Farmhouse 231

Chapter 231: The Onset of the Flame Poison

In the split second of lightning and flint, Gu Youyou's mind had spun several circles in the blankness.

Jin Zijin cannot die! She did not want to see him die before her eyes. Suddenly, she felt that if she was destined to be captured and fed poison, it might be better to die clean.

She smiled bitterly in self-mockery, then looked up again with a cold laugh, glaring at the man in black. Facing the Cold Light Frost Sword in the man's hands, there was no trace of fear in her pale face—only a resolute acceptance of death.

Before it was fake, this time it was real.

Gu Youyou suddenly felt so tired, truly tired, tired of guessing, tired of living.

She didn't even know who she was, yet so many people were fighting over her.

What for?

Jin Zijin, what are you fighting for? To have children? If you can't even walk, what's the use of struggling? Why not just agree to his demands and let him take you? At least you'd still be alive, right?

That tragically beautiful and resolute cold laugh was like a poppy blooming in the cold moonlight, dazzlingly beautiful, yet laden with an incurable poison.

"Hahaha... You all just want to have me, don't you? I simply won't let you get your wish!"

"Youyou!" Jin Zijin's heart suddenly tightened, as if he had been suddenly pierced by a nail, the pain paralyzing him completely.

And the man in black, the astonishment in his eyes was no less than Jin Zijin's.

Gu Youyou threw herself at the knife, a move that was less about protecting Jin Zijin and more about seeking death.

Fortunately, he had never intended to kill. He just wanted to injure Jin Zijin so he couldn't move and then take Gu Youyou away.

Otherwise, that stroke would have been fatal.

Gu Youyou trembled with pain so intense it seemed to shake her heart. It turned out that dying was not so easy.

That pain also snapped her back to clarity.

She felt that if she continued to be driven by them, she would one day succumb to a mental breakdown.

How could she die? No, she couldn't die. She couldn't let herself off so cheaply for those people.

She had been stabbed in the abdomen. Looking down at the wound, it seemed that just the skin had been penetrated without reaching the kidney.

It was quite coincidental; the stab was precisely at the position where Gu Youyou had struck the man in black with the surgical knife.

Goodness, is this how quickly karma is returned?

"Senior Brother!" Yue Rujing had come back, and on seeing the scene, was filled with a rage that seemed to shoot flames three feet high.

Seeing that he had lost the opportunity tonight, the man in black, feeling unwilling, retreated once again.

"Well then, I wondered how you managed to run faster than a rabbit; turns out you played a trick to lead the tiger away from the mountain. You stand right there..."

"Ajing, Youyou's injured!"

Yue Rujing was about to chase after him when Jin Zijin called out to him.

Jin Zijin also reached his limit and, after speaking, collapsed straight backward.

This time, Gu Youyou didn't have the strength to catch him, and without Jin Zijin to lean on, she too wobbled, unable to stand firm from the pain.

Yue Rujing was shocked, catching Jin Zijin and quickly reaching out to support Gu Youyou as well.

"Hey, hey, what's going on with you two? Senior Brother, how did you..." He intended to ask how he had lost to the man in black, but the words stopped short when he touched Jin Zijin.

His face turned pale with shock and he exclaimed, "Senior Brother, has the flame poison flared up?"

Gu Youyou pressed down on her bleeding waist and abdomen, tearing a strip of cloth from her clothes to wrap it tightly around the wound—at least to stop the bleeding until they could get her cleaned up back at home.

Turning her head, she saw Yue Rujing still examining Jin Zijin's injuries. She frowned and said, "Let's go, we can talk about it when we get back."

The strange flame poison Jin Zijin was suffering from hadn't just appeared overnight; if it was to be cured, there was no hurry.

Yue Rujing nodded, hoisting Jin Zijin onto his back. Looking at Gu Youyou, pale-faced and holding her waist, he asked with concern, "Can you make it?"

In the dead of night, whether she could make it was not the question—she had to. Gu Youyou nodded weakly and said, "I can make it; just make sure he's secure on your back."

...

Chapter 232: How to detoxify?

Jin Zijin had completely passed out, his body alarmingly hot, like a tinder ready to burst into flames at any moment.

On Gu Youyou's end, she had already tended to her wounds, which were not deep, and after applying medicine, they had begun to heal.

Sitting by the bed, Gu Youyou had figured out Jin Zijin's condition.

Clinically, aside from the persistent high fever, his symptoms were no different from an ordinary fever sickness.

But according to Yue Rujing, he was poisoned by the Flame Pond Fire Lotus, so it probably wasn't as simple as an ordinary fever sickness.

That night, Gu Youyou stayed by his side while Yue Rujing was busy fetching water to cool him down, but it seemed to have no effect.

After a night of burning, boils started to appear on his arms, a manifestation of heat toxin syndrome coming from within to the surface.

Gu Youyou looked outside the window, where the sky was beginning to lighten in the east. After calculating the time, she estimated it to be between five-thirty and six in the morning. There was still a big hole in the bedroom, and by eight o'clock, she was supposed to go to Jisheng Hall.

She really didn't want these messy people to disturb the quiet and peaceful Lotus Village.

Yue Rujing had stopped fetching water and was just standing at the doorway, staring straight at Gu Youyou.

Gu Youyou replaced Jin Zijin's steaming hot towel and, seeing Yue Rujing in a daze, said to him, "Get another basin of cold water. It's no good if we can't bring the fever down; he's starting to get boils."

Yue Rujing didn't move, tugging at the corner of his mouth, an inexplicable sourness in his nose, and laughed bitterly.

Gu Youyou furrowed her brows and said, "What are you laughing at? Go on! Do you want your senior brother's brain to get fried?"

He shook his head and said in a low voice, "It's useless, no amount of cold water can cure the poison of a Fire Lotus."

After struggling for half the night with no improvement, Gu Youyou, as a doctor, was well aware of it.

But what exactly was this Fire Lotus...?

"Then tell me, what should we do? He must be in a lot of discomfort right now, using cold water to cool him down has to be somewhat relieving."

A sudden sense of helplessness surged in her heart, causing a stifling sensation that made her nose and eyes ache unbearably.

They were using her while being cautious around her. She clearly hadn't done anything, knew nothing, so why were they treating her like this?

Taking a deep breath, she suppressed her displeasure and asked more gently, "He's been poisoned for so long, why did it suddenly flare up tonight? How did you treat it during previous outbreaks? At this point, what do you still have to hide from me?"

Yue Rujing pursed his lips tightly and after a long contemplation, finally said, "Apart from him and me, only our master knows about my senior brother’s poisoning; even she doesn’t know. Now there’s you too. We can’t leak the poisoning incident, no matter whose side you’re on, I hope you can remember that we have been fairly good to you, and in the future..."

"I’m asking now, how can we save him!" Gu Youyou interrupted him loudly, not letting him continue.

Under different circumstances, she would have been pleased to see Yue Rujing being open about Jin Zijin’s matters, but right now she didn’t want to listen, didn’t want to deal with secrets that weren’t for someone like her to touch; she just wanted to know how to save him.

Yue Rujing stared at Gu Youyou, taken aback, and then said faintly, "Suppressing the toxicity... isn’t difficult. The only thing that can suppress the poison of the Flame Pond Fire Lotus is the Youying Grass."

"Youying Grass?" Gu Youyou looked up at him and asked, "Don’t you have this grass?"

If they had it, would Jin Zijin need to come to Lotus Village and stay for years?

No, that’s not right; she distinctly remembered that he came to Lotus Village to find someone, not to look for the Youying Grass.

Chapter 233: Bloodletting

Yue Rujing shook her head gently and said, "Although Youying Grass is rare, it is not difficult for us to find. However... ordinary people cannot directly take Youying Grass to detoxify, it needs to be used in combination with the Youying Pearl."

What a hassle!

"So you actually don’t have the Youying Pearl? You’ve been searching for so many years and haven’t found it. Surely it’s too late to start looking now. Just say it, what do we do now?"

"Now? If you want him to wake up as soon as possible, only you can save him."

"Me...?" Gu Youyou recalled the scene where Jin Zijin's body was burning up, and she almost lost control. Her face suddenly heated up.

Get naked and sleep with him? But why? That's so unscientific?

"Do I really have to do that?" Gu Youyou asked Yue Rujing tentatively.

Yue Rujing nodded affirmatively and said, "Indeed, otherwise, my senior brother will not last three days."

"Then fine, it's not the first time anyway."

Gu Youyou began to undress, but then she saw Yue Rujing, a grown man, still standing there. She frowned and said, "You don't need to stay, do you? I'll call you when he wakes up."

"You..." Yue Rujing saw her intention and coughed awkwardly, saying, "You might be misunderstanding me. In the past, that method might have worked, but now we need to do something different."

"Huh...?" Confusion crossed Gu Youyou's face, followed by a wave of embarrassment. She glared at him, the instigator of the misunderstanding, and said, "Then say it all at once, will you?"

Buttoning her clothes back up, Yue Rujing had already strode over to them.

Without saying another word, he grabbed Gu Youyou's arm, revealed a small knife, and whispered, "My apologies, but endure it a little!"

"Hey, ah..."

Yue Rujing's movement was swift and fluid, giving Gu Youyou no time to react. He just grabbed her arm, made a cut to draw blood, and let it flow.

"Yue Rujing, couldn’t you... explain things first, to prepare me?"

That was a blood vessel he cut, and Gu Youyou watched her blood flow out like water, filling a large bowl in no time.

With her frail body, this amount of blood was already the limit. Plus, the knife wound in her abdomen also caused a lot of blood loss. After one bowl, she began to feel dizzy.

"How... much more?" Gu Youyou asked weakly.

Continuing like this could kill a person.

Yue Rujing’s face darkened, his expression ominous as he coldly spat out two words, "Not enough!"

When one bowl was filled, he took out another.

Gu Youyou felt she was losing not just blood, but her life as well.

Her lips parted slightly, lacking even the strength to argue or curse, she could only watch the bright red fluid carrying her life away, drop by drop.

Time was so short, yet so painfully long.

Continuing like this, she was certain to die.

In her delirium, it felt as brief as a moment, yet as lengthy as a century.

She didn’t know how much blood she had lost, didn’t know when she had drifted into a deep sleep, nor when she saw a beam of light in that darkness...

Gu Youyou, like a trapped beast, was confined in the void of darkness, where the distant light was so bright, so desirable, yet so out of reach.

"Youyou, come here, quickly..." The voice was calling her soul from afar, now closer, now distant.

The voice was coming from the light, yet it was too far away for her to grasp.

So, she chased the voice, desperately running towards that glimmer of light.

"Youyou, keep it up, you have always been the best!"

Chapter 234 Argument

Gu Youyou heard it clearly, it was the voice of a middle-aged man, calm and powerful, yet with a hint of imperceptible vicissitudes.

"Who is it?"

The scene before her eyes changed, and she saw a familiar track, the kind found at Xunchang School.

And she herself was running desperately on that track because at the other end of the track was the finish line, and the place where the beam of light was.

"Youyou, hurry up, do you see it? The blue sky, the sunshine, don’t let yourself be trapped in darkness forever."

"Grandfather!" Gu Youyou recognized the voice, it was her grandfather’s voice from when he was younger.

"Grandfather, where are you?" she asked while she ran.

"Hurry, Youyou, run out!"

The voice, sometimes distant and sometimes close, seemed to change again, becoming much younger and equally familiar.

"Youyou, wake up!"

"Jin Zijin? Ah..."

Suddenly, a great suction force appeared within the light, and it sucked her in entirely.

She had not had time to find her grandfather or Jin Zijin before she was pulled back to that familiar place and abruptly opened her eyes.

Gu Youyou felt a buzzing headache as two men, silhouetted against the light, seemed to be arguing in the room, not noticing that she had opened her eyes.

"How could you let her lose so much blood? An ordinary person couldn’t tolerate it, let alone her being so frail!"

Through the curtain, against the light, Gu Youyou couldn’t see their faces clearly, but from the voice, she knew that Jin Zijin was furious as he spoke.

He was blaming Yue Rujing for letting her bleed too much, and her cold heart unnoticeably warmed a little.

It was not in vain that I risked my life to save you, Jin Zijin, at least you have a conscience.

"But if I hadn’t done that, I wouldn’t have been able to save you!" Yue Rujing, who usually seemed carefree and unconcerned about anything, was also speaking in an irritated tone.

Jin Zijin clenched his fists, suppressing the anger in his heart, and almost roared at him loudly, "Did you ever consider that she could die?"

Jin Zijin was always composed and unruffled, and Gu Youyou had never seen him so angry, especially with Yue Rujing, whom he trusted considerably.

She still remembered Yue Rujing mentioning that only two people knew about the incident of him being poisoned by the secret flames, not even their master knew.

One was Jin Zijin himself, and the other was Yue Rujing, which showed his trust in Yue Rujing.

Yue Rujing looked at Jin Zijin incredulously, "Senior brother, are you blaming me?"

There was no response from Jin Zijin, his stance had always been very clear.

Moments later, Yue Rujing burst into loud laughter and said, "So what if I am? All I know is that you cannot die! Besides, she's just a woman with an unknown background. Now that she knows about your secret flame poisoning, it could be dangerous if she has any ulterior motives for you..."

Jin Zijin took a deep breath, closed his eyes as if deflating, and seemed to press down the anger deep into his heart as he said in a low voice, "Enough, I've said that no matter whom she belongs to, she cannot die."

"You... you've changed!" Yue Rujing said suddenly, sounding somewhat disappointed, "This is dangerous for you, she will become your vulnerability."

Jin Zijin ignored him, saying to himself, "I've survived all these years, why should I fear a bit of poison! Sooner or later, I'll be able to purge it completely."

"Ha, what kind of joke is that!" Yue Rujing said, as if hearing a huge joke, "You clearly know that the flame poison in you... is different from that of an ordinary person..."

Chapter 235 Just Like Returning to the Beginning

"So what, I've said Gu Youyou can't die!" Jin Zijin roared, "Ajing, I hope this is the only time!" This was a warning to him.

His taut face signaled just how angry he was about Yue Rujing’s reckless bloodletting.

"Huh..." Yue Rujing let out a low, bitter laugh and said lightly, "Life is yours, you call the shots!" He would have to be out of his mind to panic.

In front of the window, Jin Zijin’s tall figure stood for a long time, blocking the sunlight streaming in from outside the window.

His silhouette looked somewhat desolate and lonely, as isolated as a statue.

Lying down for too long made Gu Youyou feel uncomfortable. It had been a while since she’d lain down for such an extended period, and her patience wasn’t what it used to be.

And the man in front of the window endured too much.

He must have been standing there for quite a while, the sun moving from east to west, yet he remained like a statue, standing there, seemingly lost in thought.

Gu Youyou turned over, facing the direction of the window where Jin Zijin stood.

This was Yue Rujing’s study where she slept; their bedroom had been ruined by the men in black, unfit for sleeping.

Yue Rujing really knew how to enjoy life; the bed was so comfortable it nearly rivaled a modern mattress, in stark contrast to the hard wooden beds of ancient times.

The noise behind her woke the standing figure by the window.

Gu Youyou saw his body sway before he slowly turned around.

He drew the bed curtain and saw her looking pale from blood loss.

"I... am a bit thirsty!" Gu Youyou opened her mouth, looking for an excuse to ease the awkwardness.

A flicker of uncontrollable joy crossed Jin Zijin's face, and he said cheerfully, "Mm, I'll get you some water!"

He was afraid she'd notice the secret on his face and left almost as if fleeing.

As he turned away, Gu Youyou finally smiled.

She thought: So, he does care about me, and maybe it's not just because my blood can detoxify.

Soon, a bowl of water at just the right temperature was brought before her.

When Gu Youyou was too sick to take care of herself, Jin Zijin had gotten used to attending to her, and she had grown accustomed to his care, creating a natural understanding between them.

He extended his arm behind her back and gently propped up her body, then helped her sit up.

With one hand supporting her back, and the other holding the coarse bowl, he fed her.

After swallowing half a bowl of water, Gu Youyou felt somewhat better.

Wanting a drink wasn't just an excuse; she was genuinely thirsty.

After placing her back in bed and covering her with a blanket, Jin Zijin said softly, "There's congee still simmering on the stove, I can get you some."

"No need!" As he rose, Gu Youyou grabbed his hand.

His hand was still warm but no longer scaldingly so.

This was his usual temperature.

"I want to get a good look at you."

Jin Zijin sat at the edge of the bed, tugged at the corner of his mouth, and generously brushed his long hair behind his ear, chuckling softly, "Alright, look!"

He smiled just right!

With the same eyes, the same prominent nose, only because he changed a layer of skin, he looked completely different.

If Jin Ziyuan was like a piece of crystal-clear glaze, Yue Rujing an untouchable fairy in the moon, then Jin Zijin was like the warm sun of early spring in March, capable of melting ice and snow! Always just right, unknowingly warming the ice and snow that had been cold all winter.

Gu Youyou raised her hand, wanting to touch and see.

As her hand lifted, pain at her wrist and the ugly white bandage wrapped around it reminded her of the large cut made there early this morning.

But seeing Jin Zijin safe and unharmed, she felt it was worth it.

Chapter 236 The Secret on Me

"Youyou!" Jin Zijin suddenly restrained his smile, his eyes revealing an indiscernible expression.

He grabbed her hand and placed it back under the blanket, whispering, "Don’t be so foolish next time. I’m not a good person and not worth your efforts for me."

Gu Youyou smiled awkwardly, thinking to herself: If only she had known Yue Rujing harbored the intention to kill the goose that laid the golden egg, she wouldn’t have allowed him to cut.

In the end, she failed to feel for it and changed the subject, "If you never find the Youying Pearl, does that mean you can never leave me?"

Jin Zijin’s expression changed abruptly, and he looked down at her in astonishment.

It seemed he had not expected Gu Youyou to suddenly bring up the Youying Pearl.

In Gu Youyou’s eyes, his expression seemed to indicate that she had asked something she shouldn’t have, touching upon a subject that should not have been mentioned.

Gu Youyou felt somewhat disappointed but still said with a faint smile, "The matter of the Youying Pearl was mentioned by Yue Rujing, so... he might want to kill me to silence me."

Kill me to silence me! Death!

Such words penetrated Jin Zijin’s mind, causing his eyes to narrow suddenly.

Gu Youyou was surprised to find a trace of pity in his inscrutable eyes.

Pity? For her, Gu Youyou?

A thought suddenly struck her heart; Jin Zijin’s kindness towards her... was it really just because she was his antidote? But if she were merely a cure, why would he bother to be so considerate towards her?

If it were her, Gu Youyou, in his place, she would have simply given some silver to the Gu Family, purchased the dying invalid, and then done whatever she wanted with her purchase.

Of course, having known Jin Zijin for so long, she understood he was not someone so direct.

"You... Zijin, why do you treat me this way? I really don’t understand. You all simply see me as a poison antidote, so why argue with Yue Rujing for my sake? He truly cares about you."

Jin Zijin gently brushed the stray hairs from her forehead, his voice hoarse as he said, "Don’t... don’t ask me, I don’t know either."

Although he said nothing more, Gu Youyou could not help feeling overjoyed and laughed out loud!

A little is enough, just a little bit. Do you know that often it’s that tiny spark that can start a wildfire?

The one who had finally fallen wasn’t just her anymore. It’s alright if you don’t know now; one day you will.

"Zijin!" Gu Youyou called his name joyfully, "Does that mean you’ve come to trust me? Apart from those inexplicable abilities I have, I have never lied to you, I’ve never hurt you, have I?"

She was eager to gain his trust.

Only if he truly trusted her, believed that she wasn’t someone planted by someone else, could he see his own heart clearly.

Jin Zijin said, "Yes, you jumped off a cliff with me, you took a sword strike for me, you almost lost your life for me, I know all that. It’s just..."

Gu Youyou was eagerly awaiting the rest of his sentence, but the big ’but’ pushed her down again.

"But what? What else are you worried about?" Her clear eyes showed a frantic look, and she gazed at him expectantly.

But Jin Zijin did not seem inclined to continue, instead he sighed and said, "Let’s not talk about this now. You need to rest. Ajing won’t silence you."

His habit of saying half and leaving half truly drove her crazy; they had finally broached such a topic today, and Gu Youyou did not intend to let it go just like that.

"Fine, I won’t ask about your matters anymore, but can you tell me what’s with my body? Why can my blood suppress the poison in you?"

This was something she was equally eager to know.

Chapter 237: Your Effect on Me

Jin Zijin said, "You should have already guessed who poisoned you, right?"

"Hmm?" Gu Youyou looked up at him and then nodded her head.

She had naturally guessed it was the people from the Dao Family’s Xuanzong, the same "Master" mentioned by the black-clad person last night.

Being the senior brother of Tianzong, Jin Zijin surely knew that person.

"He is the Sect Master of Xuanzong, the current State Preceptor of Zhuzhao Country," Jin Zijin said calmly.

She didn’t expect this person to have such a grand background, so how could she, a mere village girl, have offended such a significant figure?

Gu Youyou asked, "Then why did he make me drink those medicines?"

Jin Zijin said, "The main ingredient in the medicine you drank is Youying Grass. This ’grass’ is better described as a poisonous insect."

"Poisonous insect?"

My gosh, this is getting more and more fantastical.

Gu Youyou had heard about such things as poisonous insects before; they always seemed mysterious and frightening, something unfathomable.

Jin Zijin nodded and explained, "This grass blooms from the flesh and blood of poisonous insects, thriving in cold and shadowy places. If nurtured by Youying Pearls, its medicinal effect is even more exceptional, hence it’s called Youying Grass."

It sounded a bit like the growth pattern of caterpillar fungus, and just by this pattern alone, one could tell its preciousness.

They really didn’t spare any expenses.

Gu Youyou nodded to signal him to continue.

"Youying Grass is a poison of extreme yin and cold, ordinarily fatal to anyone within three days of ingestion. However, someone with the Four Pillars Pure Yin constitution can consume small amounts daily when combined with a unique formula, producing unexpected effects."

"What effects?" Gu Youyou asked subconsciously, her heart growing increasingly tense.

Jin Zijin replied, "The Youying Yin Qi you emit can suppress the poison in my body. Having taken the medicine for many years, your blood has already blended with the properties of Youying Grass, which is highly beneficial to the flame poison in my body. That’s also why I brought you out of the Gu Family."

"So you’re finally admitting that you’ve been using me?" Gu Youyou said with a bitter smile.

But Jin Zijin said, "No, it’s mutual use."

"Heh...? And how exactly am I using you?" Gu Youyou looked at him sarcastically. "I recall not bothering anyone and just quietly lying in that dark room waiting to die. I didn’t agree to anything with you!"

Jin Zijin didn’t appreciate Gu Youyou’s indifferent attitude towards life and death; that touch of dispassion in her clear eyes invariably made him panic.

He clenched his fists tighter and tried to keep his voice steady as he said to her, "Your grandfather sought cures for your illness everywhere, even secretly worshipping Buddha, and happened to be discovered by me. You may not yet know, but worshipping Buddha... is taboo in Zhuzhao Country. He told me everything about you and pleaded that I keep it a secret!"

Jin Zijin watched for Gu Youyou’s reaction, and indeed, she was utterly astonished. Buddhism being taboo in Zhuzhao Country reminded her of that certain nation in ’Journey to the West’ that valued the Dao over Buddhism.

That made sense. With the State Preceptor deriving from the Dao Family, it would be strange if Buddhism wasn’t suppressed.

"So don’t tell me that after hearing this, you felt compassion, pitied that old man who cried to you, and thus came up with this method to get me out of the dark room legitimately. And my ability to suppress the poison in your body was merely incidental."

Looking troubled, Jin Zijin said in a low voice, "Why must you mock me?"

"Heh..."

"I’ve been in Lotus Village for years. I’ve known about your existence and that it was Xuanzong’s doing. I was solely focused on finding the Youying Pearl and didn’t want to draw Xuanzong’s people here because of you. And taking you away from the Gu Family, firstly, your body was no longer holding up, and secondly, I just happened to need you. As I said before, we are merely helping each other."

Chapter 238: When is the next bloodletting?

Gu Youyou: "..." What you just said was clearly about mutual use.

Alright, let’s not dwell on that issue.

"What do the people of Xuanzong want to do with me?"

Finally knowing some truth, Jin Zijin used her as a living medicine, but what about the people of Xuanzong? What use would they have for a medicine person they had been nurturing for decades?

Jin Zijin narrowed his eyes slightly and said, "I'm not quite sure of the specifics, but the people of Xuanzong insist that people like you, nurtured with Youying Grass, can connect with the heavens and the earth. They believe that if they gather seven pure Yin men and women, they will be able to activate an Ancient Array, which allows people to ascend in broad daylight!"

For an atheist like Gu Youyou, Jin Zijin's words seemed like utter nonsense, and it took her a long time to come to grips with them.

She muttered under her breath, "Ascend in broad daylight? It sounds more like they're having pipe dreams."

Jin Zijin laughed and said, "That's what I think, too! Not just me, everyone from Tianzong thinks the same, which is why our Dao Family's Tianzong doesn't get along with Xuanzong."

Gu Youyou wasn't interested in the disputes between the Dao Family's Tianzong and Xuanzong; she was more concerned about her own body.

"So, what do they want to do with me?"

She guessed, but still asked with that incredible thought suppressed in her heart.

To her surprise, Jin Zijin didn't want to continue on this topic and simply said, "You don't have to worry, I won't let them take you away."

Hah... Gu Youyou chuckled bitterly, but could you really be trusted?

Gu Youyou felt conflicted about Jin Zijin, and she presumed, maybe Jin Zijin felt the same way.

Their relationship was fraught with interests that couldn’t be ignored; they couldn’t be as reckless as an ordinary man and woman.

Gu Youyou gazed blankly at the wound on her wrist while Jin Zijin patiently spoon-fed her the porridge he had prepared.

What a beautiful picture, a husband caring for his seriously ill wife!

If only they didn’t have their own hidden agendas.

The porridge contained strips of greens and meat and had a light, salty flavor, cooked thin to suit the low appetite of a sick person, clearly made with care.

As she comfortably enjoyed his care, Gu Youyou felt a sense of desolation in her heart.

She suddenly remembered a well-fed pig, fattened up for slaughter.

And they were taking such careful care of her, just to bleed her.

Gu Youyou always had a sharp tongue, and she asked with a low voice dripping with sarcasm, "When’s the next bloodletting going to be?"

Jin Zijin’s hand froze, and inadvertently, the porridge dripped from the spoon, spilling onto the blanket, causing Gu Youyou to frown.

From beside her, Jin Zijin’s voice came through, resignated and hoarse, "Youyou, I never intended to let you bleed, and there will be no more in the future... Ajing... won’t either."

"Then you..." Gu Youyou asked with a hint of disbelief, "how can you guarantee that?"

Jin Zijin raised an eyebrow, hesitated for a long moment, and counter-asked, "Do you really distrust me that much?"

Hah... Why don’t you do something that’s actually trustworthy then!

Jin Zijin gave a pained smile, said nothing more, and stood up to put the bowl away. He then took a clean cloth and wiped the spilled porridge off the blanket.

...

Gu Youyou assessed her physical condition, fearing that she would need several days of rest. That damned Yue Rujing, she never realized he was one to strike so harshly.

After staying up all night and sleeping fitfully during the day, she was especially tired in the evening.

Jin Zijin busied himself preparing medicine for her, cooking food, and after dinner, Gu Youyou went to sleep.

Chapter 239: Waiting for You to Come Back to Fix the House

Yue Rujing had an argument with Jin Zijin and was gone for the entire day, unexpectedly returning in the evening as if nothing happened.

In the study where he usually slept, Gu Youyou was sleeping soundly while the bedroom still had a huge hole that no one cared for.

Looking around, Yue Rujing scoffed, "Brother Jin, how can you live like this, with such a big hole in your house and you don’t even bother fixing it?" It seemed he would have to stay at an inn tonight; sleeping in a house with a hole was out of the question.

Jin Zijin simply said, "I’ll wait for you to fix it. I need to take care of Youyou."

"Me...?" Yue Rujing pointed to his own nose, his lips twitching violently as he said, "Do you think I look like someone who knows how to repair houses?"

Jin Zijin glanced at Abao’s kennel and earnestly said, "You fixed its house pretty well, didn’t you?"

Yue Rujing: "...That’s a doghouse!" Can we not talk about doghouses? It makes me feel wronged; everyone is picking on me.

"If you can fix a doghouse, why can’t you fix a house?" Jin Zijin believed it was only natural for Yue Rujing to know how to fix houses.

"Who told you that if you can fix a doghouse, you must be able to fix a house?"

"Fixing a doghouse is harder than fixing a house!" That was what Jin Zijin thought.

"You..." Yue Rujing felt at a loss for words.

He harrumphed, took a deep breath, and waved his hand resignedly, "Fine, I’ll find someone to fix it tomorrow. Today, I need to discuss some important matters with you."

"Good, I also have important things to discuss with you," Jin Zijin said.

"Oh...?" Yue Rujing raised his eyebrows in surprise and said, "Then you go first."

"You go first!"

Yue Rujing: "..."

"Alright, I’ll go first."

He craned his neck to look towards the study and whispered, "She’s asleep, right?"

Jin Zijin didn’t know if Gu Youyou was asleep or not, but he seemed reluctant to discuss everything behind her back; it would only make her more resistant to him.

So he said, "She’s asleep. Go ahead!"

In the courtyard, Abao lay leisurely on the ground, his amber eyes fixed intently on the bright moon in the sky, deep in thought.

In this quiet little courtyard, the voices of the two men could occasionally be heard.

"Brother Jin, do you know what shocking and unconventional things she did while you were away these past days?"

Having just finished hanging the laundry on the bamboo poles, Jin Zijin momentarily paused at the question and turned to ask, "What has she done now? You’re making such an odd face."

"Hey! You’ll never guess!" Remembering the sight of Gu Youyou wielding a small knife towards Yuancheng’s private parts still made Yue Rujing feel uneasy, despite several days having passed.

Unintentionally, his gaze drifted towards Jin Zijin’s crotch area.

Being stared at like that by another man was definitely uncomfortable, causing Jin Zijin’s face to darken instantly.

"Ajing!"

The warning tone was heavy; you indecent fellow, believe it or not, I’ll throw you out.

Yue Rujing shuddered all over, snapping back to his senses.

How could he even begin to explain this? Yue Rujing thought himself to be thin-skinned (or so he believed), which truly made this difficult for him!

His hesitance made Jin Zijin increasingly impatient to stand there with him, the room was a mess, and there were plenty of things waiting for him to do.

"If you're not going to speak... then you can spend your time watching the moon with Abao!"

Jin Zijin turned to leave.

"Hey, I'll speak, I'll speak..." Yue Rujing quickly stepped in front of Jin Zijin, blocking his path as if he had made up his mind, and quietly said through gritted teeth, "Your wife is definitely not normal."

He threw out the statement with a mysterious air.

"Do you know what I saw?"

Chapter 240: Your Wife is Not Normal

Jin Zijin couldn't stand his mysterious act and glared at him impatiently.

Yue Rujing continued, "I saw her treating Yuancheng. I've told you before about my investigation into the people from Jisheng Hall, remember? The child who was almost sent to the palace to become an eunuch, the one who's been sick since birth."

Jin Zijin narrowed his eyes at him, utterly speechless. What on earth was he trying to say? What was he trying to do?

With a helpless tone, he said, "I know Yuancheng."

Yue Rujing clapped his hands together, utterly surprised, "I said she treated Yuancheng, so why didn't you react?"

Jin Zijin: "..." He had no clue what he was talking about. Gu Youyou had good medical skills, what was wrong with her treating someone?

"Ah..." Yue Rujing suddenly realized, "You surely don’t know how she treated him. You’ve probably never heard of this kind of treatment method. She, she..."

His junior brother was becoming more and more skilled at being cryptic.

Jin Zijin took the empty basin into the house and went straight to the kitchen to boil water.

"Hey, Senior Brother, have you ever heard of the word ’surgery’?" Yue Rujing followed after him.

It wasn’t that he wanted to be secretive, but this matter was truly hard to speak of and utterly unimaginable.

Because he saw that Gu Youyou took a real knife and really made an incision.

Jin Zijin was too lazy to look, too lazy to listen, it didn’t matter whether he spoke or not.

So, Yue Rujing, holding his breath, spilled everything out vividly.

"A few days ago, I felt that something was off with Gu Youyou and Qin Changlin, so I didn’t leave in the evening. Instead, I stayed in the medical hall to see what they were up to. Then, I was shocked to find the usually kind Qin Changlin serving Yuancheng a bowl of Knockout Drug and coaxing him into drinking it.

After that, I saw Gu Youyou hurriedly asking Qin Changlin to fetch a knife and boil water, and she even put on a strange suit of mourning clothes. Oh, Qin Changlin put on one too. I wondered why since their master, Doctor Zhou, had died and it was past the time to wear mourning clothes..."

"Mourning clothes?" Jin Zijin interrupted him.

Fortunately, Gu Youyou was really asleep. Otherwise, hearing the words "mourning clothes," she would have fainted from anger.

What they had specially made—a stylish white doctor's coat—turned into mourning clothes according to Yue Rujing.

"Exactly, with knives and boiling water, both dressed in mourning clothes, they scared me half to death. Gu Youyou wouldn't let me watch, and Qin Changlin insisted it was for some treatment. I figured they were prepared for Yuancheng's treatment to fail and had the funeral wear ready in advance, or why else would they have put on mourning clothes beforehand?

Hey! They wouldn't let me watch, but I insisted on seeing, so I went to the hall first, and as soon as they closed the door, I climbed onto the roof.

Senior Brother, guess what I saw?"

Jin Zijin said gruffly, "Are you going to tell me yourself, or do you want me to guess?"

"Oh oh, I'll tell you!" Yue Rujing lowered his voice and said, "Qin Changlin undressed Yuancheng, and Gu Youyou directly used that knife to... hey hey! Senior Brother, Senior Brother..."

"What did you say?" Jin Zijin's mind flashed with the images described by Yue Rujing, and he completely lost his composure, bolting to his feet and grabbing a handful of Jin Zijin's front.

Gu Youyou was a girl. How could she do such a thing? Perform genital cutting on Yuancheng? Did they really intend to turn Yuancheng into an eunuch?

A nameless anger raced through his body; even if Yuancheng was just a child, and that thing hadn't fully grown yet, it was still unacceptable.

Yue Rujing had never seen Jin Zijin so flustered before and was momentarily stunned