

Chapter 601

Head

Yang Chen and Rose were clueless as to what had just made Old Li pale in that instant. Curious, they turned around to face the direction that Old Li was gazing at.

“Oh. There I was thinking who it could be that set up shop in this area? It turned out to be you. No wonder I couldn’t find you in the west district. I guess you must have relocated your stall recently.”

A tall fair man with a slightly high pitched voice strode up to them. He was wearing a waist-length leather jacket accompanied with a bright red shirt. It was especially eye-catching to many of the passersby.

Surrounding him were a group of men who came in all shapes and sizes. They were marching toward Old Li’s stall while subconsciously instilling fear for those who were in the vicinity.

Yang Chen frowned when he saw them approaching the stall. He realized that the reason why Old Li changed the location of his stall was not due to a saturated market, but most likely because of these young men.

A year ago when the conflict between Red Thorns Society and West Union Society was happening in Zhonghai, Old Li was caught up in a bad situation with both the father and the son of the Chen family. And even after Zhonghai was finally conquered by the Red Thorns Society, his situation still did not improve.

Yang Chen gave it some thought and found the situation slightly puzzling. The Red Thorns Society who was under Rose’s control would not be allowed to generate their income by using such despicable means. Rose was still actively trying to legalize the money-making aspects of her business. Besides, Red Thorns Society was not lacking in money; why would they make their lackeys collect ‘protection fees’?

Noticing Yang Chen’s grim aura, Rose immediately explained, “Hubby, don’t misunderstand. I have forbidden my subordinates to oppress commoners with their power. I’ll be sure to look into it later.”

Yang Chen nodded in acceptance. He trusted that she would handle the situation as soon as possible.

The tall and thin man had soon made his way to Old Li’s stall. The punks around him shoved Yang Chen and Rose aside with a snobby and arrogant demeanor.

“Old Li, do you know that this street belongs to me, Xi Pi? Do you really think anything will change if you relocate your store?”

Old Li cried and stammered, “Boss Xi Pi, it’s not that I’m unwilling to pay, but business has really gone downhill recently. Only after moving my stall all the way up here did business start to pick up again. When I do make money, I will make up for all the protection fees that I still owe. Please give me a few days to collect it.”

Xi Pi sneered. “You said you’d make it up to me last week. But not only did you fail to pay me, you fled to another part of town as well. I, Xi Pi, am a good-tempered and lenient man. I’ve always done my best to keep the peace in my territory while you do business. But I expect everyone else to play their parts

accordingly. So just know that whatever happens to you from now on, happened because of your decisions today. Do not blame me for not being merciful to you.”

And with that, a few of the punks gathered around the stall. Two of them even had the audacity to take Old Li’s meat skewers and gnaw on them.

Old Li’s forehead went cold and sweaty. His eyes darted to Yang Chen in an effort to plead for help. He had no choice. He would not have asked Yang Chen for help if it wasn’t his final attempt at resolving this matter.

Because of his daughter’s affairs, Old Li wanted nothing to do with Yang Chen. Who knew that the next time they met would be when he needed his help most.

Yang Chen sighed. He knew that Old Li would not explicitly plead for his help. It was apparent that Old Li’s prejudices towards him still ran quite deep. Old Li must be afraid that Li Jingjing would associate herself with Yang Chen again. He would rather die than forsake his daughter’s future.

Yang Chen had planned to deal with the problem from the beginning, but Rose grabbed his hand and pulled him back. She shook her head and said, “Let me deal with it.”

Rose then walked to the young lad—Xi Pi—and asked calmly, “Who gave you permission to charge protection fees?”

Xi Pi had actually took notice of Yang Chen and Rose a while ago. But he brushed them off as he thought they were just a couple who wanted to buy meat skewers. Now that Rose had taken the initiative to walk up to him, Xi Pi’s eyes glowed sinisterly.

Xi Pi laughed before swallowing his saliva audibly. He said, “What do you want beautiful lady? Did you come here for retribution? Have you watched too many movies or are you taking this opportunity to get to know me better?”

Rose’s face went cold. “I will ask again. Who allowed you to collect protection fees?”

This time, a half-eaten roasted octopus was thrown to the ground by an enraged lackey under Xi Pi’s command. He walked up and yelled, “Damn you, Bitch. Don’t you dare to talk to Boss Xi Pi like that. You don’t know who you’re messing with. Do you think we’re afraid to strip and rape you, right here right now?!”

“Sigh... You should be chivalrous to beautiful women,” said Xi Pi as he pulled the lackey behind him. He started to gaze at Rose in a teasing manner. “Can’t you see, my beautiful lady, that we are an organized and disciplined mafia? It’s our job and obligation to collect protection fees in our territory. Was that answer good enough for you?”

Rose continued, “The only mafia in the whole of Zhonghai is the Red Thorns Society. And if I recall correctly, I don’t remember their members being allowed by their head to collect protection fees.”

Upon hearing this, Xi Pi and his followers were taken aback. Xi Pi then laughed and said, “So you are aware of our Red Thorns Society. That’s right. I was the person put in charge of these streets, Xi Pi. As for your claims Miss, that we were not given permission collect protection fees, I think you’re mistaken.

Most people misunderstand the things we do and the reasons we do them. How about I explain how things are done here with you over a drink?"

Xi Pi with a twisted smile on his face, reached out to Rose's face in an attempt to caress her as he spoke.

However, before Xi Pi was able to straighten out his hand, Rose's foot had found its way to the back of his knee!

"Ouch!"

Xi Pi screamed in agony. Losing balance, he fell to the ground on his knees!

The sudden change in events made Xi Pi's followers take a while to process what had happened. Their leader had been beaten!

"Sneaky bitch. How dare you sneak an attack on our boss! You must be looking to die tonight!"

The punks immediately dropped into a fighting stance, ready to pounce on her. They did not care that Rose was a woman. Fists and kicks were sent flying to her aimed at various parts of her body.

Although they did not know it, these people were no match for Rose. She simply dodged their attacks and didn't even bother using her hands. She kicked them all away with her feet, as if they were stationary targets.

With just a swift move, the originally fired up group of punks cowered on the floor in pain while keeping their heads down in fear. They were afraid being beaten again by that woman with incredible speed and force!

Still Xi Pi—who was knocked down earlier—gritted his teeth and eventually stood up facing her. He stared at the Rose fiercely. "Crazy bitch! I may have underestimated your abilities. So you think you're a fighter huh? Just wait. With one call to my boss, he will bring more than one hundred of our best fighters. Let's see if you still fancy yourself a fighter!"

"I shall wait here then. I am quite curious to see who your boss is."

Xi Pi felt a little off-put by Rose's identity due to her threatening presence. But he could not take back words that were already spoken. In his mind, there was no one stupid enough to provoke the Red Thorns Society. No matter how strong this woman was, how could she defeat every member from Red Thorns Society?

After reasoning the whole situation with himself, Xi Pi inflated with newfound courage. He pulled out the mobile phone buckled on his belt and dialed his boss's number.

As soon as the call got through, he cried, "Hello, Brother, where are you? What? Drinking? I was just beaten by someone! Yes, on your turf! At the south entrance of the food street. Send your best men here quickly. This woman was so brutal that she hurt me and my men."

While speaking on the phone, Xi Pi glared at the Rose fiercely. He was staring her down, afraid that she would try to escape.

Old Li, having witnessed Xi Pi make the phone call, was so frightened that he hurried to Yang Chen's side and whispered quietly, "Yang Chen, take this lady and leave. Xi Pi's brother, Lei Zhen, was placed as one of the heads within Red Thorns Society. He is not a person to be trifled with. Us commoners have no power against people like him!"

Although in the past Yang Chen had helped Old Li deal with the Chen family, Old Li never found out that it was Yang Chen who helped him with it. So all he knew Yang Chen as was a skilled young man who married the young lady of a wealthy clan. In his eyes, it was impossible for Yang Chen to challenge Lei Zhen who had a hundred men backing him up.

Chapter 602

Refuse to Obey

After hearing the name 'Lei Zhen', Rose frowned. She was upset because she knew who he was and his authority over this area.

Yang Chen took notice of Rose's change in expression but chose to remain silent. He also omitted any explanation to Old Li even though the latter was quivering uncontrollably. Instead, he asked out of concern, "Old Li, sorry I wasn't there when you were admitted to the hospital for a surgery. I didn't want to intrude. How are you feeling now?"

In the past, Li Jingjing took it upon herself to raise money for Old Li's tumour resection. Yang Chen remembered that Lin Ruoxi paid a visit to Old Li but he didn't.

Old Li didn't know how to respond. So with a bitter smile, he said, "I have completely recovered. However, there were certain things that couldn't be fixed however minor they were. Enough of that! Stop talking and leave while you still can!"

Old Li met Lin Ruoxi when he was in the hospital. Even though they chatted for a short period of time, he had gotten to know Lin Ruoxi enough to form a lasting impression. Old Li knew that Rose wasn't Yang Chen's wife. Therefore she must be one of Yang Chen's women. But to him, as long as it wasn't his daughter, he turned a blind eye towards it.

Yang Chen shook his head slightly and walked to up to Old Li's stall before picking up several skewers of lamb. He laughed and said, "I haven't grilled meat in a while. How nostalgic. Do you mind if I help myself to a few of these meat skewers before Lei Zhen arrives?"

Old Li was at his breaking point. He sighed heavily knowing that there was nothing else he could do to persuade Yang Chen to leave. All he could do now was worry.

Their conflict drew the attention of many of the passersby. Most of them—especially those who knew Xi Pi—hurried past the group in fear. They tried to flee as quick as possible in order not to get caught up in the mess. Many of them even felt sorry for Yang Chen and Rose.

But despite the majority that fled the scene, a handful of people had the courage to wait and watch. It was nighttime. They relied on the darkness to not be spotted.

After approximately five minutes, there was rustling sound from the end of the street followed by a loud clamour. It seemed as though a large crowd was headed their way.

As the people gathered, the spectators began to leave. Even though they were curious, watching the commotion wasn't worth the risk of being caught in the middle.

Yang Chen roasted and spiced up several lamb skewers before chewing away.

Xi Pi's face was filled with excitement and delight. He looked at Rose and Yang Chen with malicious intent and laughed evilly. Running towards the crowd he yelled, "Brother!"

Lei Zhen was a middle-aged man with a boxy-looking face. He was fatter and shorter compared to Xi Pi. His frightening grandeur was what made him stand out from the crowd.

Lei Zhen looked like a normal businessman in his white shirt. If it wasn't for his ferocious and lofty subordinates, he wouldn't have been taken as someone from the underworld.

"Brother, it was that unladylike woman! She hurt me and the people from our gang!" Xi Pi cried resentfully beside Lei Zhen.

Lei Zhen glared at his brother and said, "You're not a little boy anymore. All you do is look for trouble and call me when there is a problem. Seriously, what the hell is wrong with you?!"

Xi Pi replied while feeling wronged, "Brother, it wasn't my fault. That lady was too strong. My subordinates and I were no match for her!"

The few of Xi Pi's subordinates grunted in acknowledgement and pointed at Rose who stood beside the stall quietly. Yang Chen—who was enjoying his lamb skewers—was said to be her accomplice.

Lei Zhen couldn't see very clearly as he was standing quite far away from them. He didn't take the lady who bullied his brother seriously. There was nothing so out of the ordinary that required his presence. Ignoring Rose, he turned his head and awkwardly smiled at the lady dressed in a black dress who had tagged along. He said, "I'm really sorry for bothering Miss Chen with this joke. It is so rare for us to meet, but unfortunately something like this has come up and interrupted us. However, as this rascal is my one and only younger brother, I can't afford to let anything happen to him."

The elegant lady dressed in black was comfortable facing the crowd of men. She seemed like she was powerful enough to keep those punks under control.

"Since he is part of your family, it is necessary for us to help when he is in trouble. Besides, if these people are against Red Thorns Society, it will concern all of us," the lady replied.

Lei Zhen smiled and nodded his head in agreement. He started nearing Rose's location with his subordinates.

The two people in charge exchanged looks with Rose. They were confused and seemed hesitant at first but they soon became terrified.

"Pre—pre—president?!"

"Sister Rose..."

Lei Zhen and the lady in black were shocked beyond compare when they recognised Rose. The members of Red Thorns Society who were gathered around the two were surprised as well. Many of them had

never seen Rose before. But who else would their heads call 'president' if not the leader of Red Thorns Society? The lady who rarely appeared in public and singlehandedly ruled the underworld of Zhonghai was none other than Rose!

On the other hand, Xi Pi paled when he finally understood what it meant when his brother called Rose 'president'. He almost passed out in shock.

"What's wrong, Rongrong and Lei Zhen? You don't seem very happy to see me," Rose said while gazing upon the crowd. The whole area became silent as if time stood still.

Rose was wearing a casual outfit which made her look like an ordinary beauty in the city. Lei Zhen and Chen Rong couldn't recognise her from afar!

Lei Zhen took some time to recollect himself before he quickly bowed with respect. He swiftly explained, "President, please stay calm. This isn't what you think. If I knew it was you, I would... I would..."

Rose smiled coldly. "You would what? Were you going to misuse your power as one of the heads in Red Thorns Society to help your brother? If it was someone else who punched your brother today, would you have helped him return the favor?"

Lei Zhen felt his legs turn soft. Clueless as to what to reply, he kicked Xi Pi aside in frustration!

"Piss off! Bastard! How dare you provoke the president?!"

Xi Pi spun in the air several times before passing out.

Old Li, who was still standing frozen in the same spot, opened his mouth in astonishment. *?I can't believe that this beautiful and young lady is the president of Red Thorns Society! No wonder Yang Chen wasn't worried. Why is Yang Chen constantly surrounded by powerful women?!?he thought.*

On the other hand, Chen Rong who seemed terrified at the revelation, bit her lip and walked towards Rose. She lowered her head and said softly, "Sister Rose, I was just here to discuss some issues with Mr Lei. Please don't misunderstand my involvement in this."

Rose looked at Chen Rong apathetically and ignored her. Instead, she looked at the terrified Lei Zhen. She said, "I remember saying that if we, Red Thorns Society, want to stand strong, we mustn't misuse our power. Those who threaten civilians will be punished severely. Any heads who have failed to keep their divisions under control will bear the consequences as well. I can't believe that I was on the receiving end of this today. Especially since I rarely leave the house. Moreover, it was the leader's brother who was going around fooling the public while using the name of my society. Are you challenging my position and my orders?"

Lei Zhen stood up and apologised repeatedly. "President, please don't be mad. I take full responsibility of the things that have happened today. I will teach him a lesson when we return. I promise that this will be the last that you hear of such cases!"

"It's okay," Rose said calmly. "There are things that can never be forgiven. Lei Zhen, wrap up anything that is still outstanding. Tomorrow, I will send someone else to take over your domain. You shall leave Red Thorns Society along with your brother."

After hearing what Rose had said, Lei Zhen was horrified and distressed. He babbled in shock, "President! You can't do this to me!"

Rose raised her voice and replied, "Who's the president? You or me?"

While she was shouting, a strong intimidating aura flooded out of Rose. It suffocated Chen Rong who was standing to the side of their conversation!

Lei Zhen's face paled while his cheeks turned a shade of red. He clenched his fists and said, "President, I have always respected you. For once, this incident has been entirely my fault. I admit that I have been negligent towards my subordinates and brother. But I have served the Red Thorns Society well all these years. I have put in my one hundred and ten percent effort to get to where I am today. If you're going to take everything I am away because of one mistake, I, Lei Zhen, refuse to obey!"

Chapter 603

Insanity

Lei Zhen was essentially challenging Rose's position as president. He no longer had his head lowered and was instead staring right at her.

Rose started to boil with frustration. She didn't expect Lei Zhen to publicly go against her. Laughing with her voice full of malice, she said, "It sure looks like I've been away for so long that some people have forgotten their place. Lei Zhen, are you starting a rebellion?"

"This one dares not do so. But regardless, I don't find President's decision appropriate!" Lei Zhen yelled violently. "If President insists on dismissing this one, I request President to organize a meeting among all the leaders within the gang. I would like my dismissal to come down to a vote. If everyone believes I deserve this severe punishment, I will leave without hesitation!"

Darkness filled Rose's eyes. "Lei Zhen, what makes you think you're qualified to negotiate? Had it not been for your contribution to the society, I would have bathed this very street with you and your brother's blood!"

No one doubted Rose's words. That was because her eyes were surging with killing intent!

Chen Rong who until now, was just an innocent bystander, couldn't help but say, "Sister Rose, Mr Lei wasn't completely informed of this. Everyone makes mistakes once in a while. Please show him some mercy this time. Regardless of what he has done, he was a founding member of this society. Not to mention his large contributions to this society. Furthermore, dismissing the leader of such a large district will definitely disrupt operations on a large scale."

Rose didn't even glance in her direction when Chen Rong begged for mercy on Lei Zhen's behalf. Instead, she looked all the more displeased. She finally turned to Chen Rong and coldly said, "I believe I haven't relinquished the title of president to you yet, have I? Why then are you assuming the role now?"

Chen Rong instantly paled, lowering her head in fear, losing the courage to speak.

On the contrary, Lei Zhen fell into contemplation after seeing Chen Rong plead on his behalf.

Rose saw that Chen Rong lowered her head, so she turned to Lei Zhen and said, "I've said everything I wanted to. If you and your brother have yet to leave tomorrow, don't blame me for what comes next. It's been a while since I have drenched my hands in blood. Lei Zhen, please don't let me start with you."

Upon she finished speaking, Rose turned to Yang Chen who had been silently eating the lamb skewers. "Hubby, let's go home."

Yang Chen nodded. He wasn't interested in getting involved. To him, whatever happened in Red Thorns Society wasn't a huge concern to him. He wouldn't step in as long as his woman was fine.

"Wait a minute!" Lei Zhen yelled panting in anger. "President, you have left me no choice!"

Yang Chen and Rose stopped moving and turned around. Lei Zhen who was staring at them with a burning rage, pulled out a pitch-black Beretta 92. The barrel was aimed right at Rose's head!

"Ah! It's a gun!"

The civilians on the streets quickly scattered like mice when they realized how serious the situation became. However, quite a number of the people dining nearby were watching the scene.

Lei Zhen was holding a genuine gun, causing the civilians who had not seen one before scream in anxiety and panic.

The once quiet street descended into chaos. The people started sprinting in all different directions afraid that they would be caught in the crossfire. Innocent lives could be lost if there was a mistake made!

"Lei Zhen, are you crazy?! Put the gun down!"

Chen Rong who was previously keeping her head down raised it when she saw the gun. She begged, "Mr Lei, please don't act foolishly! This isn't a joke!"

Lei Zhen smiled maliciously. "I know that this is serious. Miss Chen, you need not worry. I'll remember your kind act to day and return the favor. Since things have progressed to the way they are, I don't have to sit here and endure our stubborn little president anymore. Thank you, President, for your care throughout the years. I will personally send you off today, but only because you have forced my hand. Should you become a ghost, you mustn't come for me."

"What do you think this will accomplish? How idiotic." Rose wasn't at all nervous. Ignoring the fact that it wasn't her first time being on the receiving end of a gun, she knew that nothing could happen to her with Yang Chen by her side.

Lei Zhen said, "I am fully aware of my capabilities. I will die today if I fail. These people here are all the brothers I trust. No matter how good you are in combat, President, there is no way you can outplay a gun. I believe you don't doubt my ability to do so. Of course, if you would be so kind as to forget the events that have happened today, I will let you live. I've always regarded you highly and it would be a shame to see you go."

"Why are you putting up such an act?" Rose asked teasingly. "You're actually afraid of me more than anyone else. Otherwise you would've pulled the trigger by now. Why else would you blabber on?"

Lei Zhen flushed in anger. "President, you regard yourself too highly. It doesn't matter anyway. I've brought prosperity to Red Thorns Society for the past two years. So it is high time that I start enjoying the fruits of my labor. Now that your inheritor Chen Rong has become more than capable, I believe all of us will support her to take over your position..."

Panic filled Chen Rong's eyes once she heard Lei Zhen. Biting her lips forcefully, she looked at Rose anxiously and glanced at Yang Chen who had remained silent.

Rose looked at Chen Rong before saying, "Are you trying to say that you want Rongrong to replace me?"

"That's right. In the past six months, Miss Chen has been handling the management tasks within this society. We've all noticed her excellent job. Since President has raised such a competent inheritor, she's bound to take over sooner or later. So why not we speed that process up a little?" Fanaticism filled Lei Zhen's eyes. "As long as President agrees to organize a meeting and pass all responsibilities to Miss Chen, I'll be willing to help her strengthen her position!"

"That's enough! Lei Zhen! Don't involve me with this insane plan of yours! Put your gun down now. How dare you point a gun at President?!"

Chen Rong couldn't hold back anymore. The fear in her heart exploded into fury.

She wasn't the same naive girl who had newly arrived in Zhonghai anymore. In the past year, under Rose's guidance, she had greatly improved in competency and demeanor. To avoid being looked down upon, she had maintained a favorable and elegant outlook. However, all the training in the world could not have prepared her for this.

Lei Zhen was stunned. He felt that his proposal was most beneficial to Chen Rong.

Having been appointed as the inheritor by Rose, she had been working hard to bond with the fellow leaders within the society. It was her ultimate destiny to one day become the president.

Rose was still young after all. Although she had taken a step back from managing the society, she would take at least a decade or two to give up her position as the president.

As a result, Chen Rong must've gotten impatient in one way or another. No one would be willing to only take over the position they desired at the age of seventy or eighty. How many years left would she be in power by then?

This was the perfect opportunity for her to finally obtain the position of president! Rose had come alone, while Lei Zhen had all the manpower and firepower he needed. When he finally got rid of Rose, everything would fall into place smoothly.

Was Chen Rong that fearful of Rose, or was she afraid of something else?

Lei Zhen couldn't think of a logical explanation no matter how hard he tried. If Chen Rong did manage to get hold of the power to command the elites within Red Thorns Society, she would definitely have the ability to withstand any resistance should there be any.

It was exactly because the temptation for the president's position inside Red Thorns Society was enormous, while Chen Rong begged mercy for Lei Zhen, he thought he could gain Chen Rong's

cooperation. Why else would Chen Rong ask for forgiveness? Wasn't she hoping to gain support from the leaders in the gang?

Chapter 604

Misfire

Who would have thought that Chen Rong was not in favor of such a beneficial plan to her! Lei Zhen did not know if she was genuinely appalled at it or she was just putting on an act to seem innocent.

Not to mention that his trusty associates were wholly convinced that Lei Zhen's plan was foolproof. It caught them off-guard when Chen Rong rejected the offer. In their eyes, Rose was just a respectable figure and nothing more. But Lei Zhen on the other hand, was the real reason they were in the positions they held now. If there was a change in the president's occupancy, their roles would be reshuffled and they would be replaced by other people. There was a chance that they would obtain positions which were worse off than before. It was a devastating thought for most.

Unfortunately what Lei Zhen and his associates failed to comprehend was that Chen Rong, present at the West Union Society banquet dinner back then, did not fear the chairwoman Rose. Her real fears were directed at Yang Chen!

Yang Chen had been her brother Chen Bo's friend, and subsequently Rose's lover. It was not long before Chen Rong felt firsthand the domineering presence of Yang Chen before her!

She would never forget about that night at the banquet, when Yang Chen single-handedly spilt the blood of fourteen huge, armed men on his own!

It was obvious that an incident of that magnitude was not capable by any human being. It was then when Yang Chen really struck deep in Chen Rong's mind. Even till this day she would sometimes wake up in the middle of the night drenched in cold sweat, terrified of the things she saw. Needless to say, she was traumatized beyond repair.

The things Yang Chen did in the shadows of the Red Thorns Society was known only to a small handful of people. His unofficial participation in the society kept people like Lei Zhen in the dark about certain matters.

In Chen Rong's eyes, Yang Chen was like a big brother to her, always calm and caring on the outside. But deep down inside her, she had an indescribable fear towards him.

Chen Rong was a young girl with a brilliant mind, which was expected of Rose's successor. Chen Rong knew from the beginning that Rose only entrusted most of her powers to her because she had nothing to worry about when Yang Chen was there to back her up from the shadows.

At this moment, this foolish man Lei Zhen, with his bunch of poorly armed misfits actually wanted to threaten Rose to yield power to him. What's worse, he thought he could actually use this opportunity to rise up in the ranks?!

The chain of events was driving Chen Rong crazy. However, she knew for a fact that it was impossible to explain to Lei Zhen in such a short time, so her last resort was to draw the line as quick as possible.

After all it was crystal clear to her that, if she put up an act of true and unwavering loyalty, she was and always would be the first in line to succeed Rose. And given how Rose rarely involved herself in internal affairs, it was her that was wielding much of the actual authority.

Even though it might be a little disappointing to not obtain the position of president anytime soon, she was not going to risk her life for a position!

Lei Zhen's expression went dull. He cocked his head back and started to drawl. "Since Miss Chen has chosen to be so modest then let me be the one to fill in for her. For the prosperity and goodwill of Red Thorns Society's future, it is high time for a change in management. President Situ, I appreciate your care and consideration after all these years. If you would allow me, I would like to bid you your final farewell."

Whilst speaking, Lei Zhen cocked the gun and aimed the barrel right at Rose's head, ready to fire.

At that moment, Old Li who was previously panicking went blank, unable to process what was going on. Chen Rong was as pale as a ghost while the guys backing Lei Zhen up, however, were excited about the future prospects of the society. As for Rose, she was completely indifferent as if it was just another day for her.

"Hey, Mr Lei, the weather has been quite dry for the past few days. A misfire from the gun happens quite often at a time like this one. If I were you, I wouldn't pull the trigger."

Yang Chen who was quietly observing on the sidelines finally decided to chip in. He grabbed some of the cheap serviettes from Old Li's stall front and wiped the grease of his hands.

From the start, Yang Chen seemed as though he was just a random stranger. Lei Zhen was not bothered by his presence as a result.

While the elites around Rose would recognise Yang Chen, the management heads like Lei Zhen wouldn't have a deep impression about him, even if they had seen him before.

Lei Zhen frowned. "Who are you again?"

In a high-intensity scenario like this, any random person would be quivering where they stood. But for this man to remain calm and collected would mean that he possessed abilities beyond that of Lei Zhen. But that was just Lei Zhen's initial assumption.

"Don't misunderstand my position here. I'm just Rose's man. I'm not anyone of importance." Yang Chen casually responded while smirking a little. "I'm just trying to help you by telling you that your gun is a little old. If it really did fire accidentally you might injure yourself in the process of firing it. Why don't you put the gun down and we can go back to discussing this like civilized people."

Lei Zhen couldn't help but break into laughter as he scorned Yang Chen in his mind. "Oh I remember now, the president does have a guy named Yang. I heard you possessed some unique skills and that you were bold and brave. But it would seem like the rumors weren't true in this case. You are nothing more than a coward and a fraud. Misfire? You kidding right? This pistol has been with me for more than ten years now. It has become part of my being. Are you mocking my intelligence?"

Yang Chen seemed frustrated as he frowned and replied, "Why won't you believe me? From my years of experience, I can honestly tell you that your gun really has some problems."

"You're the one that has problems!" Lei Zhen swung his gun over to Yang Chen, and aimed right at his forehead. "Since you seem so sure about the accidental fire, I'll show you how your brains get fired first!"

At this moment, Chen Rong who was shaking with anxiety gave up on trying to save Lei Zhen. She took one look at him and all she saw was a dead man walking.

Lei Zhen felt like he was being made fun of by Yang Chen. So he couldn't care less but to pull the trigger!

Bang!!!

The sound of gunfire echoed through the entire street. Chaos and panic ensued.

In the meantime, Lei Zhen's trusty associates behind him were left confused at the scene. They realized that their boss' marksmanship was not as great as he played it up to be. Because the plodding kid Yang Chen, was still alive and standing right where he was.

What happened next left them all dumbfounded!

Lei Zhen who was standing with his back facing them suddenly went weak as the gun slipped through his fingers. His body soon followed as he crumpled onto the ground.

Thud!

Amidst the sand and dust, Lei Zhen's body was found collapsed on the ground like a lifeless puppet!

"Boss!!!"

"Big Brother?!"

Lei Zhen's associates yelled and screamed in panic, unable to comprehend what had happened in that split second.

Curious as to what had caused such an event, they knelt down to take a closer look at his body. They were horrified at what they saw. At the centre of his forehead, there was a crater the size of a bullet. Blood was streaming out from the hole like a broken faucet. It soon enveloped half his face as there was no one willing to touch or cover the hole.

Both of his eyes were wide open, seemingly staggered by his own premature death.

Unfazed, Yang Chen let out a yawn in front of the commotion. Uninterested with what had happened, he replied, "Didn't I tell you that your gun was old and would lead to a misfire? See, now the bullet had backfired into your own head. I was only trying to be nice, but you just wouldn't listen."

Everyone present minus Rose who was mildly surprised, were staring at Yang Chen in shock. It was as if they were in the presence of the devil himself!

A misfire? Only an idiot would believe that.

When everyone finally got a grasp of the situation, they realized that in the split second the shot was fired, Yang Chen had pulled an unfathomable trick by repelling the bullet backwards. This caused the bullet to head straight for Lei Zhen's brains!

It happened so quickly that the human eye was not able to capture it. In other words, this man Yang Chen was not human!

When mankind encounters a presence that they cannot comprehend, they become extremely prone to genuine, indescribable fear.

Everyone present was petrified by Yang Chen. A presence so terrifying that their legs went soft despite the constant pounding in their heads telling them to run. Avenging Lei Zhen was the last thing on any of their minds!

Rose at this point was rather accepting of Yang Chen's capabilities. She was the first to recover from the shock. She then proceeded to taunt the other members of the gang. "Pull yourselves together. Your boss is now dead, which leaves the rest of you with two options: First, those still loyal to him can accompany him six feet under. Second, swear your loyalty to the Red Thorns Society, and I will assign a new head to all of you."

There was really only one viable option for the lot of them. Only a madman would swear loyalty to the dead!

The entire gang of Lei Zhen's trusty associates uniformly went down to the ground, kneeling and weeping while exposing Lei Zhen's 'heinous acts'. They started spewing nonsense about how they were all blackmailed by into doing his dirty work. How none of it was done on their own volition. How much they admired and respected Rose as their leader.

The previously jovial group of men all suddenly became emotional as they wailed and whimpered away.

Rose, annoyed by their pathetic acts, raised her hand to stop them. "Take Lei Zhen's body away. He's blocking my way."

Upon hearing Rose's pardon, the group of men let out a collective sigh of relief as if having been spared from death. They quickly dragged Lei Zhen's corpse like it was a gunny sack and vanished into the horizon.

Before they scurried away they each gave a quick glance back at Yang Chen, wary of the possibility that they would be shot in the back.

The closest thing this little rebellion could be compared to was a soap opera. Yang Chen as the highlight of the event seemed to be rather unfazed by everything that had just happened before him.

Chen Rong stood not too far away from them, her frail body trembling from the more recent events. She didn't dare to speak a single word nor look Rose in the eyes. After all, she knew for a fact that Rose had more than a piece of her mind to give to her.

As expected Rose remained silent for a little before she ordered. "Come over here."

Chen Rong obediently moved behind Rose where she stood. How could she afford to disobey after witnessing such an act?

Slap!

A loud slap went straight to Chen Rong's cheeks, to the extent that her entire torso swayed left to right losing all sense of balance. The burning after-sensation left her cheeks with a flaming red hand print!

A glow could be seen in Chen Rong's eyes as an aftermath of the slap. It was from her reminiscing about her past with Rose. Ever since they met, Rose had always provided additional care and affection towards her much like an elder sibling would to their younger sibling. It was the first time Rose had slapped her without restraint.

Chapter 605

Special Agent

"Do you know why I hit you?" Rose asked coldly.

Chen Rong bit her lower lip in an attempt to control her tears. "I—I shouldn't have helped Lei Zhen beg for mercy. His actions had granted him necessary consequences."

"It isn't wrong to beg for mercy. He was the founding member of the society. There are others who would do the same," Rose answered.

Chen Rong was stunned. It was clear that she had no idea what the real reason was.

Slowly, Rose explained, "Don't tell me that you were unaware of what Gao Yue from Green Dragon Society has done."

Panic surfaced in Chen Rong's eyes. She immediately knew what Rose was referring to.

"Sister Rose, please let me explain. It isn't what you think it is!"

"Explain?" Rose snorted coldly. "I let you manage our partnership with Green Dragon Society. That did not mean I let you commit crimes with them or allow you to make every single decision on your own. The only reason Red Thorns Society managed to conquer the underworld of Zhonghai isn't because of our power, but because what we do does not cross certain governmental boundaries.

"I only delegated a small amount of power to you. But what you did with it was more ruthless than anything I had ever done. Also, it doesn't matter what your reasons were. The first thing you should have done was report the matter to me!"

Chen Rong paled even further. Shivering slightly, she muttered, "I—I just thought that rejecting Gao Yue's request would hurt our relations with Green Dragon Society. He is a highly ranked member of their society. Not to mention we had just formed our partnership. So I wanted to please them a little in order to improve our partnership... I—I wanted to tell you but haven't had the chance to..."

As Chen Rong spoke, her voice gradually faded into the background. She knew that Rose would not accept such a weak reason like that.

Indifference filled Rose's eyes. She then shut her eyes before letting out a long sigh. "I expected great things from you in the beginning, you know that? Your ability to learn and adapt surpassed me when I

was your age. However, it is exactly because I expected a lot from you that I'm deeply disappointed in you this time..."

In the end, Chen Rong couldn't hold back the tears in her eyes anymore. Her teardrops fell uncontrollably as she sobbed. "Sister Rose... I'm... I'm sorry..."

"What's there to feel sorry about? It is I who have granted you this power. It is also I who have failed in that regard." Rose smiled bitterly. "You should apologize to the female university students whom Gao Yue had exploited instead. Along with the hundreds of civilians bullied by Lei Zhen and his men."

Chen Rong nodded his head forcefully, but couldn't speak a word. She herself wasn't sure why she had done all those regretful things without thinking first. Now that she had been exposed by Rose, she felt that she couldn't forgive herself!

"Rongrong." Rose suddenly extended her arm and caressed Chen Rong's cheek. It was rather swollen as Rose had slapped her earlier.

Chen Rong barely raised her head and gazed upon Rose with her watery eyes.

"Do you know how mad I was when I realized my men from Red Thorns Society were collecting protection fees and blackmailing the public? I rarely leave the house. Yet I was able to encounter such a situation. I can't help but imagine just how much has happened in the past few months when I was absent! I don't even want to think about how many people see us as scum of the earth now."

"It is true that many have treated us as scum since the start. 'The word 'filthy' has been used to describe us in the past. But must we conform to their taunts and contaminate the world further as a result?"

Chen Rong remained silent. Ever since she had chosen to walk this path, she felt sinful on the inside. She even got rather guilty when she faced her elder brother Chen Bo.

However, when Rose said that, Chen Rong realized that her career wasn't all that bad. It was the lack of effort to accept society as it is that made her work so unbearable.

At this moment, Yang Chen who had been standing aside walked over. Gently, he said, "Rose, I believe that's enough. Rongrong isn't a child anymore. I believe she understands your point. Your slap earlier was too hard. She doesn't even dare to look at you now."

Chen Rong looked at Yang Chen thankfully. She didn't expect Yang Chen to still treat her so politely when she made a mistake.

Rose nodded her head and smiled faintly in silence.

Yang Chen then looked at Chen Rong. "Rongrong, you've been on this path for some time now. I can understand that no one is perfect. There is no one that isn't tempted by anything in this world, am I right?"

Chen Rong wiped her swollen eyes and said, "Thank you, Brother Yang. I will change for the better."

"That's good. It's all in the past now. I still believe you are capable of greater things than this. I believe your Sister Rose would still raise you as her inheritor. However, Rongrong, you mustn't repeat a mistake like that again..."

Chen Rong hurriedly shook her head. “Absolutely not. I—I’ll try my best to keep them under control.”

Yang Chen smiled but his eyes revealed coldness. “I’m your elder brother’s friend. Which makes me responsible for your well-being. Not to mention it was I who have sent you to Rose. However, you should remember that if you intentionally pull off something so unforgivable, I... Brother Yang, will not hesitate to send you to hell. Even your brother will not be able to change your fate...”

Rose felt a chill run up her spine, freezing her in her tracks!

She could tell that Yang Chen wasn’t just frightening her. The previously tender man was warning to kill her if she repeated her mistake...

Yang Chen stopped speaking. Holding Rose’s arm, he turned around and bid farewell to Old Li.

Old Li had been stunned long ago, his mind going blank. He finally realized that Yang Chen existed in a separate class from mere mortals like himself. Yang Chen did not change only after marrying an impressive wife, but he himself wielded unimaginable powers!

Old Li pondered about the past as his forehead was covered in cold sweat. He was strongly against her daughter Li Jingjing from interacting with Yang Chen back then. But had it not been their friendship, Yang Chen might’ve slain him and his wife already!

His mind was filled with questions. Old Li failed to realize that Yang Chen had said goodbye and left with Rose long ago.

Due to the conflict, the street was rendered empty. Chen Rong who was petrified stood at the same position absentmindedly, being shone upon by the lights under the night sky, wondering what was to come of her next.

Walking to the parking area, Rose held Yang Chen’s arm as they walked. Softly, she said, “You didn’t have to frighten her like that. The child knows what to do.”

Yang Chen looked at Rose and answered, “Who told you I was just frightening her?”

Rose was surprised. “Wi—will you really kill her?”

“If she goes back to the grey area even after her second chance, being the one who has sent her here, I must also be the one to right my wrong,” Yang Chen said. “Of course, I too believe that she wouldn’t repeat her mistake.”

Rose nodded her head. From her eyes it was obvious that she felt worried for Chen Rong. Deep down her heart, she treated Chen Rong as her own sister, but she knew that Yang Chen’s decision was final.

After the series of events, Rose was rather tired. Yang Chen sent her home and drove back to his place.

In the living hall, Guo Xuehua was once again watching Korean drama with Wang Ma. Lin Ruoxi was nowhere to be seen. He guessed that she was in the study room dealing with work, which allowed him to breathe slightly easier. It could be said that he was quite afraid of her.

He couldn’t be bothered about what was happening in the drama on the television. The main actress was crying resentfully after getting slapped by her mother-in-law.

Guo Xuehua and Wang Ma were both holding pity in their gazes, as if their own daughter was the one being hit.

Yang Chen sighed helplessly and walked upstairs slowly. He didn't want to disturb the two elders. Entering his own room, he planned to take a shower and go to bed early.

As he was about to step into the bathroom, his phone rang. It was a call from a strange number.

Yang Chen frowned, assuming that it was a mistake. But he still picked it up regardless.

"Hi, who's speaking?" Yang Chen lay on his bed lazily.

The call was completely silent for a while before a gentle and familiar voice could be heard.

"Bro—Brother Yang..."

Yang Chen laughed. "I thought it was a wrong number. But it turned out to be Hui Lin instead. Tsk tsk, why did you suddenly call me? Is this number yours?"

Hui Lin hadn't returned home since she won the championship of Star of Yu Lei. The company had filled her work schedule fully to utilize the fame she had gathered from the competition by promoting her in different cities. Naturally, her time was filled with activities like concerts and fan meetings.

Moreover, due to her exceptional voice in addition to her talent in music, she was provided with the opportunity to work with many famous music producers. She had several albums that she had to prepare for. The process in song recording alone was tedious, so she had no spare time to come home and 'visit her relatives'.

Hui Lin answered, "This is my new number. I asked my manager Sister Jenny to get me a new phone."

Yang Chen was unaware of any manager called Jenny in his company. He was ashamed to call himself the director of the company. "I haven't seen you in a while. What have you been busy with?"

"I have returned to Beijing. But I have spent most of my days in the recording studio for my new album," Hui Lin answered softly. "Brother Yang... are Elder Sister, Aunt Guo, Wang Ma, and Zhenxiu doing fine?"

Yang Chen felt a little downhearted after listening to what she said. *That kid has stayed in this house for quite a while already. I believe she's formed a strong bond with the people here. Now that she's suddenly away from home, although she was originally from Beijing, the only people she got to meet were employees. I guess she's feeling lonely there. After Lin Zhiguo left, Abbess Yun Miao has to take over the Lin clan in addition to fulfilling her duties within Yellow Flame Iron Brigade—her time could not be sat constantly watching over her granddaughter,* he thought.

"Yeah, they're all doing well. What could happen to them while I'm here?" Yang Chen asked, "How about you? You must call me immediately if there's anything you're dissatisfied with. I'll help you take care of any troubles that you may have. You don't have to suffer in silence. You're a superstar and not a stress reliever for anyone, do you understand?"

Yang Chen was most worried that Hui Lin was as naive as before. That would result in she being bullied in the entertainment industry. Should Lin Ruoxi find out about that, she'd feel a major headache.

Hui Lin happily hummed in acknowledgement. "Thank you, Brother Yang. Then... does it mean that... I could call you more often in the future?"

Yang Chen was slightly shocked. Smiling, he answered, "Of course you can. You're the busy one here, while I pretty much do nothing all day. As long as you're free, you could even call me at midnight."

Hui Lin was all the more pleased. She then said, "Then... will Brother Yang come to Beijing to visit me?"

Yang Chen felt that it was a coincidence. "Now that you reminded me, I have to visit Beijing soon. I might be there awhile, so I'll definitely pay you a visit. No matter what, you're the future star of our company. Being the company's boss, it would only be right for me to check up on you, wouldn't it?"

Hui Lin chuckled. She then hesitated before asking, "Will Elder Sister and the others come as well?"

"Erm..." Yang Chen was going to the Cai clan in Beijing to talk about his relationship with Cai Yan. If he brought Lin Ruoxi there, wouldn't he be asking for death? Thus, he said, "I'll be going alone. What is it? Would you only be glad if your elder sister went?"

Hui Lin hurriedly denied, "No, that's not the case. It's fine if Elder Sister is busy at work. I'm happy enough that Brother Yang can come and see me. When you visit, I'll bring Brother Yang to my home. Grandma is still in Beijing; she'll definitely be happy to see Brother Yang!"

Yang Chen exuded cold sweat. "It's still early now... We—we'll talk about it when the time comes..."

Why the heck should I visit Yun Miao? What if she forces me to marry Hui Lin?? he thought.

Yang Chen vaguely felt that Hui Lin had similar intentions for him. However, it wasn't right for him to brutally draw a line between them. It was becoming increasingly hard to be a man these days.

The call finally ended after they chatted a bit more, and Yang Chen gave Hui Lin encouragement.

In the end, Yang Chen wondered if Hui Lin had made a call to everyone or just to him alone. But he couldn't go ahead and ask. It wouldn't be good if he was the only one who received a call from him.

Yang Chen didn't want to think about it too much. Removing his clothes and pants, leaving only his underwear, he planned to take a shower in the bathroom.

At this moment, someone neared his room.

Yang Chen was surprised. Judging from the footsteps, he felt that it wasn't Lin Ruoxi. As he wondered whether it was Guo Xuehua or Wang Ma, the door was suddenly pushed open!

Since Yang Chen was never in the habit of locking his door since, he didn't expect anyone to barge into a room without knocking on the door beforehand!

Guo Xuehua could be seen standing by the door. Her face initially contained a smile, but it soon displayed shock, followed by a little awkwardness. However, she didn't back off.

Yang Chen was rather embarrassed. "Mom, why didn't you knock first before coming in?"

Guo Xuehua found it funny. "There's nothing shameful here anyway. Is it inappropriate for your mother to see you half-naked?"

Yang Chen thought, *?No wonder Ning Guangyao didn't choose you back then, and went for my mother-in-law instead. It sure seems like perversion runs in the family.*

He dared not speak his mind aloud of course. Yang Chen giggled and said, "I was going to take a shower. Mom, what do you want to tell me?"

"I'll go straight to the point then. Since Ruoxi isn't home now, I wanna ask if you've set the place and venue to see that mother-in-law of yours. I think we should make the meeting as soon as possible." Guo Xuehua was rather worried.

Yang Chen wasn't against having it early of course. He briefly explained what Ma Guifang told him. She wanted Guo Xuehua to pick both the time and venue.

Guo Xuehua nodded and contemplated for a while. "How about tomorrow? Ruoxi will be at work, so that is taken care of. I feel like a special agent now, trying to hide from my own daughter-in-law and help you deceive others. Sigh, let's go to Dragonwell Teahouse for lunch."

Yang Chen smiled shamelessly. He didn't find anything about this situation inappropriate. Since he wasn't required to show up in the office every day, he agreed to Guo Xuehua's suggestion. When the time came, he would pick Ma Guifang up while Guo Xuehua would drive there alone.

Ma Guifang actually lived next door, but Yang Chen was too embarrassed to tell his mother, afraid that she would find out two of his lovers lived together. He felt that she could find it hard to accept, so he wanted to explain during the meeting.

Chapter 606

Your Great Son

Knowing that his mother and mother-in-law would meet for the very first time tomorrow, Yang Chen couldn't help but feel uneasy about the whole thing. It even costed him a few hours of sleep but fortunately for him, he did not require it. Sleeping was merely a habit to him. It didn't affect his energy levels.

The next morning, when Yang Chen came down for breakfast, Guo Xuehua was already seated with Lin Ruoxi and Zhenxiu at the dining table. He then proceeded to sit down quietly before starting to eat.

In the past, Yang Chen would take this opportunity to spout out all the nonsense he could muster. However since today was a particularly nerve-wrecking day, he felt rather constrained.

"Brother Yang, why are you this quiet? You don't usually behave this way," said Zhenxiu as she stared at him with curious eyes.

Lin Ruoxi was slowly eating her porridge like she always did. After Zhenxiu spoke, she looked at Yang Chen in contemplation but remained silent.

Yang Chen sensed danger, but pretended like there was none. Smiling, he answered, "It's not like I love to chat. Why must I talk then? Have your meal obediently and don't ask so many questions. Aren't you going to school later?"

Zhenxiu furrowed her elegant nose, dissatisfied with Yang Chen's lecture. She gave a small frown and stopped thinking about it.

Lin Ruoxi stood up after only less than half her bowl of porridge. She said to Guo Xuehua, "Mom, I still have a lot to do in the company, so I haven't had the time to spend time with you. Why don't we head out for dinner tonight? I know a decent seafood restaurant but haven't had the chance to dine there."

Guo Xuehua was stunned. *Dinner?* she thought. In the past, she would have been delighted at the request, but she had promised to meet Ma Guifang later. Guo Xuehua didn't know how long the meeting was going to last, so she smiled and replied, "Ruoxi, it's fine if you're busy. We could always go out anytime in the future. However, today I am meeting an old friend of mine which might take up the whole day."

"Oh..." Lin Ruoxi nodded her head and stopped asking.

The breakfast was rather dull. When Zhenxiu headed out for class and Lin Ruoxi for work, Yang Chen and Guo Xuehua finally let out a sigh of relief.

Helplessly, Guo Xuehua said, "I really don't know why I agreed to this in the first place. Ignoring the fact that I have no clue what to say later during the meeting, if Ruoxi finds out that I, as her mother-in-law, am helping you with other women, where then will I hide my old embarrassed face?"

Yang Chen smiled awkwardly. "Mom, your face isn't old at all. You're still young and gorgeous."

Guo Xuehua replied, "Kid, who taught you how to sweet talk? It looks like you're getting nervous already. Do you think I'd refuse to go after giving you my promise?"

Yang Chen indeed felt concerned. Having gotten Guo Xuehua's confirmation once again, he became less worried.

After getting dressed in his smart casual attire, Yang Chen left home right after Guo Xuehua did. Since Wang Ma was at home, it would be rather suspicious if they left together.

On the other hand, Ma Guifang had long gone to Madam Xiang's restaurant to work. She worked for two hours before Mo Qianni picked her up for the meeting.

During the journey, Ma Guifang asked Mo Qianni what her mother-in-law's hobbies were, what interests she had, and what her family background was like. However, Mo Qianni couldn't answer most of the questions out of sheer nervousness. Back then when she met Guo Xuehua, she showed up as Lin Ruoxi's close friend, so she tried not talk to Guo Xuehua too much.

As a result, Ma Guifang blamed her daughter for not taking enough concern in Yang Chen's parents. But it wasn't her fault, she never had the chance to do so. When Guo Xuehua visited her home, she would mostly talk to Rose, while Mo Qianni would steer away from any conversation. She was afraid that her affair with Yang Chen would be exposed.

Ma Guifang didn't own any luxury clothing, but she was dressed in a much nicer attire than she would normally wear. At the same time, since it was a working day for Mo Qianni, she was well-dressed and had makeup on.

When Mo Qianni arrived at Dragonwell Teahouse, she recognized Yang Chen's car outside. She felt a lot more relieved as Guo Xuehua had indeed come.

The mother-daughter pair held hands and walked into the freshly decorated teahouse. Since the place contained many private rooms, Mo Qianni proceeded over to the counter and asked the server for the one booked by Yang Chen.

Guo Xuehua was careful in selecting the location. She knew that the mother of Yang Chen's lover might get slightly rowdy should things go south. That would result in her being embarrassed, so she picked this restaurant which had a decent sound-proofing system. It was more likely for them to hear the people outside than the other way around.

Within the room, Guo Xuehua pondered about what she was going to say. Her son's marriage wasn't a topic that could be kept hidden for long. However, it is also difficult to assume that the other party would be so accepting of the news. Thus, she had to think of a way to indirectly persuade the mother into giving her daughter freedom.

If Guo Xuehua was from an ordinary family, she certainly wouldn't agree to help Yang Chen. However, being in a major clan, polygamy was not an uncommon sight. While it was illegal for a man to have multiple wives, it didn't stop the men from huge clans from doing so.

Even the premier of China, Ning Guangyao, had an illegitimate daughter who happened to be Guo Xuehua's daughter-in-law, Lin Ruoxi. It wasn't surprising for those men to be involved in such affairs.

As a result, with a mindset beyond the norm, Guo Xuehua was more open to ideas. At worst, she would utilize the status of the Yang clan to persuade the other party.

Guo Xuehua sipped on some fragrant tea while contemplating certain matters. When she drafted her speech in her mind, she quickly remembered that she was still clueless as to whom she was meeting later. *Why hasn't Yang Chen told me yet? He has been dodging the question ever since I brought it up,* she thought.

Guo Xuehua hurriedly asked Yang Chen who was sitting beside, "Son, what's the name of the girl? You can tell me now, can't you? I'm going to need to know what I should call her."

Yang Chen had intentionally concealed it from his mother, but he had to tell the truth now. Smiling awkwardly, he said, "Actually, Mom, I believe you have met her before. She's called Mo Qianni."

"Mo... Qianni?" Guo Xuehua frowned as she found the name familiar. She then exclaimed, "What did you just say?! It's Qianni?!"

Yang Chen rubbed his nose and nodded.

Guo Xuehua instantly understood a lot of things, which she found absurd yet laughable. "You're such a terrible child. How dare you trick your own mother? No wonder you were unwilling to let me know her name. So that's because she has been 'lying low' around me!"

"How is that a trick? What's the difference between knowing it now or before?" Yang Chen laughed. "You guys are meeting later anyway. And isn't it great that you actually know each other?"

Guo Xuehua sighed helplessly, but a thought soon struck her mind. *This is bad!* she thought and stood up violently from the seat!

Yang Chen saw her reaction and asked curiously, "Mom, what happened to you?"

"There's a problem!" Guo Xuehua said while she frowned painfully. "If the girl is Qianni, that means her mother is... is..."

No matter how powerful Yang Chen's mind was, he couldn't figure out what had made his mom so tense. He was wondering what trouble Guo Xuehua was facing.

Guo Xuehua silently hoped that she was just having a bad dream. When she chatted with Ma Guifang a few days ago, Ma Guifang mentioned that she had a great son-in-law. Wasn't she then referring to Yang Chen?! Furthermore, Guo Xuehua told her that her son Yang Chen was married to Lin Ruoxi!

Everything was over even before it began! We don't have to meet anymore. I don't think any amount of persuasion will change her mind! she thought.

As Guo Xuehua panicked and felt an intense headache, the door of the room was opened from the outside.

Holding her daughter's hand, Ma Guifang walked into the room smilingly, and immediately noticed Guo Xuehua who was standing in the room.

Guo Xuehua clenched her teeth while she furrowed her brows. She stared at Ma Guifang in agitation. She then darted a glance to Mo Qianni quietly.

Mo Qianni sensed that the atmosphere inside the room wasn't right. She looked at Yang Chen who had stood up as well, but the latter shrugged his shoulders, implying cluelessness.

The person whose expression changed the quickest was Ma Guifang. She turned from feeling nervous to puzzled, before falling deep into thought. She looked at Yang Chen, then at Guo Xuehua again before she revealed an indescribable smile. She asked, "Sister Xuehua, so your son is Yang Chen?"

Chapter 607

Happiness and Hurt

Guo Xuehua had the urge to dig a hole and bury herself in it. The urge to cave Yang Chen's head in was also very present. Had Yang Chen told her that she was meeting Mo Qianni, she wouldn't have foolishly revealed so much!

Ma Guifang didn't need to ask anything. She basically understood everything when she looked at the situation!

Mo Qianni's heartbeat quickened when she heard what her mother had said. Feeling like things had spiralled out of control, she forced a smile and asked, "Mom, have you... met Aunt Guo before?"

Ma Guifang gazed upon her own daughter coldly, her brows filled with anger. "Not just that. We even called each other sisters."

Mo Qianni felt miserable. She had only seen her mother's current expression once when she was a child and all she did was steal a sweet potato. Her mother looked just as fierce if not more right now!

Ma Guifang was not one to display such fury unless she had been pushed to her breaking point!

"Mom... please—please don't do this..." Mo Qianni lowered her head while her body quivered.

Yang Chen also realized that something was wrong. Guo Xuehua and Ma Guifang evidently knew each other. Judging by Ma Guifang's furious expression, could it be that...

"Sister Ma, please let me explain—"

"There's no need!" Ma Guifang interrupted. With a strict look, she said, "I knew that something was wrong when you two refused to talk about marriage despite being so intimate. You barely mentioned anything about your family. Turns out it's not because you don't want to, it's because you can't!"

Guo Xuehua wanted to speak, but she didn't know what to say.

"Sister Xuehua, your son Yang Chen is already married, but you still came to meet me to talk about our children's marriage. What games are you playing?" Ma Guifang asked as her face started to redden in fury. "I, Ma Guifang, am not from a wealthy family, and admit that I am not the most cultured. But at the very least, I know where my pride lies! How shameless can one person get?!"

"Mom, please calm down. Actually, the—"

"Shut up!!!" Ma Guifang screamed, cutting Mo Qianni off. "Mo Qianni, are you trying to infuriate me to death?! Did I raise a mistress?! Why couldn't you have gone for someone who wasn't already married? Do you know who his wife is? It's the granddaughter of the Old CEO, Lin Ruoxi! The Old CEO gave you such an excellent life, and Lin Ruoxi is your best friend! Why then are you returning the favor by messing with her husband? Where's your conscience?!"

Mo Qianni's eyes reddened and her tears gushed out. Each one of Ma Guifang's words felt like a poisonous stinger, prodding at her already raw heart.

She certainly knew that being a mistress wasn't right, and felt that mixing with Lin Ruoxi's husband was inappropriate. Not to mention, she was aware that her mother would be utterly disappointed.

But I still did it, didn't I?? she thought.

When it came to the matters of the heart, she was totally defenseless. It wasn't that she hadn't tried to give it up, but fate had ensured that everything fell perfectly into place for her.

Mo Qianni had asked herself this before: *Had it not been the contract for the marriage between Lin Ruoxi and Yang Chen which had given me an excuse, would I still get together with him inconsiderately?*

To which she answered, *Yes, absolutely.* She couldn't deny the feelings she held for Yang Chen. She couldn't imagine how she would end up had Yang Chen rejected her.

By doing so, she would certainly end up in pain, but she believed that it would all pay off in the end.

Mo Qianni had cheered and consoled herself repeatedly before she dared to bring her mother into the equation. However, before the conversation even started, Ma Guifang had already destroyed any consolation she had erected for herself!

“Mom... I know that I’m at fault,” Mo Qianni spoke as she sobbed, as if her body would collapse anytime soon. “I know that I’ve betrayed Ruoxi, bu—but I couldn’t...”

“You don’t need to speak anymore. Leave now with me and I will forget it ever happened. Otherwise...” Ma Guifang wasn’t a soft-hearted person. “Pick yourself. Do you still want me as your mother or will you continue being a mistress?!”

She basically meant to say that she would cut off her ties with her daughter should the latter refuse to stop her relationship!

Mo Qianni paled instantly as her tears came to a halt. She wondered if she heard it right. However, judging by Ma Guifang’s strict expression, she knew that Ma Guifang wasn’t kidding.

Yang Chen felt an immense heartache. Looking at Mo Qianni’s suffering, he clenched his fists tightly.

It was Ma Guifang who had made her cry. However, Yang Chen couldn’t do what he would do to other people—beating or killing her, just to help Mo Qianni take revenge.

She was Mo Qianni’s birth mother and Yang Chen’s elder. Moreover, he was truly the one at fault. All he could do was endure. Walking forward, he said softly, “Mom—”

“Don’t call me mom!” Ma Guifang stared at Yang Chen with anger in her eyes. “You don’t deserve to call me mom. I don’t want a son-in-law like you! Yang Chen, being a senior, let me give you a piece of advice. Go home and treat your wife with respect! Don’t mess with any other women outside!

“I know that you might be wealthy, and you are downright impressive too.”

“However, even if you had all the money and power in the world, you can’t possibly provide happiness to different women at the same time! That is because your woman is already hurt at the thought of you accepting someone else!”

Yang Chen was utterly speechless. He wanted to ask for chance, but failed to concoct even a single word.

While Ma Guifang wasn’t very educated, and she hadn’t seen too much of this world before, she was still no stranger to people and their relationships.

Her speech was just like sedatives, causing Yang Chen’s previously high hopes to instantly vanish.

All Guo Xuehua could do was lower her head in silence, listening to the conversation while standing still. She too was a mature woman. Realistically, she knew that there was nothing else she could say to rebut Ma Guifang’s speech.

Moreover, immense guilt had filled Guo Xuehua’s heart. She was starting to reconsider her decision of helping Yang Chen since the beginning. That was because whether or not an issue would surface wasn’t her concern, but everything was a mistake to begin with.

Panting, Ma Guifang gave a final emotion-filled gaze to Guo Xuehua and Yang Chen before turning around. Facing Mo Qianni who was dejected, she said, "Girl, don't be so stubborn. Mom will never bring you harm. This isn't where we belong."

Mo Qianni remained quiet. She bit her lips forcefully while tears once again dragged across her tender cheeks, causing her makeup to disperse.

"What is it? Are you refusing to leave? Great..." Ma Guifang nodded her head, deeply aggrieved. "Now that you've become a mistress, you're even thinking of disowning your own mother. Why am I surprised... I'm nothing but a poor, uncultured woman burdening you. Who would want me as their mother..."

"No, that's not the case!" Mo Qianni shook her head violently and rubbed her tears quickly. "Mom, that's not what I meant! Ple—please don't get mad. I'll leave with you..."

Ma Guifang let out a long sigh. She extended her arm and caressed Mo Qianni's cheek with pity. "Now that we've come to this point, just finish what you have started and come home with me. I'll forget everything that has happened. Even if you remained unmarried for the rest of your life, Mom would never want you to be someone else's mistress. Do you understand?"

Mo Qianni nodded her head as she felt numb. She couldn't think of anything at the moment.

Ma Guifang smiled faintly and held Mo Qianni's hand before leaving.

Yang Chen wanted to make them stay, but was stopped by Guo Xuehua who was beside.

"Don't go." Guo Xuehua grabbed his hand and shook her head. "Sister Ma has a straightforward personality. If you act this aggressive, she'll only get angered further. It is us who owe them. If you really want to do something about it, wait until Sister Ma calms down."

Yang Chen smiled bitterly. "Can it still be saved?"

"I don't know." Guo Xuehua sighed. "It depends on how far you are willing to go. Yang Chen, regarding this matter... and your other relationships, Mom really shouldn't be involved in any of them in the future. I can act blind and deaf, but I can't help you. I hope you won't blame me."

Yang Chen nodded his head stiffly. "I'm grateful enough that you're not against it."

Chapter 608

An Absurd Idea

It ended. A well-planned meetup had ended before it had even started.

With a frustrating realization, Yang Chen knew that this particular problem was indeed the one that brought him the most headache.

Mo Qianni's background was nowhere near Cai Yan's, An Xin's or Liu Mingyu's. She was merely a white-collar worker in the city. It was because of this exact reason that her relationship with Yang Chen was the most innocent at its core.

But why would any sane parent allow their daughter to become a mistress without having a say in the matter? After all, matters like these were despised by the society.

In Ma Guifang's eyes, all her daughter needed in life was a stable job and happy marriage. So it was no surprise that Mo Qianni was strictly prohibited from going beyond those boundaries.

Yang Chen was incredibly powerful in combat, and he was not lacking in the wealth department as well. However, it was not enough to sway Ma Guifang's decision of their relationship. He never wanted to 'buy' a girl from her mother, let alone to 'steal' her.

If Ma Guifang wouldn't give her permission, Yang Chen knew that there was nothing else he could do; lest he lead a long life of regret should Mo Qianni stay with him.

While thinking these things, his desire to return to work soon diminished. After sending Guo Xuehua home, he drove aimlessly around the city.

It wasn't until he reached a river by the city road that he suddenly recalled, *"This was where I first met Tang Wan; I was heading back to my rented apartment from Old Li's house."*

A year had passed in the blink of an eye. It was so fascinating how time flew by so quickly.

Pulling over, Yang Chen stepped out of his car and walked to the riverside. He then quickly located a place for him to sit.

It was noon. There was no one around. He had bought two packets of cigarette from a small shop nearby and began to puff smoke as he stared into the distance with murky eyes.

In his head, Ma Guifang's sharp criticism and the helpless look on Mo Qianni's face kept appearing. Yang Chen felt the weight of the world on his chest—a discomfort that couldn't be shaken off.

"No matter how much I've gained in life, relationships will forever be my shackle to the ground," he thought bitterly.

A relationship; it could provide protection and offer a sense of security, but could also be a huge boulder in the way of life.

Yang Chen had just finished with his first packet of cigarettes and was about to unwrap the second one when his phone vibrated.

He initially believed that it was from Guo Xuehua who might've gotten worried about him. Glancing at his phone screen, he saw on the call screen that it was Jane.

He picked up the call and tried to sound as relaxed as possible. "Our noble scientist, is there anything I can do for you? What made you call me during lunchtime?"

Jane chuckled lightly. "Oh, how daring I must be to order you around! I'm just calling to let you know that I'm already at the airport. My flight leaves in a little bit."

"So suddenly? Everything is solved then?" Yang Chen added, startled.

"Without a doubt. I've already analysed the substance that poisoned Master Tang, there's no point to stay in China anymore. It's not like you have time for me anyway," said Jane resentfully.

“Still, I need to thank you. Why didn’t you let me send you off? You’re leaving so soon!” added Yang Chen.

Jane said, “I had already planned to leave quite a while back. Anyhow, there’s nothing special that you were going to do anyway. It’s not like you would give me a goodbye kiss. I thought I may feel attached if you came so I guess it’s better for all of us that you weren’t here. I would rather you come visit me in Europe if you really want to.”

Yang Chen laughed, albeit a little awkwardly. Indeed, all he would do at the airport was possibly waving Jane goodbye.

Jane had sensed Yang Chen’s embarrassment through the phone. She chuckled and said, “Right, I forgot to tell you. I’m bringing Hannya along with me. I figured it would be safer with her around. You don’t mind me continuing using your employee, do you?”

“Of course not.” Yang Chen remembered that he once ordered Hannya back to Japan. *It’s not a bad idea for her to follow Jane; leaving China is better than making Yellow Flame Iron Brigade pointlessly suspicious,* he thought.

After saying goodbye to Jane, Yang Chen felt a surge of guilt. It would be a lie to say that he had absolutely no feelings towards a stunning girl like Jane, not to mention the feelings were reciprocated. But Yang Chen watched her grow up, and with the relationship between himself and Catherine, he found it even more inappropriate to involve himself with Jane. It wouldn’t be fair to the mother daughter pair.

All the complications with his relationships made it difficult for Yang Chen to open up to Jane. Pretending like it did not exist was the best course of action.

However, a phone call with her had unexpectedly reminded him of Tang Wan. *Why not talk to Tang Wan about it? She’s quite the listener.*

Hence, he dialled Tang Wan’s number. After all, she was someone that he didn’t mind contacting spontaneously.

Tang Wan picked up the call rather quickly. Her soft voice more feminine than usual through the phone. “I was just about to call you! Heard about Jane leaving yet? She didn’t wish me to tell you before this.”

Yang Chen grunted, “I was just on the phone with her. How about you? You should be more relaxed now that Master Tang has recovered and the toxins were dispelled from his system.”

“I am definitely much calmer now. I’m grateful for that. You might not know how much Grandpa means to me and the Tang clan, but as long as he is healthy, I feel more at home,” Tang Wan said smilingly. “I wanted to treat you to a meal but I’m going to Beijing with Grandpa tomorrow. He planned to attend the clan meeting which requires my participation. I guess it’ll have to wait until next time then.”

“You’re leaving too?” asked Yang Chen gloomily.

Tang Wan burst out laughing. “You sound like you’re reluctant to see me leave... Why, are you sad that I’m leaving?”

Yang Chen flushed. His face a shade of deep red. It was fortunate that she couldn't see him over the phone. "Why organize a clan meeting out of nowhere? Are you going to bring Tang Tang along?"

"There were a lot of rumors spreading within the clan when Grandpa was sick. There were even some rumors of disbanding the clan! Grandpa wanted to take this chance to get everyone back together. Anyhow, Tang Tang is growing up and she's the grandchild of our family, of course she has to attend too! Even if she enters your Yang clan after marriage, she'd still be a part of us. She's smart enough to stick around Grandpa all the time. She probably knows that Grandpa could offer her great things."

Yang Chen listened and felt a little weird. "What do you mean by entering our Yang family? She's going to marry Yuan Ye, and he's from the Yuan family!"

"The Yuan family is an extension of the Yang family now, isn't it?" Tang Wan paused for a while and continued, "Yang Chen, don't blame me for being too blunt. But there's no need to dodge the subject. We're too close for me to pretend I'm unaware of the situation. As far as I'm concerned, Master Yang is more confident in you than Yang Lie. You should take note of that. Who knows if the Yang family will be handed over to you in the future..."

Yang Chen had planned to discuss about Mo Qianni with Tang Wan. However, he didn't think she would suddenly mention the Yang family.

"I'm not interested in clan," said Yang Chen while smiling lightly.

"Matters like these are often not as simple as you think," replied Tang Wan before sighing. "Perhaps you have extraordinary capabilities, but in China, there must be a reason for the four major clans to dominate Beijing. I may be the heiress to the Tang clan, but even I know that our clan does not merely run several large businesses. I believe... the Yang clan is also more complicated than just controlling part of the military."

"Not only that, think about it, if you decide to stay here, the status of the Yang clan will aid you in numerous occasions. At the very least, nobody would dare to mess with you or the people around you, right? I also know that your mother is staying with you right now. Do you really think she wants to be away from her family? If you join the Yang clan, many things become official."

Yang Chen's eyes shone suddenly. An absurd idea soon crossed his mind...

If he were to become the master of the Yang clan, it would be easier to have more than one woman. It was not as if he would publicly announce it, but using the status, it would only be a matter of showing his domineering strength to the rest of the world. People could only gossip behind their backs. Then, his women wouldn't have to suffer so much hardship! Some would even be envious of them!

To be honest, Yang Chen did not have to use the status of the Yang in other countries. That was because he couldn't act the same as he did overseas within this country.

In the past, it would never have worked. The reason he was separated from Guo Xuehua was because she had conceived him before marriage. She had to send him to the orphanage.

However, things had changed. Even if the rich were to marry a second partner, nobody would bat an eye.

So, there were two sides to everything. This world and its people had gotten rid of the past, but had somehow made life seemingly less challenging for Yang Chen with all the shortcuts now available to him.

Of course, it was only an idea. To have it really work would require a lot more planning. Not only did he recently come back to China, he still held a bad reputation from his past behavior. Assuming Yang Gongming was willing to hand over his position to Yang Chen, what other people thought about it was an issue as well.

Furthermore, being the master of a clan, could he really keep all the women by his side happy and satisfied? Even if they were fine with it, what about the others who were not? People like his mother-in-law, Ma Guifang...

Chapter 609

Cutting the Finger

Since Tang Wan was leaving to Beijing, Yang Chen didn't want to trouble her any further. He wished them a safe trip and ended the phone call.

He felt slightly better after the conversation with Tang Wan. He looked at the time to realize it was late noon. Remembering the plan he had made to visit Liu Mingyu's new place, he dialed her number.

Liu Mingyu was in her office, going through some documents of a newly established project. She had been quite busy after returning from Europe. She had increased the degree of the expansion for her company. As Yu Lei International's wealth had skyrocketed, every single officer from the public relations department barely had time to take a breather because they were busy running around ensuring that the company would not collapse with the sudden increase of workflow.

Answering Yang Chen's call, Liu Mingyu removed her black-framed glasses from the bridge of her nose. Allowing herself a wide grin, she could roughly work out the reason behind this phone call. "You're finally free?" asked Liu Mingyu.

Yang Chen was surprised at how easily she could read his mind. He laughed bitterly and said, "What time do you get off work? I'll come pick you up."

"I have a car," stated Liu Mingyu. "Anyway, you're also a part of Yu Lei, you should know the working hours."

Yang Chen touched his nose and replied, "You don't have to be so brutal with someone so close! I'm just being considerate, aren't I?"

"How fake. You just wanted to know if I would skip work," Liu Mingyu said smilingly.

Yang Chen felt wronged. He never wanted her to skip work. But after giving it another thought, he realized that Liu Mingyu was dropping him a not so subtle hint. He then decided to play along, saying, "Ah so you noticed! Well since you already know, I'll come pick you up from work and we'll leave together. It'd be weird to go in separate cars."

"Now you're talking," uttered Liu Mingyu before hanging up on him.

She had been all over the company for the past few days. When a chance to see Yang Chen presented itself, she figured it was a good idea to take a little break.

Half an hour later, Yang Chen drove out of the parking lot at Yu Lei with Liu Mingyu in the passenger seat. They were listening to an album by Adele—the very same one Rose had bought yesterday.

This made Liu Mingyu ask in a curious voice, “Oh I couldn’t tell you liked Adele’s songs. And here I thought someone who was so heartless like yourself couldn’t appreciate good music.”

“What do you mean by heartless?” Yang Chen pursed his lips, dissatisfied. “There are literally a hundred other ways to describe me? Casanova, or another word like that sounds way better! Anyway, the CD is not mine.”

“Whose is it then?” wondered Liu Mingyu.

Yang Chen thought for a while and said, “It’s Rose’s. She was listening to it in my car yesterday.”

Liu Mingyu knew who Rose was. Because of Liu Qingshan, she knew that Yang Chen had a lover—the president of the Red Thorns Society, Situ Qiangwei.

Now that Yang Chen had mentioned Rose, Liu Mingyu merely nodded and continued, “Oh, her. I would quite like to meet her in the future if possible.”

Yang Chen laughed in his head. *Both of you are actually from the underworld.*

They had journeyed for some time when Yang Chen suddenly questioned Liu Mingyu, “You still haven’t told me where you live.”

She pondered for a moment. “Let’s not head back just yet. I should do a little grocery shopping for some ingredients. I’ll make you dinner tonight.”

This was fine by Yang Chen. After all, the only women by his side who could cook were only Mo Qianni and Lin Ruoxi. So when Liu Mingyu suggested that she’d make him a home cooked meal, he was more than willing to oblige.

Upon arriving at the market, Yang Chen and Liu Mingyu looked just like a pair of young couple who had just gotten off from work.

Liu Mingyu was every bit the same as any normal girl was. Before her father had come into the picture, she was living the life of an ordinary city girl.

As they walked down the street, Liu Mingyu would bargain on everything she was interested in buying. She would argue with the old seller and threaten to leave if they didn’t comply with her. Yang Chen had to play along with her by putting up an impatient look on his face.

Everything started to unfold before Yang Chen. He wondered, *Is Lin Ruoxi also like this when she’s out with Wang Ma at the market? No, it can’t be. Even though she’s been more chatty these days, that didn’t mean she was the same to strangers. Bargaining? She probably wouldn’t have dreamt of it in her next life.*

Liu Mingyu's lips were stretched into crescents whenever she managed to get a lower price for her goods. She would pass the bags to Yang Chen and proceed to the next stall.

Yang Chen asked incredulously, "That happy? It's not like we aren't well to do. You spent so much time just to save one or two dollars. What's so great about that?"

Liu Mingyu pouted and rolled her eyes. "What are you blabbering about? It's not about the money. It's the process of bargaining which I enjoy very much. If I were to stop doing that then you might as well just kill me."

"Did your mom teach you that?" asked Yang Chen, curious.

Liu Mingyu nodded and smiled lightly. "When I was little, my mom raised me because my father was still in Beijing. We weren't well-off. Every penny saved is a penny earned. It's a habit, bargaining. Mom used to do it all the time. Even though I'm working in the fashion industry now, I still know the worth of the market goods. A lot of things are worth very little once you strip off its branding."

Yang Chen observed the delighted and somewhat adorable expression on Liu Mingyu's face and sighed. *It sure seems like I don't understand the women around me as well as I thought. Can't believe someone elegant like Mingyu has this side to her,* he thought.

It is natural for a person to share the same interests as their lovers. So Yang Chen had quickly gotten used to Liu Mingyu's shouts while bargaining in no time; he even joined in shortly after.

While entertaining, this method of shopping for goods was a lengthy one. After approximately half an hour, Liu Mingyu had finally finished buying the ingredients she needed.

The sun had already disappeared from the sky when they arrived at Liu Mingyu's new home. It was a seemingly high-end apartment.

The area had adapted the 'go-green' concept; even the air conditioner was operated by geothermal energy and underground waters. There was only one condominium unit on each floor which justified its price of a small fortune.

Liu Qingshan was rather generous towards his own daughter. Otherwise, Liu Mingyu would never be able to purchase a place like that which costed millions only using her hard-earned salary.

Holding multiple plastic bags filled with fresh vegetables and meat, Yang Chen followed Liu Mingyu up to the top-most floor. The entirety of this floor was hers to enjoy. What a waste!

"Tsk tsk, having a rich father certainly shows its benefits," exclaimed Yang Chen while smiling.

Liu Mingyu blushed. "I didn't want to stay here. My father forced me to."

"What is there to be embarrassed about? He left you and your mother behind and stayed in Beijing for so many years. He's trying to make it up to you. He'd be overjoyed if you were willing to spend some of his money," encouraged Yang Chen.

She ignored him and proceeded to open the door. She then asked Yang Chen to put the bags in the kitchen.

The entire condominium interior had a milky white accent to its decor; the light brown sofa was made of real leather; a patterned sheepskin carpet was laid out on the floor and there were all sorts of the high-tech gadgets in the room. There was even a massage chair worth ten thousand yuan fixed in her house.

This apartment was even more elegant and expensive than where the CEO Lin Ruoxi stayed. The renovation alone could've easily costed millions. Liu Qingshan had indeed spent a ton on his daughter!

"You can rest while I prepare the meal. It'll take about an hour or so," said Liu Mingyu while taking off her work outfit. She slipped into a thin, light blue t-shirt and a pair of white skinny jeans. She let her hair down, allowing her to look more relaxed.

"An hour? That's too long!" muttered Yang Chen despairingly. "I thought it would take half an hour at most. I'm so hungry already. Why not let me help you? I may not be good at cooking but I'm quite an expert in working with knives."

"Can you really do it?" asked Liu Mingyu, giving him a suspicious look. "What if you cut your finger?"

"If I cut my finger, it'd be because of you, not me," laughed Yang Chen.

"Why would it be me?" Liu Mingyu retorted.

Yang Chen put on an appreciative look and said, "Having such a gorgeous lady cook next to me might make me lose focus. So of course I'd cut my finger!"

"Stop fooling around. I think it'd be better if you just kept quiet." Liu Mingyu actually felt warm in her heart, as opposed to what she expressed.

It was decided then. Yang Chen would do the cutting and dicing, and Liu Mingyu was in charge of cooking. The pair looked exactly like a couple while their laughter drifted across the kitchen.

Yang Chen was quite the skilled cutter. He could even close his eyes while cutting the potatoes. After finishing up with his part, he leaned against the kitchen door and stared at Liu Mingyu, who was busy cooking in her apron.

It was common knowledge that women were attracted to men who knew how to be serious. For guys, a woman immersed in cooking was just as charming.

A fuzzy warm feeling spread through Yang Chen's heart. He recalled what he had been through with Liu Mingyu since the day they met, and realized that he was spending less and less time with her as time passed.

But in all honesty, Liu Mingyu never asked for much. The reason she was so focused in preparing this meal was because she knew how rare a night like this was—she had to cherish this opportunity.

Love—it is often not about how much one could gain, but how much they could do for one another.

Chapter 610

Self-intoxicated

The homemade dinner consisting of four dishes and soup was completed a lot quicker with Yang Chen's help. When the dishes were finally set on the dinner table, Yang Chen couldn't wait to dig in.

Liu Mingyu removed her apron after exiting the kitchen. Her forehead was covered in droplets of sweat and her hair was slightly ruffled. Right now, she looked every bit like a housewife and nothing like the company executive she was.

“Let’s have some alcohol. Please make yourself at home since it is your first time here,” Liu Mingyu suggested with a grin.

Yang Chen nodded and replied, “Do you have any alcohol or would you like me to get some for you?”

“I believe I do. Let me go get it,” Liu Mingyu said as she walked into the storage room. She then returned with two bottles of wine.

She placed the two ordinary-looking glass bottles on the table and said, “My father bought me these. He said they were imported. I find myself fancying the taste quite a bit, but I don’t drink regularly so please help yourself.”

Yang Chen picked up the wine and took a closer look at its label. Startled, he asked, “Did your father really get you these?”

Liu Mingyu, confused by his question, answered, “Yeah. Why?”

“Did your father tell you that these are Romanée-Conti?”

“What? Is that the brand of the wine? I don’t know much about wine, so I can’t tell if it is good or bad,” Liu Mingyu replied. She did know however, that wine gifted to her from her father would be ones of exceptional quality.

Yang Chen shook his head and thought, *Even Liu Qingshan doesn’t know the value of these. Lucky that I’m here today or they would have gone to waste.*

“Babe, do you know of Lafite?” Yang Chen asked.

Liu Mingyu nodded her head and said, “Yes of course I know what Lafite is. I believe it’s about ten or twenty thousand per bottle.”

“This wine is Romanée-Conti. Its yearly production is one fiftieth of Lafite. There are only one to two thousand bottles in the whole world. Now do you know how valuable this bottle is?” Yang Chen explained and sighed.

Yang Chen had traveled the world for the better part of his life, so he was no stranger to most kinds of delicacy and culture. He had also tried numerous types of wine but it was rare for him to get his hands on Romanée-Conti as there were quite few in number. So he was fully aware of how precious the it was.

Liu Mingyu widened her elegant eyes and asked, “So it must be really expensive then?”

“These would cost at least a hundred thousand yuan if they were purchased at market value. Plus, even if you had the cash to spend, there was no guarantee that you could get your hands on one,” Yang Chen said, giggling. “Since we were allowed this opportunity, let us enjoy ourselves. Wine is meant to be consumed anyway. It would be a shame to not indulge in this.”

Liu Mingyu couldn't believe that these ordinary-looking wine bottles cost hundreds of thousands. But what Yang Chen said was right. It would be wasted if they left it unconsumed.

They opened one bottle and filled their wine glasses to accompany their dinner.

If an expert got their hands on such a high-class wine, they would have treated the wine like the rare treasure it was. They definitely wouldn't have taken it during dinner like some common beer.

Since Yang Chen was never bothered about luxury and Liu Mingyu didn't know much about wine—they didn't really care about how they drank the wine. Each and every sip they took was a couple thousand yuan down their throats.

They started chatting about life and discussed about work-related events. Before they realized it, they had finished their bottle of wine.

Liu Mingyu had a weak tolerance to alcohol. She was rather tipsy despite only having drunk two glasses of wine.

"Tsk tsk..." Yang Chen indulged in the aroma of the wine and spoke softly, "Being the daughter of a gang leader entitles you to such a different lifestyle than mine. I've been benefited by gracing the presence of the great Miss Liu today, haven't I?"

Liu Mingyu's cheeks were pinkish under the light, allowing her to appear particularly charming. She said, "Don't call me that... I'm not used to it at all."

"What's wrong with it? You have to be recognized with such a title. It's not something any girl could have even if they wanted it," said Yang Chen with a smile.

Liu Mingyu rolled her eyes at Yang Chen. Gazing upon the wine glass she was holding, she replied, "I get scared every time I overhear my dad discuss about underworld issues with his subordinates... Although he used to stay in Beijing, I had always thought he was just a regular businessman. There was nothing for me to worry about then..."

"But now that he is here in Zhonghai, I am constantly worried that he might leave me. Why must he be a gang head... instead of a normal businessman?"

"Previously when he visited us in Zhonghai, I would be thrilled to see him even if it was for a day or two. But now, even though I see him every day, it just doesn't feel the same anymore. I know that he still cares for me and is willing to give me power and money. But there's something in me that just doesn't feel the same as it used to..."

Yang Chen listened quietly and thought, *Maybe the true reason why Mingyu got drunk so quickly wasn't because of her low alcohol tolerance. It was probably her overthinking that intoxicated her instead.*

"Yang Chen, am I despicable? I moved out and distanced myself from my father even though he is trying to get closer to me," Liu Mingyu asked and pouted her red lips.

"Of course not! It's not like you refuse to accept him as your father." Yang Chen knew that all Liu Mingyu needed was comfort. He said, "To be honest, I really admire your tolerance. All these years, your father has lied and hid everything from you until recently. Your father had another woman in Beijing and even gave birth to a son there. Yet you still accept him with open arms when he returned."

“If all of these things happened to someone else, they would probably have spiraled into a pit of depression and hatred. On the other hand, you accepted everything quietly and even got along with your brother very well. I have to admit that you’re an amazing person for being able to accept things with an open mind.”

Liu Mingyu smiled as she laid her head down on the table. She murmured, “I can’t change anything that has happened... It doesn’t matter if they lied to me. I can’t change the fact that he’s my father, and that I’m related by blood to my brother. No good will come from me making a huge deal out of it.”

Yang Chen kept quiet and thought to himself, *“Mingyu’s mind is so rational that she has somehow found a way to reason herself into accepting such a terrible father and brother. But I can’t even accept Yang Pojun and Yang Lie even when the latter and I are more closely related than Mingyu and Liu Minghao. However, hatred always runs deeper within relatives than strangers.”*

Liu Mingyu noticed Yang Chen’s silence. She asked, “Yang Chen, you’ve never mentioned about your family before. What do they do? Are they living in Zhonghai?”

Yang Chen knew that it was time to reveal his dark family background. He wasn’t intentionally hiding it from them anyway. Plus, it would certainly reduce complications when their families meet.

Of course, Yang Chen didn’t have the time or patience to start from the very beginning. He only mentioned that he was related to the Yang clan and he reunited with Guo Xuehua recently. Nevertheless, Liu Mingyu was shocked at the revelation. She stared at Yang Chen for a while before suddenly laughing. “Wow! It’s such an honor to be hooking up with the prince of a major clan.”

Yang Chen rubbed his chin and replied, “I would love to be the member of a clan that I can benefit from. My identity is not exactly Earth shattering.”

Although Liu Mingyu was slightly tipsy, she could still grasp the atmosphere pretty well. She asked, “Are you okay? You seem to have a lot going on in your mind. I’ve never seen you speak in such a depressing manner.”

Yang Chen downed the rest of the wine in his glass in one go. He explained truthfully about the issue that happened in the afternoon involving Mo Qianni.

Complication filled Liu Mingyu’s eyes. She sighed and asked, “So have you thought of what your next move is?”

“There’s not much else that I can do. All I can really do is wait for my mother-in-law to calm down before I apologize,” Yang Chen mumbled while forcing a smile.

Liu Mingyu nodded and replied, “I thought you were about to give up. I was a little worried.”

Yang Chen was a little stunned. Liu Mingyu was implying that if Yang Chen had given up on Mo Qianni because of a problem, there might be a chance that he would give up on her in the future too.

“Don’t overthink it. My greatest strength is my thick skin. I won’t leave you even if you want me to, Yang Chen said seriously.

Liu Mingyu glanced at Yang Chen and replied, "I suddenly realize that having a gang leader for a father may not be the worst thing in the world. At least he wouldn't judge relationships the same way Qianni's mother did. Qianni must be feeling awful. You seem to be surprisingly good at hurting people."

Yang Chen wanted to retort but chose to keep quiet instead. He was beside Mo Qianni during the day and he knew very well how distressed she was. He was miserable as well but he couldn't back himself up.

After dinner, Liu Mingyu who was quite tipsy after drinking three glasses of wine wanted to clean the dishes in the kitchen. She had developed this habit of hers after doing chores for the better part of her life. She felt uneasy leaving the unclean utensils in her sink.

Yang Chen held her down onto the chair and said, "You're too drunk to be cleaning dishes. Stay here and let me do the work."

"How could I let you do that? It's your first time visiting this place. It was already too much asking you to prepare your own meal. I can't let you clean up as well." Liu Mingyu shook her head and tried to pick up the plates.

Yang Chen simply took the dishes from her hands and bent over to kiss Liu Mingyu on her cheek. He smiled and said, "Don't serve me out of obligation. I want an understanding woman, not a servant."

After speaking, he quickly picked up the dishes and carried them into the kitchen. He threw away the leftovers and started to work on cleaning the dishes.

Liu Mingyu sat at the dining area, staring at Yang Chen's back while he did the chores. Her vision was rather blurry and she was feeling particularly hot. She touched the area on her cheek where Yang Chen kissed and smiled with contentment.

Yang Chen learnt how to do the chores since he had lived alone for quite some time. Thus, he completed his job quite quickly and made his way back to the table.

It was supposed to be a romantic night. It had been a while since Yang Chen and Liu Mingyu got intimate after all. She was quite tied up with moving to her new place recently. Yang Chen felt that he needed at least a hundred rounds of combat with her to feel satisfied.

However, when Yang Chen walked towards Liu Mingyu excited to get started, he realised that she had fallen asleep on the table!

Chapter 611

On a Diet

Left with no choice, Yang Chen let out a sigh. He walked up to Liu Mingyu and stared at her beautiful face that was just an inch away from his. And with one look, he was lost in his thoughts.

A slender body, curvy eyebrows, an exquisite tall nose, and succulent, rosy red lips—he was all too familiar with it. But staring at it right here right now, Yang Chen suddenly found it all so foreign.

It was as though despite being his woman, she felt like a stranger instead.

All of a sudden, a terrifying sense of fear filled his heart. Instinctively, Yang Chen realized that it was because he had been affected by the morning incident where Mo Qianni was brought away by Ma Guifang.

He started to fear the potential future where the women who were originally by his side would leave him, and he would end up being as helpless as this morning.

In the end, all his women could really become strangers to him...

Yang Chen inhaled a deep breath, his eyes sparkling. He clenched his fists for quite a while before loosening them.

Under the dim light, Yang Chen smiled and shook his head, as if he was mocking himself. Then, he reached his arms behind Liu Mingyu's knees and back and lifted her up.

Liu Mingyu had fallen asleep without knowing it, and did not seem to intend to wake up. She seemed to be muttering something in her dream. She was in Yang Chen's arms, and was pouting her rosy lips in an adorable manner, revealing an innocent look that was quite rare for her.

Yang Chen walked slowly, carrying Liu Mingyu into the bedroom. He gently put her down on the bed, placed her head on a pillow and pulled a blanket over her. Realizing that she still had her heels on, he took them off as well.

Given the circumstances, there was no need to wake her up to wash up. The fire that was burning within Yang Chen had somehow vanished into thin air as well.

Watching Liu Mingyu sleeping soundly, Yang Chen was suddenly overcome by an unprecedented feeling of fatigue. His body was not tired, but his heart was.

Yang Chen was in no mood to go home either. He sent a message to Guo Xuehua to say that he wasn't going home tonight. He then took off his jacket and trousers and lay down on Liu Mingyu's bed.

Liu Mingyu seemed to feel something warm next to her. Still in her dreams, she snuck up to Yang Chen's side instinctively. She rested her head on Yang Chen's chest as if he was a bolster.

Due to the alcohol, the natural fragrance from her body was amplified. It lingered in between every breath that Yang Chen took.

Yang Chen felt her soft and tender body in his arms. Her ample bosom were well rounded, and he could almost feel her poking up against him.

If the same scene had happened in the past, even if Liu Mingyu was drunk, Yang Chen wouldn't have resisted such a temptation.

But right now, Yang Chen had no indecent thoughts at all. All he wanted was for this woman in his arms to have a good night's rest. He was contented with holding her in his arms and just being next to her.

Yang Chen moved his body sideways so that Liu Mingyu could use his arm as a pillow properly. He hugged her in his arms and fell into a deep sleep...

The next day, Yang Chen lazily opened his eyes late in the morning.

He had truly fallen deep sleep the previous night. Normally, because of his cultivation, he was practically awake even when he was sleeping and was capable of detecting anything in his surroundings. The only reason he would remain in bed was the fact that he was too lazy to get up from it.

But, perhaps because he intentionally wanted a thoroughly peaceful sleep, Yang Chen had lowered his guard and did nothing but sleep through the entire night with Liu Mingyu in his arms.

Sunlight streamed in through the bedroom curtains and shone on the light brown wooden floor. The light golden rays made the room feel warm.

Yang Chen felt a soft body still stuck by his side. He tightened his wrap around the woman, and let out a satisfied smile.

Liu Mingyu was already awake. She knew that it was already past the time to report to work. But she didn't wake Yang Chen up, nor did she intend to go to work.

When she realized that she had fallen asleep and that Yang Chen did nothing but wrap her in his arms and slept till morning, sweetness started to overflow in her heart.

In the past, whenever Yang Chen came to meet her, he would always try to get naughty with her. That made her doubt at times whether he truly wanted to meet her, or whether it was only to satisfy his sexual desires. But now, it would seem like she was sorely mistaken. This man here still cared for her.

"Not gonna say anything even though you're awake?" Liu Mingyu looked up and asked. Her hair was messy, and she had a lazy look on her face.

Yang Chen's eyes were still closed. He released a small smile and said, "It's been so long since I last slept properly like this. I don't quite feel like getting up."

Liu Mingyu could roughly guess that Yang Chen was still troubled over Mo Qianni's matter, hence his reply. However, there was nothing she could do to help either. She said gently, "Get up now, it's almost noon. How about I prepare lunch for you?"

That made Yang Chen realize that it was getting late. He asked in doubt, "It's already so late. Why didn't you wake me up? Aren't you late for work?"

"You didn't wake me up last night either. Of course I wouldn't wake you up." Liu Mingyu smiled sweetly. "I think I won't go in today. It was because of you anyway. If the CEO finds out, you'll have to plead for me."

The word 'CEO' shook Yang Chen into a shiver and he became wide-awake immediately.

Not knowing why Yang Chen's face suddenly turned so pale, a slightly confused Liu Mingyu asked, "What's wrong with you... Just tell me if you are not comfortable talking about me in front of Boss Lin. I was just kidding."

Yang Chen replied awkwardly, "It's nothing like that. But I'm already wide awake. Let's get up..."

Lin Ruoxi's torture on him for the past few days had actually made Yang Chen grown to fear her slightly. Yang Chen could only convince himself that a henpecked man is a good man. Yang Chen, you're truly the role model of an ideal man in the modern era! he thought.

They both got up and freshened up in Liu Mingyu's huge bathroom. Liu Mingyu had already prepared a new set of toiletries in the bathroom specifically for him. That made Yang Chen feel so loved inside.

She obviously knew that I can't possibly visit too often, but she still made sure everything would be well prepared for me to relax myself," Yang Chen thought.

Since she wasn't going to work, Liu Mingyu didn't wake up early to apply makeup as usual. Without her makeup, she looked less bewitching but more elegant.

Donning a floral printed casual dress with an apron, Liu Mingyu hustled around in the kitchen making noodles. Although it was no longer clear whether this noodles was breakfast or lunch, they still had to eat something.

Yang Chen didn't want to bother her. He just sat on the sofa idly, watching the news that was on replay.

Yang Chen paid extra attention to the entertainment news more so than before. Hui Lin won the Star of Yu Lei which had caused her reputation to soar within China now. Besides, Christen and Yoo Yeonhee's publicity efforts were making it more likely for Hui Lin to become 'a young diva'. So her name often showed up in the entertainment news column.

Indeed, when he was watching the entertainment news, most of it were regarding the 'super rookie' Hui Lin. It talked about her first upcoming personal album. The famous lyrics writer and songwriters that were invited had all given her extremely high compliments. Some fellow even claimed outright during his interview, "I believe that Miss Hui Lin is completely capable of replacing the current most popular female singer in Asia within the foreseeable future."

This speech caused quite the commotion amongst the general public. The current most popular female singer in Asia was supposedly Yoo Yeonhee who had performed exceptionally well on America's Grammy awards. Yet, that producer claimed that Hui Lin could match or even surpass Yoo Yeonhee. This was quite a lot of pressure on a rookie!

The news ended by mentioning some other information about her during Star of Yu Lei and playing some short clips of Hui Lin's beautiful singing during the talent show.

Yang Chen knew that these reports were all publicity stunts by his company. Yu Lei was now loaded. Compared to the old-time entertainment companies and music companies, Yu Lei indeed had very little experience. But everything was easier with money. Moreover, Lin Ruoxi was more than willing to spend on boosting this younger sister of hers. She was very generous with the advertising fees. Or else, there wouldn't have been such a long segment of news specially talking about Hui Lin alone.

While he was watching, the mouth-watering aroma of noodles came wafting out from the kitchen. It was mixed with a unique fresh aroma which made Yang Chen's saliva secretion speed up immediately.

"Babe, what noodles are you making? Why does it smell so delicious?" Yang Chen popped his head out to see what Liu Mingyu was doing in the kitchen.

Liu Mingyu turned around and looked at him with a smile. "Don't be impatient. It'll be ready soon."

A few minutes later, Liu Mingyu came out with the bowl of ready-cooked noodles. It was large enough to satisfy Yang Chen's appetite.

Yang Chen realized upon close examination that it was pickled green mustard noodles. It had been ages since he last had it. A few shreds of pork meat and some bright red dried chilies were thrown into the mix as well. It looked delicious indeed.

“My mom made this pickled green mustard. It’s so much fresher than what you can get outside. I’ve been meaning to let you try it, but I only just got the chance,” Liu Mingyu said to Yang Chen with a proud look on her face.

Hearing what she said, Yang Chen laughed. “Pickled green mustard made by my mother-in-law? I bet it tastes good even without tasting it. Hehe, come on let’s eat. I’ll feed you.”

Liu Mingyu shook her head. “I’m not eating the noodles. There are fruits in the refrigerator. I recently started a starch free diet.”

“Diet?” Yang Chen said with an unhappy tone, “Why do you need to go on a diet with your figure? Come over here. You’re not allowed to eat just fruits!”

“I can listen to you on other matters. But I know my figure best. Hmph, of course you won’t say that I’m fat now. It’ll be too late for you to regret when my body really goes out of shape someday.” While talking, Liu Mingyu got up to get the ready-cut fruits from the refrigerator.

There was nothing Yang Chen could do. He could only say sulkily, “Just don’t lose fat in your breasts and hips.”

Liu Mingyu who was just about to open the refrigerator blushed instantly. She clenched her teeth and glared at Yang Chen. “Just eat your noodles. Stop babbling nonsense!”

Yang Chen tucked his head a little. “Women are so sensitive when it comes to their figure.”

Liu Mingyu’s cooking was pretty good. And the pickled green mustard that her mother had made was delicious as well. Yang Chen finished the entire bowl of noodles soup, leaving not even a drop of soup behind.

Liu Mingyu ate some fruits. Seeing Yang Chen finish the entire bowl made her very pleased. Ignoring the oil still dropping from Yang Chen’s mouth, she stepped forward to give him a kiss.

Yang Chen was totally indulging himself in this sexy benefit. He couldn’t help but reflect on his situation. “Little Yu’er is still more thoughtful. When have I ever not finished all my food? Yet Ruoxi has never given me a kiss as a reward,” he thought.

By the time she was done washing the bowls and chopsticks, Liu Mingyu removed her apron and asked in anticipation, “If we’re not going to work, what then should we do?”

Yang Chen was just about to throw the question back at Liu Mingyu when suddenly, Liu Mingyu’s phone started to ring.

Chapter 612 School Belle

Liu Mingyu furrowed her brows slightly. She was worried that the company was contacting her regarding some urgent matters. But still, she had to pick up the phone regardless.

Glancing at the number, Liu Mingyu heaved a sigh of relief. She answered the call, smiling, "Haili, what do you need so badly that you had to call me at this hour?"

From Liu Mingyu's tone, the caller was probably someone she knew well.

After talking on the phone with the woman called Haili for a while, Liu Mingyu's face showed slight hesitation, but in the end, she merely responded softly in agreement to something.

After hanging up, Liu Mingyu spoke without even waiting for Yang Chen to ask. "Haili is my university classmate and a good friend of mine. She invited me to attend a simple gathering. Our class monitor in university came back from Su Province to handle some issues. s=Since he's not staying for long, they wanted to have a gathering in the afternoon."

This was new to Yang Chen. He had never attended school, so things like 'classmates' were totally unfamiliar to him. Hearing that Liu Mingyu had a classmates' gathering to attend, he felt slightly envious of her past.

"Go ahead then. I'm free most of the time anyways. I'll hang out with you again after your gathering." Yang Chen didn't want to affect her gathering that was such a rare occasion.

But Liu Mingyu pursed her lips and said, "Yang Chen, come with me to the gathering."

Yang Chen was caught off guard. "This... is it appropriate?"

"Why would it be inappropriate? It's only a gathering between classmates. Why should it matter if I bring my boyfriend or not? Plus, they never said that I'm not allowed to do so," Liu Mingyu said casually. "Quite a number of my classmates are already married. When I attended gatherings in the past, I usually went alone... It felt weird to be there."

Yang Chen suddenly understood. He figured that Liu Mingyu wanted him there to make her look better! But that was nothing he couldn't do, since he was indeed her man. Besides, since he wanted to understand the women beside him better. What better way to do so than get a glimpse into their past.

"Then do I need to wear a suit and a necktie?" Yang Chen asked a bit anxiously.

"Why would you have to wear a suit and a necktie?" Liu Mingyu was puzzled.

"I have never attended a gathering between classmates, so I have no idea what to do. I'm worried of embarrassing you." Yang Chen smiled awkwardly.

Liu Mingyu let out some laughter and rolled her eyes at him. "Your skin is so thick no one could tell whether you're feeling embarrassed. In my opinion, you're fine just the way you are. We're just having a casual gathering. It's not like we're meeting important figures. I'll go in to change my clothes and put on some makeup. You wait here for a while, I'll be ready in a second."

Though she claimed to be ready in a second, by the time the two set off, forty minutes had gone by.

Liu Mingyu changed into a light blue double-layered Chanel dress, revealing her fair and tender calves. She had a striped mini suit on, which made flowed past the gentle curves of her neck. She looked almost like a Japanese or Korean star. As the sun was glaring, she even had a pair of fashionable Gucci shades with colored stripes on.

Such a get-up would never appear during usual working hours. This set of attire would cost at least twenty thousand dollars. Even though she was one of the higher-ups in Yu Lei, it would be too much to wear such an outfit to work.

Yang Chen looked at his own outfit. Although they were also all branded items that Lin Ruoxi had bought for him in the past, it still looked shabby next to her. But he wasn't one to fuss over such issues, since Liu Mingyu said it's okay, then so be it.

Since Liu Mingyu's car was still in the company, naturally they went to the gathering in Yang Chen's car. The gathering was at a high-class clubhouse at the eastern region of Zhonghai. Without an annual salary of two hundred thousand minimum, it was impossible for anyone to enter. It seemed like the few classmates who had invited Liu Mingyu were all doing very well themselves.

When Yang Chen arrived at the destination by car, a few males and females were just about to enter the clubhouse as well.

Alighting from the car, Liu Mingyu removed her shades. She waved at one of those who were about to walk through the entrance—a tall lady with curly hair—and shouted, "Haili!"

The woman with curly hair turned around, revealing a round face. Upon seeing Liu Mingyu, she ran back happily and hugged Liu Mingyu affectionately.

"Mingyu, it's so rare for you to make it on a working day. I thought you wouldn't come," Haili said, elated. Her gaze naturally shifted towards Yang Chen who had just locked the car behind Liu Mingyu. She asked doubtfully, "This gentleman... is he your boyfriend?"

A blush flashed across Liu Mingyu's face as she shyly replied with a yes.

Yang Chen, on the other hand, was not at all shy. He spoke to Haili proactively. "Hello, Miss Hai, I'm Yang Chen. Mingyu said that I can tag along, so I just came uninvited."

Haili covered her mouth to hide a smile. "Who's 'Miss Hai'? My surname is Zhao. Zhao Haili. Who in the world has the surname Hai?"

Yang Chen was taken aback. True as it may be, yet he hadn't realized it.

Upon seeing Yang Chen's blank look, Haili broke into another round of laughter. She held Liu Mingyu's hand and said, "Your boyfriend is so amusing. Wait till the rest meet him. They will definitely admire your taste."

Yang Chen curled his lips. Was this woman praising him or demeaning him?

Liu Mingyu just laughed, "It's my boyfriend anyway. They can say whatever they like."

Haili suddenly sighed, "I heard about Qi Kai's story. Who knew that the Qi family would end in such a tragic way. Luckily you managed to put that matter behind you. Now that you have a boyfriend, I feel relieved as your sister."

Qi Kai's entire family was slaughtered by Liu Qingshan's Green Dragon Society. Yang Chen and Liu Mingyu was aware of that. Despite efforts to intentionally shush the news, it was still impossible to hide it from everyone in the society.

Liu Mingyu's expression did not change in the slightest when she heard the name 'Qi Kai'. "That's all in the past. There's nothing left to talk about," she said.

"That's true." Zhao Haili didn't want to make Liu Mingyu feel uncomfortable as well. She immediately said with a grin, "Let's go. The class monitor and the others are already inside. And to Mr Yang Chen who is attending our gathering for the first time, welcome and come on in!"

Zhao Haili had an outgoing personality. So Yang Chen didn't take offence to her joke at him. He just grinned and followed the two ladies into the clubhouse.

Although Liu Mingyu brought Yang Chen along to show their relationship off, she wouldn't pretentiously want to stick next to Yang Chen all the time. That was not her style. So on the way in she just kept talking to Zhao Haili whom she hadn't met in a long while while holding her hand.

The space within the clubhouse was extremely huge, and it was well equipped with all sorts of entertainment facilities.

Under the lead of Zhao Haili, the trio walked into a large private room. A mix of pop songs echoed throughout that room, and around seven to eight people were chatting to each other and drinking merrily.

"How could you guys already start drinking before we've arrived!" Zhao Haili jokingly scolded them the moment she entered the room.

The moment they saw Zhao Haili and Liu Mingyu, the other people in the room stood up immediately. But they all had different expressions on their faces.

A handsome man who was in a casual suit and wearing a red shirt fixated his gaze on Liu Mingyu. An excited smile appeared on his face. "Mingyu, you're here too."

Liu Mingyu nodded her head lightly, took a step back, and wrapped her wrists around Yang Chen's arm. Then she calmly nodded her head towards everyone, "It's been a while, everyone."

Because she was from the public relations line of career, she often had to negotiate fiercely for their rights in the business industry. This contrasted with Liu Mingyu's quiet personality which was currently on display. It was apparent from how she treated her classmates. But many people have completely opposite personalities in person compared to in the workplace, so it wasn't anything to be shocked about.

"Our school belle has truly gotten prettier and prettier over the years. Huh, could it be that this gentleman here is your new boyfriend, Mingyu?" A tall, slim man with a small moustache spoke.

Liu Mingyu nodded. "His name is Yang Chen. He's a colleague in my company, and also my boyfriend."

Yang Chen didn't say anything. He just let Liu Mingyu introduce himself as a way of respect for her. After which, he nodded at the people there to greet them.

But hearing from their words that Liu Mingyu was the school belle, Yang Chen felt very happy with himself. Turns out that he had unknowingly got himself a girlfriend who was a school belle. But when he thought about it again, it felt like nothing to be proud of. Any one of the women beside him were fit to be school belle's.

Although the crowd was slightly surprised, they still responded politely, inviting Yang Chen to sit down at the sofa with them.

Zhao Haili could be said to be the topic generator within the crowd. And once they all sat down, she immediately introduced everyone's names to Yang Chen who had just joined their group, so that he was familiar with them.

The first man to speak to Liu Mingyu was the class monitor Zhu Kangyu who had come back from Su Province. When he heard Liu Mingyu introducing Yang Chen as her boyfriend, his expressions started to reveal awkwardness. He waited until everyone had taken their seats before asking, "It's my first time meeting Mr Yang, have you known Mingyu for very long? How come we've never heard about you before?"

With these words, a few other classmates of Liu Mingyu also turned their gazes towards Yang Chen curiously. Liu Mingyu was the popular school belle in university, so she naturally attracted the attention of many suitors. There was a somewhat romantic relationship between her and Qi Kai, that her classmates knew as well. But now that Qi Kai had passed away, her classmates were once again curious as to who she was going to end up with.

As for the class monitor Zhu Kangyu, he was doing the best among these people. Otherwise there wouldn't be so many people who specially made time to show up at the gathering the moment he returned to Zhonghai. He was fond of Liu Mingyu even when they were still studying. Now that Qi Kai was no longer around, he felt that this was his chance.

Yang Chen was no idiot, he could sense that Zhu Kangyu obviously held enmity towards him. He was probably one of the suitors who were eyeing Liu Mingyu. Thus, Yang Chen said with a smile, "It's been almost a year now. But we were both rather busy so we hadn't had much chance to come out together."

Zhu Kangyu nodded, then suddenly said, "I am the vice head of the Provincial Party Committee Organization Department in Su Province. I wonder what position is Mr Yang holds in Yu Lei? I assume that Mr Yang must be quite the figure to be able to gain the love of our school belle, right?"

With these words, it was clear that he was trying to display his own abilities openly.

Before Yang Chen could even say anything, a fat guy with a beer belly exclaimed, "Oh my god! Our class monitor is so formidable! It has only been a year and you've been promoted once again already!"

"A few days ago my dad came back and told me that my class monitor had joined the Provincial Party Committee Organization Department, and even joined the Provincial Standing Committee in Su Province. I couldn't quite believe it at that time. Who knew that it was true!" another classmate said with mixed feelings.

Zhu Kangyu just shook his hands with a nonchalant face and said, "I was just lucky to replace an empty position. It's no big deal."

"Class Monitor, stop being so humble. Even people like me who's not familiar with politics know that entering the Provincial Party at your age means that you'll have a bright future ahead of you. I believe there aren't that many people at your age who are working in the Provincial Party," Zhao Haili said in admiration.

With all the flattering speeches, a tinge of redness glowed on Zhu Kangyu's face. Those words were obviously boosting his ego. Everyone who was seated there all came from pretty good family backgrounds, but classmates who had once started around the same level as he did, now sang praises to him. Wasn't that the best proof of his success?"

However, when Zhu Kangyu shifted his gaze towards Liu Mingyu whom he was most concerned about, he was disheartened to find her merely smiling with a nonchalant face. She seemed to have no intention of flattering him. There wasn't a single twitch of surprise on her face!

Actually, that was not Liu Mingyu's fault. If it were the old Liu Mingyu, perhaps she would have felt shocked by how he had entered the Provincial Party at such a young age. But now, not to mention her own man Yang Chen was the eldest grandson of Yang clan, one of the four major clans, and he had extraordinary abilities and talents. Even her father Liu Qingshan dominated the underworld of Beijing. Ministers in Beijing had to show respect to Liu Qingshan. So as Liu Qingshan's daughter, she had no reason to take note of officials like the past.

But Zhu Kangyu wasn't privy to Liu Mingyu's recent developments. He just saw it as her being blinded by her love for Yang Chen, so much so that she had become numb to realizing how bright his future was. So he continued asking, "Stop being so polite, everyone. I'm still the same class monitor I was. More importantly, Mr Yang is our guest here today. Being chosen by Mingyu as her boyfriend has made me very curious about that. Don't you all want to know more about it too? Mr Yang, we've yet to hear of your position."

Actually, no matter how Yang Chen answered this question, it would be a utter humiliation. The reason being Yang Chen couldn't be the CEO of Yu Lei International, at most he was one of the higher-ups. And a higher-up from an international company was not unusual. Compared to Zhu Kangyu who already yielded great power at such a young age, Yang Chen was miles away from where him.

Everyone was also well aware that Zhu Kangyu was trying to embarrass Yang Chen on purpose. He wanted to let Liu Mingyu realize the difference between him and Yang Chen. Even if it might not necessarily make Liu Mingyu change her mind, he didn't want to make it easy for this outsider called Yang Chen!

Chapter 613

Yang Chen's Chastity

As she listened to the indirect attacks being thrown at Yang Chen, Liu Mingyu furrowed her eyebrows slightly. But on the surface, Zhu Kangyu's words weren't that impolite, so there wasn't a reason for her to step in.

At that moment, Yang Chen suddenly looked all shy and giggled. "Is there a need to question this? My duty, is being my dear Mingyu's personal boyfriend of course."

After the words left his mouth, Yang Chen reached his hand out to intimately caress Liu Mingyu's tender, clean face. It made Liu Mingyu's face burn red with embarrassment and she glared at Yang Chen shyly.

This man really had no shame. Embarrassing words and actions meant nothing to him even in a room full of strangers!

But she couldn't embarrass Yang Chen by leaving the room even though that was the only thing on her mind!

Indeed, it not only made Liu Mingyu angry and embarrassed at the same time, it was also a jaw dropper for the few classmates who were present!

The original question posed was a serious one about the respective persons career. Who knew that this fellow would actually start showing off his love without warning?

Not only did it shift the topic, it even gave Zhu Kangyu a harsh slap of humiliation. *Do you see that? This here is my woman, what can you do about it??* thought Yang Chen.

Yang Chen's thick-skinned personality and his sly actions totally overturned the others' perception of him before this. Especially Zhao Haili. Her mouth was wide open, all the while thinking, that was the same guy who was calling her 'Miss Hai' stupidly just now. How could his personality have changed in such a brief moment?

Zhu Kangyu's face turned sour as he laughed awkwardly. "Mr Yang is such an expert at making girls happy, no wonder Mingyu chose you as her boyfriend."

"Well the full story is slightly more complicated than that. The crucial point is that I'm a person who is willing to love her genuinely," Yang Chen said with a totally simple and honest face. He looked as sincere as though he was absolutely willing to dig out his heart and lungs for her.

Many of Liu Mingyu's classmates' expressions became ones of disgust! The lovey dovey words that this guy had said were too nauseating!

Liu Mingyu just kept her head lowered without saying anything. Her burning red ears were proof that she was actually embarrassed and shy beyond measure right now.

Zhu Kangyu finally understood. This man in front of him was totally shameless. No matter how hard you try to humiliate him, he was able to deflect it and move on. Why? Because he didn't know how to feel ashamed!

"Looks like Mr Yang is truly devoted to our school belle. Haha, Class Monitor, let's not let him continue demonstrating his devotion towards her. We rarely meet up, so let's have a few more drinks!"

"I agree, I agree, looking at them makes me so envious especially when my marriage is heading towards its grave. Let's just hurry up and drink instead."

The few classmates all started to interrupt Yang Chen's words, in an attempt to save Zhu Kangyu some pride. After all, if things were to continue like this, Zhu Kangyu would be driven to his death by anger soon enough.

This Class Monitor Zhu was still the one with the brightest future among their classmates. Those who were present were planning to rely on Zhu Kangyu to help them out in some matters in the future, so how could they not try to please him?

Zhu Kangyu, on the other hand, was also a person who was used to being in official situations. Although he was still young, he had to develop a high tolerance level. His expressions returned back to normal, and he smiled while raising his glass of wine, clanking it against a few other classmates' glasses, saying,

“I’ve already said it before. I’ll only be staying in Zhonghai for no more than two days. Yet the lot of you have decided to gather in my honor regardless. I truly don’t know how to repay you all.”

“Our honored minister has come personally. It is our pleasure to share a few drinks with you. How could we even ask of you, the minister to repay us with anything?” One of the classmates said flatteringly with a smile.

The other classmates also joined in on the flatter and lavished an array of compliments on him, mostly praising how Zhu Kangyu was doing well making it up the ranks with his exceptional abilities, and his role as a model in their lives.

Zhao Haili, on the other hand, was closer to Liu Mingyu. She felt that Liu Mingyu didn’t have pleasant feelings towards Zhu Kangyu, so she chose to remain silent. She just grabbed three glasses and poured some whiskey for Liu Mingyu and Yang Chen.

Yang Chen was all smiles, thanking Zhao Haili. He felt that this ‘Miss Hai’ had a pretty good personality, as she didn’t rush to flatter Zhu Kangyu, instead she made it a point to pour some alcohol for her friend and Yang Chen, this outsider.

However, looking at these so-called classmates, Yang Chen sighed in his heart. These people might have been true friends in the past. But the pretentious looks of theirs were practically no different from the social interactions in the workplace.

This Zhu Kangyu was obviously still a deputy minister, yet they just had to ignore it blatantly and called him ‘minister’? just so to make him happy.

Liu Mingyu didn’t really say much save for her little chats with Zhao Haili. Whenever others asked her anything, she would give a short and simple reply. Actually she wasn’t keen on staying on, but they were her friends after all. Although everyone had aged differently, she still cared about their friendship and didn’t want to make it an unhappy event for everyone.

However, Liu Mingyu glanced at Yang Chen who was sitting beside her from time to time. She was worried that Yang Chen was still angry at Zhu Kangyu, and would drag her into his mess again.

Yang Chen was munching on snacks and drinking some alcohol. He seemed relaxed and carefree. In his eyes, these people before him might as well have been clown in a circus. He just treated it as though he was watching a show with his woman.

When he saw Liu Mingyu glancing at him worriedly, Yang Chen winked at her secretly. And with that, Liu Mingyu eased up and relaxed slightly.

After Zhu Kangyu and the classmates had been chatting insincerely for quite a while, Zhu Kangyu’s gaze shifted back towards Yang Chen who was drinking on his own lazily. He smiled and said, almost creepily, “Mr Yang has been drinking alone all this while. It makes us look like bad hosts. How about this, I propose that we all toast to Mr Yang, just treat it as our blessing for Mr Yang and Mingyu to be blissful and happy together.”

There were a total of eight people present, including Zhu Kangyu. It practically meant that Yang Chen had to drink continuously with eight of them!

A few fellows who were smart enough immediately realized that the class monitor was trying to knock out this unlucky guy called Yang Chen. Serves him right. Who asked him to get involved with a woman no one was allowed to touch?

But these people were all sided with Zhu Kangyu, naturally they wouldn't try to persuade him out of it. Besides, this suggestion appeared to be for the sake of Yang Chen and Liu Mingyu's happiness on the surface. Of course everyone was more than willing to do Zhu Kangyu this favor!

They only had to drink a cup, whereas Yang Chen was the one who had to drink at least eight cups!

"What a good suggestion. Come on, I'll be the first to empty my cup to give my blessings. Mr Yang, you fill up your cup too. Drink up!"

A man who was sitting near to Yang Chen took the lead to initiate the drinking. He held up the wine bottle and filled Yang Chen's cup, followed by his own. Then he stood up, and in a raise of his head, he gulped down the entire cup of amber-colored alcohol!

Whiskey had around 40% alcohol. If they drank like that, people with an average limit would start to feel dizzy by the time they had downed two cups. This bunch of people often drank together. It was only natural for their tolerance to be quite high.

All of them were causing such a commotion about it. If Yang Chen refused to drink, then it would seem like he wasn't giving them any face at all, and it meant that he was admitting defeat.

Liu Mingyu was even more upset at Zhu Kangyu now. But in the presence of so many classmates, she couldn't possibly say it outright either. She was extremely anxious in her heart. She didn't want Yang Chen to really have to drink up all eight cups continuously.

Yang Chen quietly reached his hand to grab Liu Mingyu's hand slightly, to tell her that he was okay. Then he picked up his wine glass and toasted to the guy, saying, "Since you're so enthusiastic, I of course have no reason to reject."

After which, with a raise of his head, he gulped down the entire glass of wine too.

A tinge of chilliness flashed across the eyes of Zhu Kangyu who was watching from the side. He had an evil smile at the corners of his lips, as though anticipating Yang Chen's eventual embarrassment. He didn't believe that the Yang Chen in front of him would be able to drink eight glasses of drink with 40% alcohol continuously—that was the equivalent of two kilograms of high-alcoholic Maotai Chinese liquor already!

Now that they had started drinking, the few others had to follow suit and toast to him as well. If they didn't toast to him, they were not giving Zhu Kangyu any face. Although some of them felt sorry towards Yang Chen, it was either them or him.

Yang Chen was rather welcoming, rejecting no one who came forward. He toasted to these classmates of Liu Mingyu one by one, glass by glass, stomaching the whiskey as though it was plain water.

Alcohol didn't really pose a threat to him. He could just use the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture to 'evaporate' it, and it was settled. Not a problem at all.

But watching all these with her own eyes, Liu Mingyu who sat beside him could feel her heart hurt for him. She couldn't care less about her friendships with the people in the room anymore—her man was more important than that. So just when Yang Chen was about to drink the fifth glass of whiskey, Liu Mingyu hurriedly stopped him, "Don't drink anymore!"

The man who was about to toast to him laughed awkwardly. "Hey Mingyu, how can you not give me some face? You let the rest of them toast, yet you want to stop him when it's my turn. Mr Yang is still fine after drinking so much. His alcohol tolerance must be incredible."

Liu Mingyu furrowed her pretty eyebrows, ignoring that classmate, and just said to Yang Chen gently, "Don't drink anymore, alright? It'll damage your body."

Yang Chen was not interested in entertaining them any longer either. Since Liu Mingyu was so worried about him, he just nodded his head obediently and put down the wine glass.

"Mr Yang, this won't do. I was the one who suggested this toasting, and I haven't even toasted to you, yet you already want to stop drinking. This is truly taking a shot at my pride." Zhu Kangyu smiled. He personally filled Yang Chen's glass with wine, then raised his glass to toast to Yang Chen. "I'll drink it up first as an honor."

Right after he said that, Zhu Kangyu gulped the entire glass of wine, and turned his glass upside down to show that there was not even a single drop left.

"I've already drunk. Mr Yang wouldn't be so petty to reject even this final glass of wine, would you?" Zhu Kangyu showed an honest look although his intentions were all but innocent. He believed that Yang Chen only refused to drink because he had already reached his limit.

A few others joined in on the commotion, "That's right. As the boyfriend of our school belle, you should at least have alcohol tolerance. You should give the class monitor some face!"

"I am the one who's stopping Yang Chen from drinking. You all should stop forcing him." Liu Mingyu was very anxious, and spoke up to protect Yang Chen.

A woman chuckled, "Could it be that Yang Chen is afraid of his girlfriend?"

"That makes sense. Hey, Brother Yang, just drink the alcohol if you're a man. Otherwise you're losing all your face!" Another person laughed and tried to provoke him.

Yang Chen scratched the back of his head, and he innocently giggled while he said, "Babe Mingyu has already forbidden me from drinking. So I'll definitely not drink."

"Are you sure! Are you even still a man! You're throwing away your face!" A few angry fellows started yelling out. They had already drunk so much, but all their efforts would go down the drain if Yang Chen did not get drunk!

But Yang Chen merely just licked his lips and said out loud and firmly, "I've already lost my chastity, what need do I have for a face?"

With these words of his, everyone present was stunned into silence.

They'd seen shameless people before, but not shameless to this degree!

Chastity? Was it something that any man should even say!?

Liu Mingyu felt like laughing out loud. This fellow was too annoying. He even dared to spout such nonsense in such an occasion. But then it made her anger subside as well. She just rolled her eyes at Yang Chen and smiled while saying nothing.

Zhao Haili was laughing like a madman. She was so fascinated by the fact that her sister-like friend had gotten herself such a boyfriend.

Zhu Kangyu and the rest looked very awkward. Yang Chen had already set the bar to a new low for them. What more could they say?

They weren't afraid of those who were unreasonable, but those who pretended to be innocent!

"Since Mr Yang obeys Mingyu's words so much, then we have nothing to say. I still have something on, I have to make a trip out. You may carry on." Zhu Kangyu stood up with a solemn face. Disregarding the odd gazes from the others, he just walked straight out of the private room.

Chapter 614

The Minister's Undisclosable Woe

Seeing Zhu Kangyu leave the room, the rest of them continued their futile efforts to make Yang Chen drunk. At the end of the day, all they were there to do was to get on Zhu Kangyu's good side. Deep down in their hearts they still felt rather sorry towards Liu Mingyu and this Yang Chen whom they had never met before.

But now that things have gone to the point of no return, they felt awkward talking to Yang Chen afterward. They just pretended as though nothing had happened and started chatting with each other on their own.

Yang Chen asked Mingyu who was beside him softly, "You asked me to accompany you here because you already knew and wanted me to help shield you from that Zhu-something guy right?"

Liu Mingyu bit her lips a little and nodded.

"So you are basically just using me?" Yang Chen frowned.

"Are you angry?" Liu Mingyu raised her head worriedly. She said guiltily, "Zhu Kangyu has been wooing me ever since my university days but I have never accepted him. Things got slightly better when he went to Su Province for work later on. But he would still ask me out every time he came back to Zhonghai. All I've ever wanted from him was for him to give up. But I never expected him to do what he did just now. Although I thought that he was just an ordinary guy in the past, I never knew him to be this cunning."

Yang Chen grinned. "I'm not exactly angry, but I still feel wronged. Being used like a gun by my own lover, it's almost like suffering from alcohol poisoning....."

Liu Mingyu could tell that Yang Chen had other intentions behind his words. How could he even be suffering from alcohol poisoning if he wasn't even the slightest bit drunk? She rolled her eyes at him and said, "Take it as an I owe you. Next time I'll find a chance to make a proper meal for you to pay you back."

"I don't want to eat your home cooked meal." Yang Chen shook his head.

"Then what do you want?" Liu Mingyu asked.

"I want you. I'll just eat you," Yang Chen said right beside the woman's ear.

Liu Mingyu felt her face burn up. She didn't reply anything but just lowered her head. She didn't want these people to find out how shy she was.

Yang Chen didn't continue teasing her. He took a sip of alcohol and said slowly, "Actually... I would rather you make use of me more often, so that I can do more for you."

"Hmm?" Liu Mingyu raised her head, puzzled, staring at Yang Chen.

"I will never be able to give you a complete relationship. All I can do is leave you in the dark. I feel so guilty about it that I would like to make it up to you as much as possible." Yang Chen lowered his volume and said, "That's why, being able to do something for you, to contribute a little, makes my heart feel more at ease. In the future, if you have another guy that you like, I wouldn't be too sad about it even though it might hurt. As long as you can be happy, then it's alright for me to back out as well since I'm the one who's being too greedy from the start."

Liu Mingyu's clear eyes brightened up. In the dim light, her hand held onto Yang Chen's rough palm unconsciously.

"I also want to try hard not to love you, you bad guy. So that when I feel unfair and upset in my heart, I wouldn't feel so bitter and suffocated... But I can't do it. I can't do it right now, and I won't be able to do it in the future either. You have already taken away my ability to do so. So you ought to use your entire lifetime to make it up to me, don't you think?"

Yang Chen smiled unnaturally, nodding his head.

"Say, what are you two talking about? Are you ignoring me, this former classmate of yours?" Zhao Haili who was beside them finally realized what these two were mumbling about. She glared at them disapprovingly.

Liu Mingyu smiled at Zhao Haili apologetically, "Alright fine. Let me toast to you as compensation."

The two women toasted and emptied their glasses. Liu Mingyu was originally from the line of public relations, it was only natural for her to have high alcohol tolerance.

"Why isn't this President Zhu coming back yet?" someone started asking curiously.

The rest found it odd as well. Almost ten minutes had passed already.

"Sigh..." Yang Chen let out a sigh. "Perhaps he has secret woes that he can't disclose."

Everyone stared at him. Zhao Haili asked curiously, "What secret woes?"

Yang Chen laughed mysteriously before saying, "For guys, when they're under too much stress, and not getting enough exercise, their prostate gland... kidney... things like that might start to develop problems. The class monitor who has always been contributing to the country so cautiously, for him to have some minor problems is quite inevitable as well. You should all stop nagging about it so much."

With these words, everyone couldn't help but laugh out loud. This fellow was too mean. He had only just turned things over to make it look awkward for Zhu Kangyu just now, and now he was saying things like Zhu Kangyu having problems with reproduction behind his back. If Zhu Kangyu were to hear this, there's no telling what he might do in a fit of rage!

The door flipped open right at that moment. Zhu Kangyu walked back in not knowing what had just transpired. He seemed to be in a good mood. Even his footsteps were much lighter.

"Why, everyone is laughing so happily. Is there something I don't know?" Zhu Kangyu asked, seeing the laughter on everyone's faces.

Who knew that all these classmates were all staring at Zhu Kangyu, checking him out. And they even focused their gazes on his lower body secretly...

Zhu Kangyu was filled with questions but chose not to speak. He could only suppress his doubts and sat down to continue speaking, "Sorry to let everyone wait for so long. The National People's Congress is going to be held soon, so there're so many things going on. Come on everyone, let's continue drinking."

However, Zhu Kangyu had just raised his glass, and Liu Mingyu said, "Class Monitor, Yang Chen and I have to make a trip back to the company in the afternoon for some matters, so we can only stay until now for today. Let's meet up again next time if there is a chance."

Basically she meant that they were leaving right away, no longer keeping him company.

Liu Mingyu was worried that Zhu Kangyu would do something to target Yang Chen again. She couldn't bear to see Yang Chen suffer just to protect her.

At first, everyone thought that Zhu Kangyu would try to make them stay. However, Zhu Kangyu just smiled casually. "Mingyu is leaving so fast. But we shouldn't delay you if it concerns work. We'll see you two off."

Everyone else agreed and got up to see Yang Chen and Liu Mingyu off.

Yang Chen was fine with it. Liu Mingyu wanted to leave, then he'd leave together with her. But somehow, he knew things were not going to play out quite this simply.

All of them sent Yang Chen and Liu Mingyu out of the private room and all the way out of the clubhouse. They warmly expressed their hopes to gather together again next time, and even praised Yang Chen for how well he could drink.

Yang Chen was secretly swearing in his heart, who said that he was the only thick-skinned one? These people here were all thick-skinned. They could change their expressions even faster than one can flip a book!

Just as they were about to step out of the main gate of the clubhouse, a short and plump man with a crew cut, wearing a striped grey suit walked straight towards them. The man had his head lowered so he didn't seem to notice a bunch of people walking out of the door, and just walked straight towards them in rapid footsteps.

Yang Chen immediately realized something and moved his body sideways slightly, trying to avoid this plump guy.

Little to know that, even though that plump guy's 'accidental' bump didn't succeed, he still moved his body towards one side in a very 'professional' manner—and fell down on the floor!

Yang Chen laughed. He didn't even do anything. Weren't this fellow's acting skills a little too formidable!

"Ouch!"

The moment the plump guy landed on the floor, he shouted out in pain. It was as if he had hit his elbow against the pillars of the door. His tears were almost dropping as he hugged his arm and yelled out loud, "Help! It hurts so much!! Are you trying to kill me!!"

Not waiting for everyone to react, about seven to eight men who were in various outfits suddenly came rushing out from a corner outside the clubhouse. One of them who had a silver necklace hung around his neck, and had slightly curly hair with a squared face shouted anxiously, "Old Fatty! What's wrong with you!? What happened to your hand?"

The short plump guy who were referred to as 'Old Fatty' had an upset look on his face and cried out in pain, "Big Brother! I was just about to enter through the door, and this guy bumped into me! My hand... I think my hand is broken!"

"What?!" That square-faced guy glared at Yang Chen angrily. "You dare to bump into my, Curly Hair Wolf's subordinate?! If you don't give us an explanation today, don't even think about walking out of this door unharmed!"

The group of subordinates immediately helped the pretentious plump guy up, and yelled out after this Curly Hair Wolf, asking Yang Chen to give them an explanation!

Everyone present was well aware that it was a scam. Those people were obviously waiting there to pull one on them.

But at such a high-class clubhouse, how was it possible that not even a security guard was present in sight? How were they allowed to carry out their schemes here? There was something wrong with the matter, and it seemed specially targeted at Yang Chen!

A few people who were sharp-witted consciously took a glimpse at Zhu Kangyu who left the room just now to do something. But Zhu Kangyu's face seemed full of worry. No one could tell anything odd about him.

"You guys are scamming us in broad daylight! If you don't leave right away, we're going to call the cops!" Liu Mingyu probably could guess what was up, but she couldn't say anything without evidence. Since Yang Chen remained quiet, she could only use calling the cops as a threat out of panic to fight these hooligans off.

"Call the cops? Tsk tsk, little woman, how can you be so ignorant of the state of affairs?" Curly Hair Wolf stared at Liu Mingyu with a lecherous gaze, saying, "So what if the cops do come? We are still in the right aren't we? This was your man who bumped into our brother first! At most we can examine his injuries at a hospital!"

"He's not injured at all!" Zhao Haili who was by the side couldn't stand watching this and spoke up for Liu Mingyu.

Curly Hair Wolf smiled evilly. "Injured or not, we'll only find out when we reach the hospital."

Yang Chen was shaking his head down in his heart. Actually this wasn't a matter of whether Old Fatty was injured or not. Even if he were not injured, given these people's 'professionalism', they could very well have caused an injury on the way. Therefore, the crucial point was finding out the true reason behind why this happened.

If it were in the past, the easiest way for Yang Chen to settle this would be to beat all these people up. But if he did that, he would be walking straight into these people's trap. Regardless of whether he hurt or killed them, he would only bring misfortune upon himself. The troubles would only keep on coming, and it would add unnecessary trouble to Liu Mingyu. It wasn't worth it.

After thinking about it thoroughly, Yang Chen had an idea. He said to Liu Mingyu who was next to him, "Call the cops. We'll talk after the cops come."

Chapter 615

Unreasonable Old Woman

Liu Mingyu had her phone ready, and upon Yang Chen's agreement immediately dialed the police hotline.

Curly Hair Wolf and his group were in no means intimidated by the call. They watched curiously, looking forward to see what games Yang Chen was playing.

Once Liu Mingyu was connected to the east district police department she recounted the gist of the incident. After giving a detailed address of her exact location, she turned to stare at Yang Chen.

She knew that for Yang Chen, nothing was beyond his capabilities. But in the presence of thugs like these, the bright-minded Liu Mingyu realized quickly that Zhu Kangyu was the mastermind behind this. What she could not comprehend however was how a person once head over heels for her, would do something so despicable against her. If anything, this would only make her despise him more.

Zhao Haili along with her other old schoolmates had not left the scene due to their fear of Curly Hair Wolf and his gang of thugs. Despite how wealthy or powerful they were, staying out of confrontations like these were their safest options. Not to mention setting themselves behind the scenes made grounds for a fair opportunity to observe how things would play out.

"Yang Chen, are we expecting a fight?" Liu Mingyu anxiously whispered to him.

Yang Chen—who was the crux of the issue—was contemplating whether or not he should have a smoke. After all, waiting for the police time and time again was a tedious task. But once he heard what she had said, he burst into laughter. "Why? Are you waiting for your man to flex his abilities?"

"Look I'm dead serious okay, let's keep this low profile alright? I know you are capable of amazing things but that doesn't mean I will not worry," Liu Mingyu said, frowning.

Yang Chen brushed it off with a smile. He'd rather not explain to her that his true intention was to settle this once and for all. Safety was never his point of concern.

It was a pity that this incident happened in the east district, so the police department was not within Cai Yan's jurisdiction. Otherwise, everything would've been over before it had even started.

Curly Hair Wolf and the gang dragged the obese little man to the back and ordered a henchman to watch over him. The rest of the gang each lit a joint as they circled the entrance of the association building, effectively cutting off all the exits as they anticipated the arrival of the police.

Zhu Kangyu gave a show of concern as he came forward and started to speak, "Mr. Yang, I know this matter might be rather complicated. I don't think I am in a position to speak but I do have however several favors. Why don't I get someone to settle this matter for us instead?"

Everyone watched as Zhu Kangyu faked empathy in this situation, disgusted from within but still gave their upfront applause. Two-faced reactions started to ring from the crowd. Some even took it upon themselves to yell, "Class Monitor you have such a good heart!"

Yang Chen faked some laughter and said, "Well that's not really needed. I can handle the police myself. How about you... Been busy recently?"

Yang Chen's nonsensical question caught Zhu Kangyu off-guard. It took him a while before he recollected himself and replied, "Well like I said, I have been quite busy these days. Anything the matter Mr Yang?"

"Oh, not really, just that I'd suggest you Minister Zhu to delegate some responsibility to other people else things may get too delayed," Yang Chen politely mentioned.

Zhu Kangyu who was caught in the wind, eventually decided to take Yang Chen's words as a joke and responded with a shake of the head.

The one with more genuine intentions on the other hand came running by. Zhao Haili who had made her way to the management returned. She furiously snapped, "Mingyu, I went to look for the security and managers in the centre just now, and everyone was present! The worst part? They acted like none of that was their business. They even had the galls to tell us to deal with it ourselves!"

Liu Mingyu sighed inside. It was too obvious that all these people were connected to Zhu Kangyu. For a man of his age to reach executive levels, his family background was certainly of an unusual type. And among the ones present, the only person that could demand a fancy venue like this one to disregard their customers was none other than him.

Right then two police sedans drove towards the building and stopped right in front of the entrance. Following their arrival, several policemen led by a middle-aged flat top police officer stepped out of their vehicles.

It had only been five minutes since the call was made and the police were already here at the venue. This kind of efficiency caught everyone present by surprise, which led many to speculate if they were pre-informed.

"May I know who made the call?" the middle-aged police officer commanded to the masses in a stern manner.

Before Liu Mingyu got her chance to speak, Curly Hair Wolf hurriedly found his way to the officer and pleaded, "Officer, I demand justice for my brother. These people almost had my brother crashed and murdered!"

"What nonsense are you spouting about! Just go ahead and die, will you?" Zhao Haili held no punches.

"Shut up bitch it's none of your businesses!" another thug taunted.

"Shut it! What's unjust is not decided by who talks the loudest. Can the victim and the instigator please step forward? We will conduct interrogations back at the station," the police officer declared.

"It's this punk! He crashed into my brother Old Fatty and broke his arm. Still he chooses to ignore his mistake and play innocent!" Curly Hair Wolf furiously pointed at Yang Chen.

The officer was stern as he ordered the policeman next to him. "Lock him up and take him back to the station."

"Wait!" Liu Mingyu was enraged by the decision. "How can you just arrest someone like that? Just from what he said? You didn't even hear from us!"

The police officer gave a soulless grin and said, "Look Miss, I can sue you for obstructing civil prosecution just for doing that. We will judge his intentions at the police station. Why? Are you worried that the evidence would go against him? Is that why you're opposing this arrest right now?"

"It's quite obvious that this arrest is one without proof! How dare you call yourselves policemen!" Zhao Huili furiously rebuked.

Right when the police officer was noticeably irritated by the resistance, Yang Chen stood out from the crowd to clear the air. With a smile, he spoke, "Alright guys let's cut the chatter. It's no big deal for me to go to the police station again. It's not like it's my first time. Let's go."

Amidst all the talking, Yang Chen took the initiative and made his way to the policeman.

"Bring the handcuffs and lock me up... ugh... it's only been a few days since I got out of custody. It's such a shame to have to go back. It sure seems like I'm fated to forever be in police stations..."

Yang Chen appeared rather indifferent as he mumbled away, as if it was just another day for him, which left the rest speechless.

Liu Mingyu nervously hurled herself forward and held Yang Chen tight. She shook her head and said, "Don't go with them. I can call my dad. He will definitely know how to deal with this. If you really do go with them who knows what they'd do to you?"

The police officer was offended by her words. Furious, he said, "Excuse me Miss, but I have to warn you to speak carefully. Need I remind you that defamation is a crime?"

Liu Mingyu's usual mild-mannered nature was nowhere to be seen at this moment. She glared at the officer and snapped, "If you arrest my man today, I'll make sure your position will be vacant by tomorrow!"

Liu Mingyu was pushed to her limits. This day was not turning out like she had hoped. Yang Chen was originally told to come along for her own selfish intentions, to defend her against Zhu Kangyu. But not only was he made to do numerous shots of alcohol, he even ended up as a victim of Zhu Kangyu's dirty scheme. Liu Mingyu felt riddled with guilt.

As a result, regardless of how reluctant she was to risk her father's mob background, Liu Mingyu made up her mind to defend Yang Chen.

The officer was not threatened by that, instead he gave a cold smile as he said, "Why should I care about your threats when I'm abiding the law? Move! Or else you will be coming along!"

Yang Chen patted Liu Mingyu on her shoulder, a subtle acknowledgement that everything was going to be fine. Liu Mingyu's sudden explosion of emotions filled his heart with warmth. It was his first time witnessing Liu Mingyu this heated before. She was yelling and taunting like what he assumed an 'unreasonable old woman' would do...

Yang Chen abruptly cleared his throat, as he looked towards the emptiness of the centre's top left corner and shouted, "Still enjoying the show? You guys really want to see me in the police custody again, don't you? Or do you think you could evade me?"

Everyone shifted their focus to the direction Yang Chen was staring at. Besides a few parked cars, there was not a single silhouette to be found.

Is Yang Chen hallucinating?? many of them thought.

However, after several moments two figures, one taller and the other one shorter, with light footsteps trotted out from a corner and casually strolled towards them.

One was a big and bulky man, while the other was a modest and elegant girl. Nobody present at the scene knew who they were, but they were exactly the duo sent by Yellow Flame Iron Brigade to observe Yang Chen's whereabouts—Sky Dragon and Ye Zi.

Chapter 616

Yes

Sky Dragon and Ye Zi were both called out by Yang Chen just like that, and they had no choice but show themselves.

They had initially planned to observe the situation in the shadows. As long as Yang Chen was not in any serious trouble they would have preferred not to interfere.

If Yang Chen was brought to the police station, they would go directly to the police station and bail him out. End of story.

But as it turned out, Yang Chen decided to resolve the issue now. He even went so far as to say that he would personally fetch them should they be unwilling to come forth.

Sky Dragon and Ye Zi thought to themselves that if they couldn't even hide their existence from Yang Chen—there was no way they were going to escape his grip. They might as well reveal themselves obediently to save themselves the embarrassment.

The two of them were posed to keep Yang Chen under surveillance. But in reality they were there to keep any situation Yang Chen was in from escalating. Restricting Yang Chen's freedom would be a mad man's dream.

The scene went quiet in an instant. Nobody recognized Sky Dragon and Ye Zi nor understood their purpose of being there. They couldn't even figure out how Yang Chen knew they were there.

Liu Mingyu was not at all surprised. She knew that Yang Chen had many secrets. She reckoned that they were there to protect Yang Chen. After all, Yang Chen did have the background of the Yang clan. She was correct to a certain degree.

"Who are you chaps?" the officer asked in discontentment.

Sky Dragon did not speak. He took out a tiny leatherback book colored in a dark olive green from his jacket pocket. On the cover of the book, there was a steel seal with the pattern of sickle-axe and fork. The emblem looked sophisticated.

The tiny book was placed in front of the officer. The officer frowned and inspected it carefully. At first, he was clueless as to its significance. But when he looked at the line below it, his face became stiff in an instant.

Everyone noticed that the police officer's facial expression became petrified that they were curious about what Sky Dragon had pulled out. But Ye Zi conveniently blocked the public's view from the content of the book.

The few policemen who stood behind were all stunned on the spot after reading the book. They couldn't believe their eyes.

"The se—security bureau?"

The police officer was almost petrified, and murmured these words under his breath in disbelief.

He initially wondered if he was dreaming. Even if he couldn't right now verify the authenticity of the badge, the words on top were almost like a phrase one could only imagine! Could it be a fake? The officer soon dismissed such a thought as impersonating a member of the security bureau would mean death. However tough a person was, no one would go toe to toe with the country.

Who would fake a badge of the Security Bureau to get out of sticky situations? It would be more convincing to lie about having a senior official as one's father. Besides, the both of them appeared in manners that were very covert. It seemed like they were indeed agents of some sort in hiding.

Sky Dragon asked in a deep voice, "Do you require any further authentication?"

The officer shook his head violently. He said, "Of course not. There's no need for that. You... Oh no, Chief! I believe the chief!"

It was deserving for one of the security bureau to be called 'chief' at a place like that. The officer sure was quick to respond.

Sky Dragon took his badge and stuffed it back into his pocket without causing a scene. Although the Yellow Flame Iron Brigade was a special branch in the bureau, it was still within the bureau. Hence he

still had a badge to prove his identity. To deal with these people, Yellow Flame Iron Brigade's badge wouldn't have been nearly as effective.

"Matters concerning Mr Yang is not within your jurisdiction. If there is nothing else, leave now," Sky Dragon said directly.

The police officer hesitated slightly as the task of retrieving Yang Chen was delegated to him. He did not expect things to have turned out this way. He definitely did not expect two members serving crucial roles in the country to turn up. But yet he tried to say something only to see Sky Dragon's face turn cold. He then immediately saluted and said, "Yes, Chief!"

The officer turned back and waved his hand. "Retreat!"

As the drama finally came to a close, the crowd was left more puzzled than ever. Who were these two mysterious people whom the police held with such high regard? At the same time, many started to look at Yang Chen in a different light. Was Yang Chen really just an employee of Yu Lei International? How could a person possess such fearsome powers that even the police had to yield?

Zhu Kangyu, however, bit his gum as he was afraid to act rashly in face of this situation. Yang Chen was young yet had such power. Zhu Kangyu knew better than to fight a battle with no winning guarantee. The identities of these people were still unknown to him. And Yang Chen's background was definitely suspicious. He decided to investigate first before making a step.

Curly Hair Wolf hid in a corner in fear. Him along with the rest of his men dared not take action in fear of provoking the two people.

The police were retreating, but Yang Chen stopped them.

"Hold your horses. Who let you leave? The convict has not been arrested yet."

When everyone heard what Yang Chen said, they looked at him without a word. *What a vengeful guy,* they thought.

The police officers stiffened their bodies. They turned to look at Yang Chen, then looked at Sky Dragon, and did not know whom to listen to.

Sky Dragon smiled bitterly. He went over to Yang Chen and whispered, "Come on Yang Chen, you have nothing to lose. Let's not make this a big deal."

Smiling, Yang Chen said, "I saved you two from embarrassment by not making a move. You can't possibly allow them to get away with wronging me, can you? Besides, my woman is now angry. Do you know what will happen when a woman is angry? They get wrinkles and that's a great deal."

Ye Zi, who was listening to Yang Chen, rolled her eyes. "Brother Yang, what kind of reasoning is this? Why can't you forget about it?"

Yang Chen shook his finger, squinted, and said, "In the whole Zhonghai, only the Red Thorns Society and the Green Dragon Society rule the underworld. The Red Thorns Society is the dominant group. So where then is this Curly Hair Wolf guy from? This must be made clear. And who was the one who prevented the security from doing anything? Also, who contacted the police beforehand? If all these things are linked up, it's not just a matter of someone setting me up. This guy, or these people, involved the police,

the authorities, and the mafia. What's even more puzzling is, why would such a small matter make the east district police interfere?"

Sky Dragon and Ye Zi looked at each other. They failed to analyse the situation to that degree. According to Yang Chen's explanation, there was indeed a dark scheme behind these events.

Yang Chen yawned and pointed his finger at Curly Hair Wolf, who no longer had a shred of arrogance left.

Curly Hair Wolf turned pale at the sight of Yang Chen's face. He finally understood that Yang Chen was in control here. He had unfortunately gotten himself into trouble instead!

"Which organization do you belong to? As far as I know, Red Thorn Society does not condone such behaviour." Yang Chen believed that Rose's underlings would not commit dirty work. Even if the economy was bad, they would still be able to collect protection fees secretly.

Sure enough, Curly Hair Wolf whispered, "I... I am from the White Wolf Society."

A sudden realisation dawned upon Yang Chen—this area was close to Su Province, so it was understandable that the territory was indistinct. Besides, people don't walk around with a note sticking on their forehead. No one would know which society one belonged to when walking down the street.

Remembering that Rose had been severely beaten by those from the White Wolf Society, a malicious intent surged through Yang Chen's head. But it left as quick as it came. That guy was just a small fry. There was no need to take it out on him.

"Who ordered you to frame me?"

Curly Hair Wolf fell to his knees immediately and cried, "Brother, please have mercy! I'm just an insignificant pawn. I don't know what's going on at all."

"Do you think you can get away with this just by saying that?" Sky Dragon responded. Things were definitely not as simple as they seemed. The security bureau had the responsibility to ensure social stability and maintain order. He too was quite curious as to the mastermind behind this plan.

Liu Mingyu's classmates watched the drama excitedly. They didn't realize that Liu Mingyu's seemingly rogue boyfriend came from a good background and possibly held more power than Zhu Kangyu.

Zhao Haili was most surprised. Yang Chen had shocked her again and again. But the more she thought about it, the less complicated it became. Liu Mingyu was the school belle. How was it possible that such a beautiful girl would choose a man who couldn't do better in life than her? Therefore, at that moment she only looked at Liu Mingyu, her close friend, with envy and felt lucky to know her.

Zhu Kangyu was the most uneasy person on scene. He wanted to leave the place immediately, but if he did, it would appear as if he was fleeing from his crime. Thus he chose to keep watching and waiting.

Curly Hair Wolf cried out in tears as mucus flowed from his nose. "Brother, I really know nothing! I was just ordered by my head to play along with the police officers here. I don't know anything else!"

“You... What are you bullshitting about?” Since the cat was out of the bag, the policeman was not going to sit and take the hit. His face reddened and he shouted, “Don’t listen to him, Chief! I was just here on duty. I only came here after receiving a notice from the chief officer—”

Once the word took wing, the officer immediately covered his own mouth.

The chief officer’s notice? Since when did such a small case warrant a notice from the chief officer himself?

Almost everyone there subconsciously guessed who was ultimately behind this. Sky Dragon and Ye Zi were both judicial officials of the state. The thing they disliked most was the abuse of power. They immediately decided that they could not let such a matter slide so easily. After all, as so many people had already witnessed this, the country’s reputation would be smeared should the news spread.

Liu Mingyu also finally understood the reason why Yang Chen made her call the police. He must have wanted to expose these revelations from the start. As he had made her worried and angry for nothing, she couldn’t help but roll her eyes.

“Now it’s probably clear that some people not only colluded with the White Wolf Society, but also with the police. Such a person is as despicable as they come.” Yang Chen seemingly unintentionally turned his head to Zhu Kangyu’s direction. The latter who looked like a frozen vegetable. He then smiled and asked, “Minister Zhu, who do you think would have such ability?”

“This... I don’t know either. Hehe...” Zhu Kangyu let out a forced smile.

“Minister Zhu, do you believe that such a person should be arrested and punished severely by the law?” Yang Chen asked again.

Zhu Kangyu went silent for a long time. The corner of his mouth twitched a little, before he reluctantly smiled and nodded. “Yes.”

Chapter 617

Fear

The atmosphere became eerily quiet after Zhu Kangyu said ‘yes’. Not another word was spoken.

Yang Chen didn’t continue his line of questioning. Even a blind person would be able to tell that all of this had been orchestrated by Zhu Kangyu.

“Yang Chen, I promise I will report this matter to the headquarters. The supervisory bureau will adhere strictly to the system, and punish those that do not. Just drop it. There is no need for you to interrogate this small fry any further,” Sky Dragon said solemnly.

Yang Chen could be considered as Sky Dragon’s friend. On top of that, Sky Dragon himself had decided to take matters into his hands. Without any solid reason to pursue this, Yang Chen dropped his aggressiveness.

“Since you already said so, I naturally have to believe you. Anyhow, the White Wolf Society has to be punished. If I don’t get news that the White Wolf Society has been eradicated in the next few weeks,

expect me to take this issue into my own hands,” said Yang Chen with a playful smirk. His eyes told a different story as they were filled with killing intent.

Sky Dragon was flabbergasted. He did not understand why Yang Chen would care so much about the White Wolf Society.

Ye Zi could not help but ask curiously, “Brother Yang, did you by any chance cross paths with the White Wolf Society in the past?”

“Well... they didn’t wrong me.” Yang Chen shrugged. “However, one of them did injure my woman. It was an internal injury.”

Sky Dragon and Ye Zi were shocked. How could such a thing happen? Why didn’t they know anything about it?

It was quite clear as to why they didn’t know. The women around Yang Chen did not only include Lin Ruoxi. As much as the Yellow Flame Iron Brigade was obsessed with Yang Chen’s whereabouts, they didn’t have enough people within the group to observe each and every one of his women.

But there was one thing that Sky Dragon and Ye Zi were clear about—the White Wolf Society was done for.

Yang Chen was a diplomatic person. When he first returned to China, he lived his life as low-key as possible. He even set up a stall to sell mutton skewers.

It could be said that up to this point, Yang Chen had only acted for the sake of other people. From Old Li’s family, Rose, to Lin Ruoxi and Mo Qianni. Yang Chen was almost always protecting others. It was clear that offending the people around Yang Chen was far worse than offending the man himself.

It was not rational for the country to fall out good terms with Yang Chen for the sake of the regional mafia. Moreover, the White Wolf Society had colluded with government officials and the Department of Justice. They had crossed certain lines that any mafia should never cross. Their demise was eventual.

However, the people of the White Wolf Society would never have thought that their greatest misfortune was not their confrontation with the Red Thorns Society, but the poor acting skills of several of their own men.

The crowd witnessed Yang Chen talking to Sky Dragon and Ye Zi about things they couldn’t hear. They could only observe in curiosity lest they anger the three people in question.

Sky Dragon said solemnly, “You can be rest assured that when the investigation is done, justice will prevail. The White Wolf Society has come to its end.”

Yang Chen grinned and pulled out his cell phone to dial a series of numbers on it. The number dialed was quite extensive. It had exceeded the length of any existing telephone numbers. Moreover, it was typed in a sequence that seemed random.

After he was done, Yang Chen placed his cell phone screen in front of those two.

Both of them looked at the number. Puzzled, they asked, “What is this about?”

Yang Chen blinked. "This is my exclusive number to the headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. You may make a copy of this for your superiors. Whether it's General Cai or the chiefs of the supervisory and security bureaus. Just let them know if you are having any trouble whilst eradicating the whole society, I don't mind calling this number to solve the problem myself..."

Sky Dragon and Ye Zi's faces went pale. They already knew what Yang Chen was up to.

"When working under me, Zero's efficiency has always been very high..." Yang Chen said softly. However in their ears those words were just like the devil's whisper!

Among the security bureau of each country, it was normal if they had not heard of a certain secret special forces' name. This was due to the secret forces undergoing a reformation process every so often.

But no one would not know what Zero represented!

It was the only recognized assassin organization in the world—the one that nobody dared to provoke!

The group's name 'Zero' could convey another meaning—the beginning of life, or the end.

Assassin organizations had always been immensely despised throughout the world. When hired at high prices, they wouldn't mind slaughtering core politicians and government officials from any country. It was very likely for such an organization to give rise to an external, unofficial army which could cause a disorder.

Usually, such worrying groups were wiped out at their infancy stages by powerful countries to prevent them from getting out of control when given time to develop.

Therefore, very few assassin organizations dared to show themselves. Most of them only engaged in underground activities and would never challenge the defense departments of any countries.

However, the birth of Zero was an exception!

It wasn't because Zero was too strong for anyone to oppose, but thanks to its founder who was one of the very few gods known to the few most powerful countries—Hades!

The first-generation Pluto, for whatever reason, had singlehandedly established such an assassin organization, and appointed himself president of the organization, possibly for an unfathomable scheme of his.

After decades of development, Zero had recruited more than eighty percent of the world's most powerful assassins. But no country ever tried to take action because who in their right minds would confront a god!

Nevertheless, Zero had always maintained a strict 'moral code' that helped it garner a good reputation. Its assassins were never allowed to interfere or get involved in anything related to the destruction of each country's core decision makers.

Therefore, although it was powerful, many countries were still alright with its existence.

Zero had even maintained good cooperative relations with quite a number of countries. For instance, Belgium provided an entire block of office building in their capital Brussels for Zero to use as their headquarters. Of course, this was not public knowledge.

Among Zero, there were countless reputable assassins. A few of the most famous people there naturally included the ex-president of Yamata Sect, Noriko Okawa, and Yang Chen who had successfully slain a god to become the next Pluto.

Yang Chen's training during his earlier years started at Zero. Over there, he met Song Tianxing—who was also an agent—and obtained the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture.

A series of event led Yang Chen to the destruction of the old Zero he had detested. But nevertheless, he rebuilt the organization to what it was today, partially due to the complex emotions he felt.

Till this date, Zero had been accepting less and less assassination orders than before. Under Yang Chen's leadership, many members had returned to living ordinary lives. Some of them, on the other hand, entered the Forgotten Realms to enjoy their retirement. However, every time they received an order, it would be executed with no mistakes.

At this time, Yang Chen suddenly showed his trump card. It was obvious that he was dead serious, and did not want any tricks.

Sky Dragon gave a wry smile. "I will inform the general about this, as for this number... We don't need to remember, and I believe you won't need it as well."

Ye Zi nodded and said, "Brother Yang, just let it slide. If you really want to stick your nose into this, the Hongmeng Messenger may appear again."

As Ling Xuzi had appeared once before, and with the general suddenly replaced, the fact that the Hongmeng Messenger actually existed was no longer a secret within Yellow Flame Iron Brigade.

With complicated thoughts, Sky Dragon asked, "Yang Chen, don't you fear that the Hongmeng Messenger would take action should you cause a huge mess?"

Yang Chen looked up and sighed. He patted his chest and said, "Of course. How can I not fear Ling Xuzi? Up until now, I still can't be certain if I can defeat him or not. I don't know if there's anyone better than him in Hongmeng. However, being afraid of something doesn't mean I have to stop pursuing if I have every reason to do so."

"Just because of a woman?" Sky Dragon asked as he found it absurd, frowning.

"If you live, but aren't able to defend the people you hold dear, what's the point of being alive?" Yang Chen laughed before he continued, "Don't worry, I'm not stupid. This is not enough for Hongmeng to take action. I haven't wavered the safety of the country. Besides, Zero isn't the only group I have... Just some time ago, I summoned a team from the Sea Eagles here... And besides them, I still have—"

"Enough, enough!" Sky Dragon had to stop Yang Chen from continuing this conversation, his forehead covered with cold sweat. Every time he remembered Yang Chen's profile given by the headquarters, which recorded every organization loyal to Yang Chen, Sky Dragon couldn't help but shiver in fear.

With his own strength, he became the undisputed king of all assassins in the world back then at such a young age. He was also the first man in history to become a god by killing another god. His aura was so domineering that no one could stop him from taking in so many underground organizations that sought his refuge.

Sky Dragon and Ye Zi were shocked. Seeing as though the situation had finally come to a close, Yang Chen took Liu Mingyu and drove away after she bade farewell with her classmates.

It was inevitable for Curly Hair Wolf and his gang to be locked behind bars. Even the White Wolf Society was done for. Would they still have a chance to live?

Zhu Kangyu said his goodbye to some of his classmates with a sour face and left. No one dared to question him but everyone speculated that the police would find out the truth sooner or later which would get him into trouble.

Along the way back to Liu Mingyu's home, she kept looking in Yang Chen's direction. Her beautiful eyes were shimmering not unlike a fangirl staring at her idol.

Yang Chen was in cloud nine. With his ego at his sleeves, he said, "If you keep look at me like that, it will only feed my ego more."

"Dear, how many secrets are you hiding in that body of yours?" Liu Mingyu asked.

Yang Chen pouted his lips. "If you really want to know, I'll tell you all about them all. Is that alright? I'll start from my childhood—"

"Don't!" Liu Mingyu interfered. "If you just tell me like that, it will be so boring."

"What will be boring now?" Yang Chen was puzzled.

"Men are only attractive when they're mysterious. I'm going to dig out your little secrets in the future little by little. That way, we could keep things interesting. If you let me know so easily, then I'll have nothing left to left to find out," Liu Mingyu said excitedly.

Yang Chen was taken aback. He did not expect this woman to be anything like this. Having said that, if he didn't reveal his secrets by himself, Liu Mingyu would need several more lifetimes before she would unravel everything about him on her own.

When Liu Mingyu arrived home, it was already sunset. She asked reluctantly, "Are you going back tonight?"

"Why? Want to make it up to me for falling asleep without me yesterday night?" Yang Chen asked with a naughty smile.

"How are you always thinking about all that sort of things. I was just asking casually. Besides, it's time for dinner soon." Her charming voice resonated in the light orange glow of the setting sun.

Yang Chen, in fact, was a bit cynical. He spent a whole day with Liu Mingyu and had not tasted any of her sweet treasure yet. But if he did not return home for two consecutive nights, would it not worsen the already broken relationship he had with Lin Ruoxi?

Just then, his cell phone vibrated. Yang Chen took a look at the call screen—it was Guo Xuehua.

Yang Chen made a silent gesture to Liu Mingyi, and then picked it up. “Hey, Mom, are you asking me to go home for dinner? I am just about to head back.”

Hearing Yang Chen say ‘mom’, Liu Mingyu’s pupils widened nervously while she dared not gasp for breath.

Guo Xuehua however blurted anxiously, “Yang Chen, where are you now? Is it convenient to go to Zhenxiu’s school at this time? She hasn’t come home yet, and I can’t get in touch with her.”

“Zhenxiu hasn’t gone home yet?” Yang Chen looked at the time—it was almost an hour after the time school should have ended. On any typical weekday, if Zhenxiu was not staying in school, she would have gone home to help Wang Ma with dinner.

Guo Xuehua didn’t know many places in Zhonghai, and Wang Ma was busy at home and it was inconvenient for her to drive out, hence she thought of asking Yang Chen. As for Lin Ruoxi, it wasn’t possible for her to go either. She already mentioned she would be very busy these days.

Yang Chen immediately said, “Then I’ll look for her now. Don’t worry. She may just be doing revision. Extra-curricular tutoring has gotten quite a bit heavier lately. The girl must have forgotten the time.”

Guo Xuehua tried her best to think positively. Although she was not related to Zhenxiu by blood, she had come to accept Zhenxiu as Yang Chen’s younger sister. She really treated Zhenxiu like her own daughter.

As he hung up the phone, Liu Mingyu guessed that Yang Chen had to leave, but still asked curiously, “Who is Zhenxiu? Why haven’t you mentioned her name before?”

Yang Chen scratched his head. “She’s like a little sister to me. We’re like a family now. Let’s meet some other time when we have the chance. Sigh, I have to leave now. I’ll come back to you another day.”

Liu Mingyi nodded with a hint of sadness. Though reluctant to part with him, she got off the car quickly as she could tell that Yang Chen was worried.

After bidding farewell to Liu Mingyu, Yang Chen drove all the way to Zhenxiu’s high school. Fortunately, it wasn’t too far away. Within ten minutes he had arrived at the school’s main entrance.

After getting off the car, Yang Chen facepalmed himself. How could he locate Zhenxiu if he didn’t even know which class she was in?

Chapter 618

Going After Zhenxiu

Now that I think about it, it’s not realistic to ask the guards at the entrance. There’s no way they would be able to recognize so many students! Not to mention the security might require assistance from other staff who have presumably gotten off work already.

Should I call Mom? She too has never been to Zhenxiu’s school before. It is not likely that she would know...?Yang Chen thought.

A sudden thought hit Yang Chen in the head. *Ruoxi has long involved herself in Zhenxiu's education. She must have taken her to school before. Maybe she would know.*

Yang Chen didn't stop to consider if Lin Ruoxi would pick up the call as he anxiously made the dial.

After a couple beeps on the phone, the call connected to his surprise.

Lin Ruoxi's clear voice paired with hints of fatigue resonated through the phone. "What do you need?"

"Why do you sound so lethargic? Did you work overtime again last night?" Yang Chen frowned. All he knew about her work was that she was busy acquiring entertainment firms for the past few weeks. What he didn't know was her hardcore dedication to the project.

"If there's something you want to say, make it quick. My meeting is about to start." Lin Ruoxi had no intention to chat.

"Everyone's about to go home now and you're holding a meeting? Being your associates must be painful." Yang Chen sighed, and continued, "Anyway, school's over but Zhenxiu did not go home. Mom got me to come over to the school to look for her, but I don't know which class she's in. I'm calling to ask if you do."

Lin Ruoxi went silent for a while, then replied, "Zhenxiu has never spent the night out without informing us beforehand. She's a thoughtful child. Why would you wait till now to call me?" Her tone was considerably heightened.

Yang Chen was agitated. It wasn't like he could manipulate how this situation would pan out. Why did she get mad at him for? He replied, "My beloved wife, because you have a reputation of a very busy CEO, Mom didn't want to interrupt you. Hence my involvement."

"Are you blaming me? You don't even know which class Zhenxiu is in. I wonder why she still treats you like her brother." Lin Ruoxi didn't hold back. "Zhenxiu is in the second class of the third years. Her seat is second from the back. Her class teacher is Mrs Wang, a middle aged woman. The class is the second class on the right, top floor of the second curricular block. Regardless of how the situation turns out, send me a text to inform me."

After the stream of words, she hung up the phone without second thought.

Yang Chen was boiling in within. *How dare this woman order me around like an errand boy? Not too long ago she was all feminine and attractive. She was even becoming a family woman. It seems to me that she went back to her cold and arrogant self!* he thought.

Yang Chen was already anxious about Zhenxiu's absence, and Lin Ruoxi's attitude towards him was not helping the situation. The guilt he previously held for her had also dissipated into thin air. It looked like they were as far apart a match could be! The mutual understanding between them only lasted a couple of days until they went back to silent treatments!

But there was nothing that he could do for now. Yang Chen jogged into the school compound following Lin Ruoxi's words. The third year's second class of the second curricular block.

Lin Ruoxi was genuine in her efforts on looking out for Zhenxiu. Something Yang Chen as her pseudo brother had failed to do.

Upon his arrival in her classroom, Yang Chen was shocked to discover that besides the chubby girl in glasses currently in the front row, there was no one else left!

Yang Chen went with his only option as he went straight to the student. He then asked, "Girl, is there a girl in your class by the name of Xu Zhenxiu?"

The chubby girl in glasses lifted her head and glared at him, with amazement. She replied, "Uncle, are you going after my classmate Zhenxiu as well?"

Yang Chen was left in confusion. *Why are people always calling me 'uncle'? Zhenxiu used to call me that, Tang Tang too. Do I really look that old??* he thought.

But then something else came up. *What did she mean that I'm going after Zhenxiu as well? Does she have a lot of guys pursuing her?*

"Look Uncle, there's no shame in that. There might be a lot of guys after her, but as long as you put your heart to it, an older man like you might actually have more potential," the chubby girl continued in a knowledgeable tone.

Yang Chen gave a bitter smile. "Alright let's cut it here. I just need to know if she has left or not."

The chubby girl frantically looked around her, and brought herself closer to Yang Chen before she whispered quietly, "Actually Uncle, I don't know if Zhenxiu has left or not. I just saw Jiao Yanyan drag her out when school ended just now but I'm not sure where they went. Jiao Yanyan is a really powerful girl. Nobody dares to ask too many questions about anything related to her. But if I am right, she probably dragged Zhenxiu out to bully her."

Yang Chen got chills. He continued, "Who's this Jiao Yanyan?"

"She is uh..." the chubby girl pouted. "I can't say. I don't want to upset the wrong people! Nobody crosses her! Uncle, please don't tell anyone that I told you about Jiao Yanyan. I don't know much to begin with. Good luck chasing Zhenxiu, Uncle. Keep her from coming back to school. Since she's that beautiful, she should just get married early! Studying is really tough, and we even have to worry about marriage after we're done with studies!"

Yang Chen was dumbfounded. *Why is this chubby girl even talking about marriage? High school girls these days sure are upfront. Why's she even relating studies to marriage?!?* he thought.

But from the information he got, the reason Zhenxiu had not gone back probably had something to do with Jiao Yanyan. And seeing how afraid the chubby girl was of her, Jiao Yanyan was definitely not an even-tempered person.

But Zhenxiu left her old life mixing with gangsters behind her. Why is she still involved a person like that?? he thought.

Yang Chen couldn't seem to put his finger on the situation. If he were to search class by class, or ask another person, it might be too slow. But right at that instant a thought flashed through his mind like a lightning bolt. *How can I be this stupid! I'm no different from a radar. Why would I need to go around asking people things I can find out on my own?*

With his current cultivation, his senses were leaps and bounds ahead compared to his past self. Locating a person within a school compound? Piece of cake!

As a result, Yang Chen came out from the classroom and kept his eyes closed, as his divine sense spread and engulfed the entire school compound. He scanned through every nook and cranny within the radius.

If any cultivator found out about this level of divine sense, they would be deeply terrified. This was not the profound cultivation mentioned in the legends. It simply couldn't be explained in martial arts terms!

But it was all Yang Chen's own ventures and discoveries that had led to this understanding. This was a stage in his cultivation path that even he himself was not entirely clear about.

Within this scan of mere seconds Yang Chen forced his eyes wide open. His fists tightened as he surged with fury!

He made a turn and headed straight towards the corner on the west of the corridor.

On the furthest end of the floor held the bathrooms. A single wall separated the entrances of both male and female bathrooms.

Yang Chen walked past the male entrance and steered straight to the female's!

The entrance of the female bathroom was shielded by a utility bin used for cleaning. Right before it was a yellow sign with the words 'Cleaning in Progress'.

Yang Chen, emotionless, yanked both the obstacles away and barged right into the female bathroom!

It was dead silent inside, which was expected as classes had already ended. Furthermore, who would use the bathroom on the highest floor even if they had to stay back in school?

Yang Chen walked right to innermost cubicle, as he gave a long sigh before pulling the door open.

A feeble girl was sitting on the toilet flush, trembling. Her hair was drenched in water like it had just been recently washed, but it wasn't dried using a towel—even droplets of water trickled down the tip of her hair.

Her entire uniform was soaked in water which stuck onto her skin. In the damp and moist air, it was no wonder the girl was trembling. She must be freezing.

Her limbs were tied tight with a rough hemp rope, kept in place thanks to some masking tape. It basically rendered her immobile.

What was more unfortunate was the bottom half of her uniform was nowhere to be seen; she was left only in her white panties, exposing her fair legs. The rest of her lower body was also dripping wet.

Under such a scenario even if the girl could escape from the bathroom, she would have to risk walking in public in just her underwear.

Tiny strands of blood emerged in Yang Chen's pupils as his expressions tightened. He was trying his best to keep his fury at bay. He went so far as to use his cultivate internal energy to limit his killing intent.

Zhenxiu was in too much shame to lift her head. She tried her best to hold back her tears but ultimately was unable to refrain her shoulders from the tear-jerking reflexes. When she saw that the person who came in was Yang Chen, she refrained herself from making any noise, hoping that she wouldn't be seen in such sorry state.

However, it was proven futile as Yang Chen eventually did find her. Her mind went blank as she prayed for this to be a bad dream. She would have rather spent the rest of her days back at the streets operating her roadside stall than live another second in this humiliating state.

Yang Chen was silent the whole time. He went forward and started to gently remove the hemp knots and the tape off her fair hands. He then squatted down and continued removing them from her legs, before taking off her drenched socks and shoes as well.

Due the prolonged stress on the skin, Zhenxiu's fair and supple calves and ankles were tainted with blue-blacks.

Zhenxiu remained still throughout the process. To have Yang Chen tend to her bare legs made her a little ashamed. But nothing could compare to the depressing feelings that were running through her mind at that very moment.

Yang Chen held onto one of Zhenxiu's freezing hands as he released a warm stream of Endless Restoration Scripture True Qi into her veins.

Zhenxiu soon found herself relieved from the constant chill throughout her body. She looked up in astonishment while staring at Yang Chen with her teary and swollen eyes, unable to speak.

Chapter 619

More Than Willing T

Yang Chen's heart ached for Zhenxiu. He didn't care that his actions had frightened her. All he could focus on was getting her warm again.

Within seconds, her hair and most of her clothing seemed to have dried off. But her face was still pale due to the excessive loss of heat.

A pair of gem-sized eyes blinked at him and with her thin, pinkish lips half opened, her adorable features were a sight for sore eyes.

But Yang Chen was not in the mood to partake of this view. He opened his mouth and said, "Xu Zhenxiu, tell me what happened to you."

Zhenxiu was stunned. Yang Chen had always been so playful. She was caught off guard when he started speaking in a serious tone.

After a while, she slowly replied, "It was just a prank from a girl in class."

"A prank?" laughed Yang Chen, livid at the situation. "Have you finally gone crazy from all the studying or do you take me for an idiot?"

Zhenxiu bit her lips, not knowing what to say. She didn't want him to know anything more than he already knew.

But he knew there were more to the story. He took in a deep breath and asked, "Who's Jiao Yanyan?"

Her head shot up, her eyes filled with curiosity. "How do you know her?"

"Did you really think I came unaware of anything?" Yang Chen said with resignation lining his words. "You weren't like this before. Just tell me who was it that bullied you! The Xu Zhenxiu I knew was a pickpocket on the bus. There was no such thing as a situation she couldn't get out of!

"Look at you now! You let people remove your skirt, pour water all over you and even tie you up in a toilet cubicle! But yet, you can still sit there and tell me this was just a prank? I've never heard of anyone's courage diminishing. Only increasing! And also, you're keeping things from me. Am I still like a brother to you?"

Zhenxiu dipped her head. "Let's not talk about the time I was a pickpocket. It was so long ago."

This is not even the point! thought Yang Chen gloomily.

"Alright. If you don't want me to talk about it, I won't. But at least tell me the truth. Otherwise, I'll tell your Aunt Guo and Sister Ruoxi everything about your past life as a thief. You know how hot their tempers are!"

Zhenxiu's face paled instantly and she pursed her lips resentfully. "How can you threaten me like this? You're the one that's bullying me!"

"Are you going to tell me or not?" Yang Chen was running out of patience as Zhenxiu continued to beat around the bush.

Finally, Zhenxiu caved. She then explained everything in a hushed voice.

So it really was Jiao Yanyan, along with two of her 'followers'. After school, they forced Zhenxiu to follow them into the toilet to 'negotiate' a deal. Once she entered the toilet, they blocked the door.

Jiao Yanyan suddenly asked Zhenxiu to remove her skirt. Zhenxiu refused to in the beginning, but she was pushed to the ground by Jiao Yanyan.

Afterwards, the three of them removed Zhenxiu's skirt by force. They then used rope and tape to restrict her movement.

Lastly, they poured three buckets of tap water onto Zhenxiu's body.

Jiao Yanyan and her companions were very pleased with themselves. After all their wicked doings, they took Zhenxiu's skirt with them before they left. They told her that they would return her skirt after returning to school later on. So until then, Zhenxiu had to sit in the cold and wait it out.

Zhenxiu's mobile phone was turned off. With only her underwear on, she was not going to humiliate herself by walking around and looking for help. Hence, she decided to stay in the cubicle. Right up to the point where Yang Chen had discovered her tied up there.

When Yang Chen was done listening to Zhenxiu, he asked, "Why would they do this to you? What was their motive!"

There was nothing left for Zhenxiu to hide at this point. "Do you remember when I told you about Liu Minghao leaving his mess behind after he left?"

Yang Chen nodded, frowning. "You said his departure had left many negative consequences behind. I didn't dig deeper into your words after that day."

"Actually, it wasn't totally his fault." Zhenxiu's face was overflowing with bitterness. "I don't really know why she does what she does either. I only came here to resume my studies so that I can get into a top-ranked university. But that didn't stop a bunch of guys from approaching me. They labeled me as the prettiest girl in the school. How can I be? I barely leave the classroom!"

"But because of that, most of the girls assumed that I seduced the guys. Especially Jiao Yanyan. She liked Liu Minghao for some reason and had always desired to become his girlfriend. But Liu Minghao was busy chasing me. Although I never accepted him, Jiao Yanyan believed that it was I who got in her way.

"There was no point in correcting anything. It wasn't just Jiao Yanyan. Most of the other girls ignored me as well. It was fine by me though. I only came here to study. However, I did not come here to get bullied into submission by a jealous girl."

"Jealousy can be a very scary thing." Yang Chen had roughly understood the reason. He observed her features closely and smiled. "I can't believe you're known as the prettiest girl in the school! You're still just a little girl in my eyes. Tsk tsk, guess we need to pay more attention to you from now on. Who knows, maybe you will be like Hui Lin in the future. A celebrity working for Ruoxi's company."

Zhenxiu flushed and said, "You're getting sidetracked again! Let's not talk about this anymore. It's getting late. Let's head back before Aunt Guo gets worried."

Yang Chen glanced downwards. "You want to walk out of the school in just your underwear?"

Zhenxiu had suddenly realized that her legs were still bare! Her face became a deep red and she quickly extended her hands to cover her underwear. She had no idea what to do.

Her heart beat against her ribcage after realizing how she had been talking to Yang Chen for so long with just her underwear on.

"The—then, what do we do?" questioned Zhenxiu while slowly losing the edge in her voice.

Yang Chen said, "That Jiao Yanyan said she'd return your skirt when she returned. They will surely return to take a look at you in your pitiful state. We shall wait for them here."

Zhenxiu froze. She then shook her head abruptly. "It's fine, don't make a big deal out of it!"

"It's fine?" laughed Yang Chen. "Xu Zhenxiu, let me make it absolutely clear to you now. I sent you here to study, not get bullied! If you're being bullied, I'd rather let you sell rice cakes on the streets!"

Zhenxiu's eyes reddened slightly and she muttered something inaudibly.

As he was about to finish his speech, Yang Chen heard footsteps from outside the door. His lips twitched as he pulled Zhenxiu up. "They're back. Let's give them a warm welcome, shall we?"

He then retrieved a large red bucket from the corner of the toilet and started filling it up with tap water.

The three girls were nearing the toilet, including the one referred to as Jiao Yanyan. They noticed the objects blocking the door were all moved away.

Jiao Yanyan shouted out loud, "Son of a bitch. Don't tell me the vixen has been let out or escaped!"

"I highly doubt so. There's a very low chance of her walking around in her underwear. She'd be laughed at for doing so."

"That's true. Let's take a look then," said Jiao Yanyan while chewing a piece of gum. Her friends tailed closely behind her

Suddenly, a swishing sound filled the air. Following that sound was a huge amount of water that rushed down the three girls' heads.

Jiao Yanyan and her friends felt the icy chill of the water seeping through their clothes. They opened their eyes and saw an unfamiliar person holding a bucket above his head.

"Damn, nasty fella! You have a death wish?" Jiao Yanyan spit out her chewing gum onto the floor while staring at Yang Chen furiously. "Who are you? How dare you pour water on us! Do you know who I am?"

Yang Chen yawned, waving a hand at the dumbfounded Zhenxiu. "Go whack them all you want. I won't stop you."

Zhenxiu was startled at hearing this. With a puzzled face she asked, "Me?"

Yang Chen furrowed his brows and said, "Yeah you. Since you're the one who got bullied by them, it only makes sense for you to fight back. I'm sure the three of them are no match for you."

Zhenxiu was once a well-known gangster in the street-racing community. Even though she hadn't been fighting lately, Yang Chen was confident that she still retained some of the skills she had picked up over the years.

"Right! I remember you! You're the old man who sent her to school in the morning! The one driving a BMW!" Jiao Yanyan had finally recalled, laughing coolly. "Don't think that you're so powerful just because you drive a BMW! My father can call upon a hundred people with the snap of his fingers and chop you to bits! You better kneel down and beg for my forgiveness now, otherwise..."

Without letting her finish, Yang Chen slid across the floor and stood in front of her. Without notice, a slap landed loudly on her left cheek.

Jiao Yanyan was thrown sideways into the door, like a kite whose string had snapped before falling onto the floor.

Blood dribbled from the corner of her mouth and the left side of her face appeared to be swollen.

Her 'followers' were scared out of their wits. They retreated to the corner of the toilet but were too afraid of opening the door.

Golden stars swam before Jiao Yanyan's eyes. She shook her head hard while attempting to maintain her balance. Pointing a finger at Yang Chen, she exclaimed, "You animal! Are you a man? You dare enter the female's toilet, and lay your hands on a girl?"

Yang Chen laughed shrilly. "My sister was thoroughly drenched with water. So what if I have to enter the women's toilet? Or hit a girl? I'd be more than willing to even be a ladyboy!"

Jiao Yanyan's anger skyrocketed, but she was speechless. *?I've never met such a shameless guy. What ladyboy?!?* she thought.

Standing at the side, Zhenxiu's tears kept dripping down her face. It was like a pearl necklace without its string, endlessly falling.

Yang Chen's words were meant to be funny, but to Zhenxiu, his not-so-tall backview had been imprinted in the softest corner of her heart.

He wasn't biologically related to her, but he had proved time and time again that she didn't have to be blood related for him to still treat her like his sister.

He was willing to throw everything he had away for her. And how did she choose to repay him? By pissing him off.

Xu Zhenxiu, why are you always so useless?? she thought.

Yang Chen didn't know what she was thinking. Seeing her cry, he merely thought that she felt sorry for him. He sighed and asked, "Why are you crying? Just go up there and finish the job. Treat them like how they treated you. Don't worry about them retaliating. I'll be here."

Zhenxiu wiped her tears away, shook her head smilingly. "It's fine, Brother Yang. You already done enough here. Let's just go back."

Yang Chen's face whitened. "Why? You don't dare to? Well, I'll help you then."

He strode over to Jiao Yanyan, who was hugging her two friends so tightly after seeing Yang Chen's movement towards her. They were still girls, after all. Yang Chen's scary glares would still frighten them.

"No!" Zhenxiu rushed upwards to stop him. She clenched her jaw and uttered, "Brother Yang, le—let me do it by myself..."

She knew perfectly well that he was capable of basically anything. If he were to beat Jiao Yanyan up, her face would not only be swollen, it'd be broken beyond repair.

Without a choice, she turned around and edged towards the three girls.

"Yo—you... don't come over!" Jiao Yanyan's face was full of fear. She wanted to run away but lacked the strength to do so. So she resorted to shouting "If you dare to hit me, I'll make sure my father kills the both of you!"

In her heart, Zhenxiu was scolding her. *?Why is this girl so idiotic? I'm actually trying to save her by beating her up myself.? But yet she insists to retort using her fathers name. Doesn't she realize the situation she is in?*

Thinking of all the sufferings she had endured and the repeated humiliation from Jiao Yanyan, Zhenxiu finally gave in to the temptation and threw her onto the floor with great force.

Zhenxiu had learned how to fight during the days of being a gangster. It was a common back then. But after Cai Yan's attempt to educate her, she had changed her ways.

Now, the hatred she felt for Jiao Yanyan had made her revert to her old ways. She aimed at all the spots that she knew were weak points of the body, making Jiao Yanyan squirm around the floor and shout for help.

Once Zhenxiu started hitting them, it was difficult to stop. Only then did she realise how much she detested Jiao Yanyan.

In the end, the three girls were sprawled across the tiles immobile from all the beating. Their faces were puffy and full of blue-blacks.

Zhenxiu panted as her face slowly turned red from the excessive use of energy. With sweat all over her face, she dropped to the floor. She couldn't believe that she had beaten them up in such a demeaning way.

Yang Chen was watching from the side, but he didn't stop her. He wanted her to release all her negative emotions, which was why he let her hit them without a word.

Those girls deserved a little punishment. As long as nobody died, Yang Chen wasn't going to stop Zhenxiu.

Yang Chen worried about Zhenxiu's mental health should she continue to keep it locked up. Looking at how relieved she felt, a heavy load was removed from his chest.

"There's still one more step," said Yang Chen, patting Zhenxiu's shoulders. "Go take her skirt off. Just like what she did to you."

Zhenxiu was now calmed. She said rather sheepishly, "I got my skirt back, it's fine."

"You're already here, why stop at the last step? Think about it. Do you really want me to help you with that last step?" laughed Yang Chen, giving a naughty grin.

Zhenxiu gritted her teeth and moved towards the girls. Ignoring their motionless bodies, she stripped them off their skirts then proceeded to put hers back on.

Taking the skirts from Zhenxiu's hands, Yang Chen dumped them into a toilet bowl without the slightest hesitation. He then said to Zhenxiu, "Let's go home now."

Zhenxiu nodded her head, taking one last glance at the half-dead girls lying on the floor. She didn't feel any pity for them. She followed Yang Chen out through the door, her feet light against the ground.

After waiting for her to pack her things into her bag, both of them left the school compound and entered the car.

Yang Chen didn't start his car right away. He dialed Guo Xuehua's number instead, telling her that Zhenxiu had to attend an extra class and she was too tired from the stress she fell asleep and had forgotten to go home.

Guo Xuehua sounded pained in the phone, but didn't suspect anything else. She only asked for them to go home earlier so that they could still have dinner while it was still hot.

Afterwards, Yang Chen called Rose. Since Jiao Yanyan kept describing her father as an all-powerful guy from the underworld, Yang Chen decided to acquire a little bit more info on the person he was going to be dealing with in the future. He asked Rose to do some background checks for him, and asked her to send her men to protect Zhenxiu. These things wasn't really a challenge for someone like Rose.

When Yang Chen had finished making his arrangements, Zhenxiu said apologetically, "Brother Yang, I am sorry."

Yang Chen had just started the engine. Hearing these three words, he asked in a curious voice, "Why apologise?"

Expressionlessly, Zhenxiu replied, "I have been nothing but trouble for you since the day we met. I can't contribute to anything, but I kept making you worry about me.

"You, Sister Ruoxi, Aunt Guo and Wang Ma are like my family. Sometimes, I really think that I am undeserving of everything that has been given to me. How can I accept everything all of you have done for me? I was just an orphan which caused enough trouble to be a regular in the police station...

"But you overlooked that and sent me to school so that I can have a future."

"A—and yet, I still cause trouble in school."

Zhenxiu choked at her words. Her fair-skinned hand tightened around her skirt and she continued by saying, "I want to really work hard from now on, and get into a prestigious university. I want to earn enough to pay you back. But it seems that all I can do is attract problems. I feel really useless, I'm sorry."

Yang Chen's expression seemed distant. It looked like he was listening to her but at the same time he was not.

"Xu Zhenxiu," Yang Chen suddenly said. "I ask you, the reason you wanted to let the thing with Jiao Yanyan go was because you didn't want to cause me any trouble?"

Zhenxiu nodded and said faintly, "Brother Yang, I already owe you a ton. I really don't want you to have to bear any more trouble because of me. I know you're tired. Even though you look happy on the outside, no one has a stress free life. You're not an exception"

"So this is why you wanted to keep it from me?" asked Yang Chen.

"Yes," grunted Zhenxiu. "Sometimes I wonder how is it I can still live a life like this one. Is this the life I deserve? Am I this lucky? Why would I gain people like you, who would help me selflessly regardless of the circumstance?"

"I even wonder sometimes. What if I wasn't taken in by the orphanage? What if I was starved to death? What if I had died from any of the fights from before?? Maybe I wouldn't have to be such a nuisance right now.

"I was a nobody, but you treated me like I was someone. I-I don't think I can handle it anymore."

Suddenly, the BMW stopped in its tracks!

Zhenxiu's whole body lunged forward. She turned her head to stare at Yang Chen with disbelief. She didn't understand how a well-functioning car had just stopped at the roadside!

Yang Chen turned his head to face Zhenxiu. With an expressionless face, he said quietly, "Well since you think that way, let me show you something."

Chapter 620

April Fools' Day

Faced with Yang Chen's emotionless look, Zhenxiu started to worry for what was to come. But, she dared not object due to recent events.

After Yang Chen spoke, he turned the car around and headed to the opposite direction. He stepped on the accelerator rather forcefully causing the car to immediately speed up past the speed limit.

Since it was around midnight, the roads were basically clear. It was highly unlikely for the police to be patrolling at this time.

Zhenxiu used to race illegally, so being in a speeding car was not uncommon for her. However, what unnerved Zhenxiu quite a bit was the fact that Yang Chen had not spoken a word for the entire duration of their journey.

Occasionally, Zhenxiu would turn her head in Yang Chen's direction. She would attempt to speak but ultimately remain silent. She could tell that Yang Chen wouldn't answer any of the questions she asked.

Around ten minutes had passed when the car finally came to a halt next to a coastal area.

There were multiple small islands in the north coastal area of Zhonghai City. Most of them had recreational resorts built on it, while the rest were marine research facilities set up by various companies.

The islands were connected using cable-stayed bridges. While not being particularly long, they all contributed towards quite a magnificent view with more than ten of them intertwined together.

The dazzling lights on the bridges made it seem as though the bridges were dragons of light hovering above the waterfront.

However, since it was dinner time, there were very few cars that passed by the area.

Yang Chen drove the car to the center of a relatively long bridge before stopping on the emergency lane.

"Get down," Yang Chen said after removing the car keys.

Zhenxiu was surprised at his request. Softly, she asked, "Over here?"

“Yes, right here.” Yang Chen opened the door and walked out right after speaking.

Zhenxiu hesitated for a while. Although clueless as to why she was brought there, she followed in suit.

The cold wind was strong, causing their clothing to flap noisily. Zhenxiu felt rather cold as she was dressed only in her uniform. Her hair fluttered around her face making it difficult for her to keep her eyes open.

Yang Chen had lit up his cigarette the moment he got out the car. The poor-quality tobacco burnt exceptionally fast in the wind—almost half of it was used up by now.

Walking towards the railing, Yang Chen stared at the surging waves. With a cigarette in his mouth, he sighed deeply and said, “Kid, come here.”

Zhenxiu curled her body up a little before she hugged herself and slowly approached Yang Chen.

When seen from the bridge, the surface of the sea seemed to be approximately thirty to forty meters away. The depthless ocean was no different from a beast hibernating in the dark.

Zhenxiu felt nervous. “Brother Yang... let’s go back, shall we? It’s scary here.” Her voice shivered a little due to the wind.

She was just a girl no more than twenty years of age after all. Had it not been for Yang Chen’s presence, she wouldn’t have dared to come out of the car to face the lonely bridges and the empty ocean.

Yang Chen laughed disdainfully out of the blue. Strangely turning his head over, he asked, “Go back? Where to?”

Zhenxiu was stunned. “Go home... of course.”

“Home? Is that your home?” Yang Chen asked with an odd smile.

Zhenxiu paled instantly, moisture filling her eyes. She couldn’t utter single word.

“Didn’t you tell me that none of it was yours? Didn’t you say you couldn’t accept how well we treat you by providing shelter, clothing and food? And everything you received up till this point was undeserved?”

“Brother Yang... you... I...”

“What are you muttering about? Or did you not remember your words?” Yang Chen asked scornfully. With a smile, he continued, “Since you feel that way, and you’re constantly causing us trouble, why do you still want to go back?”

Zhenxiu felt that her legs had weakened significantly. Dispirited, she stood still in silence.

Yang Chen smiled coldly. “Xu Zhenxiu, you just told me that everything would be made right if you were left to die in starvation, or left alone in the street racing gang... In my opinion, it isn’t too late for you to receive that relief that you so desperately crave. That is, if you want it...”

Zhenxiu raised her head violently, gazing upon Yang Chen in disbelief. “Bro—Brother Yang, you...”

Yang Chen finally finished smoking that cigarette of his. He turned his head to look at the turbulent sea waves. “I made a thorough analysis. If you fell from this bridge, even if you don’t drown, you’ll definitely

be flushed by the torrent of waves or crushed by the reefs. It is quite a distance from here to the land, so by the time your corpse is discovered, you'd have probably started to rot or eaten by the fish already..."

Zhenxiu was so pale that there was no trace of blood on her face. Staggering backwards, she refused to believe what she just heard.

"Zhenxiu, you're right. Living is really a burden sometimes. You must be so tired... Brother Yang feels pained to see you suffer. So why not you relieve yourself from this duty called life?" Yang Chen was still expressionless throughout it all. "Don't worry, no one will know if you jump from here. They will just chalk it up to a missing teenager and nothing else..."

Zhenxiu shook her head hurriedly while tears gushed out from her eyes. "Don't... Brother Yang, I—I don't want... You must be kidding, aren't you? You're lying to me!"

"I'm kidding?" Yang Chen shook his head. Coldly, he replied, "Is it April Fools' Day today? Why would I be kidding?"

Zhenxiu forced a smile. "No, it can't be... Brother Yang, you're teasing me aren't you? Why would you want..."

The smile on Yang Chen's face vanished—it was replaced by indifference.

"Xu Zhenxiu, if you don't climb up the railing yourself, I'll gladly help you out by throwing you off this bridge. It's a piece of cake to me."

Zhenxiu was petrified as Yang Chen didn't look like he was kidding. The tone he used combined with his facial expression made her feel that he wanted to stab her to death!

Zhenxiu shook her head and started to step backwards as she muttered something, but her feet were firmly planted to the ground.

Yang Chen said nothing more. He leaped forward and grabbed Zhenxiu's waist, lifting her light body above his head!

Zhenxiu was dumbstruck. When she regained awareness, she noticed that she was floating mid air. No matter how much she struggled or screamed, Yang Chen refused to release his iron grip on her.

"Stop moving. You're too weak to do anything to me let alone escape," Yang Chen said indifferently as he walked closer to the railing.

Zhenxiu saw with her own eyes that her body was shifted beyond the railing. The violent sea waves were right underneath her feet!

The ink-black ocean looked just like a demon trying to devour her, growling unstoppably!

"Brother Yang! I don't want to die! I don't want to die!!!" cried Zhenxiu.

Yang Chen snorted lightly. With the release of his grip, he let go of Zhenxiu...

All Zhenxiu felt was her body losing its support. Before long, an immediate force pulled her downwards at an increasing speed...

Zhenxiu widened her eyes in shock, forgetting to breathe.

In her mind, the appearance of her parents she remembered when she was young surfaced. The memories she had from the orphanage where she had fun with the other children emerged as well...

The moment where her grandmother-like President Cha carried her up and teased her; the moment where she started learning pinyin and alphabets; the moment where Lin Ruoxi came to visit her with the Old CEO...

She recalled each and every one of her memories which she had almost forgotten in the last few years.

She clearly remembered the time when she sobbed and ran on the streets after leaving the orphanage, the time when she joined a group of bad teenagers for street racing, and the time when she was caught being a burglar...

She met Yang Chen, then Lin Ruoxi. Before long, she had found herself a new family...

The voices and smiles of Wang Ma and Guo Xuehua filled her mind. She could even hear Wang ma calling her from downstairs for dinner...

At last, Yang Chen was the last thought in her head. He was the man who had brought her to heaven, but was currently sending her to hell...

Zhenxiu had no clue what was happening. She was going to be swallowed by the ocean, but she felt no fear, and instead felt a little sad at how her life was going to end...

Pearl-like tears spread out into the sky before disappearing away.

Zhenxiu shut her eyes...

The duration of any fall from that height was not a long one, but felt like a century.

Zhenxiu's body was becoming lighter as she relaxed herself. She felt her body become so light the winds could have blown it away.

Isn't the ocean supposed to be cold? Why am I feeling warmth instead?? she thought.

Zhenxiu soon realized that the situation was different from what she imagined. She slowly opened her eyes, only to realize Yang Chen right in front of her. However, his face held a gentle smile like before.

Although what happened earlier was abrupt, tossing Zhenxiu down from the bridge before jumping down as well to catch her on the sea surface was an easy task for Yang Chen. To Yang Chen, leaping back and forth from a bridge was too easy of a task for him.

Unfortunately, Zhenxiu couldn't process the split second time of events.

"Kid, do you understand now?" Yang Chen asked with a smile while carrying Zhenxiu horizontally.

Dejected and resentful, Zhenxiu opened her mouth and bit Yang Chen's shoulder without speaking a word!

Though it was separated by his clothing, Zhenxiu bit as hard as she could while tears fell from her eyes and onto his shirt.

Yang Chen didn't stop her from doing so. When Zhenxiu soon got tired, he said, "I thought you'd bite my face instead. I was still concerned about whether I would be disfigured. You're very kind you know that?"

"I hate you!" Zhenxiu punched Yang Chen's chest with her soft fist. Only now did she finally understand what had taken place. Although she was clueless as to how Yang Chen managed to save her, it was obvious that it was his plan to frighten her all along.

Yang Chen smiled, relieved. "Hate me all you want. I prefer this than if you hated yourself."

Zhenxiu's eyes had reddened. She then wrapped her arms around Yang Chen's neck and hugged him tightly.

Yang Chen helplessly patted her back gently. "Xu Zhenxiu, don't ever feel that you're a burden to the ones who love you. In this world, you're the one and only Xu Zhenxiu. Your life, to you or to all of us, is the most precious thing in the world..."