Farmhouse 1661

Chapter 1661: Investigation

Looking at his expression, there was no pain before his death, he passed away quietly.

Gu Youyou stood up and asked the guard of the Imperial Mausoleum, "How did you discover the Emperor’s passing?"

The guard replied, "It was Eunuch Wan who discovered it, at Empress Xiaochen’s tomb!"

The Empress Xiaochen he mentioned was not Jin Yushu, but Xiao Qinqin.

Jin Zijin stood up, grabbing the guard’s collar, "Where is Wan Decheng?"

The guard said, "Eunuch Wan fell ill, at..."

He pointed in a direction, and Jin Zijin rushed towards it.

Wan Decheng lay on a shabby bed, barely alive, exhaling more than inhaling, clearly on the brink of death.

Two eunuchs stood helplessly by his side.

When he saw Jin Zijin, his eyes widened in excitement, but he couldn’t utter a single word.

"Youyou!" Jin Zijin shouted loudly.

Gu Youyou hurriedly carried a box and ran towards the direction of the voice.

"Quick, Wan Decheng is about to die."

Gu Youyou swiftly administered first aid to Eunuch Wan, but unfortunately, it was too late.

Eunuch Wan, agitated, failed to catch his breath and passed away on the spot.

Gu Youyou’s face turned somewhat pale, and she said in a low voice, "He’s dead!"

She quickly examined Eunuch Wan’s body. Finding no obvious injuries, she discovered an extremely tiny pinhole behind his ear.

A fresh pinhole!

She was taken aback and used a small scalpel to gently cut open the skin behind the ear, extracting a silver needle as long as a thumb from behind Eunuch Wan’s ear.

Gu Youyou carefully wrapped it up, intending to take it back for Searcy to examine.

"Eunuch Wan died an unnatural death, likely related to this silver needle!" Gu Youyou said.

Jin Zijin clenched his fists tightly, remaining silent.

He turned around and strode towards the Emperor.

"Tingyu, stop crying for now, let’s first examine Father Emperor’s body."

Jin Zijin told the Crown Prince about extracting the silver needle from Eunuch Wan’s body. The Crown Prince, greatly surprised, ceased his crying and began to carefully examine the Emperor’s body.

The pinhole was very small, almost invisible if not inspected closely.

Gu Youyou had someone call Searcy from the Prince Residence. Fortunately, the Imperial Mausoleum wasn't far from Beijing, taking only a few hours to arrive.

Jin Zijin and the Crown Prince finished examining the Emperor's body, finding nothing abnormal, so they let Searcy in to check.

Meanwhile, Gu Youyou gathered all the guards of the Imperial Mausoleum together, and Jin Zijin and the Crown Prince arrived just in time to conduct interrogations.

On the seventh day after the Empress Dowager's death, everyone returned to Beijing after the ceremony, except the Emperor insisted on staying behind.

Everyone knew that although the Emperor and the Empress Dowager were not mother and son, but master and servant, the bond between them was closer than that of an ordinary mother and son.

People thought perhaps the Empress Dowager's passing deeply saddened the Emperor.

The seven-day period lasted only a day, so they allowed the Emperor to stay and keep vigil for the Empress Dowager for the first seven days.

Thus, everyone left the Emperor behind without much concern, along with the close attendants around him.

Little did they expect an incident would occur that night.

"Did no one notice anything unusual?"

After investigating, not a single one among the guards keeping vigil or the guards and hidden guards around the Emperor noticed anything unusual.

Yet a fatal silver needle was indeed found behind Eunuch Wan's ear.

"After the evening meal, the Emperor said he wanted to take a walk and dismissed all of us. We saw the Emperor heading towards Empress Xiaochen's tomb. Eunuch Wan, worried about the night chill, took a cloak and also went to Empress Xiaochen's tomb. It was only when we noticed something was wrong that we discovered both the Emperor and Eunuch Wan had met with misfortune."

Chapter 1662: The Unsolvable Mystery

So even the Hidden Guard is not by the side?

Jin Zijin and Gu Youyou exchanged glances with the others.

The Emperor himself dismissed the Hidden Guard, but why?

The Hidden Guard wouldn't randomly speak. Even if the Emperor had private words to share with Empress Xiaochen, there was no need to send the Hidden Guard away!

The reason behind this, perhaps only he knows.

At this moment, Searcy's voice came from inside the room.

"Found it!"

Jin Zijin and the others were startled and hurried into the room.

Searcy was holding a piece of black paper, with a bit of white on it and a trace of transparent liquid.

She said to everyone, "In the gaps of the Emperor's teeth, we discovered this viscous liquid. It's colorless and tasteless. Once ingested, it causes people to gradually fall into a deep sleep, and once asleep, they never wake up again!"

The Emperor was poisoned?

But who would poison the Emperor?

Jin Zijin staggered a step, his face having turned completely pale.

"Zijin!" Gu Youyou quickly supported him.

He waved his hand, saying, "I'm fine, quickly search, search for any containers holding this type of poison!"

Everyone hurriedly began searching around Empress Xiaochen's mausoleum, and before long, someone found a tiny porcelain bottle not far from the mausoleum, no larger than a thumb.

He took the bottle to show Searcy, who immediately recognized that the viscous residue in the bottle was the poison.

Jin Zijin stared blankly at the bottle, suddenly understanding a phrase the Emperor had said earlier.

"This is something I owe your mother. If you don't want it, I will compensate her with something else."

Something else? Could it be his own life?

Jin Zijin was very aware of the Emperor's abilities; nobody in this world could have fed him poison silently.

Moreover, there was truly no sign of any struggle near the mausoleum, nor were there any injuries on the Emperor. The way he died didn't seem painful, just as if he were asleep.

If he didn't drink the poison himself, no one could have...

Jin Zijin slowly closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and shared his analysis with everyone, then whispered, "Not a word of today should spread. Just say... say the Emperor passed away from excessive sorrow!"

The Crown Prince, however, asked excitedly, "Then what about Eunuch Wan? If Father's death was his own doing... what about Eunuch Wan?"

Eunuch Wan? The Emperor couldn't have killed Eunuch Wan in such a manner.

Searcy stepped forward, saying, "That silver needle was also poisoned. It's a miracle Eunuch Wan lasted until you arrived!"

Eunuch Wan was killed, but what did it matter if he lasted until they arrived? He couldn't speak a word before departing.

Eunuch Wan didn't know who killed him, and that's precisely what worried them.

Who in this world would do such a thing?

After contemplating for a moment, Jin Zijin said, "Announce the sudden death of Father, and conduct the state funeral splendidly. Don't disclose anything about Eunuch Wan for now; act as if it didn't happen to avoid alerting the enemy!"

...

The Emperor's coffin was brought back to the Imperial Palace, and the state funeral was held. Once everyone returned, Jin Zijin remained in the Imperial Mausoleum.

"Zijin, did you discover something?"

Gu Youyou naturally stayed behind as well.

He gently shook his head but said, "I just feel that perhaps Father left something for me."

Gu Youyou watched as Jin Zijin first offered incense in Empress Xiaochen's mausoleum, then searched and observed everywhere. His search was meticulous, and finally, he found a small booklet under the prayer mat.

Chapter 1663: Deciding to Leave

Jin Zijin picked it up, and Gu Youyou immediately went over to take a look.

The booklet was about the size of a palm, looking somewhat old, but the material used was a very high-quality silk fabric.

Opening the first page, there was a painting of a lotus in full bloom, as fiery as the lotus pond behind the Imperial Garden.

They didn't know what it meant and didn't think much about it before turning to the second page.

The second page depicted a small infant, wrapped in cloth also embroidered with a lotus.

The third page showed a little boy of about two or three years old.

The fourth and fifth pages, continuously turning for over a dozen pages, it could be seen that the boy in the paintings was the same person, but each picture showed him looking different.

This showed the boy's growth from infancy to adulthood.

Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin had realized who this boy was.

It was drawn personally by the Emperor, and the subject was Jin Zijin.

He had never seen him, didn't know what he looked like, so he could only draw him based on his imagination.

Finally turning to the last page, there were no longer images of people, but rather a few words.

"I am leaving, not sure if I still have time to find her. In this life, though unfulfilled, I have no great regrets. Once one can let go, regrets become fewer. Life is short, may you not live like me, may you live well for a lifetime!"

Jin Zijin tightly held the booklet, speechless.

The Emperor indeed committed suicide.

The person he searched for was the owner of this tomb, Empress Xiaochen, Xiao Qinqin!

Few people were aware of the Emperor's deep affection for Xiao Qinqin. He deceived everyone, and the world believed that the Emperor's beloved was Noble Consort Sheng, but the Emperor hid his cherished person deeply within his heart.

Two consecutive national mourning periods plunged the entire country into mourning.

The Emperor had specially prepared this tomb for himself, the tomb that allowed him to be buried alongside Empress Xiaochen.

After the Emperor's burial, Jin Zijin sat in front of this imperial couple's joint tomb for seven consecutive days.

So much happened this year, from finding Yu Jizi and Tian Jizi, to their deaths, to the rebellion of the Beiping Army... and finally to the death of the Empress Dowager and the Emperor.

Event after event left everyone utterly exhausted!

Even Jin Zijin's body, as strong as iron, fell ill after all these trials.

When the new Emperor ascended the throne, he could only be absent.

Gu Youyou took Jin Xuyao to attend the new Emperor’s coronation, with the new Emperor and Empress enduring hardships, leading others to endure as well.

After the ceremony, Gu Youyou was ready to leave with Xuyao but was stopped by an eunuch.

"Princess Ning, the Emperor summons you!"

Gu Youyou, though very tired, could only nod gently.

She was led by the eunuch to a familiar palace, the Emperor’s Qianqing Palace.

The palace was the same, but the people had changed.

The new Emperor and Empress sat prominently, and Gu Youyou led Jin Xuyao in paying respects to them.

The new Empress, Xie Qinyun, hurried down to stop her, saying, "There are no outsiders, there’s no need for such formality!"

Gu Youyou smiled slightly, gradually relaxing.

"Everyone is tired today, why call us so late?"

The Emperor descended, sighing lightly, "Has the elder brother recovered from his illness after so many days?"

Gu Youyou nodded gently, saying, "He’s just been too stressed, he needs to rest well!"

The Emperor was silent for a moment, then asked, "I’ve heard you’re planning to leave?"

"Yes, once Zijin’s health improves, we plan to leave."

The Emperor asked nervously, "Will you return?"

Chapter 1664: You’re Pregnant Again?

Gu Youyou paused for a moment.

The Emperor smiled bitterly and explained, "Father, and the generation of Imperial Grandfather, they all had many brothers, but when it came to fighting for the throne, it was brother against brother, resulting in the untimely deaths of their brothers. In the end, only they were left, becoming solitary figures.

I, I also have brothers, two older brothers. Fortunately, we did not fight over this throne. But the outcome is still the same; Second Brother is nowhere to be found, and Eldest Brother is about to leave. You all have gone, and once again, I am the only one left in Beijing!"

Gu Youyou was somewhat surprised, not having known much about the Emperor back when he was Prince Qin.

He was favored by the late Emperor and deeply received the true teachings of the late Emperor, understanding how to disguise his weaknesses. Although the late Emperor was the Crown Prince back then, he had the lowest presence among his brothers, so while Third King and Fifth King fought to the death, he could benefit from it.

Prince Qin was similar; even Jin Zijin, who rejoined the Imperial Family later, was more active than him.

Therefore, Gu Youyou did not truly understand the current Emperor.

Only now, it seems, he somewhat childishly said these things.

Gu Youyou’s gaze grew deeper, and she slowly said, "Being an Emperor doesn’t require brothers; otherwise, why would the Emperor call himself a solitary man?"

Solitary man!

...

Gu Youyou’s business focus moved to Yangguan City, and Jin Zijin’s health had almost recovered.

What surprised them even more was that they hadn’t been able to conceive Erbao, but just days before departure, they discovered she was pregnant!

They were so overwhelmed with excitement, "Should we postpone the journey?"

Gu Youyou said with some difficulty, "If we postpone, it might be until next year. The child will be too small to travel long distances!"

"But didn’t you say the first three months of pregnancy are prone to problems?"

Gu Youyou, hesitating, said, "No worries, I’m a doctor myself, and Searcy and others will be traveling with us, so we can take care along the way!"

The key is that Gu Youyou doesn’t like to make changes to a fixed plan. It’s not easy to move home, considering the number of things involved, and having already informed friends about their departure.

Jin Zijin, seeing her insistence, didn’t say much but only said, "Then I’ll call Searcy over, and you can discuss it with her! Don’t force anything if it doesn’t work!"

Gu Youyou laughed, saying, "Alright, I know what I’m doing!"

Jin Zijin decided to reprepare the carriage, making sure it is spacious and comfortable, and should travel slowly!

Searcy entered, looking at her in surprise, saying, "No way, you’re expecting again?"

Gu Youyou replied irritably, "Why does your tone seem so sour?"

Searcy gritted her teeth and touched her own stomach.

It’s been years, and still no reaction.

Gu Youyou had checked her body, and she couldn’t conceive due to having ingested too many poisons as a child. She had been taking care of her health for years.

Gu Youyou rarely discouraged her, just lightly sighed, "You’re still young; don’t worry, it will happen!"

Searcy also rarely didn’t retort, just nodded lightly.

"By the way, you plan to leave with us, have you told General Lu?"

Searcy’s expression darkened and said, "Their matters are theirs, I am myself, my departure has nothing to do with them!"

The Lu Family’s grudges have been resolved, but the seemingly indifferent Searcy has not forgiven them.

In truth, it’s not about forgiving or not. Searcy is just like this, asking her to go back obediently and call a father would be akin to killing her.

Since Searcy hadn’t said anything, Gu Youyou had to send someone to inform General Lu, at least to give a heads-up.

Chapter 1665: Farewell

Three days later, a grand procession lined up in front of the Ningwang Residence, and Xiang Chun was busy instructing the servants to load the carts.

"Hey, hey, where are you moving that? This is jadeite, and it goes on cart fifteen!"

"And you, put this screen on cart six."

"Oh dear, what's happening here? You all are so eager when it's payday, but when it comes to working, you're all clumsy. With how clumsy you are, why follow your masters to the new residence? Might as well be sold off."

"Hey, I'm talking to you. Look at you, so clumsy that no one would want you even for free, let alone buying!"

Xiang Chun's tongue had only gotten sharper over the years, and only someone like her could manage all the servants of a residence.

Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin moved house, taking more than fifty carts in a row.

The surrounding onlookers were the townspeople. Today, the Ningwang Residence was moving, and whoever could come did to watch the spectacle.

Before setting off, the Emperor appeared, bringing ten carriages with him.

Xiang Chun held a massive ledger, feeling instantly overwhelmed.

This ledger recorded every single item, and with ten more carriages, she thought she might as well die.

Heaven knows how long it took her to learn bookkeeping?

"The Emperor has arrived!"

The guards pushed the onlookers aside, and Xiang Chun, full of complaints, unwilling as she was, could only kneel to receive the Emperor.

"Rise!" The Emperor extended his hand to support Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin, smiling as he said: "The first decree I issued states that my brother and sister-in-law need not bow to the Imperial Family, including myself."

He gestured, and the eunuch immediately brought forward a brocade box.

He gave the brocade box to Jin Zijin, saying: "This is a token of my thoughts, I hope my brother and sister-in-law won't mind it!"

Inside the brocade box was the inventory of the items in the ten carriages behind him.

Gu Youyou grabbed it and laughed: "Since it's a gift from the Emperor, we won't be polite!"

Jin Zijin looked at her with tenderness in his eyes, and smiled helplessly.

"You go ahead and get in the carriage, I'll be there shortly." he said.

"Alright, hurry up!"

It was only Gu Youyou who dared to urge him to be quick while he was speaking with the Emperor.

Gu Youyou got into the carriage, while the Emperor and Jin Zijin stepped aside to talk.

"Brother, you are welcome to return at any time, this residence will always be the Ningwang Residence!"

Jin Zijin pursed his lips and smiled faintly: "I'm not disappearing like Xiaoran. I intend to return. At least for the first three years, I will be present for Father's memorial days!"

The Emperor sighed in relief and said: "You didn’t say where you are going, so I was worried you might disappear like second brother!"

"Hey, I didn’t say anything not to keep it from you, but to give Youyou a surprise!"

The Emperor: "..."

Jin Zijin laughed and said: "There is enjoyment in being Emperor, and also in being an ordinary citizen. I didn’t attend your enthronement; congratulations on ascending to the throne, I hope it’s not too late!"

The Emperor laughed too, hurriedly saying: "Not late, not late!"

Jin Zijin put away his smile, nodded, and said: "Then I’ll be off, do a good job!"

The Emperor choked for a moment, not knowing how to respond.

Jin Zijin turned around and took two steps, then suddenly stopped, and said to the Emperor: "I heard you intend to promote the Noble Consort Sheng to Empress Dowager?"

The Emperor’s face changed, and he carefully asked: "Is that not possible? She is my mother consort!"

Jin Zijin pondered for a moment and said: "Your mother consort is someone else, she is not Noble Consort Sheng, she has always been Sheng Qiaoyue. She probably doesn’t want to be Noble Consort Sheng!"

Chapter 1666: Farewell Part 2

The emperor was stunned by what he had just heard, but the speaker had already elegantly boarded the carriage, and the massive gates of the Ningwang Residence closed heavily. Sixty carriages, a grand convoy, had already started to move.

Such a massive carriage convoy drew the citizens to follow along and watch the commotion all the way until the carriages exited the city.

At the Shili Pavilion in the outskirts of Beijing, they saw many familiar faces ahead, and only then did they stop.

"Youyou, here, Youyou, over here!" The old Madam Lin, supported by Madam Lin, approached Gu Youyou, who alighted the carriage and saw them.

She wondered why they wouldn't come to see them off, turns out it was halfway through.

"Grandmother, why did you come so far to see us off? Didn't we agree yesterday not to?"

Old Madam Lin said, "The city is too crowded, it's quieter here!"

"Thank you, Grandmother!"

"Ah, when will you be back again? Oh dear, look at me, we've just left, and I'm already asking when you'll return."

Jin Zijin smiled lightly and said, "We won't go far, we'll often return to Beijing to see you all!"

"Oh, that's good, just worried you might disappear like Qianqing and the others once you leave."

Gu Youyou gave Jin Zijin a reproachful look and said, "You're always keeping secrets, making everyone think we're going into seclusion."

She had such a big business, she wouldn't want to live in seclusion.

Shunzi's family followed behind the Lin Family, Shunzi awkwardly scratched his head, feeling he had a lot to say to them, but not knowing where to start. In the end, he only said, "Big sister, remember to write to us and let us know you're safe after you arrive!"

Gu Youyou laughed and said, "But can Shunzi read a letter?"

Shunzi blushed and hurriedly said, "I couldn’t before, but now I can!"

Erya said, eyes red, "Big sister, you brought us to Beijing and gave us a good life. We didn’t expect you’d be the one leaving now!"

Shunzi’s mother said, "Yes, I thought we’d all be in Beijing, looking out for each other!"

Shunzi’s father chimed in, "What looking out for each other, it’s all Ningwang and the Princess Consort looking out for us!"

This made everyone laugh.

Miss Du’s belly was quite large, due to give birth in a month or two.

Gu Youyou pursed her lips and tightly squeezed her hand, saying, "I can’t deliver your baby this time, but since you’ve already given birth once, this second one should be easier."

Miss Du said, "It’s alright, there’s a midwife, and Cuiya still remembers the process from last time with Yiyi!"

"Hmm, the business in Beijing depends on you!"

Miss Du laughed and said, "Don’t worry, we’re all hoping you can expand the business in Yangguan City!" She looked at Gu Youyou’s belly and said, "I should also be careful, after all, it’s such a long journey!"

"Don’t worry, I’m a doctor, and Searcy is with me, you needn’t worry about me!"

Though it was unclear exactly where Gu Youyou and the others were moving their residence to, it was roughly known to be near Yangguan City.

Gu Youyou bid farewell to her family and friends one by one, then turned back to see Jin Zijin talking with Uncle Lin Xingyi and Jie Huanzhi and his son in the distance. She faintly heard it was related to Eunuch Wan being assassinated.

General Lu's family watched the convoy from afar; they came along with those sending Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin off. However, Searcy hadn't given them a good face, so they wanted to see them off but didn't dare to.

Gu Youyou sighed helplessly and said, "Go on, we're leaving!"

Chapter 1667: End of Main Story

Searcy was helpless after being pushed by Gu Youyou, so she walked towards the Lu Family.

"Have you already decided to go with them?" General Lu had completely lost his airs, seeming a bit nervous!

Searcy responded with an "Mm," saying, "Just consider it as me getting married far away!"

For someone like her, saying such words was already her limit. General Lu was stunned, but his son nudged him and laughed, "Dad, sister says she's just getting married far away!"

It was only then that General Lu reacted, his face beaming with smiles.

He seemed a bit flustered, waved his hand, and a carriage appeared from the back. He hurriedly said, "Yes, yes, daughters are meant to marry, Xueying is just getting married far away. I was too extreme back then, when you got married I didn't give you anything. This carriage is the dowry we prepared for you; since you're going far away, remember to take your dowry with you."

Searcy glanced at it, then turned around and loudly called out to Gui Yunxi, who was bidding farewell to her parents and siblings, and extended relatives, "Coachman, come over to pull the carriage!"

With tears in her eyes, Gui Yunxi bid farewell to her parents and relatives, then rushed over to Searcy's side to load the dowry from the Lu Family onto the carriage.

The team rested for half an hour at Shili Pavilion, finished their farewells, and resumed their journey.

After more than ten days of walking and stopping, Gu Youyou found this road increasingly familiar.

Heading west from Yangguan City, in this direction... Gu Youyou was astonished, turned to ask Jin Zijin, "Is this going back to Qingshui Town?" She laughed and said, "You wouldn't have built a mansion in Qingshui Town, would you?"

Jin Zijin smiled mysteriously, saying, "Keep walking and you'll find out!"

The team sped up, traveling for another day, the road ahead becoming more familiar, Gu Youyou growing more excited, she shouted loudly, "Are we going back to Lotus Village?"

Jin Zijin couldn't suppress his smile, pulled open the curtain of the carriage, saying, "Look outside, is this road wide enough?"

Gu Youyou stuck her head out to look, it was still the same road as before. Only it had become much wider, with railings added on the side near the cliff.

Previously, it only allowed passage of a small carriage drawn by a single horse, now even a large carriage drawn by three horses was manageable.

The carriage team traveled all the way to the familiar Lotus Village, seeing countless familiar people standing at the village entrance, Gu Youyou realized that he had chosen their home, which indeed was the starting point of their story.

"Youyou, is it you who have returned?"

It was Aunt Second and Dabao's family, they had returned to Lotus Village earlier, the new house was already built, though farming was a bit tough, they felt at ease.

Gu Youyou waved to them from the carriage, saying, "Yes, we've come back, we'll be living in the same village again!"

Countless villagers watched as this grand carriage team entered the village, passed through the village.

Jin Zijin said loudly to the villagers, "Today we're just moving in, in a few days we'll invite everyone for a home-warming banquet, everyone knows the place, right?"

"Yes, we know, you can go back first, you've traveled for so long, have a good rest!"

Gu Youyou still didn't know where her new home was, but the villagers all knew, it seemed it wasn't far!

The carriage team crossed the village but didn't stop, instead, it continued towards Tianmen Mountain.

A great road leading straight to a crimson valley!

Gu Youyou was joyfully thinking of shouting.

That valley, it was that valley!

Back then, she lay weakly at the north end of the village, watching the valley bloom gloriously.

They told her then, that the valley had no road, it couldn't be reached.

It could only be seen from afar, but not played up close.

She could only lie in her chair, basking in the sun, staring blankly at that crimson expanse.

Back then, happiness for her was as distant as that valley.

Even healthy people might not be able to reach there, let alone she, who was a sickly person gasping for breath after a few steps.

Once the road was opened, reaching that valley wasn't far, not yet finished sighing, Gu Youyou had arrived.

There's someone who, when you say you want a place of prosperity, can give you a city full of splendor; when you say you desire admiration from thousands, can deliver to you the beauty of a country; when you say you want a home, he says: a place with you and me, anywhere is home.

In this life, after witnessing the splendors of the world, they returned to the beginning, amidst the full bloom of plum blossoms in the valley, hand in hand, treading back through the snow.

Chapter 1668: Extra — Gave Birth to a Daughter

After nine long months, Gu Youyou finally reached the time for childbirth.

Last time, the father of the child didn't make it in time for the child's mother's labor, but this time he managed to be present.

However, Searcy was a traditional person from ancient times, and in her view, men were not allowed in the delivery room, so she firmly blocked the door, saying, "Anyway, Your Highness, you can't go in; it's unlucky, you'll have bad luck for three years!"

Jin Zijin twitched at the corner of his mouth but said, "I can perform a ritual, assist with the delivery, I used to be a Taoist!"

Gu Youyou was in such pain that she grimaced, yet she found the two outside both annoying and amusing.

Shouldn't they be paying more attention to the pregnant woman? Damn it, the pregnant woman is lying here giving birth!

She struggled to say to the people outside, “Regardless of which of you comes in first, can you help me bring that cloth over?”

Sweat streamed down her face, and she could barely open her eyes.

“I’ll do it!”

“I’ll do it!”

Both stepped inside, after all, they were more concerned about Gu Youyou.

Searcy handed the sweat cloth to Gu Youyou, but Jin Zijin immediately grabbed it and carefully wiped her sweat.

Searcy looked worried and said, “If Your Highness insists on coming in, what if…”

Gu Youyou hurriedly said, “It’s fine, just pull the curtain over for some privacy.” She wasn’t superstitious; she just had seen husbands watching their wives give birth before, leaving some bad memories. Mainly, she felt a bit embarrassed!

A grand villa was built in Plum Blossom Valley, comparable to the Ningwang Residence in Beijing. Jin Zijin took half a year to complete it, using a large workforce.

Since Gu Youyou and Searcy were both doctors, they had a workroom prepared similar to the one in Ningwang Residence, and the room for delivery was ready per Gu Youyou’s requirements.

The white curtain in the middle nicely separated her lower body, and Jin Zijin stood above, holding her hand, encouraging her while wiping her sweat.

Gu Youyou’s first birth was quick, and this time she didn’t exert much effort before the child was born.

Hearing the child's loud cries, everyone finally breathed a sigh of relief.

"Congratulations, this time it's a girl," Searcy said, holding the child whose umbilical cord hadn't been cut yet for Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin to see.

"Awesome, it completes a pair!" Gu Youyou said.

Jin Zijin also beamed with joy, but he looked a bit lost staring at the newborn baby.

Searcy stuffed the child into his hands, saying, "Go and wash the baby; I'll come to cut the umbilical cord in a while!"

"Huh? Oh, okay, but she's so tiny…" Jin Zijin, usually astute, suddenly seemed like Shunzi had possessed him, standing silly without daring to move while holding the child.

"Hurry up, I need to tend to your wife!"

Gu Youyou: "…"

Though she was displeased with Searcy's not-so-friendly attitude, seeing Jin Zijin cautiously holding the tiny baby and going to wash her, she couldn't help but smile.

Ah, two children now, and if possible, she would want… to have more?

Outside, upon hearing the baby's cries, the four-year-old Jin Xuyao danced around excitedly, craning his neck to see into the delivery room.

Poor Xiang Chun had to keep pulling him back, saying, "Little Master, we'll go in later. You can't go in now; Searcy hasn't called us yet!"

Jin Xuyao complained, "Since when did you become so afraid of Searcy?"

“Me? Afraid of Searcy?” Xiang Chun raised his voice, loudly saying, “I’m just following the Princess’s orders; the Princess hasn’t called us in yet either!”

Chapter 1669: Jin Luoyin

"Tsk, you’re clearly scared. My mother is giving birth right now, how could she have time to call you?"

"I, I was just..."

Xiang Chun was so tongue-tied she couldn’t find words. She never imagined that conversing with a child could be this difficult.

Jin Xuyao huffed twice, then took his little legs and pushed past Xiang Chun, running towards the birthing room.

At that time, Jin Zijin was already holding the baby in the outer room, and he saw Jin Xuyao come in, followed by a very nervous Xiang Chun.

"Young master, young master, you can’t..." Seeing Jin Zijin come out holding the swaddle, Xiang Chun stopped speaking and obediently stood to the side.

"Xuyao, come here quickly!" Jin Zijin sat on the chair in the outer room, a faint smile on his face.

By now, he was much calmer. The wrapped-up baby was very similar to how Jin Xuyao looked as a child.

Jin Xuyao ran over with an excited look, gazing at the tiny infant. She was sleeping soundly, a small bundle, her skin red with many soft hairs on her face.

He reached out his hand, trying to touch her.

"Shh, he’s sleeping, this is your sister!" Jin Zijin slightly turned, avoiding Jin Xuyao.

Jin Xuyao was a bit disappointed and asked, "What’s my sister’s name?"

They had thought of several names for both boys and girls, but since Gu Youyou hadn’t decided yet, they needed to discuss with her which one to use.

He said, "Go ask your mother which name we’ll use for your sister."

"Can I go in now?"

"Yes, go ahead!"

Jin Xuyao took another look at his sister, reluctantly running into the inner room.

Searcy had already finished her work and changed out of her blood-stained clothes.

Xiang Chun brought in two maids to clean up.

Jin Xuyao stood beside Gu Youyou and asked crisply, "Mom, are you tired?"

Gu Youyou yawned, not wanting to deceive him, she just told him her genuine feelings, "A little tired."

Then she smiled and asked, "Did you see your sister?"

Jin Xuyao laughed, "I saw her. Sister is so small, when will she grow up?"

"Hmm?" Gu Youyou thought for a moment and said, "Little children grow very fast. By next year when the plum blossoms in the valley bloom again, she can go pick flowers with you."

Jin Xuyao laughed happily and said, "I want to pick the most beautiful plum blossoms with my sister to give to you, mom!"

"Hmm, such a good boy!" Gu Youyou pinched her son’s chubby little cheek.

It was then that Jin Xuyao mentioned the real matter.

"Dad asked me to come in and ask what name we’ll give to the sister."

Boys’ names from the "Chu Ci," and girls’ names from the "Shi Jing," educated ancients often followed this tradition in naming.

Gu Youyou, adapting to local customs, gazed at the crimson plum blossoms filling the branches outside the window, and thought of a fitting and poetic name.

Ten thousand trees bear no color in the cold, the southern branch alone has blossoms.

The fragrance perceivable by flowing waters, the shadows fall in wild homes.

"Sister is named Luoyin, Jin Luoyin! How’s that?"

Jin Xuyao gleefully ran to the outer room to tell Jin Zijin, "Dad, sister is named Jin Luoyin, mom said so!"

Jin Zijin smiled and said, "Alright, if your mom says so, it’s perfect!"

The Ningwang Residence moved into the deep mountains less than a year ago, and now in Zhuzhao Country, it was well known by all.

The once remote mountains took on a new life because of the Prince Residence in Plum Blossom Valley.

Qingshui Town received substantial development, becoming the largest town in Yangguan.

Together with Lotus Village, the countless lotus flowers in summer also became a popular spot for scholars and refined individuals to visit and enjoy the scenery.

Chapter 1670: Congratulations

Of course, what they were most fascinated by was this Plum Blossom Valley at the foot of Tianmen Mountain. With a special glass shield for protection, there were always some renowned plum blossom varieties that bloomed year-round without withering.

This was something others could only envy; after all, who could compete with Gu Youyou's wealth and Jin Zijin's power?

Jin Luoyin's full moon banquet was held with great excitement, especially since it was the plum blossom season. Anyone who had any connection with Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin took this opportunity to visit Plum Blossom Valley, hoping to flatter the idol couple and feast their eyes.

The Emperor sent a congratulatory gift and even bestowed the title of Commandery Princess Mingyue. It had been a long time since Yue Rujing had shown up, but now he came as well.

Long time no see, he was still the elegant young man in white, looking carefree.

Seeing Jin Zijin, he couldn't resist giving him a big hug, but, alas, Jin Zijin was afraid he might bump into the child and discreetly dodged, leaving him rather disappointed.

"Senior Brother!" Yue Rujing sounded a bit wronged.

"Why have you come? I heard that Marquess Yue was going to pass the title to you. Shouldn't you be quite busy?"

Sitting inside, Gu Youyou poked her head out and asked, "Why are you here alone? Where's your wife?"

Seeing that neither of them showed any concern for him personally, a wave of disappointment washed over him.

With a hint of sadness, he said, “My father’s unwell; that was a lie to me.”

Gu Youyou: “…”

Jin Zijin: “…”

“He’s strong enough to kill a tiger!”

Everyone: “…”

“He wouldn’t let me leave Lingnan to force me to get married and have a child. Now that my little sister’s on the way, he finally let me out!”

“Ah…?” So Marquess Yue was such a person? Poor Yue Rujing, kept locked up for over a year, just to procreate.

Gu Youyou disdainfully said, “And you still ran off? Your wife’s expecting; you should be staying much closer!”

“Please, spare me. If I don’t see my senior brother again, I’d be dying from missing him!” Saying so, he leaned toward Jin Zijin again. If it weren’t for the fact that his little sister was already expecting, Gu Youyou would have liked to shout once more, “Let go of my husband!”

After catching up with Jin Zijin, Yue Rujing looked left and right but didn’t see Jin Xuyao, and asked, “Where’s Xuyao? I’ve been here a while and haven’t seen him?”

Gu Youyou, still in her confinement period, could only occasionally poke her head out from behind the glass window to greet the well-wishers, and Jin Zijin, holding the little baby all the time, seemed not to have noticed either.

When Yue Rujing brought it up, they realized they indeed hadn’t seen Jin Xuyao for some time.

At this, Xiang Chun quickly explained, “The young master, seeing everyone bring gifts, said he also wants to prepare a gift for his sister and mother. Just now I saw him shut himself in a room, quietly making something. I guess he’s crafting gifts for the Princess and the little lady.”

Yue Rujing chuckled and said, “So young and already thinking about preparing gifts, that’s quite something. Let me go and see!”

Yue Rujing turned around, followed by a servant leading him to where Jin Xuyao lived.

The smile on his face grew wider and eventually turned into hearty laughter, which made the guiding servant a little uneasy.

The senior brother’s family life was so good, so good that he didn’t want to interrupt. Fortunately, he had kept the secret all those years ago.

This was best; he now had a family too, and everyone could live happily.

Jin Xuyao’s door was not closed but ajar.

Yue Rujing felt something was amiss and hurried in.

“Xuyao!”