Farmhouse 301

Chapter 301: Treated as Bandits to be Suppressed

Qin Changlin quickly put on a mask and began to ask Uncle Wang about his discomfort.

As Uncle Wang left, he huffed in discontent, "If I really caught a contagious disease, what good would your damn piece of cloth do?"

In fact, Qin Changlin had the same thought.

Gu Youyou paid no attention to that vulgar man, understanding that as a doctor, Qin Changlin had to know better.

So Gu Youyou sat down and patiently told Qin Changlin a story about the great importance of wearing a mask.

After listening, Qin Changlin could only click his tongue in amazement. Looking at the mask in his hand, three layers of gauze sewn together, he felt even more astonished.

"So, just this thing can suffice if there's really a plague?" he asked.

Without a word, Gu Youyou rolled her eyes and said, "It's not about it sufficing, but it can greatly reduce the transmission. Many infectious diseases are transmitted through saliva and breath; using a three-layer gauze to cover the mouth and nose can block the pathogens in the air."

"Then why do we have to wear it every day? It's quite uncomfortable."

"Even the common cold is contagious. Wearing it is to prevent you from falling ill frequently. As a doctor, the premise of treating patients is to ensure your own health. Oh, and remember what I told you about disinfecting when you come into contact with patients' bodily fluids."

He nearly understood; Sister Youyou had him do all these things he had never done before for the sake of his own health.

Qin Changlin cracked a smile and said, "I got it now, thank you, Sister Youyou."

...

The next day, Jin Zijin indeed wanted to accompany Gu Youyou to the Gu Family, to see what sort of mischief her two uncles were up to.

Yue Rujing, who had not been gone long, returned, her expression one of anger mixed with anxiety.

"Senior Brother, we've been duped by that bastard."

Gu Youyou was taken aback and put down the medicine jar she was about to pick up.

"What happened?" Yue Rujing was rarely this flustered, making Jin Zijin frown as well.

"That bastard Zhuo Qing pulled a 'luring the tiger away from the mountain' scheme on me. The letter he sent to Beijing yesterday was a ruse; in secret, he moved the troops from Yangguan City here. My men on Hu Mountain have been surrounded, under the guise of bandit suppression!"

Jin Zijin calmly said, "But wasn't it you who initially labeled them as Hu Mountain bandits?"

"Exactly!" Yue Rujing was livid, stamping her feet in frustration. "I brought so many people over and had no way to settle them in a small town without attracting attention. I thought posing as bandits would draw no scrutiny, but it turns out I've given that bastard the perfect reason to wipe us out."

Yue Rujing, tugging at Jin Zijin, exclaimed urgently, "Senior Brother, those are our main reliance in Qingshui Town, we can't just squander them. Come with me, I refuse to believe my men can't overcome those good-for-nothing soldiers."

Jin Zijin hesitated, glancing at Gu Youyou.

Gu Youyou smiled and picked up the medicine jar again.

"Go ahead, I'll take Abao with me."

"But your two uncles..." He felt uneasy.

Gu Youyou said, "It's okay, if we lose our backing, what will we do when Zhuo Qing comes forcibly? "

Seeing him still hesitant, Gu Youyou added, "What could they possibly do to me? The worst is having them hold a grudge for the last time they failed, looking for an opportunity to teach me a lesson. I'm not foolish enough to let them do it without cost. Even if I'm caught by them this time, won't I intensify my retaliation next time?"

Yue Rujing also said, "Senior Brother, as long as we're here, he wouldn't dare touch Youyou, but once it's just the two of us... just the two of us left, however skilled we are, we can't withstand their numbers."

Chapter 302 What the Hell is He Thinking?

"Ah, that grandson clearly wants to swallow me whole, and all I can do is take it silently and watch, furious enough to die."

Yue Rujing was both angry and anxious, stamping her feet in the courtyard.

It made sense, after all. In the hands of the two Gu brothers, one might suffer a bit, but in the hands of Zhuo Qing, it wouldn't be so simple as just suffering.

In the end, Jin Zijin still went with Yue Rujing.

"Youyou is here again, quite early today as well!"

Today, staying at home was Huang Xiangwen, the second aunt, who, unlike usual, was very enthusiastic towards Gu Youyou.

No matter how warm Huang Xiangwen was, Gu Youyou didn’t offer her a pleasant face. She couldn’t even pretend to do it and didn’t bother trying.

"From now on, this early, only one dose of medicine." Gu Youyou said indifferently, her tone cold.

Had it been any other time, Huang Xiangwen might have exploded with rage, insisting on making a scene. But this time, she didn’t get mad. It was as if she had gotten used to it and still warmly approached despite the cold treatment.

"Youyou, your second aunt has saved some fried bread twists for you, want to eat some?"

"No need, I’ve already eaten." Gu Youyou said.

After speaking, she went straight to Gu Feng’s room, with Abao following behind her, mouth wide open, revealing his tongue and teeth in a rather scary manner.

That’s why Huang Xiangwen didn’t dare to follow her in.

After treating Gu Feng, he was deeply preoccupied. He was always clearer about his own son than others were, but reminding his granddaughter to be cautious around her uncles felt awkward no matter how he thought about it.

These two unfilial sons.

To prevent Youyou from any accidents, Gu Feng still spoke up.

"Youyou, be careful around your two uncles, those unambitious fellows."

Gu Youyou was startled, so Grandpa also noticed? She smiled and said, "Don’t worry, I’ll be careful."

"Mm, I've finished the medicine. You better go back quickly."

Gu Youyou thought that made sense. To avoid suffering losses when possible was best, lest Grandpa and Jin Zijin worried.

One could always avoid trouble.

Huang Xiangwen was very enthusiastic today. When Gu Youyou came out of Gu Feng's room, she brought over another bowl, inside was a big bowl of milky white liquid.

Smiling, she said, "Youyou, your second uncle ground this soybean juice early in the morning. Have a taste, it's sweetened with sugar."

Oh, they bought meat yesterday and sugar today; they're truly sparing no expense to catch a wolf!

Gu Youyou said, "No need, let Sanya drink it. The kids will definitely love it."

Huang Xiangwen, clearly peeved, said, "That little liar Sanya? What doesn't she love to drink? Give her anything good and she'll gulp it down. Don't mind her; she's got her own. You drink, don't spurn your uncle and auntie's kindness."

Gu Youyou looked towards Sanya, who was sitting by the stone table on the side, with her own bowl already half-drunk.

Seeing Gu Youyou look over, Sanya showed her little white teeth and smiled at her.

"Ghost sister, the soybean juice is tasty, you drink!"

Seeing the child's innocent smile, Gu Youyou smiled along.

She took the soybean juice from Huang Xiangwen and carried it over to the stone table, sitting next to Sanya.

"Ghost sister, it’s delicious!" Sanya nudged her half-finished bowl of soybean juice towards Gu Youyou, her eyes switching between the juice and Gu Youyou, looking rather reluctant.

Gu Youyou laughed and said, "Alright, I’ll drink what Sanya has given."

She turned her head to look at Huang Xiangwen, who stood there with a look of astonishment.

Gu Youyou paid her no attention and handed the big bowl of soybean juice she had just received from Huang Xiangwen to Sanya, saying, "Sister drank yours, so I’ll give my bowl to Sanya. But Sanya, don’t drink it yet since you’ve already had quite a bit, and it’s a bit hot. Wait a while and then it won’t be hot anymore."

Chapter 303: Bait

There’s a saying, "Over eagerness to offer help is either a trap or a theft," so Gu Youyou had to be on guard.

She wasn’t sure if there was anything wrong with the mung bean drink Huang Xiangwen served, so she switched with Sanya, but she couldn’t let Sanya drink it either.

If there were indeed a problem with the drink, Huang Xiangwen surely wouldn’t give it to her own daughter to consume after Gu Youyou had left.

Gu Youyou watched Sanya, smiling as she finished the remaining half of her mung bean drink.

It had only a hint of sweetness and wasn’t very well made, still carrying the astringency of the beans, but the child drank it happily, thinking it was delicious.

Children of this era were worlds apart from the children of modern times; after all, Sanya was the child of Lotus Village’s richest family.

Of course, Gu Youyou knew that many children in the village couldn’t even dream of having dregs of tofu, let alone mung bean drink.

Seeing Gu Youyou finish her drink, Huang Xiangwen’s expression was indescribably strange, and Gu Youyou heard her mutter under her breath, "She actually drank it."

Before Gu Youyou could ponder the meaning of those words, she felt dizzy. She internally cursed, realizing too late that something was wrong.

The moment before she collapsed, Gu Youyou saw that Sanya had already slumped over the stone table, motionless.

How ruthless, it wasn’t a careless mistake by Gu Youyou, but her enemies were simply inhuman.

It might also be due to her being too kindhearted; some people have no humanity, no bottom line. She couldn’t comprehend people who would use their own children, especially a little five or six-year-old girl, as bait.

Unsure of how long she’d slept, Gu Youyou heard some voices in her groggy state.

Her head felt as heavy as if it was weighed down by a stone, and she couldn’t open her eyes, leaving her only to listen to those strange words with her ears.

"Hurry up, this is a big catch."

"Be careful, in broad daylight, have you squared things with the gatekeeper?"

"Don’t worry, I just said she’s my wife, sick with smallpox; the gatekeeper can’t wait for us to get her out of here."

"Did you bring the cinnabar used for fake smallpox marks?"

"Got it, got it, it’s on the old woman’s hands. She’s waiting for us at Shili Pavilion up front, once we pick her up we’ll hit the road."

Gu Youyou was alarmed yet again. Who were these people? The wife with smallpox they mentioned, it couldn’t possibly be her, could it?

Damn it, two men in the carriage, one man driving it outside, Gu Youyou didn’t recognize any of their voices.

She must have been drugged with Knockout Drug, which causes rapid unconsciousness, leaving one with a pounding head and a powerless body upon waking, but you recover after half an hour. Since she just woke up, the best thing would be to wait another half an hour before getting up; she should keep pretending to be asleep for now.

With a loud bang, and a long neigh from the horse, Gu Youyou felt the carriage come to a sudden halt, not very smooth, causing her head to hit the side of the carriage, the pain making her jerk, which in turn cleared her mind a little.

The man driving the carriage pulled hard on the reins, and one of the two men inside got out, cursing: "Who the hell, in broad daylight, litters rocks on the road, trying to kill people?"

There was rustling from the bushes by the road, and Gu Youyou recognized a familiar voice.

"Liu Dazhuang, what are you hauling in that carriage?"

It was Uncle’s voice.

Gu Youyou was startled.

Seeing that it was Gu San, the one called Liu Dazhuang felt somewhat sheepish.

He certainly knew who was in the carriage and also the relationship between Gu San and the person inside the carriage.

He shrank his neck but still blustered confrontationally, "What's it to you? What I haul in my carriage is none of your business, is it? Move aside."

Chapter 304 Sold Out

Gu Laosan, however, did not agree. Holding a shovel in his hand, he said fiercely, "Don't think I don't know what you're up to. Hmph, if you're smart, hand over the person. Otherwise, I'll report you to the authorities. Liu Dazhuang, have you not eaten prison food for too long and want to taste it again?"

Liu Dazhuang was from the neighboring village and had always been involved in human trafficking. Human trafficking was permitted in Zhuzhao Country, and people too poor to survive often sold their children. But the cost of doing this through official channels was too high, with all the hassle involved, one could hardly make a profit. Thus, to earn more silver, he engaged in many illicit dealings.

A few years ago, he was caught once and sentenced to two years of prison food. Now that he was out, instead of reforming, he had returned to his old ways.

The taste of prison food was hard to endure, and naturally, Liu Dazhuang did not want to go back.

But thinking of that girl on the cart, with skin as tender as a peeled egg, he couldn't bear to let her go.

Rich masters loved these kinds of soft, tender young girls. By his judgment, this girl could fetch a good amount of silver if he sent her to a wealthy household in Beijing. How could he willingly give her back?

Moreover, he had already found a buyer, who was offering not a small amount of silver. With goods this good, he might even be able to raise the price on the spot.

He snorted coldly and waved toward the man on the cart, who understood and took out a large saber.

Gu Laosan took a few steps back, holding his shovel. Being nothing more than an ordinary farmer, the sight of such a large, gleaming saber instinctively frightened him.

But with Gu Youyou on the cart, he could not back down.

"Liu Dazhuang, you want to take her by force? Aren't you afraid I'll report you to the authorities?"

Liu Dazhuang said, "Go and report it then. This is a legitimate purchase with real silver; I even have your second brother's fingerprint. He's accepted my silver; what do I have to be afraid of?"

Saying this, he took out a Servitude Contract. It was an official human trafficking contract, but the illiterate Gu Laosan couldn't understand it.

Gu Laosan cursed, "Don't try to fool me with a tattered piece of paper. Our Youyou is married; once married, she follows her husband. Even if my second brother wanted to sell Youyou, he doesn't have the right. Your contract counts for nothing. Even if I take this to the Governor's Office, I still have the right."

She was sold by her second uncle and aunt?

Gu Youyou's mind became increasingly clear, and she opened her eyes to look outside through the carriage curtains.

Gu Laosan was standing not far in front of the carriage, his trouser legs rolled up high, revealing muddy legs with plenty of mud on them, a shovel resting on his shoulder.

It seemed he had just come from the fields and hadn't even had time to wash off the mud before chasing after the carriage.

She smiled bitterly but did not expect such an outcome.

Gu Lao'er and Huang Xiangwen were actually going to sell her to a human trafficker.

"Well, that's not my problem. All I know is that Gu Youyou is a Gu, and your Gu Lao'er accepted my silver. As for who has the right to sell her, it has nothing to do with me. If we really make a fuss at the

Governor’s Office, I will be the victim. Your family’s Gu Lao’er cheated me, and he will have to return my silver."

"You..." Gu Laosan planted the shovel onto the ground and angrily said, "I can’t believe there’s no justice to be had. We’re not selling, hand over the person."

There were three men on the other side, one driving the cart, sitting at the front holding the reins without speaking.

The other two faced Gu Laosan; one was Liu Dazhuang, who was arguing with hands on hips, and the other was a tall and stout man with a large saber on his shoulder, looking fierce and menacing.

If it really came to a fight, in a matter of minutes, they could finish off Gu Laosan’s small frame.

Chapter 305: Two Hundred Taels of Silver

Liu Dazhuang’s eyes flashed with malevolence as he cracked a cold smile, showing his yellow teeth, "Gu Lao San, I’m advising you to be sensible and step aside. If you go back now, you might still be able to get a share of the silver from your second brother, huh? A hundred taels of silver, man, that’s enough to take care of seven or eight children in an ordinary family. Aren’t you tempted?"

Gu Youyou inside the carriage was dumbfounded, "Damn, am I only worth a hundred taels of silver?"

Gu Lao San was indeed tempted for a moment, but his face quickly turned cold again, and he angrily said, "Do you think I’m like you? A heartless beast who only sees money. It’s not just a hundred taels of silver, even a thousand taels wouldn’t buy her. Hand over the person."

Liu Dazhuang was also furious and snorted, "The beast who sees money is your second brother, but your second brother was the one who came to me, not the other way around. Hmm, you better not refuse the toast only to be forced to drink a forfeit. You should know that we are not ordinary human traffickers."

Gu Lao San’s grip on his shovel tightened. He certainly knew these people were not ordinary human traffickers.

And Gu Youyou, she really hadn’t expected to have been sold by her uncle and aunt, and the person who came to her rescue would be her third uncle?

In Gu Youyou’s eyes, both her second and third uncles were of the same ilk: her second uncle was outright unsavory, while her third uncle presented a better facade, concealing his true nature.

Gu Youyou saw that although Gu Lao San had fear in his eyes, he did not shrink back and showed no intention of leaving under threat.

The people opposite had also realized this and cursed their luck.

Though they weren’t afraid of trouble, they didn’t want to invite it.

Who would want to complicate what could be a simple transaction?

Gu Youyou unobtrusively moved her hand into her sleeve, reassuring herself that all her protective items were there, she breathed a sigh of relief.

If it came down to a fight, she believed she had a good chance of knocking down the big man unexpectedly.

"How can we get her released?" asked Gu Lao San.

Liu Dazhuang looked at him with contempt and said, "Our rules of trade are clear: if a seller has regrets, they have to pay double the silver. I bought her from your Gu Lao Er for a hundred taels, so if you regret it, you have to pay me two hundred taels. This deal of mine was done fair and square with a contract. If you can produce two hundred taels, I will return her to you according to the rules."

He didn’t believe that Gu Lao San could come up with two hundred taels of silver. No farmer in Lotus Village could afford that much.

Gu Youyou also didn’t believe that Gu Lao San could produce two hundred taels of silver, yet his actions gave her some comfort.

Whether or not she could be rescued was one thing; whether they would try to rescue her was another.

But to everyone’s surprise, amidst Liu Dazhuang’s scornful sneer, Gu Lao San indeed pulled out two hundred taels of silver, two ingots each weighing a hundred taels, shining brilliantly.

"Here are two hundred taels of silver. Release her!" said Gu Lao San.

Gu Youyou was so surprised that she stirred slightly, he really had two hundred taels.

Equally astonished was the human trafficker, who stood frozen as Gu Lao San stuffed the silver into his hand, then snatched the contract from his other hand and tore it to shreds.

"You... you!"

How was this possible?

The burly man with a big knife hurriedly said, "Brother Liu, quickly check if the silver’s real."

Yes, check if the silver’s real.

He had never seen such large ingots of silver before and hurriedly examined them, his eyes wide with shock.

"Brother Liu, is it real?"

Liu Dazhuang numbly nodded, saying, "It’s real."

Meanwhile, Gu Lao San had already thrown down his shovel, hoisted Gu Youyou onto his back, and started running.

Chapter 306 Not a single good thing

Gu Youyou had already awoken, yet as Uncle Three carried her on his back in a flight for life, she still dared not reveal her consciousness.

The situation was too peculiar; if Uncle Three had produced a pile of broken silver, she might have guessed it was the result of his years of scrimping and saving.

Although the members of the Gu Family were all cunning, they were also quite diligent and frugal. It wouldn't be surprising if they really had saved up a hundred or two hundred taels of silver. But what he held was untouched silver—where in such a small place could someone have two hundred taels in whole pieces? Don't tell me he made a special trip to the town's bank to exchange it—that would be a ghost of a chance to believe.

Heh, my second uncle and his wife selling me to a human trafficker for silver is something they would do, but what about Uncle Three?

Why would he do that?

So much money, clearly it could not be his own—had he found a bigger buyer to exchange me for even more money?

Uncle Three, carrying Gu Youyou, had run a good distance, panting heavily. Seeing that they were already far from those three men, he stopped and threw Gu Youyou onto the ground.

Gu Youyou kept her eyes shut, motionless.

After catching his breath for a few moments, he drank from a stream running down the mountain beside him and could not help but burst into laughter, saying, "This is perfect, too perfect! That fool of a second brother actually helped me so much—I was worrying I wouldn't get the chance to make my move.

Ha ha, even if Dad dies of anger, it won't be my fault; it will be second brother's doing. Selling his own niece and angering Dad to death—do you think you'll get the Gu Family's property? It's all mine, all mine! I'm going to use that silver to buy fields and lands; I'll become the first landlord of Lotus Village!"

Gu Youyou listened with a sinking heart, indeed none of her uncles were good men. Her second uncle sold her to the human trafficker, and who knows where Uncle Three intended to sell her.

She gripped the needle hidden in her sleeve tightly, ready to stab him to death if he came close.

After his wild laughter, Uncle Three was in an exceedingly good mood.

Humming a tune, he turned around to pick up Gu Youyou once more.

They were not far from the meeting place with those people—the things he wanted were soon to be in his hands.

Getting closer, Gu Youyou quickly calculated the distance in her mind. Just as he went to grab her, Youyou suddenly opened her eyes, her hand hidden in her sleeve moving swiftly toward Uncle Three's neck.

A needle penetrated his skin and the anesthetic infiltrated Uncle Three's body.

"You..." Uncle Three's eyes widened in shock; he could only utter a single word before losing consciousness.

"To think of harming me and wanting to anger Grandpa to death, huh..." and here she thought he was a good person just a moment ago.

Gu Youyou was furiously indignant; a beast without humanity, that was the real beast without humanity. Cursing, she kicked him fiercely several times.

Suddenly, she heard some unusual noises and promptly stopped.

"We should be close by now, keep searching," a man’s voice said. By the sounds of it, there were several people.

Gu Youyou was startled; these could very well be the people Uncle Three was meeting. Not bothering with Uncle Three anymore, she quickly hid in a thick bush.

...

After Gu Youyou was taken away by Uncle Three, how could Liu Dazhuang just sit back and accept it? He had to make a scene at the Gu Family’s home, no matter what. Everyone for miles around knew what kind of person he was, so he didn’t care about losing face, but the Gu Family did care about their reputation.

Hmph, you care about face, yet you commit such shameless acts; can I let you get away with it? I’m not some great benevolent person.

"Thump thump thump..." Liu Dazhuang banged forcefully on the door.

Chapter 307 Pretending to be Kind and Righteous

Today, Huang Xiangwen, together with the second son of the Gu Family, sold Gu Youyou. She had never done such a thing before, so her mind had been restless ever since.

They had received the silver, but the shock in her heart wouldn’t subside for a day or two. Every time she heard the door make a sound, especially such a loud one, she would break out in a cold sweat instantly.

Oh, my own dear mother, that accursed enemy sure knows how to run fast. As soon as the person was sold and the money collected, he ran off to the field, leaving her alone at home, scared out of her wits.

"Who is it?" she asked.

"Open up, open up, it’s me, Liu Dazhuang."

Liu Dazhuang? Hadn’t he already taken the person away? What was he doing back here?

Huang Xiangwen shuddered.

"No one’s home, go look in the fields," she said irritably.

When she said no one was home, she naturally meant there were no men around. Aside from Gu Feng, who was lying in bed sleeping, there really were no other men at home.

"No one? Humph..." Liu Dazhuang snorted coldly and said loudly, "Do I have to wake up Old Master Gu before you’re willing to open the door?"

Gu Feng, drowsy and half-asleep, heard someone talking. By the time he fully woke up and listened carefully again, the voice had ceased.

He guessed it was due to his illness that he kept remembering strange, inexplicable things recently. It could’ve been from recent events or many years ago. Sometimes, when he was confused in sleep, he couldn’t distinguish between what was real and what was not.

So with the noise just now, he thought his mind was muddled again and didn’t give it another thought.

In the yard of the Gu Family, Huang Xiangwen’s face turned ashen with fear.

She locked the door tightly, not daring to let the people inside hear.

"What did you say? Gu Feng took the person away?"

Liu Dazhuang was furious. "Exactly, now deal with it yourself."

Deal with it herself? That was out of the question.

Huang Xiangwen was so frightened she didn’t know what to do.

"Where is the person?" Gu Feng had taken her away, but she had not seen Gu Feng bringing Gu Youyou back.

Could it be that he had taken her directly to town? What were they to do?

"How would I know where the person has gone? I am asking you," Liu Dazhuang said with a cold laugh. "I really didn’t see it coming. Your family’s third son still has some conscience, actually cherishing his niece that much."

Conscience my ass, Huang Xiangwen nearly blurted out.

Could she not know what kind of hypocrite Gu Feng was?

Just these past few days, for no apparent reason, Gu Feng had been showing sudden concern for Youyou. Did other people not know what this couple was up to? If they put themselves in their shoes, Huang Xiangwen had guessed then that Gu Feng wanted to sell Youyou himself, which was why they were so eager to act first and gain the upper hand.

Huang Xiangwen said resentfully, "He must have taken Youyou to sell her himself. I knew there was something off about him."

Liu Dazhuang truly didn’t believe it. How high must the price have been for Gu Feng to have given him two hundred taels of silver?

The thought of the silver made him have to believe it.

Two hundred taels of silver, that explained how Gu Feng had managed to pull out such a sum without batting an eye. It turned out he had found a big buyer who was willing to pay a high price.

At this thought, he became even more discontent. He hadn’t expected the girl to be so valuable, that a major buyer was willing to pay silver for her. Ah, what a huge loss, this girl was originally his to have.

Looking at Huang Xiangwen, Liu Dazhuang was fuming, "I don’t care, I’ve paid the silver, and the Gu Family owes me the person. I must take Gu Youyou away today."

Huang Xiangwen was also getting angry and shouted back, "We’ve already settled our accounts, whether the girl ran away or died, it’s your own business. How dare you come asking me for the person?"

Chapter 308: Complaining

"You Gu family members must have conspired together, with Gu Feng selling and Gu Xiaoqing robbing, thinking you can fool me, right? Don’t forget, I have the contract in hand, and I’m not afraid to take it to the Governor’s Office!"

Now that Gu Feng was also involved in taking people away to sell, he was dead set against acknowledging the receipt of two hundred silver.

He himself had robbed someone and sold them for a high price; how could he not make Gu Feng cough up a bit more to compensate for his own losses?

"You dare report to the authorities? You, a human trafficker, dare report to the authorities? When the time comes, I’ll just say you stole Youyou to sell. Let’s see if you don’t end up eating prison food!" Huang Xiangwen was furious and relentless. She was a rural woman who didn’t care about contracts or no contracts; she couldn’t understand them and only knew that once the goods and money were exchanged, it wasn’t her problem if the person ran away.

He was angry at Liu Dazhuang for one thing, but he was truly furious with that scheming Gu Xiaoqing.

Just you wait, Gu Xiaoqing.

As for the ’evidence’ of Liu Dazhuang’s contract, it had already been thoroughly destroyed by Gu Xiaoqing. Despite his bravado about going to the authorities, there was still a hint of trepidation in his

heart. Should he actually go before them, especially with his prior record, it might indeed result in him being falsely accused.

It enraged him to no end.

Huang Xiangwen and the notorious human trafficker Liu Dazhuang had started arguing in the corner of the courtyard. Erya Gu Xiaoqing, who had been secretly eavesdropping by the corner of the wall, was now paralyzed with shock.

My god, Uncle and Auntie actually sold my elder sister to a human trafficker; they're incredibly bold, absolutely crazy.

Luckily, Dad came to the rescue.

But Dad didn't bring my elder sister back; it seems he must have taken her to town.

Although Auntie said Dad sold my elder sister, she absolutely didn't believe it. What words wouldn't Auntie say? Hmph, she framed Dad for selling my sister, but just wait until Dad brings her back home; then you'll get what's coming to you.

Erya quietly retreated to the Gu family compound to report to Grandpa.

After bickering, Huang Xiangwen and Liu Dazhuang calmed down and thought something was amiss and that the situation was fishy.

Huang Xiangwen said, "Gu Feng is bound to come back anyway; why don't we wait for him to return and then discuss it."

Continuing to argue was futile, and Liu Dazhuang saw the sense in that. He nodded and said, "All right, let me know when your Gu Feng returns."

...Father

"Grandpa, Grandpa, are you awake?"

Erya knocked on the door with an anxious, soft voice.

Now that there was no one else at home, she couldn't overpower Auntie and was scared that Auntie would conspire with the human trafficker to sell her too. She even went to the kitchen to grab a firewood knife.

If they dared, she was ready to fight them with that knife.

"Erya, come in!" Gu Feng called out.

Ever since Grandma passed away, Grandpa's health hadn't been good, and Erya could tell even his voice had weakened.

She opened the door and saw Grandpa had already dressed and sat up straight.

In her hand, she held the firewood knife, fear evident on her face.

Gu Feng's eyes weren't as sharp as they used to be, but he spotted the gleaming knife right away.

"Erya, what are you doing with that knife?"

Erya was genuinely frightened. She softly shut the door and slowly approached Grandpa before saying, "Grandpa, I've got to tell you something, but you have to be very quiet, or you'll lose another granddaughter!"

"What kind of nonsense are you talking about, child?" Gu Feng said, irritated.

Erya was just a fifteen-year-old girl who had never been this terrified. Besides grandpa's place, she really didn't know where else to hide in the house.

Auntie and Uncle must have gone mad; this was terrible.

Erya's face was pale, her hand shaking slightly as she gripped the firewood knife.

She said, "Grandpa, I'm not making this up. Someone knocked on our door a moment ago, quite loudly; out of curiosity, I put down my embroidery to see. Grandpa, I saw Auntie talking with Liu Dazhuang, the human trafficker from the neighboring village."

Chapter 309: It Really Was a Murder He Committed

Gu Feng was startled, as if he had thought of something, which frightened him until his face turned pale.

He took several deep breaths, trying to suppress the thing that was surging towards his head.

"What did they say?" he asked, his voice trembling.

Erya was trembling with fear herself and didn't notice Gu Feng's changed expression, only wanting to blurt out what she had seen and heard.

"Grandfather, Second Aunt and Second Uncle sold sister, and it was Liu Dazhuang who took the deal."

As he had feared, Gu Feng felt something rushing toward his head, a sweet taste in his throat, and he could barely sit up straight.

He suddenly gripped Erya's hand tightly, making her shiver. She finally noticed something was wrong with Gu Feng. "Grandfather, what's wrong with you? You can't panic, sister is fine, my dad rescued her, she should be on her way back to town by now."

No harm?

It was only when Erya spoke that Gu Feng avoided passing out.

Erya continued, "Right now, Second Aunt is outside with that Liu Dazhuang, sister was taken away by my dad. They are frustrated; I heard it and got scared. If Second Aunt dared to sell sister, she would definitely dare to sell me too, so... so..." She raised the hatchet in her hand, saying, "I've got this hatchet, if they dare to sell me, I will fight them."

Gu Feng was irate but for Youyou's sake, he couldn't afford to be angry, at least not before he saw Youyou—he couldn't let himself die of anger.

"Damn it all!" he cursed loudly, startling the already frightened Erya.

"Grandfather!"

"Not you," Gu Feng reassured Erya, saying, "Just stay in Grandfather's room and don't go out. I refuse to believe those bastards would dare to come into my room to take someone. We'll talk again tonight, after everyone comes back."

The old servant had just died, he fell ill, and without heads, the family was falling apart; thus those bastards had become restless.

Huang Xiangwen quietly closed the door and, as she passed by Gu Feng's room, glancing inside and seeing the door shut, quickly went to the back yard.

Abao was still locked in the woodshed. She had drugged the meat to make Abao unconscious before making her move on Gu Youyou. The dose was heavy, and Abao still hadn't woken up.

She knew she could not leave Abao here; with Abao drugged at home, her story wouldn't hold up even with eight mouths to defend it.

Taking advantage of the near-empty home, she stealthily dragged Abao out of the door and threw him into a dirt ditch.

When Abao woke up, he would return on his own; then, it wouldn’t be her concern anymore.

Erya closed the window and returned to Gu Feng’s bedside, whispering, "I saw Second Aunt throw Abao outside."

Abao, that was the dog Youyou raised!

Angry, Gu Feng cursed a few more times at the inhuman beasts.

...

Seven or eight people arrived where Gu Youyou had been, only to find Gu Old Three unconscious on the ground.

The man leading them kicked him fiercely, cursing, "Useless trash, let that woman get away."

Another voiced, "Why use someone so stupid for such important work? Always messing things up."

"Now that she’s gone, what do we do? Shall we kill him? He’s no use to us."

The lead man waved his hand, signaling not to kill.

Another man, not quite understanding, asked, "Why not kill him? He’d kill his own brother and sister-in-law for some silver, and harm his niece. Why keep such a person around?"

What?

Gu Youyou was shocked. To kill her own father and mother, Gu Youyou’s parents didn’t die by accident but were murdered, and the murderer was her Third Uncle.

Chapter 310: The Pursuit

Gu Youyou remembered what Gu Feng had said before, he mentioned their parent's death was suspicious, and told her that if there was a chance to uncover the truth, she should execute the vengeance with her own hands.

She had always assumed that the nemesis was the State Preceptor they had never met, but unexpectedly it was her Third Uncle, Gu Wu.

The biological son of their grandfather!

If grandfather knew that the enemy he had been grieving over for more than a decade was actually his other son, who knows what he would have felt.

No, she couldn't let grandfather find out, his health was poor, he wouldn't be able to bear it.

Gu Youyou's heart was filled with mixed emotions, even though she had never met those parents and felt no affection for them, perhaps it was due to the body she was in, tears unknowingly streamed down her face.

Maybe it wasn't her crying, but this body, it was the young Gu Youyou shedding tears.

This was the Third Uncle who just yesterday said that the death of one family member meant one less to cherish. Sure enough, family members indeed decreased upon death because he was making full use of it.

A beast without humanity.

"This man is still useful," the leader of the men said.

Another complained, "What use is he? He couldn't even handle the well-set continuous ruse; how could he be of any use? I think that second brother Gu is more useful, at least he managed to deliver the person."

A sharp light flashed in the eyes of the leader, who said, "This is the senior brother’s command, do you want to defy it?"

Upon hearing this, the one clamoring to kill Third Brother Gu fell silent, frustrated, he kicked Gu Wu once more.

One of them crouched down and glanced at the footprint on Gu Wu’s body.

It was a kick from Gu Youyou, it had rained last night in the mountains, and the muddy footprint she left on Gu Wu was evident.

That person was startled, then delighted, hurriedly informed the others, "She hasn’t gone far, these footprints are fresh."

Upon hearing this, the others looked and also noticed the problem.

Gu Youyou, who rarely came into contact with mud, hadn’t thought about these issues, and from her hiding spot, she listened to their conversation, fuming with anger.

A good opportunity was about to be lost because of last night’s rain and those muddy footprints.

"Quick, look for the footprints and follow!"

They were all professionally trained and quickly picked up on the footprints Gu Youyou had left behind.

"Over here!"

Knowing it was useless to hide any longer, Gu Youyou hurriedly ran down the mountain before they closed in.

Before long, the men caught sight of Gu Youyou, and the leader laughed, "That's the woman, chase her."

Gu Youyou, a weak woman, couldn't outrun these men whose feet were swift as the wind; it was only a matter of time before they caught up, but Gu Youyou still ran. If she could make it to the official road at the bottom of the mountain and find people, it would be easier to deal with the situation.

Without guessing, Gu Youyou knew who was pursuing her; they were not ordinary villagers. They moved swiftly with Qinggong, just like Jin Zijin and his kind. Only someone like Zhuo Qing would go through such great lengths to deal with her, this was indeed a ruse to lure the tiger away from the mountain.

A successive ruse, truly a cunning strategy. First, they lured her second uncle into selling her for money, then sent the third uncle to abduct her.

Later, they could easily shrug off her disappearance onto the human trafficker, and Jin Zijin would be unable to deal with them.

As for the human trafficker, they had lost their human cargo long ago. They never had her, so Jin Zijin couldn't find her through them either.

In any case, without evidence, the two brothers from the Gu Family could just keep passing the blame between each other, walking away clean.

Gu Youyou sneered coldly, fortunate for them they didn't kill Third Brother Gu. Dying like that would have been too easy for a man so devoid of conscience.

"Still running? Break her legs," someone shouted angrily.