Farmhouse 611

Chapter 611: Let the Governor's Office Investigate

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Jie's Second Master stood there, rendered speechless, unable to utter a single word.

Upon hearing these words, Master Jie seemed to age ten years in an instant.

An old friend entrusting his child on his deathbed, only for her to be driven to such a state under his roof, coerced in such a manner.

In previous years, wearied by the strife caused by the three of them, Master Jie had devoted himself to affairs of the Imperial Court and hardly ever managed the household affairs again, but he never expected that his home would come to this.

He looked at his second son, and his feelings had long surpassed mere disappointment, now filled with deep sorrow, especially for the woman who lay dying upon the bed.

"Alin, two years ago I entrusted this residence to you, and you said you had managed well, that the conflicts between wives and concubines had lessened. Is this the extent of 'lessened'? You've driven your legitimate wife to such a state, allowing a concubine to strut around arrogantly. Is this what you call managing well? If such an incident hadn't occurred today, how much longer would I have remained in the dark?"

Jie's Second Master slumped into a chair, not even daring to look at anyone in the room, his gaze fixed on the cold floor tiles.

He loathed her; after taking control of the Jie Family's power, the first thing he did was force Du Xintong to move to the most desolate courtyard, and later he gave all the authority in the house to Concubine Du.

Du Xintong was someone he never wanted to see in his lifetime; hearing that she secluded herself, he merely thought she had finally come to her senses and stopped troubling them, which was enough, which was for the best.

Therefore, he did not know how she had come to her senses.

He was even more unaware of the kind of life she led.

When faced with his father’s interrogation, he could not produce a single word in his own defense.

"Alin, you have been unfilial and unrighteous yourself, and have even implicated your father in your lack of virtue. Can you not now, even in her presence, offer her some explanation?"

Everyone looked at Master Jie in surprise, especially Concubine Du.

She seemed not to understand what this explanation... meant.

Seeing her somewhat confused expression, Xie Qinyun coldly smiled at her saying, "What it means is that my father believes Cuiya’s words; you have been mistreating the Second Sister-in-law behind her back. If she were faking it all to show others, shouldn’t she be parading around in patched clothes all day? Why hide away in this courtyard then? Hiding all these things away, how would that fulfill her purpose, right?"

Indeed, how could such a simple truth be unknown?

"That’s exactly what’s so terrifying about her..." Concubine Du continued her futile defense.

Xie Qinyun said indifferently, "Anyway, she won’t survive now, and it’s impossible for her to rise and argue with you. Whatever you say goes, right?" She looked toward her elder brother and added, "However, the death of the Second Sister-in-law is suspicious. Second Brother, you have no objections to handing this matter over to the Governor’s Office, do you?"

Jie’s Second Master was startled for a moment, then said, "Nonsense, having the Governor’s Office investigate our family’s affairs, what kind of decorum would that be?"

Xie Qinyun laughed, "Does our family still have any decorum to speak of? A concubine mistreating the family head's wife, I fear that within Beijing our house stands alone in this. The affairs of your room have long been the talk of the town, what face do we have left to lose? Haven't some people already lost their face?"

Seeing that the brother and sister were speaking more and more outrageously, Master Jie could not sit still any longer.

"Enough. We all know what's happened. Jie Zhonglin, it was one thing for you to make noise in the past, but this time someone has died, and I can't let you protect this woman anymore."

"Father!" Jie's Second Young Master hastily said, "If we let the Governor's Office investigate within our walls, wouldn't that be..."

"Be quiet," Master Jie, furious, cut him off, "Isn't this the result of your own doing? How could you be so cruel?"

Chapter 612: Awakened

On the other side, Gu Youyou had finished administering acupuncture treatment to Miss Du, and Lin Qianqing was supporting her; both of them were speechless at the behavior of this family.

Miss Du started to regain consciousness slowly, coughing once, startling everyone in the room who was arguing.

"Awake?" The concubine's face instantly turned ashen.

Wasn't she supposed to be unable to speak anymore? How come she had awakened?

Magistrate Xie stood up in shock, asking hurriedly, "Doctor Gu, what is this...?"

Xie Qinyun quickly interjected with an "Ah!" and snatched the conversation away, "Sister-in-law is experiencing the 'returning light.' Doctor Gu, you are truly amazing."

Lin Qianqing chimed in from the side, "My cousin made Miss Du wake up so she could speak a few words for herself. She doesn't have much time left, so if you want to know anything, you'd better ask quickly."

No matter if it was true or not, everyone present was extremely agitated.

When Magistrate Xie's second son tried to step forward, he was squeezed out by Xie Qinyun and pushed to the back.

Magistrate Xie, with tears streaming down his face, said, "Xintong, do you have anything else you want to say? Tell me, how did you fall into the water?"

Miss Du's mind was foggy, but upon seeing all the people in the room, the memories of before she fell into the water also came flooding back.

Pointing at the person hiding in the far back of the crowd, she said, "You, come here."

Hearing this, the crowd made way for the concubine to come forward.

Miss Du was both saddened and upset, weakly questioning, "Why did you do that? I'm about to die, and you still won't let me go? You even wanted me dead!"

"Sister, what nonsense are you speaking?" The concubine denied on the spot.

This wasn't the first time such a thing had happened; the concubine had always been able to twist right and wrong, and Miss Du had grown accustomed to it, only nodding, "Alright, alright, I won't argue with you, I'm too tired to argue. I'm asking you, where is Father's letter? After I fell into the water, did you recover them all?"

Everyone looked at them in surprise, those who understood felt even more sympathy for Miss Du.

That was just the way she was, which was why she was bullied to this state, right?

What she was concerned about now was not that the concubine wanted her life, nor how much longer she could live, but the letters left behind by Magistrate Du.

The concubine’s face stiffened for a moment, then she said, "When you fell into the water, big sister, we were all busy trying to save you, who had time to care for Father’s letters? I’m afraid most of them must have been ruined in the water by now."

"You... cough cough..." Overcome with anger, Miss Du started coughing fiercely, then shouted angrily, "Go, get them. Do to me what you will, but those are things Father left behind, you, as his daughter, cannot treat them like this."

Seeing Miss Du getting worked up, Magistrate Xie hurriedly ordered, "Go, get all of Magistrate Du’s letters back, not a single one should be missing."

In the midst of this family’s life-and-death separation, and the debate over who was right and who was wrong, outsiders like Lin Qianqing and Gu Youyou withdrew to the most inconspicuous corner of the room.

Lin Qianqing spoke softly behind Gu Youyou, sighing, "When disaster strikes, one only knows how to shirk responsibility, while the other, despite grave danger, still remembers their father’s belongings. Cousin, how can there be such a great difference between people? Are there still those who cannot discern between good and bad? Doesn’t the character of a person determine their actions? What do you think?"

Gu Youyou laughed and said, "Dear Cousin, this is what you don’t understand. There’s a saying that beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder. What you think is bad doesn’t mean others feel the same. Everyone knows it’s imitation, but what about the person who cherishes imitation as if it’s real pearls? Is that not so?"

"Yes, yes, Cousin, your insights are always profound. It’s just a shame that the real pearls have been cast aside by the ignorant fisherman, thus remaining in obscurity."

Chapter 613: Dying Wish

"Isn’t it just so? With all this commotion, go tell Miss Xie to let the pearl rest in peace."

"Huh?" Lin Qianqing was utterly bewildered.

They were just trying to scare someone by saying that Miss Du wasn't going to make it, but now that Miss Du was doing fine, how could they let her rest in peace?

"Just tell her that," Gu Youyou whispered.

Hardly understanding but steeling herself, Lin Qianqing took Xie Qinyun aside and said, "My cousin says that it's okay for Miss Du to rest in peace now."

Xie Qinyun raised her eyebrows and glanced at Gu Youyou, who was standing far away, then nodded as if she understood.

Lin Qianqing was even more confused. Do you really understand what's going on?

Before she could say another word, Xie Qinyun crawled over to Miss Du, crying as if in mourning, and shouted, "Second sister-in-law, I know you're not going to make it, so please, if you have any last words, say them quickly. Father is here, he'll surely take charge for you."

Miss Du only knew that she felt terrible and as if her head was going to explode at any moment, but she didn't realize that she was on the brink of death.

She was confused and instinctively looked towards Cuiya, the person she trusted most.

Cuiya, who was in on the plan with Gu Youyou and the others, immediately crawled to Miss Du's bedside, crying out, "Miss, please rest easy. You won't be alone when you're gone—Cuiya will hang herself with three feet of white silk and serve you even in the Infernal Hell."

Everyone then remembered that Miss Du was unlikely to survive much longer, and that if she could still speak, it must be the last rally of energy before death.

Master Jie said, "Now that it has come to this... your vengeance... ah, let's not talk about that now. Do you have any unfulfilled wishes?"

Seeing everyone acting this way, Miss Du was stunned on the spot.

She had indeed thought about how death would bring peace, but ever since deciding to leave the Jie Residence, she had been thinking about what to do after leaving and how to rebuild the Yu Family's embroidery business. However, she never expected that she wouldn't live to leave the Jie Residence, let alone have a chance to express her last wishes.

Tears streamed from the corners of Miss Du's eyes as she quickly accepted her fate.

Well, such was her life... it was meant to be this way.

She looked up at Jie's second young master, and the concubine who was timidly hiding behind him, feeling an unbearable heaviness in her heart as if it was about to burst forth.

It was these two who had ruined her life.

Since she was not going to live, she wanted nothing to do with these two ever again.

She said, "Uncle Jie, to speak unpleasantly, marrying into your family was the greatest regret of my life, so I hope you can... grant me a divorce from the second young master right now. When I die, bury me in the Du Family's graveyard, with my parents."

Master Jie, tears streaming down his face, nodded heavily several times.

"It was my confusion, yes, I promise you."

He immediately ordered someone to prepare ink and paper, and he quickly wrote the divorce paper himself. It was ready in a short while, and all they needed to do was press their fingerprints on it to each hold a copy for it to be official.

Miss Du pressed her fingerprint without hesitation. When it was the turn of Jie’s second young master, he hesitated and could not bring himself to do it.

The concubine watched Jie’s second young master nervously, her eyes fixed on the divorce paper.

It was the very thing she had longed for.

Jie’s second young master looked at Miss Du and said, "The Du Family is no more. Who will offer incense at your grave if you enter the Du Family’s graveyard? It might be better to..."

Xie Qinyun immediately stood between Jie’s second young master and Miss Du, saying, "Second brother, this is your second sister-in-law’s dying wish. You and your beloved have driven her to her death, can you not let her rest in peace after she’s gone? Do you really want the three of you to continue this conflict for another hundred years?"

Chapter 614: Give me back my sachet

The words were harsh, but Jie’s second young master, unusually, didn’t get angry; he resignedly impressed his handprint on the document.

As he handed the divorce paper over to Miss Jie, his hands trembled slightly. He felt that with this delivery, he was losing something important.

Xie Qinyun could not stand it and snatched it from him, handing it to Miss Du.

People always say that one should encourage reconciliation rather than divorce—could his sister, Mo Yue, be a fraud?

Jie’s second master was stunned for a moment, then whispered to Miss Du, "I never thought it would come to this, nor did I think you could hate me so much."

But Miss Du said, "Haven’t you always said you couldn’t wait for me to die? Now your wish is about to come true; you should be happy."

Beyond holding this divorce paper, she had no expectations of him anymore.

Yet, thinking that this was her ultimate end, she couldn't help but feel resentful. Therefore, her resentment towards Jie's second master grew stronger.

"I... those were all... said in anger!" Jie's second young master was taken aback, feeling that his explanation was weak and unconvincing.

"Sister-in-law—no, now I should call you Miss Du, do you have anything you wish to say to me?" Xie Qinyun didn't seem particularly sad but rather appeared to be teasing Miss Du with her question.

Miss Du looked at her maid and said, "Xintong knows the third miss is a good person. I only hope the third miss can take care of my maid. Staying in the Jie Residence, the only way she can survive is by being by your side."

Cuiya immediately burst into tears, "No, I want to go with my mistress. Even if I have to go to Infernal Hell, I will follow and serve her."

Xie Qinyun pulled Cuiya to her feet and nodded, "Alright, I will ensure this girl lives well."

After speaking, Xie Qinyun again turned her gaze to Jie's second young master and said, "Second brother, after all, you were husband and wife. Don't you have anything to say?"

Jie's second young master had been in a state of shock, only reacting when nudged.

Hearing Xie Qinyun's words, he finally reluctantly turned his gaze to Miss Du and asked, "Do you have anything to say to me?"

Miss Du sighed, fell silent for a moment, and then said, "I just hope I can leave cleanly. I want to take all things related to me in the Jie Family with me." She glanced at the concubine and added, "I'll only say this once—I'm the one she pushed into the water. Whether you choose to deal with her or not, it's up to you after I'm gone. As for my things, I don't want to leave a single item behind."

Your things?

"What things?" Jie’s second young master looked at Miss Du in bewilderment.

The others were equally curious. Given Jie’s second young master’s disdain for Miss Du, how could he have any of her belongings?

"That tiger-shaped sachet; don’t tell me you don’t have it," Miss Du said indifferently.

Had it not been for that year she arrived at the Jie Family and saw him wearing the sachet she gave him as a child, she would never have been so persistent in marrying him, nor would she have conceived such thoughts.

"The tiger-shaped sachet?" Jie’s second young master subconsciously took out the sachet from his person.

At this point, the concubine turned pale, her mouth opening and closing, wanting to say something but at a loss for where to begin.

Xie Qinyun exclaimed, "So it’s this sachet. Second brother, haven’t you been treasuring it since you were young? So it was embroidered by Miss Du. But since when has Miss Du’s embroidery skills been so poor?"

Miss Du answered, "At that time, Xintong was just learning; it was indeed rather poorly done."

Jie’s second master was utterly astounded, suddenly turning his head to look at the concubine.

Chapter 615: The Origin of the Tiger Sachet

From a distance, Gu Youyou and Lin Qianqing, who were watching the play, couldn’t help but draw closer, as the drama seemed to grow more interesting.

"What’s going on here?" Xie Qinyun’s second son asked, his voice trembling.

Concubine Du shook her head as she stepped back, tears slowly emerging from her eyes, "I... I was too young at the time, I can't... I can't remember clearly."

At that moment, everything seemed clear and yet, at the same time, obscure.

Xie Qinyun's second son staggered so badly he almost fell to the ground.

In his memory, a chubby little hand passed him a handkerchief to wipe away tears, which he had rejected without hesitation.

Later, a small tiger she had made was given to him to cheer him up, he cried holding that little tiger through the night, and the next day, he finally left that room.

That year, six-year-old Du Xintong had just learned Peking embroidery and had embroidered a pair of little tigers for herself. Later, to appease her sister, who had lost her concubine mother, she gave her one of the newly finished little tigers, and sure enough, the little girl stopped crying.

Afterward, when the Jie Family's Madam passed away, their second son, only a year older than them, was heartbroken all day long and without his mother's care. Madam Du, kind-hearted, took him into the Du Residence to look after him.

He also locked himself in his room, grieving and weeping, just like his sister had when they lost their concubine mother. So, Du Xintong thought to bring the other little tiger to cheer up Xie Qinyun's second son.

At the time, Xie Qinyun's second son didn't pay attention to her and didn't even glance at her, just snatched the little tiger and continued to cry on his knees.

She was very disappointed, her tiger could soothe her sister, but not her brother.

But the next day, he came out of the room and became friends with his sister, who also held a little tiger.

They would talk about their mothers and their little tigers, while she could only watch from behind, stealing glances. They both had lost their mothers, so they must have had a lot to talk about...

Her thoughts returned to reality, and Miss Du had come to an acceptance.

Whether it was his misrecognition or misunderstanding, it didn't matter to her anymore as she was nearing the end of her life.

Her mother had said that we, the inheritors of Peking embroidery, our first creation after learning Peking embroidery is always a sachet, and then we would always keep this sachet to be buried with us in our coffins.

This pair of sachets was her first creation, she could no longer remember which little tiger was embroidered first or which was second. Du Wanqing hated her so much, she thought she must have lost the little tiger she had given her long ago. Therefore, it left only the one in Xie Qinyun's second son's possession that she must take to her grave.

"I embroidered a pair back then, and that year when you both lost your mothers, I took them out to cheer you up. Now that you don't need them anymore, can you give them back to me?"

Miss Du's voice was soft and faint, like a feather brushing by, creating an almost intangible feeling that made one's heart uncomfortably heavy.

What was there to not understand? There had been such a misunderstanding between them.

Xie Qinyun's second son gripped the sachet tightly in his hand, not daring to let go.

It had always been with him, accompanying him through the toughest night of his life, the seventh day after his mother's death.

He had always thought it was made by the woman he loved, but to think, it was from the woman he had despised most.

Xie Qinyun watched her disheartened second brother, deeply sighing.

She had guessed there might be some misunderstanding among the three of them, but what of it?

The item was real, but the years of hurt they had inflicted upon Miss Du were also real, and how could his doting on that woman be just for a sachet?

Chapter 616: Sorrow and Joy, Life and Death

Miss Xie from the Jie Family never understood why her second brother loved Concubine Du so much and disliked Miss Du, who was obviously much more beautiful, so much. Later, a granny by her side explained, "The young master and Concubine Du sympathize with each other. They lost their mothers the same year, and every year when they pay respects, they do it together."

She didn’t understand at the time, but having heard what Miss Du just said, she vaguely grasped something.

Xie Qinyun snatched the sachet from the dispirited second master Xie’s hands and said, "This is the only wish she has left, you should return it, shouldn’t you?"

He watched as the sachet returned to Miss Du’s hands.

In his memory, it was that hand that had placed the sachet in his, wasn’t it?

Only it was much too thin now.

"My dear!" Concubine Du timidly tugged on the sleeve of the second master Xie.

Second master Xie turned his head woodenly, and looking at Concubine Du, he only felt a blur.

Why did he have the impression that he had never really seen her clearly?

The divorce paper Miss Du wanted was obtained, as was the ’token of love’ that Concubine Du and the second young master of the Jie Family believed they shared. Gu Youyou thought the time was just about right and whispered to Lin Qianqing, "It’s our turn to come forward."

Lin Qianqing responded with a smile and stepped forward to ask, "Does Miss Du have any other wishes?"

Miss Du was clearly stunned, and even the heartbroken Master Xie and the dispirited second young master were taken aback.

It made sense for them to ask Miss Du if she had any unfulfilled wishes, but what did it mean for you, a stranger who popped out of nowhere, to ask the same?

Miss Du was a bit dazed, never having imagined that her imminent death would look like this, completely different from when her parents died.

She looked past Lin Qianqing and said, "As for wishes, I have none left, only regrets that I understood too late."

If only she had understood sooner, perhaps things would not be like this.

She was speaking to Gu Youyou, who then smiled at her and said, "If I gave you another chance at life, what would you want to do?"

"What?"

No sooner had Gu Youyou said this than all eyes in the room turned to her.

The second master Xie was visibly excited and exclaimed, "Doctor Gu, didn’t you say there was no hope?"

Lin Qianqing replied, "Do you wish for Miss Du to be beyond help? We just thought you wouldn’t save her."

"What do you mean?" asked the second master Xie, still baffled.

Master Xie, agitated, stood up and stared intently at Gu Youyou, asking, "Doctor Gu, what is going on here?"

Gu Youyou produced a medicinal pill and said calmly, "Just now, Miss Du was a woman of the Jie Family; her life and death were in the hands of the second young master Xie. Her maid has told us more than once that the second young master Xie could hardly wait for Miss Du to die, so I couldn’t bring out this life-saving medicine.

Now that she is a free woman, I truly cannot bear to see Miss Du die so young, which is why I have decided to save her."

A mix of joy and sorrow, life and death, left Miss Du feeling as if she was living in another world.

Overcome with emotion, she fainted once again.

"Miss!" Cuiya, crying again, rushed to her side.

"What’s going on now?" It wasn’t just Miss Du who experienced a roller coaster of emotions; everyone else in the room did too.

"Doctor Gu, please save her quickly," Master Xie urged anxiously.

Gu Youyou nodded slightly and hurried to Miss Du’s side, helping her sit up and inserting the medicine into her mouth, then pressed her philtrum. Soon after, she woke up again.

"I’ll prescribe you some medicine; after resting for a few days you should recover," Gu Youyou said softly.

Miss Du held her chest, struggling to even her breath.

Chapter 617: Priceless Treasure

"Is... is it all better now?" Xie Great Man anxiously asked.

"Her life is no longer in danger," Gu Youyou said.

Concubine Du stood frozen for a moment before leaning against a wall.

She wasn't going to die? How could that be? Could it be that from the beginning, this was all an act they put on?

Why would these people do such a thing?

But at the lake, she had struggled a few times before going still as if she had fainted. She thought she was dead, but she was not; her life sure was tough.

Xie Great Man, on the other hand, sighed in relief. As long as she was alive, he didn't bother to care whether it was an act or not.

He bowed to Gu Youyou, expressing his gratitude, "Thank you, Doctor Gu, for saving her life."

Gu Youyou merely nodded slightly and then went to write a prescription.

Still, this was not enough to repay the great debt Xie Great Man owed her.

Gu Youyou glanced at Lin Qianqing, and with perfect understanding, Qianqing said to Miss Du in a gentle voice, "Miss Du, the medicine my cousin used is made from the Thousand-Year Heart-Cooling Snow Lotus that she gathered on the snowy mountains of Lingnan. There were only two in existence. The last time she fell ill while making medicine, she nearly lost her life and had to use one to save herself. The world's only remaining one was meant to be kept for her own urgent needs, and now it has been used to save you. You must live well and not let her sacrifice be for nothing."

Hearing this, everyone was startled once again.

Xie Qinyun said, "Qianqing has mentioned that Doctor Gu has always had poor health since she was young. During that time when we were offering sacrifices to the Dragon King, she almost..."

Lin Qianqing spoke up, "Yes, that time was relatively mild, so she didn't need the medicine. But the time after that was severe. If it weren't for that life-saving medicine, my cousin might have... Ah, let's not talk about it anymore."

"If it is so important, Doctor Gu, how could you use it to save me? I truly do not deserve such an honor!" Miss Du struggled to sit up.

Gu Youyou had already finished writing the prescription, and after blowing on the ink to dry it, she said softly, "This medicine is precious, naturally, and is meant for saving lives. If it can save a life, then it is worth it. My master always said, being a healer, treating and saving patients should come first. If today I had refused to save Miss Du for personal reasons, how could I face my master in the future? Miss Du, the medicine is very expensive, and since I've been busy in your quarters all day, I can't leave without compensation. I will be charging for the consultation and the medicine, so you need not thank me."

Miss Du was stunned. Such precious medicine must be worth a fortune, far beyond the value of gold and silver.

But she still needed to calculate if she had enough silver to pay for it.

"Doctor Gu, how much is needed?" Xie Second Young Master asked first.

Gu Youyou did not speak but instead looked at Miss Du.

She appeared embarrassed, as if she had already allocated her silver for other purposes.

Xie Second Young Master interjected hastily, "I... after divorcing... Miss Du, I promised her a compensation. Let the fees for saving her life be our compensation to her."

Seeing an opportunity for the scoundrel to bleed money, Gu Youyou was naturally pleased. Her expression remained calm as she said indifferently, "Since the medicine can save a life, it is naturally a priceless treasure. Second Young Master Xie, please give as you see fit."

"This..." Both Xie Second Young Master and Xie Great Man found themselves in a dilemma. Without a price being set and it being priceless, they would have to owe a favor instead.

Xie Great Man addressed Gu Youyou, "Consider it a favor I owe to Doctor Gu. If there is anything you need from me in the future, feel free to seek me out."

However, Gu Youyou responded, "Xie Great Man, you are an official, and I am but a commoner. Moreover, you and my uncle are colleagues in the court. As a junior, Youyou would not dare to accept such a favor from you."

Chapter 618: Will The Father-Son Relationship Be Terminated?

Jie Da Ren shook his head and handed a jade pendant to Gu Youyou, saying, "Doctor Gu might not need it for himself, but perhaps someone Doctor Gu cares about will. Please keep this jade pendant. In the future, anyone who comes to me with this jade pendant, I will recognize and help."

What Jie Da Ren meant to say was that even though Lin Xingyi held the same rank as him, his family foundation wasn't as deep as that of the Jie Family, so there might come a time when he'd need Jie's help. Little did he know that his words were exactly what Gu Youyou wanted to hear, as this affirmation was precisely what she sought.

Having settled matters with Jie Da Ren, Jie Second Young Master then said, "My father's promise of covering the medical expenses is one thing, I will personally contribute an additional consultation fee. We have troubled Doctor Gu today, so you may return home first, and I, Zhonglin, will personally deliver it to your residence another day."

There were probably many accounts yet to be settled between Jie Residence and the two Misses from the Du Family. Gu Youyou and Lin Qianqing nodded slightly and soon returned to the Lin Residence.

Lin Qianqing exclaimed with great satisfaction, "Cousin, what do you think they will do to Concubine Du?"

Gu Youyou said indifferently, "Instead of asking what they will do to Concubine Du, you might as well wonder what Jie Da Ren and Jie Second Young Master will argue about, and how long it will take before they sever their father-son relationship."

"What?" Lin Qianqing was naturally not expecting to think that far ahead and asked in surprise, "Why would Jie Da Ren sever the father-son relationship with Jie Second Young Master?"

Gu Youyou said, "Jie Second Young Master wants to protect Concubine Du, but this time, neither Jie Da Ren nor Miss Jie will let Concubine Du off lightly. This will naturally lead to conflict."

"But that doesn’t mean they will sever their father-son relationship, right?"

"Jie Da Ren values loyalty and righteousness and must give an account to his late friend. If Jie Second Young Master still cannot discern right from wrong this time..."

Gu Youyou spoke with profound meaning, not continuing further, but Lin Qianqing had already caught on.

"So, whether Jie Da Ren and Jie Second Young Master will sever their father-son relationship depends on how Jie Second Young Master handles this incident?"

"Exactly, after all, he is his own son."

...

Knowing that Gu Youyou had urgently left the house with Lin Qianqing today to save someone, her aunt said nothing unusual.

Gu Youyou understood that this was because Lin Qianqing had told her that Jie Da Ren owed Gu Youyou a favor.

In the capital, the character of Jie Da Ren... is indescribable; it wasn't difficult to establish connections with him, but to make him deviate from his principles of integrity and owe such a big favor was extremely difficult.

So, this was a beneficial matter for the Lin Residence, and not only did Madam Lin not have any objections, she even added a ginseng soup to Gu Youyou's dinner.

Gu Youyou was pleasantly astonished, quickly rewarded the maid who brought the soup with two silver taels, and asked her to say more good words on her behalf.

All the maids in the back courtyard of the Lin Mansion were shrewd; when they received favors, they naturally did not skimp on the compliments.

"Miss Cousin, our Madam treats you like she does Miss, even though you're an outside Miss of the house, your status is far above that of the second young mistress of this courtyard. You understand what our Madam means, right?"

Gu Youyou hurriedly said, "I understand, I understand. Youyou has no more maternal family; this home of my uncle and aunt is Youyou's maternal family now, and Youyou always remembers the kindness my aunt shows me."

"Ah, that's right." The maid felt that Gu Youyou was very sensible and went back to report happily.

Gu Youyou calmly finished the soup in her bowl and took out the jade pendant to look at it again and again.

No matter what she said, she wouldn't give this jade pendant to them.

Jin Zijin arrived later than usual that night, and Gu Youyou waited left and right before he finally appeared.

By the dim light of the candle, Gu Youyou saw that his complexion wasn't good.

Chapter 619: Jin Zijin is Injured

"What happened? What's the matter?"

Jin Zijin smiled and said, "It's nothing serious, just a little injury."

"Injury?" To be honest, Gu Youyou really didn't know what kept them busy all day long. There were several times he arrived late, only mentioning that something had delayed him.

Gu Youyou thought that sneaking around wasn't honorable, so she naturally chose a good time and thus didn't ask too many questions.

But now... "How did you get hurt? Where are you injured? Haven't you always been staying at Sanqing Temple?"

While speaking, Gu Youyou had already grabbed Jin Zijin's hand to check on his internal injuries.

"It's inside." Jin Zijin pulled her hand away and then tore open his clothes at the chest.

A simple wound that had been treated with medicine was on his chest. She hadn't yet seen how deep the wound was, but it was noticeably long and startling.

Gu Youyou cried out in alarm and anxiously pushed him back onto the edge of the bed, saying, "How did you get this, it's so frightening?"

Gu Youyou brought over a candle and placed it beside the bed, finally getting a clear view of his wound.

It was a gash caused by a broadsword, not a thin cut. Judging by the look of it, it had probably been about an hour, so he'd just performed a simple treatment on the wound before coming here.

"I'll re-bandage it for you."

Gu Youyou quickly fetched the bandaging supplies and medicinal powder to accelerate the healing of the wound.

Originally, she had been waiting for him today, delighted to tell him about the big victory at the Jie Residence, only to find he had been injured.

Well, of course, she couldn't mention having given a common medicine to Miss Du and exaggerating its effects - she absolutely couldn't admit to deceiving and cheating.

She set up this situation with selfish intentions, but it was also for Miss Du's sake.

Old stubborn Master Jie would not have agreed had she not taken such measures.

Gu Youyou slowed her movements while washing his wound again, applying the medicine, and re-bandaging it.

She was always swift in her actions, but this time, she was unusually gentle.

Once she had helped him put his clothes back on, she began to interrogate slowly.

"What exactly happened? How did you get injured?"

Jin Zijin said, "I was careless this time, I'll be more cautious in the future."

"In the future?" There's a future?

"Ajing and I were attacked; it's a common occurrence."

"Really?" Gu Youyou never heard about it before.

Jin Zijin smiled nonchalantly, "Using such methods to test each other is normal. It’s just for these past few years. The next State Preceptor will need to be chosen soon, and the rivalry behind Tianzong and Xuanzong will become more intense."

"So you get attacked often?" Gu Youyou’s heart tightened, and she kept her eyes fixed on him.

"Yes, getting attacked often." Jin Zijin said, "Don’t take it too seriously; it’s very normal. Our days aren’t easy, and presumably, neither are theirs."

How could she not take frequent attacks seriously? Gu Youyou rolled her eyes speechlessly and could only helplessly mutter "psychopath."

She took a jade pendant from herself and handed it to Jin Zijin, saying, "I got this during the day; it’s a promise from Master Jie. Is that unexpected?"

Jin Zijin took it and said in a low voice, "It’s unexpected; I only thought that he would owe a favor, not that he would solemnly give you a token."

Gu Youyou tugged at the corner of her mouth, smiling faintly, "So, does that mean I have dealt with Master Jie?"

"Dealt with?" Jin Zijin’s brows tightened as he stuffed the jade pendant back into Gu Youyou’s hand, saying, "I suppose so."

"Why are you giving it back to me when I gave it to you?" Gu Youyou held the jade pendant awkwardly.

"You should keep this jade pendant for now; we won’t need it just yet." Jin Zijin said.

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Chapter 620: The Palace Rules for Seeking Death

The Jie Residence’s Second Young Master proved to be a man of his word. The very next morning, he personally brought the consultation fee for Gu Youyou’s visit to the Jie Residence.

For the medical examination of his former wife and concubine, he paid a basket full of silver, amounting to a thousand taels.

Gu Youyou, who usually dealt with large sums in silver notes, saw such a vast amount of actual silver for the first time. She reached out to lift it, but it was so heavy that her slender arms and legs could hardly bear the weight.

It became an embarrassing scene.

In fact, it wasn't Gu Youyou's fault; a thousand taels of silver at that time weighed over sixty jin. How could an ordinary young girl carry that, let alone Gu Youyou with her slight frame?

Seeing this, the Second Young Master suggested, "How about I help Doctor Gu carry it inside?"

Gu Youyou forced a laugh and hurriedly said, "No, I'll call my maids to carry it."

She didn't like the Second Young Master's character and was determined not to deal with him in the future. How could she let him help her?

Having received his payment for the consultation, they were even.

Afterward, Gu Youyou was confined again. If she wasn't at Jisheng Hall, there were always people from other residences coming to invite her for consultations. Madam Lin, after dealing with it for a few days and finding it bothersome, allowed her to go out for four hours a day.

The prerequisite was that she was accompanied by two martial house servants and four old maids and two young maids.

This was a requirement set by her Uncle Lin Xingyi.

She didn’t mind having a few strong bodyguards with excellent martial skills, but what was the deal with the maids, a pile of snacks, the warmers, and the bedding in the carriage?

The medical hall was only two streets away from her home, which left her speechless.

Lin Qianqing, on the other hand, was filled with envy.

"You should be content. I can’t even go out if I wanted to."

Gu Youyou said, "Freeing one is the same as freeing two. Why can’t you go out?"

She thought to herself: Aren’t you able to climb over walls?

With a sigh, she sat on the doorstep and said, "The Empress’s birthday is in a few days. My mother is planning to take me to the Imperial Palace, and these days she is personally supervising the preparations, having matrons from the palace teach me the palace etiquette."

"Oh!" Gu Youyou assumed that Madam Lin went to the capital for the Empress’s birthday.

"Then you learn slowly, I’ll be leaving now."

"Hey, wait a minute!" Lin Qianqing got up, pulled Gu Youyou back down to sit on the doorstep and said, "Don’t you still have half an hour before you go to the medical hall? Sit with me for a while."

Gu Youyou raised an eyebrow and looked outside the courtyard, asking, "When do you start learning the palace etiquette?"

"In half an hour, when you leave, I start."

Gu Youyou felt a sudden urge to laugh and said, "Looking at your listless appearance, it seems learning that palace etiquette is as tiring as a farmer turning over two li of land."

Lin Qianqing suddenly became interested and eagerly asked, "Cousin, have you ever seen how the rice we eat is grown?"

...Gu Youyou was taken aback.

Did her maternal grandmother’s yard grow vegetables without planting rice?

Women like her were often confined to large houses for a lifetime, starting in their family home until they married off, and then in their husband’s home until death, most never knowing how the everyday crops they consumed were cultivated. It was indeed a sad thought.

Especially for a cousin like Qianqing, whose heart was as wide as the sea, filled with the vast blue sky and the whole world, she was constrained by her social status to a life confined to a small corner.

Women working in the fields envied their life of leisure, while they longed for a carefree existence, even if it meant plain food every day.

Gu Youyou patted the back of her hand and said, "After the Empress’s birthday has passed, I’ll take you to the countryside to have a look."

Lin Qianqing’s eyes suddenly widened in disbelief, "Can we really do that?"