

Celebrity Girl Is My Wife Chapter 251

Nan Chen took a look at the document before signing it.

Just as Jiang Zhe was about to leave with the document, Qiao Zhan pulled him aside.

“What are you doing? Please watch yourself, Captain Qiao!” Jiang Zhe shouted out loud.

“I can’t think of anything. Assistant Jiang, your job is all about coming up with crafty ideas, so won’t you help me out here for a while?” Qiao Zhan smiled feebly while asking him.

“My job is all about coming up with crafty ideas? Wow, I had no idea you thought so highly of me, Captain Qiao. Did you actually mean to say is that I don’t have much ability, and that is why I need to come up with crooked ideas just to make a living?” Jiang Zhe was clearly offended.

“I don’t mean it in that way. You know I am just a buffoon; I don’t know how to be tactful. So, if I have offended you, I really hope you can forgive me.”

Qiao Zhan humbled himself as he knew Jiang Zhe would be able to help him.

“No, Captain Qiao, your job scope is beyond my ability. I am sorry, but I am busy and have to take my leave first. Captain Qiao, take your time, and may you come up with something soon.”

Jiang Zhe then tried to get away but when Qiao Zhan pulled him back, he couldn’t move no matter how much he struggled.

Jiang Zhe was so weak. He was definitely no match for Qiao Zhan physically.

No matter how much strength he exerted, he could not release himself from Qiao Zhan’s strong grip.

Jiang Zhe was so angry and anxious that his entire face turned red.

As the two of his right-hand men continued fighting and struggling with one another, Nan Chen acted as if he did not see a thing.

“CEO, can you please handle this ox of yours?” Jiang Zhe finally turned to Nan Chen for help.

“Assistant Jiang, you are an educated man, how could you say things like that? I am a human being, how dare you call me an ox?” Qiao Zhan furrowed his eyebrows.

“CEO, look, he’s refusing to let me go. How can I do my work now?” Jiang Zhe was really beginning to panic now.

Without lifting his gaze, Nan Chen said, “Since he wants you to help think of an idea, then why don’t you just help him out a little. He will let you go after that.”

Qiao Zhan was overjoyed upon hearing that. “Heard that? Even Sir Chen is asking you to help think of an idea.”

So the reason why boss has been so silent was to get me to help to think of something.

How could I be so silly? I should have seen through his desire a long time ago.

“Actually, Ms. Ding is quite an easygoing person, but we have definitely wronged her this time. She must have felt very aggrieved. The way I see it, there is no way out of this at all,” said Jiang Zhe.

“Pfft, and here I was thinking that you were so smart. After such a long time, that is all you have to say? That is all there is to a so-called cultured person?” Qiao Zhan said with disdain.

Nan Chen remained silent.

Jiang Zhe and Nan Chen could read each other’s minds very well.

It was definitely impossible for Jiang Zhe to be helpless when it came to this kind of small issue.

Indeed, Jiang Zhe continued, “If we were to deliberately come up with a plan, it would look very unnatural. However, if we could get the two little ones to come for dinner, we can then dispel a lot of the misunderstandings. It is best to just go with the flow for some things. Ms. Ding loves the two children the most, and she could never hate anybody who could make them happy. Moreover, she is not a calculative person who will fuss over this for too long.”

Qiao Zhan thought about the plan and it all began to make sense to him.

However, wouldn’t this be a little too simple? Just bringing the two kids for a meal? If the solution were this simple, why would we still need Jiang Zhe the apple polisher?

“That’s it?” Qiao Zhan asked in disbelief.

“That’s it. Was I not clear enough?” Jiang Zhe scowled.

“Yes, you were clear, but isn’t it a little too simple? It’s just a dinner, even I could have thought of that. And here I was thinking you would have a better idea.” Qiao Zhan was still rather dissatisfied.

“Captain Qiao, may I go now? If you drink more milk and less alcohol, your brain could be of better use,” said Jiang Zhe.

“You...”

“Go do your work and stop fooling around,” Nan Chen ordered.

Now that boss has spoken, they really couldn’t fool around anymore.

“Since the problem has been solved, I’ll take my leave now,” Qiao Zhan said.

“Your job is to pick them up and bring them to the restaurant by six o’clock tonight,” said Nan Chen.

“Oh? I am worried I won’t be able to invite them if you don’t extend a personal invitation,” Qiao Zhan sighed miserably.

“That’s your problem,” Nan Chen said coldly before waving Qiao Zhan away.

“Oh? Then which restaurant are we going to?”

“You are buying dinner, so how would I know?” Nan Chen said coldly.

Qiao Zhan was stunned. *Why am I the one buying dinner now?*

Would Ms. Ding forgive me if I treated them all to dinner? I am just a nobody!

However, Qiao Zhan did not dare to ask too much and merely followed Jiang Zhe out of the office.

Then, he held onto Jiang Zhe and asked, “Assistant Jiang, what is Sir Chen trying to say?”

“You don’t get it?” Jiang Zhe sneered.

“Not at all. My brain is nothing like yours, and I can’t read between the lines,” Qiao Zhan said.

“Are you still belittling me?”

“No, no, I am not. I am really asking for your help here.”

“Well, I’ll tell you once you call me Big Brother.” Jiang Zhe folded his arms and looked at Qiao Zhan.

“Never!”

“So be it then!” Jiang Zhe then turned around to leave, only to be pulled back by Qiao Zhan again.

“I won’t let you go if you don’t tell me. Sir Chen knows I don’t understand it either, and he wants me to ask you too, so let’s not pretend you can get out of this.”

“You rogue! Hooligan! So rude!” Jiang Zhe began to berate him.

“All right, spit it. What did Sir Chen mean?”

“Boss wants to admit his mistake to Ms. Ding, but his ego is too big for that. Hence, you are the scapegoat for Ms. Ding. Boss will then pretend to just be in the area and pop by. That’s it, get it? How do you not understand such a simple plan? Do you have mush for brains?” Jiang Zhe scolded him.

“Oh yea, why did I not think of that? Assistant Jiang, you are indeed a mind reader. If you lived in ancient times, you would have been the most influential and powerful eunuch serving the emperor.” Qiao Zhan stuck up his thumb.

“Caption Qiao, how dare you insult me?” Jiang Zhe began to fume.

Qiao Zhan smiled and waved goodbye before he turned to leave.

By five o’clock, Qiao Zhan had appeared at the kindergarten entrance punctually to pick up the children.

After that, he rushed to the set with the children and waited for Ning Ran to finish work so that they could have dinner together.

It was only after all the children had left that Dabao finally walked out of the school slowly while holding his sister’s hand.

Dabao was never one to rush with others, and the kindergarten principal would have never dreamt of letting these two little precious children rush out of the school together with the other children. They could never handle the responsibility if both of them were hurt in any way.

Qiao Zhan walked up to them warmly, “Little Master, Little Miss.”

“Uncle Qiao!” Erbao called out to him happily.

“Oh no, you can’t call me that. I can’t handle that,” Qiao Zhan said loudly.

“Mummy says we have to call you that. If not Uncle Qiao, do we call you Brother instead?”

Erbao laughed out loud cheekily after she finished talking.

Dabao rolled his eyes at his sister to indicate that she had crossed the line.

Erbao immediately changed the topic. “Uncle Qiao, you look so handsome today.”

“Thank you for the praises Little Young Mistress. You are really quite sweet, aren’t you?”

Qiao Zhan opened the car door and carried the two of them into the car before buckling them into their car seats.

“Let’s go! We are going to the film set to pick up your Mommy, and then I am going to buy you all dinner.”

“All right, all right!” Erbao began to cheer.

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Qiao Zhan then brought both children into the film set. The two of them looked so distinctive; nobody could forget what they looked like after one meeting. Nobody dared to stop them when they arrived, and this was how they broke the rules and entered the film set.

However, Dabao had learnt from their last mistake and was now watching Erbao, making sure she didn’t take a peep. All they did was stand a distance away and watch the filming quietly.

The scene they were watching was a love scene between Zheng Lunlun and Ning Ran. Even though it was not an intimate scene, both the set and the atmosphere were made to look rather ambiguous. Erbao immediately reached out to close her eyes with her hands. “Oh no, what is Blondie doing with Mommy?”

“This is Mommy’s job. She is acting out a story with Blondie. This is not their real behavior.” Dabao described the action deftly and explained everything calmly to his sister. “I know, they are just acting for television,” Erbao said.

“Yes, so don’t call out to Mommy. If you affect her work, we will get into trouble again,” Dabao said. “I know what to do now, Brother,” Erbao replied obediently.

However, Erbao still ran up to them after the scene was done. “Mommy! Blondie!” Zheng Lunlun was overjoyed to see Erbao. He picked her up to lift her up high.

Ning Ran quickly said it was too dangerous and instructed him to quickly put her down. “You’ve grown prettier, but you are plumper too. Have you been eating meat every day?” Zheng Lunlun pinched Erbao’s chubby cheeks.

“I haven’t grown plumper. In fact, I’ve lost weight.” Erbao has always denied putting on weight. She could accept looking rich, but the word ‘plump’ did not exist in her vocabulary.

“Oh, you’ve lost weight? Look at how thin you are, poor child, you need more nutrition.” Zheng Lunlun burst out laughing. Erbao was unhappy with that. How could Blondie laugh at me for being plump in front of so many people?

“I don’t like Blondie anymore.” She pouted huffily with her puffy cheeks. “All right, all right, I was wrong. Erbao has lost weight. However, you really are prettier than before. You are now a beautiful young girl.”

“Hrmph!” Erbao turned her face away from him. “I heard there’s a new desserts cafe that has just opened near my house, and that it is really good. I wonder if anybody would be willing to go and give it a try with me...”

“Me!” Erbao immediately fell into the trap and raised her hand. Dabao looked at his sister helplessly. Zheng Lunlun laughed out loud, “Hahahaha, all right, that’s the way.”

“Blondie, so when are you bringing me there?” Erbao has always been a fan of desserts. “Right after we finish our work,” said Zheng Lunlun.

“Captain Qiao, why did you bring them here? I’ve said that I didn’t want the kids here to affect our work,” Ning Ran chided.

“I’m here to bring you and the kids for a meal. I did not do my job properly, so I’d like to buy you a meal as a sign of my apology,” Qiao Zhan said cautiously.

“No, there is no need, it’s all in the past. Captain Qiao, you were just doing your job, and we can hardly blame you. There is no need for dinner...”

“Hey, what no need? There is a need. I want to eat, and if Captain Qiao is treating, that’s even better. I’ll go too,” Zheng Lunlun quickly said.

He had been prepared to have dinner with Ning Ran after work. Now that the two kids were here, it’d be even better.

“Oh, you have a dinner appointment? Let’s wrap up for the day then.” The director came over as well.

“There is really no need. We’ve all agreed to put in additional hours to pick up our speed. How can we wrap up so early?” Ning Ran cried out.

“No worries, it’s not like we can catch up in one day anyway. Lunlun has just come in today, so we shouldn’t tire him out. We’ll just add onto his workload slowly. So yes, go and grab dinner, you guys,” The director said with a chuckle.

“Yes, yes, I’ve just arrived today, so I can’t be too tired. If I burn out again, it’d be worse for our schedule,” Zheng Lunlun continued.

Ning Ran rolled her eyes at Zheng Lunlun.

With this situation where Zheng Lunlun wanted to leave and that the children were here, it was clearly impossible to continue with the shoot.

“All right then, we’ll put in extra time tomorrow.” Ning Ran had no choice but to agree.

It was supposed to be the director’s decision, and he had already made the decision to wrap up for the day. It wouldn’t change if she was the only one who insisted on continuing.

Qiao Zhan was about to bring Ning Ran and her children to the restaurant, and allow Nan Chen to appear then. However, there was one more person involved in the plan now – Zheng Lunlun.

Young Master Lun was not part of the plan and was not supposed to be at the dinner. However, Qiao Zhan did not dare offend him and did not know how to handle this situation.

“Where are we going for dinner? We aren’t going to Uncle’s company canteen, are we?” Zheng Lunlun asked Qiao Zhan as he sat at the passenger’s seat.

“Of course not. I’ve booked a restaurant that specializes in Hunan food,” Qiao Zhan said absent-mindedly.

“That’d be good, I haven’t had it for a while.”

“Young Master Lun, I am here today to bring Ms. Ding out for a meal. Alone,” Qiao Zhan said hesitantly.

“What are you trying to say? That I am an extra?” Zheng Lunlun could understand what he was trying to say.

“Why not I treat you to a meal separately another day, Young Master Lun?”

“No! Qiao Zhan, are you bullying me here? You are treating her but not me?” Zheng Lunlun was really unhappy now.

“No, it’s just that today’s a little different…”

“What special occasion is this? Did you not bring enough cash or what? I know you have always been very tight-fisted, so why don’t I just pay for this?”

“I don’t mean it that way, Young Master Lun, it’s just that…”

“Fine, I was here to have dinner with them anyway. If you are too stingy to part with your money, I’ll pick up the tab then. Don’t even think of trying to get rid of me!” Zheng Lunlun was about to lose his temper.

Qiao Zhan did not dare to say anything else now that Zheng Lunlun was angry.

Qiao Zhan had made quite a good choice of restaurant today.

After all these years of working with the Nan family, his exposure had led him to book a restaurant that was far from being mainstream.

After they settled the children down, Qiao Chan came out to call Nan Chen. “Sir Chen, I’ve brought them to the restaurant, but there is an extra person with them!”

“What do you mean?”

“Young Master Lun is here too.”

“Get rid of him,” Nan Chen immediately said.

“No, I’ve tried it and he refused to leave. In fact, he was about to get angry when I tried to say more.” Qiao Zhan

“That’s your own business. Get him out.” Nan Chen put down the phone.

Qiao Zhan was now in a quandary. How could he get rid of someone he could not afford to offend?

With his head hung low, Qiao Zhan returned to the private room. “Young Master Lun, may I have a word with you?”

Zheng Lunlun followed Qiao Zhan out of the room. “What do you want this time?”

“Young Master Lun, can you just leave first? If you don’t leave, it’d make things difficult for me.” Qiao Zhan looked very worried.

“Hey, what’s wrong with you? You keep trying to get rid of me! I’ve said I’ll pay for it, so what’s the problem?” Zheng Lunlun was getting annoyed.

“I don’t mean it that way, and I don’t mind paying for you. Why not you move to a different room, and I’ll order a separate table of dishes for you?” Qiao Zhan said.

“A separate table for me? Qiao, are you discriminating against me? Do you think I am not worthy to sit at the same table? Or are you worried I’ll spread some disease to you?” Zheng Lunlun was truly fired up now.

“No! It’s just that I feel that you should...”

“Leave! I’ll pay for it myself, and I’ll buy tonight’s dinner. I don’t want to see your face ever again!” Zheng Lunlun scolded him.

“I...”

“Leave!” Zheng Lunlun roared at him.

“All right.” Qiao Zhan let out a troubled sigh before he turned to leave.

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He saw a Rolls Royce at the entrance.

Nan Chen came out of the car with his face void of expression. Dressed entirely in black, he walked in with a powerful aura about him.

Qiao Zhan went up to him. “Sir Chen.”

“Haven’t gotten rid of him?”

“I...I couldn’t get rid of him,” Qiao Zhan bowed his head and said.

Nan Chen did not say anything and continued to take large strides forward.

Qiao Zhan followed him from behind. Nan Chen then turned around and shot him a questioning look. *Why are you following me?*

Qiao Zhan understood him perfectly and hence stopped following him. He then turned and left.

At the private room in the second floor, Nan Chen adjusted his suit a little and knocked on the door.

“Please come in!” It was Erbao’s little voice.

Nan Chen pushed the door open to enter the room.

The whole table was taken aback. They had expected it to be the server with their food, only to see this supreme being walk-in.

“Third Uncle?”

“Third Uncle!” Erbao shouted out joyfully.

Erbao was an extrovert who was the happiest when more people she knew got together.

Ning Ran was the only one who looked rather unhappy.

Now that the threats from Ning Ziqiang and gang were gone, she thought they could finally relax and have a good meal together. However, Poker Face had shown up.

No matter where he went, he would bring pressure and tension into the room.

In other words, he was the party pooper. As long as he was there, the atmosphere would never be lively.

Nobody liked to share a meal with someone like that. Who could relax and truly enjoy a meal with that much tension around them?

Without waiting for an invitation, Nan Chen pulled out a chair and sat himself down.

Dabao was happily staring at his Third Uncle with twinkling black eyes.

Third Uncle was his favorite person. He may seem cold to other people, but Dabao felt an especial kinship with him.

This is because, like him, Dabao also had a cold and frosty appearance which disguised his colorful and rich personality.

Even though he had a very interesting personality, he still brought awkward silences everywhere he went to, which was extremely embarrassing.

Dabao felt the most for his third uncle when he led the room into a prolonged awkward silence with his mere presence. He wanted to do something for him but didn’t know what to do.

Erbao was the expert in warming up a party, not Dabao.

“Third Uncle, where did you come from?” Erbao asked sweetly.

Nan Chen was immediately melted by the enchanting child’s voice. He then looked at Erbao with a gentle look and said, “Come here.”

Erbao got down from the chair obediently and walked towards Nan Chen.

Nan Chen then picked up Erbao to sit on his lap. “You’ve gotten a little heavier.”

Erbao became embarrassed by the issue of her weight again.

“No, you must be imagining things, Third Uncle. Anyway, how did you know we were here?” Erbao asked.

“I was just in the area when Qiao Zhan mentioned you were here, so I decided to drop by to see you and Dabao.”

He made it clear that he was here for the children and had nothing to do with the adults.

“Uncle, I don’t believe you were just in the area. You’re always so busy!” Zheng Lunlun could not help but interrupt.

Nan Chen shot him a glare that instantly stunned him into complete silence.

“Don’t you have something to do? You can leave first,” Nan Chen said.

Zheng Lunlun was taken aback. *I’m done for the day, what do I have?*

“I don’t...”

“You do,” Nan Chen said decidedly.

“I...”

“Go ahead.”

Zheng Lunlun finally understood why Qiao Zhan had wanted to treat him separately.

Turns out I am now inadvertently the third wheel because Nan Chen wanted some alone time with Ning Ran.

However, isn’t she supposed to be Fourth Uncle’s girl? What has it got to do with Third Uncle?

Why are these relationships getting more and more messed up?

No, I can't let the messy relationships go on like this. It will only make things more difficult for me.

No, I am not leaving. That would be for the best.

"Indeed, I've something on," said Zheng Lunlun.

"Then, go ahead and get it done."

"But I've settled it. Thanks for your concern, Uncle," Zheng Lunlun said without missing a beat.

Nan Chen was stunned for a while. *How dare this kid go against me?*

"Don't you have a medical appointment?" Nan Chen asked.

"Medical appointment? What medical appointment?"

"Your doctor says you need to go back for a checkup, so off to the hospital you go," Nan Chen said.

"I'm already discharged from the hospital under doctor's orders, Uncle. Look, I don't stutter anymore!" Zheng Lunlun shouted.

"You might just relapse anytime soon. So, go for your checkup, the doctor is waiting for you," Nan Chen ordered, without any expression on his face.

Zheng Lunlun was about to burst into tears. *Even though you are my elder, that does not mean you can bully me like this.*

While I have shown you respect, you should care for the younger ones as well. What are you doing here?

Not only are you stopping me from having dinner, but you are also making me go to the hospital at night? What is this all about?

"It's late, I'll go tomorrow." Zheng Lunlun still tried to fight till the end.

"Not late at all. The doctor is waiting for you, so you need to go now," Nan Chen said.

"Uncle..."

"If you don't go today, you will stay in the hospital for a fortnight from tomorrow onwards," Nan Chen warned.

Zheng Lunlun wailed, "I am not staying in the hospital anymore, I've recovered..."

"Then go for your medical checkup now. If the doctor confirms you are fine, you don't need to stay in the hospital," Nan Chen said.

Zheng Lunlun shook his head as he knew his uncle was forcing him to leave.

If I don't leave, it'd be worse if he locks me up in the hospital for an entire fortnight!

I hate the disinfectant smell in the hospital! I can't go in there anymore!

"Fine, I'll leave, I'll leave now." Zheng Lunlun had no choice but to stand up.

Nan Chen did not say anything to that. *Wouldn't it be better if you had left earlier?*

Ning Ran merely watched the whole scene play out in silence.

What is Nan Chen getting at?

From the surface, it seems Nan Chen was trying to get rid of Zheng Lunlun so that he can spend some alone time with me.

However, this doesn't make sense. Doesn't he hate me the most? Why would he want to spend alone time with me?

Moreover, he has already said that he is here to see the kids.

But if he is here to see the kids, Zheng Lunlun's presence wouldn't matter at all. Why did he have to get rid of him?

It was very clear even to Dabao, that Zheng Lunlun was being forced to leave by Nan Chen.

Dabao was puzzled as well. *Why can't Blondie have dinner with us? It'd be fun to have dinner all together.*

After Zheng Lunlun left the room, the atmosphere turned colder than ever.

"He really needs to go back for a medical checkup. Let's eat, everyone." Nan Chen picked up his chopsticks.

Nobody moved a hair, still engrossed in that awkward situation just now.

Erbao was the first to move again. "All right, let's eat! I'm hungry!"

"What do you want to eat?" Nan Chen asked her.

“That one.” Erbao pointed.

Nan Chen then turned the dish towards Erbao. “Can you reach it?”

“Yes I can. Thank you, Third Uncle.”

“It’s rude for children to climb onto the table. Mommy will get the food for you,” Ning Ran said.

“It’s all right, there are no outsiders here anyway,” Nan Chen said.

This sounded rather ambiguous. No outsiders here? So we are all family?

Throughout the dinner, Nan Chen showed lots of care and concern by constantly asking after Dabao, and then Erbao.

Ning Ran felt as if Poker Face was showed his best side when he was with the two children.

In front of them, he is mellow and friendly and speaks softly. With them, he instantly transforms from an ice prince to a warm and affectionate man.

The transformation is so shockingly tremendous. Indeed, Poker Face exemplifies the complexity of human nature.

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“Qiao Zhan has told me about what happened a while ago.”

Nan Chen was clearly speaking to Ning Ran, and not the children now.

Ning Ran did not reply him.

“Qiao Zhan has been incompetent, and I wanted him to apologize to you,” Nan Chen continued.

“What do you mean, Mr. Chen? I don’t quite understand you.” Ning Ran knew how to play dumb as well.

“You know very well what I mean.” Nan Chen was not giving her the opportunity to feign ignorance.

“I don’t understand it at all,” Ning Ran persisted.

“Qiao Zhan has misunderstood you. Luckily, the whole incident has been investigated thoroughly,” said Nan Chen.

Ning Ran sneered in her heart. *Doesn't Qiao Zhan just listen to your instructions? You are really quite amazing, how can you push all the responsibility to Qiao Zhan just like that!*

"What truth? I really don't get it."

"Fine, forget it then." Nan Chen began to be annoyed as well.

This woman is just too hard to please. I've already taken a step back, and she is still not playing along?

If you are not playing along, I am not either!

"Fine," Ning Ran said coldly.

Erbao took a look at her mother and her uncle.

The atmosphere is a little strange, but why?

I really don't know why it feels strange, so what can I say now?

All this tension in the room is just too much! I really don't like it!

"Mommy, are you two fighting?" Erbao asked feebly.

"No, we're not!" Nan Chen and Ning Ran said simultaneously in the same pace and tone.

It was the first time the two of them had so much cohesion, which was practically a miracle.

Ning Ran felt her face burning up inexplicably.

"If you are not fighting, then what are you doing?" Erbao asked.

This time, neither of them spoke.

Nan Chen thought Ning Ran would answer that, while Ning Ran thought Nan Chen would. In order to avoid an awkward situation, both of them did not respond to the question.

"There's been some misunderstanding between Mommy and I, so I am explaining things to her," Nan Chen said softly.

"Then have you explained yourself clearly?" Erbao asked.

“Ask Mommy,” Nan Chen said.

Erbao then looked at Ning Ran and asked, “Mommy, what’s going on? Did Third Uncle explain himself clearly?”

“Eat your dinner.” Ning Ran did not answer her directly.

“I’m full, and I shouldn’t eat too much in case I grow fat again,” Erbao smiled shyly.

Ning Ran laughed out loud.

“You are actually thinking of eating less? That’s rare.”

“I’ve always been very careful about that. I am the Most Beautiful Girl in the Entire Universe, remember?” Erbao smiled.

She sounded completely adorable as she said that, melting both Ning Ran and Nan Chen’s hearts.

“I have something to say to Mommy. I’ll get Qiao Zhan to send the both of you home first, all right?” Nan Chen suddenly said.

“All right,” Dabao and Erbao answered him together.

Both children understood the importance of giving adults space to talk.

Ning Ran could not say anything since Nan Chen had already put it that way.

This is strange. What would Poker Face want to talk to me about? What do I have to say with him?

Nan Chen called Qiao Zhan who appeared very quickly.

When the two children left with Qiao Zhan, Nan Chen and Ning Ran were left by themselves in the private room.

Recently, the two of them have spent more time alone, and Ning Ran was slowly getting used to the pressure Nan Chen brought with him.

Nan Chen did not say anything, and neither did Ning Ran.

Since Nan Chen mentioned he had things to say, Ning Ran wanted him to let him speak first.

However, Nan Chen was still thinking about it; he did not know where to begin.

This is really too important, where do I begin?

They remained like that and were silent for a few minutes, which made the atmosphere incredibly awkward.

Ning Ran finally could not bear it anymore and stood up to say, "If you are not going to say anything, I'm leaving."

"Sit down." These were the only two words Nan Chen said.

Ning Ran really did sit down.

That was the magical power Nan Chen possessed. One line from him wielded more power than many lines from other people.

However, Ning Ran felt that she had been way too obedient, so she immediately stood up again.

"Sit down." Nan Chen commanded her again.

Ning Ran nearly sat down again but this time, she resisted him a little and did not do so immediately.

I am not sitting down, so what can you do to me? Kill me? I cannot appear to be too submissive!

Seeing Ning Ran refuse to sit down, he stood up as well.

He was so tall that when he stood up, Ning Ran could immediately feel his large presence looming over her.

This pressure made Ning Ran feel very uneasy, so she quickly sat down again.

Nan Chen took his seat when he saw Ning Ran finally sitting down.

Nan Chen then called the server to take away the leftover food. Then, he ordered several snacks and also a bottle of strong Maotai.

Ning Ran was stunned by his order. *Are we drinking again?*

Is he now addicted to making me drink now that he knows that I am a light drinker? All he wants is to see me embarrass myself after he gets me drunk?

What's wrong with him? Is it really that fun to watch a woman go crazy when she is drunk?

"I'm not drinking," Ning Ran said huffily.

Nan Chen poured out just one glass of wine, which meant that he hadn't meant for it to be for Ning Ran at all.

What's wrong with him? Is he so broken-hearted that he needs to drown his sorrows in alcohol?

Nan Chen was feeling very conflicted as well. *Why am I drinking right now?*

Am I celebrating the fact that Ning Ran is not the type of materialistic woman who doesn't care about her father's life and death?

Or am I trying to use the alcohol to embolden myself to tell her the truth?

Alcohol can make one braver, but Sir Chen was no ordinary person, would he need it?

"What are you doing?" Ning Ran looked at Nan Chen uneasily.

He looked like he was about to make a very important decision, and his grim face made Ning Ran feel more pressured than ever before.

Nan Chen did not say anything and continued to drink.

The wine was somehow smoother; it tasted better that night.

Ning Ran pointed at their snacks and said, "You should eat something, or else you'd get drunk very soon."

It's not like I care so much for him, but more because I won't be able to carry him if he gets drunk!

More importantly, if he gets drunk and throws a tantrum, there's no way I can handle him even if there were three of me.

The server then came in with some champagne, which Nan Chen had ordered for Ning Ran.

This hotel did not stock champagne, and he had specially gotten the staff to buy it at a nearby supermarket.

Ning Ran was more and more puzzled. *What is he trying to do?*

Nan Chen then poured some white wine for himself, and some champagne for Ning Ran.

“This is a toast to you. You’ve worked hard all these years,” Nan Chen said.

Ning Ran thought she had heard wrong.

Did Poker Face really say something so polite to her?

“Say that again?” Ning Ran could not help herself.

Nan Chen felt a little embarrassed. It was tough enough for him to utter those words, what more to repeat himself?

Nan Chen’s face changed. Of course, he did not repeat those words.

All he felt was that it had been difficult for Ning Ran to bring up the two children by herself all these years, and he just wanted to express some gratitude towards her.

However, he could not utter the two words, ‘thank you’, and could only acknowledge her hard work through that toast.

But Ning Ran was not satisfied and demanded him to say it again.

He definitely would not say it again.

Therefore, he poured and drank another glass of wine.

Normally, he rarely drank even during dinner parties, because he had a lot of work to do. However, he had already gotten drunk a few times with Ning Ran.

Somehow, he felt that he needed a few glasses in him before he could speak his mind without worry.

Ning Ran was suddenly amused by his antics. This was so unlike him.

“I’ve something really important to tell you.” Nan Chen put down his glass again and looked at Ning Ran.

Ning Ran felt rather worried as she couldn’t handle Poker Face’s grim attitude.

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“Go ahead,” Ning Ran said. However, Nan Chen still hesitated. It was very difficult for him to talk about something as important as the matter. “You can’t say it without enough alcohol in you? Drink more then.”

Ning Ran stood up and poured more wine for Nan Chen. He downed the drink immediately. "Not bad, not bad at all. One more then!" Ning Ran poured another drink for him.

Nan Chen then indicated for Ning Ran to drink too. Ning Ran picked up her champagne glass. "I am actually the children's real father..."

Pfft! Ning Ran immediately spit out the champagne from her mouth. Luckily, she was a distance away from Nan Chen who managed to avoid it. "Sorry, I'm sorry..." Ning Ran immediately picked up a napkin and began wiping away.

"I'm serious," Nan Chen said. "You've had too much to drink. Stop drinking now. If you continue, you're going to say you are the emperor next," Ning Ran advised him.

"We have a DNA report that says I am the children's biological father, and that Nan Xing is not," Nan Chen said. Ning Ran was flabbergasted. Does that mean we can finally solve the mystery of the shirt button?

"Wasn't there a test before this?" Ning Ran asked.

"Nan Xing was in Africa before this. When I saw that the children looked like him, I just assumed they were his children. However, we are twins who share practically the same DNA, so we used my sample for the test. That time, we never thought the children could be mine and not Nan Xing's. Then when you were talking about the button when you were drunk, I realized that that button you have been keeping was mine. I am the only person in the whole wide world who uses those types of buttons. It's a customized, one-of-a-kind button. Therefore, I was the man from that night, and not Nan Xing."

Nan Chen said all these in one breath. He felt as if he hadn't spoken so much in such a long time. Ning Ran was completely taken aback as she stared wordlessly at Nan Chen. Did I really reveal so many secrets after I got drunk?

Indeed, drinking makes things worse. Did I say anything else?

"You are the children's mother, and I am their father," Nan Chen said, slowly and clearly.

Ning Ran could feel the thumping of her heart. Indeed, her heart was beating faster and faster. What is happening? Why is my heart beating faster?

"What do you think?" Nan Chen asked Ning Ran.

"I think this sounds a little strange, and I don't want to talk about it any further." Ning Ran blushed as she replied.

Not only is my heart beating faster, but I am also blushing!

This is really abnormal for me. Is this what they say about being so in love that your heart beats faster and you blush as well?

“You don’t want to talk about it?”

What does she mean by that?

“I will take care of Dabao and Erbao together with you from now on,” Nan Chen said earnestly.

Ning Ran glanced at Nan Chen, whose poker face was now a little flushed thanks to the alcohol.

How could a big man like him have such a flushed face too?

His eyes flickered as they burned up, and its rhythm echoed Ning Ran’s rapid heartbeat which had picked up once again.

Why am I blushing? Why is my heart racing? Ning Ran, you aren’t some lovelorn teenage girl all right? Can’t you do a little better for yourself?

The kids have found their biological father, that’s all! Stop feeling all the flutters! What’s with your thumping heart?

Ning Ran struggled to appear calm and less anxious.

“All right,” Ning Ran said coolly.

“You’d given birth to them and have brought them up on your own. It’s been tough on you. You are welcome to make any requests and I’ll try to fulfil them,” Nan Chen said gravely.

“Okay,” Ning Ran answered coolly again.

Ning Ran’s coolness shocked Nan Chen a little.

Since she’s so materialistic, shouldn’t she be asking for money immediately by now?

Right now, as long as the amount is not too astronomical, I will definitely say yes.

But why is she sitting there like a fool?

Hang on – is she a fool, or is she merely fishing for something larger?

“Do you have any requests?” Nan Chen asked her again.

“Yes, I actually do,” Ning Ran replied.

Nan Chen heaved a sigh of relief. It would have been strange if she didn't have any requests.

“Say it then. I'll try to satisfy your wants as much as possible.”

“Please don't take the children away from me,” Ning Ran said seriously.

Nan Chen was taken aback. “That's your only request?”

“Yes.”

“Think about it a little more. I can fulfil a lot more requests.”

“Just promise me this first. I don't care who their father is, but they are my children and my life first and foremost. No one can take them away from me,” Ning Ran said decidedly.

Nan Chen did not say anything.

To Ning Ran, the children are the most important, but they are important to me too.

When it came to the children, Nan Chen was also very careful about his promises.

What if she gets together with some random man? Do I have to agree to that and watch the children get some random useless stepfather?

“If you conduct yourself with dignity, I won't snatch the kids from you,” Nan Chen said.

Ning Ran's thumping heart immediately quietened down.

“When have I not been dignified? What are you trying to say?” Ning Ran asked him angrily.

Nan Chen did not reply her.

This is an important day, and is almost a celebration as I have told her this important thing.

Therefore, I really don't want to argue with her.

No matter what, it has been difficult for her to bring up the children, even more so as a single mother in a foreign land.

“Nothing. I will take care of you and the children from now on, and I’ll make it up to you as much as I can.”

Nan Chen was a completely different person in front of Ning Ran today. Never had he spoken so gently to her before.

However, Ning Ran felt nothing when it came to his promises.

He does not deserve my trust if he cannot promise that he won’t try to snatch the kids from me.

No matter how gentle he is on the surface, he is still cold and hard-hearted.

“There is no need. We have had a good life without you all these years anyway,” Ning Ran said.

This killed the atmosphere and completely wiped out Nan Chen’s good intentions.

His good intentions were not appreciated at all.

Rejection is unbearable as it is, and it was even more so for someone as proud as Nan Chen.

He had expected an emotional reunion when he revealed the truth to her. Even if there weren’t tears, he thought that it would at least be a peaceful and harmonious situation.

However, the reverse had happened. She was just an obstinate woman who refused to accept anything.

She has barely respected my good intentions, and the only thing she has given me in return is her cold attitude.

Nan Chen was about to burst.

When have I ever come down from my level? And here you are, showing not even one ounce of respect or gratitude!

“You have to take whatever that I give you. And you are not allowed to have what I am refusing to give you.” Nan Chen said coldly.

The war between them has officially begun.

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Nan Chen was extremely demoralized and felt a sense of defeat. Before today, he had planned to swallow his pride and break the news to Ning Ran in a manner as gentle as possible, when he informed her of his newfound identity of the kids' biological dad.

After which he would continue to express his gratitude and concern for the kids' mom, as well as provide her with suitable substantive compensation for her efforts in raising up the kids all these years.

Nan Chen had tried his best, yet was unable to figure out what went wrong. The actual outcome was vastly different from what he had imagined it to be.

He had reached a conclusion that it happened this way because the woman was uncultured and lacked the abilities for proper communication.

In other words, she couldn't tell chalk from cheese.

"It doesn't mean anything even if you are the kids' mom!" Nan Chen started to get frustrated.

The alcohol in his system was beginning to take effect. It was evident that the man was losing control of his emotions.

"Yup, that doesn't say anything," Ning Ran retorted.

The two of them were merely dissing each other; it was not a productive conversation at all.

"I'm leaving. Since you sent Qiao Zhan away, you are footing the bill. I have no money."

Ning Ran grabbed her bag and left.

She must be one of the few women who could proclaim themselves as having no money in such an assured manner.

Nan Chen couldn't be bothered with her as he was already fuming mad.

The warm and harmonious scene which he had pictured in his mind did not happen. Instead, they had parted in discord.

Whose idea was it to reduce tension and improve relations over a meal? It was the worst idea ever!

Jiang Zhe, just wait and see how I'm going to settle this with you tomorrow!

When he saw Ning Ran stomping out of the restaurant, the Nan family's bodyguard immediately stepped forward and said, "Young Mistress, this way to the car, please."

“Who are you calling ‘Young Mistress’? You and your entire family are the Young Mistresses.” Ning Ran was still smoldering with anger.

The stunned bodyguard kept quiet.

Not to mention my entire family, I would already be overjoyed if only I were the Young Mistress! The bodyguard silently thought.

Even though she was angry, she was not going to decline a free ride.

After Ning Ran got into the car, she shut her eyes and inhaled deeply, hoping to calm her emotions.

As they had an early dinner, it wasn’t very late yet, and the streets were still crowded and bustling.

Looking at the glancing and gorgeous neon lights outside the car window, Ning Ran’s lips suddenly curled into a smile.

She did not know exactly why she was smiling, she just felt like doing it.

She had finally gotten confirmation that Poker Face was the actual dad of her children. It proved that her hunch had been right all along.

Although he was a boring man, it was without a doubt that he would make a better father than Nan Xing. There were many things Dabao could learn from him.

Nan Xing was a playboy who always had different women fluttering around him. As such, he could be a negative influence on Dabao.

Nan Chen was not the same. Word on the street was that the man practiced abstinence and stayed away from women. His life was dedicated to just working, nothing else. It was much simpler as compared to his brother’s.

As these thoughts ran through her mind, Ning Ran suddenly had a joyful feeling.

When she realized she was feeling that way, the woman was slightly upset with herself.

What’s there to be happy about? She had just been fighting with Nan Chen a moment ago.

When she reached home, Ning Ran thanked the chauffeur before proceeding upstairs.

She started humming a tune unconsciously, in a much better mood as compared to just now.

But as for why, she did not know.

Cheng Xiangyun was sitting cross-legged on the sofa. She was watching a Korean drama while snacking, and she burst out into laughing fits intermittently.

Ning Ran joined her after she finished showering and changed into pajamas. However, she stayed away from the snacks.

The woman had put on two pounds from the countless suppers she had with Nan Chen over the past few days.

That food seemed to have all transformed into stubborn fats which were now stuck to Ning Ran's body.

She would become a fatso soon if she did not start controlling herself.

When the drama reached its climax, Ning Ran laughed along with Cheng Xiangyun.

Cheng Xiangyun took a look at Ning Ran and said, "Shouldn't you be revising your script in the study now? You're not going to do your homework?"

"I don't feel like looking at it today. I just wanna enjoy the drama with you," Ning Ran replied.

"Hmm, it seems like someone is in a good mood. Did you meet an eye candy today? But it shouldn't be a rare sight for you given that you are always around good-looking men, like the Nan brothers, Zheng Lunlun, and even that BMW guy. It shouldn't make you this happy."

Ning Ran nodded and answered, "You have a point. What are 'good-looking men' anyway? They're just impractical beings. Even pork is better value for money."

"Why do you look so happy then? Have you struck the lottery?"

"Is it really that obvious that I look happy?" Ning Ran sized herself up.

"Even an idiot can tell something good has happened to you. It's written all over your face! Why don't you take a look at yourself in the mirror? You're just short of laughing out loud."

Ning Ran was suddenly wary of her behavior. *Am I really that indiscreet about it? Aunt said even an idiot would be able to tell.* She wasn't sure if Poker Face had also made the same observation.

If he had, it would have been really embarrassing for her!

However, she felt that he had not, because they were engaged in a fierce argument at the restaurant, and she could not have appeared to be too happy given the circumstances.

If she had felt back then how she was feeling now, Ning Ran probably wouldn't have been able to get mad at the man.

"Aunt, can I ask you a question? You have to answer me honestly," Ning Ran said with a serious expression.

"What is it? Just shoot!"

"Between Nan Xing and Nan Chen, who do you like better?"

Cheng Xiangyun did not have to think about her answer. She answered without hesitation, "I like both equally much!"

How can this aunt be so horny! She wants both of them? Ning Ran let out a gasp.

"But if you could only choose one, who would it be?"

"Any of them will do! They're both great!" Cheng Xiangyun replied as she swallowed.

"No! What if you MUST choose only one?" Ning Ran pressed on.

"Why do I have to choose? They look exactly the same, what difference would it make? Just give me any one of them!" Cheng Xiangyun said.

"Nope, I don't intend to give you anything. You're overthinking. It's just a casual question," Ning Ran replied helplessly.

"Is there something wrong with you today, asking such a pointless question? Isn't Nan Xing your man? You don't want him anymore?"

"He's not my man," Ning Ran quickly corrected.

"You already have children with him. How is he not considered your man?"

"The kids are not his..." Ning Ran accidentally let the cat out of the bag.

Cheng Xiangyun was someone susceptible to gossip, so there was no way she would have missed such an important piece of news.

"What did you just say?"

"I didn't say anything. Why aren't you sleeping yet? How many more episodes do you intend to watch? It's getting late, you should go to bed soon," Ning Ran said, attempting to change the topic.

Cheng Xiangyun caught hold of Ning Ran and said, "I'm definitely getting to the bottom of this matter today. If Nan Xing isn't the father of those kids, then who is? Don't tell me it's that BMW guy... Oh my God! If it's really him, you would no longer be able to enjoy the privileges given to you by the Nan family. Wouldn't all my efforts come to naught then? I was still banking to ride on your coattails! After you gain popularity, I would naturally rise to become the most sought after artiste manager then. Looks like my dream is shattered!"

At the end of her rant, Cheng Xiangyun let go of her grip on Ning Ran's clothes and leaned backwards, letting out a cry, as if she had nothing more to live for.

Ning Ran was speechless. *Does Aunt have to be so dramatic?*

She made it seem as if her future depended solely on the relationship between Ning Ran and the Nan family.

Ning Ran was suddenly feeling under pressure.

"Aunt, come on! We, women, need to be independent. We can't only think about relying on men," Ning Ran comforted the other women softly.

"I don't care about being independent! I want to count on men. Since I can't get one of those dependable men myself, I can only rely on you to get one. Now that you've given up a dependable man for an unreliable one, there's no one I can count on anymore!"

"Ok, ok. Aunt, enough of your tongue twisters. It's time to wash up and head to bed. We still have work tomorrow!" Ning Ran laughed it off as she simply did not know how to handle her aunt.

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Work resumed as per normal the following day. As Zheng Lunlun had returned, the crew had to hasten the filming process to complete the scenes that he was involved in. As such, it was a hectic and tiring day.

The crew was only able to take a break at 6 p.m. By then, they were done filming at the current location and was ready to move on to the next to resume filming.

The next shooting location was a mountain village. The main scene which was to be filmed there revolved around the female lead teaching at the village.

After being separated for many years, the male lead had finally found the female lead, who was living in seclusion at the mountain village. They lived together at the village for a period of time, until the male lead passed away from an illness.

However, that was the original storyline. After taking market needs and possible reactions of viewers into consideration, the director was worried Zheng Lunlun's passing in the drama would cause outrage among his fans and cause them to boycott the drama as a result.

Therefore, the ending of the drama was tweaked. Instead of the male lead passing away from the illness, the director decided on an open ending instead, with the couple leaving the village together in search of a cure.

The mountain village scene was the ending scene of the drama. When filming at that location was done, it would be a wrap for the entire drama.

After Zheng Lunlun changed out of his costume, he started whining, saying he was dead tired and bugged Ning Ran to have a drink with him.

However, Ning Ran did not feel like drinking as she was bogged down lately. She just wanted to rest at home and prepare for the next filming session.

Zheng Lunlun was not buying it though. He had wanted to have a meal with Ning Ran since yesterday but had been chased away by his uncle. Without his uncle around today, he was determined to have a drink with her, to celebrate his healthy return.

Zheng Lunlun had always been very clingy and persistent. Once he had his sights set on Ning Ran, it was almost impossible for her to get away with it.

As such, Ning Ran agreed to have dinner with him, but rejected drinks or games. The woman was really exhausted. All she wanted was to get home early and lie on the bed while studying her script.

Just as the two of them exited the film set, they spotted a Rolls-Royce with the car plate number '8888' parked outside.

"Uncle? Why is he here again? He has even dispatched his official sedan! Is he planning to snatch you away again?" Zheng Lunlun let out a cry.

Ning Ran herself was also surprised. *Didn't we just meet for dinner yesterday? Does he want to meet again today?*

Besides, they had parted on bad terms last evening. Did he want to continue from where they left off yesterday and escalate the argument even further?

However, Nan Chen did not show up. Jiang Zhe was the one who approached them instead. He seemed overwhelmed with emotions as he greeted Ning Ran, "Good evening, Young Mistress."

"What did you just address her as?" Zheng Lunlun creased his brows as he clarified with his uncle's assistant.

"Young Mistress," Jiang Zhe replied excitedly.

From Jiang Zhe's expression, it was apparent that he had already found out about the relationship between Ning Ran and Nan Chen.

Jiang Zhe had always been observant. He had an inkling all along, as his boss treated Ning Ran differently from other women.

As such, he had constantly reminded himself to watch his attitude towards the woman, as she might very well become the Nan family's Young Mistress one day.

True enough, his prediction was correct. Naturally, the assistant was very pleased with himself.

"This way of address is so distasteful! I don't like it at all," Zheng Lunlun said with resentment.

Jiang Zhe did not reply. It did not matter to him whether Zheng Lunlun liked it or not. Most importantly, Mr. Nan liked it.

"Young Mistress, I'm under Mr. Chen's orders to take you to the company," Jiang Zhe said, as he looked at Ning Ran.

"I don't think I will go, I'm tired. I feel like going home instead."

"Yeah, you heard her, she's tired. She just wants to go home and rest after having dinner with me," Zheng Lunlun added.

"I'm afraid that's not possible as Mr. Chen has instructed me to pick you up. Please come with me," Jiang Zhe said.

"Look at you, Assistant Jiang. Who do you think you are? Do we have to listen to everything you say?" Zheng Lunlun was starting to get really annoyed.

I can't offend my uncle, but I'm not afraid of offending you! He thought.

"It's not my idea to fetch the Young Mistress to the company. I'm merely following Mr. Chen's instructions. There's an important gathering tonight which will impact Young

Mistress, so it's best that she attend it." Jiang Zhe was insistent on following his boss's wishes.

"What kind of gathering is it?" Ning Ran asked.

"From what I know, it's a dinner gathering with some of Mr. Chen's friends," Jiang Zhe replied.

"She isn't an entertainer. Is my uncle crazy? She's already so exhausted from a full day's work, and he's not letting her rest, and forcing her to entertain with him? Has he turned into one of those unscrupulous capitalists too?" Zheng Lunlun yelled.

"Mr. Chen is very busy. Tonight's gathering is organized for Young Mistress, and not for his own benefit."

"For me?" Ning Ran wondered what it could be about.

"Yup," Jiang Zhe nodded.

"What exactly do you mean by that?"

"You'll know when you go, Young Mistress. Mr. Chen asked me to convey the message that this is a work commitment. Even though you are the Nan family's Young Mistress, you are also a signed artiste under Star Entertainment. It's stated in your contract that you are required to fulfil work obligations."

That sparked Ning Ran's irritation. *That Poker Face is such a big bully!*

However, it was indeed written clearly in the contract. There was no way she could escape from it.

"Okay then, I'll go." She had no choice but to accede to the request.

"My uncle is too much! How can he make someone work at this hour of the night? It is equivalent to an invasion of privacy!" Zheng Lunlun was pissed.

"If Young Master Lun has any views on it, you can let Mr. Nan know directly. I'm just following his orders and have no say in the matter either," Jiang Zhe said.

"Enough, enough, don't give me this nonsense. Just get going." Zheng Lunlun waved the assistant off, feeling exasperated.

Ning Ran looked at Zheng Lunlun and extended her palms. "Sorry, I don't have a choice. I'll buy you dinner to make up for today next time."

"Just go, just go." Zheng Lunlun dismissed her with a wave.

Ning Ran followed Jiang Zhe into the car and they departed.

The chauffeur drove them directly to the headquarters of the Nanshi Corporation. When they reached, Ning Ran and Jiang Zhe took the executive-only elevator up to the conference room.

There were already four people seated in the room, including three men in suits and an attractive lady who looked in her thirties.

“Please wait for a while, Mr. Chen will be here soon,” Jiang Zhe said to Ning Ran.

Those four people suddenly stood up at the same time and nodded to Ning Ran. With smiles on their faces, they said, “It’s a pleasure to meet you.”

Ning Ran did not recognize any of them and looked at them with a confused expression.

After they finished with their self-introductions, Ning Ran was stunned beyond words.

The three men belonged to the senior management of Star Entertainment, being the CEO, Executive President and Director of the Department of Film and Television.

As for that lady, she was Wang Xiaoou, the most notable artiste manager in the country. Many of the most famous celebrities were once under her care, and she was affectionately known as ‘Mommy Wang’ in the industry.

Luo Fei, who was at one time a sensation, had also been an artiste under Wang Xiaoou’s management.

The team currently present in the room was basically the best in the country’s entertainment industry. They were the industry’s most influential and powerful individuals and had outstanding achievements in their respective niches.

Just then, Nan Chen walked into the conference room.

“Mr. Chen,” everyone greeted the man with a respectful bow.

He motioned for them to sit down.

“No worries, we know Mr. Chen is a busy man.”

Nan Chen glanced at Jiang Zhe, prompting him to start.

“The main purpose of this meeting is to officially introduce Ms. Ding Mi, Star Entertainment’s newest signed artiste, to all of you. We would also like you to come up with a one-year plan for Ms. Ding to become an A-list celebrity. Mr. Chen has a few

requirements that you should keep in mind. First, intentional hype created cannot be too conspicuous.

Second, paying for trending hashtags or searches is not allowed. After all, Ms. Ding is an actress with real abilities and traditional hyping methods are not the best strategies to be used on her. Observation of current trends is that, with regard to celebrities with huge followings, their abilities to exert influence on their fans are becoming weaker.

As such, Mr. Chen hopes you can be more innovative in your ways of thinking, in order to produce a superstar who gained popularity on the basis of her true abilities.”

After Jiang Zhe narrated the agenda of the meeting, a brief silence ensued.

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However, there were specific requirements that they were supposed to follow. They had to be discreet in creating intentional hype and were not allowed to pay for trending hashtags or top searches.

But all of them knew the current market conditions well. To become a superstar, the first step was to create enough media visibility and coverage for raising her profile. Also, in order to help with exposure, she had to be the top search term for at least five times a month.

As such, it was a well-known secret in the industry that almost all of the most popular celebrities had paid a sum to manipulate search engine results.

As Nan Chen had already stated that paying for trending searches was not an option, they could only think of means to deliberately create hype for the woman in a discreet enough way.

Under such stringent restrictions, it was extremely hard for the team to create a superstar out of Ning Ran, especially given her current almost obscure status.

However, none of the four dared to raise any objections in front of Nan Chen. They merely gave each other knowing looks.

Ning Ran herself was shocked as well. She did not expect Poker Face to summon her here to meet with the senior management team of Star Entertainment. Moreover, the purpose of tonight’s meeting was to mold her into an A-list celebrity.

“Mr. Chen, I’m afraid it’s an immensely challenging task,” Wang Xiaoou broke the silence.

Wang Xiaoou was a first-class artiste manager and was well-respected in the country’s entertainment industry. She was also known for her straightforward character.

As she spoke, the three men heaved a sigh of relief. Someone had to take the lead, and they were glad that it was Wang Xiaoou.

No response came from Nan Chen.

“If it was going to be easy, we wouldn’t have invited all of you to come here personally today,” Jiang Zhe replied on behalf of his boss.

“Each industry has its own rules. For ours, it would be extremely difficult for an artiste to gain popularity without intentional hyping activities. Paying for top searches is one of the most effective strategies the industry utilizes to help an artiste gain traction. It may be possible for an artiste to shoot to the top without doing any of those, but it would have to take longer, and we would have to catch the right timing. In fact, nothing would work without the right timing. There are many artistes who had waited for their entire career for such an opportunity but to no avail. Those people end up struggling at the bottom, despite having real abilities. There are also actors and actresses who had taken part in numerous films and dramas but were never recognized on the streets, even though they had displayed brilliant acting skills in the various productions. Mr. Nan, you should know that having solid abilities does not have a direct correlation to an artiste’s popularity. Some of today’s most popular celebrities are not good at their crafts at all. I’m not saying that... “

Nan Chan interrupted Wang Xiaoou with a wave and said, “I am already aware of everything you just mentioned.”

No one spoke after that. Since the boss had stated he understood how the industry worked, there was nothing more to be said.

“I am not expecting her to go viral overnight, but I would like to see consistent improvements,” Nan Chen clarified his intentions.

Everyone understood what he meant. Briefly speaking, although it posed a challenge, they were not expected to create miracles and raise her to the top within a short period of time. More accurately, they were supposed to groom her like a superstar.

“It can take two years, or even three. What I want to see is a real superstar, not short-lived fame,” Nan Chen added.

Everyone let out a huge sigh of relief. As long as there was no time constraint, things would be much easier.

“From now onward, Mommy Wang will be Young... Ms. Ning’s manager. The duration of the contract would be three years. When the three years are up, the renewal of the contract shall be discussed again,” Jiang Zhe said.

It would be a great honor for any artiste to be under Mommy Wang's care. However, someone suddenly raised an objection. "I don't consent to that."

It was, of course, Ning Ran's voice. She was not agreeable to Wang Xiaoou being her manager.

Everyone was shocked by her declaration, as Ning Ran had just rejected the best artiste manager the country had. *What could her intentions be?*

Even Nan Chen stared daggers at Ning Ran. It was incomprehensible to him that the woman had turned down such a rare golden opportunity.

She must either be ignorant and not aware of Wang Xiaoou's status and value in the industry, or she was just set on staying as a small actress who would always remain unheard of.

It would be unforgivable if it was the former.

If her reason was the latter, it would be even more incredible. A good soldier always aspires to be a general. If Ning Ran did not have the ambition to become a popular actress, that only went to show that she's a good-for-nothing. It had got nothing to do with being Zen or wanting to keep a low profile.

Needless to say, Wang Xiaoou was even more upset. She was the one manager every artiste wished to have. Where did this third-grade actress get the nerves to reject her?

This task which the team was given wasn't an easy one, to begin with. Since Ning Ran had opposed to it first, it gave the manager an opportunity to pass the buck.

"Since Ms. Ding feels that I'm not suitable for the role, Mr. Nan should get someone else to take up the job instead," Wang Xiaoou said nonchalantly.

Nan Chen had a grim expression after the woman stated her stance.

Since knowing he was the father of Ning Ran's kids, Nan Chen had been thinking of ways to make it up to her.

He did not think she would accept an outright cash gift, as she might interpret it as an exchange for her children.

After careful deliberation, Nan Chen decided that the best compensation he could give Ning Ran was to help her with her career.

This way, not only could she have an identity that was separate from the Nan family and enjoy financial independence, but she could also tap on the Nan family's abundant resources. It seemed to be the best option.

This evening's meeting was a result of Nan Chen's decision. The brilliant team, which was made up of the senior management of Star Entertainment, had gathered to devise a long-term plan for Ning Ran's career development.

Even though Nan Chen had selfish motives for doing this, Ning Ran indeed had the potential to be a superstar, in terms of both looks and acting skills.

Right from the start, her acting abilities had already been validated by Nan Chen.

She was born to be an actress. Without much guidance or direction, she could enter into a character's persona almost immediately, and portray the essence of the character perfectly.

It would be a waste for such a raw talent to be a full-time stay-home mom.

Ning Ran possessed the right qualities to soar to great heights in her career. Besides, a woman would be able to broaden her mind and horizons after surpassing a certain level career-wise. Her overall standards would naturally also improve.

In order to fly higher, there was a lot more she had to learn. The learning process itself was an essential part of achieving the long-term goal.

Ning Ran was different from Luo Fei. Luo Fei gained her popularity wholly through the hype and superficial packaging. There had been no visible improvement in her skills over the years. Even Nan Chen eventually started to find her extremely tasteless.

That was also why the man had hoped for Ning Ran to become an independent superstar with outstanding true abilities. The type who would be remembered by the public even with the passage of time.

He would hate to see her turn into one of those who earned a substantial income only through endorsements due to a huge fan base, without any iconic works that were representative of her career.

However, Nan Chen's good intentions had landed himself in an awkward situation due to Ning Ran's unwillingness to cooperate.

"Mommy Wang is the best manager in the entire country. No one else even comes close," Jiang Zhe gently reminded the woman who was standing beside him.

"I know. Although we are not very well acquainted, I've definitely heard of Mommy Wang's name. She's someone whom I could only look up to and I'm indeed very honored to have this opportunity to work with her. However, I already have my own manager. Although she's currently still a nobody, she was the one who sought out all my roles after I returned to the country. When I had nowhere to stay, she was also the

one who offered me a roof over my head. Therefore, as long as I am still in this industry, she will be my one and only manager,” Ning Ran explained her reasons.

“Ms. Ding used to be an independent artiste and was free to decide on your manager. But since you are now signed under the company, the company has the rights to appoint your manager.”

The man who just spoke was the CEO of Star Entertainment, in other words, Ning Ran’s boss.

But of course, even the boss had a boss, and that was Nan Chen.

The CEO was not intentionally making things difficult for Ning Ran; he was merely stating facts. The woman was obliged to accept the company’s arrangements.

Besides, those were Nan Chen’s orders. No one had the audacity to disobey them.

The CEO of Star Entertainment was worried Nan Chen would deem him incompetent if the plan fell through. He could not afford the consequences.

However, the man was just senior managing personnel of a Nanshi Corporation subsidiary and was not aware of the intricate relationship between Nan Chen and Ning Ran. Naturally, it would seem bizarre to him that a small artiste had chosen to reject such a good opportunity offered to her by the company.

“I know. But even if that’s the case, I still can’t abandon my current manager. I won’t be one of those scumbags who turned their coats,” Ning Ran showed no sign of backing down.

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As such, the conference room sunk into silence once again. No one had expected Ning Ran to play hardball on this issue.

Wang Xiaoou was also slightly embarrassed. Given her standing in the industry, she had never expected herself to be declined in such a ruthless manner.

Her guess was, perhaps Ning Ran was nursing a grievance against her over the fact that she was once Luo Fei’s manager. However, after some further analysis, she was quite certain she had not offended Ning Ran when she was Luo Fei’s manager.

At that time, Ning Ran was still a nobody and did not pose a threat to Luo Fei. As such, there would not have been a need to pay any attention to her.

Could it really be because of sentimental reasons that the woman refused to give up on her current manager?

Doesn't she know, between friendship and her future, which is more important?

"Let's revisit this again," Nan Chen said. Thereafter, the senior management of Star Entertainment stood up as the meeting was adjourned.

Ning Ran did not move, as she knew Nan Chen would have stopped her from leaving anyway. Jiang Zhe was able to read the situation and left the room as well, leaving Nan Chen and Ning Ran the only two people in the room.

The atmosphere inside the conference room was rather tense. "Thank you, I really appreciate your kind intentions."

Ning Ran felt that it was only right if she expressed her gratitude. After all, the man had put together such a magnificent team and organized this meeting specially for her. It was definitely not a trivial matter.

Despite having to deal with a host of issues every day, Nan Chen had especially taken time off his busy schedule to look into this matter personally. It showed that this was an important matter to him.

So, no matter what, she should still be thankful for his efforts.

However, Nan Chen did not reply, as he was still mad at her.

The meeting had turned out differently from how he had expected it to be. He was looking forward to Ning Ran being pleasantly surprised and grateful at the opportunity.

But that was not the case. It seemed like Ning Ran was totally not appreciative at all.

As such, Ning Ran's words of thanks sounded sarcastic to him. He couldn't believe that she had made him look bad in front of the rest just now.

Ning Ran was aware of Nan Chen's fury just by looking at his face.

However, she could not bring herself to follow his wishes blindly.

"Hey, don't be mad at me anymore. As you know, I'm indebted to Aunt. She placed her trust in me and has helped me so much during the lowest points in my life. If I abandon her to pursue my own bright future, wouldn't that be too inhumane? Although I want to be rich and famous, I can't ignore my principles just to achieve those things. If this is the kind of person I am, I'm sure you wouldn't like me..."

Ning Ran stopped mid-way once she realized she shouldn't have said the last sentence.

She wondered why she had even mentioned the word 'like' in the first place? Poker Face had never admitted to liking her, it would seem as if it was her own wishful thinking.

"What did you just say?" It had not escaped Nan Chen's ear.

"Oh, nothing. What I meant was, I am your company's artiste. If I am someone who can bend my principles for my personal fame and gains, it wouldn't sit well with you right?" Ning Ran managed to wittily turn the statement around.

Nan Chen did not respond.

He merely stood up and took large strides towards the door.

Ning Ran remained at her spot as she did not know what the situation was.

"You're not coming along?" Nan Chen asked, as he turned around and looked at Ning Ran.

"Oh, yes, I'm coming!"

Ning Ran stood up immediately and followed Nan Chen out of the conference room.

The few from the senior management of Star Entertainment were still standing outside, as they did not dare to leave without explicit permission from Nan Chen.

"You guys may go now. Apart from the choice of manager which requires further discussion, the other parts of the plan remains unchanged," Nan Chen said to them.

"OK, Mr. Nan, we understand," the senior team said in unison before walking out of the room.

Nan Chen then looked towards Jiang Zhe and said, "Make an appointment with her manager."

Ning Ran suddenly grew anxious as she wondered if Poker Face was planning to take action against Cheng Xiangyun.

"What are you going to do?" the woman asked as she stared at Nan Chen.

"Asking your manager out for dinner," Nan Chen said indifferently.

"You can't do that! She has always looked out for me and stayed by my side when I needed help the most. She's my benefactor!" Ning Ran shouted.

"So?" Nan Chen frowned.

“So, you are not allowed to hurt her!” Ning Ran raised her voice even louder.

“Is buying her dinner considered hurting her?”

Ning Ran realized the man had a point. *How did treating someone to dinner amount to hurting her?*

“Other than treating her to a meal, are you going to use the opportunity to threaten her and chase her away from Flower City? Or even the entertainment industry?”

“I never knew you had such a rich imagination,” Nan Chen said coldly.

“Ha! I have guessed it correctly, right? You can’t treat my friend this way!” Ning Ran was prepared to defend her manager with her life.

“Would I have to go to the extent of buying her dinner if my intention was really to threaten her?” Nan Chen asked as he creased his brows.

Ning Ran agreed the man had made a good point. If Young Master Nan Chen wanted to deal with someone, he did not have to do it in such a roundabout manner. He could simply instruct his men to take action directly.

“Then what exactly are you planning to do?”

“Didn’t you say she’s your benefactor and your friend? Is there anything wrong with treating her to a meal if that’s the case?” Nan Chen questioned again, still frowning.

Ning Ran downcast her eyes and thought about what he said. Indeed, it didn’t seem like there was any problem with that.

Just then, her phone rang. It was Cheng Xiangyun.

The woman stepped away to pick up the call. The moment she answered, Cheng Xiangyun started screaming into the phone, barely able to contain her excitement.

“Ranran! I just received a call from Assistant Jiang!”

“Aunt, why are you so thrilled?”

“You know what? He told me Young Master Chen wants to buy me dinner! Nan Chen is treating me to dinner! Nan Chen will personally be there!”

It was not difficult to figure out Cheng Xiangyun was already going crazy with excitement.

“Aunt, can you calm down a little? Why do you have to make such a big deal out of it? You’ve lived for so long, has no one ever bought you a meal before?” Ning Ran found herself slightly disappointed at the woman’s reaction.

“How could those be compared to this? It’s Nan Chen who wants to buy me dinner. Do you know how many people would die to have a meal with Nan Chen? But I am going to have dinner with Nan Chen tonight, and he was the one who asked me to dinner! OK, I don’t have time to talk to you now, I need to get changed! I need to dress well and make a splendid appearance...”

Ning Ran coughed lightly a few times to stop Cheng Xiangyun from continuing.

“Aunt, you don’t have to get so excited, it’s just a meal...”

Before Ning Ran could complete her sentence, Cheng Xiangyun had already hung up.

Ning Ran could only let out a long sigh.

“Let’s go now,” Nan Chen said to her.

“I’m also going?”

“You don’t want to?” Nan Chen asked.

“Oh! No, no. I’m coming along,” Ning Ran answered at once.

Nan Chen walked in front and Ning Ran followed cautiously behind him, while Jiang Zhe walked behind Ning Ran.

The three of them entered the elevator in that sequence.

“Have you made the arrangements?” Nan Chen asked his assistant.

“Everything is ready,” Jiang Zhe replied carefully.

The fact that Nan Chen was taking Jiang Zhe along meant it wasn’t purely a private dinner, but had work elements involved as well.

Ning Ran started worrying for Cheng Xiangyun again. She was afraid the man would force Cheng Xiangyun to give up being her manager.

If Poker Face really did that, Ning Ran would definitely side with Cheng Xiangyun.

They will not submit to force and would fight till the very end!

Just then, Ning Ran’s phone rang again. It was a video call from Cheng Xiangyun.

Ning Ran did not accept the video call but switched it to a voice call instead.

“Ran, I need your help to tell me which dress looks nicer on me,” Cheng Xiangyun said urgently.

“Aunt, don’t be so anxious, just take it easy and wear what you would normally wear. It’s more important that you feel comfortable,” Ning Ran said softly.

“But I’m having dinner with Nan Chen, how can I dress casually? Of course I have to dress up!”

“Don’t give it too much importance, I will be there too. Someone else will also be there. Aunt, just relax,” Ning Ran replied, lowering her voice even more.

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Jiang Zhe had picked a business clubhouse as the venue for the dinner. Cheng Xiangyun had indeed made effort to dress up. Instead of dressing casually like she usually did, she wore a dress and high heels.

Even Ning Ran felt tired just looking at the way she was walking. I already told her to just treat this as an informal dinner. Why did she insist on putting herself through such suffering!

After being in an elevated mood for a while, Cheng Xiangyun gradually returned to her normal state. That was because she could sense Nan Chen had something to discuss with her, and was not just purely buying her dinner.

“Ms. Cheng, thank you for taking care of Ning Ran all this while.” Nan Chen raised his wine glass to propose a toast to Cheng Xiangyun.

Cheng Xiangyun was of course very flattered and lifted her glass as well. “Ran is my friend, so I ought to take care of her. Actually, more accurately saying, we are taking care of each other. She often looks out for me too,” Cheng Xiangyun replied self-consciously.

“I would also like to thank you for taking care of my kids.” Upon hearing this, Cheng Xiangyun’s eyes widened. She looked at Nan Chen and then shifted her gaze to Ning Ran.

A blush of embarrassment spread across Ning Ran’s cheeks and she nodded at Cheng Xiangyun. “Ah! So you are the father of those children. Oh my God...”

Cheng Xiangyun had almost wanted to shout out loud but decided that it would not be proper to do so. As such, she hurriedly regained her composure.

Nan Chen looked at Jiang Zhe.

Jiang Zhe immediately took the hint and said, "Yup, so Ms. Cheng, there's something we would like to discuss with you."

"What is it?"

"A few of the senior management personnel from Star Entertainment had a meeting today. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a plan to mold Ms. Ding into a superstar, including how to make the best use of the company's resources in order to do that."

"Wow, is that for real? Is Ran finally going to soar and skyrocket?" Cheng Xiangyun was so excited that her face turned red.

"Not exactly skyrocket, but we will take proper and consistent steps for her to enter into the ranks of the A-listers first, becoming a superstar would be the next step. No doubt Ms. Ding has the caliber to achieve that, but it's also essential for her to have a first-class team to support her on the journey," Jiang Zhe said.

"So?" Cheng Xiangyun was not dumb. She was alert enough to detect that the assistant was implying something.

"The company had intended for Wang Xiaoou to be Ms. Ding's manager, but Ms. Ding has already rejected the arrangement." Jiang Zhe did not bat an eyelid as he said that.

"Wang Xiaoou, she's one of the best managers in the industry."

Cheng Xiangyun started to realize where the man was getting to.

"I can nullify my contract with Ran in order for her to soar to greater heights."

Cheng Xiangyun had said that in a very resolute manner, without even a single trace of hesitation.

"Aunt, you... "

Cheng Xiangyun waved her hand to stop Ning Ran from proceeding. "It's not a big deal for me. In fact, it's also my wish to see Ran reach the peak of her career, that's my goal too. If my presence poses an obstruction to Ran, I have no issues withdrawing from the position as her manager. I think that's the right thing to do."

Ning Ran felt a warm glow in her heart as tears welled up in her eyes.

As Cheng Xiangyun had mostly displayed only her snobbish side, Ning Ran had not expected the woman to act in such a selfless manner.

“No, don’t say that. The successes I get to enjoy today are a result of your efforts and hard work. I won’t turn my back on our friendship for my personal gains.”

“Ran, this wouldn’t affect our friendship at all. I am not upset and don’t blame you for anything. It’s a fact that I am still lacking some abilities to support you further in your career. Wang Xiaoou is indeed a more suitable candidate. She’ll be a great asset to you in your journey to stardom.”

Cheng Xiangyun did feel slightly nostalgic when she expressed her views.

“I intend to honor my contract with you. We will always proceed as a team,” Ning Ran was very determined as well.

“Actually, both of you don’t have to fret over this. We have already come up with a better solution for you. Ms. Cheng can join Star Entertainment and continue to be Ms. Ding’s manager. However, Ms. Cheng might have to take on the work of an assistant in the initial stages, while Wang Xiaoou acts as the main manager for Ms. Ding. After all, she has access to more resources and has built up a wider network in the industry due to her many years of experience. After Ms. Cheng learns the ropes and is familiar with the job scope of a manager, she can then become Ms. Ding’s full-time manager. Is that okay with you, Ms. Cheng?” Jiang Zhe asked, after elaborating on the proposed plan.

Cheng Xiangyun looked at Ning Ran, who shook her head, indicating that she wasn’t aware of any of these.

Ning Ran had travelled to the clubhouse with Jiang Zhe and Nan Chen, but nothing had been discussed along the way.

In reality, Nan Chen had never explicitly instructed Jiang Zhe to convey the message, but Jiang Zhe could read his boss’s thoughts just by a single look.

It could be said that Assistant Jiang was the person who knew Nan Chen best. It was no wonder no one had been able to replace him as Nan Chen’s assistant.

“You want me to join Star Entertainment and continue working with Ning Ran?” Cheng Xiangyun clarified.

“Yup, salary-wise, we can discuss it later. If Ms. Cheng has any other requirements, you may let us know as well. We will try our best to make it work for you,” Jiang Zhe said.

Both Ning Ran and Cheng Xiangyun looked towards Nan Chen, as they wanted to make sure that the boss was agreeable as well.

Nan Chen nodded slightly, expressing that it was in line with what he had in mind.

The situation left Ning Ran puzzled. Nan Chen had not said anything, how did Jiang Zhe know what his boss wanted?

Could he really read the man's mind?

"Alright, this plan sounds good to me. As long as I can continue to work with Ran, I won't mind taking a pay cut. I will gladly accept the role," Cheng Xiangyun agreed readily.

"Great. I will get the secretary to draft your contract then. When it is ready, I will need Ms. Cheng to look through and let us know if there are any areas which you would like us to amend, and we can take it further from there. If that's the case, I shall welcome Ms. Cheng into our Nanshi Corporation family in advance, welcome!"

Jiang Zhe raised his wine glass after he spoke. However, the man quickly realized that it was inappropriate for him to do that before his boss had even said anything. He was acting exactly like a presumptuous guest usurping the host's role.

"How does Mr. Chen feel about that?" Jiang Zhe asked Nan Chen dutifully.

"Good," Nan Chen merely replied with one word, before lifting his glass.

"Then, let's toast to Ms. Cheng joining our big family!" Jiang Zhe let out a sigh of relief.

"Cheers!"

Nan Chen took a sip of his red wine and cast a meaningful look at Ning Ran.

He was asking her if she was happy with such an arrangement.

Ning Ran could feel her face slightly flushed. She never knew Poker Face could be so kind.

"Thanks," Ning Ran expressed her gratitude to him for doing this.

Then, Nan Chen took a glance at Jiang Zhe.

As usual, the assistant immediately understood what his look entailed. "Ms. Cheng will be required to work at Star Entertainment's office in the future. As part of your duties, you will also need to report Ms. Ding's activities to the company. The reason for that being, if an artiste's commercial value is affected by her personal affairs, she would have to bear full responsibility for it."

That sounded strange to Ning Ran. Did that mean aunt has been tasked by Poker Face to spy on me?

What did he mean by 'an artiste's commercial value affected by her personal affairs'? What sort of personal activities would cause my commercial value to be affected?

"Sure, I understand. I will do my best," Ning Ran could not believe Cheng Xiangyun had just agreed to that.

"But please don't worry, Ms. Cheng will still enjoy a high degree of freedom as there won't be many restrictions placed on you. You will be able to have more clarity on the details once your contract is ready," Jiang Zhe said.

"Sure, I am okay with that," Cheng Xiangyun graciously accepted it.

Just then, Nan Chen's phone started vibrating.

It was Nan Chen's personal phone. He rarely used it as no one really called him on that number. In fact, he hardly shared it with anyone.

Those who contacted him on that phone were the people closest to him.

Nan Chen glanced at his phone but did not answer the call.

As Ning Ran was just seated next to him, she couldn't help but peek at his phone.

It was a number ending with several '6's, but it was not saved as a contact.

For no reason, Ning Ran had a hunch the caller was a female.

A feeling of displeasure arose in her heart.