Farmhouse 85

Chapter 85: The Deal

The night was almost completely dark, and through the scattered shadows of the trees, a bright moon vaguely ascended into the sky. Only when the fire rose and she watched the flickering flames and felt the scorching heat, did Gu Youyou finally feel at ease.

She had been frightened all day long; during dinner at the Gu Family's, Grandma Huangshi kept muttering criticisms about her which she ignored. After dinner, she followed Jin Zijin up into the mountains.

Now, her nerves, tense all-day, finally relaxed, and she felt utterly drained.

Jin Zijin observed this and said, "I've prepared the bedding; you've been tired all day, go to sleep first!"

Truly exhausted and sleepy, Gu Youyou didn't even bother to wash up and laid down on the bedding placed upon the rock, still in her clothes.

The wood crackled in the fire, and in its light, Jin Zijin's expression remained mysteriously unfathomable, like a vast enigma.

Gu Youyou lay there in her clothes, watching his profile for a long while without speaking.

Despite being tired and sleepy, once she lay down, Gu Youyou felt she couldn't sleep. She tossed and turned, flipping over and back again.

Jin Zijin remained seated by the fire, occasionally stirring it and adding a log.

His profile, illuminated by the firelight, had sharp and distinct features, his chiseled face hidden behind that disarrayed beard.

Gu Youyou was extremely curious; what did the face hidden beneath those disordered whiskers look like?

Just by looking at the contours of his face, Gu Youyou thought he must be a handsome man of impressive appearance.

After a long while, she suddenly spoke up, "Did you use to live in this cave before?"

She remembered Wang Shun once saying that when Jin Zijin first arrived he didn't even have a thatched hut, that he was so poor he lived in a cave. The village women admired him, but none wanted to live in a cave with him, so he remained single.

Jin Zijin did not deny it; he nodded slightly and said, "Yes, it is this cave."

Gu Youyou suddenly laughed a little and asked, "Where are you from? No matter how poor your family was, it couldn't have been so bad that you didn't even have a thatched hut and had to live in the mountains like a wild man?"

Jin Zijin froze as if reminded of something; he gripped the firewood tighter, and the starry hue of his eyes grew much darker.

A flicker of fierceness crossed his resolute face. When the fire reached a scarred branch, a crisp pop echoed in the silent cave, pulling his thoughts back to reality.

He looked up at Gu Youyou, his expression slightly grave, and he said in a low voice, "You've forgotten our agreement. I don't ask you, and you don't ask me."

Gu Youyou tightened the blanket wrapped around her and blinked as though she hadn't heard, to cover the awkwardness, she turned over and muttered, "Fine, don't ask. If you won't tell, I'm not eager to ask."

Turning this way and that, Gu Youyou felt suffocated. She had secrets, but to outsiders, she was just the fragile Gu Youyou from the Gu Family. It seemed Jin Zijin knew everything, whereas she knew nothing about him.

This face might be real or fake, the name might be true or false, and she had no idea what he was even doing in this little mountain village.

To marry a frail woman like herself was beyond comprehension!

Restlessly tossing again, Gu Youyou spoke in a low voice towards Jin Zijin by the fire, "I think it’s unfair; we both have secrets, but clearly, you have more. How about we make a trade? You tell me one, and I tell you one."