Farmhouse 881

Chapter 881: She is a Variable

She was scoffing at the fact Yu Jizi had meticulously planned for so many years, yet in the end it was all for naught.

Who would have guessed that in this world, aside from his creatures, there was another way to safely extract the Youying Pearl.

Yu Jizi was clutching the Poisonous Insect, his entire body trembling.

Where was the Youying Pearl?

Where was his Youying Pearl?

He had personally fed it to Gu Youyou himself, it couldn't possibly be gone.

He coldly turned his face, glaring at Gu Youyou with wide eyes, and harshly demanded, "Where is the Youying Pearl?"

Gu Youyou burst into raucous laughter, her throat felt scorchingly painful, yet she laughed merrily.

"What do you think?" she said to him with a hoarse voice.

"You're seeking death." Yu Jizi kicked Gu Youyou, her body flew straight out, crashed against the coffin, and then fell down.

Gu Youyou spat out a mouthful of blood. As a doctor, she was acutely aware that her ribs were broken, and quite possibly more than one.

Gu Youyou continued to laugh heartily, saying, "You will never get your hands on the Youying Pearl. Do you know where I went? I went to sea and cast the Youying pearl into the deepest part of the ocean, you will never find it, ha ha..."

Yu Jizi's face turned an iron blue, his face no longer showed any trace of kindness, instead it was fierce and terrifying.

This is wrong, wrong, this woman is an unpredictable element.

Everything was supposed to be under his control...

His pupils suddenly constricted sharply.

But without the Youying Pearl, how should things proceed?

His body was already so old, he couldn't wait any longer.

Just then, he discovered something even more shocking.

Jin Ziyuan, who should have been absorbing the blood of the Poisonous Insect inside the coffin, was instead emitting strange red glows, and the Poisonous Insects that he had carefully bred were dying en masse.

The blood of those Poisonous Insects couldn't reach his body at all; instead, as soon as they touched Jin Ziyuan, they were burnt to death by his scorching breath.

How could this be?

Seeing this abnormality, Yu Jizi could not bother with Gu Youyou any longer, and immediately bent down to examine Jin Ziyuan.

Jin Ziyuan’s face was flushed, and upon touching him, he was surprisingly hot to the touch.

How could he be hot?

Activating the cold Poisonous Insect inside his body should have made him freezing all over.

Yu Jizi was utterly at a loss, lost in thought, when suddenly Jin Ziyuan opened his eyes inside the coffin, the juxtaposition of the outward cold and inner heat compelled him to cry out loud.

"Ah..."

It was at this moment that Yu Jizi suddenly thought of a possibility. Only the lost Zhuzhao Pearl of the Jin Imperial Clan of the Zhuzhao Country could annihilate these insects that he had so carefully bred with such intense yang energy.

Had Jin Ziyuan found it, or had it been with him all along?

No, the timing was not right.

But there was no time for him to consider how the Zhuzhao Pearl ended up in his hands.

"Hmph!" He snorted coldly, grabbed Jin Ziyuan’s chin, and placed the bloodied insect back into Jin Ziyuan’s mouth.

Jin Ziyuan had not awakened and was struggling in discomfort.

The insect crawled into his mouth, and very soon came back out, carrying the crimson Zhuzhao Pearl.

Though he had lost the Youying Pearl, obtaining the Zhuzhao Pearl made Yu Jizi equally overjoyed.

"Ah, ha ha ha... Another pearl requires a change of the array!" he exclaimed with laughter.

Gu Youyou had the thought of killing Jin Ziyuan. When had that guy gone back to the sea to retrieve the pearl and disgustingly swallowed it?

Perhaps because there was no longer a struggle of cold and hot energies within his body, Jin Ziyuan finally woke up.

Chapter 882: Finally Waiting for Him

He saw Yu Jizi holding the Zhuzhao Pearl and laughing madly, and he directly grabbed it with a speed as fast as the wind.

Yu Jizi hadn’t expected that these half-dead people could still resist, so, due to his momentary carelessness, it was snatched away by him.

He jumped out of the coffin and, upon seeing the situation before him, his eyes immediately froze into ice.

Was this the sacrifice?

These women, were they the sacrificial offerings?

Gu Youyou?

His eyes were full of worry.

She was there, too, and she seemed to be seriously injured.

Gu Youyou was about to speak up, but her throat was damaged, and even she couldn’t hear the words clearly.

All she could do was use the shape of her mouth to tell him, "Don’t worry about me, just leave if you get the chance."

After Yu Jizi’s instant of surprise, he quickly calmed down.

Could he really escape from this ancient tomb?

Apart from Tian Jizi, there was no one in this world who could match him. It was just that Jin Ziyuan’s body would soon be his, and he did not want it damaged.

"Give it to me, and I’ll spare her life," Yu Jizi reached out his hand towards Jin Ziyuan

Gu Youyou pursed her lips and shook her head vigorously at him.

She couldn’t listen to the ravings of this lunatic. At this point, they could only choose to shatter to pieces rather than remain whole and flawed.

But the more she shook her head, the more powerless she felt.

Why wouldn’t he hand it over? If he didn’t, would Yu Jizi not be able to take it? Having swallowed the object, could it be taken out again? The tomb chamber was only so large, how could he protect it?

It was no more than a mantis trying to stop a chariot, overestimating his own strength.

"Do you want to fight against me?" Yu Jizi disregarded him with disdain.

Jin Ziyuan looked painfully at Gu Youyou; she appeared weak and covered in blood.

She was already so frail, how could she bleed so much?

No, he had to save her. Even if it cost him his own life!

Suddenly, his expression turned cold, and he reached for his own throat, uttering in a hoarse voice, "Release her, and I will give it to you, otherwise I'll suffocate myself right now."

Yu Jizi pupil's shrank, his heart tightened.

Such a perfect body would be such a waste if it died.

He softened his expression a bit and said, "Don't worry, even if you didn't threaten me, I wouldn't kill her. She has great use to me."

"Then release her now."

Being frequently threatened made Yu Jizi a bit irate and he said, "How am I supposed to release her? Even if I let her go, she won't be able to get out."

Jin Ziyuan tightened his grip on his neck a bit more; his slender fingers were nearly sinking into the flesh, and he spoke resolutely, "Release her, throw her outside the tomb chamber and I'll give it to you. Whether she can leave or not, that's her own fate."

"You..." Yu Jizi, holding back his temper, said, "Fine, fine, we'll see if she can crawl out in her half-dead state. If she dies at the door, that's on you."

Yu Jizi, frustrated, removed the bugs from Gu Youyou's body, picked her up, and opened the stone door.

The moment the door opened, a flash of golden sword light fiercely stabbed inside.

Yu Jizi's face showed shock as he quickly stepped back to dodge the sword light and, at the same time, he dropped Gu Youyou.

Seeing the familiar person, Gu Youyou’s last nerve snapped, her brain lost consciousness, and she fainted.

Thankfully, he had come; she had finally waited until his arrival.

Gu Youyou fell into a warm embrace; this embrace was not as warm as before, but it was still cherished enough that she would never want to let go for the rest of her life.

"Youyou!"

Holding the bloodied person, Jin Zijin was trembling all over.

Chapter 883: Tian Jizi PK Yu Jizi

She was injured so severely.

"Youyou, it was I who came too late!"

He pressed her acupoints to stop the blood that was flowing.

Jin Zijin’s expression was startled, he said, "You wait here obediently for me."

He laid her down, holding the blood-red dagger, ready to rise and stab at Yu Jizi.

Tian Jizi held him back, saying, "He’s just performed a ritual and expended a lot of energy; you stay here and look after this female doctor. Let your master handle this."

"Could it be that Tian has really come?" Yu Jizi stared at Tian Jizi in shock.

Tian Jizi smiled faintly and said, "I had calculated that today would be your weakest; if not today, then when?"

Yu Jizi cursed furiously, "Damn you, old immortal, you actually schemed against me; aren't you supposed to be insane?"

"Whether I'm insane or not, you'll know if you try."

With that, he brandished a golden, glittering long sword and attacked Yu Jizi.

Even a skeletal camel is bigger than a horse; although Yu Jizi was extremely weak at this moment, he could still staunchly withstand Tian Jizi's assault.

Yu Jizi and Tian Jizi quickly engaged in battle; such a level of combat was hard for others to intervene.

Jin Ziyuan saw an opportunity and quickly ran to the stone door, to Gu Youyou's side.

He squatted down and stretched out his hand to touch her but, seeing her lying in someone else's embrace, he abruptly retracted his hand.

Jin Zijin lifted his head and said to him, "Thank you! You should leave quickly, your people are searching for you everywhere."

Jin Ziyuan nodded slightly, took another reluctant look at Gu Youyou, and finally left with gritted teeth.

Having him here meant that he would save her; she would be alright.

This tomb door had a peculiar feature: once opened from the outside, it had to be opened again from the inside to fully unlock, a process of entering and exiting.

For instance, when Yu Jizi took Gu Youyou and the others inside, the next time the tomb door was to be opened, it had to be done by someone inside; those outside could not open it. Therefore, Jin Ziyuan had exhausted all means to make Yu Jizi open the door.

Back then, Gu Youyou couldn’t open the tomb door for the same reason.

Fortunately, the tomb chamber was equipped with a secondary method of opening the door, and Gu Youyou happened to understand the Innate Eight Trigrams, she found the life gate, which gave her the opportunity to open that tomb door again.

Jin Ziyuan did not know that Jin Zijin and Tian Jizi were outside the door; he was just gambling, betting that Jin Zijin would come, and if he did, he would be able to rescue her.

Fortunately, his gambit paid off, and Jin Zijin did not disappoint him.

Watching Jin Ziyuan flee, Yu Jizi was unable to contain his fury and kicked the lid of the coffin, sending the several hundred-pound lid flying towards the tomb door, wedging it midair just as it was about to close.

Jin Ziyuan, hearing the loud noise, didn’t look back and plunged headfirst into the narrow tomb corridor, running wildly, unaware of how much blood he was vomiting.

Yu Jizi wanted to chase after him but was blocked by a sword from Tian Jizi.

A golden, glistening, ostentatious sword was erected in front of Yu Jizi, who was so infuriated that his eyes seemed to turn green.

"So the Money Sword is actually in your hands? You’ve hidden it well!"

Back then, having lost, Tian Jizi parted with the Money Sword, but unexpectedly, before Yu Jizi could even enjoy it, the sword had vanished.

Yu Jizi was furious at the time, and despite whipping many of his disciples, he could not locate the sword.

In his understanding, Tian Jizi had always been known as a righteous gentleman; since he had lost the sword to him, there was no reason for him to steal it back. Hence, over the years, he never suspected him.

But who could have thought that he would actually steal the sword back.

Chapter 884: Fierce Battle Outside

Yu Jizi, while fending off Tian Jizi’s attacks, scoffed coldly, "Elder brother, to think you would stoop to such shameless acts like a thief in the night, truly an eye-opener for me."

Tian Jizi laughed heartily and said, "You don’t deserve it, it was mine to begin with, and I’m naturally going to take it back."

The Money Sword, formed from eighty-one gold coins linked together, was a weapon used by the Dao Family to slay demons and vanquish evil. In the Dao Family, it held an extremely high status, for possessing it meant wielding the supreme authority of the Dao Family.

"You haven’t gone mad, you were only faking your illness? Since when did you start plotting against me?" Yu Jizi stamped his foot in anger.

With a smile, Tian Jizi said, "If I weren’t mad, how could you have felt secure to make your move? So indeed, I had gone mad."

The sword in Yu Jizi’s hand flashed brightly, striking with each move at the vital points of Tian Jizi.

This old man was truly detestable to the core.

In the tomb chamber, sword lights flitted about. Jin Zijin, fearing more sword qi might injure Gu Youyou, hurriedly took her out of the chamber.

Her injuries were too severe, she couldn’t stay here any longer; he had to take her down the mountain to be healed.

Lotus Village was nearest, and Qingshui’s doctor, Qin Changlin of Jisheng Hall...

"You’ve ruined my plans today; fifty years ago, I couldn’t kill you, but today, I will make sure both you and your disciple die here."

Jin Ziyuan had run off, bringing the soul-exchanging ritual he had planned for today to a failed end, and this infuriated Yu Jizi beyond measure.

Tian Jizi laughed loudly, "This is what they call ’using a man’s own strategies against him.’ Fifty years ago, I fell for your trick. Did you think I was going to fall for it again? Go on, see if you can kill me."

As they spoke, they had already exchanged hundreds of moves, each naturally flowing yet deadly.

The other women in the tomb chamber were already dead, their expressions twisted in horror. A myriad of insects tried to flee, but under their swords, not even a fly could survive.

Swept by the sword qi, all the poisonous insects Yu Jizi had been raising for years were wiped out.

His heart clenched with pain, his eyes glimmering with malice, and his attacks grew increasingly fierce, yet his desperation led to numerous openings.

Tian Jizi continued to assault him relentlessly.

"Soul transfer is an act against the heavens, no one has ever succeeded, and neither will you. Stop dreaming about it; too much desire is only self-destructive."

Hopping mad, Yu Jizi said, "If it weren’t for your interference, how could I have failed? You didn’t dare to do this, but I did. I’m not doing it just for myself; if I succeeded, you could also..."

"Life and death are predestined; do you think everyone is like you? Go tell your sanctimonious excuses to the ghosts!"

Tian Jizi seized the opportunity to deliver a lethal blow to Yu Jizi.

He had been defeated by him on the Sword Trial Platform more than fifty years ago, a grudge he had harbored for over fifty years.

He had waited for this day for just as long.

Yu Jizi hurriedly dodged, but was still wounded by the sword qi.

A wound from such sword qi was no trivial matter, and Yu Jizi immediately spat out a mouthful of blood.

Seeing the turn of events, he bolted for the door.

This old man was already over a hundred years old, his lifespan was not much longer, and he was over twenty years younger than him, there was no sense in fighting so desperately at this moment.

The two of them, one chasing and the other fleeing, quickly left the tomb chamber.

They had been fighting inside, only to come out and discover a fight going on outside as well.

Yue Rujing, leading a group from Tianzong, was fiercely battling with Huo Li, who led a group from Xuanzong, in the forest.

They were actually fighting here on Tianmen Mountain?

Jin Zijin, holding Gu Youyou as he left the ancient tomb and seeing the scene before him, was both anxious and furious.

Chapter 885: Shunzi, Quick Look at the Fairies Fighting

Because as soon as the people from Xuanzong saw him emerge, they attacked without a word, and he was holding the severely injured Gu Youyou, completely preoccupied with worry about her injuries. How could he find the hands to deal with them?

Having no choice, he could only lay Gu Youyou down on a large boulder and told a few disciples to keep a close watch.

He himself stood guard around her, slaying the Xuanzong disciples who rushed at them one by one.

But continuing like this would be very dangerous for Youyou; he must find a doctor for her immediately.

"Hey, I'm over here..."

A woman's voice shouted in the forest. Jin Zijin focused his gaze and saw it was Searcy in a sorry state, with Gui Yunxi by her side, holding a rock and shrinking behind Searcy.

Searcy also knew medical skills, which was great.

Jin Zijin urgently called several Tianzong disciples to bring the lady across from them over.

In the chaos, Searcy finally made it safely to Gu Youyou's side.

Seeing Gu Youyou's pale face, Searcy was uncontrollably furious. She clenched her teeth tightly and said in a low voice, "Did that old pervert do this?"

After checking Gu Youyou's pulse and finding she was still alive, but not far from death,

she couldn't care about anything else. She took out silver needles that had been soaked in anesthetic from Gu Youyou, aiming at several acupuncture points on her body.

It didn't matter how the anesthetic would affect her; as long as it wasn't fatal.

But if she didn't give her a few needles to protect her heart vessels soon, Gu Youyou wouldn't make it.

Tian Jizi and Yu Jizi fought from inside the cave to the outside, and now they had reached the top of Tianmen Mountain.

They moved with elegance and the air of immortals.

From afar, the two white-haired elders were fighting gloriously above the clouds of Tianmen Mountain, like immortals descending to the mortal world.

Some hunters from Lotus Village were hunting in the mountains; hearing the commotion, they all came to watch.

They were on the opposite mountain, excited beyond themselves at such a sight.

"The fairies are fighting, Shunzi, have you ever seen fairies fight? Let’s go take a look. If a fairy takes a fancy to us, what need do we have to hunt anymore? We could be disciples of a fairy and become one ourselves." The hunter was clutching Shunzi’s wrist so tightly he was almost crushing it in his excitement.

Shunzi finally pulled his hand free and said, "I’m not going. I have to go home to take care of my wife. If I became a fairy, what would she do?"

"You blockhead, you deserve to hunt for the rest of your life. You’re not going? Well, I am!"

Yu Jizi was gradually losing. He thought Tian Jizi had aged and would not be as good as in the past, but Tian Jizi turned out to be even more formidable than he had imagined.

Of course, his own crushing defeat was also because he had used so much energy today and had given Tian Jizi the upper hand.

"Senior brother, do you really intend to kill me here?"

"I should not have spared you fifty years ago. A moment’s pity on my part let you take advantage," Tian Jizi said.

Tian Jizi struck out a palm towards Yu Jizi, putting all of his life’s strength of Inner Strength into it.

"You can go now."

Yu Jizi clenched his teeth and narrowly evaded, but the force of the palm wind made him sway and he began to fall off the cliff.

Shock crossed his face; he was not ready to die like this. His eyes darkened and he quickly pulled out a black whip from his waist, lashing it at Tian Jizi.

Having just used up his energy with that full-force palm strike, Tian Jizi couldn’t recover immediately and was hit by Yu Jizi’s fierce strike. The whip instantly coiled around his legs.

Tian Jizi’s feet slipped from under him. Pulled by the black whip, he widened his eyes in fury, plunging down the cliff together with Yu Jizi.

Chapter 886: Falling Off the Cliff

Everyone was stunned by the scene, their master had fallen off the cliff; how could they still have the heart to fight? They all stopped and ran toward the mountain peak of Tianmen Mountain.

Jin Zijin was momentarily stupefied, then glanced at Gu Youyou and followed the others.

Everyone climbed to the edge of the cliff and called out loudly, but there was no response.

Below the cliff was white mist, obscuring the view of anything beneath.

The clash between the Dao Family’s Tianzong and Xuanzong ended with both Tian Jizi and Yu Jizi falling off the cliff.

Jin Zijin’s eyes widened, he couldn’t believe his master was gone just like that... No, he needed to go down and look for him.

He walked dazedly over to the rock where Gu Youyou was placed, ordering several disciples to take her to Lotus Village, then to Qingshui Town, to find Qin Changlin. There, there were medicines, and the best medical facilities.

The disciples of Tianzong and Xuanzong all descended Tianmen Mountain, and several hours later, they found the valley beneath the cliff.

The valley below had many tall trees snapped in two; on the ground was a large pool of blood.

However, there was no sign of Tian Jizi or Yu Jizi.

Had they died and been dragged away by wild beasts, or had they not died at all?

If they had not died, where had they gone?

...

Gu Youyou awoke in immense pain, not knowing how long she had slept.

She opened her eyes and saw a familiar place, one she had not visited in a long time.

It was the operating room at Jisheng Hall in Qingshui Town.

It looked the same as when she left years ago; she moaned in pain, and the doctor immediately stood up and hurried to her side.

"Qin..." Gu Youyou barely managed to utter one word before she couldn’t pronounce the second.

Her throat was excruciatingly painful.

"Sister Youyou, you're finally awake, you've been unconscious for five days," Qin Changlin said as he extended a hand.

Gu Youyou looked down at herself; she was wrapped in bandages and supported by wooden splints.

It seemed her broken ribs had been reset.

But Qin Changlin was a half-competent doctor, okay for minor ailments, but was he capable of such a complex operation?

Damn, he couldn't have set them wrong, could he?

Gu Youyou seriously doubted Qin Changlin's skills, becoming very anxious.

Improperly set ribs could be a problem for life.

Seeing her anxious expression, Qin Changlin hurriedly said, "Wait until your throat is better to talk about anything, Doctor Searcy said you should stay still for now, otherwise your bones might shift."

Searcy?

Could it be that her ribs weren't set by Qin Changlin, but by Searcy?

Searcy learned quickly; Gu Youyou had once taught her how to set a deer's broken bones, she should be able to manage, right?

Well, there was no other choice; Searcy's work had to be more reliable than Qin Changlin's.

Gu Youyou gently nodded her head.

Qin Changlin poured a cup of water for Gu Youyou, helping her sip a small mouthful.

He sighed helplessly, "I always hoped you would come back, but if I had known you'd return like this, I'd rather you never came back."

Gu Youyou listened quietly, staring at him.

She never imagined she would return to Qingshui Town in this state.

Right now, she had many things to ask, but her condition made it impossible to speak, and with injuries on her hands, writing was not an option, so she could only stare helplessly.

Speaking for himself, Qin Changlin said, "These years, Jisheng Hall has earned quite a bit of silver; not just from nearby villages, but even the big cities nearby come here for medicine. I, Qin Changlin, am quite renowned locally, if my master were still alive, he would be very pleased..."

Chapter 887: Throat Damaged

Knowing Gu Youyou couldn't speak, and that she had slept for so long that she could no longer fall asleep, he sat beside her and spoke non-stop.

About Jisheng Hall, Qingshui Town, Lotus Village.

He even talked about how he himself had married a wife five months ago, planning to have children within a year.

He went as far as to tell Gu Youyou about that wealthy young lady who had been entangled with Yue Rujing and whom she had eventually married, how many children she had borne.

Gu Youyou really wanted to ask him if he wasn't thirsty from talking so much, but whenever she tried to speak, her throat hurt so much that she simply endured it.

Two or three hours passed like this before the door to the operating room finally opened.

Enter Searcy, still yawning.

Upon seeing Gu Youyou awake, she was overjoyed.

"You're finally awake. You've given me quite a hard time these past few days. I've been taking turns with this idiot to guard you, unable to get a good night's sleep, always fearing this fool would mess up and you'd stop breathing without anyone noticing."

Qin Changlin's face turned green with outrage. Ever since he was young, he had felt he was much smarter than his siblings. When had he become someone constantly called an idiot?

He pointed at Searcy's nose and retorted angrily, "What does your PMS have to do with me?"

Gu Youyou was stunned by Qin Changlin's words. Back in the day, because her body contained a cold poison, and having difficulty in Kuishui, she couldn't explain to Qin Changlin what the issue was. So, she had told him she had PMS, that abdominal pain and insomnia were normal and would pass in a few days.

But now he remembered it vividly and had even used it against Searcy.

It was also Searcy's first time hearing this term, and she was taken aback, not knowing how to retort.

Searcy told Gu Youyou that things were chaotic that day. When she and Gui Yunxi hurried back that night, they saw Tianzong and Xuanzong's people clashing in fierce combat, with Jin Zijin protecting her. At that time, she was already unconscious, and her life was hanging by a thread.

Tian Jizi and Yu Jizi, the two white-haired elders, fought on a mountaintop and later both fell off a cliff.

It was only then that Tianzong and Xuanzong's people stopped. Jin Zijin and Huo Li led their respective groups down the cliff to search for the elders, while she was taken to Jisheng Hall by a few others.

Seeing Gu Youyou wrapped in bandages, Searcy was visibly worried.

"I set your bones, and it was my first time doing such a thing, so I wasn't very confident." She hurriedly corrected herself, "Hey, hey, it's not that my medical skills are lacking. It's just that your condition was so critical at the time, you could have lost your life at any moment, which added psychological pressure and made the surgery more difficult. So you need to get better quickly. If anything isn't right, you'll have to figure it out yourself."

After listening to Searcy, Gu Youyou felt completely unsettled.

But no matter what, she had survived and owed her thanks.

Gu Youyou spoke with difficulty, "Thank you!"

Her throat hurt unbearably, and her voice was so hoarse it was unrecognizable. Qin Changlin hurriedly said, "Sister Youyou, you should talk less. If you don't take care of your throat, it could be permanently damaged."

Gu Youyou's voice was very pleasant, a young girl's clear and spirit-like voice, like a oriole emerging from the valley. It would be a terrible shame if it were truly ruined.

She had been awake for quite some time now, but Jin Zijin was nowhere to be seen.

Whether Tian Jizi and Yu Jizi survived their fall from the cliff remained unknown.

Gu Youyou wanted to ask Searcy, but Searcy was now sitting beside her dozing off.

It seemed Searcy really hadn't had a proper sleep in a long time.

There was a knock at the door. Searcy woke from her doze and yawned as she went to open the door.

Chapter 888: Searching the Mountain

Entering was Gui Yunxi alongside Shunzi.

Shunzi’s tone revealed joy as he asked, "I heard Big Sister has awakened?"

Searcy turned her head to glance, and Gu Youyou was also gazing at them with open eyes.

She nodded gently, making way for Gui Yunxi and Shunzi to enter.

Shunzi had matured since two years prior. His gentle features now bore a touch more resilience. Seeing Gu Youyou, his face broke into delighted relief, "Big Sister finally woke up, that’s great. Erya can rest assured now. Big Sister, how are you feeling now?"

Searcy blocked him, saying, "Her throat is injured, she can’t talk. Right now, well, there’s no threat to her life, but she needs rest. No long talks, please. Oh, right, didn’t you go into the mountains? Did you find Jin Zijin and the others?"

Gui Yunxi shook his head, "The Dao Family mobilized many people, and the nearby garrison troops as well. They searched the mountains for several days, but aside from the bloodstains at the base of the mountain, they found no clue."

"So, are they still looking?"

"Yes, there’s blood, which means they were injured, so naturally, the search continues. However, some people are guessing... after they fell, their bodies might have been eaten by wild beasts underneath, which is why they can’t be found."

There was a moment of silence in the room, then Searcy spoke again, "There’d be traces if they were eaten by wild beasts. Nothing at all; I find it unlikely. If those two old guys intentionally hid, I reckon even if we dispatched tens of thousands more searchers, we still might not find them, these fools."

Gui Yunxi hastily said, "We can’t stop searching, though. If the two of them are dead, or let’s say both just injured and in hiding, it would be okay. But if one’s dead and one’s injured... who is dead and who is injured... it would be major events for both the Dao Family and the Imperial Court. It’s a matter that affects the greater scheme of things, so before the opposition gives up, none of us can give up."

Searcy raised an eyebrow, a dark smile crossing her lips, "A mere coachman, and yet you’re spouting such principles. You’ve made progress, haven’t you?"

Gui Yunxi laughed awkwardly, "These aren’t my words. I heard them from the Princely Heir Yue and the others. Right now, with Xuanzong’s people not pulling out, and Tianzong’s people not leaving either. The Dao Family won’t leave, and neither will the Imperial Court’s dispatched troops. The Princely Heir Yue said this mountain search couldn’t be finished in a few months. Now that Doctor Gu has awakened, it’s good news. Jin Zhenren has been worried. When I return today, at least I have some news to report."

Gui Yunxi looked towards Gu Youyou, and Gu Youyou nodded gently to him.

In these times, Gu Youyou greatly hoped Jin Zijin would come to see her, but under the current circumstance, him staying in the mountains to continue the search was the most rational choice.

It couldn’t be hoped that Yue Rujing would handle things if Yu Jizi was found half dead.

After so much effort to bring Yu Jizi to this state, they couldn’t give him any chance of making a comeback.

Faced with Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin, Shunzi had many questions.

But seeing Gu Youyou in her current state, he eventually swallowed those questions back down.

There would be time in the future, once she fully recovered, to ask them.

He’s been out for a while, it’s time to go back. His wife and children are waiting at home. Erya is close to giving birth, and he feared any complications with no one by her side.

Their house was still next to the former thatched cottage of Jin Zijin.

The thatched cottage remained as it had been, regularly tended to by Shunzi, but they did not live inside it, merely storing some farming tools and items.

Their house consisted of a two-section compound, comprising the main house and east and west wings, constructed in the style of the Gu Family estate, yet slightly smaller than the Gu Family's courtyard.

Chapter 889: Shunzi's Family

This house was owned jointly by the siblings Sanbao and Erya. Initially when Gu Lao San had an accident, and Erya's mother committed suicide, Wang Shun's family disagreed with him marrying Gu Xiaoqing. Despite this, he insisted on marrying her and severed his ties with the Wang Family, becoming Gu Xiaoqing's live-in son-in-law.

Later, when Gu Xiaoqing and her brother became prosperous, the Wang Family wanted to take them back. But Shunzi was not foolish, knowing that if they returned, all the money they had earned would belong to the clan head, and that would include all of Gu Family's silver. Therefore, he adamantly refused.

Shunzi's mother was an enlightened woman who had treated Youyou well in the past, but with a domineering mother-in-law and sisters-in-law pressing down, and her own husband not being assertive, she barely had a say.

Fortunately, everyone's days were passing well.

When Shunzi returned, Wang Family's aunt was busy drying washed clothes on the bamboo poles in front of his house.

Erya was close to giving birth and it was really inappropriate for her to go to the riverbank to wash clothes, especially since she was also taking care of a child.

To hunt better prey to nourish his wife, Shunzi had often gone into the mountains with fellow hunters recently.

Twelve or thirteen-year-old Sanbao was bustling around, busy with the work in the fields.

"Mom, you've come to help at home again, be careful or grandma will scold you again."

Hearing her son say this, Wang Family's aunt couldn't help but respond loudly, "Let her say what she wants! If she infuriates me, I'll divorce your father, and stop serving their family, and see whom she can complain about then."

Shunzi, usually hearing his mother not speak like this, was stunned and quickly asked, "Mom, has something happened? Did grandma upset you again?"

Wang Family's aunt's eyes reddened as she spoke, "Your grandma is always like that, when doesn't she upset someone? It's okay, I've gotten used to it."

Shunzi's mother was honest and capable. In times like these, it seemed the more honest a person was, the more they suffered. Working hard yet still being scolded, Shunzi's mother was such a person.

Shunzi knew what kind of person his grandmother was, and he just sighed, "If it really doesn't work, Mom, go back and talk with Dad, consider splitting the family. You could take my younger siblings and move in with us. Our house is large, and Brother Jin's room is also empty, it would certainly be more comfortable than squeezing in with Uncle and Aunt."

Wang Family's aunt sighed and said, "You make it sound so easy. If it were so easy, do you think it would have come to this? Your father is too filial and too easily swayed. It would be truly surprising if he agreed to split. Alright, let's not talk about this anymore. Go and check on Erya, I think she is going to give birth in a few days. The first baby was a boy, this time I really hope it's a girl."

Shunzi smiled, took the basin from his mother's hands, and said, "My mom is really progressive, other mothers-in-law always hope their daughters-in-law keep having boys, yet you hope it's a girl."

"What's so good about a bunch of manly men? Look at your uncle's family, all five are boys. Our family has just our little sister as a girl, much more endearing..."

Erya, having heard that Youyou had awakened and was out of danger, finally felt relieved.

These past few days, her heart had been fluttering with worry, fearing that Youyou could not pull through.

"Shunzi, did you ask what exactly happened to elder sister? And about brother-in-law, why is everyone saying that they actually have no relationship, that grandpa only had them marry to cure an affliction and to deceive others?"

All these arrangements had been made by Yue Tingfang. Now, everyone in Lotus Village knew that Youyou and Jin Zijin weren't really related; they were together only for treatment purposes.

Chapter 890: They are Not Related

Jin Zijin agreed to take in Gu Youyou, because he had once had an accident while hunting in the mountains when he first came to Lotus Village and nearly died there. Later, Gu Feng saved him and in order to repay the debt of gratitude, he agreed to help Gu Youyou.

They later realized that Gu Youyou and Jin Zijin were not really husband and wife.

Generally, even the poorest couples would hold a wedding ceremony, but due to Gu Youyou being close to death that day, the ceremony was skipped. Normally, a chicken is used as a substitute in such cases, but they did not even have a chicken, so everyone believed it was a sham.

Their marriage was fake.

The outsiders didn't know, but how could Erya and the others not know?

Despite outsider claims that their marriage was fake, Erya saw how genuinely affectionate the eldest sister and her husband were to each other; their gazes filled with genuine emotion couldn't be faked.

Unless something happened that forced them to act that way.

Shunzi had been unaware previously, but in the past few days, after interacting with Jin Zijin, he had come to understand the situation.

He looked at his mother and swallowed his words.

Shunzi's mother, understanding of the situation, immediately smiled and took her grandson out the door.

Only then did Shunzi whisper to Erya, "I'm telling you this, but you mustn't blabber about it!"

Erya took on a serious tone, yet couldn't suppress her dissatisfaction, "Who's the blabbermouth? You're the blabbermouth!"

"Alright, alright, I'm the blabbermouth!" Shunzi conceded. "You know Brother Jin is no ordinary person. He came to our village years ago on a mission, searching for something in the big mountains. A few days ago, one of the mountains collapsed, and what they were searching for was inside; after that, he left."

Erya, confused, asked, "What does that have to do with my big sister?"

Shunzi explained, "Recently, there has been trouble in those mountains, and the military has arrived. Do you know why?"

"I don't know," Erya shook her head.

"It's complicated," Shunzi continued, "Something big happened in those mountains; they are searching for someone. Both the Dao Family's Heavenly Master and the State Preceptor are involved in the search, and so is Brother Jin. Brother Jin's real identity is that of the senior brother from the Heavenly Sect of the Dao Family, and he cannot marry because of that status."

Shunzi gave Erya a knowing look, and even though she felt she didn't quite understand, she nodded nonetheless.

Dwelling further on such matters was pointless; the less these ordinary villagers knew, the better.

"So, are you going back up the mountain tomorrow?"

"Yes, of course. Brother Jin is worried about my sister's health. Now that she is fine, I need to take Gui Yunxi to inform him. Gui Yunxi is from Beiping and not used to mountain paths; he might get lost on his own."

...

"Senior brother, where could master be? Why is he avoiding us? I'm exhausted; I haven't had a good night's sleep in almost ten days."

"You were snoring away in the tent just last night." Jin Zijin, who had not had a good rest for a long time, had bloodshot eyes.

Yue Rujing choked a bit, then said, "Slip of the tongue, ah! It was a slip. I haven't slept well in ten days. You saw me sleeping in the tent, but my mind was occupied with thoughts of master."

Jin Zijin responded, "Master's life or death is uncertain; we can only continue searching."

"Indeed, senior brother is right. I just don't understand, what does master mean? Where has he hidden? It's been so many days and we've searched all the mountains nearby."