

Chapter 361 - Prove Her Worth

"Stop faking it." Xiehan was annoyed. Was this girl trying to make him carry her to the hospital so she would take pictures and send them to Lanni, creating a misunderstanding between them? What an outdated trick.

As a human being, part of him strongly wanted to believe that she had really fainted but he couldn't help recalling what had happened the last time he helped "a woman in trouble".

He was about to turn and leave when he felt a strong reluctance in his heart. Could she have injured her head from the impact of the fall? What if her life was in danger?

Pinching his nose bridge, he took out his phone and called Lin Jian. "Where are you?"

"Lin Media Group." The latter responded immediately. "What's up, did you miss me too much already?"

"Just shut up." Xiehan really wanted to ask what he had done wrong to deserve a friend like him. He never stopped joking! "Get to Flowery Ile Hotel right away. Your woman's life may be in danger."

"Who? Ruby?! I'll be there right away!" Lin Jian caught on immediately, and Xiehan heard him bark a few orders before hanging up.

He must be rushing over, so Xiehan felt more relaxed and sent the VIP room number over. This way, he could be sure that no trouble would arise, and at the same time, Ruby would be safe if she was not pretending. But, why did he still feel uneasy?

He stalked to his car and got in. As the chauffeur drove off, his phone rang. His eyes darkened when he saw the caller identity. That mischievous girl!

"May I know what you meant by doing this?" He tried to control his temper, or else he would get Xiaoshi's location and slap the hell out of her.

"C-cousin..." Came the timid voice.

"I'm sure you are aware that I have a girlfriend, right?" His voice sounded threatening.

"I thought she might really be in trouble. But later, I wondered what would happen if she had tricked me, so I called to check on you." Xiaoshi explained guiltily. "I'm glad you are alright."

"Don't try such madness again." Since she already knew her mistake, Xiehan did not dwell on it too much.

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He had just arrived at Feng Ji International when Lin Jian called him.

"How did you know that Ruby had fainted?" He went straight to the point.

Xiehan frowne, placing his phone on his desk and reaching for a file. He didn't want to bring that matter up. "It doesn't matter. How is she?"

Lin Jian let out an audible sigh. "Her condition isn't looking great. I just contacted her father."

Xiehan was surprised. She wasn't faking it? Luckily he had not chosen to ignore her completely. Or else, perhaps could not have been saved. For some strange reason, his heart was unsettled. He couldn't help wondering what exactly she wanted to tell him. Perhaps it was not what he thought?

Thinking about it, he sent a text message to Lanni.

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Tian Yu Media.

Lanni had finally gotten the hang of doing things. After busying herself about all morning, she went to the CEO's office to report her progress in the last few days.

"Very good." The man nodded in approval when he heard all about her progress. "Mr. Ming has a good eye."

Lanni couldn't stop a smile from surfacing. "Thank you." To gain the approval of the CEO in such a short time proved that she really was more capable than she thought.

"I'm not saying this so you slack off." CEO Qian emphasized. "Mr. Ming was so good at his job that I kept insisting that there couldn't possibly be anyone good enough to take his place. However, from my observation these few days, I have high expectations for you. Do not disappoint me."

"I will work hard." Lanni promised, then left the CEO's office.

As she got back to her own office, she realized that everyone was giving her a curious look. Some would run away as soon as they saw her, and a few groups would disperse as soon as she approached. It was no doubt that there must be some topic going on around her... again.

"What's going on?" She asked a random journalist when she submitted her article a few minutes later.

The girl looked nervous. "Chief Editor, Han Lili has been going around saying that you seduced the CEO and that is how you managed to steal her position from her." When she heard Lanni let out a laugh, she shook her hands as she trembled. "I... I didn't say it! It was Han Lili."

Lanni rolled her pen. So it was this rumor, just more twisted to appear a little more dramatic. She scoffed. "What do you think? Does it make any sense?"

"What?" The girl was confused.

"Nothing." Lanni smiled. She knew that she had the authority to fire anyone below her in the company. However, that would be no fun. She had a way to make sure Han Lili didn't have the strength to ever act b*tchy around her boss again. For now, she could only watch whatever was going on around her with a scoff.

Her phone vibrated with an incoming text message. Judging from the jovial smile on her face, it was obvious who the text message was from.

[Xiehan: Are you free after work? I would like you to accompany me somewhere.]

She smiled before replying, [Bribe me and I will go.]

Soon his reply arrived. He had sent a kissing emoticon and asked whether it was enough. She laughed. How silly... [Obviously, it's not! That's not how you bribe your girlfriend.] She attached a pouty gif.

She only needed to wait for a few seconds before his reply came in. [How about we go first? Then I will 'bribe' you in my bed all night.]

"That pervert." Her cheeks flushed scarlet. No matter how much time passed, he was still a pervert through and through. But then again, she had asked for it so she could only send over an [Okay] with a :Yay: emoji. Actually, she looked forward to that 'bribe'...

Moonlight Studios.

After being shown around and learning about the company's new projects in her departments, Xiaoshi was informed that she would undergo a probation period of three months.

During this period, she had to prove her worth. Once the three months were over, her work would be assessed and she would be assigned to a group depending on her talents, or dismissed if it was found that her presence couldn't bring any worth to the company. However, there was also a rule that if an employee did something outstanding while in their probation period, they could directly become a permanent employee.

Although Xiaoshi had fought with Luna recently, she didn't decide to slack off and get dismissed as anyone would expect. On the contrary, she still admired Luna's capability and still had the desire to work under a boss like her.

Hence, she decided that she would make sure to stand out as soon as possible.

Once she had the time, she carefully studied one of the projects she thought she could be of help doing. It was the new application being developed by Luna, which was an otome game that would use Cheng Yu's most popular comic as its story.

Xiaoshi thought it was an excellent idea, considering the millions of readers who loved the comic and wished they would have more interactions with the main leads. It was certain that the game would have uncountable players as soon as it was launched. As expected of Luna.

To get more insight, she read the comic even though she had already read it, trying to understand it more from a commercial point of view.

The more she read, the more a certain idea etched itself in her mind. When she was done, she decided to pluck her courage and suggest it to Luna.

When she reached the door of the CEO's office, she was about to knock when her hand hung mid air. All her confidence faded. What if her idea was silly? Perhaps it was because she wanted to prove her worth

that everything she thought of was excellent in her own mind. How embarrassing it would be if Luna scoffed at it or laughed...

"Xiaoshi?" She was still battling mentally when the door opened and Luna appeared.

Since it had come to this, Xiaoshi could only bite the bullet. "Boss, I had a tiny suggestion about the game "Demon Below Me."

"Let's hear it." Luna went back to her office and welcomed Xiaoshi, then listened to what the latter had to say.

Xiaoshi let out a sigh and explained, "I realized that the comic that will be used as the game's story is all about demons, but the more I read it, the more I found it opposite to another comic by Author Cedric, which is all about gods. It's the kind of opposite that would look perfect together so... how about we merge it into a game of demons and gods, and use both comics as the theme?"

Chapter 362 - Working Together

Luna checked out Cedric's comic on the spot.

"I have to admit that it's indeed a good idea." She said joyously as soon as she pictured them in the same game.

"It is?" Xiaoshi was surprised, especially since she was afraid that her idea was too lowly for Luna to approve.

"Indeed. Why don't you write the whole proposal? You can give it to me later and I will show it to Cedric and Cheng Yu. If the turn out is better than we had estimated for the original version, you will directly qualify as a permanent employee."

"Thank you, Luna." It was almost unbelievable. She had gained so much approval on her first try? In the next second, her expression turned sad.

As though reading her mind, Luna laughed. "Are you worried that I'm going easy on you because we knew each other before I scouted you?"

"Uh-huh..." Xiaoshi nodded shyly.

Luna was amused. "Don't worry. I am a business-minded person. Of course, I will not risk ruining my company's projects for the sake of friends. Even if it is Lanni, she will have to work hard and earn it."

Hearing that, Xiaoshi felt reassured. She would only feel reassured if she got the things she deserved by working hard, not by having people be lenient on her.

A knock resounded on the door and Cheng Yu came in with a notebook and a stylus in her hands. She glanced at Xiaoshi and when the latter left, she walked to Luna's desk.

"Luna, I completed the initial drafts."

Luna took the notebook from her hand and scrolled through the drafts. She nodded in satisfaction. "However, you may not be able to use them as they are."

"Is there anything I should change?" Cheng Yu looked over.

"Not the drafts... the story." She went ahead to explain Xiaoshi's proposal. "So, you and Cedric will work together on this. You can bring over the final drafts once you are done."

"Are you kidding me?" Cheng Yu was stumped. She had to work together with that stubborn-as-hell man? Sadly, even she couldn't deny the fact that merging both books would bring about a much better effect than if it was just one of them.

Luna burst into laughter when she saw her friend's defeated expression. "Are you unwilling to work with Cedric? Scared that you will fall head over heels in love with him, huh? Or could it be that you are already in love with him and are scared that your feelings will be revealed if the two of you work together?"

Cheng Yu grabbed a piece of strawberry from the colorful fruit salad that Luna was munching on while working, and shoved it into the latter's mouth. "Keep your mouth full. Is there any CEO who plays around as much as you do?"

She had just finished her statement when she recalled that there indeed was one. "Lin Jian is a special case."

Luna laughed. "Why don't you get to work then, Author Yu?"

Cheng Yu rolled her eyes and decided to bite the bullet. It was for the sake of the company after all.

In the end, Cedric and Cheng Yu sat opposite each other in the latter's office. While Cheng Yu tried her best to finish up as fast as possible so they could forget about this, Cedric did the opposite—he was trying his best to drag it out as much as possible so he would get to spend more time with Cheng Yu.

At first, Cheng Yu didn't mind. But after hours with no noticeable progress, she couldn't take it anymore. "You are doing it on purpose, aren't you?"

"Yes." The idiot didn't even bother to deny it.

She sucked in a breath. Could she slap him to death? Because heaven knew just how tempted she was to do that.

Seeing how riled up she was, he leaned over the desk. "Are you alright? You look distressed."

Cheng Yu rolled her eyes. "You are right here in front of me. How can I not look distressed?! I'm so worked up that my head could explode, okay!"

"Yu, how can you say that? You even yelled at me, my heart is broken." He recoiled and clutched his chest pitifully.

"Then why aren't you dead yet?" She sighed, wishing she could send him to heaven with a kick.

Cedric knew that acting pitiful wouldn't work on her this time. He had used the pitiful trick too many times. Hence, he changed his tactics a little. "What do you say we grab a snack? I'm so hungry..."

Cheng Yu was about to deny it when her stomach rumbled. She had forgotten all about food when she got busy. Hence, her series of scolding turned into one word, "Okay."

Cedric was overjoyed. She said yes!

Happily gathering their equipment and keeping it away safely, he led her out of the office. The employees cafeteria had been opened recently and all the food served there was delicious, so he suggested going over.

All Cheng Yu wanted was to eat so she nodded to whatever he said.

In just a few seconds, she started hearing chatter around them.

"Isn't that Cedric? He really managed to get Miss Cheng to go out with him?" A female agent gossiped aloud.

"Hush! Do you want to die? I heard she is the mysterious co-founder of Moonlight studios." A short-haired girl jabbed her, even though she wasn't whispering herself. She looked at the duo and added, "Though I have to admit that they look together."

"Yeah... but it's such a pity that she is technically his boss. Do you think she can say yes to him?" The first girl sighed like it was pitiful outcome.

The short haired girl looked surprised. "But, he is Cedric Han. He is a young master from a wealthy family so although she is his boss, he can still deserve her based on his family background."

Cheng Yu's gaze darkened as she glared at the man beside her. What a magnet of gossip. He was no different from the playboy, Lin Jian.

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Speaking of Lin Jian, the man was currently sitting on needles on a bench in Hillside Hospital.

"Why hasn't Ruby woken up yet? What happened to her? Why did she faint?" He had mumbled these, and many other questions on repeat for so long that he couldn't keep track.

When he thought he could pass out from anxiety, he heard footsteps heading towards him and was surprised to see Xiehan and Lanni.

"Xiehan! You are here." He dashed to his friend's side like he had seen a saviour.

"Behave yourself." Xiehan blocked the other before he could hug him. Was this man an idiot?

"You are so mean!" Lin Jian lamented then remembered why he was distressed. "Ruby hasn't woken up yet. Do you know why she fainted?"

"I don't know." Xiehan explained what had happened.

Lanni let go of his hand. "From what you said earlier, she had Xiaoshi trick you into meeting her, and as soon as you realized that it was her, you turned to leave but then she fainted while trying to chase after you?"

"Yes." Xiehan looked at her nervously. Was there anyone who would believe such a twisted plot? She would trust him, right?

Lanni studied his face, making him feel like he was standing on pins.

However, she wasn't even focusing on him but on her inner thoughts. "Mmh... something is fishy about all this."

Xiehan felt his soul leave his body. "Honey, I promise. This is what really happened."

Lanni was confused for a moment then slapped her forehead when she understood his train of thought. "Something is fishy about her, not you."

"Oh..." He let out a sigh of relief and pulled her into a hug.

Lin Jian was speechless. He thought they had come to comfort him but they were comforting each other instead?

A doctor left Ruby's ward, coming to his rescue. "Are you the patient's close family?"

"We are... her friends." Lin Jian answered truthfully, despite being tempted to claim to be her family.

The doctor looked troubled as he took off his mask. "Can you contact her family?"

"We can... but her dad is overseas on a business trip. Is it... something too serious?" Lin Jian's heart raced. Why did the doctor sound so solemn?

"Why don't we talk in the office?" He led the way, and the trio followed him.

It was understandable for Lin Jian to be anxious since he liked her, but Xiehan didn't know why he was feeling the same way.

He was, in fact, so tensed up that his hands were trembling. It was a feeling he couldn't comprehend no matter how he tried.

Lanni noticed the fear in his eyes and held his hand, squeezing it comfortingly. Perhaps he was scared that he would be blamed for what happened to Ruby, she thought.

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Sitting in the doctor's office, the man went ahead to explain a series of medical mumbo jumbo that they could barely understand.

In the end, he dropped the bombshell.. "Ruby has been diagnosed with Leukemia."

Chapter 363 - Is She Faking It?

"What?" Lin Jian felt all the strength leave his body while Xiehan stared at the doctor blankly.

"We can prescribe her medicine to slow down the symptoms, but the ultimate cure is a bone marrow transplant. Which is why we would like you to contact her family." He explained. "Although it is not impossible to have a compatible donor with whom the patient does not share a blood relationship, the probability is higher with biological relatives."

"Then I will contact Mr. Chan right away." Lin Jian wiped the tear he didn't know had dropped from his eye.

"Please do it as fast as you can." The doctor dismissed them.

The three of them left the office and tried to contact Ruby's father. Alas, his phone had been turned off.

"I will go and see her. Perhaps she can tell us about her mum and then we will try to contact her." Lanni suggested, suddenly realizing that Ruby had never talked about her mother.

Xiehan nodded. "I will contact Mr. Chan's assistant.

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Lanni walked towards the doctor's office, to ask whether Ruby was awake and if she could see her. She was about to knock on the door when she realized that it was slightly opened. She heard the doctor talk to someone on the phone and laugh joyously. She didn't mean to eavesdrop on other people's conversations but curiosity got the better of her.

She didn't hear much but what she caught was shocking. "The job is done".

She frowned when she heard the doctor say the words to the other party. What job? Why did he seem so sneaky, and who was he talking to?

Although she knew that it might not have anything to do with whatever she was thinking, she couldn't help feeling unsettled. After all, she, Lin Jian and Xiehan were the last people to exit the doctor's office.

She turned and went back to where the men were waiting for her.

"Did she tell you?" Xiehan asked as he pulled his phone back from his ear.

Lanni shook her head. "Actually, I found out something troublesome."

"What happened?" Lin Jian joined in worriedly.

Lanni nervously explained what she had heard. "What if Ruby is faking it and she isn't really sick?"

Lin Jian furrowed his brows at her. "Are you being serious right now?"

"It's just a suspicion. The doctor was indeed acting sneaky and many things just don't add up. What if..."

"I didn't know you are such a heartless woman." Lin Jian scoffed in disbelief. "Ruby is in this condition yet you still have the heart to suspect her of faking it??!"

"I said..."

"Don't say it. I'm so disappointed. Is it because she once had her eyes on your boyfriend that you want us to stop focusing on how to get her treated, so she can die?"

"Jian, enough." Xiehan felt a headache coming on. He knew that while Lin Jian was currently so madly in love with Ruby that he would never suspect her, Lanni would not trust her. He rubbed his temples.
"While we try to contact her family..."

"Don't say anything about having another test. I know Ruby would never fake such a thing." Lin Jian interrupted.

Xiehan realized that beside him, Lanni was on the verge of exploding from anger. He held her hand.
"Let's go. Lin Jian can look after her and we can help him contact her family later."

Lanni's apartment.

Although Xiehan had told her that she was thinking too much, Lanni couldn't stop herself from wanting to get to the bottom of it. If the doctor was really talking about another task, it would be for the best. But if he was doing anything sneaky regarding Ruby's ailment, she would not spare him.

"Have some fruit." Xiehan brought a plate of colorful fruits to the balcony and sat opposite her.

She thanked him and stabbed a piece using a fork, then looked at him. "Xiehan, do you also think I'm unreasonable?"

He shook his head immediately. "No, my love." He sighed. "Well, sometimes you are a little too paranoid but it's understandable. You have been betrayed so many times that you just cannot trust anyone."

"Forget about paranoia." She sighed. "I still can't figure out what Ruby could ever gain from faking Leukemia. I mean, she doesn't have any siblings so the only person who can transplant their bone marrow to her is her dad.

The only thing I can think of is that she wants to act pitiful and gain someone's attention."

Although she had stated clearly that she didn't have feelings for Xiehan and that she had been misunderstood, Lanni couldn't completely rule out the possibility that she was trying to gain Xiehan's pity.

After all, who would trust a girl who said one thing and did the opposite just a few moments later? Because she convinced Xiaoshi to help her trick Xiehan into meeting her, Lanni could no longer trust her.

She gazed at her boyfriend seriously. "Don't get fooled by her, okay?"

"I won't." Xiehan chuckled, and he meant it. "What are you planning to do now, investigate her?"

"Yes... I would have let Luna help me do that since she can get information much faster than I can. However, Xingyu will chew me out if I bother her..." She looked troubled.

"Leave it to me." He said naturally.

She shook her head instantly. "Feng Ji International is so busy lately. Besides, it's just a small matter, I can handle it on my own albeit slowly."

"But you already have a matter to settle at work." He was worried that she would be too tired.

Lanni chuckled at his words. "Han Lili? That's nothing. I can deal with her and still have time to conduct my investigation."

Since she was so confident, he could only leave it to her. He fed her a pineapple piece. "If anything happens and you need my help, you should tell me right away, okay?"

"Yes, sir." She jokingly made a salute sign.

Meanwhile, in Moonlight Studios.

After having lunch, Cedric was more serious about their task. Since they were working together, they managed to complete the initial drafts before it was time to knock out.

Cheng Yu was relieved. She had thought that she would have to work overtime because of a certain naughty person despite being so tired that she could pass out. To her surprise, it turned out that the naughty person could also get serious sometimes, and when he did, he was so effective at work that she was motivated to go at his pace as well.

As soon as they submitted the drafts, she practically dashed into the elevator as though she was fleeing. Well, to be exact, she was indeed fleeing. She was running away before a certain naughty person could catch up to her and make her life difficult.

Alas, she was in for a surprising turn. When she got to the exit of the building, she was shocked to see the person she was running away from, and he was waiting for her.

She lips twitched. He must have guessed that she was going to run away from him so he dashed to the exit first, and decided to wait for her there since she would have to leave the building no matter what. Smart move.

"Yu, I enjoyed having lunch with you today. Would you like to join me for dinner at my home later? I will pick you up."

"Of course not!" She was in disbelief. Was he being serious? His home?!

He held his chin in contemplation. Why did she sound like there was something wrong with having dinner at his home? Thinking about it, there indeed was something wrong. Since he had never brought any girl home, his parents might think that she was his girlfriend and that he was taking her over to introduce her.

Of course, he didn't mind that kind of misunderstanding. If anything, it was the only misunderstanding he could ever hope for. However, he knew that Cheng Yu wouldn't like it. "Alright, we cannot go to my home. What about your place?"

When he saw her frown, he pulled on a pitiful expression. "Yu, I promise to be good. I will cook delicious food and wash the dishes."

Cheng Yu was helpless. Before she could say no, her phone pinged with a text message from Luna.

[I will stay at Xingyu's tonight. Have fun! <3]

There was nothing new about that. Luna had been staying over with Xingyu so often that she may as well move in with him. She was wondering whether to order takeout for dinner when she remembered that she was not on her own.

Cedric was still right there, looking at her with a pitiful gaze. "Yu..."

She felt helpless. "Fine. After dinner, you will be on your way. Don't even think you can whine your way into staying over."

"Of course not!" He had not thought about it. But now that she mentioned it, he wondered whether he could give it a try....

Chapter 364 - Nightmare

Goldenwing Apartments.

Cheng Yu kicked off her high heeled shoes when she arrived home after a tiring day, not giving any thought to the young man who had followed her home. She went to the kitchen and poured herself a glass of water, then slumped into the couch to take some rest.

"Are you very tired, would you like a massage?" The ignored man grabbed on this chance to make himself useful.

Cheng Yu creased her brows at him. Would he die if he was a little less stubborn? She gave him a stern look. "No. But I'm sure the veggies in the kitchen would like one."

"What?" He was confused.

She gave him an amused look. "I remember that a certain someone vehemently promised to cook and wash the dishes. You don't have to do the second part though, we have a dishwasher. So I'm only asking you to cook." Under his dreadful gaze, she added, "All the ingredients you need are in the kitchen."

She had restocked everything they needed in the kitchen so Luna would always readily have whatever she wanted to eat, but the news came like the roaring sound of thunder to Cedric. He was just about to claim to want to go and buy the required ingredients.

Once he was allowed to go out, he would figure out a way to wiggle out of this grave he had dug himself. If worse came to worst, he would order takeout and hide it among a pile of fresh vegetables, then he would warm it later. But now he definitely couldn't do that!

"Is something wrong?" She asked when she noticed his expression that looked like the world was ending.

"Nothing..." He held back his woes. Of course something was wrong! He didn't know how to cook. In fact, he didn't think he knew what a kitchen looked like in real life.

however, he was scared that Cheng Yu would be angry with him and kick him out if she found out that he made a promise he was unable to fulfill, so he dragged himself to the kitchen. Surely, cooking shouldn't be that hard?

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After looking around at the foreign appliances for what felt like ages, Cedric couldn't take it anymore. He pushed the kitchen door closed and slid his phone out of his pocket, then dialled his sister's number.

"It must be raining actual cats and dogs. My adorable little brother finally decided to give me a call?!" cedric's sister, Han Xiaoli, exclaimed as soon as the video call connected.

"Sis, I'm in trouble!" Cedric lamented anxiously.

"What happened?" Han Xiaoli looked worried.

"I don't know how to cook." He lowered his voice into a whisper, peeking to make sure Cheng Yu was not within earshot.

"Pfft..." The latter burst into laughter. "Why do you need to know how to cook? Hold on..." She realized something and peeked around. The place that Cedric was in wasn't familiar to her.

She raised an eyebrow. "That's not our kitchen."

Cedric regretted making a video call and stuttered. "That... I decided to move out and live on my own. I'm an adult already, I can't keep bugging dad and mum, haha!"

He thought his answer was flawless, but she was not even listening to it. She was busy checking out his background. "That's a woman's kitchen."

"What? How would you even know?!" he was shocked by his sister's godly eyesight. Even he couldn't tell a man's house from a woman's let alone the difference between kitchens.

The latter began to tease him. "You didn't move in with a girl, did you? Hold on. I would know if you moved out. Are you planning to run away from home?"

He felt his head hurt. "I didn't and hey! It's an emergency."

She burst into laughter as she gloated in her brother's misfortune. "I'll help you, under the condition that you promise not to lie to girls anymore. Everyone hates being lied to and she will not trust you anymore if you do. But I'm still curious. There is really a girl that can get you this worked up? May I know who the lucky maiden is?"

"No. You may not. Help me!" He was on the verge of tears from how these women were tormenting him.

When she had had enough fun laughing at him, she finally decided to be of help. "Since it's your first time cooking, why don't you make her egg-fried rice? It's a little easy to make."

"Yes yes!" He felt revived after finally hearing something that brought him some hope.

Under her instructions, he picked out the required ingredients and set them on one kitchen counter.

"Prepare the ingredients first so you don't have to rush through cooking." She advised. "Take a bowl and break three eggs into it."

She had just finished speaking when he grabbed a bowl from the utensils he had prepared and broke the egg into it... as well as the shell...

Han Xiaoli facepalmed. "You don't even know how to break an egg? I really should have bullied you a little more when we were younger."

Cedric looked into the phone screen pitifully like a child admitting his mistakes, so she couldn't bring herself to scold him anymore.

She instructed him to dispose of the shells and then went to her own kitchen and broke an egg, patiently showing him what to do.

He followed suit, doing it right this time. When he set the eggs aside, she let out a sigh. "We still have a long way to go."

She then instructed him to take a measuring cup and the glass jar labelled [rice].

Just as he placed the jar on the kitchen counter, it slid and fell onto the floor, shattering into pieces and spewing rice all over the floor.

"Are you okay? What happened?" Cheng Yu appeared faster than he imagined, and his first reaction was to try to hide the mess.

She didn't even care about the spilled rice and checked him over instead. "Are you..."

She paused halfway through her statement when she noticed the ongoing video call.

Han Xiaoli, on the screen, looked stumped.. It took a while before she caught her voice. "Cedric, what the heck are you doing with that woman?!"

Chapter 365 - Treacherous?

Cheng Yu was surprised when she heard Han Xiaoli's words. What did she mean?

Before she could ask, the woman on the screen directed her cold glare towards her brother. "Stay away from that treacherous woman, do you understand?"

Cheng Yu couldn't hold it in anymore. "Excuse me, but do I know you?" Since they had never encountered each other, why was the other party accusing her of being treacherous and even asking her brother to stay away from her?

It wasn't that Cheng Yu wanted to be close to Cedric, but there wasn't anyone who liked being called names so she waited to hear what the other party had against her. Alas, she merely harrumphed and hung up the call.

Cheng Yu was not the only one who was confused, Cedric was too. He tried to give her a call to find out but the other had switched off her phone.

He thought of going over to her place to find out what was going on with her but as a man who had two sisters, he remembered that women could be quite sensitive sometimes, even over matters that one might think made no sense.

If he left right now, it might appear as though he was taking sides and had chosen his sister's side despite not knowing the whole story. Hence, he continued standing by Cheng Yu's side. If he were to pick a side, he would readily choose to believe that Cheng Yu would never be the kind of person mentioned by Han Xiaoli.

She gently pushed him aside and grabbed a broom and dustpan to clean up the mess on the floor.

"Let me do that." He quickly offered, he had created this mess after all.

"Leave it." Her tone was so stern that he recoiled to the side, in fear of upsetting her even more. He awkwardly wondered what to do and in the end decided to make his presence scarce by not letting out a peep.

When Cheng Yu finished cleaning up and saw him standing at the side like a child who had done something wrong, she was amused. "Aren't you going to do as your elder sister said?"

He shook his head like a rattle as though he had been waiting for that question. "I don't want to leave. Can I please stay?"

She was speechless at this man's antics. Knowing that she would not be able to get rid of him even if she tried, she ignored him and started preparing a fresh set of ingredients.

"Yu, I'm sorry." He decided to come clean, seeing as she had assumed the mess from earlier as an accident. "I don't know how to cook."

As expected, she turned to glare at him. Although he had dreaded this, he also knew that the outcome would be much worse if he still pretended to know and she found out the truth later. He honestly explained, "I was scared you would kick me out if you knew that I didn't know..."

She massaged her temples. "Did you really think that I didn't know? If you knew, you would look forward to showing off your skills when I sent you to the kitchen. You would not be frightened as though I was sending you to the guillotine."

"Yu, can you forgive me? I will not lie to you anymore."

Her heart softened from how sincere he sounded. "Okay."

She then went ahead to prepare to cook sour and sweet pork while he stood aside obediently.

All was silent until he slotted himself next to her. "Can you teach me how to cook? Once I'm good at it, I will make you delicious meals every day."

Seeing him promoting himself so earnestly, she had the urge to laugh. Since he was merely standing there and probably feeling awkward, she decided to teach him a thing or two. "I'm teaching you not so you can cook for me, but so you don't have to starve if there is no one to cook for you."

"Yay!" He cheered and started watching what she was doing as he listened to her words. For the most part, he was engrossed in the beauty of her side profile and heard nothing. But when he jolted and remembered that he wanted to cook for her in future, he paid more attention to it.

The meals were ready in longer than she thought they would be. She set the table with the help of her new disciple but didn't have much appetite.

When she tasted a piece of the meat for the sake of not going hungry, she immediately grabbed for a glass of water. How salty!

Paired with the saltiness, none of the food tasted good. Was she so shocked that she couldn't even correctly do what she was good at?

Although this was the worst meal she had ever cooked, a certain person was scarfing it down like it was a rare delicacy.

She looked at him speechlessly. She obviously didn't feel a thing for him. She didn't even like him. Why was it that when she heard his sister spew nonsense about her and urge him to stay away from her, her heart felt such a great deal of discomfort? She couldn't have started having feelings for him, right?

No matter what, she couldn't be with him. She knew this and didn't need a reminder about it. Not every family was like the Jiang family, who treasured their soon-to-be daughter-in-law regardless of her past.

Putting aside her past, there was her background which would never be changed. Even though she had a well-paying job now and would soon be able to take care of herself and her brother and would afford a more luxurious life than the one she was already living, it was still not enough to match up to the Han family. The last thing she wanted was to be the subject of drama between rich in-laws and the girl they think is too lowly for their son. Besides, his sister was already against her and who knows who else was.

Hence, she thought it would be best if nothing started between them. "Cedric."

He looked up from his plate with his mouth full of whatever he was wolfing down. She almost chuckled but remained serious. "We may have been classmates before, in Star Art International, but you should understand that it is in the past."

"Yu, what are you saying?" He swallowed his food to ask.

She crossed her arms against her chest with a strict look on her visage. "We are no longer in Star Art International. We work at Moonlight Studios now, and I am your boss. Putting this aside, Luna and I don't want to promote workplace relationships as this could create unnecessary drama at work."

"What drama?" Was the only thing he was curious about after her rambling.

She looked at him like he was a fool. "If everyone was dating their colleague, it might be romantic, right? But what would happen if everyone broke up and started fighting at work? What kind of chaos would that create?"

He thought through her reason and didn't find anything wrong with it. It seemed to answer him. So this was why she would always avoid him. He was relieved, having previously thought that she hated him.

"So, if I resigned from Moonlight Studios and was no longer your subordinate, would you say yes to me?" He asked in all seriousness.

Cheng Yu was speechless.

Chapter 366 - Scandalous

For the next few days, Cheng Yu avoided Cedric like the plague. It was nothing out of the ordinary since she had always avoided him anyway... aside from the fact that he was avoiding her as well. If she went right, he would go left even if that was not where he was intending to go.

If she entered the room he was in, he would make a random excuse and leave. The only exception was the conference rooms whenever all the authors had a meeting with her and Luna. He couldn't walk away, but he would avoid her gaze as though repulsed by her.

On Thursday, in her office, Cheng Yu let out a sigh. This was the outcome she had wanted. Why, then, did she feel so hurt about it?

"I knew you had something bothering you." Luna spoke, jolting her from her deep thoughts. She didn't know when the latter had walked in.

"Luna, you should have called me over. Why did you have to come all the way?" She immediately stood up and helped Luna onto a chair, leaving her speechless.

"Xiao Yu, you too?" Luna didn't know whether to be happy or sad. A few days ago, news of Luna being engaged and being expectant had filled the city. Everyone was happy for her, but after knowing about

her pregnancy, they all started treating her like she was a delicate egg that could break at the slightest tug.

Let's not even get started about how Madam Jiang and her family had made sure that every nook and cranny of the Jiang Mansion was padded. Xingyu was currently doing the same for L&X Villa, and they would move in when the work was done.

Cheng Yu laughed at her friend's helplessness. "Everyone wants to take care of you and ensure you and my future little godchild are in perfect health."

Luna rubbed her stomach happily, then got back to the main point. "What's going on with you? Is your family bothering you again?"

Cheng Yu shook her head with a troubled look. Her family had, of course, not completely ceased to bother her. They would try to look for her and create trouble once in a while but after she threatened to sue them and permanently take her brother away from them, they had stopped trying to find trouble. That was the least of her worries now.

Luna had guessed as much. "It's not your parents? Let me guess, is it possible in any way that it could be related to a comic artist called Cedric Han?"

Cheng Yu clicked her tongue. "Why does everyone think I could be troubled because of him?"

Luna laughed as she crossed her arms. "Oh? Who else thinks so?" this proved that she really was bothered because of him, right?

Cheng Yu realized that it didn't make much of a difference. After all, Lanni and Luna would often think the same way, so it didn't really count as many people thinking that way, right? Anyway, "I couldn't care less about him. As if he would influence my emotions."

"Is that so? If my observation is correct, your mood started getting explosive as soon as he started ignoring you, and this happened the day after both of you had dinner at Goldenwing Apartments." Luna analyzed with the expression of a detective. "May I know what happened that night? Did something trigger you to repel each other?"

"You are so gossipy!" Cheng Yu was helpless. Knowing that she would not be able to brush it off, she leaned against the desk, facing Luna. "Nothing much. I asked him to stay away from me. If I enter a room, he should leave and if I go left, he should go right."

Luna almost found it comical. "Which is what he has been doing, but it hurts your feelings that you cannot be together?"

Cheng Yu thought hard about it, then dismissed it. "Luna, some things were just not meant to be." It didn't matter how hard her friends tried to make it work between her and Cedric. As long as they were not meant to be together, all their efforts would be fruitless.

Luna knew this, but she still didn't think that Cheng Yu and Cedric were not meant to be. She spoke out of her own experience. "You may think that you and him are not of the same world or that his family may reject you, but what if it is different from reality?" Even she had thought that her past was too dirty for her to deserve Xingyu but in the end, she was the only one that Xingyu wanted and his family appreciated her as well.

Cheng Yu was thinking about the same thing, but their circumstances were too different. "His sister already expressed his disapproval."

"What?" Luna frowned.

Cheng Yu nodded, then explained the incident from that night when Cedric followed her to Goldenwing Apartments. "It is rumored that Cedric listens to his sister more than anyone else. He loves her even more than he loves his parents. As long as she says the word, he will do whatever she wants him to do."

"So, you think he will also reject you merely because she does not approve of you" Luna finally understood what the latter was thinking. When Cheng Yu nodded, she added, "But not everything works that way, Xiao Yu. Just because you love someone and listen to them doesn't mean you will let them control everything including your love life. How will you find your happiness if it's always about someone else?"

"I don't know, Luna." Cheng Yu still looked troubled.

Luna thought about it and said, "How about I check into this Han Xiaoli? I will find out why she called you treacherous, it couldn't be for no reason." her implication was that the other woman could have mistaken her for someone else or misunderstood her. If they found out what really happened and cleared the misunderstanding with the other party, perhaps she would not dislike Cheng Yu anymore.

Cheng Yu nodded to the suggestion. "Thanks, Luna."

Meanwhile, Tian Yu Media.

Lanni sat in her chair in her office, holding the latest issue of the weekly magazine in her hands. She had gone through all the featured articles before they were published so of course, there wasn't anything new... except a huge reveal in the business section.

She had not approved of this, because it was a piece of fabricated news about a businessman. According to the news article, the businessman had been caught up in a scandalous case of corruption, and there was evidence to prove him guilty. Of course, the so-called evidence was mere words, since the whole thing was false to begin with.

Just as she chuckled about it, an email was forwarded to her. The said businessman had decided to sue Tian Yu Media for libel.

However, in reaction to the news and the alert she had just received, she could only laugh at a certain someone's stupidity. They had done themselves in this time... because the said businessman was someone she was quite familiar with.

AN: Make a guess, lol...well, two guesses.

Who is the said businessman?

Who is the person Lanni thinks has done themselves in?

A reward awaits the first person to get both correct answers within 24 hours

Chapter 367 - Dismissed

With an evil grin plastered on her face, Lanni dialed a number.

"Yo, sister-in-law!" Xingyu greeted jubilantly as soon as the call connected.

Lanni couldn't help laughing. The new form of address sounded kinda cute. "Did Luna have you call me that?"

"She didn't have to. Well, you will be sooner or later, so it doesn't matter when I start calling you my sister-in-law, does it?" He laughed.

Lanni's tone turned strict. "Then, you must be the only man who would sue his sister-in-law."

"Eh? When did I sue you?" Xingyu sounded surprised, then recalled that he had indeed sued someone. All he remembered was that his assistant reported that a news agency had published false news about him and tarnished his reputation. In response, he had only given two words: "sue them." Who would have thought that it would turn out to be his sister-in-law?

Now that he thought about it, Luna had mentioned that Lanni was now the chief editor of a news agency. If there was any problem with a piece of published news, the blame would befall her. What kind of sin had he committed?!

He panicked. "I didn't know you work at Tian Yu Media and that my actions would trouble you. I'm so sorry, sister-in-law! I'll get my assistant to revoke the suit right away." As he spoke, Lanni could hear him summon his assistant on the other end.

"Hold on!" She immediately stopped him.

"Is there something else?" He carefully asked, afraid that she was upset. If he did anything to anger her, heaven knew that Xiehan and Luna would gnash him to death.

Lanni chuckled at his tensed tone. "Don't revoke anything. Go ahead with the suit, okay? I want to deal with this matter on my end." She instructed.

"O-kay..." Xingyu was confused by her words. Was there anyone who wanted to be sued? Even so, he could only do as she asked.

Lanni hung up the call and rolled her pen. Her aim of calling Xingyu was to ensure he didn't drop the suit once he realized that she was the Chief Editor of Tian Yu Media. When she was done, she also notified Xiehan not to take any action once he heard the news.

This would teach Han Lili a lesson. Did she really think that a mere piece of false news would be enough to kick her out?

...

Just as she expected, the matter blew up. Xingyu even helped her fan the flames from his end.

The following afternoon, Lanni was summoned to the CEO's office.

The man's expression was grim as he pushed aside the newspaper on his desk and looked up to glare at Lanni who had just walked in. "Miss Li, I believe one of your roles is to ensure that every piece of news that is published or reported is authentic."

Lanni's expression did not shift in the slightest. "CEO Qian..."

"Don't give me excuses." He interrupted, looking utterly disappointed. "I did not expect this from you. Get the party behind this to resign. And if you are at fault too, you will not get away either."

Lanni nodded. "Understood, CEO."

As she left his office, she was a bit surprised. She didn't expect that the man could already tell that whatever happened was not a result of her negligence but of someone else's meddling. As expected of the CEO. He was so observant... No wonder Tian Yu Media was gaining fame at a rapid pace ever since he took over from the former CEO.

"Someone's going to get dismissed this time. I told you she didn't deserve her position." she heard Han Lili sneer to another employee just as she walked down the hallway.

The employee being spoken to appeared to be troubled. "I thought she looked quite capable, but looks can be deceiving. If she really doesn't qualify, she might not be able to do a good job and Tian Yu Media would be in trouble because of her."

As soon as they saw her pass by, the other employee shut her mouth while Han Lili continued jabbering on.

From such gossip in the company, Lanni knew that it was about time to get rid of annoying flies. Otherwise, her abilities would be doubted forever.

...

Since she didn't want to drag the matter too much and risk having it soil the reputation of Tian Yu Media, she immediately called for a meeting with the editorial team, publishing team and journalists in one of the largest conference rooms.

The meeting had been expected since such a huge scandal had arisen, hence everyone rushed to the conference rooms within a few minutes.

As soon as she walked in, a hush befell the hall.

She went straight to the point. "I believe that everyone knows why we are here."

When they agreed in unison, she glanced at Han Lili who had followed behind her like the good assistant she was doing a horrible job at becoming. She then looked back at the employees. "In that case, I will not waste time. Many of you have been made to believe that I got to this position using corrupt means, and that Han Lili was initially chosen.

You should know that not only does this rumor destroy my reputation, it also questions the credibility of CEO Qian, who has always believed in doing the right thing." This was the part that annoyed her the most. It was not okay to mess with her, but dragging innocent people into the mix just to make her life difficult was too much.

"So, I will clear everyone's doubts." She declared, and had Yu Ming play a video on the large screen. "You are all free to point it out if you see anything that qualifies as underhanded means."

The video was taken on the day of her interview. Interviews were usually recorded in case someone else undertook them and later showed them to the CEO, or if they were to be shown to the board of directors. This time, they just happened to come in handy and Lanni had obtained the permission of CEO Qian to use them.

When Han Lili saw what was being played, she panicked slightly.

In the video, Lanni answered every question thrown her way with confidence and eloquence, and she had smart answers for all of them. The CEO and former Chief Editor were visibly impressed.

When the video ended, Han Lili was the first to speak up arrogantly. "So what if they were satisfied? They may have given kind remarks just to make her feel better about herself. This doesn't prove that she didn't give bribes beforehand!"

"Are you an idiot? CEO Qian would never receive a bribe!" A male employee wanted to give her a slap.

"Yeah. If our CEO was capable of accepting brainless employees for money, this company would be shambles. Besides, didn't you see how intelligent chief editor Li is? As if she would need a back door." another seconded.

Seeing that everyone's opinion was in her favor, Lanni played Han Lili's interview video, which made everyone cringe in disgust. She knew nothing and kept glancing at her palm to read out the answers she had written down, which were all wrong answers.. She even lied that she had once worked for the largest media group in the nation, Lin Media Group, and that she was fired after being accused falsely.

Chapter 368 - Dismissed(2)

Everyone sneered in disgust. How did such a person even get into Tian Yu Media?! It was an embarrassment to work in the same building with such a fool!

Yet, the video that was played next made their blood boil in anger. Han Lili made her way to the editorial department and gave a golden card to the department head. Along with it, she gave him a few sheets of paper.

The video was taken from a surveillance camera that did not support audio. However, there were a few people who could read lips and they managed to understand their conversation. The two of them had already made an arrangement beforehand, to publish the news article that Han Lili had written. In

exchange, the latter would give him one million yuan as the deposit, and later give him two million if Lanni was fired thanks to the scandal.

It was finally clear.

"So Han Lili was the one behind that corruption scandal. I knew CEO Jiang would never be that kind of person." a little fangirl patted her chest in relief.

"Right? Jiang Corporation has advanced to greater heights ever since CEO Jiang took over. Even though there are companies which get to their top positions through corruption, the Jiang family has always been against such dark deals." another seconded.

Gossip filled the conference hall, as yet another journalist whispered. "That's not the main point, okay? The point is, this news was supposed to create trouble for Chief Editor Li and make her lose her job for being incompetent. But Han Lili totally slapped herself in the face! Chief Editor Li must have been waiting for her to make a move."

The employees burst into peals of laughter as a dark-haired man joined the discussion. "Do you know what's more tragic? CEO Jiang is Miss Li's brother-in-law. Han Lili did herself in this time."

"CEO Jiang is her brother-in-law?!" the ladies were shocked.

The man lowered his voice to say, "Don't you know about it? Miss Li's twin sister is engaged to him. When I saw the news, I was so heartbroken, thinking it was Miss Li. I have always had feelings for her."

The girl who had spoken earlier laughed at him. "Well, it doesn't make a difference. Chief Editor Li is taken too, and her boyfriend is so handsome you could faint from the blow."

...

On the stage, Lanni stood up and the conference room fell into a hush. From the whispers a moment ago, she knew that Han Lili had not just offended her. She had learnt that not only was Han Lili rude to

everyone, she had been flaunting her authority around and using her position as "the rightful chief editor" to bully the interns and everyone else she thought was below her.

Hence, she made the announcement everyone was looking forward to. "For misusing her position and going against her work policy, Han Lili will be punished. She will send a letter of apology to Jiang Corporation and be responsible for whatever repercussions her actions have caused. After that, she will be dismissed. The head of the editorial department will suffer the same consequences."

In just a few sentences, she had dealt with the most stubborn thorn by her side and sent a severe warning.

Later, in the CEO's office.

"Good girl." CEO Qian praised when she reported how she had handled the matter. "You didn't decide to make a post and clear your name but chose to make the matter huge and use it as a warning to everyone who still doubts your capability, letting them know what their fate will be if they challenge your authority. Good, this was a perfect way to handle it."

Lanni was happy from the praise. CEO Qian sounded just like an elder brother, proud of his little sister for finally doing the right thing.

Pushing the weird thoughts aside, she took back her tablet from him. "Thank you, CEO. I will ensure such an incident doesn't reccur."

...

As she left the office, Lanni was aware of the gossip around her. Contrary to the little cutie they once saw her as, she was now an unpredictable demonness. They even looked scared when they greeted her. Lanni didn't mind the change of attitude. On the contrary, it would ensure no one tried to mess with her anymore.

When Han Lili left the office, she made Yu Ming her new assistant and told her what to do.

She had just settled down in her office when her personal phone rang. Why would Lin Jian call her? She curiously answered the call.

"You are so unfair! You heartless woman!" the other party had nothing but a series of complaints as soon as Lanni answered the call.

She held her phone away from her ear and waited for the yelling to end before carefully putting it back against her ear. "Uh... Are you sure you called the right person?"

"Of course! You, Li Lanni, are the most heartless woman on earth! How could you go to work at another media agency instead of Lin Media Group? What's this if not being unfair? I want to know what Xiehan has to say about this!"

Lanni laughed at his accusation. "Calm down, okay? I did think of coming over at Lin Media Group. However, I knew that I was not qualified."

Lin Jian humphed at the other end. "What nonsense are you saying? What qualification? Lin Media Group would have accepted you even if you had zero qualification!"

"That's the thing." Lanni pressed the phone between her ear and shoulder so she would continue arranging the documents on her desk while talking to him. "It's exactly because I knew that you would do that, that I didn't come. I would very much appreciate it if I got a position I deserve instead of one I got because the CEO is my boyfriend's best friend."

Lin Jian no longer knew what to do. All the women he had dated before would have been overjoyed if he used his connections to help them secure better jobs in grander companies, while Lanni wanted to earn everything on her own. Why did he suddenly feel like Xiehan was so lucky?

Speaking of Xiehan, he remembered his main point.

"If that's the case, then good luck. A hardworking woman like you will soon qualify to work in Lin Media Group. When that time comes, will you consider coming over?" He anxiously asked. Everyone liked an honest and competent employee, after all.

"I'll think about it when the time comes." Lanni promised. "Is there anything else?"

"Yes." Lin Jian wasn't sure how Lanni would react but he could only say it. "Ruby woke up. She is doing much better now."

Lanni had been so busy lately that she almost forgot about it. "Did she get a bone marrow donor?" She asked.

"Her father was luckily a compatible donor. She is recuperating now." There was an obvious tinge of joy in his tone, which was soon replaced with nervousness. "Lanni, would you like to pay her a visit? You could bring Xiehan with you."

"Heh..."

Lanni's chuckle sounded like a curse in his ears, making him anxious. "What... What happened?"

Lanni shifted in her seat, her gaze darkening as though Lin Jian was right in front of her. "Ruby asked to see Xiehan, didn't she?" When Lin Jian hesitated, she laughed.. "I knew it."

Chapter 369 - Spoiling The Princess A Little Too Much

Lin Jian felt his soul leave his body. "Lanni..."

Lanni scoffed through the phone. "Lin Jian, are you seriously letting her have her way even while knowing that she is trying to seek another man's attention? Don't you spoil your little princess too much?"

Lin Jian had nothing to say to her sarcasm. It hurt him too, okay! But if he blatantly rejected Ruby's request, she would be upset and that would definitely not help him get closer to her. Hence, he could only hang up and hope that Ruby would soon realize just how much time she was wasting by trying to get close to a taken man.

In the end, Lanni shrugged. "It's just paying her a visit, right? Alright, I will go tomorrow in the evening. Of course, I will check with Xiehan first."

Lin Jian remained silent. Whether Xiehan went or not depended on Lanni, but he loved his life so he didn't dare to point that out.

—

The following day, Moonlight Studios.

Looking at the information she had gathered, Luna let out a helpless sigh.

"What happened?" Cheng Yu asked worriedly.

Luna picked a pen on her desk and uncapped it, then leisurely tapped the top of the desk as she gathered her words. "Xiao Yu, I'm sorry."

"What's this about?" Cheng Yu was curious. She pulled the white leather chair and sat opposite Luna, raising an eyebrow to the other's apology.

Luna looked troubled. "I found out the reason why Han Xiaoli is so much against you being together with Cedric."

"Oh..." Cheng Yu had almost forgotten about it, and her heart felt uneasy when she suddenly recalled it. She did want to know, but part of her was reluctant to hear what Luna had to say. She felt as though she was sitting on needles as she observed her friend's expression.

Luna nervously stated, "This has nothing to do with you. In actual sense, you are merely suffering because of me." She explained. "It is because Han Xiaoli once confessed to Xingyu, and he rejected her. She has been holding the grudge for ages and hates me for supposedly taking away the heart of her man. Since you are my friend, she doesn't like you either.

It's just an unfortunate coincidence that you and her brother like each other, so she cannot let this opportunity to revenge slip."

Cheng Yu was rendered speechless by the explanation. Here she was thinking that she had done something wrong. It turned out to be a strike of vengeance by a spoilt heiress was in denial after a failed confession?!

"I will help you deal with it." Luna promised resolutely. She would not let her own choices ruin the happiness of her best friend. Of course, she wasn't going to break up with Xingyu either. Han Xiaoli would have to wake up from her delusional slumber.

In the evening, Lanni went to the hospital where Ruby was. Earlier, she had sent a text message to Xiehan so he would go first. When she arrived, he had long arrived and was making some small talk with Lin Jian and Ruby.

The girl looked frail as she lay between the white sheets, wearing a pale blue hospital gown. Her hair was a mess, her little face was almost as pale as the sheets, and even her lips were drained of color. Such a pitiful sight, no wonder the two men were at her beck and call, serving her fruits and telling her jokes to cheer her up.

"Lanni, you are here!" She smiled sweetly and looked much happier when Lanni walked in through the door.

"How are you feeling?" Lanni was not as enthusiastic as her, but she smiled anyway.

"I'm fine now. I should be discharged tomorrow at the latest." Ruby said through a pale smile. "Thank you for checking up on me."

"It's nothing." Lanni found a spot to sit.

Ruby glanced at Xiehan and added, "And, thank you for not leaving me alone on that day. If you didn't bring me to hospital, who knows what would have happened to me..."

"You don't need to thank me. It would be too heartless of me if I neglected anyone in that situation." Xiehan felt uncomfortable, probably because of the tension that was starting to build up between Lanni and Ruby. The former's eyes looked like they were about to start emitting daggers, so Xiehan held her hand and rubbed it gently.

"Since Ruby is alright now, I guess we should take our leave." He suggested, knowing that Lanni was not willing to continue being here.

Naturally, she was happy to leave as well. Though for some reasons, she was curious about something.

However, just as Xiehan walked past the bed, his hand was grabbed by a small, cold hand. He turned to look at the girl on the bed curiously.

"Xiehan, don't go. Could you accompany me a little longer?" Ruby pleaded, her eyes looking up at Xiehan pitifully.

Lin Jian clenched his fists at the side.

Lanni couldn't hold it in anymore. She leaned over and swatted Ruby's hand away from Xiehan's wrist. "That's enough. First, you fake your illness and now you want to deliberately seduce someone else's boyfriend, right in front of his girlfriend? Have you no shame?!"

Ruby recoiled in shock. "Lanni, how could you say that?"

"If you are going to put up and act, make sure it is believable." Lanni glared at her fiercely.

Lin Jian was displeased. "Lanni, I understand how you feel, and the fact that you don't trust Ruby, but how can you accuse anyone of faking illness?"

Although Xiehan didn't say anything, he was not pleased by the accusation either.

Meanwhile, Ruby fought back tears as she looked at Lanni in disbelief. "I know I have said this before but I really don't have that kind of feelings for Xiehan. It's really not what you think..."

The latter was disgusted. "Forget the feelings part, you can say anything about that. I'm just curious... your "truth" is that you really had Leukemia and now, you have been treated? Who was the bone marrow donor?"

Actually, this development was not similar to what Lanni had expected. She thought that for the sake of making Xiehan get close to her, she would fake the medical details so her only possible compatible donor would be Xiehan. Afterwards, she might use "being grateful to him for saving her life" as an excuse to get closer to him.

Although her guess was luckily wrong, it didn't make much difference. She was still using this fake illness to get closer to Xiehan and was even doing it right in front of everyone!

Lin Jian answered the answer for Ruby. "Her father. Who else would it be?"

Lanni scoffed. "Really? Why do I recall hearing the doctor state that only her biological relatives could be possible donors?"

"Isn't that exactly what happened?!" Lin Jian was getting impatient.

Lanni smiled evilly, under Ruby's tensed and shocked gaze. "Well, I hate to break it to you, but Neil Chan is not even her biological father. May I know how exactly this happened?"

"What did you say?!" Lin Jian was shocked, while Ruby burst into tears.

Xiehan frowned at the scene. "Enough. Lanni, bone marrow donors don't have to be biologically related to the patient." What he didn't mention was, Ruby must have wanted to keep the fact that she was Neil Chan's biological daughter a secret. It was revealed in such an accusatory tone, wasn't this too hurtful?

As though reading her boyfriend's mind, Lanni glanced at him then at Ruby with a scoff. She then opened her handbag and took out a stack of paper. "Of course, I know that. Which is why I kept investigating. And guess what? They are not compatible either."

Xiehan leaned over to read the content of the document and so did Lin Jian. The analysis was baffling. Lin Joan's eyes widened in disbelief and he pulled the document out of Lanni's hand, then showed it to the tearful Ruby.

If Neil was not a compatible donor, then he couldn't have donated his bone marrow to save Ruby. Then how could she explain her current condition?

He almost didn't dare to ask, "Did you orchestrate this?"

The girl wiped her tears using the back of her fist. "I really don't know how this happened!"

Lanni couldn't believe that she was still trying to deny the claim. She looked at Ruby sharply. "I have an interesting audio clip. Does anyone want to hear it?"

The two men looked at her with obvious curiosity, so she scrolled through her phone and played the clip. She deliberately fast-forwarded to the part everyone was waiting for.

[Dad, why would you want me to do this?] It was Ruby's voice.

A chuckle resounded, followed by a man's voice, which was Neil Chan's. [Silly girl, aren't you trying to get close to Xiehan?]

"Stop, don't play it anymore." Ruby tried to grab Lanni's phone in despair. Lanni was faster, and held her phone above her head with a glare. Her reaction was akin to admitting it, so she had no choice. "I'll admit it.. It was all fabricated."

Chapter 370 - Ruby Chan

Lanni looked at Ruby meaningfully, then glanced at Xiehan with "I told you" written all over her eyes.

Xiehan's eyes darkened.

Ruby knew what he was thinking and quickly explained, "All I wanted was to get a little closer to Xiehan as a friend. I didn't expect..."

Her statement trailed off, as though she was too troubled to say anything.

Lanni scratched the part behind her ear. This was unbelievable! After lying to everyone, making everyone worried over a lie and trying to seduce Xiehan, she now wanted to act wronged by pushing the blame onto Lanni and accuse the latter of invading her privacy?

While she did invade her privacy, she didn't have much choice. Would she have to investigate Ruby if she didn't start scheming?

Not willing to argue with her, she grabbed Xiehan's hand. "My love, let's go."

"Mmh." He led the way out of the ward.

Lin Jian, who had not reacted since receiving the bombshell, looked at Ruby in disbelief.

All along, she had been acting strange but Lin Jian decided to believe her, even when all the signs proved him wrong. He hadn't completely believed it even when Lanni showed the proof but when she admitted it through her own lips, his world shattered.

As though seeing through him, Ruby held a hand out to him. "Lin Jian, listen to me. They got it all wrong... "

"I won't be such an idiot." Disappointed, Lin Jian walked out.

Neil Chan's villa.

The man looked more disappointed than Lin Jian was a while ago. He shook his head as he studied his daughter, who had left the hospital since the cat was already out of the bag.

" You had such a tiny task to do. All you had to do was pretend to be sick, which you were doing quite well. How could you mess it up?"

Ruby played with her fingers, in disbelief about the mistake she made. She still couldn't believe that just because of a moment of impatience, she had given herself away. Besides, "Who would have thought that Lanni would be so suspicious? She had already investigated everything even before she came to the hospital."

Neil still couldn't make much sense of it. "I've been meaning to ask, how the hell was she able to get a voice recording from our house? If I remember correctly, we were in my study when we talked about it and... damn it!"

"Dad?" Ruby's eyebrows scrunched up when her dad suddenly cursed.

Neil huffed in anger. "You have been tricked, do you know that?"

"What do you mean?" Ruby didn't understand.

He held her by the shoulders so she would look into his eyes. "With the tightness of the security in this villa, do you think it is possible for her to have snuck into the house and placed a bug in the study? It's not possible for her to have used someone from the inside either. Besides, she would need to have known that we were up to something in order to think of bugging our house."

Ruby frowned. Indeed, the villa's security was unprentable. Ever since someone tried to kidnap her when she was a teenager, Neil had employed a new security team from an internationally renowned organisation. Even the kitchen maids were specially trained to be loyal. Besides, their basic salary was multiple times more than that of regular bodyguards, so they definitely couldn't be bribed using money. Threatening one of them was not a possibility either, since their formation in the villa did not allow anyone to do anything secretly. Basically, it really was impossible for Lanni to have snuck in a bug.

"Then how did she..."

Neil patted his daughter's head like she was being too naive. "You, my dear, have been tricked. She could have just created a voice recording using our voices and used a conversation she thinks we could have had. Since you were shocked, you wouldn't even realize that you have been tricked."

Ruby widened her eyes in disbelief. Now that she thought about it, the conversation from the recording didn't seem to be what they had discussed word for word.

She slapped her forehead. "I'm sorry dad. I ruined everything. I was just so devastated when I realized that someone else knew that I'm not your daughter that I didn't see through the trick."

Neil rubbed her head to comfort her. "It's alright, it's normal to make mistakes. And what do you mean you're not my daughter? Biological or not, you're my little princess—you have always been."

Ruby emotionally hugged him.

Having been spoiled by him all her life, the worst day of her life was the day she found out the truth—that she was not the Chans' biological daughter.

The past was quite dramatic.

Neil and his wife had been trying to get pregnant for years in vain. Just when they had given up and were about to opt for adoption, the wheel of fortune turned in their favor, and his wife finally conceived.

However, that was far from the end of their problems. When their daughter was born, she had a weak heart and died before even letting out her first cry.

Neil's heart was shattered when he heard the news. After all, this child had carried all their hopes. He had been looking forward to becoming a dad. He didn't want to imagine how heartbroken his wife would be when she learnt the news.

Just as he wondered how he would bring himself to break the bombshell to her, he overheard a pair of nurses arguing about how to handle a newborn baby girl. Apparently, she had mysteriously appeared in the hospital and her origin couldn't be traced, hence there was no one to take care of her. Since they wanted to give the baby up for adoption, he decided to take her. He initially wanted to tell his wife the truth but seeing how overjoyed she was when she woke up and saw the little redhead, he couldn't bring himself to break her heart.

Hence, it turned into a secret that lasted fifteen years. He was planning to wait for Ruby to be an adult before telling both of them the truth, but fate had other plans in store. One of the nurses from fifteen years ago decided to tell Ruby's mother the truth.

Neil blinked and looked at his daughter as he thought of the past. When she learnt that Ruby was not her daughter, his wife had divorced him for having lied to her, so the only family he had now was this precious daughter.

Noticing his gaze, Ruby smiled back at him. She couldn't find the right words to accurately describe her feelings. When she learnt that she was not the princess she had always thought she was, but instead an abandoned baby who was picked up at birth, her world had come crumbling down on her.

She was devastated when her mother left, but the most fortunate thing was that Neil didn't treat her any worse. He still adored her and pampered her like his own biological daughter. In fact, if there was a choice, she would forget the past and pretend she never learnt the truth.

Because the truth was much worse than it seemed.

Neil would never have thought that by deciding to adopt the baby he thought was motherless, he had slotted himself into a deadly conspiracy—A conspiracy that had lasted two decades. He never would have thought that the helpless girl had merely been robbed of her true life. Still, he was glad that he decided to take her. Otherwise, she might have been killed just to make sure the truth never got out.

Ruby let out a sigh when she thought about it. "Sometimes, life can be more twisted than movies. Who would have thought..."

Neil patted her shoulder. "I will say it again, Ruby. You are my daughter no matter what."

"I know, dad. But I still want to tell them the truth." It wasn't that she was unsatisfied with Neil as a father—she had never been. It was only because she couldn't stand the deception that innocent people had to face as a result of what happened in the past. Besides, they both knew that the worst was yet to come. Although the plans of those people had failed, it didn't mean they wouldn't try to harm her family. After all, they now lived with an impostor, which was like a ticking time bomb. Most importantly, everyone had a huge misunderstanding about her now—especially Lanni.

Neil knew what his daughter was thinking. He breathed out a sigh. "What do you want to tell Xiehan then? The truth about Ji Feifei—that she is an impostor? That the Ji family might be in danger? Or that you are his biological sister?"

Did a bombshell just break?

Runs around with flailing arms.

A tiny summary just in case I got anyone confused (I hope I didn't)

—Someone conspired to switch the Ji family's baby at birth, and slotted in Ji Feifei, then discarded Ruby.

—Neil Chan adopted Ruby to take the place of his dead baby.

—The nurse told Ruby's Foster mother the truth when she was fifteen, but she and Neil found out the truth (about the conspiracy) much later after doing some digging. I hope it's clear enough!