

Full-Level 931

Chapter 931: Her Lanugo

At this moment, Ye Li was already consumed by worry.

He didn't know the identity of the mastermind, nor did he understand the motive behind taking Ye Leng'an's lanugo. Yet, the clandestine contact with them and the sudden influx of a substantial amount of money into their account were sufficient evidence that the other party was no ordinary individual.

Moreover, now that Ye Leng'an was aware of how the Ye family had obtained that sizable sum of money, how could she possibly let them off the hook?

Their current predicament amounted to offending two influential figures. What would become of the Ye Group in the future?

And the instigator of all this chaos was none other than his wife.

Upon hearing Ye Li's furious reprimand, Lin Wanqin seemed to snap out of a trance. Panic immediately washed over her face. "No, darling, I didn't intend to reveal it. But when I saw the look in Ye Leng'an's eyes just now, I couldn't control myself."

As she spoke, she couldn't help but shiver. The more she pondered, the more eerie the situation felt.

Ye Li didn't believe a word of Lin Wanqin's explanation. "Even if you didn't want to speak, could she force you? Ye Leng'an didn't do anything except watch you."

"I'm telling the truth." Lin Wanqin disregarded the pain on her cheek. "I genuinely didn't want to speak, but for some reason, I couldn't stop myself."

Her tone carried a hint of fear. "Do you think Ye Leng'an did something behind the scenes? I can't shake the feeling that she's peculiar."

Ye Li remained skeptical of Lin Wanqin's words. He believed she was grasping at straws to absolve herself of blame. "Whether intentional or not, because of you, I don't know what will become of the Ye Group!"

Lin Wanqin felt utterly aggrieved. She opened her mouth to defend herself but found herself at a loss for words.

Observing her, Ye Li felt no sympathy, only irritation. He rose from his seat, ignoring Lin Wanqin entirely as he headed straight for the door.

Lin Wanqin wanted to call out to Ye Li, but he seemed deaf to her pleas. He marched out without a pause.

At this point, Ye Li cared little for Lin Wanqin's state. He only desired to return to the company promptly. With Lin Wanqin divulging everything to Ye Leng'an, he feared the consequences. What if Ye Leng'an sought retribution? And what if the mysterious figure behind them perceived them as traitors to be eliminated?

Regardless of whether the Ye Group was currently facing a crisis, he needed to return promptly to take charge and prevent any potential emergencies.

Unaware of the turmoil brewing in the Ye family, Ye Leng'an wasted no time in heading towards Huangye Group.

Within minutes, she arrived at the company's premises.

"What's wrong?" Huangfu Ruiling's expression betrayed confusion as Ye Leng'an entered. "You don't seem yourself. Has something happened?"

Taking her seat opposite Huangfu Ruiling, Ye Leng'an wasted no time. "Ling, I visited the Ye family today and uncovered the source of their recent windfall."

"Is it related to you?" Huangfu Ruiling immediately grasped the significance.

"Yes." Ye Leng'an's eyes gleamed darkly. "It was a fair exchange. Someone behind the scenes provided Ye Li with a hefty sum of money, and in return, Ye Li surrendered something of mine. My lanugo."

Huangfu Ruiling's demeanor shifted from casual to grave. "Are you sure?"

If indeed someone had taken Ye Leng'an's lanugo hair, matters were far more complex. As cultivators, they understood that many phenomena defied scientific explanation. Especially in the Hidden World, cultivators safeguarded their possessions meticulously. Surrendering one's belongings invited perilous consequences.

Lanugo was a personal item, and it also belonged to Ye Leng'an. If it had truly been taken by someone, it would be a very dangerous situation.

"I'm sure." Ye Leng'an nodded calmly, with a tinge of regret in her tone. "It's partly my fault. I had forgotten about this matter. However, I never expected that Ye Li and Lin Wanqin would still have kept my fetal hair."

Typically, she disposed of her hair and nails with utmost care to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands. The discovery of her fetal hair at the Ye family was a glaring oversight.

With confirmation from Ye Leng'an, Huangfu Ruiling's concern intensified. "Who is behind this?"

Urgency surged to ascertain the mastermind's motives and reclaim Ye Leng'an's lanugo hair.

"I don't know." Ye Leng'an shook her head. "Neither Ye Li nor Lin Wanqin has ever laid eyes on the culprit."

Lin Wanqin wouldn't lie, and she couldn't lie. When she questioned Lin Wanqin at the Ye family, a method similar to hypnosis was employed. Of course, this differed significantly from the hypnosis in the mortal world. With the added allure of spiritual power, Lin Wanqin couldn't conceal her true thoughts and would divulge all the information.

Huangfu Ruiling's countenance turned solemn. "I'll instruct the Enforcement Team to unearth this individual from the Hidden World promptly."

Allowing such a significant possession to fall into another's hands left him restless. It spelled imminent danger for Ye Leng'an, a scenario he refused to tolerate.

Regardless of the culprit's identity, any harm inflicted upon Ye Leng'an would be met with swift retribution.

At the thought, Huangfu Ruiling's eyes flickered with an inscrutable glint.

"In truth, there's no need to fret," Ye Leng'an reassured Huangfu Ruiling, sensing his unease. "We're unaware of the other party's intentions. Panicking prematurely serves no purpose! Moreover, regardless of the culprit's identity, I'll ensure they regret crossing me."

Chapter 932: Elite Competition

Though feeling restless knowing her lanugo hair had been taken by an unknown person, Ye Leng'an remained relatively composed. She believed her strength would shield her from easy manipulation.

"I'm fine." Huangfu Ruiling's lips curled into a faint smile, though his eyes flashed danger. "I won't let anyone harm you."

Despite his gentle tone, his resolve was unwavering.

Regardless of the hidden agenda behind her stolen hair, it was best not to provoke any action that might harm Ye Leng'an. Otherwise, the consequences would be dire.

Ye Leng'an chuckled and shook her head, then reached out to stroke Huangfu Ruiling's brow. "Enough with the frown. Isn't it better now that we know? It'd be worse to be blindsided later."

Huangfu Ruiling nodded, saying no more.

"Forget about it." Ye Leng'an rose, hands on the desk, smiling at Huangfu Ruiling. "I don't have classes this afternoon. Let's go out and have some fun!"

Despite her nonchalance after learning about the events at the Ye family, she still felt a bit repulsed. Therefore, she decided against returning to alchemy in the afternoon. Her mind was too restless for effective practice. Refining pills now would likely be futile, wasting precious herbs. She opted to skip it altogether.

Thus, she desired nothing more than to go out and enjoy herself in the afternoon.

Seeing Ye Leng'an's playful demeanor, Huangfu Ruiling couldn't refuse. And he had never considered turning down any of her requests.

In the afternoon, after lunch, they headed to the amusement park.

Entering the park, they found not just children but also adults.

Seeing the variety of rides and hearing the laughter around them, Ye Leng'an felt as if transported to another world.

In her previous life, she had been to this place. But back then, the truth of her and Ye Xiyuan's switch had yet to be revealed. The Ye family had treated her well then. However, Ye Xiyuan's

emergence and subsequent changes in the family had soured everything. Eventually, she met an untimely demise.

Returning to the amusement park now, she felt a sense of disorientation, even unreality.

“What’s wrong?” Huangfu Ruiling noticed Ye Leng’an’s distraction immediately, patting her shoulder gently. “Why are you standing here lost in thought?”

“It’s nothing.” Ye Leng’an shook her head, brushing off past memories. “Just reminiscing about some old times. But they’re all in the past.”

Indeed, the past was behind her now. She was no longer the weak and vulnerable Ye Leng’an of before. Reborn, she was now a cultivator of the Ascension Stage, returned from the cultivation world.

In this life, everything was different. Ye Xiyuan no longer had the power to trample her.

“Now that it’s in the past, let’s not dwell on it,” Huangfu Ruiling said lightly. “The future is what matters most.”

“Yes, indeed!” Ye Leng’an took his hand and led the way forward. “Since we’re here today, let’s have a blast! You probably haven’t been to an amusement park like this before, have you?”

Had it not been for her visit to the Ye family today, she probably wouldn’t have reminisced about the past. But since it was all in the past now, she shouldn’t dwell on it.

Huangfu Ruiling allowed her to lead him forward. Though he remained silent, the tenderness in his eyes was enough to ensnare anyone.

In the afternoon, they shed all constraints of their identities and played like children in the amusement park.

It wasn’t until evening that they left the park and went to have dinner together.

“Oh, by the way, we’ll probably need to visit the Hidden World next month,” Huangfu Ruiling said, placing peeled shrimp into Ye Leng’an’s bowl. “The Elite Competition in the Hidden World is about to begin. We have to go back.”

“Elite Competition?” Ye Leng’an was taken aback by this sudden news. “What kind of competition is that?”

Hearing her confusion, Huangfu Ruiling proceeded to explain the rules and origin of the Elite Competition in detail.

Ye Leng’an listened intently, her interest piqued. After understanding, she became excited. “It sounds like a lot of fun! And I feel like this competition will be much more thrilling than the previous Family Competition!”

“Indeed.” Huangfu Ruiling nodded. “The Family Competition involves the younger generation of cultivators, with varying levels of strength. But overall, their abilities

aren't too high. However, this Elite Competition is different. The age range for participants is much wider. But..."

At this point, Huangfu Ruiling's eyes flashed with a hint of darkness. "The Elite Competition is much crueler than the Family Competition."

Upon hearing this, Ye Leng'an was momentarily stunned but quickly regained her composure. "You mean, cultivators may lose their lives in this Elite Competition."

"In every Elite Competition, there are cultivators who perish," Huangfu Ruiling continued. "Before the competition begins, many choose to sign a life and death contract. Once you participate, you're responsible for your own fate. Neither your family nor your allies can seek revenge for any reason."

Ye Leng'an understood. "No wonder the Elite Competition is held only once every 20 years. If it were held more often, I'm afraid many lives would be lost!"

However, she somewhat understood those who willingly signed the life and death contract. When there was no way out, people were more likely to tap into their potential, even surpassing their limits.

Winning could lead to great cultivation progress while losing meant death.

Regardless, it was a personal choice.

Huangfu Ruiling nodded. "However, every Elite Competition identifies many talented individuals. Some are recruited by the Enforcement Team. Therefore, there will be no shortage of participants in the Elite Competition. Especially for powerful rogue cultivators, if they seek backing, they may participate in the Elite Competition to attract the attention of major factions and achieve their goals."

Chapter 933: Anxiety

Ye Leng'an was quite excited upon hearing this. "Then I'll definitely take a good look when the time comes."

Listening to Huangfu Ruiling's description, she was still very interested.

"Do you want to join in the fun personally?" Huangfu Ruiling raised an eyebrow, asking. "If you're interested, I can ask the Grand Elder to sign you up."

"Forget it." Ye Leng'an shook her head. "I won't join in. It feels like taking advantage of others."

Although she also wanted to go see, going personally was out of the question. After all, she was confident that very few people in the Hidden World could match her strength. If anyone could rival her, it would probably only be Huangfu Ruiling.

Thinking of this, Ye Leng'an couldn't help but raise her head and look at Huangfu Ruiling.

She really wanted to have a match with him, to see her strength. So far, she only knew that his strength was unfathomable, but she wasn't sure how far it went.

Huangfu Ruiling naturally felt Ye Leng'an's burning gaze. A hint of doubt flashed in his eyes, then he laughed. "What's up?"

"Nothing." Ye Leng'an shook her head, but her gaze remained fixed on him. "I'm just curious about your strength! Come to think of it, we haven't sparred before!"

Huangfu Ruiling burst into laughter at her sudden words. "How did you suddenly come up with this idea?"

Ignoring Huangfu Ruiling's teasing, Ye Leng'an said with a smile, "So, when can we have a sparring match?"

She wasn't joking. She really wanted to see it. At the same time, she wanted to know her own limits.

Looking at her serious expression, Huangfu Ruiling smiled helplessly and continued, "Alright! If you insist, we can find a chance to spar when we return to the Hidden World."

If it were in the mortal world, it would be quite inconvenient.

"Great!" Ye Leng'an laughed happily.

Since handing over the slander lawsuit to Huangfu Shaohua, Zhou Cui'an had completely put it out of her mind. She felt that with Huangfu Shaohua's power and status, this lawsuit would surely be resolved.

During this period, she had been constantly criticized at school and had a hard time getting along with others in the dorm. So, she had been staying in a hotel off-campus.

However, as time passed, she couldn't help but feel a sense of foreboding. Because she hadn't been able to contact Huangfu Shaohua during this time. Although the phone still worked, she couldn't reach him. Calls went unanswered, messages unread.

Most importantly, as the court date for the summons approached, someone from the court called her, reminding her not to forget to respond.

Receiving the call from the court, Zhou Cui'an was dumbfounded. She had always thought Huangfu Shaohua would take care of everything. But now she realized that maybe things weren't as she imagined.

She took a few deep breaths, trying to calm down, then took out her phone and hurriedly dialed Huangfu Shaohua's number.

As before, either it was off or busy. For a moment, she felt a little hopeless.

Looking at the familiar number on the screen, Zhou Cui'an's face lost its sweetness, replaced with fear and worry.

She didn't know what was going on. There were no signs, but Huangfu Shaohua suddenly became unreachable.

What should she do now? The court was about to hear Ye Leng'an's defamation case. She didn't know what to do next. She didn't even know if Huangfu Shaohua had made any arrangements for her.

After all, this case directly affected her punishment. If she lost, the school's punishment would be severe. In the future, this demerit might follow her for life.

Unable to contact Huangfu Shaohua, Zhou Cui'an was frantic. Then, a thought occurred to her, and she dialed Murong Yumeng's number.

Receiving Zhou Cui'an's call, Murong Yumeng felt annoyed. But because she didn't know if she could still use Zhou Cui'an, and Huangfu Shaohua didn't seem tired of her yet, she agreed to meet.

Seeing Murong Yumeng's annoyance after hanging up, Xiao Lingling observed her for a while and cautiously said, "Senior Sister, Zhou Cui'an is really shameless! Why does she always trouble you? Doesn't she have any self-awareness?"

"If she didn't still have some use, I really wouldn't bother." Murong Yumeng's face showed naked disdain. "But, you're right about one thing. Zhou Cui'an really lacks self-awareness."

Despite saying that, Murong Yumeng decided to meet Zhou Cui'an. After all, they hadn't had any conflicts so far. There was no need to turn hostile just yet.

Soon, she arrived at a pavilion by a small lake in the school. Before she got close, she saw Zhou Cui'an sitting on a stone bench, waiting. Her face was full of anxiety.

Seeing Zhou Cui'an like this, Murong Yumeng was surprised.

Zhou Cui'an sounded anxious on the phone, but seeing her now, she felt something was off.

Though Zhou Cui'an was a little uneasy because of the slander case, she couldn't be as haggard as she was now. After all, Huangfu Shaohua had already intervened. Ultimately, Ye Leng'an would not be able to sue her and would be completely humiliated.

Therefore, Zhou Cui'an's current condition couldn't be that bad. Unless something else had happened.

Completely lost in her thoughts, Zhou Cui'an didn't notice Murong Yumeng's arrival. It was only when the latter walked up to her that she snapped out of it. Then, as if startled, she stood up from the stone bench with a hint of surprise on her face. "Senior Sister, you're here!"

Chapter 934: Don't Know What to Do

Murong Yumeng was taken aback by Zhou Cui'an's intense reaction. Once she regained her composure, a hint of displeasure flashed in her eyes, but she made an effort to rein in her emotions. "Junior Sister Zhou, what's the matter? You don't seem well."

Zhou Cui'an, oblivious to Murong Yumeng's displeasure, was consumed with anxiety over Huangfu Shaohua's unresponsiveness. She reached out and grabbed Murong Yumeng's hand. "Can you reach Shaohua?"

Ignoring Zhou Cui'an's words, Murong Yumeng felt the pain in her wrist from being grabbed and quickly pulled away. Annoyance creased her face. "What are you doing?"

Though not a favorite in her family, Murong Yumeng was still a prominent figure as a direct descendant of the Murong family. Her father was the family head, and within the family, she commanded respect. But to be treated so rudely!

Zhou Cui'an, alarmed by Murong Yumeng's change in demeanor, hastily apologized. "I'm sorry. It was unintentional."

As she spoke, Zhou Cui'an noticed the bruise on Murong Yumeng's wrist where she had gripped her. Her breath caught, and she timidly met Murong Yumeng's cold gaze.

The change in Murong Yumeng sent shivers down Zhou Cui'an's spine, filled with regret for her momentary loss of control and the resulting actions. Simultaneously, she worried whether she had alienated Murong Yumeng by inadvertently hurting her.

Now completely unable to contact Huangfu Shaohua, Zhou Cui'an was at a loss. She didn't understand what was happening. But one thing was clear. The only person who could help her now was Murong Yumeng. Yet, she had unintentionally caused Murong Yumeng harm.

Murong Yumeng suppressed her inner impatience, furrowing her brow as she spoke, "Junior Sister Zhou, what is the matter that brings you to me today? I have many tasks to attend to, and I'm truly pressed for time."

Although Zhou Cui'an might still have some utility at present, she couldn't accept the fact that Zhou Cui'an had hurt her. Whether intentional or not, the fact remained that she was injured.

Zhou Cui'an was utterly ungrateful. Regardless of her intentions, she had helped Zhou Cui'an multiple times. Yet now, Zhou Cui'an treated her like this.

Unaware of Murong Yumeng's growing impatience, Zhou Cui'an hurried to explain. "Senior Sister, it was an accident. I'm just anxious. Do you know what's wrong with Shaohua? He hasn't contacted me for so long, and I can't reach him."

Zhou Cui'an was oblivious to Murong Yumeng's annoyance, attributing it to her unintentional injury. Desperate for Murong Yumeng's help, she continued pleading with her.

Murong Yumeng frowned. "In a relationship, both parties need space. And, remember that you're dating Huangfu Shaohua, a member of the Huangfu family. He can't always be available."

Having previously advised Zhou Cui'an on this matter, Murong Yumeng had hoped for more maturity from her. But evidently, Zhou Cui'an remained unreasonable.

If this continued, it wouldn't be long before Shaohua got tired of such a woman!

"No, that's not it," Zhou Cui'an insisted. "I have something urgent to discuss with Shaohua."

"Be reasonable!" Murong Yumeng's disdain was evident. "You've caused Shaohua a lot of trouble lately. If this continues, your relationship won't last."

Alarmed by Murong Yumeng's warning, Zhou Cui'an panicked. Suppressing her anxiety, she explained, "Senior Sister, it's because of the recent incident. The court called me today to appear for a trial."

Her voice trembling, Zhou Cui'an continued, "I don't know what's going on. I just need to speak to Shaohua to see if there's a misunderstanding."

"What?" Murong Yumeng's surprise was palpable. "Are you sure? Did the court really summon you?"

That couldn't be! Such a trivial matter should have been easily resolved by Huangfu Shaohua. And Murong Yumeng had probed him before, finding nothing amiss. This issue should have been resolved by now!

"It's true," Zhou Cui'an affirmed, her voice filled with confusion. "I don't understand it either, but the court is proceeding with the trial. If I can't find Shaohua, I don't know what to do."

Without Huangfu Shaohua, Zhou Cui'an stood to lose the lawsuit. She would have to publicly apologize to Ye Leng'an, and the school wouldn't overlook the matter either. She'd surely face severe consequences.

But what worried her most was the perception of others. With the entire school knowing she was dating Huangfu Shaohua, losing the lawsuit would imply she held no significance to him. How could she face the others then?

This realization sent Zhou Cui'an into a panic.

Hearing Zhou Cui'an's plight, Murong Yumeng's confusion deepened. She halted Zhou Cui'an and said, "Wait, let me try contacting Shaohua to clear up this misunderstanding."

Even Murong Yumeng couldn't remain calm.

Chapter 935: Tell Her to Fend for Herself

Watching Murong Yumeng dial Huangfu Shaohua's number, Zhou Cui'an was filled with conflicting emotions. She wasn't sure how to feel at this moment. On one hand, she hoped Murong Yumeng could get through the call. On the other hand, she feared that Murong Yumeng would indeed connect.

Wanting Murong Yumeng to make the call was crucial because she needed to contact Huangfu Shaohua to understand the situation and figure out her next steps. However, at the same time, she dreaded Murong Yumeng's success in reaching him. That would imply Huangfu Shaohua wasn't busy but simply avoiding her calls.

Murong Yumeng paid no attention to Zhou Cui'an's inner conflict. By now, she had already reached Huangfu Shaohua on the phone. Upon hearing his familiar voice amidst the cacophony, she promptly asked, "Shaohua, what's been going on with you lately?"

The background noise on the call indicated Huangfu Shaohua was indeed at the bar. His surprise at Murong Yumeng's call quickly turned into annoyance upon hearing her almost accusatory tone.

“Ah, Miss Murong, have I offended you recently?” Huangfu Shaohua’s tone carried indifference tinged with sarcasm. “And I certainly haven’t abandoned you, so there’s no need for this questioning!”

Though Murong Yumeng was a direct descendant of the Murong family, Huangfu Shaohua was no ordinary individual. Confronted with her relentless questioning, he didn’t hesitate to assert his stance.

Feeling the dissatisfaction in Huangfu Shaohua’s voice, Murong Yumeng realized her tone might have been too harsh. Softening her voice, she explained, “Shaohua, I didn’t mean anything by it. I’m just relaying someone else’s inquiries.”

While Murong Yumeng spoke, Huangfu Shaohua had found a quieter spot. “Did Zhou Cui’an contact you?” he asked, unable to think of any other reason for Murong Yumeng’s call.

Besides this matter, he couldn’t see any other cause. However, he couldn’t interfere now.

“You know about it?” Murong Yumeng’s tone held a hint of puzzlement. “Didn’t you say you’d handle this matter? What’s going on? Zhou Cui’an has received a call from the court.”

“Oh, you are talking about this matter...” Huangfu Shaohua’s voice was dismissive. “I can’t intervene anymore. Let her fend for herself!”

Hearing Huangfu Shaohua’s words, Murong Yumeng was momentarily stunned. Her earlier suspicions had now been confirmed. But what had happened? What had prompted Huangfu Shaohua to make such a decision?

Zhou Cui’an, standing nearby, was itching to snatch the phone from Murong Yumeng and speak to Huangfu Shaohua herself. But she dared not make any move, having already offended Murong Yumeng earlier.

Without Murong Yumeng’s support, navigating through the school would be challenging for her. Listening to their conversation, she was fraught with anxiety. Simultaneously, a sense of foreboding gripped her.

Now that Murong Yumeng could reach Huangfu Shaohua while she couldn’t, there was only one explanation: Huangfu Shaohua had blocked her number.

The thought increased her anxiety. It wasn’t just about the slander case anymore; it was also about Huangfu Shaohua’s attitude. Reflecting on his behavior lately, her heart grew cold. It seemed Huangfu Shaohua wanted to break up with her.

Why else would he avoid contact?

Unaware of Zhou Cui’an’s changing emotions, Murong Yumeng’s mind was preoccupied with Huangfu Shaohua’s last words. “Shaohua, is something wrong? What’s going on?”

“Yumeng, let me offer you a piece of advice, out of our acquaintance.” Huangfu Shaohua’s voice came through the phone. “It’s best if you don’t involve yourself in this

matter anymore. And it's better not to use the Murong family's resources to help Zhou Cui'an. Otherwise, if things go south, it'll be too late for regrets.

With that, he hung up without another word.

Though the call had ended, Murong Yumeng remained lost in thought. All her attention was on Huangfu Shaohua's final statement.

She didn't understand what was happening, but Huangfu Shaohua's words hinted at something more complicated than she imagined.

At that moment, she couldn't help but recall Ye Leng'an, her fiancé, the nobleman radiating an aura of dominance.

Had Huangfu Shaohua backed down because of Ye Leng'an's fiancé? But if that were true, what was that man's identity?

The thought made her breath catch.

If he was truly as noble as he seemed, then being with him... At that moment, a strong sense of jealousy towards Ye Leng'an surged within her. She even wished she could replace Ye Leng'an.

"Senior Sister, did you reach Shaohua?" Seeing Murong Yumeng's silence, Zhou Cui'an couldn't help but ask, "Where is he? Why isn't he answering my calls? And what about the lawsuit?"

The barrage of questions snapped Murong Yumeng out of her reverie. Impatience flickered in her eyes. After a moment's consideration, she replied, "Um, Junior Sister Zhou, I'm afraid the lawsuit isn't as simple as it seems."

"What's going on?" Zhou Cui'an was on the verge of grabbing Murong Yumeng's hand again in her anxiety. But she remembered what had happened earlier and restrained herself. "Why is Shaohua ignoring me?" Murong Yumeng's words hit Zhou Cui'an like a bolt from the blue. Despite receiving a call from the court, she had clung to a glimmer of hope in her heart. However, Murong Yumeng's words shattered all her illusions.

Chapter 936: Drastic Changes

"Truth be told, I'm not sure what's going on either." Murong Yumeng looked at Zhou Cui'an, her expression troubled. "But Shaohua has made it clear that he can't assist you anymore. You're on your own now."

These words struck Zhou Cui'an like a thunderbolt, plunging her into deep despair. She hadn't expected that after wholeheartedly relying on Huangfu Shaohua, this would be the outcome.

This matter was crucial to her future. Huangfu Shaohua's dismissal of it had shattered her hopes.

“Senior Sister Murong, could you try calling Shaohua again?” Zhou Cui’an’s face was filled with anxiety, but she hadn’t lost all reason. Clinging to Murong Yumeng’s sleeve, she pleaded, “I need to speak with Shaohua. I refuse to believe he’s truly heartless.”

“In light of our acquaintance, I’ll offer you some advice.” Murong Yumeng frowned. “Since Shaohua has washed his hands of this matter, he won’t change his mind. If you still wish to remain with him, then stop pursuing this issue with him.”

Upon hearing Murong Yumeng’s words, Zhou Cui’an felt all vitality drain from her. Her spirit visibly waned.

Murong Yumeng harbored no sympathy for Zhou Cui’an.

Though she orchestrated this behind the scenes, had Zhou Cui’an not been jealous of Ye Leng’an, she wouldn’t have posted on the forum. As for subsequent events, she merely capitalized on the situation.

Thus, even if Zhou Cui’an were sued by Ye Leng’an, Murong Yumeng wouldn’t feel an ounce of guilt or sympathy.

Without hesitation, Murong Yumeng withdrew her sleeve from Zhou Cui’an’s grasp, a look of disdain flickering in her eyes as she glanced at it as if it were contaminated.

Observing Murong Yumeng’s reaction, Zhou Cui’an’s face turned ashen. But suddenly, as if struck by a revelation, she looked up at Murong Yumeng, eyes brimming with hope. “Senior Sister, you’re my only hope now. I beg you, please help me this once! Help me resolve this matter! If I lose to Ye Leng’an, I won’t have a future at school.”

In the past, Murong Yumeng had always come to her aid whenever she faced difficulties. With no other options or allies left, she had no choice but to turn to Murong Yumeng. And she believed that Murong Yumeng, with her kind heart, would help her, just as she had before.

Murong Yumeng nearly laughed aloud at Zhou Cui’an’s expression. Without emotion, she stated, “Zhou Cui’an, I truly can’t help you this time. I suggest you find a lawyer soon.”

She hadn’t expected Zhou Cui’an to be so brazen. Each time Zhou Cui’an found herself in trouble, she came to seek her help, always claiming it was the last time. But there was always a next time.

In the past, Murong Yumeng might have considered Zhou Cui’an’s usefulness and lent assistance if the situation wasn’t too complicated. But now, circumstances had changed. Even Huangfu Shaohua had warned her against involvement. Why should she wade into this mess now?

Moreover, she had no significant ties with Zhou Cui’an, no reason to risk anything for her.

Zhou Cui’an failed to perceive Murong Yumeng’s displeasure. Kneeling before her, she beseeched, “Senior Sister, you’re my only hope now. Shaohua won’t help me anymore, and I have nowhere else to turn. If you help me this time, I’ll remember your kindness. I’ll do anything for you in the future, without complaint.”

In her mind, Murong Yumeng was kind and compassionate. A few more entreaties, and she’d surely acquiesce.

Murong Yumeng regarded the kneeling figure coldly, her tone icy. “Zhou Cui’an, get up. Are you kneeling here to force me into helping you?”

“I...I’m not.” Zhou Cui’an raised her head, shaking it vigorously. “I didn’t mean it that way. I’m just desperate. You know me, I’m not like that.”

“I can’t say for sure what kind of person you are.” Murong Yumeng shook her head, sneering. “But even if you kneel here till you drop dead, I won’t help you.”

Previously, Murong Yumeng might have considered Zhou Cui’an useful, attending the meeting out of respect for Huangfu Shaohua. But now, Zhou Cui’an was of no use to her, having been forsaken by Huangfu Shaohua. There was no need for pretense.

Hearing such callous words, Zhou Cui’an couldn’t believe her ears. She stared blankly, eyes filled with disbelief. “How can you say such things? You...”

“What? Am I just a pawn in your eyes?” Murong Yumeng’s lips curled in disdain. “Zhou Cui’an, I’ve helped you many times! But you can’t just keep coming back to me! Every time you seek my help, you claim it’s the last time. I’m tired of it.”

Gazing at the drastically changed Murong Yumeng, Zhou Cui’an’s face reflected incredulity. “Senior Sister, how did you become like this? You weren’t like this before. You’ve always been kind!”

She’d always seen Murong Yumeng as gentle and compassionate, despite her affluent background. But now, though still beautiful, Murong Yumeng’s face lacked its former warmth, replaced by cold indifference and mockery.

Before Murong Yumeng, she felt suddenly small and insignificant. She couldn’t believe what she was seeing and hearing, nor that a person could change so drastically.

Chapter 937: The Difficult Situation

“What? Are you suggesting that I’m unkind just because I won’t help you?” Murong Yumeng’s expression grew more mocking. “Zhou Cui’an, who do you think you are? Why do you keep demanding my help without any boundaries? Let me warn you, don’t call me again. My time is valuable, and I don’t want to waste it on someone like you.”

With those words, she was about to leave.

“Senior Sister, please wait,” Zhou Cui’an hurriedly called out. “I implore you, just help me this once! Besides, I ended up like this because I was trying to help you.”

Although she didn’t understand why Murong Yumeng had changed so much, she had no other options. If Murong Yumeng left, she would truly be in trouble.

Hearing Zhou Cui’an’s plea, Murong Yumeng turned to look at her with cold eyes. “Zhou Cui’an, there’s no need for you to spout nonsense here. You know exactly what you’re thinking. The reason

you spread those rumors is simply because you're jealous of Ye Leng'an. Don't pretend that you're trying to help me. If you believe in such nonsense, keep it to yourself. Don't try to push it onto others. And why do you think you have the ability to help me?"

"No!" Zhou Cui'an shook her head. "I posted that thread on the school forum because of what you said. Otherwise, how would I know that Ye Leng'an was pursuing a sugar daddy?"

Until then, she had always thought that Ye Leng'an was just a wealthy girl. If it weren't for Murong Yumeng's words, she wouldn't have posted that message.

"I never said Ye Leng'an was pursuing a sugar daddy." Murong Yumeng sneered. "That's all just your assumption. And don't try to blame others for your mistakes. No one else should pay for your foolish actions."

These words left Zhou Cui'an speechless. She opened her mouth, but couldn't find anything to say.

The repeated blows left Zhou Cui'an feeling defeated. She slumped to the ground, looking like she had lost her mind.

Murong Yumeng felt no sympathy for Zhou Cui'an. "If you want to drag me down with you, go ahead. I don't care. But remember... Slandering me without consequences might be more than you can handle."

Ignoring Zhou Cui'an, Murong Yumeng turned and walked away.

Left behind, Zhou Cui'an stared blankly at Murong Yumeng's retreating figure, shivering. She never imagined that a person could change so quickly.

She used to think Murong Yumeng was an innocent and kind girl. Now, she realized that Murong Yumeng had been acting in front of her. But she couldn't understand why.

None of that mattered now. What mattered was her difficult situation.

From Murong Yumeng's words, she knew Huangfu Shaohua wouldn't intervene anymore. Even if she wanted to ask him, she couldn't find him!

She realized that despite being Huangfu Shaohua's girlfriend in name, she didn't really know him. She couldn't reach him if he didn't want to talk to her.

Before, she had been proud of being Huangfu Shaohua's girlfriend. Now, it seemed she was just his plaything.

With Huangfu Shaohua giving up on her and Murong Yumeng refusing to help, what was she to do? Beg Ye Leng'an?

But the thought of begging Ye Leng'an was unbearable. Yet, her future would be ruined if the matter wasn't resolved.

If she had once thought she could rely on Huangfu Shaohua, now she knew she could only rely on herself.

If Ye Leng'an won the lawsuit, her reputation would be ruined. She would face countless rumors in school, not to mention the punishment. With a punishment on her record, finding a good job after graduation wouldn't be easy.

Then why had she worked so hard and gotten into Capital University?

She was also worried that Ye Leng'an might retaliate against her.

She had thought Huangfu Shaohua, as a member of the prestigious Huangfu family, could handle it. But now, even he had backed down.

What kind of background did Ye Leng'an have to be so powerful? If that was the case, they didn't need to go to court; they already knew the outcome.

The top students who got into Capital University weren't fools. Zhou Cui'an understood the situation.

But the thought of begging Ye Leng'an was unbearable. It was worse than swallowing a fly.

Still, she had to do it. Otherwise, her life would be ruined. With Huangfu Shaohua no longer reliable, she had to rely on herself.

After psyching herself up, Zhou Cui'an finally dialed Ye Leng'an's number.

When she heard Ye Leng'an's voice, her hatred surged. But thinking of the school punishment and the unknown outcome of the lawsuit, she suppressed it and replied.

She didn't expect that Ye Leng'an would hang up as soon as she spoke.

Seeing the hung-up phone, Zhou Cui'an couldn't suppress her jealousy and hatred. She threw the phone to the ground.

With a clang, the phone shattered.

Many passersby saw and recognized Zhou Cui'an, starting to gossip.

Unable to bear the stares, Zhou Cui'an left.

Chapter 938: Blocking the Way

"Whose call was it?" Huangfu Ruiling felt somewhat puzzled as he watched Ye Leng'an hang up the phone without hesitation.

"It was Zhou Cui'an." Ye Leng'an casually dropped her phone, her face devoid of any extra expression. "My slander case is about to go to trial. She's probably feeling anxious."

With Huangfu Shaohua now out of the picture, Zhou Cui'an had no one to rely on. She must be feeling frantic! Otherwise, she wouldn't have called here. After all, Zhou Cui'an probably despised her to the core.

Huangfu Ruiling understood and suggested, "If you don't want her bothering you, let Huangfu Shaohua handle it."

“No need.” Ye Leng’an lightly shook her head. “It’s just a minor issue. Besides, it will be resolved soon enough.”

Hearing this, Huangfu Ruiling didn’t insist and simply nodded. “It’s up to you.”

“Oh, by the way.” As if recalling something, Ye Leng’an suddenly asked, “Does Huangfu Shaohua already know about my identity?”

“Probably!” Huangfu Ruiling replied nonchalantly. “He’s not foolish. He probably sensed something was amiss when we stopped him from meddling in this matter.”

Moreover, when they got engaged, although not all members of the Huangfu family attended, a simple inquiry would reveal that his fiancée was Ye Leng’an.

So, it wasn’t surprising if Huangfu Shaohua knew.

“In that case, he’s likely planning to completely abandon Zhou Cui’an.” Ye Leng’an concluded, nodding in understanding. “Zhou Cui’an is truly at her wit’s end this time. I wonder if Murong Yumeng, whom she has always idolized, will come to her aid.”

Huangfu Ruiling casually remarked, “Regardless of who intervenes, it won’t change the outcome.”

Ye Leng’an smiled and nodded in agreement.

While the atmosphere here was warm and sweet, Zhou Cui’an was in a state of agitation.

Unable to tolerate the whispers and stares at school, Zhou Cui’an hurried back to the hotel after leaving the premises.

Once at the hotel, she incessantly called Ye Leng’an. Unsure of what else to do, she repeatedly dialed, but after the initial call ended abruptly, she couldn’t reach Ye Leng’an again, even after changing numbers.

After numerous failed attempts, she finally despondently put down her phone.

However, she quickly lifted her head again.

Since Ye Leng’an wouldn’t answer her calls, she decided to confront her directly. She doubted Ye Leng’an would skip class.

She had no other options now. Only if Ye Leng’an withdrew the lawsuit would the school ease up on her.

Huangfu Shaohua and Murong Yumeng were no longer reliable. The only person who could resolve this was Ye Leng’an, the party involved.

Unaware of Zhou Cui’an’s thoughts, the next day Ye Leng’an went to school as usual.

Seeing Zhou Cui’an in the classroom wasn’t surprising. They shared the same major, so it was expected they’d attend the same class. However, Ye Leng’an paid her no attention. She didn’t even glance at her, simply found a seat and sat down.

Since Ye Leng’an had spotted Zhou Cui’an, the latter naturally saw her too.

One could say that the moment Ye Leng'an stepped into the classroom, Zhou Cui'an noticed her. However, because Ye Leng'an arrived punctually, the teacher followed soon after. So, even if Zhou Cui'an wanted to approach Ye Leng'an, she didn't dare to act rashly, fearing not only disciplinary action but also a teacher's reprimand.

Although Ye Leng'an was already well-versed in the material the teacher was covering, she listened attentively, out of respect.

Observing Ye Leng'an's diligent demeanor, the teacher felt gratified. Though he didn't comment, his satisfied gaze towards Ye Leng'an spoke volumes.

In contrast, Zhou Cui'an was absent-minded throughout the class. Her attention wasn't on the teacher at the podium but entirely on Ye Leng'an.

Having failed to reach Ye Leng'an thus far, she couldn't afford to miss this opportunity. Otherwise, who knew when she'd get another chance? So, all her focus was on Ye Leng'an, fearing she'd lose sight of her once she left.

Finally, when the teacher dismissed the class, Zhou Cui'an, seeing Ye Leng'an near the classroom door, panicked and shouted, "Ye Leng'an, wait!"

Ye Leng'an was about to leave when, at that moment, a loud voice rang out in the classroom. All eyes turned to Zhou Cui'an.

Ye Leng'an furrowed her brows, a hint of displeasure flashing in her eyes, but she halted.

Quickly rushing to Ye Leng'an and blocking her path, Zhou Cui'an, panting, pleaded, "Ye Leng'an, don't leave yet. I have something to tell you."

"Oh, really?" Ye Leng'an raised an eyebrow, her tone chilly. "I don't think there's anything left to say between us. So, please step aside! Don't get in the way!"

Hearing that, Zhou Cui'an's expression stiffened. Clenching her fists at her sides, she struggled to contain her anger, forcing a smile as she spoke, "Ye Leng'an, I really need to tell you something important. It won't take much of your time. Just a few minutes, please."

"Move aside." Ye Leng'an's lips curled into a cold smile. "I don't know what you plan to say, but I think we've made ourselves clear."

"Ye Leng'an, please spare me!"

Seeing that Ye Leng'an had no intention of conversing and was about to leave, Zhou Cui'an panicked. She quickly pleaded, "Everything on the forum was my fault. I realize my mistake now. Please, give me a chance to change!"

Chapter 939: Pressure of Public Opinion

"So?" Ye Leng'an spread her hands and spoke coldly, "Since you've already admitted your mistake, shouldn't you be figuring out a way to make amends?"

"Ye Leng'an, I truly regret my actions."

Zhou Cui'an took a step forward, reaching out to grab Ye Leng'an's hand, but she evaded her grasp. Undeterred, Zhou Cui'an continued, "I won't refuse anything you ask of me. But please, don't press charges against me. My future will be ruined if you do."

As the class had just ended, and in a crowded classroom, many onlookers had gathered. The incident between Ye Leng'an and Zhou Cui'an had become the talk of the school. After all, it was rare for someone like Ye Leng'an to resort to legal action over a forum post.

Many were eager to see what the outcome between them would be. Witnessing Zhou Cui'an's plea to Ye Leng'an didn't surprise anyone.

"Zhou Cui'an, instead of pleading here, why don't you think about your next steps?" Ye Leng'an sneered. "If you truly regret your mistake, then such a display wouldn't be necessary."

"No, it's not like that." Zhou Cui'an shook her head repeatedly. "I genuinely want to apologize to you, Ye Leng'an. Please forgive me this once!"

Hearing Zhou Cui'an's seemingly sincere apology, Ye Leng'an smirked. "But what am I to do? I have no desire to forgive you!"

Zhou Cui'an was taken aback by his response. Clearly, she hadn't expected such a reply.

Watching Ye Leng'an's unwavering demeanor, Zhou Cui'an felt desperate. Unsure of what to do, she bit her lip, took a step forward, and knelt before Ye Leng'an.

"I beg you, Ye Leng'an. I can't afford to go to court," Zhou Cui'an pleaded, tears streaming down her face. "If I do, my life will be ruined. We're classmates, roommates. Must you be so ruthless? I'll kowtow to you, please spare me this once!"

With that, Zhou Cui'an began kowtowing to Ye Leng'an in front of everyone. Each bow was earnest, devoid of any pretense. Within moments, her forehead was crimson, on the verge of bleeding.

Ye Leng'an's expression remained unchanged, unaffected by Zhou Cui'an's distress. She stood there quietly, showing no signs of softening.

The incident between Ye Leng'an and Zhou Cui'an had become so widespread in the school that few remained oblivious to it. Initially, many believed that while Ye Leng'an's actions might have seemed extreme, she was, after all, the victim, so her response was understandable.

After all, in this matter, Zhou Cui'an was the one at fault. Without any evidence, she had slandered a girl for gold-digging, causing significant damage to the girl's reputation.

However, witnessing Zhou Cui'an kneeling on the ground, crying and kowtowing, many couldn't help but feel that she was also quite pitiful.

A girl spoke up, "Actually... Zhou Cui'an has acknowledged her mistake. Ye Leng'an, why not give her another chance? We're all classmates and there's no need to be so harsh!"

Originally, everyone was just spectators, though they felt some sympathy for Zhou Cui'an, they hadn't intended to speak up. However, once the first person broke the silence, others followed suit, one after another. Soon, everyone began urging Ye Leng'an to settle the matter amicably.

"Ye Leng'an, we're all classmates. There's no need for such extremes. Just let Zhou Cui'an off this once!"

"Exactly! It's not a major issue, and you haven't suffered any real harm. Why blow it out of proportion?"

Almost everyone sided with Zhou Cui'an.

Now, Ye Leng'an stood resolute, while Zhou Cui'an knelt, her face stained with tears and blood. Human nature was inclined towards sympathizing with the underdog. In this stark contrast, Zhou Cui'an garnered widespread empathy.

Despite knowing Zhou Cui'an was at fault, and Ye Leng'an was the victim, people couldn't help but side with Zhou Cui'an.

Furthermore, they deemed the issue trivial. Although Zhou Cui'an had slandered Ye Leng'an on the forum, it was hardly a significant matter. Such posts were common on the school forum, often serving as outlets for momentary emotions.

Now, Ye Leng'an had actually called the police just because of a post on the forum, and now she even wanted to sue Zhou Cui'an for defamation. This was indeed making a mountain out of a molehill.

Zhou Cui'an continued to kowtow, but in a place where no one noticed, a triumphant smile crept onto her lips.

Although she was furious about kneeling before Ye Leng'an in public, she couldn't help but feel relieved at this outcome.

With almost everyone on her side, Zhou Cui'an doubted Ye Leng'an could withstand the pressure and persist with her lawsuit.

As Ye Leng'an listened to the pleas around her, her lips curled into a cold smile. Surveying the crowd, she retorted, "This matter concerns only Zhou Cui'an and me. What business is it of yours? If you truly have goodwill, use it for good, not to condemn me, the victim."

Upon her words, those who had spoken for Zhou Cui'an reddened in embarrassment and frustration. Their glares at Ye Leng'an were anything but friendly.

Chapter 940: The Crowd Dispersed

"Ye Leng'an, your words are truly offensive. We were simply offering kind advice, how could you speak like this?"

"That's right, you're heartless. What's your motive for acting like this? You know it well."

“Ye Leng’an, you...”

The surrounding voices of criticism once again filled the air, all directed at Ye Leng’an.

Faced with this situation, Ye Leng’an’s expression remained unchanged. She glanced around at the people and uttered coldly, “I’m simply using the law to defend my legitimate rights. What’s wrong with that? You only see Zhou Cui’an’s current pitiful state, but you fail to see her despicable actions. Gossip can be deadly. The reason I can still stand here and insist on suing those who defamed me is because my inner strength is strong enough to weather these storms. But just because I’m strong, it doesn’t mean I haven’t been hurt by this! If you all want to stand on the moral high ground and criticize me, then you’d better understand the ins and outs of this situation first before deciding what to do or say.”

After these words, everyone present was almost speechless. While they wanted to criticize Ye Leng’an again, they realized she wasn’t entirely wrong.

Ye Leng’an didn’t care about or pay attention to the thoughts of those around her. She continued, “Furthermore, if you truly sympathize with Zhou Cui’an, then when the verdict is delivered, you can assist her in apologizing and compensating me. If you want to play the role of a saint, I won’t object. But don’t direct your intentions towards me. If you’re truly kind, then help Zhou Cui’an compensate me instead of trying to persuade me to let this go.”

With that, the bystanders who had been watching dispersed immediately.

Seeing how pitiful Zhou Cui’an looked, they did feel some sympathy. However, they wouldn’t willingly assist her in apologizing and compensating.

This matter had nothing to do with them. Why should they get involved?

Humans were like this. They could sympathize unconditionally with the weak. However, when such sympathy infringed on their own interests, they were quicker than anyone to distance themselves.

Zhou Cui’an was left dumbfounded as she watched the crowd disperse. She remained kneeling, unsure of whether to continue kowtowing.

Initially, she kowtowed not only to seek Ye Leng’an’s forgiveness but also to use public pressure to force her to compromise.

However, with the onlookers gone and Ye Leng’an showing no sign of softening, continuing to kowtow seemed pointless and only brought embarrassment.

“Why aren’t you continuing to kowtow?”

Just as Zhou Cui’an hesitated, Ye Leng’an’s sarcastic voice pierced the air once more. “Didn’t you sincerely want my forgiveness? Why stop now? Planning to give up halfway?”

Hearing this, Zhou Cui’an snapped out of her daze. She lifted her head to glare at Ye Leng’an, her eyes ablaze with fury. “Ye Leng’an, are you deliberately mocking me? Are you proud of yourself for stepping all over me?”

“Evil begets evil, you’re quite adept at it!”

Facing Zhou Cui’an’s accusation, Ye Leng’an sneered. “You’re the one who stopped me here today, yet you have the nerve to say such things to me now. Don’t you find yourself disgusting?”

Upon hearing Ye Leng'an's words, Zhou Cui'an could no longer contain her emotions. She stood up abruptly, her previous pitiful demeanor replaced by pure rage. "Ye Leng'an, why are you so ruthless? I know I was wrong, so why won't you back down? Do you want to drive me to my death as an apology?"

"Haha, Zhou Cui'an, you overestimate yourself." Ye Leng'an stepped forward, a cold smile playing on her lips. "From start to finish, I've never considered you a threat. It's your repeated ignorance that has led to this situation."

Zhou Cui'an felt a wave of oppression emanating from Ye Leng'an, making it hard to breathe. She didn't know how to respond.

There was a hint of fear in her voice, unbeknownst even to herself. "Ye Leng'an, who are you? And is it you causing trouble for Shaohua?"

"Zhou Cui'an, aren't you being ridiculous?" Ye Leng'an's tone dripped with mockery. "You don't even know who I am, yet you dare slander me online." Her words were filled with scorn. "As for Huangfu Shaohua's matter, that's between you two. It has nothing to do with me. However, I suggest you first figure out your own identity."

At this, a malicious grin crept onto Ye Leng'an's face. "Oh, Zhou Cui'an, you accused me of having a sugar daddy online. But what about yourself? What do you call your actions? You knew Huangfu Shaohua had a fiancée, yet you still intended to come between them. And you must have spent a lot of his money! Tell me, is that not the behavior of a kept woman?"

As soon as Ye Leng'an mentioned "kept woman," Zhou Cui'an forgot her purpose for being there.

Her eyes were red with anger as she glared at Ye Leng'an. "Ye Leng'an, shut up! Shut up! I'm not a kept woman. Shaohua and I truly love each other."

"True love?"

Ye Leng'an's smile widened as if she had heard a joke. "If it's true love, then where is Huangfu Shaohua now? Why wasn't he by your side when you were in trouble?"

The barrage of questions struck at the most vulnerable part of Zhou Cui'an's heart, exposing a truth she was unwilling to admit.

She lifted her head, her gaze fierce, as if there were irreconcilable enmities between them.