin, and this impact tore the fabric off her arm, even ripping off a patch of skin, causing beads of blood to emerge. Against her fair skin, it looked particularly horrific.

In agony, Gu Youyou furiously cursed at the man responsible. "Come out now! Don't you see this place is collapsing?"

The man's eyes darkened just as an even bigger stone fell.

With a nimble turn, he dodged the large stone and used the momentum to leap out of the coffin.

As Gu Youyou clumsily dodged the falling stones from the ceiling, she suddenly felt lighter. A whirlwind seemed to engulf her, and the next moment, she was in the arms of the man, who was sprinting towards the open tomb entrance.

...

Chapter 162: Finding the Entrance

Jin Zijin rapidly darted through the woods, gripping a sachet in his hand identical to the one given to Gu Youyou. The sachet trembled violently, signaling to him that he was getting ever closer to that place.

However, it was this very place he had visited countless times over the year, turning over every stone without finding what he was searching for.

Jin Zijin stopped and stood still, looking down at the sachet in his hand, then taking in the terrain around him.

It was no different from any other part of the mountain, ordinary rocks and trees. Had he not been certain that she was here, he probably wouldn't have lingered at all.

He chuckled wryly, "The dubious tombs set by the hermit Xuanzong, how could they be so easily found?"

At the foot of the mountain, a tree shook violently, startling the birds perched above and catching Jin Zijin's attention.

His gaze darkened as he raced toward that direction!

From the hollow of the giant tree emerged a small wolf cub, covered in green moss and looking utterly bedraggled.

Jin Zijin felt a tinge of disappointment, but in the next moment, his eyes widened.

The cloth around the wolf cub's leg... the blue fabric with the tiny floral pattern. Wasn't that the very same clothes Gu Youyou was wearing the day she was taken?

So, the tomb entrance was beneath this tree.

Despite its impressive size, the tree appeared to be no more than a hundred years old. Who could have imagined that this tree, as if planned hundreds of years ago, would grow right at the mouth of the tomb, conveniently concealing the entrance?

The little wolf cub struggled to run off into the distance. Jin Zijin paid no mind to it and approached the tomb entrance instead.

A rusted Feather Arrow shot out from the opening, causing Jin Zijin's face to register shock as he swiftly dodged to the side.

The arrow struck the tree branch, dislodging one as thick as an arm that crashed down behind Jin Zijin with a thunderous fall.

Cool as ever, Jin Zijin's eyes, eagle-like, stared intently at the tree hollow. He drew a palm-sized dagger from behind his leg, its blade not the usual glaring white but a fiery red color.

Another Feather Arrow shot from the hollow, but with a swift flick of his dagger, Jin Zijin sliced the arrow in two.

His gaze fixed and intense, Jin Zijin gripped the dagger tightly and jumped into the tree hollow.

Beneath was another world, the exact tomb passage he had been searching for.

Soon, he spotted a figure flashing past at the end of the passage. Without hesitation, he pursued where the shadow had vanished.

He then realized that what had seemed to be the end of the tomb passage was actually a three-way fork, with paths diverging to the left and right.

Jin Zijin had seen the figure flee down the left path, but he didn't chase after it immediately, instead carefully scanning the area ahead.

The passage was narrow, wide enough for only one person to move through with outstretched arms. There was nowhere to run.

Tiny particles of dust drifted from above, gently landing on the tip of his nose.

Jin Zijin's expression darkened, and as he suddenly looked up, he caught sight of a dark silhouette swiftly making its way toward the direction of the tree hollow.

He had been outmaneuvered.

Tightening his grip on the dagger, Jin Zijin immediately went after the shadow.

Sounds of clashing weapons echoed through the tomb passage, their shrillness amplified in the confined space.

The wild man, wielding a rusty knife, fought while retreating. Struggling against Jin Zijin's rapid and accurate strikes, he was ultimately overpowered.

Thankfully, the exit was just above.

Mouth split in a grotesque, silent laugh, the wild man, who lacked a tongue, appeared frightening.

This was the first time Jin Zijin had seen the man's face clearly. Although it was nearly unrecognizable beneath the grime, he still made out a striking resemblance to the other man!

Chapter 163: Finally Out

Especially those eyes.

Who was he?

Jin Zijin startled, paused slightly, and his movements slowed a bit.

And during that moment of distraction, the wild man uncle quickly escaped through the tree hole.

Having spent years in these desolate mountains, he moved like a monkey, which had allowed him to escape Jin Zijin’s clutches numerous times.

But this time... Jin Zijin was determined, hell-bent on capturing him.

So, in the rarely trodden wilds, their figures darted swiftly, startling flocks of birds along the way.

Until... from a mountain far behind them, a rumbling sound echoed.

The wild man uncle stopped, and so did Jin Zijin. After the shock, they both ran back like madmen!

...

The tomb passage was even longer than Gu Youyou had imagined, and the idiot with her had gone halfway and zoned out again. Gu Youyou had no choice but to drag him forward with all her might.

"I’m exhausted, hurry up! If it wasn’t for the fact that you didn’t abandon me at a critical moment, I wouldn’t bother dragging you!"

It was simply more tiring than pulling the old ox her grandfather raised.

The rumbling noise deep in the tomb passage indicated that the chamber was likely collapsing.

They hadn’t run far when the tomb passage began to tremble, spider web-like cracks appearing, and it probably wouldn’t hold much longer.

Fortunately, the end was in sight.

Gu Youyou let go of the man’s arm and looked down. There was mud, and muddy footprints, which must mean the exit was near.

She looked up and saw a vine hanging down from the hole above, with a hint of white light barely visible.

No mistake, that was the long-missed daylight.

Gu Youyou, overjoyed, turned back and pulled the man behind her, saying, "We have to climb out from here, can you do it?"

The man just stared at her blankly, leaving her feeling like she was talking to a wall.

Stones had begun to fall in the tomb passage, and there was no time left to waste.

Gu Youyou shouted at the man, "Climbing up there is already the limit of what I can do. If you don’t want to climb by yourself, I can’t save you. I’m going up first, suit yourself!"

Having said that, Gu Youyou gritted her teeth and, grabbing the vine, used all her strength to climb upwards.

After emerging from the tree hole, Gu Youyou took a long breath.

Relieved to have survived, she finally saw the daylight again, the long-missed sunlight, incredibly beautiful.

Gu Youyou lay on the ground, forming the character "人" with her limbs, and laughed heartily.

Until her sunlight was blocked by a face overhead, causing Gu Youyou to sit up in fright.

Seeing the dazed man emerge, she laughed awkwardly, "So, you climbed up after all, huh?"

The man had an angry expression on his stern face, and Gu Youyou noticed his right arm trembling slightly, blood dripping down.

Gu Youyou, alarmed, said, "You're injured?"

The man suddenly grasped Gu Youyou's neck with his other hand and snorted, "I saved you, and you left me behind? Are all women so heartless?"

"What? You're not acting dumb now?" How are these two things related?

Gu Youyou was convinced that this man had intermittent dementia; pain seemed to bring him briefly back to his senses.

Fearing he might actually strangle her, Gu Youyou hurriedly explained, "I didn't leave you; I... Look at me, just a weak woman, managing to climb out was already impressive. How could I have pulled you out? I told you to climb first, but you didn't! Hey, you made it out alright, didn't you? It's just a minor injury; I can treat it for you!"

Chapter 164: Ran into

The tomb chamber in the mountains finally reached its limit. With a loud bang, it completely collapsed.

Gu Youyou looked behind her and suddenly felt, as the chamber fell, an era had come to an end.

She had said before that if they got out, she would properly bury those discarded bones. Now it seemed unnecessary.

The ground trembled violently, and a haze of dust billowed out rapidly from the woods behind them as the collapse spread ever wider.

They had no time to think and hurriedly fled towards the front at breakneck speed.

In the distance, a group of villagers who were searching the mountain had assembled, and from afar, they saw a mountain top sink, followed by sky-filled smoke. After a while, they finally heard the deafening roar.

From across the mountain, the villagers stood agape!

"Why has the mountain collapsed all of a sudden?"

Indeed, who had such power to make a mountain collapse?

A villager suddenly cried out ’Aiya!’, startling everyone.

"Chen San, what are you shouting about?"

"When I was a kid, my old hunter grandfather mentioned that there’s an Immortal’s Tomb in our back mountain woods. That must be the Immortal’s Tomb there!"

"Really? How can there be fairies in this world?"

The head village official, who was most superstitious about gods and ghosts, hastily said, "Hey! Without a fairy, who else casts thunder in the sky? Without a fairy, how does the rain fall? Of course they exist, it’s just that you laymen have never seen one!"

Someone in agreement said, "With such a momentous event, apart from those heaven-reaching fairies, who else could have caused it?"

"That’s right, let’s go and take a look quickly; the fairy might not have gone far!"

A large crowd was heading their way, unbeknownst to them!

Gu Youyou and the man with intermittent dementia scrambled out of the collapsing mountain, and locked eyes with Jin Zijin and the wild man uncle who had come running back.

When Gu Youyou saw Jin Zijin, she was overjoyed as if she had found her organization, and hobbled towards him.

"Zijin..."

The man behind her must have been seriously injured; his arm hung limp, and he remained conscious throughout.

He picked up Gu Youyou single-handedly like grabbing a chick and pulled her back, then stared at the people in front of him and said, "Those who have seen me cannot live to leave." He grinned, chillingly continued, "Would you rather gouge out your own eyes, or leave your lives behind?"

The chill emanating from deep within that person was even more frightening than the cold seeping from his bones; Gu Youyou felt the coldness touch her whole body through the back of her collar.

It was a kind of unidentifiable familiar cold poison; he was much more deeply poisoned than she was.

Gu Youyou wanted to say something, but at that moment, she was too shocked to speak.

On the other hand, she also wanted to see Jin Zijin’s reaction!

Without a doubt, this man was the one Jin Zijin had always been looking for, and now that he had found him, where would he place himself?

The wild man uncle kept his distance from Jin Zijin. He took a look at Jin Zijin, then at Gu Youyou and the man holding her on the other side. He then took a few steps back.

Waiting for the opportune moment!

Jin Zijin did not regard him, holding a translucent red dagger in his hand, his eyes fixed on the man holding Gu Youyou. Despite the seemingly placid surface of his deep, dark eyes, Gu Youyou knew he was making a choice.

Her heart was extremely tense; she both anticipated and feared the answer.

Gu Youyou felt like she was standing on the edge of a high cliff, thrilled and terrified.

Chapter 165: She is Just a Pawn

She wasn't nervous about whether the man behind her would kill her, but about Jin Zijin's attitude! His attitude would determine whether the view below the cliff was a breathtaking panorama or a landscape of horror strewn with corpses!

Since she had been with him, she felt as though she had involuntarily become someone else's chess piece, her utility and disposal not hers to control. Perhaps she belonged to him, or perhaps to someone else. Whose it was didn't matter, as long as it wasn't Jin Zijin's.

Gu Youyou clenched her fist as she looked at Jin Zijin, the hope in her eyes so clear to him that for a moment, the softer part of his heart controlled his will, wanting to prioritize her.

But could he really rescue her at all costs? He didn't have much time left.

He was suddenly startled, then quickly allowed that mercy to recede, his heart as hard as iron.

A moment later, he looked at the man and said with an unnerving calm, "I was looking for you. Now that I've found you, what need do I have for her?"

"Oh? It seems you are no ordinary hunter!" said the man with an interested sneer.

"I'm certainly a hunter, but my prey is somewhat special!"

Listening to their casual conversation, waves of shock surged in Gu Youyou's heart, like a lonely boat suddenly lifted and then dropped by towering waves. That intense power thrummed in her chest, unable to settle for a long time.

What need did they have for her?

Gu Youyou repeated the phrase in her mind and felt her own uselessness. The truth was so obvious—what was there to ponder?

Then suddenly, as if a bomb had gone off in her head, her body felt like it had plunged into an abyssal ice cave, an asphyxiating coldness burst from deep within her soul, quickly invading her entire body.

Her face ashen, she tried to speak to Jin Zijin but couldn't utter a single word.

It was possible that he was the person behind it all, he had poisoned her from the start with a specific purpose—to draw out the people in the mountains.

The cold poison that had long been suppressed within her body broke out like a flood, rushing through every one of her meridians. The man behind Gu Youyou frowned in surprise, realizing up close what was happening to her.

He seemed to suddenly realize something, looking at Gu Youyou with even greater astonishment.

The man's eyes darkened as he caught Gu Youyou's collapsing body in his arms; her body colder than his, he instantly understood the situation.

Looking at Jin Zijin across from him, he felt a sudden urge to burst into laughter.

"Hahaha..."

Finally, he couldn't contain himself and laughed out loud.

He didn’t know, this person must not know. What a brilliant deception!

He couldn’t help but admire it!

After a few laughs, he suddenly tore a small sachet off of Gu Youyou, looking at it with an even deeper smile, shaking his head as if sighing sorrowfully, and muttered lowly, "You are just a chess piece too! How pitiful!! We’re all the same!"

With that, he pushed Gu Youyou away and scolded her quietly, "Get lost to the side, you’re just a useless piece!"

Still in shock, Gu Youyou was tossed aside like trash, her forehead striking a rock on the ground, immediately breaking the skin and bleeding down her cheek, a startling sight.

What was the pain of the body compared to the despair of the heart? Gu Youyou felt nothing.

A sachet?

Gu Youyou looked in surprise at the sachet that had also been cast aside, then at Jin Zijin, her eyes suddenly widening.

She knew it, how could Jin Zijin suddenly give her a sachet? So it turned out that with that sachet... she could become bait with a line attached, and with that line, he could reel in the big fish.

Chapter 166: Which Prince Are You?

He calculated everything with such precision that she felt the life of little Gu Youyou was a tragedy. And now, living in her stead, she continued that tragedy.

So, it was because of this sachet that he had come!

She felt thoroughly used by him, a ripping pain in her chest!

Why was it him?

Gu Youyou, clutching her chest, asked with all her strength, "So from beginning to end, I was just bait, wasn't I?"

To raise bait for decades, what a cunning plan!

Jin Zijin's expression remained calm without a ripple, not even glancing at Gu Youyou as he grasped the dagger tightly and rushed towards the man opposite him.

"Haha, if you want to obtain that item, you'll have to see if you have the skill!"

The dagger seemed specifically designed to counter that man, leaving a scorching trail wherever it went. The sky of July was already scorching, and with this, the surrounding trees burst into flames.

Gu Youyou, who always enjoyed a sense of warmth, didn't know why, but at that moment, she found the heatwave assaulting her face utterly unbearable.

The harsh noon sunlight made her feel irritable and restless.

She liked the feeling of being ice-cold all over, curling up alone in an ice cave was what made her feel safe.

Jin Zijin fought the man for dozens of rounds, and the surrounding trees burned and were extinguished, extinguished and then reignited, twisted beyond recognition. But his opponent seemed stronger than he had anticipated.

He had never expected the puppet-like shadowy medicine man to be raised so mightily.

His complexion darkened slightly before he took out a seemingly ordinary bell.

Upon seeing the bell, the man’s face suddenly changed dramatically, losing the will to continue fighting with Jin Zijin and turning to flee.

Jin Zijin pursued with the bell in a usual manner, only to be suddenly pounced upon and pinned to the ground by a wild man who had been lurking in the shadows, waiting for an opportunity.

He had no tongue, and he opened his mouth in anger, making strange sounds from his throat.

"Let go, I don’t want to kill you!"

Jin Zijin had originally intended to kill these two people, but upon discovering that one had a special identity, he felt a sense of compassion.

He needed to keep him alive to figure out what was going on.

But the wild man ignored him completely, angrily glaring at him, crazily gnashing his teeth, and tightly gripping Jin Zijin’s leg, preventing him from pursuing the fleeing man.

As the man got further away, this person clung tenaciously to his leg, not allowing him to move an inch.

Jin Zijin grew anxious and forcefully struck the back of the wild man’s spine with the hilt of his knife.

If he didn’t let go, he would continue!

Blood, vivid as a vermillion rainbow, flowed from the furiously wide-open mouth, and yet he raised his head to Jin Zijin, baring his teeth in a frenzied laugh.

But those crazed eyes were clearly filled with deep resentment and unwillingness.

Jin Zijin stared into these eyes and asked in a deep voice, "Who exactly are you?"

The wild man paused for a moment, squinting his eyes to examine Jin Zijin's face, thinking about his purpose for being here, and seemed to realize something, abruptly stopping his laughter and widening his eyes.

A moment later, he laughed proudly at him again, a laugh filled with bitter sadness, laughing until tears streamed from the corners of his eyes.

Jin Zijin was startled and suddenly grabbed the dirty, unrecognizable collar of his garment. The pattern on it... not many could wear such designs; he was...

"Which Prince are you?" Jin Zijin asked in surprise.

He had no tongue and could not speak. Even if he could, he would not tell him.

Chapter 167: Catch Up

He stared at Jin Zijin's triumphant smile, his split teeth, and the blood filling his mouth making him look exceptionally ferocious.

Jin Zijin's eyes darkened, and he scoffed coldly, "Your tongue has been cut, but it's an easy task to find out who you are. Let go, and I won't kill you."

The wild man uncle was dead set on not letting go, glaring at Jin Zijin with eyes full of hatred, wishing he could drink his blood and eat his flesh.

Such a gaze made Jin Zijin feel increasingly heavy-hearted.

He recalled those few... It seemed they all could have ended up like this!

He lifted his other leg and kicked fiercely at the wild man uncle, who was hit in the chest, spit out a mouthful of blood, and was sent flying a good distance.

Having freed himself, Jin Zijin turned back and took a deep look at Gu Youyou before turning without hesitation and chasing after the man who was fleeing.

This day, the quiet mountain forest was destined to be unrestful.

The wild man uncle didn't give up just because Jin Zijin had kicked him away, but struggled to stand up, looking into the distance of the forest, he leveraged the advantage he had from years of living in the woods to quickly find a shortcut and catch up.

Gu Youyou also chased after them!

Gu Youyou couldn't bear being used by him; she needed to find out if the person behind all this was him or not.

She thought it was him just now, but now she wasn't so sure. Jin Zijin had only been in Lotus Village for five years, which didn't match the timeline.

Moreover, if he had drugged her, he wouldn't have helped her hide her physical condition. All this half year, he had clearly been trying to deceive everyone.

With too many unanswered questions, she was not satisfied!

Gu Youyou was not content to be manipulated by the person behind the poisoning; she followed closely behind the wild man uncle, moving swiftly through the mountain forest.

She was surprised at the potential this body could unleash, matching the wild man uncle's speed.

The wind whistled past her ears, the trees around her swayed with their deep green branches, and startled animals scattered in all directions with their cries...

There was no path left at the opposite cliff. That guy seemed to have another bout of his dementia, standing there foolishly. Meanwhile, Jin Zijin had him tied up nicely and hoisted him onto his shoulder to carry away.

During his bout of dementia, he had no reaction, just foolishly watching Jin Zijin, letting him do as he wished.

The wild man uncle, summoning strength from who knows where, upon seeing this scene, recklessly leaped forward like an enraged monkey, jumping high and throwing his whole body's strength into a lunge at Jin Zijin.

Jin Zijin had to let go of the man he had tied up to dodge the wild man uncle's lunge.

When he missed, the wild man uncle jumped up again. He opened his mouth wide to a silent roar, his bloody teeth frightfully red, as if trying to exhaust all his strength in these desperate attacks on Jin Zijin.

He dodged, he lunged again, he dodged, he continued to lunge, as if he had endless energy.

If one didn't know the wild man uncle was human, they might truly think he was an enormous wild monkey with agile movements!

Gu Youyou trailed behind them; they had already gone up ahead.

She ran forward a few steps, then came back, standing by the side of the foolish man.

Seeing him, Gu Youyou felt a kind of empathy for him.

They both suffered from the same strange cold poison; she had been raised in a small dark room resembling a grave since she was young, while he was locked in an ancient tomb. The person behind them, even if not the same individual, surely had an unusual connection.

Chapter 168: Jumping Off the Cliff

Perhaps, just like he said, you're also nothing but a pawn, pitiful indeed!

Yes, Gu Youyou felt a pang of pain in her heart, furrowing her brows and scoffing softly, "You are also nothing more than a pawn, how pitiful! You're even more miserable than I am, at least I'm conscious, while you... If I'm not mistaken, the extra bowl of medicine you drank must be the one that clouded your mind!"

Gu Youyou looked at that wild man struggling desperately with Jin Zijin, then turned to face this man. She sighed, deftly undoing his ropes, and said, "No matter who he is or what kind of relationship you have with him, you need to get as far away from him as possible. What's the use of him desperately protecting you? Isn't letting you live in a daze crueler than killing you?"

This silly man, clearly not understanding anything, but at this moment, he seemed to vaguely comprehend, tilting his head and looking at Gu Youyou, even giving a slight nod!

Gu Youyou was startled, managing to force a smile, and said softly, "I don't know if you understood me or not, but anyway... now that I've freed you, you should run. Run as far as you can, and if you manage to survive... and get even luckier to one day come to your senses, then go find the person who harmed you!

One can't live a cowering life. Whoever owes you, you go and demand it back from them..."

The ropes were already undone, Gu Youyou pushed the man, but he just curiously looked at Gu Youyou, completely unmoved.

Gu Youyou grew somewhat annoyed, shoving him hard, and scolded, "Well, aren't you going to run? What are those long legs for, to pose with?"

From a distance, Jin Zijin noticed that Gu Youyou had released the man, his gaze gradually darkening, he struck the wild man again and started running in this direction.

But at this moment, the wild man was like a crazed monkey, utterly disregarding the multiple wounds on his body, at all costs to stop Jin Zijin.

Ahead was a deep cliff that plummeted into nothingness, the wild man's eyes filled with frenzied excitement.

With this leap, he finally caught Jin Zijin, taking his body with him, he roared silently as he flung himself towards the cliff behind him.

Jin Zijin's gaze was deep as ink, astonished by his actions.

Reduced to a state neither human nor ghost, he was still clawing at life; such tenacity, yet he aimed to perish together with him for the sake of saving the drug-induced phantom?

No, it wasn't just that, there was another reason. Right, it was hatred, the intense hatred in his eyes couldn't deceive anyone.

From a noble to this state, he surely had reasons to hate, but... it seemed like he was hating the wrong person.

Jin Zijin gave a bitter smile, his body suspended in the air, he and the wild man plummeted down the cliff together, he said, "When I die, no one will know, no one will mourn. And the person you hate, he will still be untouchable, high above!"

After speaking, Jin Zijin hesitated no more, the flame-red dagger slid silently into the wild man's heart, blood spraying out and staining his face red!

The wild man's eyes bulged, no longer having the strength to hold on to Jin Zijin, his hands fell away, powerless, and his body followed suit, plummeting down.

"Jin Zijin..."

Atop the cliff came the heart-wrenching cries of a woman.

Seeing him fall down the cliff, Gu Youyou then knew just how much a heart could ache; it was a pain a thousand, no, ten thousand times more intense than when he had used her, when he had hurt her!

She hated him for using her, hated that after he was done using her, he tossed her aside like a worthless discarded piece, without so much as a glance back.

Chapter 169: Jump Down Together

But she had to admit, in this game she had become serious, and so she lost thoroughly.

She had lived for decades and always thought she understood the affairs between men and women clearer than anything else. Once upon a time, when she casually discussed men with her best friend, she would boldly proclaim, "Men are of only two types, one is after Miss's money, the other is after Miss's face. No matter which type he is, they share one name, scumbag, and Miss couldn't care less!"

Now, Jin Zijin had used and calculated her in such a way; such a piece of trash, shouldn't she have thrown a rock down on him as he fell off the cliff?

To not kill him with the fall would have been to crush him with the stone! That would have been right!

That's how it should have been, at least.

But why did she leap after him without a second thought?

Tears blinded her eyes; as she plummeted off the cliff, her mind was filled with his tall stature, his broad back that gave her a sense of security, and those arms warmer than the summer sun...

Atop the cliff, there was also a voice filled with wailing and screaming.

He lay stretched over the edge, hands clawing into the ground, scratching until bloodied without realizing it.

His face, emaciated, made his eye sockets seem large; he stared into the fog-covered depths of the cliff and cried out in heartbreaking sobs!

Not knowing what to shout, he could only emit prolonged howls of grief!

Tears spilled from his eyes, squinting his eyeballs so that he couldn’t even see the fog clearly.

He wept, perhaps for the person who had looked after him for many years in this deep mountain, someone who should have been revered but was gasping for breath like a wild beast.

Or perhaps... it was for the woman who reminded him of someone with a fate similar to his own.

People were making their way up the mountain, many of them!

The man stopped yelling, remembering the last words Gu Youyou had said to him. He resolutely wiped away his tears, stood up, and fled quickly in another direction.

...

Atop the cliff, Jin Zijin held a dagger in one hand, its blade wedged into a crack in the hard rock of the cliff wall, with one foot on a narrow protruding stone, and his other arm holding onto Gu Youyou who had suddenly fallen from above!

He had never been as furious as he was at that moment, shouting at Gu Youyou with a harsh voice, "What are you doing jumping down? Do you think I’m dying too slowly?"

Gu Youyou stared back at him blankly, overwhelmed by a torrent of emotions, her whole body trembling uncontrollably as she clung tightly to him.

Jin Zijin’s frown softened a bit, his anger subsiding by half.

"Don’t worry, I won’t let you fall! Knowing you’re scared, why did you jump down?"

No one knew that the trembling of Gu Youyou’s body was not because she feared falling.

God knows why she jumped; since they were both alive for the moment, she had to voice the curses she held back—in case she fell down and died, she wouldn’t have the chance.

"I was afraid smashing you with a rock wouldn’t be fatal, so I jumped down to crush you myself! Heh, sending a sachet, right? Were you feeling proud watching me happily accept that sachet, thinking I’m a stupid and obedient bait, so easily helping you to find something you’ve been incessantly searching for? You must have been so proud that you forgot, a chess piece, if not used wisely, can turn on you."

"You?" Jin Zijin’s anger flared again at her sharp words, his scornful gaze piercing her as he sneered, "Switching peaches with plums, swapping beams with pillars, you think nobody knows? Isn’t what you’re enduring the result of your own seeking? There’s no such thing as a free lunch in this world, for anything you do... there’s a price to

Chapter 170: Substitute

Gu Youyou’s eyes widened in shock as she stared at him, her heart filled with astonishment.

She was, after all, a soul that had traversed through time. Could he even know that?

No, no, that’s impossible!

Gu Youyou looked at him and pondered for quite a while before she openly smiled and said, "How could Gu Youyou be so easily replaced? What nonsense are you talking about? I am indeed Gu Youyou!"

"Indeed, how could a Four Yin Woman be so easily replaced?" Jin Zijin scoffed coldly. "I also wonder where they found a Four Yin Woman of similar age to replace her, just a niece, hardly worth the risk for him. So I guess... you might be another pawn planted here with some other purpose! But it doesn’t matter, if you don’t tell me, I will find out sooner or later."

Gu Youyou was stunned for a moment, then lowered her head, shifted her gaze away, and also let out a sigh of relief!

What is this all about? So he doesn’t know after all. Heh, then keep guessing!

But this Four Yin Woman... Gu Youyou could not help but give a wry smile.

She neither understood nor believed in the ghostly and powerful doctrines of the Feudal Divine Association.

In their belief, a woman born in a Yin year, Yin month, Yin day, and Yin hour was what they called a Four Yin Woman, but to her, a Four Pillars Pure Yin woman was nothing more than a coincidence of birth, no different from an ordinary person.

Unfortunately, she was born into an era of feudal superstition. People here believe in the mystical powers, thus that poor girl was schemed against at the age of seven and met such a tragic fate.

Perhaps, Jin Zijin was right—nothing in this world comes for free, especially not life. Gu Youyou, you've picked up a life for nothing, shouldn't you pay a price for it?

With that thought, Gu Youyou had a sudden realization. All the accusations she wanted to make against him, the love and hatred from before, now seemed unimportant.

The previous Gu Youyou was not her, and the current Gu Youyou was not a woman who fretted over every little thing.

This leap had indeed allowed her to clear away the grievances that had accumulated in her heart.

She laughed bitterly under her breath, raised her head to look at him, her eyes now extraordinarily serene.

Aside from the detached and calmly indifferent smile in those clear eyes, there was nothing else.

She said, "Jin Zijin, thank you for rescuing me from the Gu Family and for looking after me! No matter what, the fact that I can speak here with ease today, run freely in the woods, and see the warm sunshine, it's all thanks to you. I've always kept in mind the kindness you've shown me. I may be a little too proud, allowing others to owe me but not wanting to owe others. So, I don't hate you for using me

to find those two strange people; consider it repayment of my debt. So from now on, we are even, and in the future, you don’t need to think about using me anymore..."

She laughed bitterly; after all, what did she have left for him to use?

Hearing this, a unreadable look flashed across the depths of Jin Zijin’s eyes. He’d suspected she was planted by someone intentionally, perhaps targeting him or maybe someone else.

But no matter who had arranged for her to be there, shouldn’t she be doing everything possible to stay by his side? Why the rush to disassociate herself from him?

"Pretending to escape to lure one’s prey? Heh heh..." Jin Zijin sneered with a frozen laugh.

She wanted to retort, ’Do you think you’re worthy of my pretending to escape to lure you?’ However, getting into an argument right now seemed like a bad idea, so she thought better of it.

"Let me go!" Gu Youyou suddenly shouted at Jin Zijin in anger.

She had found a larger protruding rock nearby, and nestled in the crevices of that rock was a sizable pine tree. Grasping onto it would surely provide her with more security than relying on the unpredictable Jin Zijin.