Farmhouse 581

Chapter 581: So Stubborn

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He suddenly felt his heart thud rapidly as he strode toward Miss Du.

Concubine Du, who had followed out from behind, hurriedly caught up upon seeing that something was amiss up ahead, and an idea came to her on the spur of the moment.

She twisted her body, cried out ’Aiyo’, and fell behind Young Master Jie.

As Young Master Jie reached behind Miss Du, about to reach out, he heard Concubine Du’s cry from behind. Turning his head, he saw Concubine Du on the ground, looking up at him with tearful eyes, and he frowned, slightly annoyed. After a moment’s thought, he still decided to help Concubine Du up.

"You’re a grown-up, how come you’re not careful when walking?" Young Master Jie asked in a low voice.

Concubine Du replied with a grievance, "My lord, your concubine, I slipped accidentally."

The timing of the slip was just too perfect, Cuiya sneered coldly with a sidelong glance.

The young lady was right, what kind of people were this man and woman? Haven’t they seen through them after all these years?

Using all her strength, Cuiya helped her young mistress up and headed toward the most secluded ruined yard, thinking that even if her mistress really did faint here today, she should never expect even a trace of mercy from that heartless, ungrateful man.

Compassion and remorse began to stir in Young Master Jie’s heart as he watched the obstinate servant and mistress.

He passed Concubine Du to a nearby maid, and after a moment’s thought, he quickly chased after them.

Concubine Du stomped her feet in anger, yelling loudly, "My lord, my lord, where are you going? My knee is bleeding."

"Have someone fetch medicine for you; go back and wait for me first." Young Master Jie left these words behind and quickened his pace.

Catching up to Miss Du and her servant, Young Master Jie took Miss Du into his arms and carried her towards the ruined yard.

The person in his arms was surprisingly light as a feather, her cheeks were gaunt, her lips had not a hint of color, yet from the corners of her mouth, something red as blood was oozing out.

That was the blood from her bitten tongue.

She was so frail, yet so stubborn.

Young Master Jie's heart wrenched fiercely, and he said somewhat angrily, "Being sick like this, why do you still insist on being strong?"

Miss Du, with half-closed eyes, her voice as thin as a thread, said, "If I don't stay strong, how would Cuiya, with her slight frame, carry me back?"

"Isn't there still me..." He stopped mid-sentence. He feared he was never in her considerations.

"In the mansion, there are so many people, no matter what, you are the master. How could they just ignore you, leaving you in that yard..."

Miss Du interrupted him with a bitter smile, "How would they dare to intervene?"

Young Master Jie's eyes suddenly darkened as he said coldly, "What do you mean by that? Are you trying to say that even these servants dare to disobey you, to mistreat you?"

Isn’t that the case?

Miss Du was left with only a bitter smile. She took a breath and said, "Put me down, please, or else it’ll cause more trouble."

Young Master Jie paused for a moment, stopping in his tracks.

Cuiya, who had been following behind with tears, saw the young master stop and hurriedly reached out to take her young mistress.

But the young master just gave her a cold glare and continued to carry Miss Du forward.

"Even if we are no longer together, we are still husband and wife by status," he said.

Miss Du found it laughable; when had they ever been together? They merely had the nominal status of husband and wife—why deceive oneself and others?

She no longer had the energy to argue with him and likewise, had no desire to converse even a sentence more with him. Let it be, then.

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Chapter 582: Find Your Own Problems

Concubine Du, applying medicine to her knee, was so angry she threw something again, and a maid carefully ran in, knelt before her and said, "The young master brought in that base woman into her courtyard, and he hasn’t left yet. It is said that the base woman passed out. The young master suspects something is wrong with the medicine and has already sent for the Imperial Physician."

Grinding her teeth, Concubine Du viciously said, "So he intends to stay in that base woman’s room for a long time, huh?"

The maid, trembling with fear, looked up at Concubine Du's ferocious gaze. She could only muster the courage to say, "The young master is afraid her death would tarnish the family's reputation. If there really is a problem with that medicine..."

"Enough!" Concubine Du roared loudly. "Get out, all of you, get out!"

In this household, aside from a few masters, no one dared provoke Concubine Du. Seeing her in such an explosive temper, all the servants hurriedly retreated far away.

Sounds of Concubine Du smashing things and cursing could be heard from inside, "You base woman, you talked about divorce but then you pull such a trick, do you think I am that easily fooled?"

At Miss Du's place, the Imperial Physician had already arrived. After feeling her pulse and examining the remains of the medicine Miss Du had drunk, the Imperial Physician had an understanding of the situation.

Master Jie, anxious, asked, "Imperial Physician Fang, could there be an issue with the medicine?"

The Imperial Physician stroked his beard and humphed, "You people, always quick to blame the doctor when a patient shows symptoms, but never looking for problems within yourselves. The reason your wife fainted is that she has been ill for a long time and hasn't received proper restorative care.

"How could you still let her be upset and under stress? Could it be that you really do not want her to live? I have long heard about the affairs of the Jie family, and seeing it today, I believe the rumors to be true."

Master Jie felt very guilty and admitted in a low voice, "Imperial Physician Fang is right to reprimand me; it was Zhonglin's negligence. This won't happen again."

"Hmm, fortunately, there is no serious harm. She should wake up soon. You just need to take good care of her." Imperial Physician Fang began to pack his belongings, ready to stand up and leave.

Relieved by Imperial Physician Fang's words, Master Jie asked again, "Then, is there a problem with the medicine? Should she continue to take it?"

Imperial Physician Fang snorted with anger, "What could be wrong with the medicine? Of course, she should take it. Didn't I tell you, your wife's fainting is your own issue, nothing to do with the medicine. I can tell you, the one who prescribed this medicine has medical skills surpassing mine. In Beijing, only doctor Xu from the Imperial Medical Bureau and doctor Cui have skills superior to mine. I wonder, whose handiwork is this prescription from?"

This slap in the face left Master Jie speechless for a long while.

He thought of Gu Youyou, a young girl. Even if she had cured typhoid in Lingnan, that could have been a fluke. How could her medical skills possibly surpass those of the Imperial Physicians from the palace?

Thus, he didn't trust her anymore, which is why he sent for Imperial Physician Fang. But now, after Imperial Physician Fang's comments...

What could he say? To claim that the prescription was from a young girl, wouldn't that be a slap in the face to Imperial Physician Fang as well?

Maid Cui by his side had not thought so much. She said, "Responding to Imperial Physician Fang, my young miss's illness was treated by Doctor Gu from Jisheng Hall. Naturally, the prescription was also written by her."

Doctor Gu?

Imperial Physician Fang, surprised, turned around to look at young Master Jie.

He had heard of Doctor Gu. The big news from Lingnan had first spread from their Imperial Medical Bureau; of course, he knew about Gu Youyou. Even now, the Imperial Medical Bureau still kept her plans for the prevention and treatment of typhoid as a treasured possession.

Chapter 583: You Can Go Out Now

Just like the Second Master Lin, he didn’t believe that the young Doctor Gu was genuinely skilled in medicine. He thought that her success in curing that case of typhoid fever was purely coincidental, that she just happened to have come across the right prescription.

Imperial Physician Fang looked at the Second Master Lin in surprise, causing the Second Master Lin some embarrassment.

Since Cuiya had already spoken, he had no choice but to grit his teeth and say, "Indeed, it was Doctor Gu from Jisheng Hall who treated her."

"It was really her?" Imperial Physician Fang’s face looked somewhat strange, it was unclear whether he was struck by the young female doctor’s capability or comforted by the thought that younger generations were indeed formidable.

He then turned to look at Miss Du who was still unconscious and muttered indistinctly, "Fine, if it works, then continue drinking it."

...

Gu Youyou had reached the day when she was finally released from confinement. Being locked up for half a month made her deeply realize that the Lin Residence was not a place to stay for long.

The aunt was too overbearing and her beliefs were too conservative.

She was a resident doctor at Jisheng Hall, yet she had been forcefully kept from leaving the residence for half a month.

In front of her grandmother, they treated her quite well, but it was a different story behind the scenes.

She and Lin Qianqing had been hiding in the yard, eating braised beef, yet her aunt even skimped on her food? They cut off the heating in her room, forcing her to stay in the pharmacy to avoid the cold.

Could it be that the Lin Residence couldn’t afford beef? Could they be lacking a few pieces of charcoal? Ridiculous.

She knew it was her aunt’s way of showing who’s boss, to tell her that in this Lin Residence the uncle and grandmother were the most respected, but the one who held power was her. She could make her life unpleasant in every aspect, from clothing and food to housing and transportation.

But fortunately, every night Jin Zijin would come, bringing her some of the food she wanted to eat.

Gu Youyou had complained to Jin Zijin about her aunt’s harshness, but he remained very calm.

He simply said, "It’s quite common for the official wife to deal with disobedient concubines and their children behind the scenes, setting traps and poisoning, shaming them in front of outsiders or skimping on their clothes and food in plain sight. You, as a niece, have it pretty good."

"As long as you don’t do anything that seriously harms her, there shouldn’t be any major problems. The restrictions on clothing, food, housing, and transportation are just minor issues."

Gu Youyou thought about it and felt it made sense. She indeed had no deep grudge against her aunt, for there was no significant conflict of interest between them. She understood the women of the inner court. Compared to her Gu Family relatives who would kill for gain, her aunt was pretty adorable.

Alright, she admitted, in the Lin Residence, her aunt was the boss. As a down and out relative, she truly had no need to get into a serious argument with her. In the future, she would just act more obedient in front of her.

However, she couldn’t tolerate the restriction of her freedom, so the first thing Gu Youyou did after her confinement ended was to leave the estate and go to Jisheng Hall.

No sooner had Gu Youyou stepped out the door than a maid hurried to report to Madam Lin.

"Madam, the young mistress has left the house again."

Madam Lin set down her teacup and immediately scowled.

"All she thinks about is running outside, what kind of behavior is that? I said that those medical clinics should not be opened, and now look, what has a fine young lady become? A merchant woman?"

The maid knelt on the ground and said softly, "The young mistress is a doctor, not quite a merchant woman, right?"

"How is she not?" Madam Lin slammed the teacup onto the table, causing tea to spill all over it.

"What did she open that medical clinic for? Isn't it to earn silver? How is that any different from a merchant woman? Living in the Lin Residence, the young mistress is a merchant woman, and it makes me feel ashamed to go out. Those who don't know might think I've mistreated her, forcing her to open a clinic to support herself... Eh, hold on, where is the eldest miss? Did she go with her?"

"No, she didn't!" the maid hurriedly replied with her head lowered.

Madam Lin breathed a sigh of relief and lamented, "That's good, I was just afraid she'd lead Daya astray; Daya is meant to marry into the Imperial Family, after all."

Chapter 584: Concubine Du Seeks a Doctor

As soon as her words fell, a maid with a panicked face rushed in from outside the door.

As soon as the maid entered the room, she immediately knelt down and said, "Madam, it's terrible, the young miss has climbed over the wall and left the house."

Thud...

"What?"

...

Gu Youyou had just entered Jisheng Hall, and Lin Qianqing followed right in.

She was startled and said, "How did you get out? Didn't your mother ask you to stay at home and comprehend the Three Obediences and Four Virtues?"

The last time her aunt punished her by making her copy the women's precepts, she used a writing style that was incomprehensible, and she finished copying them in three days. Later, it was said that she was punished to comprehend the Three Obediences and Four Virtues. It wasn't hard for her to copy just a few sentences, but comprehending them to her mother's satisfaction was difficult.

Because satisfaction was something her mother had the final say over.

Therefore, Gu Youyou did not tell her when she left but thought about how she still followed.

"That's just my mother making things difficult on purpose, don't mind her."

Gu Youyou nodded her head; she knew this, but the key issue was that it was done on purpose to make things difficult for you.

"So, how do you plan to explain? The underfloor heating in my room has been docked by your mother."

However, Lin Qianqing seemed unconcerned and said, "The weather is so warm now, if it's not heated, then so be it, just bear with it."

Gu Youyou thought to herself: Why don't you bear with it? I'm sick.

"Alright, I'd better send you back quickly. Don't let your mother cut off the charcoal in my pharmacy too."

"I haven't left my courtyard for half a month; please, don't send me back. How much can that bit of charcoal cost? I'll help you buy it."

"The key is that even what we buy can only be delivered with your mother’s approval."

"Then just say it was bought by Grandmother."

Gu Youyou: "..." It seemed that this Buddha was not going to be sent back.

"Fine, it just so happens I have a bunch of things no one is doing; you check those medicine prescriptions."

Lin Qianqing immediately beamed with joy, "Yes, I’ll do it now."

Gu Youyou shook her head helplessly; checking prescriptions was also a tedious and boring task. But because it was in a different place, she felt so happy.

Because it was freedom.

With a temperament like hers, she truly wasn’t suited for living in high-ranking families in Beijing. In the future, she would still be betrothed by the Emperor; it was hard to imagine how she would endure an even more restricted life.

Gu Youyou went to the backyard to look at her experimental subjects, with the exception of the Ice Snake, all were there.

The Ice Snake had been taken by Jin Zijin to be raised, saying that he would help her collect snake venom regularly.

Getting bitten by that thing was no joke; she needed to make two doses of Antidote Serum quickly.

"Doctor Gu, there is a patient who insists on seeing you. Do you have a moment? If not, I’ll send her away first."

Shopkeeper Hu’s voice came from outside, and Gu Youyou put down a mouse and got up to wash her hands.

"Have them wait a moment, I’ll be right there."

She hadn’t been in for a while, and upon arriving, she went to the backyard to look at the experimental mice. Many patients outside came for her reputation; she had to go and see.

What surprised her, though, was that the visitor was Du Concubine, the Mistress of Young Master Jie.

Seeing Du Concubine in such a state, it seemed she must have some indescribable difficulty.

With a white veil covering her head, she forwent the grace and luxury of her makeup from the other day. This outfit, however, was very elegantly simple.

Gu Youyou invited her into the consultation room inside the house, and only then did she remove the veil covering her face.

"Du Concubine, what has happened to you..."

Speaking softly, Du Concubine said, "I’ve come here admiring your reputation, having heard that Doctor Gu’s medical skills are exceptional."

"That’s just everyone’s kind exaggeration," said Gu Youyou.

Du Concubine hesitated for a moment, then said, "Why should Doctor Gu be so modest? The plaque from the Emperor can’t be fake."

Chapter 585: Never Having Children

Gu Youyou smiled and decided not to beat around the bush. She directly asked, "So, what brings Concubine Du to my clinic today?"

Concubine Du glanced at the half-closed door. Gu Youyou immediately understood and got up to tightly close the door, then waited for her to speak.

"During our third young lady's coming-of-age ceremony, I actually didn't recognize Doctor Gu. I am truly ashamed."

Gu Youyou let out a dry laugh, "... as long as Concubine Du doesn't find me presumptuous, it's fine."

Concubine Du mustered a strained smile, looking quite uncomfortable. After a while, she said, "I don't know if Doctor Gu can treat infertility? I have been married to my husband for five years now, and there's still no movement in my belly. I've also consulted other doctors, but to no avail. Hearing about Doctor Gu's exceptional medical skills, I decided to give it a try."

"Infertility?" Gu Youyou raised an eyebrow. She had heard they had not conceived. After a moment, she said, "That's hard to say. There are many different reasons for infertility. Some can be treated, others cannot. Besides, having a child involves both husband and wife. It's not necessarily the case that the problem lies with you..."

Concubine Du immediately interjected before Gu Youyou could finish, "It can't be my husband's problem. It must be me..."

Seeing her certitude, Gu Youyou got serious.

"Then, Concubine Du, what do you think is wrong with your health?"

Concubine Du hesitantly described her symptoms. After listening, Gu Youyou checked her thoroughly and indeed, the problem was with her.

"Ah! It's all my fault for not being careful. The same year my sister and I married my husband, although I knew she disliked me, I was not cautious enough. She pushed me into the pond in the garden. It was September, and the water was nearly freezing, which let the chill invade my body. I was sick until the next spring, and that's when this chronic condition began."

Gu Youyou simply gave a faint smile and began writing a prescription.

In the struggle for favor amongst wives and concubines, who’s right and who’s wrong is not always clear.

But the fact remains that Concubine Du is a victor.

Concubine Du rambled on, "The day my sister fell ill, she was fortunate to have Doctor Gu’s help. She has finally seen reason, and after she recovers, she will divorce my husband. It’s for the best. He doesn’t like her, and staying in the Jie Family, she’s only suffering. I can protect her for now, but I can’t protect her for the rest of her life."

Hearing this, Gu Youyou stopped writing and looked up at Concubine Du.

"Miss Du intends to divorce? Was it her idea?"

"Yes, it was my sister who proposed it. Doctor Gu, it was you who treated her illness. How long must it take for her to recover?" After asking the question, Concubine Du seemed to realize something amiss in her query and quickly added, "What I mean is, my sister has been sick for so long without getting better. Is it something serious? I’m just worried about her."

Worried about her?

Gu Youyou scoffed inwardly. Concubine Du was a good actor, no wonder she was favored.

Last time I met Miss Du, she wasn’t this type, which is why she’s at a disadvantage.

"Her illness has dragged on for a while, so it will take some time to heal. To fully recover, it will probably take about a month. It’s been half a month; she should be much better now."

"Much... much better?" Recalling how Xintong still looked weak and listless the day before, Concubine Du furrowed her brows.

Was she faking it? But why would she fake being sick?

"Isn’t that the case?" asked Gu Youyou with an amused look at the changing expressions of Concubine Du.

"No, no, she, she is much better now, thanks to Doctor Gu."

Gu Youyou didn’t inquire further. Instead, she finished prescribing the medicine for Concubine Du and explained how to use it.

Chapter 586: Played Her a Trick

"Your condition has been neglected for too long, so treatment will be slow. Take these medicines home and start with them, then return to see me in a month."

"A... a month?" Du Concubine’s face turned pale as she saw the long list Gu Youyou had written, and she stammered, not daring to take it.

Gu Youyou pushed the list into her hands and said, "A month is nothing. You’re still young, Du Concubine. Perhaps after taking the medicine for a year or two, you could recover. But if you were older, it would be even more troublesome to treat."

"Ah...? One or two years?" So a month really wasn’t a long time.

"Yes, this is about the important matter of having children. You can’t be careless. Take it three times a day, without fail. Otherwise, you might never be able to have children in your lifetime."

Du Concubine’s legs had already gone weak from fear caused by Gu Youyou’s words. If she had known the cost would be so great, she would never have jumped into the pond to frame that woman. The price was too much to bear.

But without following Gu Youyou’s advice, she had no other choice. She had seen many doctors for her ailment, even the Imperial Physician, but in the end, nothing worked.

Gu Youyou was her last chance.

"Then... can I be cured?"

Gu Youyou said, "As long as you treat it according to my instructions, the chances of recovery are very high."

Everyone’s condition is different, and Gu Youyou certainly didn’t say this lightly.

"Alright, as long as I can be cured, that’s all that matters, Doctor Gu, thank you!"

"There’s no need for such gravity, Du Concubine. I am a doctor, and it’s my duty to treat the sick. However, there’s one more important thing that you must remember!"

"What?" Seeing Gu Youyou’s solemn demeanor, Du Concubine instinctively felt a jolt of dread.

"While undergoing treatment, you must not share a bed with your husband; otherwise, all our efforts will be wasted."

Du Concubine was shocked and exclaimed loudly, "How can that be possible? My husband is in his prime..." A woman’s youth is fleeting, and Jie Zhonglin is in the vigorous prime of life. In one or two years, everything would be over, and his affections might have already been taken by some enchantress.

Gu Youyou frowned and said sternly, "Treating a disease is no trivial matter. If Jie Zhonglin truly cherishes you, he can wait a year or two for you. If you think having children is important, then do as I say, or else you’ll never have children of your own in this lifetime. If you don’t believe me, you are free to consult other doctors. Anyone who can treat your condition will say the same."

This Du Concubine was both pitiful and hateful. It was true she had to take medicine for a long time, but she didn’t have to abstain from her husband’s bed. This condition was purposely added by Gu Youyou.

Du Concubine was deeply alarmed by Gu Youyou's words, and tears fell from her eyes in large drops.

This time, her crying was not an act; it was real.

After all her years of scheming, if she lost her husband's affection because of this, truly everything would be lost.

She wasn't like Du Xintong, who wouldn't starve if she left the Jie Family. The Yu Family and Du Family's wealth was in her grasp, enough to last her a lifetime.

But she only had Jie Zhonglin. Without his affection, she was nothing.

Du Concubine did not know how she made it back to the Jie Family home, but upon returning, she locked herself in her room and began to weep bitterly.

"Madam, whatever is wrong? Please open the door!" Her maids were terrified, having never seen Du Concubine like this before. She was truly wailing, the sound of her crying full of sorrow.

In the past, her tears were always for show, always crying prettily enough to evoke sympathy.

"It's all because of that wretched woman! If she hadn't stood in my way all those years ago, I would never have resorted to such methods. And now I have to swallow bitter medicines for a year..."

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Chapter 587: Jin Ziyuan Returns

Lin Qianqing, looking all secretive, pulled Gu Youyou aside and asked, "How come I just saw that despicable Concubine Du?"

Gu Youyou choked on her words at that remark and said, "You are a lady of high society, so guard your speech a bit more tightly. Calling someone a 'despicable person,' is that something you should say?"

"That’s why I said it so quietly!" Lin Qianqing declared with a sense of justified righteousness.

Gu Youyou: "..."

Well, it seems we’re just digging holes for each other.

"Let’s see how auntie’s going to deal with us tonight."

Lin Qianqing hummed indifferently, "If I were afraid of her punishment, I would have already become that well-mannered, knowledgeable young lady. Hey, what illness does Concubine Du have that she came to you for treatment?"

"Oh!" Gu Youyou said indifferently, "Concubine Du cannot have children; it’s said that her body was injured a few years ago when she fell into the water."

Lin Qianqing was slightly startled, "So did you treat her?"

"I did."

"Ouch, why did you treat her? She deserves to be childless."

"I am a doctor; it wouldn’t be right not to cure a disease I can cure."

"You... oh, it’s so satisfying that she can’t have children!"

Gu Youyou tilted her head and gave a secretive smile, saying, "I had to treat her, I couldn’t just ruin my own reputation. But... I did trick her a bit."

"How did you trick her?" Lin Qianqing’s eyes brightened.

Gu Youyou lowered her voice and revealed the last condition she had imposed, forbidding Concubine Du from sharing a bed with Young Master Jie.

After hearing this, Lin Qianqing laughed heartily, "Then she's ruined. In a year or two, ah, with Young Master Jie being such a lecher, by the time her illness is cured, the flower she's offering might have already wilted. Cousin, your move is so satisfying."

Gu Youyou laughed for a while and then sighed, "Ah, what a pity for Miss Du, she seems like a good person. But it's alright, I heard she's come to terms with it and is planning to separate from Young Master Jie."

"What? Miss Du is planning to separate from Young Master Jie?" Lin Qianqing didn't think this was good news. Although she wasn't as pedantic as the other young ladies, she was, after all, a proper woman.

"What does she plan to do then? A woman separating from her husband, it's almost the same as being cast aside," she said worriedly.

Gu Youyou replied, "That's still better than staying in the Jie Residence. With her appearance, she wouldn't last long there."

"That's also true." Lin Qianqing nodded and said, "If she can look on the bright side, leaving the Jie Residence and wandering the world, then that would truly be an enviable and beautiful thing."

As she spoke, her eyes shone with excitement and longing.

It was only then that Gu Youyou realized, this young mistress yearned for freedom, aspiring to a life unbounded by restrictions. However, being born in the household of a high-ranking official in Beijing, she was destined to be nothing more than a well-mannered little lady.

Someone knocked on the door from outside, followed by the voice of Shopkeeper Hu.

"Doctor Gu, there is another patient specifically asking for you; nothing we say seems to make a difference."

Gu Youyou only conducted four hours of consultation per day, and those four hours were already over for today, but there were always patients who insisted on seeing her.

Usually, Shopkeeper Hu would explain the situation clearly to such visitors, and most of them would understand, leaving behind only a few who refused to go and insisted on waiting for her.

Gu Youyou sighed and went out nonetheless.

If it weren't for a particularly troublesome patient, Shopkeeper Hu wouldn't have broken this rule.

A man dressed very plainly, not much different from the clerks at the pastry shop across the street, yet he had an extraordinarily distinctive face. Even though he tried to disguise it with a beard, Gu Youyou recognized him at a glance.

Jin Ziyuan.

"What illness do you need to see a doctor for? Come with me."

Chapter 588: Ministry of Justice Arrests People

Jin Ziyuan arrived, but he was not to be treated like an ordinary patient.

He said, "Never mind, just give me some of the same medicine as last time, my old ailment has flared up."

Gu Youyou immediately understood, hurriedly went to the inner courtyard to fetch him the medicine.

Fortunately, she had been locked up by her aunt a few days ago, which had allowed her to make quite a lot of it.

Gu Youyou gave him most of the medicine, and as she touched his hand, she noticed it was frighteningly cold, and quickly said, "Why don't I take your pulse for you? Your illness..."

"No need, the medicine will do!" Jin Ziyuan immediately declined, handed her a bag of silver, and left Jisheng Hall with the medicine.

Upon closer inspection, she realized his complexion was even paler than before, and he spoke in a feeble manner, which made Gu Youyou genuinely worried.

She had no idea what he had encountered.

Lin Qianqing came out from the backyard, saw Gu Youyou gazing blankly outside, and asked, "What's wrong?"

Gu Youyou came to her senses and said in a low voice, "Nothing. An old patient of mine seems to have gotten worse."

"Oh." Lin Qianqing didn't think much of it and went back inside the inner courtyard.

Suddenly, soldiers barged into Jisheng Hall, blocked the entrance, and ruthlessly grabbed the Shopkeeper Hu, demanding, "Are you the manager here?"

Shopkeeper Hu had never encountered such aggression and was completely startled.

"Official, what... what is this about?"

"I asked if you are the manager here." The soldier raised his voice and repeated the question.

"Yes, I am!"

The man seemed satisfied, took a breath of relief, turned his head to glance at someone beside him, and that person immediately produced a scroll and said, "Do you recognize this person?"

Shopkeeper Hu adjusted his glasses and found the person in the portrait somewhat familiar, but... after all, he was someone who had been around the block for many years and knew not to recklessly recognize someone, so he decisively shook his head and said, "I don’t know him."

"Don’t know him?" The soldier was about to leave, but a curious old woman who was there for a consultation looked over and said, "Eh, isn’t this the man who just bought medicine from your store? He insisted on seeing Doctor Gu."

Shopkeeper Hu held his forehead, wishing he could smack that blabbermouth old woman.

Hearing the old woman’s words, the soldier became enraged, threw Shopkeeper Hu onto a subordinate behind him, and shouted, "Tie up this dishonest old thing and take him to the Ministry of Punishment’s Prison for interrogation!"

The old woman, knowing she had blurted out the wrong thing and caused trouble, slapped her own face and said, "Oh dear Official, you can’t blame Shopkeeper Hu for this. That man did indeed come earlier to buy medicine, but he doesn’t quite match the person in the painting. The young master in the painting looks neat and well-groomed, but the man who came earlier had a face full of whiskers. It’s normal for Shopkeeper Hu, with his poor eyesight, not to have recognized him on the spot."

Shopkeeper Hu, with shaky legs from fear, hurriedly added, "Yes, Official, my eyes aren’t what they used to be, I truly didn’t recognize him."

Everyone else was frightened, and given the authority of the Ministry of Justice, no one dared to leave.

The soldier then said, "Call out your Doctor Gu."

He hadn’t overlooked what the old woman had said, the criminal had specifically asked for Doctor Gu to see him.

Could there be a connection with this Doctor Gu?

Gu Youyou, hearing the commotion outside, had already come out with Lin Qianqing.

"What’s the matter?" Gu Youyou was quite surprised to see a group of officials blocking the entrance.

"Are you the Doctor Gu they’re talking about?" the soldier asked.

"I am!" Gu Youyou nodded.

"Seize her!" With Gu Youyou’s affirmation, the soldier immediately commanded his subordinates.

Chapter 589: Dragged Down by Jin Ziyuan

"Hey, on what grounds are you arresting someone? What has my cousin done?" Lin Qianqing stood in front of Gu Youyou.

Seeing the portrait in the hands of the guards, Gu Youyou already understood what was going on. She pushed Lin Qianqing aside and said to the guards, "I don’t know what I’ve done wrong that warrants my arrest."

The guard sneered, holding up the portrait and saying, "Someone saw you treating this person, a major fugitive from the Imperial Court. We’re taking you to the Ministry of Punishment’s Prison to understand the situation."

Those who went to the Ministry of Justice’s Prison came out with a layer of skin peeled off even if they were innocent. Lin Qianqing’s eyebrows knitted together as she whispered to Gu Youyou, "They’re from the Ministry of Justice, I’m afraid you can’t refuse to go. Go with them for now and play along, stall for time, and I’ll go to my father immediately."

Gu Youyou realized that ancient police stations were nothing like those of modern times; they were places devoid of any humanity or rights, and she grew serious, replying, "Okay, go without worry."

This Jin Ziyuan, bringing such trouble upon her.

She wondered what he had done to expose his identity; now he would probably find it difficult to stay in Beijing.

As Lin Qianqing tried to leave Jisheng Hall, she was stopped by the guards. She lifted her chin and said coldly, "I am the young lady of the Lin Family. If you want to arrest me, you should go to the Lin Residence. Arresting me here will be difficult to explain to my father and mother."

Hearing Lin Qianqing claim her family name, the guard was startled and hastily gestured for others to make way.

"I certainly wouldn't dare to stop Miss Lin. Please proceed!"

As Gu Youyou was being captured, Doctor Cui, who had once served as a doctor in the Imperial Palace, heard the commotion and stepped out from her consultation room. Seeing the scene, she was startled and said, "Officer, I was once a doctor in the Imperial Palace. I wonder what crime Shopkeeper Hu and our Doctor Gu have committed that you are taking them to the Ministry of Punishment's Prison?"

"Oh, Doctor Cui!" Hearing that she came from the Imperial Palace, the guard quickly bowed and saluted, his attitude doing a complete one-eighty.

"The person who just came in to buy medicine is a remnant of the rebel Three Princes from years ago, a major fugitive from the Imperial Court. So, it's not that we want to trouble your doctors and managers, but we are compelled. Please understand."

Whom could they blame? It's just bad luck for Jisheng Hall.

The major fugitive from the Imperial Court went to other places, but unfortunately ended up at their Jisheng Hall.

Alas! A wave of sighs filled the air.

It was Doctor Gu's first day back after recovering from a severe illness, and she ran into such an unlucky situation. The damned fugitive from the Imperial Court, why didn't he go to another place to buy his medicine, insisting on causing trouble for Doctor Gu?

Hearing this, Doctor Cui frowned. Since it was a major fugitive from the Imperial Court and the Ministry of Justice was handling it personally, Doctor Cui was powerless. She said, "Then Doctor Gu and Shopkeeper Hu can only go with them for questioning, but rest assured, the officers are just taking you for investigation and won't cause you any trouble. Otherwise, the Princely Heir wouldn't agree, would he?"

"The Princely Heir?" the guard raised an eyebrow.

Doctor Cui continued, "Yes, one of the backers of our medical establishment happens to be the Princely Heir."

"The one from Jinan?" the guard was already breaking out in a cold sweat.

"Precisely, the one from Jinan. The Princely Heir is a fellow disciple of our Doctor Gu, and they set up this medical establishment together."

The guard looked at Gu Youyou, not expecting the young female doctor to be a senior disciple of that Princely Heir.

The Princely Heir was not like other heirs; he was the only son of the Marquess of Lingnan and the close disciple of Tian Jizi from the Dao Family. Whether in the Imperial Court or the Dao Family, his status and position were very high.

Chapter 590: Rushing to the Rescue

But since the person has already been arrested, they can't just be released without cause—otherwise, the Ministry of Justice wouldn't be able to show its face in Beijing.

The soldiers had no choice but to pluck up the courage to say, "We are only taking Doctor Gu and Shopkeeper Hu back to understand the situation, and we will certainly not make things difficult for them. Please rest assured, Doctor Cui, and kindly reassure the Princely Heir."

"And these chains..." Doctor Cui looked at the chains bound to Gu Youyou and Shopkeeper Hu.

The soldier quickly said, "We will remove them immediately. Doctor Gu and Shopkeeper Hu are not criminals, how could we put chains on them?"

...

Gu Youyou was taken away by people from the Ministry of Justice, and Lin Qianqing hurried to find Lin Xingyi.

By this time, he had already returned to his residence and was in the study. She hastened to the study.

As soon as Qianqing returned, a maid reported to Madam Lin, "The young miss has come back, and she went to the study looking for the master. She seemed very anxious."

"Looking for her father?" In Madam Lin's memory, whenever she got into trouble, she had always gone to the old Madam. This was the first time she had sought out Lin Xingyi.

"Let's go and see."

Madam Lin also took a retinue of servants with her to the study.

Lin Qianqing was urgently explaining to Lin Xingyi about Gu Youyou being taken to the Ministry of Justice's Prison.

"Father, please hurry and save cousin Youyou. The Ministry of Punishment's Prison is a place that devours people without spitting out the bones. Cousin Youyou will surely suffer greatly there. She has only just recovered from a serious illness and won't be able to withstand the torments of those people in the Ministry of Justice."

As he put on his coat, Lin Xingyi asked, "For what reason was your cousin arrested?"

"Today a patient came seeking cousin Youyou for treatment, but it turned out that the person was a wanted criminal by the Imperial Court. They said they were taking cousin Youyou back to the Ministry of Justice to understand the situation, but that kind of place can turn the innocent into the guilty."

"Well said, I'm heading to the Ministry of Justice right now."

"I'm coming too!"

"You are not to go. Wait at home." However, this voice didn't come from Lin Xingyi but from Madam Lin, who had heard the news and hurried over.

Lin Qianqing: "..."

Madam Lin snorted and said, "Climbing over the wall— I haven't settled that matter with you yet."

"Father..." Lin Qianqing immediately cast a pitiful look at Lin Xingyi.

Lin Xingyi touched his nose and calmly said, "Your mother is right, and that climbing over the wall does indeed need punishment. How about you're assigned to copy Buddhist scriptures for your grandmother?"

Upon hearing this, Lin Qianqing was immediately overjoyed and hurriedly agreed, slipping away to seek refuge with her grandmother.

Lin Xingyi also left the house; he needed to rush to the Ministry of Punishment's Prison.

Madam Lin was left stamping her foot in frustration, her head throbbing with irritation.

"What sin did I commit to end up married into this family? Everyone is against me. If this child were a boy, perhaps it would be fine, but for a girl to act like this every day—how is she ever going to find a husband?"

...

Meanwhile, someone in the medical clinic has already gone to notify Yue Rujing outside the city, fearing that Gu Youyou might indeed suffer in prison. He quickly rode a fast horse to the Ministry of Justice, where he happened to run into Lin Xingyi.

At the Ministry of Justice, Minister Li was questioning them.

Since they were associated with Yue Rujing, they were not mistreated but underwent the standard interrogation process.

"Doctor Gu, what medicine did that person buy from you? What exactly did you talk about?"

Gu Youyou answered, "He only came to buy medicine and did not talk much with me. I saw his pale complexion and offered to take his pulse, but he refused and left after taking the medicine."

Minister Li nodded and then asked, "Why did he specifically ask for you?"

Gu Youyou said, "Because he had bought this type of medicine from me before. This medicine was originally for my own use, not for sale, which is why he couldn’t buy it from anyone else."