

Chapter 61:

Return My Qingqing to Me

Hearing the name “Ning Yao”, Xu Junxi stiffened and quickly let go of her hand and looked back.

There was no one behind him.

There was a sneer of mockery by his ear. When Xu Junxi looked back again, Ning Qing caressed her wrist with one hand while she left without looking back.

Xu Junxi clenched his fists tightly, and fury bubbled through his chest. He chased after her with quick steps and his big palms pinned Ning Qing’s shoulder down and pressed her against the wall.

Ning Qing looked at Xu Junxi with clear eyes, her little face turning cold. “Xu Junxi, are you a psychopath? You’re not going to be content unless you harass me by being intimate with me, are you? Please clarify what on earth you want to do once and for all.”

“Harass? Hah, Ning Qing, are you even fit to use this word! I’m the one who wants to ask you what you really want to do, why do you have to fight Yao Yao in every way, why do you always appear in front of me?”

“Ha, haha...” Ning Qing looked up and laughed loudly three times. She thought it was ridiculous. Putting aside the fact that she wasn’t fighting with Ning Yao. So what if she did?

Compared with Ning Yao who’d destroyed her home, she hadn’t even gotten back the interest with what she was doing now.

“Xu Junxi, if your Yao Yao is good enough, I won’t be able to steal it from her even if I wanted to. She lacks the skills, and yet you still have the face to blame others for it?” Ning Qing retorted.

“You...” Xu Junxi was dumbfounded, he then laughed scornfully, “Ning Qing, why are you targeting Yao Yao so much? Is it because she’d stolen me from you? I’ve already told you, we’ll never be together again, I won’t come back to you.”

This time Ning Qing didn’t know if she should laugh or cry, Xu Junxi’s narcissism had refreshed her worldview once again.

Ning Qing stood up straight and looked at him seriously. “Xu Junxi, do you know how lucky I feel to have been late for the date with you three years ago? People say that men need to be tested, look, haven’t I got the results now? In this case, I should really thank Ning Yao, thank her for taking you, and not letting you harm me.”

Three years ago, she had the face to mention three years ago?

Doesn't she feel any guilt about being late for that date?

Xu Junxi gritted his teeth, his handsome cheeks trembling fiercely, the deep desire for blood blanketed his eyes lightly, his huge palms shaking Ning Qing's shoulders uncontrollably, as he roared --

"Ning Qing, don't you dare mention what happened three years ago! You are no longer the simple girl who loved to wear sweaters and jeans. You are no longer the Qingqing who likes to call me brother Junxi while smiling sweetly. Look at your sharp and mean appearance now, you've lost her, you're the one who has lost my Qingqing!"

"Ning Qing, you give her back to me, you give my Qingqing back to me!"

Ning Qing was feeling dizzy and faint from his shaking. "Xu Junxi, I'll say it again for the last time. I'm not the one who has changed, it's you. Let go of me, let go!"

Not only did Xu Junxi not let go, but he also looked at her red lips and white teeth, and immediately bent down to cover her lips, he wanted to kiss her so fiercely that she would not be able to breathe.

Ning Qing had her guard up all along. The moment he bowed his head, she reached out her hand and gave him a sound slap on the face.

Xu Junxi was stunned by the slap.

The sharp pain on his cheek brought him back to his senses, and he touched the corner of his mouth with his hand, where blood was trickling out.

Ning Qing glanced at him coldly. "Xu Junxi, if this happens again, I'll sue you for sexual harassment."

Ning Qing turned around and left.

But she'd failed to walk away, as her bruised wrist was trapped once again.

This time Ning Qing really felt that she didn't have to endure it if she could not bear it any longer. She raised her voice and said sharply, "Xu Junxi..."

"Ning Qing..." Behind him, the man called out to her in a low voice, the violence had faded, and his voice was full of fatigue and vicissitudes. "If, I said if, if I can return to your side..."

Ning Qing stared at him.

The dim light in the corridor hit the man in black as he stood there, elongating his shadow. His eyes that were looking at her were grey, and her image was reflected ever so brightly in his grey pupils.

Ning Qing was in a trance for a moment. She didn't understand what he'd meant by "can return to your side." She only knew that the past would never repeat itself.

"Xu Junxi, Ning Yao's here, behind you... I'm serious this time..."

Xu Junxi's body jolted, but he still clamped onto her wrist, using less and less strength but refusing to let go.

"Junxi, Junxi..." The voice that was as sweet as a nightingales came closer from afar behind him. Ning Qing did not struggle but just looked at him with a pair of clear bright eyes.

Ning Qing watched as complex feelings trickled out from his grey eyes, struggling between love and hate, he was evading them, then finally, he let her go.

Without restraint, Ning Qing drew her wrist back. One side of her lips curled up as she smiled sarcastically.

Ning Yao ran to Xu Junxi and hooked his arm. He'd gone to the bathroom for a long time. She came out to look for him and immediately saw that he was with Ning Qing.

He was clamping down on her wrist and refusing to let go.

"Junxi, you've been gone for so long, I was worried. Turns out you were with older sister. Older sister, are you alone? Would you like to have dinner with us?" Ning Yao asked, pretending to be kind.

Ning Qing had no intention of going along with her act. She turned around and went down the stairs.

But after two steps, Ning Yao ran in front of her and blocked her way. She reached for her hand and held it. "Older sister, why are you ignoring me? I've already given you the female lead of the "Dust and Wind" today. Are you angry again?"

Ning Qing's head pounded. Ning Yao and Xu Junxi were a match made in heaven in terms of shamelessness.

Ning Qing lifted the corner of her lips, and her delicate little face was bright as she said. "Alright, I'll request Director Wang to give the role of the female lead back to you again, but does Director Wang want you?"

Ning Yao's expression was stiff as embarrassment and resentment flashed in her eyes.

Ning Qing looked at her scornfully, bypassed her and went down the stairs.

"Older sister, I know I was wrong. Since we've happened to meet today, let's have dinner together." Ning Yao ran in front of Ning Qing again and began to tug on Ning Qing's sleeve.

Ning Qing stood still. She looked at Ning Yao, a shadow of a smile on her face. Ning Yao was standing on the stairs now and tugging at her agitatedly. Could she be thinking of putting on an act and incriminating her again?

As expected, with a soft "ah", Ning Yao loosened her hold on Ning Qing's sleeve fell backward

"Yao Yao!" Behind her came Xu Junxi's anxious cry.

Ning Yao sneered, Xu Junxi was standing behind them and was unable to see the specific situation. As long as she fell down the stairs, Xu Junxi would be furious and think that Ning Qing had pushed her down the stairs.

Of course, she was not stupid, this flight of stairs had more than 20 steps and was very long, she would not really fall down the stairs, she'd reached out and gripped onto the handrail of the stairs when she was falling backward.

Everything was going according to plan.

However, Ning Yao's pupils dilated in pain. The hand which she'd reached out to grab onto the handrail had been gripped onto in the flash of an eye. Ning Qing's voice of concern rang out, "Ning Yao, be careful!"

Ning Qing had grabbed onto Ning Yao's hand.

Ning Yao's entire heart sank, would Ning Qing be so kind?

The next moment, Ning Qing's grip loosened and Ning Yao's body suspended in midair. The world spun and Ning Yao cried out "Ah" in excruciating pain as her head came into contact with the ground.

But her "ah" was covered by another "ah", Ning Qing was also screaming.

Ning Yao wanted to curse. Come on, what was she screaming about?

She was the one who'd been hurt!

Ning Yao rolled down more than twenty layers of stairs like a ball without resistance. Her head hit the handrail uncontrollably in the middle. When she stopped, thick blood flowed down her forehead and stained her eyelashes which she'd spent a long time putting on mascara on in the morning.

"Yao Yao..." Xu Junxi quickly ran to Ning Yao and hugged her in his arms. "Yaoyao, are you okay? Where does it hurt?"

Ning Yao could not utter a single word, she was almost fainting from the pain, that b*itch Ning Qing!

She slowly extended her finger and pointed to Ning Qing.

Xu Junxi followed Ning Yao's fingers and saw Ning Qing, who was perfectly fine, standing on the stairs, but her face was pale and her hands still covered her mouth in shock, as if she had been greatly agitated.

Xu Junxi's reproachful words died instantaneously in his throat. Ning Qing was going to save Ning Yao. He'd seen them.

"I... I... She fell so fast that I couldn't hold on to her." Ning Qing's lips trembled as she looked at Xu Junxi with a pair of autumn pupils that shone with weakness.

Ning Yao was speechless, "..."

Xu Junxi carried Ning Yao horizontally and ran downstairs. "Someone, call an ambulance."

When the two disappeared from Ning Qing's sight, Ning Qing put her hand down. The corners of her lips lifted calmly and unhurriedly. She'd wanted to compete with her in terms of acting skills, fine then, she would take her on right to the very end!

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In the hospital.

The doctor dressed Ning Yao's injury on her head. Her body was not badly injured, but there were blue and purple bruises on her arms and thighs, they were very painful superficial injuries.

For the first time ever, Ning Yao experienced what it was like for a dumb man to eat bitter herbs, only able to suffer in silence.

Xu Junxi guided her to the elevator with his arms wrapped around her shoulders. She was not willing to let Ning Qing off just like that. So she opened her mouth and spoke carefully in a wronged tone. "Junxi, why didn't my older sister hold onto me? Had she not wanted to save me at all?"

The pale, small face appeared in Xu Junxi's mind. He frowned, and his voice was a little heavy as he said. "I saw it when Ning Qing was going to hold onto you... Alright, you go home and have a good rest. Don't wear such high heels in the future. It's autumn now. If you are injured in the summer, the entire crew would have to stop work and wait for you."

What had he meant by that, comforting her perfunctorily, and complaining that she wasn't sensible enough and had caused him trouble.

But Ning Yao dared not refute, she nodded cutely, "Ok."

They didn't talk anymore along the way. When they reached the elevator, Ning Yao suddenly saw a mother-daughter pair walking forward from the side. Her eyes shone brightly as her gloomy mood became sunny instantly.

Ning Qing held onto Yue Wanqing's arm and said softly, "Mom, are you tired? Let's just walk two rounds and lie back down in the ward."

Yue Wanqing patted Ning Qing's little hand. "Mom's not tired. Mom needs to recover early. I live in this hospital every day. The medical expenses alone are already very high. Although you say there is medical aid, we can't keep eating away at the state's money."

Ning Qing smiled and did not reply to her comment about medical aid.

At this time, a voice as sweet as a nightingale's rang out, "Auntie..."

Yue Wanqing and Ning Qing looked back and saw that Xu Junxi and Ning Yao were standing not too far away.

Chapter 62: Why Are You Crying So Badly?

Then, there was a tender voice, "Aunt..."

Yue Wanqing and Ning Qing turned and looked. Xu Junxi and Ning Yao stood nearby.

Ning Qing was shocked. The world was so small. The two of them came to this hospital and ran into them.

"Mom, let's go back to the room." Ning Qing held her mom by her arm and obviously didn't want to talk to the two of them.

Yue Wanqing nodded. although the personal scores among the older generation weren't related to the next generation, Ning Yao's mother, Li Meiling ruined her family, she couldn't treat Ning Yao like her own daughter anymore.

As the meeting would be so awkward, they might as well avoid it.

The pair of mother and daughter walked towards the ward.

Xu Junxi saw that Ning Qing treated him like air, his handsome face grew dispirited while Ning Yao who was next to him was rather excited. "Aunt, how are you feeling? A few days ago, sister wanted to borrow money from Junxi for your operation fees. But when Junxi wanted to lend it to her, she said that she already got the money."

Yue Wanqing stopped walking.

Ning Qing's face grew grave. There was fire in her eyes. No matter how she fights with Ning Yao, she had a line that could not be crossed, such as her mom.

"Mom, she's Li Meiling's daughter. Don't listen to her. Let's leave."

"Aunt, I have a piece of great news to tell you. Sister was in entertainment circle for three years and she finally passed a screen test today. She's the female lead role in Street Walker. Director Wang was exceptionally nice to Sister."

Ning Yao stressed on the word "nice" and she successfully portrayed an ambiguous relationship.

Yue Wanqing looked lost. She pulled her arm back from Ning Qing's hand. She looked at Ning Qing and spoke in a shivering voice, "Qingqing, what entertainment circle, what Director Wang? I don't understand. Why do you have time to go to such places. Aren't you learning piano in school?"

Ning Qing was hurt by her mother's gaze. She extended her hand and wanted to hold her mom. "Mom, let's go back to the room. Listen to me as I explain myself."

Yue Wanqing took a step back but didn't let Ning Qing touch her. She face was pale and her head ached. Her fragile body staggered and she looked like she was going to faint.

"Mom..." Ning Qing's eyes welled up with tears. She knew that the truth would reveal itself. Her mom would have found out about this one day, but not now.

"Aunt, what piano? Don't you know that sister studies at the Beijing Film Academy, the school for people who want to enter the entertainment circle and become an actor?"

"Ning Yao, that's enough. Shut up!" Ning Qing held her fist tightly. She raised her voice and there was warning and anger in her tone.

Ning Yao looked at Ning Qing as she raised her eyebrows. It felt great to take revenge, "Aiya, sister, look, Aunt is going to faint..."

Ning Qing heard a thud and she turned around and saw that Yue Wanqing fell on the ground.

“Mom!” Ning Qing ran forward and knelt down on the ground. She carried Yue Wanqing in her embrace and her tears flowed down her cheeks. She shook her head nervously and cried, “Mom, what happened to you? Don’t scare Qingqing. Mom, wake up, Mom...”

Xu Junxi saw Ning Qing then and he felt pain. His heart felt like it was being squeezed and he was suffocating.

Ning Qing was always strong and stubborn before him. But she was crying for her mom, she said to not scare Qingqing. She was like a helpless child.

Why wasn’t she willing to do so before him?

Is he not a person that she loves?

Xu Junxi realized that he was running when he came back to reality. He left Ning Yao and ran towards Ning Qing. She was helpless then, she needed him.

Xu Junxi wanted to call for the doctor but there were a bunch of doctors and nurses running towards them. They hoisted Yue Wanqing, who fainted, onto the cart and pushed her into the emergency room.

His attention was directed at a gentleman. He was the one who brought the doctor. He leaned down and helped Ning Qing who was crying on the ground.

Ning Qing stood outside the emergency room and wailed while the gentleman comforted her. Although there weren’t any intimate actions, he could tell that Ning Qing believed in him.

Xu Junxi smirked. Every time he wanted to get close to her, there were always men around her.

She was never lacking men...

Hence, she didn’t bother with him.

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As Xu Junxi made wild guesses, someone grabbed his right arm again. It was Ning Yao who was left behind earlier. She caught up and held his arm again.

He saw that Ning Qing looked over. Her eyes were red and there were tears on her face but she clenched her fists and walked over with chilly gleams of hatred.

Ning Qing walked before Ning Yao and raised her right hand to slap Ning Yao.

There was a breeze that blew past Xu Junxi’s face and he extended his hand to hold Ning Qing’s wrist in the air, “Ning Qing, all the lies would be exposed. It’s not Yao Yao’s fault. You shouldn’t have lied to...”

Before “your mom” came out from his throat, there were two slaps. Ning Qing used her left hand to slap Ning Yao.

Ning Yao was dumbfounded. She knew that Xu Junxi would protect her and would stop Ning Qing’s right hand, so she wasn’t afraid. She looked at Ning Qing smugly and provocatively.

She never thought Ning Qing could slap so swiftly, accurately, and brutally with her left hand.

Xu Junxi felt that he had been ignored again. He let go of her wrist and his pursed his lips into a straight line, "Ning Qing..."

There were another two slaps. Ning Qing's right hand was free and she swung another two slaps at Ning Yao's face.

She slapped Ning Yao four times in total.

Ning Yao was light-headed from the slaps and she could taste iron. Her cheeks were burning and she was numb from the pain.

She touched her face and there was blood on her fingertips. Ning Qing slapped her face till it bled. Her face was her capital.

"Ning Yao, I, Ning Qing will remember what happened today. If anything happens to my mom, I will take you and your mistress mother's lives! If my mom is okay, I'll accept your challenge and we shall see!"

Ning Yao knew that she couldn't fight Ning Qing. So, she quickly shed tears and tugged Xu Junxi's shirt, "Junxi..."

Ning Qing slapped Ning Yao four times before his eyes; It severely damaged Xu Junxi's ego. The moment he received Ning Yao's SOS, he immediately grew solemn and said, "Ning Qing, don't go overboard!"

"I'm going overboard. What can CEO Xu do to me?" Ning Qing turned her head slowly and looked at him. She's smiling. The lifted corners of her lips weren't sufficient to cover the chilly gleam in her eyes. She looked at him coldly with disdain.

Xu Junxi was angry.

Ning Qing put her hand in her pocket and took out a jade bracelet. "This belongs to the Xu family. Now I return it to the owner. Xu Junxi, our eighteen years' destiny has ended. I am no longer related to you by any way."

Ning Qing raised the bracelet level with Xu Junxi's eyes.

Xu Junxi was the one who asked for her to return the jade bracelet but when he saw that Ning Qing returned it to him, he didn't want to take it.

As she had said, if he were to take the bracelet, he was really not related to her anymore.

Eighteen years, how many beautiful memories they had. Such a beautiful past.

"Why, you don't want it?" Ning Qing smiled and eased her grip. The jade bracelet dropped on the floor and the sound reverberated through the hospital corridor.

Xu Junxi's eyes were red and his chest was billowing. The woman was humiliating him. Just how cruel was she?

Ning Qing greeted Xu Junxi's ferocious gaze. The angrier he got, the happier she smiled. Her tear covered face let out a beautiful smile. The resolute sorrow was like a deadly poppy flower, so beautiful.

“Xu Junxi, you didn’t look after your woman and she hurt my mom. Actually, you should be slapped too. But do you know why I didn’t slap you? I think you’re filthy!”

“Xu Junxi, as we couldn’t forget our past, let us remember each other as enemies. I hope there wouldn’t be a day where I would become your nightmare!”

Then, Ning Qing turned and left.

Xu Junxi watched her back as she left. As she made it so clear, he shall act as if Ning Qing never existed in his life.

Xu Junxi turned and walked in the total opposite direction, to the lift.

“Junxi, wait for me...” Ning Yao had hand prints on both her cheeks. She appeared satisfied. She was hit by Ning Qing but she felt great. Yue Wanqing entered the emergency room while Junxi finally called off their engagement.

Ning Yao bent down to pick up the jade bracelet and put it in her pocket. That’s great. Work harder and she will become Mrs. Xu.

Ning Yao caught up with Xu Junxi and they entered the lift.

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Yue Wanqing was pushed out of the emergency room and into the ward. Doctor Luo exhorted Ning Qing to not provoke the patient, and instructed that she must rest up.

Ning Qing nodded continuously and thanked Doctor Luo. She stood outside the ward.

Yue Wanqing leaned against the bed as she took her IV drip. She hushed the nurse out. She didn’t talk to Ning Qing, nor did she let her in.

The nurse was still carrying the dinner tray. Yue Wanqing didn’t eat nor did she intend to eat. Ning Qing’s heart was aching. Tears began to flow.

No matter how strong she was on the outside, she’d always be a little girl before her mom.

Ning Qing cried as she wiped away her tears, “Mom, can you have dinner? You can’t starve yourself... Mom, you can hit me, you can scold me, but please don’t ignore me. Woo... Mom, listen to me, I can explain myself. Woo...”

There was no reply in the room.

Ning Qing didn’t know what to do. Mom used to spoil her the most. Her mom would compromise and surrender whenever she acted spoiled.

But she cried for so long, her mom didn’t bother with her.

Her mom was really angry.

Ning Qing felt hopeless, she was wailing with pain. Her shoulders were shivering. She was very tired, both physically and mentally. Her legs grew weak and she glided down with the wall supporting her. She wanted to squat on the ground and cry her lungs out.

Before she could squat down, a muscular arm held her small waist. She felt the warmth on her cold skin through her clothing.

Kisses were planted on her cheeks where the tears flowed down. With heartache and pity, a low hoarse voice asked, "Why are you crying so badly?"

Chapter 63: Shaoming, It's Your First Time Meeting Mom, Talk Nicely

Ning Qing was stunned as she looked up in a panic. She bumped into a pair of dark eyes that were deep and bright. It was Lu Shaoming.

Lu Shaoming was back.

He was still wearing the white shirt he'd worn yesterday afternoon. The corners of his shirt were tucked into his black trousers by a shiny metal belt, his waist strong and narrow. Perhaps because of the flight, his clothes had been wrinkled, but it had not diminished his nobility and power. Even those wrinkles gave off a man's elegance and handsomeness.

Behind him stood a personal assistant, who held his suit in one hand and his business bag in the other.

One hand was shoved into his pants' pocket while another gripped onto her waist, he deep gaze swept past the tears on her face. His sexy thin lips tipped slightly, and he looked at her with a slight adoration, as if he were looking at a little girl who loved to cry.

"Wahh..." Ning Qing's suddenly released her tightly wound up feelings and cried out. She was like a lost soul wandering in the lonely sea who had finally spotted a moored port.

"Lu... Shaoming, you're back. You're back at last."

Not only was this girl not overjoyed that he was back, but she was crying with increasing ferocity. Lu Shaoming frowned helplessly at that.

He took his hand out from his trousers pocket, and caressed her delicate back, patting her back lightly. "What happened, don't cry, I'm here."

Ning Qing put her small head on his broad chest. Although he was only holding her gently, his gentle strength was enough to ignite all her sadness, fear and grievances.

"Shaoming, *Sobs*... Mom's ignoring me. Mom doesn't want me anymore. I lied to her and told her I was learning to play the piano, she knows that I'd been acting all along, Wahh..."

Lu Shaoming heard roughly what had happened from the girl's sobbing voice. He didn't change his expression. He looked at the closed door in front of his eyes. He said, "Alright, I get it. Trust me. I'll go have a talk with your mother."

Have a talk?

Ning Qing raised her head in his arms. She looked at him with a pair of teary autumn eyes. "How? Mom refuses to open the door."

Ning Qing looked down. She hung her two little hands down helplessly in front of her, like a child who'd done something wrong. "And, I'm sorry, I haven't had time to tell my mother about our marriage... Mom doesn't know about your existence yet."

Although she hadn't kept it a secret deliberately, they were already married. Her hiding it from her mom made it seem as if she was having an affair with Lu Shaoming. She felt apologetic towards him.

He'd be angry for sure.

Her cold helpless little hand was slowly enveloped by a big warm hand. Lu Shaoming put his arm around her shoulder and pinned her against the wall. "I understand, we can take it slowly. You stand here and wait. Don't run around, I'm going in now."

Isn't he angry?

Ning Qing looked up and wanted to ask him, but then Zhu Rui came over with Dr. Luo. After Dr. Luo bowed respectfully to Lu Shaoming, he took out a bunch of keys from the pocket of his white coat.

Ning Qing quickly grabbed onto Lu Shaoming's sleeve. "Shaoming, Mom will be angry if you go in like this."

Lu Shaoming looked sideways at her, and his bright eyes flashed with a sharp and resolute light. "Ning Qing, do you want your mother to be angry for a little while or for a long time?"

Ning Qing pouted her pink lips and stopped talking. She released her grip.

The door of the ward cracked open. Ning Qing watched as Lu Shaoming strode in with his long legs. She grabbed the corner of his clothes and blushed.

"What's wrong?" Lu Shaoming's impression of Ning Qing was that she was a liberal and dignified girl. It was his first time seeing her blush without speaking, looking shy and awkward.

"Shao... ming, it's your first time seeing Mom, talk nicely. Try to leave a good impression on my mother."

"Ah..." So she wanted to tell him this. It wasn't anything remotely ambiguous, why was she blushing so much, her skin was thin indeed.

Lu Shaoming reached his hand out and ruffled her hair as he laughed in a low voice. "Don't worry, leave everything to me. Nobody will come and break us up."

Ning Qing said nothing, she was too embarrassed.

...

Yue Wanqing was leaning on her bed. She heard the door open and was about to shout at them to get out. But Dr. Luo came in and had invited someone in respectfully, a man.

Yue Wanqing had lived for so long but it was her first time seeing a handsome man with such prominent features; he was like a Greek sculpture.

And the man's temperament was also very good, she'd attended many business events with Ning Zhenguo when she was young, she can see at a glance that this man was a highly regarded businessman. His clear and profound eyes exuded calm and steadiness from the accumulation of his rich and fulfilling life experience. His many years in a high ranking position had allowed him to remain calm and unmoving even in the face of collapsing mountains.

His gait, his every move, exuded a particular air of nobility that was in his blood. He must have been born into a good family and had received a top-notch education.

Yue Wanqing had forgotten about driving them away for a moment there. Even though she was old enough to be his elder, the man's aura was fearsome.

Lu Shaoming stood in front of Yue Wanqing. His ink black eyes were clear and elegant as he bowed and greeted her, "Hello, Auntie."

Yue Wanqing came back to her sense. She had no interest in chatting with him so she asked directly, "Who are you?"

"Auntie, I'm a friend of Ning Qing."

"Friend? If you want to be a lobbyist for Qingqing, there's no need for that. I don't want to listen to anything. Qingqing was such a good child before, she'd always listened to her mother's words, but she has lied to me now. What kind of place is the entertainment industry, is that a place a decent girl would go? What else had she done behind my back?"

Yue Wanqing was distressed. In her feudal thinking, the entertainment industry was a dirty trade, and none of the women in it were clean.

Li Meiling was a good example.

Dr. Luo brought a chair over and Lu Shaoming sat down slowly. His two magnificent long legs crossed together with dignity. His facial features were sharp and handsome, but also gentle.

"Auntie, you want Ning Qing to learn to play the piano? As her mother, you should know how hard Ning Qing had been working in the past three years, even if Ning Qing hadn't said anything. Her tuition fees, living expenses, and your medical expenses were not earned by a girl who was just sitting at school playing the piano."

"..." Yue Wanqing was stunned. Lu Shaoming had gone straight to the point and touched her sore spots. Yes, ever since the divorce, what she'd felt most guilty about was that she couldn't give her daughter a good material foundation.

But Ning Qing said that her tuition fees were assumed by Ning Zhenguo. She'd earned her living expenses by teaching children to play the piano. Her medical expenses were paid for by the state.

Now it seemed like they'd all been fake. She'd only been 18 years old that year. She was so young. Where could she have gotten the money from?

“Even so, she shouldn’t have earned that indecent money. I’d rather die than spend her money,” Yue Wanqing said resolutely as tears streamed down her face.

“Auntie, there is no distinction in nobleness or indecency in making money. Are all the people in the entertainment industry dirty? Ning Qing is your daughter. Don’t you know her? Why would you believe what an outsider says and doubt your daughter? You don’t even want to listen to her explanation and you’ve disappointed and made her sad by doing so.”

Yue Wanqing covered her mouth and sobbed softly. She could not refute it because the man hadn’t argued in Ning Qing’s defense right away.

He spoke smoothly and skillfully. He’d just kept emphasizing their relationship between mother and daughter. He’d spoken of the hard and sad life that Ning Qing had led for the past three years and had put Ning Qing on the weak side.

She was Ningqing’s mother. Even if Ning Qing had done something wrong, no mother in the world would not be distressed by her daughter’s suffering!

“Auntie, you are the closest person to Ning Qing. She’s pitiful enough without her father. She’d been crying the entire time you’d shut her out, thinking that you don’t want her anymore. Give her a chance and listen to her explanation.”

...

Ning Qing did not know what was being talked about inside. She was very anxious as her mother was ignoring her while on the other hand, it was Lu Shaoming’s first meeting with her mother. She was afraid that her mother would not like him.

At this time, the door opened with a click, Lu Shaoming stood by the door, as Doctor Luo supported and helped Yue Wanqing stand in front of her.

“Mom!” Ning Qing’s eyes lit up, and the tears that had just been dried out by Lu Shaoming fell down again, but this time she was weeping with joy.

Yue Wanqing looked at her daughter while she was crying and laughing at the same time and her heart turned into mush, but she hardened her heart and asked sharply, “Ning Qing, let me ask you, why didn’t you learn to play the piano but instead attend the Beijing Film Academy? Did your father not give you money for the tuition fees?”

Ning Qing knows she couldn’t hide it from her mother anymore. She wiped her tears away with her little hand. “Yes, I went to look for dad to ask him for money that day, but he didn’t even let me past the Ning family door. I’ve thought about it. I’m no longer the young madam of the Ning family anymore. Playing the piano is a waste of time and money. It’s not suitable for me.”

“Even so, you can’t enter the entertainment industry. If you don’t learn to play the piano, we can learn something else. Why didn’t you discuss it with me?”

“Mom, I had no other choice at that time. The tuition fees cost tens of thousands of dollars. I’d have to sleep on the streets if I could not afford to pay the rent... That day, a friend asked me to act as a stunt double for an actress. It was an ancient costume drama. I’d jumped off a very high cliff even though I

was afraid of heights. My entire body was trembling as I stood on the cliff, but I jumped off with my eyes closed anyway...”

Yue Wanqing never knew that her daughter’s life had been so hard for the past three years. She could not imagine her daughter’s tiny body jumping off such a high cliff. She would feel as if a thousand arrows were piercing her heart.

She’d still been the delicate young daughter of the Ning family at the age of 18. Why had the resentment of the previous generation affected her daughter?

Her daughter was clearly the most pitiful and innocent one.

Ning Qing saw that her mother had turned her tear laden away. She went forward, gripped her sleeve timidly with her pale little hands, and choked out in a low voice, “Mom, no matter what we major in, we have to spend money. Only the entertainment industry can allow me to make money while learning. Your shoulders always hurt badly when it rains. There used to be a massage chair at home. Unfortunately, I couldn’t bring it away with me. I wanted to buy one for you. I can make money by just acting casually. I can support you all by myself without depending on others.”

Yue Wanqing was so distressed that her 45-year-old self had to depend on her 18-year-old daughter to support her. She’d focused all her strength on taking care of her husband and child all those years in the Ning family, and had already derailed from society and lost the ability to survive by herself.

It was she who’d harmed her daughter.

Lu Shaoming looked at the girl. She held her mother timidly in one hand, eyes downcast. Her long eyelashes that were like butterfly’s wings fluttered a couple of times. A whole string of glittering tears slid down her fair porcelain cheeks.

She was crying very sadly.

Chapter 64: Don’t Touch

She was crying very heavily.

Lu Shaoming thought about that time three years back when she had saved him. A delicate immature girl who was confident in tackling the bandits. She was so brave and wise.

Then, she thought he died and she wailed with tears in her eyes. Then, he recalled that the woman was made of water. She was gentle and kind.

She bandaged his wound for him. Her white handkerchief had a faint fragrance. Along with her gentle yet slow movement. He missed this encounter for three years.

He always remembered her name was Ning Qing, Qing which meant pretty.

However, he came too late.

There was pity and heartache across Lu Shaoming’s eyes. His handsome eyebrows were tightly knitted for as long as Ning Qing cried.

“Qingqing...” Yue Wanqing looked at Ning Qing with heartache. “Be honest with Mom, when you were in the entertainment circle, did you... That Director Wang...”

“Mom,” Ning Qing cut her mom off. There were tears shimmering in her beautiful eyes. She said straightforwardly, “Mom, I don’t care how the others view me. But you have to trust me, a clean hand wants no washing. Every single penny I earned for the past three years, I swear it’s hard-earned money, it’s clean. Actually, the entertainment circle isn’t filthy on its own, but the human element always ensures there’ll be dirty deals.”

Yue Wanqing didn’t say anything else. She only extended her arms to bring her dearest daughter into her embrace, “Qingqing, it’s all Mom’s fault. I’m sorry...”

Mom finally forgave her. Actually, she wanted to hide it from her mom forever so that her mom wouldn’t feel guilty and blame herself.

However, for three years, she had been carrying the weight of it all. She had been looking forward to her mom one day accepting that she worked in the entertainment circle. She had been fighting alone for so long. She needed support and encouragement so badly.

It was great that her mom found out and wasn’t angry at her.

Did she benefit from this misfortune?

Ning Qing buried her head in her mom’s neck. She sniffed the warm scent on her mom’s body, she cried as she smiled and shook her head, “Mom, you didn’t do anything wrong. You’re the best mom in the world... Mom, Qingqing loves you...”

The pair of mother and daughter cried for very long and Yue Wanqing was the one who stopped first. She thought of a question and pushed Ning Qing softly. She asked, “Qingqing, where did you get the money for my surgery?”

Ning Qing was dumbfounded when she heard her question. Ning Qing looked at the tall and handsome figure subconsciously.

Lu Shaoming saw the crying girl give him an SOS gaze. He stood up then smiled gently when he answered, “Mom, I paid for the surgery.”

Yue Wanqing was like struck by lightning, “Wh... What? Mom?”

The person who addressed her as “aunt” earlier, called her “Mom” now?!

“Lu Shaoming!” Ning Qing never thought Lu Shaoming would reply like so straightforwardly. She bit her lower lip with her bright white teeth and stomped her feet angrily.

Her relationship with her mom just got better. How dare he mess it up again?

Lu Shaming raised his sword-like eyebrows, as if to tell Ning Qing, Why? Do you still want to lie to your mom?

Ning Qing was at loss for words. She creased her eyebrows as she stared at him.

“Mom, Ning Qing and I already registered and got married.” In other words, she had no choice even if she disagreed. “Actually, there’s nothing bad about us getting married. In the future, I will take care of you along with her. You don’t have to worry. If I’m here, a hundred Director Wangs are nothing.”

Yue Wanqing realized how well-spoken the man was. Great, now she was at loss for words to reply what he said earlier.

He was aiming at the fact that she would feel sorry for Ning Qing. He said that they were registered and he meant to hint, Mom, you can’t turn your daughter from a newlywed to a divorcee, right?

Take care of her, Director Wang... He stood by the door and listened to their conversation. He knew about their difficult living conditions and he made it sound so nice to hear. Wasn’t what he did taking advantage of his own power to bully them?

Yue Wanqing felt a sharp pain in her heart. She held her chest and took a step back.

“Mom!” Ning Qing held her mom and her tears flowed down in fear.

Yue Wanqing was angry and anxious. Marriage was a serious topic and Ning Qing was too careless. But what can she do? They just fought. Her daughter bore sorrow with forbearance and was filial to her. She wasn’t willing to reprimand her further.

She suspected the man intended to take advantage of such great timing.

Yue Wanqing was held up by Ning Qing when she looked at Lu Shaoming.

Lu Shaoming accepted his mother-in-law’s gaze and he smiled. He understood that the deal was done.

“What’s your name, how long have you known Qingqing?” Frankly speaking, Yue Wanqing was happy with Lu Shaoming. He seems like the kind of man who was mature, stable, understands women, knows how to take care of a woman. However, she was worried that her daughter was so innocent that she would be under the man’s full control.

“Mom, I’m Lu Shaoming. I’ve known Ning Qing for three years.”

Three years?

Ning Qing thought she heard wrong. They knew each other for barely half a month.

But she thought and she understood. Traditional people like her mom would gauge one’s relationship by the amount of time they knew each other. He can’t just tell her mom the truth.

“You like our Qingqing?”

Listening to how straightforward her mom’s question was to Lu Shaoming, Ning Qing blushed with embarrassment, “Mom...” She held her mom’s arm bashfully.

If Lu Shaoming were to say no, how awkward would it be?

“Yes, I’ve like Ning Qing all this while, for three years.” Lu Shaoming looked at how the rosiness spread across the girl’s face to her ears, he chuckled.

The man couldn’t hide his happiness and gentleness. Yue Wanqing looked and felt rather satisfied. She turned around to look at her daughter.

Ning Qing hung her head low. Although she knew that he was lying to her mom, she was blushing. She didn’t dare to look at him but behaved shyly.

Yue Wanqing clicked her tongue. She didn’t have to ask if Ning Qing liked him as she could tell the answer by looking at her body language.

“Alright, as you’re already married, Shaoming treat Qingqing well in the future. Qingqing, live well with him and stop acting like a child.”

Ning Qing was so shy that she was dying to dig a hole to hide in. Her experience in terms of relationship was rather basic. She never really thought much about marriage to Lu Shaoming. However, when her mom exhorted her, she felt embarrassed.

“Mom, don’t worry. I will treat Ning Qing well,” Lu Shaoming replied when Ning Qing was at a loss for how to reply.

Yue Wanqing didn’t speak anymore. There was drama, one thing after another, and she was really tired. Ning Qing fed her some porridge and she fell asleep.

Then, Lu Shaoming and Ning Qing returned to her room.

...

Lu Shaoming opened the door and entered first. The room was dark and the light that shone in through the window contrasted with his handsome back. His body’s outline was broad and enchanting.

Ning Qing stole a glance and lowered her head. She tried to search for the switch button on the wall as she wanted to turn on the lights.

She touched the switch and wanted to flick it. Then, a warm palm reached hers and took her hands off the wall and into his palm.

She was initially standing in the corner next to the door. His slender body approached her and her left shoulder was pressed against the wall by his other hand. He then pressed his body against hers.

Ning Qing suddenly felt light-headed. There was a refreshing bamboo-like scent on his body, which was soothing yet enchanting. It filled her nose and fully conquered her sensations.

“You... What are you doing?” Ning Qing licked her dry lips. The room was so huge but why was he pushing her into a small corner. The lights in the room weren’t on and their breath hit one another’s face. They were entangled together and it made their hearts race.

Lu Shaoming didn’t reply, but Ning Qing could feel his fingers rubbing against her face. He touched her face with his index finger. Her face was still wet with her tears that had yet to dry.

Ning Qing's eyes were shimmering in the dark. She watched as he dabbed her tears with his fingertips and put them in his mouth to test it.

"It's bitter." The man's voice was low. He frowned as he came to the conclusion.

Ning Qing's face was burning. What... What is he doing?

"Of course, tears would be bitter," she replied, laughing.

The man's bright eyes looked over while he had a faint smirk on his face. He then said in a carefree manner, "I thought it would be sweet because you're sweet."

Ning Qing was panicking then. She understood that the man was being a bully.

She extended her hand to push his broad chest and wanted to redirect the topic, "The situation today, how could you tell mom that we're married?"

Lu Shaoming smiled, the most important trait of a businessman was to grasp the timing. His mother-in-law's worldview had just been shattered by her own daughter. When would he tell her if not that day?

"So you want to lie to your mom again? You just shed the weight of one lie and you want to lie again? How tiring it is? Now that you laid it on her frankly, don't you feel at ease?"

Ning Qing, of course, felt at ease. She was tired of lying to her mom for the past three years. She was worried that her mom would find out one day and her body couldn't take it.

It was great that her mom forgave her. Plus, she just took a step forward in the entertainment circle, she felt unprecedented happiness.

She then recalled that her luck switched entirely after she met him. God started to care for her.

She wondered if what he told her mom is what made her mom forgive her? It was the sense of security that the man gave her. Everything could be taken care of easily by him.

She could trust and depend on him entirely.

Ning Qing extended her hand and punched his shoulder. She pouted and smiled. "Humph. You speak in this high-and-mighty tone. Didn't you really say all that for yourself?"

"Mm, I admit. Now, I can sleep with you truthfully every night." Lu Shaoming grabbed her small waist and rubbed it lovingly.

How could he use... the word "sleep"?

Ning Qing found it ticklish and she twisted and turned in his warm embrace. She wanted to shake him off. She chuckled, "You look so proper normally. Why are you like this now... Don't touch me, it's so ticklish..."

Her hand gripped his hand and wanted to tear his hand off her waist but she couldn't. The man pushed her even closer to the corner. His burning breath glided past her lips and his seductive voice was heard. "Gotta marry you as my wife in a right and proper way, then I can eat you, huh?"

Chapter 65: Kiss Here

“Eat... Eat...” What does he want to eat? Ning Qing couldn’t believe that those words had come from Lu Shaoming’s mouth. She really wanted to ask, I’m neither a rabbit nor am I a sheep. Why do you want to eat me?

But she didn’t ask because she felt that the topic was somewhat inappropriate.

Ning Qing mustered her strength and put her hands on his chest, trying to push him away, but all of a sudden, warmth enveloped her face as the man held her small face in his big hands. She felt something warm and wet working its way up her face.

He kissed her sharp jaw tenderly, brushing his thin lips on her delicate face, and finally dropped a kiss on her eyelids. He felt her long eyelashes trembling furiously under his lips and muttered hoarsely, “Qingqing, don’t cry again, alright? Watching you cry just now really breaks my heart.”

This man was really fickle; he could change from bull to a lovebird within a second.

Besides, who was his “Qingqing”? It’s so mushy.

But Ning Qing’s eyes were wet, she was moved. She liked how he called her “Qingqing” very much. It was with a similar tone as when he’d called her “Ning Qing”, but with a lot more warmth.

Never had a man treated her like this. Every kiss he gave her was filled with heartache and pity. The sweet nothings that he’d muttered had caused her heart to melt and beat faster at the same time.

...

“Lu... Lu Shaoming...” Ning Qing called out his name helplessly. She’d felt moved just now, but the feelings behind his kisses had changed as time passed.

Her earlobes had never been kissed by anyone before, and they were even more sensitive than her waist. His breath, as refreshing and dry as a bamboo, trickled into her ear. It felt wet and ticklish.

Ning Qing was a little nervous. She held her little pink fists up and pushed hard against his chest, but he was as immovable as a wall.

“Lu Shaoming, what are you doing?”

The man’s big hand was wandering down her tender neck bit by bit. His hands were so rough. She could feel the electrifying feelings on her skin caused by the caressing of his fingertips. It was so invigorating.

“Don’t you know what I’m doing? Qingqing, I want to... you. Are you willing or not?” His voice was low and hoarse, tinged with lust.

Want to...her?

His strong, hot and testosterone-laden scent filled the room. Ning Qing tried hard to hide, but there was no way to. She put her little head on the wall and raised her head to reveal her beautiful tender neck that was as elegant as a swan's.

"I... I am your... wife. if you want it, I can't refuse you, but... Mmph..." Her red lips had been enveloped.

Lu Shaoming kissed her forcefully. He was not a sage yet. He would still desire to have the woman he likes, especially considering her tender appearance. He could barely control himself.

The girl trembled violently in his arms. Her fingers clutched his shirt tightly. Her body was stiff. This silly girl had forgotten to breathe again.

With a sigh in his heart, he left her lips and buried his head in her fragrant neck, adjusting his disordered breathing.

Ning Qing gasped as soon as she was free of his hold. If he were to force himself on her, she would not resist, but she was really not ready for it. She was terrified.

"Shaoming, I'm sorry..." She apologized sincerely.

Lu Shaoming shook his head, ruffling her hair as he said helplessly, "You're still too young, I'll wait for you to grow up a little bit more... Don't be sorry. I'll wait for you."

A 20-year-old girl was actually not young anymore. In ancient times, 14-year-old girls were already married and had children. In such an open era as today, 20-year-old girls who were still this pure were rare breeds.

But he loves her.

That was how much he loves her.

Ning Qing slowly stretched out her two slender arms. She wanted to encircle his strong back and give him a hug. She wanted to embrace him.

But right then, two knocks sounded at the door.

Ning Qing's movements stopped abruptly. She almost jumped from his arms. Their postures were so suggestive, and the light in the room was off. What would someone think if they were to see them like that?

Lu Shaoming let go of her. Ning Qing was a bundle of nerves. She didn't know where to hide. Finally, she hid behind the door.

Lu Shaoming laughed softly as he watched her desperate attempt at subtlety. Her skin was thin indeed, feeling like she couldn't face anyone just after but a shred of intimacy.

Pop

He reached out and flicked the lightswitch.

Ning Qing blinked and quickly adapted to the sudden brightness. Her small face was very hot. Without looking, she could guess that it must be as red as a lobster. She tidied up her messy clothes with her small hands.

Compared with her panic, the man was standing calmly with his back straight, with one hand in his pants pocket. He was as comfortable as he was serious.

Four words to describe him popped up in Ning Qing's head – Beast in Human Clothes.

...

Lu Shaoming opened the door and standing outside was Zhu Rui. "President, this is the ice that you asked for."

"Ok." Lu Shaoming took the plate from Zhu Rui's hand and closed the door.

"What do you want the ice for?" Ning Qing was curious.

Lu Shaoming strode forward with his long legs to a small sofa in the room and sat down slowly. He placed the plate on the coffee table in front of the sofa. His legs were crossed reservedly. One arm was slung across the back of the sofa, while his other hand was tugging at the tie on his neck.

"You've cried for so long, your eyes won't get red and swollen tomorrow if you ice them."

Ning Qing had always known that he was a careful and considerate man. He'd care for her meticulously if she were to stay with him.

Ning Qing walked over and stood beside him. The man pulled out his tie and threw it on the sofa. Three buttons on his white shirt had loosened, revealing a glimpse of healthy tanned skin.

He gently pinched his jet black eyebrows with one hand. His handsome face was marked with a touch of fatigue.

Ning Qing suddenly remembered that he had flown to London only yesterday afternoon and said that it would take three days, but it had only been a little more than a day and he'd already come back from his journey.

"How did you come back so quickly? Did you not sleep?" Ning Qing's beautiful eyebrows furrowed gently. Care and heartache mixed unconsciously in her gentle voice.

"Yes..." Lu Shaoming murmured softly. "If I hadn't come back so soon, I'm afraid you'd cry all night, full of devastation."

Ning Qing bent down, put the ice in a soft towel and wrapped it up. Her long eyelashes were downcast, leaving a quiet and lonely silhouette on her beautiful face. She bit her cherry rhombus lip and muttered, "It's okay if you don't come back. I've been like this for three years. I'm used to it."

As soon as she spoke, she was enveloped in a hug.

Just as she was about to exclaim softly, she fell on his thigh. Lu Shaoming took the ice in her hand and placed it on her eyes. "Fool, don't you have me now? If you don't want to feel grief next time, we won't have any more grievances."

His words were overbearing and warm, and the sadness in Ning Qing's heart was instantly diluted as honey-like sweetness replaced it.

We... Lu Shaoming seems to collected to pay much mind to any grievance.

This kind of sweetness was very strange, Ning Qing did not know how to respond.

He was 1.85m, broad-chested and muscular, he was carrying her 1.68m frame as if she were a little girl. Her beautiful lips lifted slowly into a smile as she shifted closer into the security of his arms.

As her dry and swollen eyes were relieved, she looked up at the man. His actions were gentle, but his deep dark eyes were bloodshot.

The more tired he was, the deeper the lines around his eyes were, which enhanced his masculine charm.

"Thank you, for today." Ning Qing felt that she was going to smitten by his handsome face. She was never a girl who went for looks, but her cheeks would flush repeatedly every time she looked at this man.

It was a very bad phenomenon. She didn't want to become a superficial person, so she coughed and interrupted the silence.

Lu Shaoming put the ice back on the plate and smiled happily. "How much is a 'Thank You' worth? If you really wanted to thank me, take some action."

"Huh?" Ning Qing did not understand what he'd meant.

Lu Shaoming reached out a finger and pointed to his sharp and handsome face. "Kiss here."

Ning Qing's small face was as red as a tomato. He wanted her to kiss him!

But they'd just kissed!

Why does he like kissing so much?

Ning Qing struggled fiercely in her heart. This man was so kind to her, she should give him a kiss. However, she hadn't really kissed anyone except her mother.

The man smiled and looked at her expectantly. Ning Qing made up her mind and closed her eyes. Holding his handsome face with both her hands, she kissed him.

This was embarrassing. She'd kissed the tip of his nose, which was as tall as a hill!

"Haha..." Seeing that the girl had kissed the wrong place and had immediately frozen with her lips the tip of his nose, Lu Shaoming laughed recklessly.

Magnetic vibrations rumbled from his chest, causing her scalp to feel numb. Her bloodlust was stimulated. She straddled him and placed her two small hands on his shoulders, lifted his handsome face up, and said viciously, "Don't laugh! Laugh again and I'll bite you!"

"Are you a puppy? Fancy biting people?" Lu Shaoming glanced at her, apparently not taking her words seriously.

Bully!

Ning Qing's head heated up as she lowered her head and opened her mouth to bite him on the jaw.

Ning Qing regretted it immediately. The man hadn't shaved for a long time. His stubble stung her tender lips.

Ning Qing knitted her beautiful eyebrows together tightly and loosened her hold on him. She used her hands and wiped her lips with disgust as she said with arrogance, "Do you still dare to laugh at me again next time?"

Lu Shaoming's body was tense, the girl had no strength at all. The place she'd bitten looked as if an ant had bitten him. She left behind imprints from her little teeth and a bit of saliva.

Very cute.

His black eyes filled with doting indulgence. Lu Shaoming grabbed the back of her head and pulled it to his cheek. His voice was hoarse as he said, "It's useless to defeat violence with violence. At times like this, you need to use a woman's gentleness. Be good, kiss me."

Ning Qing felt that her punch had landed on the cotton. She'd flexed her claws like a kitten, but he'd gently smoothed her hair and said, "Be good, stop playing."

It was a little difficult for the two of them to communicate.

Their bodies were almost stuck together. At such a close distance, Ning Qing mustered her courage and looked sideways at him.

She could see the man's knife like facial contours, trimmed clean sideburns, as well as the arc of his strong jawline. There was tiny black stubble on his jaw, with a shiny and glossy spot. It was the place that she had just bitten.

Chapter 66: Why Aren't You Wearing Clothes

Kissing such a charming man, she wasn't missing out, Ning Qing thought and she blushed.

She sat straight and cupped his handsome face in her hands. She got closer and pecked gently on the tooth imprint that she made.

"It doesn't hurt." Lu Shaoming rubbed her hair and smiled.

Ning Qing thought to herself, did I ask if it hurt?

But, she did feel guilty!

She touched the stubble on his lower jaw. Then, she looked up at his thin seductive lips.

People said that men with thin lips were heartless.

Why wasn't he?

Ning Qing smiled sweetly yet bashfully. She extended her hand and hugged the back of his neck courageously, he then kissed her lips gently.

But before she reached his lips, there was a knock on the door again.

Ning Qing was shocked. She climbed down from the man's body full of fright. Then, she accidentally rolled on the sofa and fell on the ground.

"Ah!" Her ass landed on the ground and almost broke into half. Ning Qing screamed in pain and her eyes were welled up with tears.

Lu Shaoming saw and found it helpless. He bent down and next to the girl's face said, "The person who was outside couldn't see you but you shouted. What do you think this person would think?"

Ning Qing, "... Sh*t, she was inexorably mired in controversy!

She saw that the man didn't intend to give her a hand. She flipped around and stood up from the ground. Her ass hurt and she wanted to rub with her hand but the man was looking at her and she had to keep his image in mind.

"I don't know! You think everyone has a dirty mind like you?" Ning Qing grumbled and turned around to open the door.

She opened the door and Zhu Rui brought two nurses to send their dinner. Ning Qing blushed when she saw that Zhu Rui didn't dare to look her in her eyes.

She's doomed!

...

The two of them had their dinner in silence and the nurse came to clean up their utensils. Zhu Rui passed Ning Qing a set of white shirt and white slacks. It's men's, like sleepwear.

Ning Qing suddenly understood. Lu Shaoming wants to sleep here tonight?!

Ning Qing looked at the one and only a small bed in the room. Then, she looked at the sofa that could barely fit one person. She felt that she was in a difficult position. He wants... Does he want to sleep with her?

Lu Shaoming sat on the sofa as he read a document in his hand with full attention. He didn't look up but said gently, "You can shower first and hit the hay before me. I will be busy for a bit."

"Oh," Ning Qing nodded and went to shower as she laden with anxiety.

...

She finished her shower and the man was still working. Ning Qing held the collar of her sleepwear. Her sleepwear was long sleeved with long pants. It was pink with a cartoon design, rather conservative.

It was a delicate atmosphere. The man didn't speak, but she couldn't ask him where he planned to sleep that night.

She walked next to him as she wiped her wet hair with a towel. She weighed her words before she spoke.

As she was building up the courage to speak, a strong arm locked her soft waist. The man pulled and she fell onto the sofa. He summoned his threatening voice, "What are you trying to do when you wander around before me in your sleepwear?"

She wanted to go to bed, naturally. She was in her sleepwear. What was he thinking about?

Her towel was taken away while the man threw his document aside. He dried her hair as he creased his eyebrows, "Would your hair be dry like that? You'll get a headache if you sleep with your hair wet. Is there a hairdryer? I'll call Zhu Rui to send one over."

Call?

Ning Qing's eyes beamed.

Lu Shaoming held his phone up and called. Ning Qing turned around and held his arm as she smiled sheepishly, "Er, Lu Shaoming, tell Zhu Rui to send a mattress over."

...

There was a knock at the door and Ning Qing went to open it. The hair dryer and the mattress were sent in.

Ning Qing closed the door behind her and walked to her bed. She pushed her thin blanket to her side and pushed another thin blanket to his side. They slept on each of their sides. The well water does not intrude into the river water as each of them go their own way.

Ning Qing was relieved and excited. There was suddenly a lazy chuckle behind her. "I thought you'd ask me to sleep on the sofa."

"Why?" Ning Qing turned around and smiled. "Mister husband is busy with a myriad of state affairs every day. Even if one were to sleep on the sofa, it'd be me."

Lu Shaoming sneered as his face vaguely taunted. "If a man were to really want to sleep with you, you think holding onto your collar and having another mattress will help? Childish!"

Ning Qing, "... Just how many eyes he had that he could see all her little actions.

...

Ning Qing dried her hair and climbed into her bed. She then closed her eyes and fell asleep.

She fell asleep very quickly and had a very long dream.

It was a sunny day. She was only ten-years-old. Her parents were still deeply in love. The three of them were playing in the field at the Ning family villa.

Her father was carrying her on his shoulders. He ran as they flew a kite. He smiled and said, "Our baby Qing is really growing up. You can fly the kite so high up."

Her mom was smiling gently behind the two of them. She smiled and exhorted, "Zhenguo, don't lift Qingqing so high up, she might fall."

It was a good time.

Suddenly, there was a drastic change of scene. The sunny weather gave way to a storm. The Ning family's maidservants pushed her down from the stairs to the patio and she fell into a muddy puddle. Her mom held her in her arms and wailed in tears.

Her father who was once loving suddenly looked ferocious as he pointed at them and shouted heartlessly, "This is not your home anymore. I have Meiling and Yaoyao. Leave!"

Eighteen years old was an age of lush romance. A handsome young man in a white shirt and jeans picked her up from school with his bicycle. She sat behind him and crossed her legs as she enjoyed the ride. She smiled and called, "Brother Junxi..."

Xu Junxi passed by a flower bed and he stopped his bicycle. He then picked up a pink rose and gave it to her. She blushed and accepted the rose. The young man beamed with joy as he said, "Qingqing, I like you, can you be my girlfriend?"

She nodded bashfully.

But it wasn't as sweet as she expected. The image took a drastic turn and Xu Junxi seized her neck as he looked at her coldly. He screamed uncontrollably, "Give me back my Qingqing!"

...

Ning Qing's tears flowed as she struggled to shake off Xu Junxi, to free herself of this nightmare. Just as she was suffocating, a palm covered her cold face. There was a man's deep voice.

"Ning Qing, wake up."

Ning Qing opened her eyes and her teary eyes met another pair of bright black eyes.

It was a dream.

Lu Shaoming wiped away her tears off her cheek with his thumb. The girl who just woke up was off guard. Her puffy red eyes were looking into his innocently. Her delicate look made people love her tenderly.

He kissed her cheeks and comforted her gently. "You dreamt? Don't worry. You woke up from your dream. I'm here, don't cry."

Ning Qing's tension relaxed as she saw him. She sniffled in his embrace. In grief, she said with a hoarse voice, "I had a nightmare, I dreamt of..."

Ning Qing suddenly paused and looked at him timidly, "I... Did I talk in my sleep? Did I call someone's name?"

"Mm, yes..." Lu Shaoming replied with a smile yet didn't look like he was smiling, "You called for your dad and then, Xu Junxi."

Ning Qing stiffened.

She was Lu Shaoming's wife. Calling another man's name in her dreams would be unbearable to any man.

"I..." Ning Qing wanted to explain but Lu Shaoming suddenly got up and left the bed. There was no emotion in his voice. "I'll go get a towel for you to wipe your face."

"Shaoming..." Ning Qing was worried that he would leave. She quickly sat up and hugged his waist from behind.

"Are you angry?"

Lu Shaoming sat by the bed and let her hug him. "Mm, a little."

Ning Qing was shocked at his reply and she quickly explained, "No, it's not what you think it was... I bid goodbye with him entirely today but there are some memories that we had for the past few years... I dreamt of him just now and I was upset and melancholy..."

"I can't control that I would call his name in my dream but he is in the past. Don't misunderstand me... We are married and I want to be with you..."

Lu Shaoming listened to her quietly and he turned around to wipe her tears, "I know, I didn't misunderstand you. Don't overthink. I'm going to get you a towel."

...

Ning Qing lay down in her blanket. Although he said that he didn't misunderstand, she was still worried.

When a person is willing to be nice to you without any condition, you must know how to appreciate it. When the other person gives, you must reciprocate the same amount of love and care.

Between husband and wife, suspicion and jealousy are like poison. It was her fault for calling Xu Junxi's name in her dreams and she had to make it up.

Lu Shaoming returned. It was very comfortable when the wet towel rubbed against her face. It was then that Ning Qing noticed that he was only wearing a towel around his waist and his upper body was bare.

Maybe it was because he just took a shower, his short hair was still wet. Without his elegant jacket, his body was roaring with manly strength and he gave out a rather invasive aura.

Ning Qing stole a glance then looked away, blushing in embarrassment.

"Why aren't you dressed?" She asked softly.

Lu Shaoming didn't stop wiping his face and he sounded so carefree. "I want to see if you would blush if you saw me naked."

“You!” Ning Qing turned around and punched him playfully.

Lu Shaoming caught her hand and his black bright eyes locked on her gaze. “Why? Can’t take a joke? I just finished work and went to shower. Halfway through the shower, I heard you crying and shouting for Xu Junxi. I was busy comforting you, where do I find time to get dressed?”

Ning Qing heard and felt tears well up in her eyes. She hugged the man’s neck and kissed him on his lips. “Shaoming, don’t be angry, okay?”

Chapter 67: Is This Bear a Female or Male?

The girl’s voice was soft and sweet. Lu Shaoming looked at her red lips, his Adam’s apple bobbed, and said in a hoarse voice, “If you don’t want me to be angry, then why don’t you give me something?”

What else does he want?

Ning Qing closed her eyes, copying what he did last time. She slightly parted her cherry-colored mouth and sucked strongly on his lips.

The next second, Lu Shaoming pinned her down. His large hand found her soft waist, which he loved the most, and gently squeezed it. The other hand was on the back of her head; Lu Shaoming switched from a passive role to a more dominant role and kissing her lips.

“Mmph...” Ning Qing was in slight discomfort. Before he’d kissed her gently, entwining together, but now he was using a lot of strength, sweeping over her like a storm and causing her tongue to go numb.

She couldn’t breathe well, her mouth was filled with his refreshing aroma and his saliva, and she dared’t swallow.

Only when she’d reached out with her small hand and started pushing him away did she realize that he hadn’t closed his eyes at all.

His narrow black eyes were filled with the darkness of a man, and though they already appeared tired and bloodshot, the man’s eyes became even more bloodshot. His black and white eyes were still so dark that they could not reflect light. He stared at her closely, which was very frightening.

Ning Qing’s lay on the bed, accepting her destiny with her eyes closed. Alright, alright; she’ll admit that she could not resist him.

She couldn’t resist his mature, restrained, and forceful aura.

Lu Shaoming looked at the lamp above his head, his breathing disorderly. “No, if I don’t kiss you, I’ll be in greater agony. You go to bed first. I’ll take a cold shower.”

Lu Shaoming got up and went to the bathroom.

...

When Lu Shaoming came out, Ning Qing was still awake. Her tiny body was curled up in the blankets like a kitten. Her silky black hair was spread out on the pillow, pretty and coquettish.

The flush on her little face had not faded, the red peeking out from her fair face was like blended rouge, the features on her palm-sized face was exquisite and beautiful, and the deep and sparkling eyes were watery and bright, enticing people just by looking into them.

Lu Shaoming had changed into a white shirt and white pants. He propped his two amazing long legs on the bed. His right arm went around her small head as he embraced her. "Let's share a blanket?"

"No!" Ning Qing was frightened.

"Alright then. Let's sleep separately." Lu Shaoming withdrew his arm and lifted the thin blanket from outside.

Ning Qing heaved a sigh of relief. They could not touch each other at all. They were newlyweds who'd just gotten married and sparks flew whenever they touched each other.

But the next second, the thin blanket was lifted off her body, the warm body of the man came closer and with a curl of his arm, she'd been enveloped in his strong and tyrannical embrace.

"Lu Shaoming, you went back on your word..." Ning Qing struggled to get rid of him.

"Playing with fire again? Sleep!" The man's five words succeeded in suppressing the little girl who'd been wriggling around.

No matter how upset she was, Ning Qing dared not move. Tonight was their wedding night, she hadn't expected that it'd be so hard to endure this night.

This won't do, she must live separately from him.

Her small face was buried in his chest, where his heart was beating strongly. She was a little sleepy. She closed her eyes and said, "Lu Shaoming, are you still angry?"

"Not angry, just a little bit... Uncomfortable, Ning Qing, forget Xu Junxi as soon as possible, and then fall in love with me, ok?" He looked sideways at the girl.

But the girl had already closed her eyes and fallen asleep peacefully.

Lu Shaoming smiled helplessly. They'd only kissed, they hadn't even started "exercising" yet and look how tired she was.

He kissed her on her forehead and murmured, "Ning Qing, I'll wait for you. Good night."

...

The next morning.

When Ning Qing opened her eyes, her bedside was empty, Lu Shaoming had already gotten out of bed.

She felt ashamed upon thinking of how he could still wake up so early after going on a two-day business trip, and yet she'd slept like a little lazy pig until now.

But it's good this way too. He'd gotten out of bed first and it wouldn't be awkward for either of them.

"You're awake?" Right then, a low and rich voice rang out as Lu Shaoming stepped out of the bathroom.

Today, he was wearing a light gray V-neck T-shirt and beige business casual pants. His sleeves had been rolled up casually, revealing his strong arms. His fatigue has vanished and he was glowing with energy from head to toe, inside and out.

This was the first time that Ning Qing had seen him wearing casual clothes such as a thin shirt. His current appearance was refreshingly elegant and handsome.

Ning Qing felt her face heat up a little. "Yes, good morning." After responding calmly, she got out of bed and went to the bathroom.

She had to brush her teeth and wash her face.

Lu Shaoming leaned lazily against the door and looked at her with both hands in his pants pocket. "Ning Qing, Mom's recovering pretty well, so our life should go back to normal. Move into my house tonight."

Ning Qing almost spat out the water in her mouth. It was pretty early in the morning for him to start agitating her like this.

She thought about it; Mom's health is getting better, she'll have to go on set tomorrow, living in the hospital could not be a permanent situation, she was married so moving in with him was inevitable.

The point is, if he were to stick to her every night, the consequences would be unimaginable.

"Ok, alright, but I have some things that I have to bring over from my dormitory."

"Ok, after meeting Mom and having breakfast, I'll drive you there."

Ning Qing asked curiously, "Aren't you going to the office today?"

Lu Shaoming, with his lips, curled up and a sharp brow lifted, asked, "Do you want me to go?"

Ning Qing, "... Just take it that I didn't ask!

Also, don't seduce her, be serious!

...

Ning Qing changed her clothes and opened the door. She was surprised. Outside the door stood Kong Yang.

"Ning Qing, you're awake? I was just about to knock on the door. I got you some breakfast. Eat it while it's hot." Kong Yang handed the paper bag in his hand to Ning Qing.

Ning Qing did not accept it, she really couldn't delay this enthusiastic and lively boy any longer. "Kong Yang, I'm sorry, I'm already married."

Kong Yang was shocked. "Married? To whom?"

Right then, a strong arm slung across Ning Qing's small shoulders as a man's warm chest stuck against on her left shoulder, "Ning Qing, why are you still standing around, why aren't we going to see Mom?"

Ning Qing thought that she didn't have to waste her time explaining anymore. A man had just come out of her room and hugged her. Just looking at Kong Yang's pale and green face, she knew that Kong Yang had understood it instantly.

"Kong Yang, he's my husband." Better a little loss than a long sorrow. Ning Qing hardened her heart and gave Kong Yang a fatal blow.

Kong Yang took one look at Lu Shaoming and knew that he was a rich man with a successful career. He was nothing compared to him.

Kong Yang's eyes grew dim. He pulled the corners of his mouth and said with a farfetched smile, "Ning Qing, I wish you happiness."

Other than this sentence, Kong Yang had nothing to say. He turned around left sadly.

Ning Qing felt very guilty as she looked at the boy's back. There were few people who were nice to her in this world and Kong Yang was one of them. Unfortunately, she was unable to repay him.

"Hah," A soft laugh erupted while she was still feeling sad. "He's gone. What are you looking at? Do you want to chase after him with your marriage certificate?"

Ning Qing looked up at the man, only to see that he was staring at her with bright, black eyes while pressing his thin lips gently together, with one hand in his trousers pocket.

Chasing after him with her marriage certificate... The way this man spoke was really enough.

And why could she smell something sour?

"Are you jealous?" Ning Qing raised her head and asked him with bright eyes.

Lu Shaoming closed the door with one hand, took her by the shoulder with the other, and led her forward. He did not look doubtful, and there was some pride in his firm jaw. "Jealous?"

He uttered the word simply, with disdain in his maniacal tone. He seemed to have never heard of the word.

Ning Qing felt that it was funny. Men with too much self-esteem also led quite a tiring life.

...

Ning Qing went to Dr. Luo's office. When she came back, she stood by the door of the ward and watched as Lu Shaoming talked to her mom inside.

Lu Shaoming was sitting on a chair, his slender and beautiful hands peeling an apple.

Mom asked, "Shaoming, what do your parents work as? Do they like Qingqing?"

"My parents are running a business and they're living in Los Angeles, USA now. At my age, they won't interfere in my life anymore. As long as I like it, my parents will like it."

“Mmm,” Mom said while nodding her head frequently and smiling satisfactorily. “Even so, you should take Qingqing to see your parents more. Young people should be filial to their elders. Don’t let others think Qingqing is ignorant and rude.”

“For sure.” Lu Shaoming cut the apples into small pieces and put them on the fruit plate. Then he took two toothpicks and handed them to mom.

Mom grabbed a slice with a toothpick and put it in her mouth. They kept talking while Ning Qing focused her attention elsewhere. The man was mature and steady, and his words are watertight. He had already made her mom very happy.

Ning Qing sighed and looked out the window at the rising sun. Every day will be like this from now on. She will have this man every day.

This feeling was...really good.

...

Lu Shaoming drove Ning Qing to her school dormitory. Ning Qing opened the dormitory door and went in.

“Shaoming, how big is your house?”

“Why do you ask this?”

“Well, if your house is small, I’ll take a little less, and a little more if it’s big.”

Lu Shaoming stood by the door and looked around the dormitory. He said gently, “There’ll still be enough room even if you were to take everything here.”

That’s not necessary. Ning Qing was very good at tidying up her house. Her things were categorized under commonly used, uncommonly used, and commonly used daily necessities. With his status, he should have all those things. She wouldn’t be so unreasonable as to bring even the pots, bowls and ladles. She could just bring some important things with her.

Ning Qing stood beside the bed. Her first choice would definitely be the teddy bear.

She’d slept with the teddy bear in her arms every night; it was her bed partner!

Because she’s been sleeping in the hospital recently, she had packed the teddy bear into a plastic bag and put it on the top of the bed at a certain height in order to prevent the teddy bear from getting dusty.

She tiptoed and reached for the bear.

Lu Shaoming was not surprised at the girl’s first choice. Despite how fierce she was on the outside, she was actually still a naive little girl.

The girl was wearing black suspenders, covered with a translucent white tassel shirt, and light blue skinny jeans today. Her getup was cheerful and beautiful.

Lu Shaoming saw that she was standing on her tiptoes trying to get the teddy bear, but because she was not tall enough and her arms were not close enough, she could not get it despite quite a bit of effort.

She may not have known that when she'd reached for the bear, her small, slender waist had been exposed. Her toned, flat stomach was so fair and tender that it was shining like jade, her waist that was barely 20 inches was like the bottleneck of a blue and white porcelain vase.

Her especially perky butt was wrapped tightly by her jeans. It was perched above her legs, meaty and full of elasticity. Lu Shaoming looked at her and suddenly wondered what she'd look like kneeling on her knees.

His eyes darkened as Lu Shaoming raised his feet and approached her with his strong body. Standing behind her, he took a hand out of his trousers pocket and easily grabbed the teddy bear.

Ning Qing patted her head, realizing how stupid she was for not using the human ladder available to her.

"Thank you." After thanking him, she held out her two little hands to hug the teddy bear.

But she did not get to hug it, because, with a raise of his arms, Lu Shaoming held the bear back to a height that she could not reach.

"What are you doing?" Ning Qing glared back at him and saw that the way that he was holding the bear was a little disrespectful to the... bear. He was actually grabbing both of the bear's ears with one of his big hands, causing both of the bear's legs to flutter helplessly in the air.

"Don't pinch the teddy bear's ear, it's painful!"

Lu Shaoming placed another big hand beside the bed, and though he did not intentionally approach her, he trapped her delicate little body in his arms. "Why, is sleeping with the bear more comfortable than sleeping with me?"

Ning Qing's small face turned red with a 'ping', as the image of the both of them entangled together last night popped up in her mind again.

Well, besides the fact that his body felt a little harder, she'd slept comfortably while hugging him. For example, she had a good and dreamless sleep last night.

"That's different!" She refused to give in.

"How is it different?"

His refreshing and charming male scent was very close to her ears, Ning Qing was very nervous and she blurted out some words before thinking, "The little teddy bear has no attacking power."

"Ah." Lu Shaoming laughed. "That is to say, you can pin the bear down whenever you like when hugging it, but you have no choice but to be pinned down by me when you're hugging me. Isn't it just the usual fare between men and women? Sooner or later you'll be pinned down by me in bed."

Ptooeey, Ptooeey, ptooeey!

What was he talking about?!

“If you don’t give me the bear... That’s all right. I don’t want it then!” Ning Qing broke away from him and went to the window. The cool wind outside the window blew against her hot and flushed face. She tucked a strand of her silky hair on her cheek behind her ear with her fair fingers.

But the next moment, she felt something warm against her chest, Lu Shaoming had placed the bear in her arms.

She quickly reached out and hugged him. He still has his conscience!

“Ning Qing, I’m curious. Is this bear a man or a woman?”

Chapter 68: Let Me Show You A Magic Trick

“Ning Qing, I’m quite curious. Is this bear male or female?”

Why would he ask such a weird question?

“Female!” Ning Qing grumpy.

“Yeah? Let me see. Where’s the difference between a male and female?”

The difference... Between the legs?!

Just as Ning Qing came back to reality and looked at him, there was a rippling flirtatious gleam in his eyes. He watched her as he leisurely leaned against the side of the bed. He frowned, as though he were serious and solemn.

He seemed to be in deep thought about the difference between male and female!

She had never seen such a shameless man in her life. How could he make a dirty joke in such a proper manner?

“Lu Shaoming, I misjudged you!” Ning Qing reprimanded as she blushed.

Lu Shaoming wasn’t against her accusation but said, “You’ve only now realized? It’s too late.”

Ning Qing decided to ignore him.

...

The girl didn’t bother with him and Lu Shaoming stood by the door as he lit a cigarette. He crossed his legs elegantly as he smoked.

Ning Qing stood by her wardrobe and she asked, “Should I bring my clothes over?”

Lu Shaoming ashed his cigarette and replied in his deep voice, “Don’t need to. I have asked someone to prepare your clothes.”

“Oh,” Ning Qing replied and her face grew awkward. “Then, I’ll only pack my underwear.”

“There’s underwear too.”

Ning Qing felt uncomfortable. A man prepared her underwear for her. She was so shy.

She looked down and pouted. “Maybe the size that you bought for me isn’t suitable. I’d better bring some.”

“How could it be not suitable? I measured with my hands. Very accurate.”

Measured with your hands?

Ning Qing recalled that it was half a month ago when she sat on his lap in that dorm room. He supported her butt with his hand...

She looked at the handsome man who stood by the door and said, “You measured my bottom but what if the top doesn’t fit?”

Lu Shaoming heard and slowly looked up at her. He puffed a cloud of smoke at her face from two meters away. ENveloped by the smoke, his sculpted face showed a tinge of unrestrained wildness. He stared at her well-developed chest and said, “34B, I gauged with my eyes.”

Ning Qing cursed in her head, Stupid, why do I discuss such an unhealthy topic with him!

She reined back her gaze and the way he smokes was still in her head. It was as though the smoke thrust itself at her face. It gave her chills.

34B... It was really her size. He’s quite accurate.

However, if a man could gauge so accurately, he must have some experience.

Ning Qing’s mood instantly dampened. She felt uncomfortable. Considering his age, he would have dated at least seven or eight girls by now.

She took a deep breath and courageously looked to her side. She flashed a happy smile and spoke in a casual chatting tone. “You must have had much practice.”

Lu Shaoming chuckled and looked down when he put the cigarette butt out in the ashtray. He put his hands into his pockets and replied seriously, “I’ve only read you. You alone.”

Ning Qing couldn’t believe him. Who does he think he’s trying to lie to?

He read her only, and he could be that accurate? Or... Was he talented in this?

Regardless, he was sick!

Too sick!

But, Ning Qing stopped frowning and her mood magically lifted.

....

As she was thinking, Ning Qing idly shuffled a book that was near her. Lu Shaoming saw a comic book on her desk and he walked over to flip the comic book with his dainty fingers.

“Lu Shaoming, don’t look!” Ning Qing noticed him, and she was surprised that she stood up and ran over to take the comic. She looked at him with her guard up. “This is personal, you can’t look!”

Lu Shaoming shrugged and smiled, “Who’s the boy in your comic book? Xu Junxi?”

“No!” Ning Qing shook her head as she blushed in embarrassment. She put the comic book in the paper bag, “Don’t ask. I won’t tell you even if you ask.”

“Okay,” Lu Shaoming nodded. He wasn’t a man who was tied up in the past. Before he married her, he knew that she once had a relationship with Xu Junxi. Hence, he didn’t mind.

He’d been the one to marry her anyway, so why worry?

It must from when she was in her first bloom of love; the secret in the bottom of Ning Qing’s heart back in the day. he wouldn’t force her to reveal it.

“Are you done? Let’s go.” Lu Shaoming went to pick up the few paper bags.

...

The man walked in front while Ning Qing followed behind him, carrying her favorite plushie bear. She watched the man’s firm footsteps, and with every step he took, the corner of his beige slacks formed a beautiful arc.

It was her first time seeing a man who carried paper bags with the charm of a man carrying a briefcase.

“Why are you so slow? Hurry up!” Lu Shaoming stopped and waited for the girl behind him.

Ning Qing quickly shook away her romantic thoughts and jogged to him. She recalled something and took out the broken watch from her bag to pass to him. “I dropped the watch on the ground and it wouldn’t move anymore. Where did you buy this? Send it back and see if it can be repaired.”

Lu Shoaming took the watch and examined it. “Ning Qing, want to see a magic trick?”

“What?” Ning Qing didn’t understand.

Lu Shaoming put the paper bags on the ground and strapped the watch on his wrist. “Magic. I shake it for three-seconds and the watch will be fine.”

Bullshit. Magic is all fake. Trying to fool me like I’m a three-year-old...

They stood at the corridor near the dorms. It was noon and there were female students walking back and forth. The female students saw Lu Shaoming and they covered their mouths as they exclaimed, “Wow!”

“Handsome uncle is going to perform a magic trick. Everyone, come and see.” The female students instantly surrounded the two of them.

Ning Qing was so unhappy about the situation. Uncle?!

She'd better watch her mouth!

A crowd gathered around Lu Shaoming. He was like a prince, descended from heaven. His lips arched into a flirtatious smile as his bright black eyes fixed on the figure before him. He said gently, "Look, I'm going to do it now. One, two, three..." He raised the watch and shook it three times. Then, he showed it to Ning Qing...

Ning Qing looked. The watch was really ticking!

The girls around them exclaimed again.

"Wow! This uncle is not performing a mere magic trick. He's obviously playing tricks to make his girlfriend happy. This is so romantic. I'm so touched, I'm going to cry."

Ning Qing's delicate face blushed in embarrassment. He... What is he doing? Isn't a thirty-year-old man behaving like this a bit childish?

Where's his carriage?

Where's his unapproachable elegance?

Where's the dictatorial president?

She reckoned the watch wasn't broken at all. He was only tricking her.

"Lu Shaoming, you! I... I'm no longer nineteen or twenty! I am twenty-one this year!" Ning Qing spat in anger before she turned and ran away.

Lu Shaoming looked at the shadow of the girl running away, he laughed.

...

The black Bentley drove along the bustling street. Ning Qing looked at the world on the other side of the window and her attention was suddenly caught by a Häagen-Dazs ice cream shop.

Häagen-Dazs was her favorite brand of ice cream. She walked along the street a month ago but this shop hadn't been here.

Looking at the colorful ice cream display cabinet moving further and further away, Ning Qing held the window with both her hands and she watched the shadow of the shop pitifully.

Then, someone teased, "Want to eat ice cream? Don't forget you are already twenty-one!"

Ning Qing stole a glance at the handsome man next to her via the mirror and asked, "What does age have to do with ice cream?"

"Oh." She could hear the man's magnetic yet lazy voice. "Twenty-one years old and married. She should lean more towards sugary things, such as, lollipops!"

She immediately covered her face. She didn't understand, she really didn't understand!

...

Both of them had dinner with Yue Wanqing at the hospital. At seven at night, the Bentley was parked in a huge field. Ning Qing got out of the car and she was greeted with a European style villa with a dim yellow wall, blue roof and round windows.

Ning Qing was shocked. Although she knew that Lu Shaoming was rich, such a beautiful villa would only be seen in newspapers and magazines.

Lu Shaoming opened the door and walked in. Ning Qing quickly followed behind, "Madam." There was a friendly aunt in the house.

"This is Aunt Zhang." Lu Shaoming introduced her briefly.

Ning Qing immediately revealed a gentle and sweet smile. "Aunt Zhang, hello."

"Hi Madam. Master has great taste. Madam looks young and beautiful." Aunt Zhang smiled. The more she looked at Ning Qing, the happier she felt.

Ning Qing was caught off guard, being referred to as "Madam".

Lu Shaoming held the paper bags with one hand and held her shoulder with another, and lead her upstairs. "This will be your house from today onwards. Hurry up and get used to it. The glass door in front of the living room downstairs leads to the swimming pool. There's a master bedroom, guest bedroom, study, a wine cellar, and a movie theatre on the second floor. You can watch movies when you're free. On the third floor, it there a full glass balcony. The about it. If there's anything that you don't like and want to change, change things to your liking. No need to go through me."

Ning Qing looked around at the villa. The decor and furniture in the villa were exquisite and luxurious. On the stairs, she could see the chandelier in the living room. It was bright and it was not marred by a speck of dust. Even though the light wasn't on, the deep luster was extremely brilliant.

Ning Qing was a hundred percent certain that he was the type of man who kept a low profile but he knew how to enjoy life.

"I know." Ning Qing felt as though she fell into a golden pit. She felt anxious.

The two of them stood before a room and Lu Shaoming opened the door. "This is our bedroom. Let's go in."

Bedroom?

Ours?!

"Hold on," Ning Qing stopped her footsteps and found it difficult to say, "Shaoming, can I stay in the guest bedroom?"

She refused to sleep with him.

Lu Shaoming removed his hand from her shoulders and put in his pocket. He raised his eyebrows and spat, "No!"

She stiffened.

“You can take the master bedroom, I’ll sleep in the guest bedroom,” the man said calmly.

Ning Qing beamed and lifted her gaze. She looked at the handsome man, who was a head taller than her. Right then, she couldn’t reveal her intention to smile, but she chuckled and said humbly, “Well, how can I have the gall to...”

“Let’s shower and go to bed early.”

Ning Qing quickly got into the room and blocked the door with her body. She grabbed the paper bags from his hand and said with a straight face, “I’m tired. I’m going to bed. Good night.”

She shut the bedroom door.

But the door couldn’t be closed, as man blocked the door with his hand.

“This is a credit card. Use it when you need it.” Lu Shaoming passed her a gold card.

Ning Qing hesitated but ended up extending her hand to take it. She already spent a lot of his money. If she were to start to take account of it now, it would be unreasonable.

She took the gold card and she was suddenly at loss for words.

In this embarrassing moment, Lu Shaoming touched her hair and got closer to kiss her forehead. “Didn’t you want to live well with me? Husband and wife don’t keep account of things between them. Feel at ease and take things when your husband gives them to you. Sleep tight, good night.”

...

Ning Qing took out the things from the paper bag and organized them in the room. The room was blue and white, simple yet warm.

There’s a walk-in wardrobe in the room. She opened the door and walked in. There were clothes for autumn and winter. The classic Chanel and elegant Dior, two big brands. There were LV bags and C, Gilson’s undergarments...

Besides the luxurious brands, she saw that the clothes were segregated into two categories in the wardrobe. One was simple yet fashionable wear where she could wear to go out, just like what she was wearing. Her favorite knitted wear and jeans.

They only knew each other for half a month and he already knew her style. He was willing to spend time and effort on her. He understands her, he takes care of her.

Ning Qing was touched. How could she repay him?

Then, “didn’t you want to live well with me?” reverberated in her ears. Yeah, she was his wife. His house, every excellent condition that he provided was right and proper.

And, she would work hard to carry out her duties as a wife.

Ning Qing’s face blushed.

Knock Knock

Someone knocked on the door.

Ning Qing ran to answer the door and Aunt Zhang stood at the door.

“Madam, Häagen-Dazs just sent ice cream over. Try it, see if it tastes good.”

Ning Qing looked at the plate in Aunt Zhang’s hands. There was a white delicate porcelain bowl on a golden-edged burner. It was filled with pure milk chocolate sauce in the bowl. There was matcha ice cream on the sauce and it was topped with a supple cherry.

It’s Häagen-Dazs ice cream fondue.

Ning Qing looked and started salivating.

She found it unbelievable. When they passed by the Häagen-Dazs’s shop earlier, Lu Shaoming teased her for her girly sense of taste. Then, he sent ice cream over.

“Madam, I told Master that he shouldn’t let you eat cold things at night but he said that you love it so it’d be okay so long as you don’t eat too much. Look just how much Master adores you.”

Ning Qing took the ice cream and she blushed. She stole a glance at the corridor and looked downstairs, but she didn’t see Lu Shaoming’s shadow.

Aunt Zhang saw Ning Qing’s behavior and she chuckled. “Madam, he’s in the study. He normally works ’til late at night. You can take a shower and sleep.”

Aiyo, she wasn’t waiting for him to come to bed.

Chapter 69: I Won’t Tell Others That You Have A Little Birdie

...

After she’d closed the door, Ning Qing took a set of pajamas and went to the bathroom to take a bath. After taking a bath, she sat beside the bed, drying her hair and stirring the ice cream, which had turned thick after boiling, with a small spoon.

She took a bite of the ice cream with a small spoon.

Wow, it tasted great!

Sweet agar had been added to the red beans, while fresh cream had been added to the matcha ice cream, and the mellow taste of chocolate made it simply delicious.

Ning Qing took one taste and suddenly thought of the man who was still working in the study.

Should she go and see him?

Good things were meant to be shared.

Forget it, she’d better not. He’d only be distracted if she were to go to him like this. Besides, she couldn’t just feed him with the little spoon if she were to go there.

It was too mushy!

Ning Qing shook her head. She'd better go to bed early after finishing her ice cream. She had to wake up early and fly to Shanghai with the crew for a shoot tomorrow, and she could not be late.

...

The next morning, with an "Ah", a scream could be heard from the bedroom. Ning Qing sat on the bed and looked at the alarm clock on her bedside table in horror. Yikes! It was already 7 o'clock!

The plane was going take off at 7:30!

It would take about 20 minutes to get to the airport, not counting the traffic jam.

Why had she slept like a log?

Ning Qing quickly jumped out of bed and ran down in her pink slippers. She wondered if Lu Shaoming had gone to the company. She did not have time to take a taxi and needed him to give her a ride.

She opened the door to the second bedroom. The door was unlocked so she ran straight in. "Lu Shaoming, Shaoming..." The bed was empty and nobody was there.

Ning Qing's heart had almost sunk into the bottom of her chest, but she didn't give up. She rushed into the bathroom upon seeing that the bathroom door was half open. "Lu Shaoming...Ah!"

Ning Qing screamed and quickly covered her face and eyes with her two small hands.

He, he, he was wearing a grey silk nightgown and standing by the toilet, holding his...with one hand while relieving himself.

Ning Qing had seen one for the first time in her life; she wanted nothing more than for the floor to swallow her up.

She screamed for a few times again. "Ah, ah, ah!" She was going to develop a sty in her eye.

The sound of running water reverberated through her ears, the man was washing his hands after he'd flushed, and heard the girl scream "ah" endlessly. He opened his mouth, and said with a rich and deep voice tinged with post-wake-up hoarseness, "Stop it, stop acting as if you'd been mistreated after getting such a bargain!"

What? A bargain?

Ning Qing was so emotionally agitated that she could not refute him. She bolted out of the door with her thin legs. She sobbed. She was never going to speak to him again!

Lu Shaoming watched as the girl went, awkwardness emanated from his clear eyes and jet black eyebrows, and his handsome face was a little red.

Not only was it her first time seeing it, but it was also his first time being seen as well.

...

Ning Qing had changed her clothes after washing up and Lu Shaoming happened to be going out as well. He was handsome and suave in his custom Armani white button up shirt and black pants.

Ning Qing tried hard to forget that scene. After a couple of deep breathes, she flashed a sweet smile and said, "Good morning." My plane's going to take off at 7:30 and I'm in a hurry. Can you give me a lift?"

"Okay, let's go." Lu Shaoming nodded as he responded.

Ning Qing was walking ahead. Lu Shaoming watched as the girl walked down the stairs. She was wearing a light linen Korean style double-breasted overcoat with a V-neck silk white shirt today, revealing her delicate and beautiful collarbone.

Nude colored stockings caused her legs to look straight and slender. With a pair of black boots on her feet and a delicate yellow handbag in her hand, she gave off a strong youthful trendy vibe.

She also had some light makeup on her face. There was red lipstick on her beautiful rhombus lips, and her skin was smooth and fair. She was stunning.

He had ordered the clothes, but she'd paired the clothes according to her taste. He hadn't misjudged her. She was a smart little woman who knew how to showcase her beauty.

Lu Shaoming's Adam's apple bobbed.

"Sir, madam, you're up. Come and have breakfast." Auntie Zhang brought their breakfast to the long table.

"I'm late."

"Eat your breakfast first. I promise to get you there by 7:30." Lu Shaoming took her by her hand and led her to the table.

Ning Qing looked down at his big hand holding her small hand, and her small face turned red again.

...

Sure enough, Lu Shaoming hadn't lied. He arrived with Ning Qing at the airport gate at 7:25.

"Shaoming, thank you. I'm going now." Ning Qing reached out her hand to unfasten her seat belt.

But he reached over and unbuckled her seatbelt for her before she could. How thoughtful. As Lu Shaoming's tall and straight body came closer, his charming manly scent instantly filled her nostrils. The man told her softly, "Ning Qing, call me if you encounter any difficulties at work."

Ning Qing turned sideways in order to avoid his enticing scent, and said, "Shaoming, due to family strife, I have formed a feud with Ning Yao, her mother, and Xu Junxi. Although we're married and I also know that you are very strong, I want to settle my problems myself. I want to retain my independence in this marriage. If I were to depend on you for everything, I would not be any different from a caged canary."

Lu Shaoming listened and looked up. He reached out and pinched her little cheeks twice as he laughed dotingly. "I know, I will respect you, and I will not interfere."

She was only 21 years old and her life had just started. A good lover was one who would allow her to develop on her own, under his wing. He would be responsible for escorting and protecting her while she grew up slowly.

After her seat belt had been unfastened, Ning Qing had one last thing to say. "Shaoming, I'm really going. Bye-bye." Ning Qing opened the door.

As one of her foot landed on the pavement, she heard the man behind her ask with a slightly jocular smile, "Ning Qing, what did you see in the bathroom this morning?"

Ning Qing seemed to have been stunned by an electric shock as her other foot jumped out from the car. She stood firmly, her pink face flushed as she said, "Don't worry, I won't tell anyone that you have a little birdie."

Bang!

Ning Qing quickly slammed the door shut and jogged into the airport as if someone were chasing her.

Little birdie?

Lu Shaoming's face was a little dark. He'll show her the power of the "little birdie" one day!

When her beautiful silhouette disappeared from his sight, Lu Shaoming made a u-turn, and when the Bentley was driving down the main road once again, a luxury car came in front of him.

The car's window slid down, revealing a delicate and beautiful young face. If Ning Qing saw it, she would be surprised, because the facially paralyzed Ou Luo Xi was smiling.

Ou Luo Xi smiled with a slight gap around the corners of his lips, it looked a little stiff, as if he did not smile often or had just learned to smile, but when he smiled, two dimples peeked out. Accompanied with his clear and pure black eyes, his smile was as simple and warm as a newborn baby's.

"Big Brother." Ou Luo Xi looked at Lu Shaoming in the Bentley and shouted.

Lu Shaoming lifted the corner of his lips and said, "Third brother, I'll entrust your sister-in-law to you. Let's reach out your second brother in the army and go to the bar and have a drink together after the movie filming has ended."

"OK." Ou Luo Xi's frosty aura vanished and nodded his head like a well-behaved child.

...

Ning Qing had been filming in Shanghai for half a month. All of Meng Yao's school days' scenes in *Wind and Dust* had been filmed. Director Wang brought everyone to Red House, where all the scenes taking place in The Bund's ballroom were filmed.

When she'd reached Red House, Ning Qing came across some familiar faces. Namely, the crew of "Pink Beauty" and of course, Ning Yao was the most important one.

Ning Yao had rolled down the stairs half a month ago and had been slapped four times by her. She had been quite heavily injured and “Pink Lady” had just started filming now that she had recovered.

Ning Yao’s gaze was full of piercing viciousness. She looked at her as if she wanted to pierce several bloody holes through her on the spot, but she still pretended to be friendly and went over to greet Ning Qing warmly. Ning Yao responded to everyone’s greetings with a smile, and the film set looked peaceful.

The two groups are filming in two different halls, but they shared a common space during their break. The second female and male supporting actors were practicing their lines. Ning Qing was reading the script while sitting in a chair.

When she was absorbed in her reading she heard someone call, “Sister.” there was a voice as soft as a warbler’s by her ear. “Look, Junxi is visiting me at work.”

Ning Qing looked up. Xu Junxi, surrounded by two or three people, strode towards Ning Yao with his long legs. He carried a thermos cup in his hand.

Xu Junxi also saw her and he pressed his thin lips together tightly, his eyes were cold and gloomy. He stared at her as if she owed him tens of millions of dollars.

Ning Qing was not angry at all. She flipped her silky hair, which was curled as she was playing the role of a songstress. Her silky hair fell down and framed her face, making her appear soft, beautiful and enticing. She ran her tiny hands through her silky hair as she gracefully hooked her lips and said, “President Xu, long time no see.”

Xu Junxi looked at her fake smile. He gazed at her deeply before looking back down at Ning Yao and reaching out his hand to touch Ning Yao’s face, demonstrating their closeness. “Yaoyao, this is black chicken soup. Filming is very tiring, you should drink more.”

Her assistant helped unscrew the lid of the thermos cup. Ning Yao took an exaggerated sniff of the black chicken soup’s aroma and smiled like a flower. “Thank you Junxi. You’re so good to me.”

“Oh no!” Ning Yao suddenly exclaimed. She said crossly, “Junxi, my sister is here too. Why didn’t you bring some for my sister?” Ning Yao looked at Ning Qing apologetically. “Sister, Junxi only thought of me and forgot about you. Why don’t I just give you this soup to drink?”

Ning Qing felt mentally exhausted for this couple. Do they really like putting on an act in front of her?

Ning Qing covered her cherry mouth with the script as she giggled. She was surrounded by a group of staff members and she told everyone in a joking manner, “President Xu has brought black chicken soup to my sister but my sister asked me to drink it. Do you think I can drink it?”

“How can you drink that, Ning Qing, you’ll have indigestion if you drink it!” Xiao Zhou looked at Ning Yao with disdain and irony, and all the staff members erupted in laughter.

Ning Yao’s face darkened. She kicked a ball towards Ning Qing. She hadn’t expected Ning Qing to kick it back as if she were practicing Tai Chi.

There were many supporting actresses on the set. Ning Yao instantly felt that these supporting actresses were looking at her weirdly. Everyone could see that she was intentionally displaying her affections in public and they were envious and jealous of her. They probably hated her a little as well.

Ning Yao was furious.

At that moment, there was a shout from across the room. "It's meal time."

Ning Yao saw that there were two staff members from Ning Qing's production who were bringing in a big pot. Beef and other dishes must be stewing in that big pot. It was steaming and fragrant.

The entire crew was full of energy and laughter as they took their own bowls and chopsticks and squatted together on the ground while having a lively meal.

Xu Junxi looked as Xiao Zhou handed over a bowl of white rice to Ning Qing. Director Wang took a small bowl and personally placed it on the stool beside Ning Qing. He told her, "Ning Qing, this is the dish that I'd asked the kitchen to prepare for you specially. Don't leave any leftovers and finish it all."

Ning Qing was about to thank him when someone shouted and protested. "Director Wang, how can you be so biased? We also want something special."

Director Wang took a pair of chopsticks and knocked on the man's head. "Hungry ghost, Ning Qing's not eating more for no reason. She's going to dance later. If she's not full, how will she have the energy to dance?"

Wind and Dust's first supporting actress immediately pouted her lips and laughed. "Director Wang, you said you're not biased, but how many additional scenes have you given little sister Ning Qing after seeing how beautifully she could dance?"

When Director Wang could not refute, Ning Qing smiled and said, "Sister Lingling, are you asking for tuition fees from Director Wang by saying that? I couldn't dance the Cha-Cha in the previous scene, luckily you were there to teach me, you are my teacher."

The smooth flattery made the second supporting actress laugh like a flower. "Ning Qing, you have a sweet mouth."

"Haha..." The entire crew laughed and the atmosphere was peaceful and harmonious.

Ning Yao's face was purple with rage, the second and third supporting actresses in Feng Dust were all famous front-line actresses in China. If not for Director Wang, why would they play such insignificant roles?

She hadn't expected that in just half a month, Ning Qing was already getting along so well with them. She was beautiful and sweet-mouthed and had sweet-talked the crew around her finger.

Looking at them laughing and talking, Ning Yao looked at the black chicken soup in her hands and suddenly lost her appetite.

Xu Junxi stared at the encircled beautiful figure opposite him. He hadn't expected Ning Qing to ever have all this. Her eyes on her tiny face were curved as her expression was bright and lively. The entire crew liked her.

Dancing?

He suddenly remembered the Crystal Plate Dance she had performed more than half a month ago. No one knew that he had secretly blocked all the videos and news about Ning Qing's dance from leaking. He was this dark and despicable; he did not want anyone to see her beauty.

However, she'd broken away from his control and was about to fly high and away from him.

She was always someone who would become popular easily and now, Director Wang had given her a chance to put her talents to use.

Xu Junxi suddenly realized something. In his subconscious mind, he'd also known that Ning Qing would definitely become popular, she only lacked an opportunity.

...

Ning Qing went to a room in the Red House Hotel after dinner to find Ou Luo Xi. After half a month's interaction, she felt that Ou Luo Xi's personality was cold and isolated. He always ate alone and would plunge into his room after filming, rarely coming out.

Standing in front of the room's door, Ning Qing reached out and knocked at the door.

"Come in." Ou Luo Xi responded from inside.

Ning Qing pushed the door open and went in. The beautiful young man was sitting on the light purple retro-floral sofa. The bright and warm afternoon sunshine reflected rainbow-like light through the window and shone on his handsome face, the image was as delicate as a sketch.

Ning Qing finally knew why Ou Luo Xi had so many fans. Apart from his overly handsome face, his temperament was very quiet. He was so quiet it seemed as if he were in harmony with nature, just like a light and simple freehand brushwork.

Ou Luo Xi was peeling an apple.

Ning Qing walked in front of him and asked, "Luo Xi, have you eaten yet?"

"Yes." The young man's eyes were downcast. The soft bangs on his forehead swayed with the wind, covering a pair of long eyes.

Ning Qing saw that he was very inexperienced in peeling the apple as if he was just learning. She sat on the other side of the sofa and took the knife and apple from his hands. "Let me teach you."

As she peeled the apple, Ning Qing thought about when she'd seen Lu Shaoming peel an apple for her mother when she was outside the ward the other day.

Chapter 70: Compete

As Ning Qing peeled the apple, she recalled the scene where Lu Shaoming peeled an apple for her mother at the hospital.

The man's delicate and beautiful yet sleek looking hands had peeled the apple gracefully.

As Ning Qing thought of him, she couldn't help but smile. For the past couple weeks, they would text one another every night. He was a man of few words and he wasn't a sweet talker, but she was content with his short replies of "mm" and "okay".

The man was very busy with his work but whenever she texted, he would reliably message her back within three-seconds. That itself was rare to come by.

"What about peeling an apple makes you smile?" As she was thinking about her husband, she heard a voice of bewilderment.

She lifted her gaze to look at the young man opposite her. The young man was perplexed at her expression; there was doubt and suspicion across his face.

Ning Qing was taken off guard. It was her first time seeing Ou Luo Xi reveal such an expression. As he was curious, he looked around and she got a good view of his eyes. They were shimmering and crystal clear, extremely beautiful.

She felt that Ou Luo Xi was a totally different person on and off set. Off set, Ou Luo Xi didn't even know how to peel an apple. He'd ask questions like an innocent, naive child. His psychological age seemed to be quite young.

Ning Qing was curious. Behind every interesting person, there was an unknown past and a detailed story.

What kind of story was Ou Luo Xi's?

Ning Qing passed him a peeled apple and replied, "Because I thought of someone when I was peeling apple skin. I felt happy so I smiled."

"Oh," Ou Luo Xi nodded, "Did you think of someone that you like?"

Like?

Like Lu Shaoming?

Ning Qing's cheeks were rosy, "Mm, yeah, the person I like. Luo Xi, let's go. The next scene is coming up soon."

"Okay," Ou Luo Xi stood up and took down a black jacket from the clothes rack. They then left the room together.

...

Ning Qing and Ou Luo Xi filmed a dancing scene in the afternoon. Then, they needed to find a lake pavilion with beautiful scenery for a romantic scene.

“Director Wang, let’s film it at the pavilion,” Ning Qing pointed at a pavilion on the lake nearby. The scenery there was beautiful.

Director Wang looked and said, “Alright, let’s go there.”

Everyone came to the pavilion and the filming crews were setting up for the shot. Director Wang was telling Ning Qing about things that she needed to take note of for the scene. Suddenly, she heard a frail voice utter, “Sister, are you filming here?”

It’s Ning Yao. Why is she everywhere?

Ning Qing looked up and saw that Ning Yao was walking over with her arms around Xu Junxi. There was an assistant and a few crews behind them.

“Sister, we are filming a scene later. I saw this pavilion earlier but you came first. However, everything is on a first come first serve basis. Can you let us film first?”

“How could you be so unreasonable...” Xiao Zhou was pissed and she wanted to argue with Ning Yao.

What was she talking about? She was obviously jealous of Ning Qing and wanted to cause her trouble every step of the way.

Ning Qing grabbed Xiao Zhou’s shoulders and moved her behind herself. She took a step forward and smiled gently at Ning Yao. “Sissy, it’s correct that everything is on a first come first serve basis. You might not know that I saw your current outfit at the mall a while back. But unfortunately, you bought it first. Before I let you take the pavilion, can you take off your clothes and return them to me?”

“Ha, Haha...” The Street Walker crew saw that Ning Yao came to cause trouble and they were angry. But they saw that Ning Qing easily held their ground, which entertained them.

Director Wang laughed. “Ning Qing, well said!”

Xu Junxi frowned and he was unhappy with Ning Yao. The way she came to fight for the pavilion was simply childish. It was obvious that she offended Director Wang.

She just started her career and had no foundation. She got her female lead role in Pink Lady mainly because of him. There were no secrets in the entertainment circle. The news about her fighting for the pavilion with Director Wang would spread very soon. She would become a joke in the industry due her brazen rudeness.

However, he was even more angry with what Ning Qing had said. No matter how bad Ning Yao was, she was his girlfriend. How dare Ning Qing make comments like “take off your clothes”!

“Junxi,” Ning Yao shook Xu Junxi arm and pouted, “our filming crew picked the pavilion. Tell sister to let us film here.”

Xu Junxi wanted to give Ning Yao a lecture and ease the tension. However, his gaze met Ning Qing’s and he could see the glow of disdain in her beautiful brown eyes.

Her gaze was like a pot of cold water poured upon him. Half a month ago, she returned the jade bracelet and he couldn’t see any sign of feelings in her eyes.

She bid farewell to him entirely!

There was emptiness in Xu Junxi's heart which swept over his body. His hands clenched into fists and he told his assistant, "Send an invitation to President Dong of Red House and inform him that I am going to rent the lake pavilion for the afternoon."

"Yes sir!" His assistant turned around and left.

Ning Yao beamed with joy. "Thank you Junxi!" She looked at Ning Qing provokingly.

"Shameless!" Xiao Zhou cursed.

"CEO Xu, I never expect that you would spend so much money to fool me just to make your woman smile." Director Wang, who was always calm, suddenly grew unhappy. He squinted his eyes and looked at Xu Junxi. "I've always thought CEO Xu was a man of integrity. Today, only I realized that CEO Xu is deteriorating in the entertainment circle. If your girlfriend were to become famous, it would be a miracle! Luo Xi, Ning Qing, let's go!"

Director Wang left.

Listening to Director Wang's reprimand, Xu Junxi was embarrassed. Ning Yao felt distressed as she only then realized the severity of the matter. She offended Director Wang.

"Director Wang, I..." Ning Yao wanted to explain herself.

The filming crew cleared their filming equipment and Ning Qing walked out from the pavilion with Xiao Zhou by her side. But, she suddenly noticed the sandalwood signage on the pillar of the pavilion. There was a word on the sign.

Memorial!

Ning Qing took a look. Everyone was busy fighting over the pavilion but no one inspected the place.

Yeah, Red House was full of tall buildings, but there was only a pavilion on the lake.

The Dong Family history was interesting. They must be literati who posed as a cultured person among men of letters. They built the memorial at the junction of the lake and the mountain.

The president of Red House ran over with his assistant nearby. As Ning Yao was busy trying to explain herself, Ning Qing had an idea. She returned to the pavilion and saw that there was a long wooden table there. She smiled, "Sister, the scenery here is so beautiful. I want to take a selfie here on the wooden table. You wouldn't mind, right?" Ning Qing asked, about to sit on the table.

Ning Yao saw that Ning Qing was conquering her territory. She immediately let go of Xu Junxi and ran to Ning Qing. She shoved Ning Qing away and shouted, "Go away, this is my territory!"

Then, Ning Yao sat on the wooden table.

Ning Yao pushed Ning Qing hard. Even though Ning Qing was prepared to be pushed away, she staggered for a few steps.

"Be careful!" Someone helped Ning Qing catch her balance.

She looked up and saw Ou Luo Xi.

Ning Qing was shocked. Huh? If she wasn't mistaken, Ou Luo Xi already walked about four or five meters away. How can he appear next to her in an instant?

Ning Qing quickly shook her head. Her memory must be incorrect.

The drastic change made people who left the pavilion stop and turned around to look.

"My God!" Suddenly, a tragic voice rang out. The sixty-year-old president ran over and entered the pavilion. He pointed at Ning Yao with his quivering finger and said, "This, this is the table we use to perform memorial rituals for our ancestors. Our Dong family carried on for five generations. Besides laying the food and joss stick for memorial service, the descendants kneel down to pray. You... Who are you? How dare you sit on this table! Such an evil deed!"

Ning Yao was shocked. Memorial?

President Dong waved and the bodyguards behind him came forward and seized Ning Yao's arm. They were going to eject her from the pavilion.

"President Dong, please," Xu Junxi quickly stopped.

"CEO Xu, this woman humiliated the Dong family's ancestors; this can't be tolerated!"

A scream could be heard as Ning Yao was thrown out from pavilion like rubbish. She landed heavily on the ground.

"Ha, haha..." The surrounding crowd let out a heartening laugh.

Ning Yao's face grew embarrassed. She felt that her dignity was trampled on. Everyone was pointing at her and laughing.

Ning Qing!

"Ning Qing, you framed me? President Dong, it was Ning Qing who wanted..."

"Ning Yao, stop making an unfounded attack," Xiao Zhou cut her off, "The memorial signs are hanging around the pavilion. Either you're blind and you can't see or you're illiterate and you can't read. Everyone saw how arrogant you were when you fought with Ning Qing over who got to film at the pavilion first. Now, you're trying to shift the blame onto her! Great, where's your witness? Tell someone to speak for you."

Ning Yao was at a loss for words. She looked around. The people from Street Walker filming crews were laughing at her. There was no guarantee in a verbal agreement.

She then looked at Xu Junxi. His face was so dark and he was looking at her with great impatience. It was as though he were bored of her.

Ning Yao's heart had reached an all-time low.

“Forget it, Xiao Zhou. My sister is so barbaric and unreasonable. As long as CEO Xu takes care of her, she will have her way. CEO Xu is powerful and influential, my sister can do whatever she wants. Don’t be bothered, let’s go.” Ning Qing looked aggrieved. She pulled Xiao Zhou’s hand and left.

The filming crews of Street Walker followed. Director Wang bid farewell to President Dong and couldn’t help but nod at Ning Qing. The girl had meticulous forethought and wisdom. Most importantly, she had a clever and nimble heart.

In the entertainment circle, there were plenty of people who could act well in front of the cameras, but there were hardly any that could put on such a convincing show behind the scenes.

“Junxi...” Ning Yao stood up with difficulty and walked to Xu Junxi.

She knew that Xu Junxi was bothered by what Ning Qing said. His face grew grave after Ning Qing spoke.

Ning Qing was so brutal. She knew where Xu Junxi’s bottom line was!

Ning Yao wanted to comfort Xu Junxi, but before her hand reached him he said, “Reflect on what you’ve done.” Xu Junxi left heartlessly.

Ning Yao stiffened on the spot.

...

The filming in the afternoon went smoothly and the filming crews got to leave early.

Xiao Zhou put a jacket over Ning Qing and they chatted as they walked.

“Ning Qing, let me tell you something. Xu Junxi passed by our filming location this afternoon and you happened to be acting with Ou Luo Xi. He stood by the door and watched for quite a while.”

Ning Qing buttoned up and couldn’t be bothered “Let him watch as he wishes. Don’t bother with him.”

“No,” Xiao Zhou panicked, “Ning Qing, you don’t understand. I mean Xu Junxi watched you for a long time. His gaze wasn’t simple. He didn’t even blink.”

Ning Qing stopped and she thought for a while then her beautiful brown eyes suddenly beamed with a brightness of wisdom, “Xiao Zhou...” She beckoned for Xiao Zhou to come closer.

Xiao Zhou got closer and they whispered in one another’s ears.

“Wow, Ning Qing you’re too amazing.” Xiao Zhou exclaimed in surprise.

...

The dinner was held in a restaurant. Both the crews of Street Walker and Pink Lady, alongside other filming crews that filmed at Red House all gathered together.

There were many big shots and famous directors who gathered there. Director Wang brought Ning Qing to get to know everyone. When they passed by a table, Director Wang met his best friend in the directors’ circle, Director Zhang.

Director Zhang smiled. "Bro, it's been a while. Since we're both here, let's sit together. Let's see your rising star."

Director Wang led Ning Qing around and introduced her one by one. Among the group, there was Chinese director who was nominated for an Oscar, a producer nominated for Lifetime Achievement Award, a famous singers, some front-line celebrities...

Ning Qing followed behind Director Wang as she greeted everyone. She didn't speak much but she was gentle and quiet. Everyone took a liking to her.

Of course, Ning Qing saw two familiar faces. Xu Junxi and Ning Yao. Oh well, it was an important event. Xu Junxi definitely came to introduce Ning Yao to everyone else.

Look, it's true love.

Director Wang sat next to Director Zhang while Ning Qing saw that there was an empty seat next to Xu Junxi and another empty seat next to Ning Yao. Without much thought, she walked to the empty seat next to Xu Junxi.

Ning Yao saw and panicked. She hated Ning Qing and Xu Junxi coming into contact, especially in private. Reflexively, she called out, "Sister, come sit next to me."

Suddenly, the table went quiet. Ning Yao spoke and everyone looked over.

Ning Qing smiled and played along. "Okay. Let Yaoyao arrange the seating, I'll listen to you."

Yaoyao arrange the seating?

Ning Qing's carefree comment pushed Ning Yao to become an object of public criticism. The people on the table were all seniors in the entertainment circle.

Who is Ning Yao? No one cared about her but she dared raise captious remark.

"Ning Qing, sit next to CEO Xu. We are smoking here. It's unhealthy for girls to inhale so much second-hand smoke," Director Zhang stole a glance at Ning Yao and said gently.

"Alright. Thank you for your concern, Director Zhang." Ning Qing turned around and sat next to Xu Junxi.

Ning Yao was about to explode in anger and she received unfriendly gazes from the people around the table. Xu Junxi was talking to them about the upcoming movie and they intended to let her make a quick appearance in the movie. But because of what Ning Qing said, no one was willing to continue discussing the topic.

Chapter 71: Room 902

"Junxi..." Ning Yao grabbed Xu Junxi's sleeve and whispered, "Look at my sister, the director has ignored me. Hurry up and go talk to them about my filming matters."

Xu Junxi pulled his sleeve back a little forcefully. His thin lips tightened into a gloomy line as he suppressed his unhappiness.

“Shut up!” he shouted at Ning Yao.

Shut up?!

Ning Yao’s eyes widened in disbelief. Xu Junxi had not reprimanded her once in the past three years, but he’d just now told her to shut up?!

The corners of Ning Qing’s lips curled up as she listened to the conversation between the two of them. She had to admit that although Li Meiling had crafted a great show of playing hard to get by sending Ning Yao abroad, she hadn’t kept Ning Yao by her side and trained her, so Ning Yao hadn’t learned anything from Li Meiling.

What a fool!

Xu Junxi knew that Ning Qing had said what she’d said intentionally. Even when they were at the pavilion that afternoon, Ning Qing had deliberately lured Ning Yao into her trap. He was angry at Ning Qing’s slyness and cunning, but he was even angrier at Ning Yao’s foolishness and ignorance.

Ning Qing was right. Since she’d entered the entertainment industry, Ning Yao had only known how to rely on his power to promote her. However, every time she’d struck, she would be hit back twice as hard by Ning Qing.

For instance: the situation now. No one at the table had a positive expression on their face, yet she still pestered him to talk about her movie for her.

The two sisters couldn’t be compared at all. Ning Qing could be smooth and slick in establishing social relations, and she was good at singing and dancing. As for Ning Yao, other than asking for things from him, she was brainless.

Ning Yao was a lame duck. He has been cleaning up Ning Yao’s messes for a while now, and he was tired of it.

It was impossible for the Xu family and Emperor Entertainment Group to accept someone like Ning Yao as the mistress of the house.

“Ning Qing, you’ve succeeded.” Xu Junxi said to Ning Qing with a sidelong glance as he gritted his teeth. She had always wanted to destroy his relationship with Ning Yao, and she finally succeeded.

Ning Qing tucked a lock of the silky hair on her cheek behind her ear with her slender hand. She held up a glass of red wine, narrowing her eyes that were like an autumn lake, and smiled lazily while she said, “President Xu, I can’t understand what you’re talking about. I’ve told you a long time ago, for Ning Yao, you can only humor her and play with her by spoiling the girl in the palm of your hand.”

“You!” Xu Junxi was so furious he could not refute. That’s right, he’d chosen Ning Yao himself, he couldn’t blame others for this.

Distance produces beauty, and back when Ning Yao was in America, she would dress up fashionably and beautifully on top of talking softly and sweetly to him every time he went there to visit her. He was very happy then.

But Ning Yao had only been back in China for a month now, and Xu Junxi's eyes were like magnifying glasses. He could only see Ning Yao's shortcomings.

A crisp "Clang" rang out, Ning Qing had accidentally bumped into the cutlery by his hand, and a fork fell on the ground.

Xu Junxi bent down to pick it up.

When he'd bent down, Ning Qing also happened to bend down. Her fingertips touched his hands.

"President Xu, haven't you looked enough?" While he was staring, a shallow chuckle sounded over his head.

Xu Junxi's gaze locked with Ning Qing's beautiful autumn pupils as he looked up. She was looking at him with a warm and light stare, with a clear layer of coldness in her face.

Xu Junxi couldn't speak anymore. He watched as Ning Qing picked up the fork, sat up straight, waved to the waiter, and got him a new set of cutlery.

He could not remember anything that the people at the table said to him. His eyes were focused on Ning Qing. Occasionally, she would touch her long hair with her little hands. Whenever she did that, his nose would fill with her refreshing fragrance as her silky strands flowed.

...

Everyone went back to their hotel rooms after dinner. Ning Yao was pestering Xu Junxi, saying that she wanted to sleep alongside him, but Xu Junxi frowned and pushed her away.

"I'm tired." He moved his feet and went back to his room, leaving Ning Yao there, stamping her feet.

Xu Junxi went into his room, sat on the bed, fumbled out a pack of cigarettes and lit them up. Amidst the smoke, he took out his cell phone and stared noticed a phone number on his screen.

After smoking four or five cigarettes, he stood up, walked to the window, and dialed the number.

"Hello..." Ning Qing's elegant voice could be heard.

"... Hello, Ning Qing, it's me."

"Oh, President Xu, what's the matter?" Ning Qing's tone was rather surprised.

"I went back and saw that there was a crack on the Xu family's jade bracelet after you'd thrown it on the ground at the hospital."

"Is that right? I'm very sorry about that."

"How does saying sorry help? Ning Qing, you must compensate me for it. Why don't I bring it over and show you the bracelet? Which room are you in?"

“... 902.”

...

When Xu Junxi went to room 902, the door was unlocked. He opened the door and went in.

There was no light in the room, nor did he see Ning Qing, but the door of the bathroom was tightly shut, and he could hear the sound of running water.

Was she taking a bath?

Xu Junxi closed his eyes and inhaled the scent of the room forcefully. There was her special fragrance in the room. The windows were half open and the transparent curtains fluttered in the wind, making the atmosphere hazy and ambiguous.

He licked his dry lips. He didn't know why he'd lied about the jade bracelet being damaged. Why did he rush over to her room? He just missed her very much.

Blood was rushing through his body after she'd touched his hand and he'd smelled her fragrance at the dining table. It was as if something was tickling his heart. He was tempted.

“Ning Qing, are you taking a bath?” His voice was hoarse.

There was no reply in the bathroom.

Xu Junxi went to the door and quietly placed his hand on the handle. He cleared his throat several times and said, “I'll go in if you keep staying silent.”

No one spoke.

With a click, Xu Junxi opened the door.

The lights were on in the bathroom and hot water was running from the showerheads in the shower, but the beautiful body of a young girl that he had imagined in his mind was not there; the shower was empty.

Right then, “Ning Qing...” The lamp in the hotel room was turned on as Xiao Zhou entered the room. She screamed the moment she saw Xu Junxi “Ah! President Xu, why are you in Ning Qing's room? A man like you barging into a woman's room so late at night... What's the matter with you?”

Xu Junxi diverted his gaze. He had been tricked by Ning Qing. Damn it!

There were many celebrities in this hotel, so naturally, there would be many media reporters who were lying in wait. It was imperative that he leave immediately. He could not be photographed like this.

Xu Junxi marched towards the door. When he was about to leave, he heard several “clicks” of a camera as a huge swarm of reporters crowded around the door. Xu Junxi's exit was blocked.

“President Xu, it's 9 p.m. now. Why are you in Ning Qing's room so late at night?”

“President Xu, you've openly admitted that your girlfriend Ning Yao still stays next door. Ning Yao and Ning Qing are sisters. Does President Xu have a history with each of the sisters?”

The reporters' questions were becoming more and more pointed. Xu Junxi rubbed his temples. "I'm sorry, I can't tell you anything." He squeezed out of the crowd and walked towards his room.

The reporters followed him like a shadow. Xu Junxi was trying to figure out how he could lose them. At that moment, a pink figure appeared in his sight. It was Ning Yao.

Oh no.

Ning Yao clenched her fists and looked at him with tears in her eyes. "Hmph!" She sniffed coldly before turning around and running away.

Xu Junxi was even more troubled now. "Yaoyao, it's not what you think it is. Listen to my explanation." While chasing Ning Yao, he took out his cell phone and called someone. "Hello, send some people here to deal with this situation."

...

Xu Junxi's team soon arrived and the reporters were dispersed. The hotel corridor immediately became silent.

Ning Qing walked out from the corner, Xiao Zhou ran up and handed s disc to her. "Ning Qing, the video was recorded. We've fought this battle beautifully."

"Yes, upload the video onto the Internet and Weibo immediately. No matter how powerful Xu Junxi is, he can't stop the netizens' gossip. This kind of scandal is always popular. By the time Xu Junxi can coax Ning Yao and shut down the webpage, this would have already spread." Ning Qing's eyes sparkled with wisdom.

Xiao Zhou nodded. "Okay, I'll do it right now."

After Xiao Zhou left, Ning Qing saw Director Wang walking towards her from the corridor. He asked, "Ning Qing, what's going on?"

Ning Qing laughed and said, "Director Wang, I remember that the first stage of our Wind and Dust promotional campaign is about to begin. Previously, President Xu and Ning Yao were hot topics. I was only just using them to fire some shots first and make some headlines."

Director Wang immediately flashed a gratified smile. He had indeed not judged her incorrectly. "Ning Qing, I really hadn't expected you to be quite the clever little imp, haha."

...

Ning Qing went back to her room and took a bath.

She'd suddenly thought of this strategy after she'd heard Xiao Zhou mention Xu Junxi's constant gaze. She'd known all about the dirty and despicable thoughts that Xu Junxi had about her, so she went along with the situation and took advantage of him.

This pair of despicable creatures. This was only the beginning of the battle, and she has officially declared war on them.

She would get back at everyone who had insulted her, one at a time.

Ning Qing took out her cell phone and found someone's phone number. Tomorrow's entertainment headline would definitely be about her and Xu Junxi. Would Lu Shaoming be angry when he learned of her scandal?

Ning Qing decided to send a short message to cue him in so that he could be psychologically prepared.

[Shaoming, there might be some scandals about me with Xu Junxi. I hope you don't mind.]

The text message had been sent. This time, Lu Shaoming did not reply quickly. After waiting for about three minutes, his text message came.

[Who gave him your room number]

Ning Qing was astonished. He'd known all about it even before she'd told him what the scandal was about?

Furthermore, does his question need to be so pointed?

There were two possible angles in this scandal. If someone had given Xu Junxi her room number, she would be the passive one in the scandal. If it's known that she had given the number on her own initiative, it would be clear that the scandal had been planned by her. Perhaps Lu Shaoming would subconsciously think that she wanted to continue things with Xu Junxi.

This man's words were never a lot, his sentences were short and to the point. He was too blunt, going straight to the point.

Ning Qing bit her lower lip with her pearly teeth, and finally answered honestly – [I gave it]

After the text message had been sent, Ning Qing waited for his reply anxiously, but one minute, five minutes and then ten minutes had passed, but her cell phone never rang.

Ning Qing's heart clenched. He wouldn't just ignore her, would he?

Ning Qing quickly picked up her cell phone as she laughed timidly and apologetically. [Haha, Shaoming, are you angry? I was just borrowing his fame to hype things up. I'm innocent.]

10 minutes later, her cell phone was still quiet, and when Ning Qing did not get his reply, she understood that he was angry!

He was really ignoring her!

Why was this man so petty? It was normal in the entertainment industry to create a scandal.

Alright, alright, she'd used her ex-boyfriend to create some hype about herself and had made him feel unhappy and uncomfortable, but, but... They hadn't seen each other for half a month. The only contact they had with each other was through texts at night. Was he going to ignore her so ruthlessly just for this?

Ning Qing was devastated, but she knew that she had made a mistake. She continued to text him, racking her brain to find the right words that would make him happy.

The room was quiet. Her eyes were bright and her heart was beating like a drum while waiting for his reply.

But she was disappointed.

Half an hour had passed, and the man had not replied. He had hardened his heart and decided to give her the cold shoulder.

Ning Qing puffed her tender cheeks as his watery eyes rolled around in anger. "Lu Shaoming you big villain, I don't care about you either!" Ning Qing closed her eyes, she was going to sleep!.

...

Ning Yao had locked himself in her room, but Xu Junxi had asked the hotel manager to open the door for him, the door opened with a click, "Yaoyao..." He rushed in anxiously.

But there was a "bang" as Ning Yao ran towards the wall of the room and slammed her forehead against it.

"Yaoyao!" Xu Junxi yelled and ran forward to catch Ning Yao's body as it began to slide down the wall. The blood was pouring out from Ning Yao's forehead and her face had turned white. He was heartbroken. "Yaoyao, why are you so silly? Why did you throw yourself against the wall? Does it hurt?"

Ning Yao lay in Xu Junxi's arms weakly. Her eyes were full of tears as she sobbed, "Junxi, let me die. I know you like my sister. In that case, I will get out of your way, and I wish you eternal love."

Xu Junxi brushed Ning Yao's bangs away. The spot which she'd slammed the hardest happened to be the place where she'd gotten the scar while saving him three years ago. His guilt suddenly overflowed.

"Yaoyao, you've misunderstood. I had something to discuss with Ning Qing. She wasn't in the room, and we haven't done anything. Yaoyao, you're the one I love."

Chapter 72: Tear It Down Face To Face

"Yaoyao, you misunderstood me. I have something to talk about with Ning Qing. She wasn't in the room, we didn't do anything. Yaoyao, you're the one I love."

"Junxi, don't lie to me. I've known for the past month that you're ashamed of me. You think I'm not as good as my sister, not as smart as her. But, don't forget, I just entered the entertainment circle. My entire life was all about you. I secretly love you and I molded myself according to your liking. I am very new to the entertainment circle and I have no experience at all."

"Because you're the CEO of Emperor Entertainment Group, that's why I decided to enter the entertainment circle. I acted too hastily these past few days, but I only wanted to be closer to you, to be the woman who stands by you. But you can't see the effort that I've put in. You blame me, you're ashamed of me."

Xu Junxi felt a tight slap on his face and he was ashamed.

True. When he felt ashamed of Ning Yao, he forgot that Ning Yao had no past experience in the entertainment circle. He forgot that she was innocent and kind. He also forgot how much Ning Yao had done for him.

Ning Yao had known for a long time that he was ashamed of her, but she didn't complain at all. If it he hadn't entered Ning Qing's room that day, Ning Yao wouldn't have exploded.

The silly girl only knew to hurt herself even when she exploded. She even gave her blessing to him and Ning Qing.

"Yaoyao, I'm sorry. It's my fault. I admit that I am very moody these days. I won't do it again. Trust me..." Xu Junxi explained.

But Ning Yao pushed him away as she stood up with difficulty and ran towards the wall, "Junxi, let me die. I feel so insecure. Although you admitted you're at fault today, I don't know when you would be ashamed of me again. Without you, I might as well die."

Xu Junxi hugged Ning Yao from behind. He hastily kissed Ning Yao hair and said, "Yaoyao, let's get engaged. I'll treat you well."

Engaged?

Ning Yao was beaming with joy and her eyes were filled with surprise. That's great. The day has finally arrived. Xu Junxi finally said it!

However, she didn't turn around immediately. She covered her mouth and she cried, "Junxi, are you being serious? I hope that you are proposing to me because you love me. If it's because you feel guilty, I'd rather not."

Xu Junxi held Ning Yao's shoulder and turned her around. He cupped Ning Yao's face and kissed her tenderly. "Silly girl, of course I love you. Yaoyao, be my wife, let's stay together forever."

"Mm." Ning Yao nodded her head and accepted Xu Junxi's embrace.

...

The doctor bandaged Ning Yao's head. She hit the wall with controlled force. Hence, she wasn't too badly injured.

After the doctor left, Xu Junxi held her shoulder and kissed her face. He said, "Yaoyao, take a shower and sleep. Your head can't come in contact with water, do you want me to help you?"

He sounded very suggestive, making Ning Yao blush.

Ever since the other day when she helped him, they had been doing intimate activities. She always held back at the very last part and did not let him touch her. Hence, he had yet to be satisfied.

Ning Yao took a look at Xu Junxi's handsome face, she climbed onto his lap. She then extended her hand to unbutton his shirt. She spoke seductively. "Junxi, I am yours. As we are going to get engaged, I shall give myself to you tonight."

Xu Junxi's eyes grew dark and his body stiffened. The fire that Ning Qing caused in him had yet to subside and then Ning Yao rubbed herself against him, making his passion burn further.

Ning Yao was beautiful too. Her fair skin was smooth and she looked innocent and fragile. She gave out a charming aura.

However, there was another face that appeared in Xu Junxi's head. It was youthful, yet beautiful. When she felt aggrieved, when she was angry, when she was happy, her facial expression was vivid. Her stubbornness and persistence in particular stirred a man's desire to make her submit.

That person was Ning Qing.

Why would he think of her then?

There was a sudden softness on his lips. Ning Yao kissed him when his concentration wandered.

Xu Junxi closed his eyes to hush away Ning Qing's face. He warned himself that he loved Ning Yao and the person who was having intimacy with him was Ning Yao.

He held Ning Yao's waist with his hands as he deepened the kiss.

The two of them rolled onto the bed and Xu Junxi was panting. The skin against his palm was soft and smooth and his eyelashes were quivering while his were eyes closed. He realized that he couldn't control himself. He was thinking about Ning Qing.

This afternoon, he watched Ning Qing on set. She was wearing a cheongsam with a red peony. Her amazing hourglass body in the slit cheongsam design accentuated her long legs, which was extremely seductive.

Xu Junxi realized that he was even more excited as he thought about Ning Qing in his head. He felt extremely thrilled, as though he were on a roller coaster.

Ning Yao was very happy as she immersed herself in the pleasant sensation that Xu Junxi gave her but she didn't know that Xu Junxi was muttering the name, "Qing Qing."

...

On the second morning, Xiao Zhou basked in the glory of victory.

"Ning Qing, great news. As you have expected, the entertainment headlines were about you and Xu Junxi. As of now, the number of Weibo discussion posts on the subject is up to 4.4 billion! Street Walker successfully took first place as most searched."

Ning Qing wasn't surprised at the result. In order to make Ning Yao famous in the entertainment circle overnight, Xu Junxi put in a lot of effort over the past month. She stepped on their fame and was launched to the top, it was twice the result with half the effort.

“Ning Qing, the film crew just launched the first batch of movie promotional videos and photos. Everyone gave good reviews to your acting. Your Weibo fanbase has already increased to six million.”

Ning Qing turned on her computer and browsed the website. Her Weibo account was filled with the digital citizens’ positive comments.

[I just watched Street Walker’s promotional video, the female lead role has great acting skill. She portrayed the character of a different age and her course of life so vividly.]

[I’ve always known Ning Qing. She’s a fallen famous woman in T city. For the past three years, there was much negative news surrounding her. Hence, I initially didn’t have a good impression of her. But ever since I watched Street Walker, my impression towards her has drastically changed. She is so beautiful and her acting is so good. Ning Qing, I really shouldn’t have believed those rumors. I support you.]

[Street Walker is another amazing work of Director Wang’s. I have nothing much to say. I support Director Wang, I support Ning Qing]...

Tears welled up her eyes. For three years, she has experienced so much social snobbery. No one understood her. Aside from her beautiful face and her background which became a topic of discussion at everyone’s leisure, they were giving her biting sarcasm most of the time and making fun of her.

She persistently stood straight and firm through the journey in the entertainment circle. She dreamt of a day where she could win everyone over and obtain everyone’s leniency, understanding, and respect.

The day had finally arrived.

She stayed true to herself and received recognition!

...

Director Wang led the Street Walker film crew to the first promotion stop. The scene was busy and hustling. Besides the media, there was a huge mass of Ning Qing’s fans.

When the media reporters asked about what happened the night before during the Q&A, Ning Qing didn’t respond at all. She smiled at them and pleaded for mercy. She wanted them to focus on the movie.

Although they didn’t receive any answer, Ning Qing’s elegance was approved. Everyone complimented her, saying that she lived up to the title of no.1 socialite in T City.

The promotion ended in the afternoon.

Director Wang invited everyone to KTV as a celebration for the successful first stop. Just as Ning Qing was going to agree, Xiao Zhou walked over with an iPad mini in her hand.

“Ning Qing, the latest news, Xu Jinxi is going to throw a grand proposal party in Shengshi Hotel and officially propose to Ning Yao. Besides, Ning Yao’s mom, Li Meiling would be there too.”

Ning Qing took over the iPad and saw the luxurious and exquisite decoration of the five-star hotel in the screen. There was even romantic white cloth and flowers. There was a reporter saying,

“Hello, everyone. We are live at the scene where CEO Xu Junxi is going to propose to Miss Ning Yao officially. Our idol in the drama scene, Li Meiling, is going to make an appearance here to witness her daughter’s happiness...”

The camera caught Li Meiling’s shadow and Ning Qing humphed at the sight.

Xiao Zhou grew solemn. “Ning Qing, what Xu Junxi is doing is giving us a tight slap on our faces. After the engagement party, every good comment will become bad. They will portray you as a mistress who stole her brother-in-law or a scheming woman that sensationalized the situation with the other’s fame.”

Whatever Xiao Zhou could think of, Ning Qing had already thought about it long ago. In just one short night, Ning Yao took care of Xu Junxi and made him propose to her.

Actually, it wasn’t strange. Ning Yao most likely put on a sad show along with selling her body. A ridiculous man like Xu Junxi couldn’t resist the temptation.

Ning Qing smirked and passed the iPad to Xiao Zhou. She then walked outside.

“Ning Qing, where are you going?” Xiao Zhou quickly followed behind.

“Someone already declared war on me. I shall go and meet them now and tear them apart!”

...

Shengshi Hotel.

Ning Yao looked at Xu Junxi, who knelt down slowly before her, and she felt happy. The man held the diamond ring in his hand that looked just like an eighteen-carat pigeon egg.

When he took out the diamond ring, Ning Yao could hear everyone gasp. Without looking up, she could tell how many of them were jealous of her.

She was bored of being in the spotlight everywhere she went. She should be supported like a princess.

“Yaoyao, I love you. Marry me,” Xu Junxi said to her affectionately.

“Mm, I promise.” Ning Yao flashed a sweet smile. She then slowly raised her right hand before Xu Junxi.

The eighteen-carat diamond ring slowly glided onto her ring finger.

But, suddenly, the door was pushed open. Someone got into the hall.

Ning Yao lifted her gaze and looked. It was Ning Qing!

Xu Junxi’s hand stiffened. He never thought Ning Qing would have the guts to be there. He had been in the entertainment circle for so long. Ever since he saw Xiao Zhou the night before, he knew that he was made use of and fooled. As she was so treacherous and heartless, the proposal party was the heaviest hit he gave her.

He never thought she would dare to make an appearance.

Li Meiling saw and her eyes flashed. In order to prevent any incident during the proposal, she arranged many bodyguards outside but Ning Qing managed to come in.

Looking at Ning Qing's reporter outfit and cap, Li Meiling knew that most of the people at the scene were reporters and Ning Qing found the loophole.

Li Meiling quickly walked forward and grabbed Ning Qing hand. She flashed a friendly smile and said, "Qingqing, you came? Today's your sister's happy day, you must be here to give her your blessings."

Ning Qing smiled, Li Meiling gained the initiative by striking the first blow. The moment she pushed the door open to enter, all the spotlights were focusing on her, how could she deny this before the public?

Li Meiling's action left her no choice but to simply grin and bear it. Her actions were limited to "blessing."

Ning Qing didn't mind it. On the contrary, she held Li Meiling's hand and walked to the "happy" couple, hand-in-hand. She walked over leisurely with a smile, "Aunt Li, you're right. My sister was proposed to. I'm of course here to give my blessing. We had a misunderstanding the night before and everything has been clarified."

Ning Qing actively brought up "the night before" and it immediately stirred the media's interest. There were reporters that immediately asked, "Miss Ning, what sort of misunderstand was there the night before?"

Ning Qing reined back the hand that Li Meiling was holding and put her hair behind her ears, "Oh, my brother-in-law came to my room to take the play script but you happened to take photos of it. My sister got angry but I immediately called to explain it to her. Look at the couple, they spent another night sweetly together. then, he proposed today. It is all my effort. Am I right, Yaoyao?"

Ning Yao's eyes were wide open in disbelief. What call? What clarification? Their sweet night and proposal were all her effort? How did it relate to Ning Qing?!

Ning Qing was lying.

"Sister, you..." Ning Yao wanted to refute.

"Yaoyao!" Li Meiling quickly cut off Ning Yao and smiled, "Look how much your sister cares about you."

Ning Qing nodded without modesty. She teased the media and said, "Our sisterly bond is especially strong so you'd better not simply make a report, like "the third person" or "scheming woman" or anything of that sort. If you were to use them on me, my brother in law and Aunt Li would be the first to not let you off the hook."

The media reporters mocked. Actually "the third person" and "scheming person" were already in their news script and these headlines were going to be posted when the party ended.

Wasn't it obvious? Ning Qing and Xu Junxi were in a sex scandal the night before and Xu Junxi suddenly got engaged with Ning Yao the next day. Anyone could tell Xu Junxi was slapping Ning Qing's face.

The reporters never expected it could be taken care of so easily with one sentence.

"Miss Ning, how dare we? Your sisterly bond is so strong. We haven't even complimented it," the reporter followed.

Ning Qing nodded in satisfaction and said, "That's right."

Ning Yao's eyes were filled with hatred while Xu Junxi's tried to maintain his composure. Li Meiling still looked friendly, though her hidden gaze was like a poisonous needle shooting at Ning Qing's face.

Ning Qing raised her eyebrows at her, meaning to tell her, let your daughter grin and bear it too. Ha.

Li Meiling, "..."

Ning Qing waved like the conductor of the scene. She pointed at the man who was kneeling on the ground, "Brother-in-law, hurry up and put the diamond ring on my sister. Everyone is watching."

It was a romantic scene but Ning Qing made it sound like it was a show.

Xu Junxi bore the woman's machinations and slipped the eighteen-carat diamond ring on Ning Yao's ring finger.

Chapter 73: Battle of Wits

"Hold on!" When the diamond ring was about to be put on her finger, Ning Qing suddenly said, "As the older sister, I've forgotten to tell my brother-in-law a few things."

"What do you want to say?" Xu Junxi's face was extremely dark. He couldn't get angry in front of the media, but his feelings have been repressed and he was extremely irritable.

"I mean, my soon to be brother-in-law, you must be good to my sister in the future. Although we were once engaged, the engagement has already been terminated, so you should give Yaoyao twice the happiness that I did not receive."

"Wow..." As soon as Ning Qing's words fell, the entire venue exploded.

"Miss Ning, what did you say? Were you engaged to President Xu? Why did you break up? Why is President Xu with your sister now?"...

Reporters were pumped up and excited, and the cameras "clicked" one after another as they rushed to ask questions.

"Qingqing..." Right then, Li Meiling sighed gravely and earnestly, pretending to be helpless. "Why do you bring all of this up at your sister's wedding banquet? Three years ago, you entered the entertainment industry, and everyone knew what had happened to you. What do you want Junxi to do?"

Ning Qing had to admire Li Meiling. Not only did her words cause the reporters to suspect that she had brought up these old matters with bad intentions, but she has also reminded the reporters of her "unbearable" experience in the entertainment industry over the past three years.

"Miss Ning, are you still unable to let go of your feeling for President Xu, so you're openly wishing him well today but secretly trying to destroy their relationship?"

“Miss Ning, you’ve been involved in many illicit love scandals in the past three years, and there are rumors that you are a sugar baby. Did President Xu break up with you and move on because of this?”

Vicious pride flashed across Ning Yao’s eyes when she heard the reporters pointedly team up on Ning Qing. Ning Qing was still too tender to fight against her mother!

Ning Qing dug her nails deeply into her tender palms. When she looked up, her beautiful autumn colored eyes were already sparkling with bright and soft tears.

She looked at Li Meiling slowly and full of grievances. “Aunt Li, I had already been engaged to my brother-in-law before the illicit love scandals happened. I know I can’t compare with my sister. When my sister returned home, one word from my soon to be brother-in-law had made her popular, but when we were engaged, he ignored me. He let me be plagued with scandals, and he allowed others to covet his fiancée.” Ning Qing was weeping heavily and could not go on.

The reporter suddenly realized that the timing was indeed suspect.

Xu Junxi and Ning Qing got engaged before Ning Qing had entered the entertainment industry. It seemed that Xu Junxi had fallen in love with someone else first and that he was very cruel and heartless to Ning Qing.

The reporters were silent. Everyone was looking at the girl whose shoulders were trembling. Her body looked so weak that many started to pity her.

How humiliating and painful was it to stand there while smiling and wishing him and her sister happiness after being abandoned by her ex-fiance?

Ning Qing sniffled and continued to choke out, “And Auntie Li, how can you say that about me? I’ve played insignificant roles, hung from wires, played the roles of a beggar, and gotten slapped in the face. How could I live in such a mess if those illicit love affair scandals were true?”

Ning Qing straightened up her slim waist as she spoke, then faced the camera stubbornly and determinedly as she said, “Three years ago, I’d been castaway and was in such dire states that I had no choice but to enter the entertainment industry. No one has helped me in these three years, and I have not leeches onto anyone. Today, I, Ning Qing, shall announce here that I am innocent! If anyone were to say that I’ve had illicit love affairs or had a sugar daddy in the past three years, would the person who dares to slander me bring along their evidence and confront me personally! From now on, I will take legal measures to defend myself against anyone who wants to destroy my reputation!”

The reporters were shocked. Although the girl’s eyes were red, strength shone through her weakness. Her eyes were clear and shiny, like the rivers in the mountains, sacred and inviolable.

That’s right; if those illicit love affair scandals were true, how could she have become the laughing stock of the entire city and lived such a hard life?

Ning Qing’s was known as the fallen richest socialite of T city. When she’d entered the entertainment industry, many people had naturally given her all kinds of embarrassing labels. Everyone had insulted her, misunderstood her, and laughed at her.

Nobody expected the truth to be so shocking today.

At that moment, Xu Junxi felt lost. Ning Qing used to say that she was innocent, but he had never believed her because there were always many men around her.

But he'd been swayed now. Was she really innocent after being in the entertainment industry for these three years?

No. Xu Junxi shook his head. The rims of his eyes grew scarlet. She was no longer innocent and pure. Three years ago, she'd already...

Only Ning Yao was devoted to him. There was blood on the sheets this morning. Ning Yao had given him her first time!

Only Ning Yao deserved his deep love.

Xiao Zhou was elated. Ning Qing was so smart that she'd taken the opportunity to clarify all the "bad deeds" of her past.

Xiao Zhou came up, embraced Ning Qing, and said with relief, "Ning Qing, stop crying. Forget it. Let it go. President Xu and your alliance marriage was naturally not as deep as the three years of affection between President Xu and your sister."

Reporters quickly caught on to the main point from Xiao Zhou's words, and some people asked, "Miss Ning, did your sister come between President Xu and you when you were still engaged?"

Ning Yao had already been furious. Her perfectly fine marriage proposal banquet had been ruined by that b*tch Ning Qing, and Ning Qing had become the focus of the entire venue.

The words "come between" have enraged her even further now. Wasn't this phrase prepared for Ning Qing? Why had it fallen on her head after a few sentences?

Ning Yao wanted to speak, but someone had grabbed onto her little hand. Xu Junxi stood up and murmured, "This has nothing to do with Yaoyao. I was the one who shifted my love to another person."

"Wow..." The reporters hadn't expected Xu Junxi to be so frank. Some of them had wanted to ask questions, but when they met his dark and gloomy eyes, everyone stopped talking.

Ning Qing looked at Xu Junxi; she was still afraid that Xu Junxi would not speak!

"Well, my soon to be brother-in-law, we'd originally been engaged because of an alliance marriage, so it can't be said that you'd shifted your love onto another person. We already canceled our engagement when I'd returned your jade bracelet half a month ago. I'm also thankful to you for flying to the United States to take care of my sister for the past three years. As long as my sister is happy, it's okay for me to suffer a little grievance."

Those journalists who had been frightened into silence by Xu Junxi began to whisper among themselves again. Ning Qing's words had already confirmed that Ning Yao had come between someone's relationship.

And that someone was her sister!

Among the crowd's incessant finger pointing, their gazes towards Ning Qing became more and more kindly. She has been groveling in the entertainment industry for three years while her ex-fiance has been hitting it off with her sister.

How has she survived these three years?

Li Meiling glared at Ning Qing coldly. It seemed that she'd really underestimated her. She used to be very foolish. She would spread her wings and protect Ning Yao as her sister whenever Ning Yao acted a little pitiful in front of her.

She hadn't expected Ning Qing to become such a talented actress.

Li Meiling shot a look at an assistant, telling him to remind President Xu to carry on with the marriage proposal ceremony.

The most important thing now was for Ning Yao to become Mrs. Xu. As for Ning Qing, she had her own countermeasures against her.

The assistant was about to open her mouth when Ning Qing rushed to say, "I'm to blame, mentioning these sad things on such a happy day. My soon to be brother-in-law, you should put the ring on Yaoyao."

For some people, a person's kindness is just a foolish joke in their eyes. Getting deceived once was enough for her to learn a lifelong lesson. After that, she would never be soft-hearted again!

Xu Junxi looked at Ning Qing and asked in a cold voice, "What else do you want to say? Why don't you just say it all at once, so as not to interrupt my proposal again."

Ning Qing pretended not to understand the irony and hostility in his words. She nodded obediently and meekly with a sad face. "Well yes, I do have something else I want to say. After my father had married Auntie Li three years ago, he chased my me and Mother out of the house. In these three years, except for Yaoyao's return to China when Auntie Li had invited me to enter the Ning family gates to celebrate Yaoya's return, they hadn't allowed me to go in even once.

Ning Qing's words were light and soft, but they sounded like thunderous explosions in the ears of those journalists when they heard it. Amidst the waves of clicking cameras and the noisy whispers of the crowd, Ning Qing continued to speak as if she hadn't heard them.

"Since I've met Auntie Li today, I'd just like to ask if Yaoyao is my father's daughter. However, it seems that neither my soon to be brother-in-law nor Auntie Li welcomes me. In that case, I won't linger behind obnoxiously. I'll bid my farewell. I wish you happiness.

Ning Qing turned and walked away after she'd spoken.

The reporters swarmed up and frantically questioned Ning Qing as she walked out of the hotel lobby's doors.

"Miss Ning, can you explain what you've just said? You are the daughter of the Ning family. Who forbids you from entering the gates of the Ning family? Also, is Ning Yao your biological sister?"

Reporters surrounded Ning Qing, but she'd already prepared in advance, so the reporters were quickly blocked by a group of bodyguards by the hotel door. Xiao Zhou smiled and waved her hands as she looked at the reporters who were trying their best to squeeze past the bodyguards as she said, "I'm sorry, Ning Qing can't answer everyone's questions. If you want answers, you can turn around and ask Madam Li."

So the crowd turned quickly and surrounded Li Meiling.

"Madam Li, you have been very low-key these past few years. Not only do you have a good reputation in the industry, but you also often take part in charitable activities. But regarding what Ning Qing has just said, how do respond?"

"Madam Li, you won't allow Ning Qing to step into the Ning family's house, but you'd invited Ning Qing to visit when your daughter returned from abroad. Are you flaunting your pride and success to those who'd failed?"

"Madam Li, there were rumors that you were involved in the original Ning couple, but you have not responded. Can you reveal to us now whether Ning Yao is Ning Qing's biological sister or not? If so, then were you already the third party 20 years ago? Have you kicked out the original spouse and become the main mistress of the house?"

...

Xiao Zhou laughed gleefully as she watched the situation explode inside. "Ning Qing, you are too awesome, Ning Yao's wedding proposal banquet has become a farce, and Li Meiling is going to be so bogged down by this."

Ning Qing smiled. "Didn't Ning Yao feel smug about inviting so many reporters? Let her have a taste of her own medicine. Xiao Zhou, we can't drop our guard. Li Meiling is not so easy to deal with. Li Meiling's tied up now because of Ning Yao's proposal banquet, but I believe she will fight back soon."

"Noted." Xiao Zhou wiped the smile off her face as she said seriously, "I've already uploaded the video of you declaring your innocence on Weibo. Our PR team has also issued a lawyer's statement. All the people who had misunderstood you before would pity you now; we just have to wait for the rebound chain reaction."

Ning Qing nodded. In fact, defending her innocence and exposing Li Meiling's and her daughter required skill; she had always been waiting for an opportunity like today.

Why had she kept silent these past three years?

Firstly, she had no film and television works, and she lacked a foundation and popularity in the entertainment industry, so no one would believe what she would say. Secondly, Li Meiling was a veteran actress, and going against her directly would be like an egg trying to crush a stone. Thirdly, Ning Yao had been in the United States for the past three years, and she didn't have a good point of penetration.

She could only choose silence and forbearance when she was weak because she knew that if she wanted revenge, she must first make herself strong, then wait for an opportunity to fight back step by step.

Now the opportunity had arrived, and she seized it. She would make Ning Yao regret returning home.

“Xiao Zhou, you go and post the video to Emperor Entertainment Tieba.”

“Tieba? Why?”

“Although Emperor Entertainment was Xu family’s enterprise, there are three or four directors in the company who are not from the Xu family. Lately, they have been dissatisfied with Xu Junxi. Now that Xu Junxi is playing around with a pair of sisters and has an indecent private life, those directors will surely hold this against him. Didn’t Xu Junxi want to marry Ning Yao? Alright then, I will let him pay the price of marrying Ning Yao!”

Xiao Zhou listened carefully and said, “Okay.”

“In addition, I will give you the addresses of a few shopping malls and beauty salons where Xu Junxi’s mother usually loves to shop at. You spend some money and broadcast this video on their rolling screens. I want to let Ning Yao know that entering the Xu family is hard, and if Mommy Xu is supportive enough, Ning Yao will always remain a fiancée!”

Ning Qing would never forget Mommy Xu’s bitter face when she had fallen from grace. Mommy Xu had always wanted to find a socialite or someone of comparable status.

She knew that Li Meiling had spent a lot of time and effort on Mommy Xu in the past three years, so she shall teach Li Meiling a lesson of how fast Mommy Xu could fall out and turn her back on her.

“Ning Qing, you are such a genius. Making so many moves with a video, I would never think of this.” Xiao Zhou was full of admiration.

Ning Qing smiled bitterly and joked, “If you’d fallen to the bottom of life at the age of 18 like me, you’d also grow up overnight. However, I think that all the people who have already grown up wish that they never had to have grown up in their hearts.”

Xiao Zhou’s heart ached for Ning Qing as she looked at her beautiful but melancholic facial silhouette. She had known Ning Qing for three years. She’d introduced Ning Qing to her first insignificant role. She knew better than anyone how difficult life had been for Ning Qing over these three years.

“Ning Qing, don’t be sad. At least we have succeeded now.”

“Yes, thanks to Director Wang, who has given me the chance to change my destiny.” Director Wang was an important benefactor in her life, and Ning Qing would always remember him.

“Yes.” Xiao Zhou nodded. “Ning Qing, let’s go and join the cast now. Director Wang has brought everyone to bowl in a private club.”

Ning Qing agreed. Before she left, she looked down and took out her cell phone from her bag.

Chapter 74: President Lu Is Here

Ning Qing agreed. Before she departed, she looked down and grabbed her phone from her bag.

She found a familiar number. She had called Lu Shaoming for a few times since the morning but his phone was dead. She didn’t know what this meant. Did he decide to not bother with her?

Ning Qing puffed up her cheeks in grief. She hated to be abandoned by the people she liked the most, and she hated the silent treatment.

When was the filming going to end? She really wanted to go back.

Go back to see her mom, to see him.

...

Ning Qing and Xiao Zhou came to a luxurious private club. The film crews of Street Walker were bowling and Ning Qing joined them for a few rounds before Director Wang brought her to play cards.

In the exquisitely luxurious private room, there were the big shots in the entertainment circle. About a dozen well dressed people in suits sat there, crossing their legs as they smoked. Ning Qing was familiar with them. They were some of the most powerful and influential people in T City, people whom she always heard of or saw on news.

They were discussing business, glancing at Ning Qing as she walked in.

Director Wang introduced Ning Qing to a few other famous directors and they smiled and greeted her back, though not especially passionately.

Ning Qing was self aware. No matter if it was Ning family or her own fame, she wasn't on their radar. The private room was a real place for fame and gain. It was her first time.

"Ning Qing, I only brought you for exposure. I have something to talk to them about, you go ahead and play cards with the wives. It is beneficial for you to know them," Director Wang told her.

"Alright," Ning Qing nodded. If it wasn't Director Wong, she might not have even been able to walk through the door.

There were three tables of people playing cards. There was a friendly lady watching Street Walker's promotional video who was a fan of Ning Qing. She stood up and said, "Miss Ning, come and play with us."

Ning Qing looked up. Besides the lady, there were two men at the table, they were famous producers in the film scene.

Deference is no substitute for obedience. Ning Qing walked over and took a seat.

They were playing Ngau. There was one dealer and three players. The players compare the size of their bulls with the dealer. Ning Qing wasn't too good at the game.

But, as she just took a seat, how could she just get up and leave? Plus, Xiao Zhou received Director Wang's phone call and sent a stack of cash over. This would let her play at ease.

Ning Qing had no choice but to continue playing the game.

Just as she got her card, she heard someone call “CEO Xu”. Enemies often cross each other’s path. Xu Junxi came.

Ning Qing didn’t find it strange. It was a place where T City’s elite gathered. Considering to Xu family’s position, Xu Junxi definitely has a proper place here.

She looked to the side as Xu Junxi looked at her too. He immediately frowned and glared. He seemed to be surprised at her attendance but also felt disdain.

Ning Qing was delighted. She watched as her face grew grave, as though he were at a disadvantage. Where’s Ning Yao? They’re engaged. Ning Yao must have dreamt to come to such a place where these powerful and influential people gather.

She only moved two chess pieces but not one single move had disappointed her.

Xu Junxi sat on the sofa and discussed business with those people. Ning Qing continued to play cards. Her great mood instantly fell to distress. She lost at every bet.

“Haha, Miss Ning. Is it your first time playing Ngau? Don’t worry. Treat losing money as buying experience,” the producer next to her comforted her.

Ning Qing thought to herself, Heh, it’s not your money that was lost. Of course you’re not upset.

Ning Qing felt something touch her leg under the table. At first, she didn’t notice but then the producer continuously pushed her with his leg, which was rather creepy.

Ning Qing maintained a smile and moved in silence. The producer made an excuse, “Miss Ning, let me help you see your cards.” He then touched her hand openly.

Ning Qing dodged and pretended, “How can I show you my cards? Sit down!”

The producer didn’t manage to take petty advantage so he took his hand back.

Ning Qing played her cards calmly. Her eyes met Xu Junxi’s as she played. The position where he sat at the sofa was perfectly opposite to her and he obviously saw the scene where she was harassed. The smirk on his face reeked of schadenfreude.

Ning Qing rolled her eyes at him and got up. “Excuse me, I need to use the washroom.”

...

She washed her face with some cold water before she walked out.

When she returned to the corridor, the producer walked towards her.

The producer blocked before her and didn’t let her go.

There wasn’t anyone there so Ning Qing didn’t need to pretend. Her eyebrows slightly knitted and she asked, “Is there a problem?”

The producer’s eyes measured Ning Qing’s hourglass body up and down then he rubbed his hands together and said, “Ning Qing, Street Walker, in which you starred, has already achieved fame. With this

in mind, choosing a good follow up role is extremely important. I happen to have a great movie on hand, I can let you be the female lead.”

Ning Qing smiled, “It’s pie in the sky. What do you want?”

The producer saw that Ning Qing was so straightforward, he took a step forward and looked at Ning Qing’s beautiful face when he said, “Can’t you tell what I want? I want you. Tsk tsk. Although your engagement with CEO Xu was called off, he must have had a lot of fun with you. Women who are trained by CEO Xu should be great. As long as you’re willing to serve me in bed, I can satisfy you in every other way.”

There was a hint of indifference across her face. She chuckled and said, “You’re almost fifty. Half of your body is already in the soil and you’re still thinking like a beast. Aren’t you afraid that you would die early? I suggest for you to pee a pool of urine and find yourself in the reflection. You want me to serve you? You really think you qualify?”

“You!” Ning Qing’s scornful look and disdain remark embarrassed the producer. His face grew grave as he shouted, “You don’t know the evil and the good!”

The producer left, puffed up with anger.

Ning Qing didn’t bother with him. Her mental disposition was strong enough.

...

She walked forward but she suddenly paused when she reached the corner as a certain someone was leaning against the wall: Xu Junxi.

Ning Qing raised her eyebrows and flashed a smile. “Why, Didn’t CEO Xu peep at me enough in the private room? Now you are eavesdropping outside?”

Xu Junxi stood straight and looked at Ning Qing’s signature fake smile. The smile was the same she used to deal with the producer earlier.

He was distressed and his tightly shut lips suddenly smirk contemptuously, “Even if you ruined my proposal, so what? You were smiling at the card table but you’re dealing with sexual harassment underneath the table. You have to call me CEO Xu when you see me. You thought you won but you’ll always be just below me.”

Ning Qing thought this guy was a little touched in the head and needed treatment. “As CEO Xu thinks that I’m a rank lower, why do you lower your prestigious self to my level to block my path? The person who drinks it knows best whether the water is hot or cold. I do not have a good life like yours but as long as I have a clear conscience, as long as I’m happy, that will do.”

Xu Junxi smiled coldly, “Happy? Are you happy? Actually, you’re only an actress in the men’s eyes, a play toy that could be traded off anytime.”

Actress? Play toy?

Xu Junxi's choice of words severely humiliated her, but Ning Qing couldn't feel pain anymore. She wasn't even in a trance. She wouldn't suspect this person before her was the same Xu Junxi whom she grew up with for eighteen years. She felt hopeless, a feeling she's accustomed to.

Her eyes were crystal-clear and cold. "Oh? Actress? Is CEO Xu sure that you're not reprimanding your mother-in-law and fiancée?"

"Yaoyao is different, she has me."

"So? CEO Xu is standing here to tell me that I should find a powerful and influential man to rely on? Okay, thank you for CEO Xu's advice. I took note. If there's nothing else, I shall leave."

Ning Qing left.

"Ning Qing, don't you refuse a toast only to be forced to drink a forfeit. Let's see," the man behind her roared.

...

Ning Qing returned to the private room and she immediately received Xu Junxi's "forfeit".

Xu Junxi somehow went crazy and came to play cards at her table. He sat opposite her. Every time that it was her turn to be the dealer, he would increase his bets for a few folds or play extra hands. And he'd win each time.

Within half an hour, Ning Qing lost half a stack of her cash. Looking at the less than ten bundles of bills left, Ning Qing looked bitter.

The disgusting producer stirred up more trouble, "Miss Ning, why? Are you out of money? How about this? If you were to lose again, we don't want your money. You take off your clothes. Every piece of clothing would compensate for five bundles of notes. Haha."

Ning Qing let out a sigh and said with a faux smile on her face, "You look like you're quite experienced. I reckon you often visit the karaoke hall and watch the singers take off their clothes. Five hundred for a piece of clothing. Tsk tsk, it's not that high class."

The producer was suddenly at loss for words.

Xu Junxi suddenly lifted his head, "Miss Ning, have you decided if you'd like to continue the game?"

Ning Qing had to think about it. Because Xu Junxi and the producer intentionally made it difficult for her, she lost about fifty to sixty thousand. She could tell that the two of them were trying to attack her with money. However, she shook her head frankly and spat, "I admit defeat."

She had no money. Even if she had money, she wouldn't do anything stupid. Go ahead and laugh. It was just a card game.

She knew when to keep a low profile and when to keep her head held high.

As expected, the producer didn't let go of the opportunity, but instead made a sarcastic remark. "Didn't Miss Ning earn a lot from Street Walker? Why would you feel heartache after losing ten thousand?"

Would it be that Miss Ning was only glorious on the outside but in fact, is actually in a terrible situation?”

The producer spoke loud enough for the nearby rich wives to hear, then measured Ning Qing up and down with a strange gaze. The few bosses noticed and looked at Ning Qing in disdain.

It'd be a lie if Ning Qing said she didn't feel awkward. It was awkward enough as it was her first time coming to such a place. Then, she became the focus of people's ridicule.

However, she stood up elegantly and maintained her beautiful smile, “Judging people's qualities using money, isn't that too shallow? Plus, there are so many rich people in this private room. Frankly, I am the only one who is poor. The two men here, trying to compare with a girl... Isn't it an easy win?”

Ning Qing really aced that comeback. She flattered all the bosses whilst simultaneously degrading Xu Junxi and the producer. She successfully solved her difficult situation.

Those rich wives saw her elegance, she was neither haughty nor humble. Hence, they nodded in approval. Although she was poorer, her ability to stay calm in the hour of peril lived up to the what would be expected of the no.1 socialite in T City.

The bosses reined back their scorn and couldn't help but took a few looks at Ning Qing. This girl was only twenty-one years old.

Ning Qing bid goodbye to the rich wives that she was familiar with and turned around to grab her bag from the sofa.

However, the door of the private room was pushed open and there was a breeze.

Ning Qing turned and looked. The door was opened by the club manager that she saw once, and there were two bodyguards standing by the door.

There were three to five men, each in a white shirt and black suit, which was a formal outfit. There weren't many of them but their solemnity gave out an imposing elite aura.

Ning Qing couldn't help but sigh. Now who really could be called powerful and influential? Surely not just anyone who lied against the sofa at ease and crossed their legs. The men by the door then were truly powerful and influential people!

Ning Qing also noticed that it she was the only one who stood up in the private room, but then, the dozens of bosses stood up too. Just how great of a person could he be for every boss who controlled T City to stand up to greet him?

Ning Qing was curious.

The club president came out. He bowed slightly as he extended his right arm and made a gesture of “please”. Then, a well-tailored black suit came into sight, a pair of handmade leather shoes stepped on the shimmering marble floor. A pair of long legs took every step and let out an aggressive aura.

Ning Qing's pupils contracted. She couldn't believe that it was the man who she didn't bother with her for the entire day.

And he's the big shot?!

She had not seen him for half a month and he became even more handsome. His blade-like eyebrows, sculpted jawline, pointed nose, and his thin lips were extremely sexy.

Lu Shaoming took off his outer layer and passed it to his secretary, Zhu Rui. He wore a grey vest on top of his light blue shirt. It was Ning Qing's first time seeing him in a vest. His body was already brawny, and with the vest, his V-line abs were outlined perfectly. There's a brooch on his vest, it was a simple platinum design.

Ning Qing's heart suddenly started racing. The man who was shining under the retro light in the corridor was elegant and each movement was filled with a mature man's manly charm.

"CEO Lu..." Ning Qing didn't know who was greeting Lu Shaoming. Those bosses went to the door and she subconsciously retreated.

She didn't want him to see her. She was in a fix here while he was high up on the tip of the pyramid. She felt... inferior.

She never felt inferior, not even when everyone looked at her in disdain earlier. But ever since she met him, she wasn't unfamiliar with the feeling of inferiority.

Just as Ning Qing was deep thought, Xu Junxi couldn't remain calm anymore.

He saw Zhu Rui, the man who once appeared in the hospital where Ning Qing's mother was!

He looked sideways at Ning Qing and she had already retreated to a hidden place. She lowered her gaze and her delicate face sported a pair of rosy cheeks while her hands were rubbing against each other bashfully.

Xu Junxi always suspected that his eyesight was going bad. The person who was well-spoken earlier revealed such an innocent expression.

Chapter 75: Win Back Double The Amount President Xu Had Won Just Now

Who was she involved with?

Zhu Rui, or Young Master Lu?!

The head of the club briefly introduced several high-ranking elders to Lu Shaoming. Young people like Xu Junxi were not mentioned at all.

"President Lu, let's go in and talk." The room was quickly sorted out by several waiters. Ning Qing found that not only had the cutleries such as teacups changed, but the sofa cushions had also been changed into elegant floral printed ones.

The high ranking elders stood on both sides while Lu Shaoming, accompanied by the president of the club, stepped in with elegance and dignity. Ning Qing looked up at him secretly, but the man did not return her gaze.

Ning Qing was a little embarrassed. She knew he had power, but she hadn't expected him to be so important. Recalling the suggestive message that she'd sent last night, she felt that she'd been childish to the extreme. On the other hand, she felt that she had committed blasphemy in his eyes

She felt too embarrassed to meet people.

What did he think of her?

Lu Shaoming sat in the middle of the sofa, which happened to be the most important position in the room. The other high ranking business elders sat down one by one. Instead of crossing their legs, they'd sat down prim and straight.

A high ranking elder passed a cigar to Lu Shaoming. Lu Shaoming took it and the president of the club personally lit his cigar with a blue lighter. Lu Shaoming bent forward slightly to light it up. He half-squinted his narrow black eyes and took a puff. Then he slowly released the smoke from his thin lips with his sharp brows knitted together. He glanced at Ning Qing casually with his deep gaze.

Ning Qing hadn't expected him to look at her. When he smoked, he lifted his firm jaw, which was as smooth as flowing water. An air of slight condescension accentuated his serious, cold demeanor.

Pretty arrogant.

Ning Qing's small face was boiling hot. She knew that he still held a grudge. Moreover, she couldn't stand his appearance. The man's oppressive demeanor was wild and charming.

Ning Qing looked sideways, and from her peripheral vision, saw that he had elegantly crossed his right leg over his left leg. He responded in a low voice and laughed occasionally when the high ranking elders beside him talked to him. Although the low rumbling sounds emanating from his chest were so far away, they had already made Ning Qing's legs weak.

Ning Qing wanted to leave. She thought of her bag and looked at it. Oh no! Her bag had placed on a round table by the waiter, which happened to be behind Lu Shaoming's sofa.

That is to say: if she wants to get her bag, she must go to him.

Ning Qing shook her head. She didn't have the courage to walk over, and she didn't want to make a fool of herself. Forget it, there was nothing important in the bag. She would come back and get it after they'd left. With this in mind, Ning Qing turned around and left.

But after taking a few steps, a melodious ringtone sounded. At that time, the room was quiet except for low-pitched conversation, so the ringtone sounded very abrupt.

Ning Qing's steps stalled. She closed her eyes in dismay. Why? Why must it be her mobile phone?

Who dared to call her at this time?!

The conversation stopped, and a low, rich and enticing voice permeated the air. With a tinge of amusement in his voice he asked, "Whose cell phone is ringing, why is nobody answering it?"

It was Lu Shaoming's voice.

Since he'd already spoken, the high ranking elders started looking around the room. What unaware buffoon did this phone belong to?

Ning Qing was almost in tears. It was impossible for her to walk out right now. After she'd taken a deep breath, adjusted her breathing, and encouraged herself. She stepped forward with a calm and apologetic smile on her lips. "Sorry, my phone is ringing."

"Then come and take it away." The president of the club said gently.

Ning Qing was already crying bitterly in her heart by now. Under the gaze of everyone, she walked step by step towards the man who was sitting on the high seat.

When she stopped in front of him, the man exposed half of his delicate and handsome face to her. He looked down as his index finger flicked ash from the cigar into the ashtray.

"... President Lu, my bag is behind you. Could you please pass it to me?" Ning Qing asked softly, with a smile on her face.

Lu Shaoming looked up. He fixed his bright eyes that were like obsidian stones, on her. The lines at the corners of his eyes rippled. He smiled and said three words, "Take it yourself."

Ning Qing's small face was red. He'd refused her in front of so many people and put her in an embarrassing position.

What a nuisance!

The high ranking elders' eyes flashed, a little surprised. Men like President Lu have always been tolerant and gentlemanly to women, when has he ever put a woman in a difficult spot?

Unless he was related to this woman...

Anomaly is a demon; the elders faced Ning Qing one after another and scrutinized her deeply.

He'd refused to help, and the distinctly out of place ringtone was still on its loop. Ning Qing subconsciously tucked a strand of silky hair hanging around her cheek behind her ear with her tiny fair hands. She approached him, carefully avoiding his long and strong legs and stood on the edge of the sofa, reaching for the bag on the table.

But her hands were not long enough!

Ning Qing wanted to die now.

She couldn't keep staying like this. Ning Qing thought for a moment and approached him actively, her pearly whites biting down on her tender lower lip. She knelt her left knee on his sofa carefully and timidly, closing the gap between her and the bag. She stretched out her right hand and managed to get her bag.

Ning Qing was elated. She had just wanted to leave with her bag when a strong arm clasped onto her petite waist, and with a powerful tug, she fell into the man's strong and hard embrace.

"Ah!" Ning Qing exclaimed in shock.

"Be careful." Ning Qing heard the man say.

What?

Why should she be careful? She hadn't fallen into his arms accidentally. He'd dragged her in. How could he distort the truth?

"Lu Shaoming, this is Miss Ning Qing, a popular actress in China. Miss Ning has probably admired President Lu for a long time. And since she had the opportunity to encounter President Lu today, she must've wanted to have more interaction with you, haha..."

"Yes, Miss Ning is as beautiful as a flower. Looking at them now, they look like a perfect match, a match made in heaven. They make others envious."

Sighs of praise could be heard around them, and Ning Qing was amused by how the high ranking elders, who had just ignored her like a fly on the wall, had begun praising her and saying that she was one of a kind.

Also, had everyone gone blind? He was the one who had pulled her in. She had not thrown herself at him!

"Miss Ning, is that true?" Looking at the beautiful face of the girl in his arms, Lu Shaoming asked with a smile.

He had the face to ask her?

Of course, it wasn't true!

Ning Qing quickly denied it in her heart, but she did not say it out loud, because if she were to deny it in front of everyone here, he'd lose face and dignity.

A man's face and dignity were very important in front of outsiders!

Ning Qing's pair of beautiful autumn eyes were blinking and sparkling. He was holding a cigar in his mouth. The cigar was burning brightly in the dark, and the ashes were about to fall down.

"That...you..." Ning Qing pointed to his lips and whispered, "Do you want to flick the ash off? It's going to be very hot when it falls on you."

Lu Shaoming did not move. Amidst the curls of smoke, the man's silent and noble gaze were somewhat unpredictable. He looked at her. The two whirlpools in his black eyes attracted Ning Qing, who was as innocent as a piece of white paper, causing her to fall rapidly.

Ning Qing's small face was blushing more and more. She didn't understand what he meant or wanted.

She wasn't lying to him. The ashes were really about to land on him.

Ning Qing bit her lip and slowly stretched out her little hand when the ashes were about to fall. She was trembling. Her sight was filled with his thin, pink and lustrous lips. Her little hand went up and boldly removed the cigar from his lips.

The ashtray was in front of her. She flicked the ashes off for him, looked up, and placed the cigar back at his lips.

A burst of teasing laughter erupted around them. Lu Shaoming released his hold and Ning Qing rose from his arms.

Ning Qing felt that she had taken the road to ruin. She had done something so bold and ambiguous to him in public. Her finger had touched his lips just now. It was thin, soft and supple, with the coolness of the evening air.

She felt numb all over.

Ning Qing raised her feet and walked forward. At that moment, she felt a gloomy and cold gaze fixed upon her. Xu Junxi was peering at her with a complicated gaze. That dark and menacing gaze made her feel like he wanted to poke a few bloody holes in her body.

Ning Qing suddenly remembered that when Lu Shaoming had embraced her, Xu Junxi was sitting just a few meters away from them, and he must have seen the intimate interaction between them.

She could understand why he would feel this way. He was upset because he had thought that she was dating above herself. This person's heart was distorted, so he could not bear to see her doing well.

Ning Qing flashed him a brilliant smile. The purpose of the smile was to enrage him!

...

Ning Qing wanted to leave with her bag, but several wealthy wives dragged her back. Everyone shouted "Miss Ning" attentively and sat her down at the card table.

She still had to play cards?

Ning Qing really didn't want to play. She really didn't have enough money to play with them. But one shocking thing about her was her fortune when it comes to playing cards; she would win every single time.

Ning Qing guessed that it might be because of Lu Shaoming. She kept the money into her pocket without feeling any guilt. First off, the rich wives all had money and it wouldn't be a big deal to them if she won some of their money. Second off, she was Lu Shaoming's wife, and it was her right to bask in her husband's glory to win all this money.

Looking at the pile of bills that she'd won, Ning Qing was delighted. Her small eyes kept glancing towards the fat stack. She finally couldn't help herself and started counting the money when they were resting.

She wanted to see if she had won her capital back. She'd retreat immediately once she'd recouped her losses. She vowed never to gamble again.

“Master Lu...” One of the rich ladies suddenly opened her mouth and cried out.

In the midst of counting her winnings, Ning Qing’s hands stiffened. She was so excited when she had counted “580” and “590” just now that she hadn’t noticed that there was someone standing beside her.

She felt the man’s presence very close to her. Maybe his business vest had accidentally grazed her red dress. She could clearly feel the smooth and cold texture of his business vest against her beautiful back, and she noticed a healthy and charming manly scent.

Ning Qing sat up straight and froze.

What was he doing here instead of talking about business with the others?

The high ranking elders all got up and followed him. The three rich ladies had all left the table, and she was seated alone with a stack of uncounted bills in her small hands. It would be a hilarious sight to behold.

Lu Shaoming, with his hands in his trousers pockets, looked down at the little girl who dared not look up at him, and said, “Why have you stopped counting? Go on.”

Go on?

Ning Qing didn’t know what he had really meant by that, but everybody was looking at her, and she had no choice but to continue counting. So all the influential people who controlled T city looked at her with a grin as she counted her winnings.

The girl’s method of counting money was clumsy. It must be her first time doing something like that. The image of brand-new notes flipping in her little fair and smooth hands was very pleasing.

Her little face was flushed and covered with a soft layer of fluff, which gave off a soft and glittering glow under the light.

Her little hand stopped, and there were seven full stacks of money in front of her.

“Did you come out in the black?” Perhaps he had felt that she hadn’t spoken for a long time after she’d finished counting, so he asked in a hoarse voice.

Ning Qing raised her eyes slowly and looked at him. Her long eyelashes were fluttering like the wings of a butterfly. “Haha.” She gave two crisp laughs. Her beautiful bow lips curved into a lovely smile. “It’s a little short.”

“Well...” Lu Shaoming raised his eyebrows and said, “Do you want to go for another round?”

His voice was extremely soft and when he looked down at her, he could not hide his indulgence and love for her. Even if he hadn’t moved, Ning Qing could feel that he was slowly touching her head with a big, warm hand.

Ning Qing forgot to answer for a moment.

Lu Shaoming looked up and gazed at the crowd, and then locked his eyes on Xu Junxi. “President Xu, are you interested in gambling a round with me?”

Xu Junxi smiled. He could not read the deep and sharp gaze that was like an eagle in Lu Shaoming's gaze, but he had definitely chosen him because of Ning Qing. If that was the case, then it was better to accept deferentially than to decline courteously.

One of the high ranking elders here sent his wife to play again, so there were two men and two women at the card table, with Lu Shaoming sitting beside Ning Qing.

A waiter came in quickly and tidied up the card table. The card cloth was replaced and a professional dealer dealt the cards. One hand reached out and took Ning Qing's seven stacks of notes away. Ning Qing was surprised and realized it was Zhu Rui when she glanced sideways.

"Miss Ning, don't worry, I'll keep them safe for you." Zhu Rui placed the money on a waiter's plate behind her and brought a basin over. "Miss Ning, there's a lot of bacteria on the money. Wash your hands first."

"Do I have to wash my hands? But I still have to gamble later." If she were to continue gambling, it meant that she'd have to touch money again.

Just as Ning Qing sat there in confusion, a brocade box was placed in front of her. When the man in black opened the brocade box, Ning Qing was almost blinded by the gold leaves that filled the box.

Ning Qing, staring and tongue-tied, could not help but sighed that these wealthy people really knew how to play. She was stunned by the way they played this game.

After washing her hands, Ning Qing sat upright and as the shuffler was shuffling the cards. Lu Shaoming suddenly opened his mouth and said, "Producer Ni, it's boring for us to just play cards alone. How would you like to dance a striptease for us?"

Producer Ni had realized that something was off and had wanted to sneak out the door while everyone was preoccupied with watching the cards. However, Lu Shaoming's words stopped him in his tracks.

Ning Qing suddenly raised her eyes and looked at Lu Shaoming. If she hadn't yet realized what he was thinking, she knew now. She was 100% certain that this man had come to support her tonight.

This man!

Could she be more touched?

When the producer returned, he dared not show any unwillingness. He smiled flatteringly and said, "Sure, as long as Master Lu is happy, it doesn't matter what kind of dance I perform."

Lu Shaoming didn't look at the producer. He looked sideways, his deep and bright black eyes fixed on the girl with a touched look on her face. He laughed softly, "Win back double the amount President Xu had won just now, alright?"

Chapter 76: Wait For Your Calls And Determine How Much You Love Me

Lu Shaoming didn't bother to even glance at Producer Ni. He looked to the side, fixed his bright black eyes on the girl's "touched" face, and said gently with a smile, "How much did CEO Xu win from you earlier? Double the winnings for me, huh?"

Ning Qing looked at his handsome face as she nodded confidently. "Mm!"

Xu Junxi looked at their sweet interactions and saw how polite Zhu Rui was to Ning Qing. He was certain that Ning Qing and Lu Shaoming shared a deep relationship.

Heh, no wonder she rejected him and pushed him to Ning Yao so readily. It turned out that she'd found herself a rich man.

She had really done well for herself!

"Alright. Although I don't have even one-tenth of Young Master Shao's wealth, as long as Miss Ning has the skill, I can still afford to lose."

...

The croupier started dealing the cards. Ning Qing had accumulated some experience from the previous games that night. She was an intelligent woman and she managed to win some money from Xu Junxi after a few rounds.

Ning Qing thought the main reason for her success was that Lu Shaoming was sitting next to her. He wasn't next to her at the square table but their legs would touch one another. She would push him away and he'd come closer again. In the end, he extended his legs straight and conquered her space. Her heart was racing and she decided to just put her legs on his.

In the corner of her eyes, she saw him purse his lips and then raised his legs slightly so her legs were hanging leisurely in the air.

Ning Qing thought of a term, the princess's knight.

He made her feel extremely spoiled.

The two men made bigger bets. Whenever one of them was the dealer, they would each increase their bet. The card game was like a powderkeg at a bonfire.

Lu Shaoming played cards in a way that reflected his character. His strategy revealed that he was steady and wise. Every time he thought he had the winning hand, he would increase his bet a few-fold and win big.

He said that it was for her to win double what she'd lost so far, but he had already taken revenge for her. She only needed to be by his side, and she stayed under his protection in silence.

It was a great feeling.

After half an hour, Xu Junxi emptied half of his box where he stored his cash. He chain-smoked and he looked distressed.

Then, Zhu Rui walked by Lu Shaoming and muttered, "President, it's nine. You might miss tomorrow's meeting at Huan Ya if do not depart to the airport soon."

Ning Qing could hear what Zhu Rui said clearly. Her heart clenched. Is he leaving again?

Lu Shaoming nodded in acknowledgement. He looked sideways and saw the girl's gaze; she looked low spirited and reluctant for him to leave. She puffed up her cheeks slightly in an attempt to conceal her bitterness. This wasn't enough time for either of them after being apart for half a month.

If only there hadn't been any bystanders; he really wanted to pinch her delicate cheeks.

"CEO Xu, why not play one last game? We shall see who has higher points. Both of us place the highest bet we can and the winner takes all," Lu Shaoming suggested.

"Sure." With his eyebrows tightly knitted, Xu Junxi asked, "I am curious, what is the highest bet that Young Master Lu can offer?"

"How about the Guang Qing Company?"

The moment he answered, the bosses gasped as their faces changed. Xu Junxi was stunned and he found it unbelievable.

Lu Shaoming smirked and said calmly, "If I lose, I will give you the Guang Qing Company. On the contrary, CEO Xu's bet must be... Emperor Entertainment Group. CEO Xu, do you dare?"

Emperor Entertainment Group?

Xu Junxi's pupils contracted, it was the property of the Xu family.

Lu Shaoming leaned back in the soft sofa lazily and tapped the table with his fingers. "Why, has CEO Xu made up his mind?" Lu Shaoming gave a nod to the croupier. "Let's begin."

The croupier started dealing cards.

The bosses each held their breath. They never thought a simple card game would turn into a life and death battle of business so quickly. Everyone stole a glance at Ning Qing. Everyone understood that the two men were fighting over her!

Guang Qing Company? Heh, Lu Shaoming told everyone the girl was worth the price in his heart.

The croupier dealt the first card to Lu Shaoming. When the croupier was dealing a card to Xu Junxi, he waved and rejected, "I'm out."

There were faint sighs with apathy all around.

Ning Qing looked up and saw Xu Junxi. His handsome eyebrows were tightly knitted as he smoked in distress. He looked rather decadent.

Ning Qing could understand his feelings then. As the only son of the Xu family, his career had been all smooth sailing, and he was respected. In the noble circle, the gamble between him and Lu Shaoming, no one would make fun of him if he were to lose but he didn't dare to gamble.

It was the most silent yet the heaviest humiliation that Lu Shaoming had ever caused.

Xu Junxi has always been arrogant. This humiliation was a vital hit to him.

"Maybe CEO Xu doesn't have the guts; then let's forget it. Everyone, I have some other matters to take care of and I shall make a move first."

Ning Qing had yet to rein back her gaze and the man suddenly retrieved his legs. Her legs lost balance and her heels landed on the ground heavily. She was in pain.

This man!

Ning Qing saw Lu Shaoming, who already stood up. He didn't look quite good...

Would it be that he got angry that she looked at Xu Junxi earlier?

The bosses bid farewell to Lu Shaoming politely then Lu Shaoming walked steadily out from the private room. Ning Qing saw that Zhu Rui gave her a look before he left and her heart skipped a beat before it started racing.

She didn't know how to say her goodbyes to the rich wives. Lu Shaoming just left and she followed behind. Mm, everyone would know where she was heading.

...

Ning Qing took a turn at the corridor and quickened her footsteps to catch up with Lu Shaoming but she suddenly stopped. Because the man that she was after stood sideways and there was a very beautiful woman next to him.

Ning Qing knew the beautiful woman. She was a famous TV host.

The woman was in a black V-collar bodycon mini dress. Her seductive cleavage, small waist and a pair of long legs... In contrast to the amorous charm of her body, she had a soft and thready voice like the girls from Jiangnan. Her voice was much nicer than Ning Yao's.

Ning Qing sighed emotionally. She deserved to be the Goddess who all otakus fantasized about. Just her body and voice itself would trigger a man's vicious mind.

"Young Master Lu, I never thought that I would meet you here. Three years ago, during a commercial opening ceremony, I'd fallen down in the crowd not far from here. You told your assistant to give me a hand and I have yet to find an opportunity to thank you. Young Master Lu, can you give me your number? I shall treat you a meal when you're free."

Although Ning Qing only saw the side profile of the beautiful TV host from afar, she could see that the TV host looked at Lu Shaoming in admiration. There was romance in the air.

Then, Ning Qing saw that Lu Shaoming had one of his hands in his pocket as he looked at her directly with his cold, deep eyes.

He didn't reply but seemed to be waiting for her to respond.

Ning Qing stared at him. Was he simply kindhearted? What did her falling down have to do with him?

What other reason other than because she was pretty!

Ning Qing went forward. "Shaoming!" She lifted the corners of her lips as she held the man's arm. She didn't look at the beautiful TV host but asked Lu Shaoming, "Who's this?"

Lu Shaoming looked down at the little girl. She had a pair of eyes that could talk.

There was a clear distinction between the black and white in her eyes. Her crystal clear eyes weren't filled with worldly affairs and desire like your general person. Her eyes were calm like the autumn ripples when she was quiet.

Anyone who could see her like that would be as lucky as Lu Shaoming. She raised her delicate eyebrows with enchanting seduction. She was like a kitten kneading his heart with her claws.

Rather tempting.

She was wearing a red lace dress, a simple yet poised design. The bright red set off her snow white skin and white teeth. Only he knew how gorgeous her body was underneath the dignified and reserved clothing. For thirty years, he didn't look at any woman but when he took a good look at the TV host before him, she was such an ordinary woman.

"I don't know her." Lu Shaoming's Adam's apple rolled as he replied.

Ning Qing let out a breath of relief as she had seen many scenarios where when husband and wife argue, either one of the parties would use a third person to provoke their other half. It was childish and harmful to a relationship.

Luckily, he didn't do so.

When there was friction between the two, she was willing to take the first step during the confrontation while he was willing to walk the other ninety-nine.

"Shaoming, let's go." Ning Qing held Lu Shaoming by his arm and turned him around.

Lu Shaoming followed Ning Qing. "Oh yeah." He suddenly recalled something then he turned around elegantly and looked at the TV host with a cold gaze, "I do not have an assistant but only a secretary. I pay my secretary on an hourly basis. So, things like giving a helping hand to another woman aren't worth the time nor did it ever happen. In the future, don't use such a ridiculous excuse to strike up a conversation. It'd be exposed easily."

The beautiful TV host's face became as pale as a sheet. She was dumbfounded and stunned.

Ning Qing was next to her man. Her eyes were glowing in secret. She suddenly wanted to comment that the man didn't know how to show compassion as the woman looked like she was going to cry.

But, she wouldn't say it. She was selfish too. Hence, whichever woman cast their greedy eyes over her man, she'd love his straightforwardness and coldness toward them.

“Shaoming, Secretary Zhu has such a high salary? Why did you make Secretary Zhu stay in the hospital to take care of my mom for an entire week?”

Lu Shaoming looked at the male toilet sign and took his arm back from her hand. He pushed the door open and entered. “Who are you? I, Lu Shaoming only have one wife.”

It was as though Ning Qing’s heart were covered in honey. She quickly followed behind. As the man stood by the basin to wash his hand, she went next to him and said flirtatiously, “Are you angry? I only took a glance at Xu Junxi. I do not have any feelings for him. We played cards for so long. I do not believe that you can’t tell that I already treat him as a stranger.”

Lu Shaoming turned off the tap. Men like him could tell if there was something going on between them in a glance. It was clear in her eyes that Xu Junxi was in the past.

He stood straight and extended his right hand to hold her chin. He pulled her closer. “Do you understand what happened tonight? Do you still want to be in a scandal with Xu Junxi?”

He exerted strength and Ning Qing felt pain. She pushed his hand away. She then pouted and asked, “What do you want me to understand?”

Lu Shaoming locked her waist then he turned and put Ning Qing onto the basin.

He leaned in closer and the air was filled with a refreshing manly scent and faint tobacco smell. Ning Qing shrank and he put one of his hands on the wall to corner her.

“Understand that I carry higher media value than he does. When you want to be involved in a scandal, give me your room number instead. I will keep you company,” Lu Shaoming licked his dry lips as he spoke calmly.

Ning Qing blushed. This man was killing her. He said it so seriously and monotonously but every single word he uttered was dictatorial with a little... ambiguous meaning.

Just as she was at loss for what to do, her soft waist was held up again. Her perky booty was pushed forward and he carried her into his embrace.

“When you were raking your bag in the private room, didn’t you notice that you were wearing a dress? When you raise your butt like that, who are you trying to expose yourself to? Huh?” He looked down at her and kissed her red lips.

Ning Qing quickly held onto his vest but her right hand accidentally touched his platinum brooch. When she was with him, she especially likes the cold hard things that he wore, such as his watch, cufflinks, buttons, belt... Men suit these things. They gave them charm.

Ning Qing thought she was such a loser. She became weak all over with one kiss.

“... I wasn’t trying to show anyone... I wore safety pants underneath, I wouldn’t expose myself...” She curled up in his embrace as she tried to explain.

There was a bright light on the basin. The girl who was in his embrace was blushing. Her rosy cheeks, her beautiful face, her delicate straight nose and her lips like cherries.

He hugged her in his embrace and thought, as warm as jade.

“Really? Show me.”

Ning Qing had yet to realize the meaning of his reply and she felt a breeze on her lap while her palm ran up her dress.

“Lu Shaoming!” Ning Qing was embarrassed and angry. Her lace underpants were exposed.

Lu Shaoming watched as she pulled down her dress. She blinked and there seemed to be faint redness at the corners of her eyes. As they each panted, he cupped her face with his palms, “For this half a month, did you miss me?”

How could she answer?

Who asks such a straightforward question?

Ning Qing kept her mouth shut, she refused to reply.

“Ning Qing, I miss you. For the past half a month, when I wasn’t working or keeping mom company, I would be pining for you. That’s why when I heard that you gave Xu Junxi your room number, I got very angry. I rescheduled the meeting earlier and flew back. In the private room, who are those random people? How dare they bully you? I felt such heartache, I begrudged them to do so.”

“Ning Qing, I have to leave soon. There’s very little time left. Take initiative, make me feel that you missed me too, although I already felt it. Since I hadn’t replied your calls last night, you called me for twenty-one times. I am very happy. Heh, I had my childish moment where I waited for your calls to determine how much you love me.”

Chapter 77: Thank You, Wifey

The man was panting heavily. Ning Qing reached out her tiny hand and stroked his clean sideburns impulsively. In her eyes, his tightly knitted jet black brows indicated suffering and self-suppression.

“Umm, wait a minute...” When his thin lips were about to bear down on her, Ning Qing turned her head sideways and avoided him. She opened her bag as her fair hands rummaged inside.

“Looking for something?” He urged impatiently.

Ning Qing’s entire body was shaking. The man’s aggressive hormones were in the air, and her face and ears turned red as she sensed it. “I...I have lipstick on my lips. Find a piece of paper to wipe them clean. Mmm...”

She kept her red lips sealed shut.

Lu Shaoming opened his mouth and suckled her lips for a moment. He joked with his eyes half closed. “Are they clean now?”

Ning Qing’s long jade-like eyelashes trembled fiercely, and she could no longer speak clearly. She stuttered out, “Lipstick is not clean, it can’t be eaten...”

He was the type who would ensure his woman's comfort.

Lu Shaoming searched for the girl's slim, petite waist and squeezed it twice with his big hand. He closed his eyes and kissed the girl gently, feeling her tenderness and sweetness. "As long as it's on you, I'd want to eat it."

Although Ning Qing was sitting on the bathroom counter, she felt as if she were walking on clouds and was about to fall down. Her slim arms hooked around his neck as she began to shyly reciprocate.

A kiss. As she seemed to be the ignorant and inexperienced prey, he was the skilled hunter. For the first time, he'd taught her how a kiss was such a lingering beautiful thing.

Ning Qing felt out of breath and dizzy as they kissed. Suddenly, Lu Shaoming lips left hers. Ning Qing opened her eyes as the man "shushed" her. They could hear the voices of two men conversing outside the door, and they were getting closer.

Ning Qing suddenly realized that this was the men's bathroom!

She almost sprang up in shock. She too embarrassed to continue living if someone were to see her like this.

The next second, her entire body was in the air. Lu Shaoming carried her into a small dressing room beside the bathroom counter.

The dressing room was too narrow. It was probably there for the guests who wanted to change their clothes at the last minute. The two of them hid inside; their bodies were completely against each other.

"Why did you send me that suggestive message last night?" He cast his eyes downwards slightly, and the warm air from his handsome nose penetrated Ning Qing's ear.

Ning Qing shuddered.

Ning Qing's was so nervous that she didn't know where to put her hands. In the end, she chose to put them on his slender waist. As she was afraid that those two men would hear her, she whispered, "Because I know you like it. But I didn't expect you to ignore me and make me feel embarrassed."

"... Qingqing, shall we make up for it now?" Lu Shaoming opened his mouth and bit her tender little earlobe.

Ning Qing was about to slip and fall. Fortunately, the man put a strong arm around her as he propped her forward with his long legs, directly pinning her gently against the door.

Ning Qing's mouth was dry as she slowly gazed at him.

The man gazed at her intently. His deep eyes were no longer clear but clouded with desires as dark as night. The corners of his eyes were very red, like a glass of fragrant and strong red wine. Devilish charm and passion rippled through them.

Ning Qing avoided his gaze.

There was a small mirror in front of her. She saw the man, who was wearing a wristwatch, run his hand through her hair. A few strands of hair that he'd teased out clung onto her delicate flushed cheeks. He did not force her to face him and instead began kissing her, starting from her petite jaw.

Both of their breathing was disordered and their palms began to sweat.

Ning Qing gulped a few times, closed her eyes, and opened them again. Her small hands slowly crept up his neck, feeling the pounding pulse of his veins.

"Shaoming, I've missed you for the past two weeks. I've really missed you a lot!" Ning Qing kissed his thin lips.

...

Ning Qing came out of the dressing room half an hour later. Every step she took felt as if she were stepping on cotton candy. Everything felt so unreal.

She went to the bathroom counter, she could see that the woman in the mirror was blushing. Her eyes bore a beautiful and delicate like, like red roses masked in morning dew.

Turning on the faucet, she washed her hands.

The dressing room door suddenly opened. Lu Shaoming was wearing his metal belt. His black trousers were a little wrinkled from being squeezed against Ning Qing. The wrinkles exhibited a different kind of casual male sexiness. The wrinkled pants looked nice on his long legs.

Lu Shaoming hugged Ning Qing from behind. He held her small hands in his as he washed them for her. He gently kissed her hair as he said, "Thank you, wifey."

Ning Qing pressed her red lips together, looked sideways at him, and said in a delicate voice, "This is not to be repeated!"

"Heh," Lu Shaoming didn't agree. "When you can satisfy me, I won't repeat this again."

Ning Qing was speechless. She elbowed his chiseled abdomen with her elbow and in a sweet voice retorted, "Looks like you're not grateful, and you're still blaming me?"

"How did you figure it out?" Lu Shaoming's low, rich voice was laced with the hoarseness of satisfaction. He rubbed his handsome face against Ning Qing's. "You've heard how other wives did it just now, and how did you do it, huh? Before we were married, I didn't even need to use my hand for three months. Now that I'm married to you, I've used it diligently. For example, last night. Wifey, are you still unapologetic?"

Last night...

He had the face to say that!

Ning Qing pouted her red lips and deliberately grumbled fiercely, "If you continue talking, there will be no next time!"

Lu Shaoming lips curled up as he laughed. He bent over and kissed her little face again. This little wife of his was so cute.

"Wifey, I'm leaving now. It may take four or five days for me to return from this trip to the Cavalier Conference in Italy. Mother is taken care of in the hospital. But don't worry, Zhu Rui is still in the country. You can reach out to him if you need anything. Also, I've seen what happened to between you, Li Meiling and her daughter. Feel free to call me beforehand if you have any ideas or want to mull over your options. I won't get involved in your affairs, but I have more experience and knowledge than you, so I can give you good advice."

"Alright." Ning Qing nodded.

His arms were very warm. She felt as if she were basking in the sunshine in his arms. The man who'd whispered sweet nothings to her just now was reassuring her like her...father.

Ning Qing couldn't help but cringe at the thought of comparing the two!

Lu Shaoming let go of her and stood up straight. "I'm leaving."

She suddenly felt cold as he pulled away from her and left.

Lu Shaoming had only taken one step forward when he felt a small hand grab his vest.

Lu Shaoming looked back, only to notice Ning Qing's beautiful autumn eyes looking at him pitifully and reluctantly.

The man laughed, he placed his hand on the back of her head and pulled her into his arms and gently stroked her hair. "What? You can't bear to part with me?"

"No." Ning Qing deeply inhaled his refreshing scent and rubbed her small face under the collar of his neat shirt.

With a sigh of satisfaction, Lu Shaoming said in a gentle voice, "I might be busy while I'm gone. The company's headquarters is in the United States, but because you are here, we might settle in T city for a short period. I have a lot of business to deal with. I'll spend more time with you when this is all taken care of."

"Ok, I know. You go and work." Ning Qing nodded and loosened her hold on him.

She actually didn't tend to depend or rely on someone easily. Ever since she was a child, he was the only person she had been dependent on, other than her mother.

She was reluctant to see him go.

"Silly girl." Lu Shaoming took a step forward, held her small face in both hands and kissed her.

Ning Qing gently embraced him and the two lovers were entwined.

After a long, delicate kiss, Lu Shaoming gently pressed down on the girl's red swollen lips with his rough thumb. The skin on the corner of her lips had broken. He frowned and said, "I promise that I will never bite you again, no matter how happy and stimulated I get."

Ning Qing was shocked, apparently not expecting him to say such a thing. Shamelessly saying such things in such a solemn tone!

"Leave!" The sadness of parting had been diluted. Ning Qing threw her small pink fist against his shoulder.

"I'm really going to leave now." Lu Shaoming pinched her tender face and turned away.

...

When the handsome figure disappeared, Ning Qing walked out of the bathroom.

There weren't a lot of people in the corridor. She covered her broken red lips with her little hand and went to look for Xiao Zhou.

But at the end of the corridor, Xu Junxi appeared...

Ning Qing was annoyed that she had to see Xu Junxi here. Rarely was she in the mood to deal with him.

Xu Junxi looked at Ning Qing. Her clothes were neat and tidy, but her hair was in disarray. Perhaps because she'd been sweating just now, several beautiful strands of hair clung to her fair neck.

Ning Qing brought her hand down and he saw her injured red lips.

Gloomy cold light burst out from his black eyes. His palms, which had been hanging by his side, clenched into fists. He stared at her as he gritted his teeth and asked, "Did you kiss Lu Shaoming?"

"Yes!" Ning Qing generously admitted. What was it to him that she'd kissed her husband?

"Well done," Xu Junxi's chest fluctuated violently, and he spoke in a guttural tone. "Don't have any self-respect. Do you think Lu Shaoming actually wants you? He's just playing with you. He won't marry you. You'll never be a part of the Lu family!"

Ning Qing really wanted to shove her marriage certificate in his face and tell him to open his dirty eyes and look at it carefully, but she decided not. She smiled coldly, then asked, "Do you think Lu Shaoming is like you? I'm sorry, I can tell you very clearly that Lu Shaoming is one in a million, and unfortunately, as I, Ning Qing, have met this wonderful man, I won't ever let him go!"

After she'd finished speaking, Ning Qing walked away.

Xu Junxi couldn't suppress the bitterness in his heart anymore. Why was he so upset? He felt as if someone was slicing at his heart with a knife.

"Ah!" Xu Junxi gave a low roar and hit the wall with his fist.

Blood started to flow down the wall.

...

Ning Qing walked away in a hurry and accidentally bumped into someone while turning the corner.

“Sorry! You’re not hurt, are you?”

“I’m all right.”

The person tidied up her skirt and raised her head.

Ning Qing was stunned. It was one of her idols, Xia Xiaofu!

Xia Xiaofu was wearing an elegant white dress. Her chestnut wavy hair hung all the way down to her waist, with some strands scattered on her delicate shoulders.

She had a very standard oval-shaped face. Ning Qing noticed that her eyes were looking around.

Ning Qing heard that she had a double doctorate in Chinese Studies from the top university in China. As the saying goes “One who is full of knowledge always behaves with elegance”. 16-year-old Xia Xiaofu had been selected to play in a Chinese ‘gods and heroes’ drama because of her untainted temperament. She had been praised as the “Sister Goddess” ever since.

“Hello, Miss Xia. I’ve always admired you very much. Can you give me your autograph?” Ning Qing asked, a little excited.

Xia Xiaofu blinked her beautiful eyes when she heard her words. A crystal clear smile appeared on her delicate little face. “Ning Qing, right? You can call me Xiaofu. I watched the promotional video of “Dust and Wind” today. I really respect your acting ability. To tell the truth, I’d been eying the role of Meng Yao for a long time. When the role had been taken by you, I felt quite depressed for some time. But, you interpreted the role very well and I candidly admit defeat.”

Ning Qing hadn’t expected the noble nation’s number one goddess to be so cheerful and lively in private, but only the actors and actresses who could differentiate who they were on and off stage could really enjoy life.

“Xiao...Fu,” Ning Qing said tentatively, “thank you for your praise.” She rummaged through her bag, pulled out a pen, and handed it to Xia Xiaofu. “Can you sign your autograph on the back of the bag for me? I want to treasure this bag forever.”

Chapter 78: There’s A Bullet Flying Towards Her

“Xiao... Fu,” Ning Qing called. “Thank you for your compliment.” She took out a pen from her bag and passed it to Xia Xiaofu. “Can you sign the back of my bag? I’ll treasure it.”

“Sure.” Xia Xiaofu took over the pen and signed her name.

Her signature was just like her character, elegant and unrestrained.

Xia Xiaofu then took out her phone and said, “Ning Qing, I’ll follow you on Weibo! Let’s follow each other.”

Ning Qing sincerely liked this woman. She had a good reputation, constantly referred to with terms like 'fairy' and 'goddess', but she had a frank and open personality.

"Yes! That's more than what I could have wished for." Ning Qing took out her phone and they successfully followed each other on Weibo.

"Xiaofu..." A man walked over.

Ning Qing lifted her eyes and saw a handsome man in a suit. There was a secretary behind him. He looked like a leader in the business circle.

"Ze, why did you come? Didn't I tell you that I'd drive myself back?" Xia Xiaofu creased her eyebrows when she saw Ou Ze.

Ou Ze walked over with a devious look on his face. He extended his arms to hold Xia Xiaofu's shoulder and smiled. "I worry when you drive home alone, so I told the driver to turn around to pick you up."

Xia Xiaofu didn't reply, but turned around and smiled at Ning Qing. "Ning Qing, this is my fiance, Ou Ze. Ze, this is my best friend that I've just got to know, Ning Qing."

"Mister Ou, hi!" Ning Qing nodded and greeted the man.

"Hello, Miss Ning." Ou Ze glanced at Ning Qing then brought Xia Xiaofu forward by her shoulder. "Let's go back. It's already the beginning of autumn, why are you only in a dress? Aren't you cold?" Ou Ze asked as he took over a blue wool jacket and put it over her shoulders.

Xia Xiaofu waved goodbye at Ning Qing apologetically as she turned in Ou Ze's arms.

Ning Qing watched them leave. A woman's sixth sense: she disliked Ou Ze. There was disdain in his gaze and his businessman-snobbiness was not subtle.

Ning Qing watched them walk away until they took a turn at the end of the corridor. A slender figure suddenly barged into her view. Ning Qing was stunned. Ou Luo Xi and Ou Ze, both of their surnames were Ou.

"Luo Xi, such a coincidence." Ou Ze paused with Xia Xiaofu in her arms.

"Elder brother." Ou Luo Xi was in a yellow wind coat and dark blue jeans. His delicate face bore a cool expression. He called when he saw Ou Ze.

"Mm, I came to pick up your sister-in-law. We are leaving."

"Okay."

Xia Xiaofu looked past Ou Ze's shoulder curiously to take another look at the delicate looking man. She had been engaged with Ou Ze for two years and she only saw Ou Luo Xi once in Ou's house. The man

gave her a feeling that he wasn't easy to get along with. The most crucial part was that Ou Luo Xi had not once looked at her directly!

Such a thing had never happened in Xia Xiaofu's entire life.

"Ze, isn't your brother coming home with you?"

Ou Ze held the back of Xia Xiaofu's head to shift her gaze. "He has an apartment outside. He's used to being a Lone Ranger. Xiaofu, I'll sleep at your place tonight...?"

As the hustle and bustle in the corridor resumed, Ning Qing walked forward while Ou Luo Xi stopped in place. His long fringe blocked his beautiful eyes; no one could tell what he was thinking about.

"Luo Xi, why are you here?"

Ou Luo Xi looked up with a poker face, revealing his black eyes that were like the dark night behind bright moonlight, quiet and lonely.

Ning Qing felt her heart twist. It was the first time she looked at the young man with heartache.

"I heard that brother came. So, I came here."

"Brother? You mean Ou Ze?" Ning Qing was confused because he called Ou Ze "elder brother". One would think he'd share a more intimate relationship with someone whom he called "brother".

"No, I'm looking for Brother Shaoming."

Ning Qing: What?

...

Ning Qing was on her iPad in the back seat of the car. She realized that she wasn't a qualified wife. They were married for so long but she didn't know anything about her husband.

She typed "Guang Qing" in the search engine bar and tapped the search button.

But the iPad in her hand was taken away by Xiao Zhou, "Ning Qing, you worry me. Quick, tell me. What's your relationship with Young Master Lu? You are ridiculous! There are rumors spreading around the club and I am the last to know that you have a thing with Young Master Lu. You don't have to use the search engine on the internet, just ask me whatever you'd like to know."

Ning Qing saw that her iPad was confiscated so she had no choice but to ask, "I'd like to know who Lu Shaoming is?"

Xiao Zhou gawked in shock. She extended her finger and tapped on Ning Qing's head, "Ning Qing, are you a woman? Are you ignorant? Have you not heard of Lu Corporation?"

"Lu Corporation is involved in business, politics and also the military. They are the biggest tycoon internationally. They are also the hottest Emperor Group affiliate. Lu Shaoming is a ninth generation member of the Lu family, which is the most outstanding generation of the family yet. His first company, Guang Qing, had an IPO in Los Angeles when he was sixteen. He is known as a business genius."

“Not only is he a man of distinguished rank, but his personal life is also extremely clean. Many famous women and daughters of the rich and influential families have made moves on him, but he was never a part of any sex scandal. He is every woman’s most desired bachelor, the one and only.”

Ning Qing was shocked. She knew that he was rich but she never thought he would be that rich.

What should she do? She felt as though she had fallen into a pit of gold.

“Xiao Zhou, was he the one who invested in Street Walker?”

“Yes. Young Master Lu is the biggest investor in Street Walker. I also heard that Young Master Lu and Director Wang are very close friends.”

The mystery that Ning Qing pondered was suddenly clear. It was because of him!

It had always been him!

She had been wondering why luck had been in her favor lately. She starred in Street Walker and her life took a three-sixty change. It turned out that it was always he who helped her.

She thought and realized that he must have been helping her before they even got married. But why? She was only a stranger whom he met maybe once or twice.

Would it be that he fell in love at first sight, poured out his heart at the second, and determined to marry her at the third?

Ning Qing felt confused. She was such an ordinary person. Which part of her worth his love?

“Ning Qing, one more thing. Ou Family and Zhou Family have been friends for many generations. Young Master Lu and Ou Luo Xi are close brothers.”

Ning Qing had already guessed this.

The man did so much for her in silence. Things that could be done, things that couldn’t be done... He even carefully thought about the lead male role in her starring film.

“Ning Qing, I told you everything I know. Now, it’s your turn. Hurry up and be honest with me. What’s your relationship with Young Master Lu?”

Ning Qing calmed herself down and looked Xiao Zhou in her eyes when she replied, “He is my husband... We are married.”

After a minute, a shrill scream came from the back of the vehicle. “Oh, my God!”

...

By the next morning, the number of Ning Qing’s Weibo fans had increased from six billion to twenty billion. She became one of the top five hottest topics on Baidu.

There was a general theme regarding “Ning Qing’s innocence” in the entertainment circle. She rose from a fallen socialite to an aspiring goddess. No one dared to denounce her or put the false charge against her past.

At the same time, digital citizens were arguing. Although Xu Junxi forcefully shut down the videos about their engagement party by the afternoon, he couldn't stop the public outcry. Almost seventy percent of the netizens were declaring war against Li Meiling. They urged her to hold a press release to explain herself regarding how she had become involved in her best friend's marriage.

Li Meiling had yet to respond to the matter.

This aside, Lu Shaoming's appearance in the private club was like a dream. No news had been leaked to the public. Ning Qing knew that he approached everything in an efficient and orderly manner.

At the same time, Producer Ni vanished into thin air in a single night. He was chased out of T City.

Ning Qing knew that although he left, there was still plenty of resentment.

One more thing that was worth bringing up: Xia Xiaofu shared the Street Walker promo video and "liked" it twelve times. The friendship between the two Goddesses touched the digital citizens' hearts.

Ning Qing went through Xia Xiaofu's Weibo. Most of the people that she followed and followed her back were female celebrities that had zero scandals, just like her. She was popular in the industry and she had a great reputation.

Recalling Ou Ze from the night before, Ning Qing found it a pity. Although she could tell that Ou Ze was dying to give his heart to Xia Xiaofu, she felt that they weren't a good match.

Ou Ze said that he'd sleep over at Xia Xiaofu's that night. Ning Qing recalled that Xia Xiaofu was only twenty-two years old, a very young age. Wouldn't it be careless to cohabit before marriage?

Ning Qing suddenly blushed as the thought crossed her mind. How dare she think she badly about other people! She had yet to turn twenty-one but he wanted to do that so much!

His enchanting scent was still lingering on her lips and a handsome face popped up in her head. Ning Qing was burning in embarrassment.

The night before when they were in the changing room, she remembered clearly that he had asked her, with his mouth so close to her ear, "Is it small?"

... Not small.

Every part of his body was so eminent and strong, fueled by male hormones. He was just like a tiger after the hunt.

... Very charming.

She can't think about him. Every time she thought of him, she would quiver.

...

Ning Qing arrived at Red House and ran into Xia Xiaofu.

"Ning Qing!" Xia Xiaofu ran over with a smile. "Our crew is here to film a scene. I'm not in this scene but I recalled that you're here so I followed them here to see you."

"Xiaofu, you're the first who came to visit me at work. Thank you," Ning Qing was touched.

“Don’t mention it. We are best friends now. Best sisters.”

“Mm.”

“Xiaofu.” Director Wang walked over. “You have time to visit us today? We are starting soon. I’ll ask someone to bring you a chair later, you can watch.”

“Okay. Thank you, Director Wang.” Xia Xiaofu was wearing a pink dress, simple yet refined. When she smiled, she looked beautiful and charming.

Ning Qing bid farewell to Xia Xiaofu and went to read her script. Someone carried a rattan chair over and Xia Xiaofu’s assistant, Xiao Li, put a soft cushion on it before she sat down.

Then, there were a bunch of girls outside the filming studio chattering in excitement, “Wow, finally get to see Ou Luo Xi in army garb on the scene. Please remember to send me to the hospital if I faint later.”...

Hearing the shrill scream of the mob of girls, Xia Xiaofu looked toward the commotion. Ou Luo Xi was there.

Ou Luo Xi wore good looking army garments with a dark yellow belt. The firm army pants wrapped around his long legs.

The white collar of the undershirt wrapped around his smooth neck, juxtaposed with a well-pressed army collar. The originally smooth fringe on his forehead was pulled back with hair gel. His forehead and his long and slender eyebrows were exposed. Every single step he took in his black leather boots was sharp. He appeared extremely dignified.

“I’m fainting, I’m fainting...” one of the girls exclaimed.

“Sister Xiaofu, Ou Luo Xi looks really good in the army fatigues,” Her assistant, Xiao Li, couldn’t help but say excitedly.

Xia Xiaofu hadn’t realized that her eyes had been lingering on Ou Luo Xi for a long time until Xiao Li spoke. All the male celebrities she’s collaborated with were perfect looking men, but she had never really checked any of them out before.

She wondered why she was dumbfounded earlier.

Xia Xiaofu blushed.

Ou Luo Xi happened to walk over in his army boots. Maybe he realized that Xiao Li was talking about him earlier so Xia Xiaofu, noticing his sharp footsteps, suddenly slowed down.

Xia Xiaofu figured that he would look over. Her eyelashes that were like cattail leaf fan fanned and lowered. There was a tinge of anxiety and excitement on her fair beautiful face.

She was nervous and she didn’t dare to meet his eyes.

However, he didn’t bother looking at her. For twenty-two years in her life, the rate at which she’d receive a second glance was two hundred percent, and they’d normally take more than two.

The young man blatantly ignored her existence. Her arrogance and dignity caused her to wait in anticipation of his gaze.

She was looking forward to seeing the surprise in his eyes.

That was how she thought it'd go.

However, she could hear his footsteps as he passed her. Ou Luo Xi didn't look at her, but instead walked right by her.

Xia Xiaofu had never been treated so coldly. He obviously noticed that she was there as he slowed down but he didn't turn around. He had no manners!

You slow down but you don't look?!

Xia Xiaofu gripped her dress and humphed angrily. "Doesn't look nice at all!"

She puffed up her cheeks, pouted her cherry-like lips, and complained in a charmingly naive manner.

If it were to be an ordinary man who saw that, they would probably slap themselves twice for making her angry. However, it happened to be the young man who didn't understand feelings.

Ning Qing turned around and sighed. She lived up to her reputation as National Goddess. Her frown, her smile, her anger was filled with an aura of awe.

Ning Qing took another look at Our Luo Xi. The delicate looking young man was talking to Director Wang as usual. She found it weird. Theoretically, the two of them should be in-laws but it felt strange.

...

The scene was about the beginning of a war. The scene consisted of a bunch of Japanese invaders barging into a karaoke hall, which would then be followed by gunshots and massacre.

Director Wang shouted "action!" Then, Ning Qing held a mic on the stage and prepared to sing. Suddenly, bang! Someone kicked open the door and the Japanese barged in.

"Bang bang!" There were gunshots and everyone in the karaoke hall scattered and ran.

Going along with the script, Ning Qing quickly got off the stage and prepared to stop the fighting. However, Ning Qing heard a very clear gunshot and her pupils contracted as she looked forward.

There was a bullet flying towards her!

Chapter 79: What a Nice Term, Calling Me Sister

"Ah, Ning Qing!" Xia Xiaofu could see everything clearly from her angle. She stood up from a rattan chair and screamed, "There are real bullets inside!"

Ning Qing felt as if her feet were made of lead. Her black and white eyes were so focused on the rapidly approaching bullet that she forgot to respond.

The entire crew was shocked. These guns were fake. The sounds of gunshots were added and edited in post-production. No one had expected that there would be a real gun.

The bullet was flying at a speed of 856 meters per second.

Ning Qing was 10 meters away. It would only take a split second before the bullet hit her.

Time slowed as the studio became so quiet; a pin drop could be heard.

Hence, Xia Xiaofu saw that in that entire room, only a single man was moving. The figure in army green jumped directly onto the round table in front with a stretch of his long legs as he leapt forward.

There were too many extra actors in this chaotic scene. His black military boots stepped on the heads of those people so lightly, not a cry of pain could be heard. He closed in on Ning Qing so fast, throwing his military cap off his head like a cold blade and out of the sheath with one hand.

The weightless cap actually flew toward the bullet with a strong gust of wind.

And the teenager landed with his right knee on the ground, his left palm supporting himself, panting.

Ning Qing felt that her heart had stopped beating, the cap flying in mid-air was shot through by the bullet, but at the same time, the bullet was deflected and whizzed through the tip of her hair.

With a bang, the bullet passed through the wall.

She had escaped death.

“Ning Qing!” Xiao Zhou screamed and rushed forward to help Ning Qing, who was about to collapse.

The crew looked at Ou Luoxi, who was still half kneeling on the ground, in shock. He had a martial arts background and was fast enough to be invisible, and could deflect bullets with his bare hands.

However, at this time, Ou Luoxi’s blood vessels bulged at his neck, his handsome face that was as beautiful as a sculpture was tense. The young boy had evolved into a man. Under the light, his jawline was as sharp and firm as a carving. He didn’t have time to wipe the cold light from his gaze. He was simply too handsome like this.

“Some...somebody help, they’ve fainted.” This time, the little girls outside the studio had fainted.

“Sister Fu, are you alright?” Xiao Li bent down and asked Xia Xiaofu as she slumped down in the rattan chair behind her. She didn’t hear her clearly. She placed her little hand over her heart, which was thumping violently.

She glanced up and looked at the teenager secretly, and she heard the sound of flowers blooming.

“What happened? Who can explain to me why any of these guns would be loaded? The props team... What do you do for a living? Didn’t you check the guns carefully before filming? How could this accident happen?” Director Wang roared with a bad temper.

The team leader of the props team trembled as he came forward, full of fear. “Director Wang, I really did check the props. I don’t know where the bullet came from.”

Director Wang was about to continue shouting when Ning Qing came forward and said, “Director Wang, this is a life-threatening matter, the team leader would never play this joke, so I think that the team leader had nothing to do with this. But this matter was very strange. There are too many extra actors and actresses on the scene and it’s so hectic that it would be difficult to check for fingerprints on the gun. Our drama is about to wrap up and it’s not good to have negative news about us. I suggest containing the spread of this news then making a report to the police in secret and collecting evidence. Then we can catch the real perpetrator.”

The first thing to do when facing a problem was to analyze calmly. Director Wang gave Ning Qing an appraising look.

Director Wang looked at Ou Luoxi who was walking towards them and asked, “Luoxi, do you agree with Ning Qing’s method?”

Ou Luoxi was still expressionless as he nodded and said, “Yes.”

With the consent of the two parties, Director Wang ordered his men to take care of the matter.

...

After two more scenes had been filmed in the morning., Ning Qing and Xia Xiaofu had agreed to have lunch together, but Xiao Zhou brought an iPad that contained very bad news.

“Ning Qing, something has happened to your mother.”

Ning Qing’s heart clenched as she quickly took the iPad and looked at the latest news of the morning.

“Ning Qing, these are photographs secretly taken by reporters. This morning, Li Meiling went to the hospital to visit your mother. Your mother reached her hand and gave her a slap in the face. The internet is fighting over it furiously, no matter which side they stand on, Li Meiling had obviously succeeded in bringing your mother into the whirlpool of public opinion.”

Ning Qing looked through the photos, which showed Li Meiling in tears, acting pitiful in front of her mother, like a little daughter-in-law who had suffered a lot of abuse.

And Mom’s eyes were resolute; that slap had been full of anger and strength.

Ning Qing’s mouth curved in a sneer, Li Meiling had finally begun to fight back. In Xu Junxi’s words, what an actress!

But out of all the things that Li Meiling shouldn’t do. She shouldn’t have involved her mother. She’ll make her regret this!

“Ning Qing, I just heard that Li Meiling has announced to the public that she will hold a press conference at 4 p.m. this afternoon to formally explain and clarify all the rumors.”

4 p.m., looks like Li Meiling couldn't wait anymore.

Ning Qing took out her phone and called Xia Xiaofu. She explained that she could not go for lunch with her as something had come up. Xia Xiaofu expressed her understanding and said that they'd just meet next time.

After putting her phone away, Ning Qing walked forward. “Xiao Zhou, book me a ticket, I want to fly to T city.”

“Ning Qing, are we going to attend Li Meiling's press conference?”

“Of course. Didn't Li Meiling set the time at 4:00 p.m just so that I can go back and watch? Well then, I'll gladly go. I'd like to see how her clever tongue can confound right and wrong.

...

Ning Qing arrived in T city at 3:30 p.m.

Ning Qing took out her phone and found Lu Shaoming's number after she'd stepped out of the airport. He had told her to call him before taking any action.

“Hello.” A clear, rich, gentle, and pleasant voice sounded at the other end after the phone rang once.

“Hello, Shaoming,” Ning Qing roughly filled him in on what had happened in the hospital that morning, “So I'm going to attend Li Meiling's press conference now. I'm going to tear her apart.”

“Alright,” the man at the other end said softly, lowering his eyebrows as he spoke. “Are you ready?”

“Of course, I'm ready. I'm on the side of justice; evil will never suppress justice.” Ning Qing's autumn pupils sparkled with confidence and determination.

“Did you say Mom slapped Li Meiling?”

“Yes, Mom's character is very gentle. Li Meiling must have said something very ugly to agitate her, and then mom must have fallen into her trap and slapped her to then be photographed by reporters.”

The other end was silent for three seconds. He must be in a very quiet place. Every syllable he uttered was laced with the gentleness that he usually treated her with but was also strong enough to really hit her. “Mom's ward is guarded by bodyguards. Li Meiling can't get in, so Mom must have sent her bodyguards away and went to meet Li Meiling in private.”

Ning Qing had a feeling that there was more to his words. “Shaoming, what do you want to say?”

“What I want to say is that Li Meiling had specially gone to the hospital to see Mom before the press conference. Obviously, she wanted to involve your mother. Li Meiling set press conference at 4 o'clock, giving you enough time to fly back to T city to tear her up. Li Meiling thought that she had the winning ticket. Mother's behavior was a bit abnormal. If I'm not wrong, there is a secret between Mother and Li Meiling. This secret is Li Meiling's biggest trump card.

Ning Qing was stunned. She hadn't thought about that.

In her mind, Mom was always so gentle and virtuous. Everything was all Li Meiling's fault and mother had always been the innocent injured party.

She had never considered that her mother would have so-called secrets.

After only listening to her brief words in such a short time, the man at the other end had objectively and calmly analyzed the entire thing and had given the wisest and sharp guess.

That was how this man could make her admire and trust him.

"President Lu, it's almost time for you to give your speech..." A pleasant female voice suddenly sounded at the other end.

But the female voice stopped abruptly, she must've been waved away mid sentence.

Ning Qing felt guilty. "Shaoming, are you in a meeting? Sorry, I'm not calling at the right time. You go in. I'll call you again in the evening."

"Alright," said the man, laughing lazily and enticingly. "Didn't you want to be independent? Then go to the press conference. There will be many challenges in life, we must learn to face them. That's it, bye."

The man hung up.

Listening to the busy dial tone, Ning Qing bit her cherry red lips with her pearl white teeth. How could he just hang up like that?

To be fair, she was the one who had asked him to hang up.

He had said, "Didn't you want to be independent?" This was what she had told him when she flew to Shanghai to shoot for a drama half a month. At that time, he had promised her solemnly, but his tone was obviously laced with a slight hint of disapproval just now.

He was laughing at her!

How could he do that? Yes, she was as childish as a blank sheet of paper in front of him, but she was only 21 years old. He had to let her grow up slowly.

Ning Qing stomped her feet in embarrassment, but she could not stop the corners of her lips from curving up.

His words always carried the straightforward decisiveness that was clean cut, which was so attractive.

The key was that his light smile was so indulgent as if she were his little girl.

Whoops, this feeling of "Father" came again.

Sobs. This is so embarrassing.

...

Ning Qing went to the hospital to see her mother first.

There were bodyguards outside the door of the ward and professional nurses on duty inside. They hadn't seen each other for half a month. Dr. Luo had said that her mother was recovering well and could soon be discharged from the hospital.

During her absence, Lu Shaoming had given her mother the best care.

Yue Wanqing was leaning on the bed, deep in thought when Ning Qing pushed the door open. Yue Wanqing looked good, but she was frowning as if her heart was heavy.

"Mom." Ning Qing went in.

"Qingqing, you're back?" Yue Wanqing was delighted as she held her daughter's little hand.

Ning Qing sat on the bed and wrapped her arms around her mother's shoulder. "Mom, what did Li Meiling say to you today? Why did you slap her face?"

"She said a lot. She said that she'd started her affair with your father 20 years ago and said that I was silly for always regarding her as a good sister. It would have been alright if she had just talked about me. She also scolded you for being the same as me, treating Ning Yao as your sister, and finally losing your fiance. Qingqing, why didn't you tell Mom that you and Xu Junxi were engaged?"

"Mom." Ning Qing rested her head on her mother's shoulder, whispering to her, "The man who could act like that has no place in our family. I'm already married to Shaoming now; why mention that Xu Junxi."

Yue Wanqing was relieved to see that her daughter had really forgotten about the past. She nodded her head with relief. "Shaoming is really a good boy. He had spent almost every day this month chatting with me. I told him about your childhood. Every expression of his indicates to me that he likes you."

"Mom," Ning Qing replied, with a shy and sweet smile on her little face as if she had smeared honey on her heart. "Don't talk about everything with him. When I was a child, I didn't know anything. He'd laugh at me if you were to tell him something embarrassing about me."

"You have the heart of a petty girl. Shaoming was very happy and he always listens carefully. Don't think ill of him."

There it is. She hadn't been here for even half a month and her mother's heart had totally deviated towards her son-in-law.

However, the 30-year-old man's speech and manners were indeed gracious, and his elegance cultured manner, and cultivation from nobility were impeccably perfect. Men like him are impressive to her mother's generation.

Of course, a little girl like her likes it too.

But my mother didn't know that the man was so bad when he was with her.

He would bully her, hooking his rough big palms around her to restrict her from moving. His unfathomable eyes would look at her, very evil, sexy and charming, telling her his desires with his eyes.

She didn't know how to refuse him when he was like that at all.

Men of his status would also have times when he would try to suppress his panting, biting her, uncontrollably and spewing words that would make her blush...

Ning Qing blushed and forcibly threw the man off her mind. She asked her mother, "Mom, what else did Li Meiling say to you today?"

She did not know how to ask about the "secret" that Lu Shaoming had suggested.

"Yes, Li Meiling said that she would hold a press conference at 4 p.m. this afternoon. Qingqing, please take me there with you, I want to see what she has to say."

"Mom..." Ning Qing didn't want her mother to take part in this too much.

"Qingqing, Mom has the right to know about this matter. My 25-year marriage with your father and 22-year sisterhood with Li Meiling has made me a fool, but I want to live without being in the dark for once."

...

Ning Qing took Yue Wanqing to the press conference and opened the door. Reporters filled the room and both Li Meiling and Ning Yao were there.

Ning Qing glanced around and saw that Xu Junxi was absent.

Looking at Ning Yao's fiery eyes, Ning Qing knew that she must have suffered losses and grievances with the Xu family. Otherwise, how could Xu Junxi not come and support the mother-daughter pair on such an important occasion?

"Miss Ning, Aunt Ning, here you are. Please say a few words." Reporters flocked towards them upon seeing them.

But these reporters were blocked by bodyguards, keeping them at a meter's distance. To ensure her safety, Yue Wanqing sat in a wheelchair, Xiao Zhou pushed the wheelchair, and Ning Qing stood beside her mother.

"Sister," said Li Meiling, with tears of joy and guilt on her face as she walked over. "Sister, you are finally willing to listen to my explanation."

Hmph. Explanation?

Ning Qing wanted to speak.

But her slender arm was pulled by Yue Wanqing. Yue Wanqing laughed desolately as she said. "What a nice term, calling me sister. I'm here today to let everyone witness our sisterly love."

"Women who sang operas in the 1990s were also the lowest-ranking women in society at that time..."

Chapter 80: A Battle of Words On Press Release (Unmasking Li Meiling For The First Time)

“A woman singing for the Chinese opera in the nineties was the lowest class in the society. When I knew you, you were just singing as a clown. You would fight with the others just for a meal ticket. Your biggest dream was just to have enough to eat and wear.”

“I like to hear you sing and you are such a sweet talker. You always referred to me as your sister, always told me how much your dad loves gambling and how he abuses you. He sold you off in the end. I pitied you and formally took you as my sister.”

“From then on, I’d give you five dollars every week. In the nineties, five dollars was enough for an ordinary person’s monthly expenses. You ask yourself, have you ever worried about food and clothes, have you ever been bullied after I took you in?”

“I improved your material life then you beat around the bush and told me many men harassed you and wanted to take advantage of you. Without hesitation, I immediately told another good friend of mine to propel you to the main role. You have your skill and you are willing to work hard. You then gained fame within a year’s time.”

“Later on, you liked to come over to my place. You would tell me in admiration that you have never seen such a beautiful house. Hence, I introduced you to my husband.”

“I’d never suspected you and my husband. Sometimes, you had to attend a social party till late at night and you couldn’t find a ride. You were afraid to go home on your own. I even sent my husband to take you home. Before I knew it, he took you home for twenty years.”

“For twenty-two years we’ve called each other ‘sister’. When you were pregnant with Yaoyao, no one was sure of the paternity. I had just given birth to Qingqing and I was in my confinement period. You couldn’t expose your pregnancy as you were a celebrity. For ten months, I let my husband take care of you. You gave birth to Yaoyao and I treated her as my own while Qingqing treated Yaoyao as her sister too. But, how did you treat us?”

“Li Meiling, God is watching your every movement. Every time I think of the filthy things that you’ve done to me these past twenty years... Then you sent your daughter to threaten me! I feel extremely stupid. I’ve lived in vain for the past forty years. We played the Farmer and the Viper!”

Yue Wanqing shed tears as she got worked up. Recalling the past: she hated Ning Zhenguo’s heartlessness, she hated Li Meiling’s betrayal, but she hated her stupidity the most.

She didn’t know how she could be that stupid. You make the bed that you lie in. She hated herself so much. How could she let herself live in such a miserable life?

She was tortured by illness for the past three years and she had always wanted to kill herself. If it wasn’t for Qingqing, she wouldn’t have wanted to live.

The reporters at the scene were silent. Everyone pitied Yue Wanqing.

Her best friend got involved with her husband and it was hidden from her for twenty years. She took the mistress's daughter as her own. Then, in the end, the mistress cast her aside and took her place. If even one of those things had happened to any woman, they'd be heartbroken.

Ning Qing stared at Li Meiling as her mom spoke.

There was no guilt in Li Meiling eyes. After all these years, when Li Meiling heard all of this, she only bore a look of jealousy.

She wondered why she should live such a miserable life while the others could marry into a rich and influential family. They were all women after all.

She wouldn't live off of charity for her entire life. She wanted to be someone of high status.

"Sister." Although everyone at the scene was leaning towards Yue Wanqing, Li Meiling said with tears welled up in her eyes, "Sister, I've always remembered how well you treated me. I was poor since youth and I accepted your help and charity. I can't refute..."

"Heh, what do you want to refute?" Ning Qing cut her off with a smile. "Aunt Li, there are so many reporters on the scene. We will give you time to refute. Enlighten me. Twenty years ago, did you not accept my mom's money? Or did my mom not spend money to help you gain fame? Or you're trying to say you didn't have anything to do with my dad?"

If Li Meiling wanted to crack jokes and play a fool in front of Ning Qing, she'd better bring her A-game.

Li Meiling was at a disadvantage. She originally wanted to take advantage of the common abhorrence of the rich, but she never thought that Ning Qing would be so outspoken and counter her like this.

"Aunt Li, as you couldn't refute, then explain why my mom treated you so well but you refused to allow me entry into the Ning family house after you became Mrs. Ning? When you were poor, my mom gave you five dollars every week but when my mom needed money for a liver transplant, you didn't even want to give us anything?"

The reporters started talking amongst themselves. The way they looked at Li Meiling soured by the second.

Li Meiling was calm as she looked towards Yue Wanqing. "Sister, do you remember why Zhenguo insisted on a divorce?"

"I didn't! I didn't push mom off the stairs!" Yue Wanqing said.

One stone stirs up a thousand waves. The reporters were shocked and the way they looked at Yue Wanqing soured as well.

Ning Qing was stunned. She looked down at her mom. She knew about her grandma's fall down the stairs but she didn't know it was her mom who pushed her.

"Sister, there were witnesses and material evidence back then. Two of the maidservants saw that you were fighting with mom and you pushed her off the stairs. A sixty-five year old lady was pushed off the stairs by you and became forever enfeebled. Zhenguo was filial and determined to divorce you because of what happened."

“Mom hasn’t been in stable condition for the past few years and she would be agitated if she saw you and Qingqing. We couldn’t let Qingqing in. Zhenguo forbids me to contact the two of you. All these years, I’ve been serving Mom at home without taking a step away. I didn’t have a chance to help you.”

Ning Qing smirked in disdain. Lies, these were lies!

Mom and grandma had a good relationship, just like mother and daughter. Mom would never push grandma off the stairs.

Without her knowing, her mom was greatly wronged.

No one told her.

“Aunt Ning, may I ask if you really pushed Old Mrs. Ning off the stairs? She’s a sixty-five year old lady. What is the reason behind such cruelty?” A reporter asked.

“I...” Yue Wanqing shook her head and wanted to explain.

Ning Qing took one step forward and placed herself in front of her mother. She said to the reporter calmly, “My mom would never push my grandma off the stairs. We will file a police report. If there were to be anyone here who said it was my mom who pushed my grandma, I’d definitely invite you to the court. Please take responsibility for your words and actions.”

Ning Qing’s speech issued a warning and the reporter quickly retrieved their mic and stopped asking about it.

Li Meiling was pissed off. She originally thought that she could condemn Yue Wanqing’s morality before the public. However, Ning Qing didn’t panic but held fast. She wasn’t an easy target.

Ning Qing slowly turned around and looked at Li Meiling. She smiled. “Aunt Li, you talked about the reason why my parents divorced, you talked about Grandma rolling down the stairs. Stop beating around the bush. Why not talk about how you married my dad instead?”

“Qingqing, back then, your grandma rolled down the stairs; a sixty-five-year old lady suddenly lost her ability to take care of herself and she hit and bit everyone like a crazy person. Your grandma needed someone to take care of her. Your dad was upset and he wouldn’t even enter the office. He had been drinking his sorrow away while the Ning family was in shambles. It was in need of female leadership.”

Li Meiling made it sound logical and reasonable. The reporter nodded. “Teacher Li, sending charcoal in snowy weather is the toughest. True feelings are revealed in times of crisis. You’re so generous.”

Li Meiling revealed a humble smile. “I’m only...”

“Humph,” Ning Qing cut her off.

Li Meiling suddenly looked upset.

Ning Qing slowly walked before the reporter who complimented Li Meiling. With a sharp gaze and a voice loud and clear, she asked, “What do you mean by sending charcoal in snowy weather? My mother sent her charcoal in snowy weather for twenty years. In the end, my mom was chased out of the house. Who should she be sending charcoal to in snowy weather?”

“Their sisterhood had gone on for twenty-two years, yet she believed in the maidservant’s one-sided statement instead of my Mom. Why couldn’t she send charcoal to my mom in snowy weather, but she could send it to my mother’s man? There were cracks in the relationship between my mom and her man. Why didn’t she help to mediate and instead immediately marry him? Grandma needed someone to take care of her. Did Ning Family has no maid at home? My dad drank his sorrows away, did it also mean that he misbehaved?”

“She took advantage of her best friend’s divorce to quickly step foot in the other’s marriage. Was she after my dad’s heart or his money? At what point in those twenty years did she set her eyes on him? Had she been waiting for this opportunity? Nodding in approval for such a shameful action; I think you’ve lost your mind!”

“Yeah!” Xiao Zhou’s quickly clapped at Ning Qing’s speech, “The persistence of this lie is due to the people of the same low level being willing to believe it.”

The reporter’s face grew pale then blushed in embarrassment. He was extremely embarrassed by Ning Qing’s rebuke.

The other reporters understood and quickly asked, “Teacher Li, it seems that you did have mixed motives back then. May I ask, when did you start your relationship with Ning Zhengguo?”

“Teacher Li, please return to the main focus of the press release. Is Miss Ning Yao Ning Zhengguo’s daughter?” ...

If Ning Yao was, there was no explanation required. Li Meiling was the third person in their marriage.

Ning Yao saw that Ning Qing had seized control of the entire press release and she was bottling up her anger. However, the question made Ning Yao’s eyes beam. Humph, Ning Qing, you’re too naive!

“Sister...” Li Meiling’s tears were flowing down her cheeks. She became upset and choked on her words. “Do you remember what happened at Yan Nan Road twenty years ago?”

Yan Nan Road?

It was Ning Qing’s first time hearing of it.

She noticed that her mom’s body stiffened. She looked down and her mother’s face grew pale. The way she looked at Li Meiling was filled with guilt.

Ning Qing’s heart dropped. It seemed that Lu Shaoming was right. Her mom did have a secret.

“Teacher Li, what happened at Yan Nan Road twenty years ago? Can you please make it clear?”

Li Meiling shivered all over, “Twenty years ago, there was this night... My sister and I were walking down Yan Nan Road. Then, a bunch of gangsters suddenly appeared and they wanted to rape us. Back then, I wanted to let my sister run away so I grabbed the ring leader and promised that I’d... I’d serve them properly. They promised to let my sister go but I...”

“Wow...” It stirred a great commotion.

This was absurd. Unbelievable.

Li Meiling would save my mom at the risk of her own? If the sun rises up from the West!

“Aunt Ning, is what Teacher Li said true? Twenty years ago, did she really sacrifice herself to save you?”
The reporter asked.

Yue Wanqing’s tears were flowing down her cheeks too. “What she said was true... There were five to six men that night. They were holding knives in their hands; they wanted to sexually assault me. Later on, Li Meiling held them back... I did not even have the strength to truss up a chicken. I couldn’t save Meiling so I ran. I ran as I shouted for help. But, but I got lost on the way...”

“I am sorry to Meiling. I owed her for the rest of my life... Actually, when I thought about it later, I realized that I was too weak. If I were brave enough, I’d have stayed back and taken it alongside Meiling...”

Ning Qing heard and creased her eyebrows. She didn’t believe it, but she didn’t have any evidence. Hence, she could only listen to what Li Meiling had to say.

Her mom was too kind. She talked about her “weakness” courageously. But what her mom didn’t know that it was a press release and what she said helped Li Meiling.

“Sister, my status was low and degrading back then but I wouldn’t accept the latent rule and work really hard. I did that just to safeguard my innocence. I wasn’t duty-bound but I didn’t turn back in order to save you yet I didn’t complain nor regret. You didn’t owe me. You compensated me with material and assistance after that... But you shouldn’t have suspected our sisterhood.”

Ning Qing then realized Li Meiling’s power. The word “compensation” flipped her mom’s kindness towards her over the years.

Even the complaints that her mom held against her bore little weight as this came to light.

“Sister, I’ve been real to you for the past twenty years, Zhenguo and I were innocent but I was very disappointed when you pushed mom off the stairs. I was moved by Zhenguo as he grew distressed. He was such a great man. Why didn’t you appreciate him? Why did you ruin his home?”

“Sister, I had to raise my daughter alone. Zhenguo didn’t forsake me for it. He didn’t care I was once... He treated Yaoyao like his own. Zhenguo and I were both pitiful people who were hurt deeply. We got together to simply go through the rest of our lives in peace.”

Then, Li Meiling suddenly ran over and knelt before Yue Wanqing. She cried, “Sister, please stop. I’m the mistress, okay? Stop hurting Zhenguo and stop hurting my daughter.”

Ning Qing’s eyes were bloodshot. It turned out to be a really flamboyant and pleasant sounding speech. Li Meiling was so good at standing facts on their head.

Li Meiling gripped her mom’s hand. Ning Qing saw that her mom’s wrist turned red and she lowered her body to grab Li Meiling’s hand, “Aunt Li, this is being recorded. Thinking twice before you speak. Is Ning Yao really those gangster’s daughter?”

Ning Yao suddenly ran over and pushed Ning Qing. She then took Li Meiling in her embrace, “Sister, stop forcing my mom. My mom did enough for your mom. I am my dad’s daughter. I will forever be Ning Zhenguo’s daughter.”

“Yaoyao, I’m so sorry. I made you suffer so much humiliation...” Li Meiling hugged Ning Yao and cried. The whole scene was extremely bitter.