

Hidden 551

Chapter 551: Cute Little Child

Five years might not be a long time for youngsters like her but for elders like Grandfather, it was like eternity. Grandfather's hair had turned all white and his straight spine had curved into a hunch. He took out his glasses from his front pocket trying to look at her face clearly...

Ning Xi's old memories all rushed back to her the moment she saw her grandfather.

It was winter, she was still young and was brought to a strange place. She saw her biological parents being intimate with Ning Xueluo as she hid in a corner and started missing her old home. She was almost on the verge of tears. Then, Grandfather found her, held her hands, took her to the kitchen and cooked her a bowl of noodles in soup, telling her not to cry as this was her home.

Zhuang Lingyu had always yelled at her, instilling fear and insecurity in her and she only became worse at the things she was told to do. Her grandfather would always spend time with her in the study room and he taught her many things patiently...

After she left home, she never returned and Grandfather did not know what had happened. As his health was not at its peak, Ning Xi dared not tell him what had happened so as not to worsen his condition. There was a time when Grandfather went to America personally to bring her back but she had declined. Till the present day, she still remembered his disappointed expression...

Currently, Ning Xi was not sure how to face him.

Ning Zhiyuan was clearly unhappy, probably still thinking about the time when she did not return home with him.

Ning Tianxin was the first to make a move to break the ice. She went over and held Ning Xi's hands and took her to Grandfather.

"Xiao Xi, what are you standing there for? Say something!" Ning Tianxin urged her.

Ning Xi was not the shy little girl she was, as she got back to her senses, she quickly gave the elder a big hug, "Grandfather! I've missed you!"

Ning Zhiyuan was surprised by his granddaughter's passionate hug and he exclaimed, "I don't really see how you have missed me! If you really did, why didn't you come back after all these years?"

Although his tone was a little harsh, he obviously still had a soft spot for her.

Ning Xi laughed, "Grandfather, I'm studying hard! You're the one who told me that knowledge transforms life. I've listened to your words and gave studying my all!"

"You..." Ning Zhiyuan looked helplessly at her with his speckled grey eyes, almost not recognizing her anymore as he mumbled, "You've changed...changed..."

Not just her looks, her personality, her aura...just meeting her for a short while made him realize that his granddaughter's transformation came as a big surprise to him.

Ning Xi cocked her head to one side and asked, "How did I change? Am I prettier now?"

The elder smiled at her and replied, "Yes, yes, and much more positive now, it's a good change! Looks like the overseas environment did you good!"

That was the only thing that comforted Ning Zhiyuan as he felt really sorry for this granddaughter of his.

After some small talk, Ning Zhiyuan moved on to the actual conversation. "Xiao Xi, I know that I told you to focus on your studies but I've also taught you to do the right things at the right time, yes? And you too, Tianxin, listen to what I'm going to say!

"You two are getting older now, practically ripe for marriage! You should find someone, get married quickly and bring me a cute little grandchild! I understand that youngsters nowadays are very busy, so if you don't have time to look after the kids, I'll look after them for you, don't worry about it!"

Chapter 552: Successor With The Blood Of The Ning Family

Ning Xi and Ning Tianxin looked at each other helplessly. Ning Tianxin was a feeble person and would not say anything, so Ning Xi spoke up, "Grandfather! Stop! You can't be like this! The first thing you tell me after so many years is to urge me to marry. You know what kind of grandfather isn't cute? It's the kind that urges their grandchildren to get married!"

Ning Zhiyuan shot her a stubborn look. "Then, do you know what kind of granddaughter isn't cute? One like you! Always roaming outside and not coming back, and not bearing any great-grandchild for me! I'm already 70 years old today, how many years do I have left?"

Ning Xi was speechless by his rebuttal.

Ning Zhiyuan looked in the direction of the banquet hall and said to them in a sad tone, "It's not that I want to force the both of you. I have no choice.

"Up until your generation, there isn't a male offspring. Who am I going to pass the family business to? Are you asking me to pass it to the adopted Ning Xueluo? Or your second uncle's two illegitimate daughters?"

Both Ning Xi and Ning Tianxin looked down shamefully after hearing what their grandfather said.

Ning Xi lived with a no marriage doctrine; she would probably never get married her whole life, what more have a child to take over the family business.

Ning Tianxin already had someone in mind but they missed their window of opportunity. She still could not let it go after so many years and she could not accept anyone else, so she was not able to fulfil Grandfather's wish as well.

Ning Tianxin's father, also Ning Xi's second uncle, Ning Yaobang wanted to force Ning Tianxin to marry someone and give birth to a successor but the fragile Ning Tianxin was stubborn on the inside. She insisted not to marry at all and threatened him with her death, so Ning Yaobang had been sprinkling his seeds outside in a desperate attempt and cultivating his illegitimate daughters, hoping they could give birth to a successor soon...

As for Ning Xueluo, even though she was adopted, it seemed that they had discussed with the Su family that her firstborn male would bear the surname Ning.

Ning Yaohua had been fighting with Ning Yaobang restlessly...

Ning Yaohua's biggest chip was Ning Xueluo's influence and her marriage to the Su family, while Ning Yaobang's biggest chip was that while he did not have a son, at least all his daughters were her real daughters. If any of them gave birth to a son, then he would be the successor with the blood of the Ning family!

As the discussion progressed, it turned stale. Both Ning Xi and Ning Tianxin not having any idea how to reply their grandfather. They could not promise him but they were not cruel enough to break his heart.

Suddenly, a familiar voice came through...

"Father, many people are waiting to meet you. Why are you here in the backyard? Uh...you...Ning Xi..."
As Zhuang Lingyu was speaking, she noticed that there someone else was with Ning Tianxin and Ning Zhiyuan.

After realizing that it was Ning Xi, Zhuang Lingyu's expression darkened and she yelled at her, "What are you doing here?! We have a lot of guests here, what would happen if they saw you? Get out!"

Before Ning Xi could say anything, the old man was enraged. "Ridiculous, Xiao Xi is my biological granddaughter, what makes you think you can chase her out?!"

Zhuang Lingyu was worried and she carefully looked around. "Father...please keep your voice down!"

"What for? Am I wrong? Is Xiao Xi not your daughter?" Ning Zhiyuan was even angrier seeing her worried gesture.

Chapter 553: Announce Xiao Xi's Identity

The reprimanded Zhuang Lingyu stared at Ning Xi, then she gently apologized to Ning Zhiyuan, "Father, I don't mean it that way...as you would know, not many people know that Xiao Xi is my..."

"I've told you a long time ago, I told you to announce Xiao Xi's identity. She was studying abroad before but now she's back! Everyone's here today and you will tell everyone that Xiao Xi is part of our Ning family!"

Zhuang Lingyu reacted in horror, "What? Father, absolutely not! I disagree!"

Her expression looked as if Ning Xi was some disgusting and terrifying beast that had to be hidden from the world...

Back then, when she had just returned home, she would have been heartbroken seeing such an expression like that from her biological mother but now, any semblance of expectation was totally eradicated.

Ning Tianxin was not aware of what Ning Xi had gone through, so she felt really sorry for her and held her cousin's hands tightly.

Ning Xi felt a sense of warmth glowing from her heart with Ning Tianxin's grip and she gave her a happy smile.

Her smile was as warm as the sun and brought an otherworldly kind of joy...

Ning Tianxin did not expect that reaction from Ning Xi and was shocked.

As Ning Zhiyuan and Zhuang Lingyu discussed, a few people had come over. Ning Yaohua, Ning Xueluo, Ning Yaobang, and her two illegitimate daughters joined the group.

Apart from Ning Yaobang's wife who was not there due to some relationship complications, all of the Ning family members were present.

"What happened? Why have the both of you started arguing?" Ning Yaohua frowned, then he saw Ning Xi and his face darkened. "Why are you here?"

He was surprised that his wife would start an argument with his father. As expected, every time this girl appeared, bad things would happen!

Zhuang Lingyu saw that her husband was here and she quickly told him, "Yaohua, please convince your father! He wants to announce Xiao Xi's identity today!"

Ning Yaohua responded in shock, "No way! Father, are you confused? Damn it, did this brat tell you to do this?"

Ning Yaohua shot Ning Xi a suspicious look.

Ning Zhiyuan struck the floor with his walking stick and demanded, "Don't you blame this on Xiao Xi, it was my idea. Now, you tell me, what's wrong with this?"

"Right, what's wrong with this? Isn't Ning Xi your real daughter?" Ning Yaobang followed along, adding fuel to the fire.

His provoking tone angered Ning Yaohua. "You, shut up! It's none of your business!"

Ning Yaohua's overbearing attitude triggered Ning Yaobang who replied, "Brother, that's not quite right of you to say that. I'm also a member of the Ning family, how is this none of my business?"

Damn it! What was the big deal being the business manager? It was not like he received any shares. How dare he yell at him like this?!

Still, he was blessed with an exceptional daughter! Not only did she bring in tons of resources, she even brought back an outstanding son-in-law! Could Ning Xueluo have brought fortune to Ning Yaohua as Master Long mentioned?

God damn it, what sort of luck did Ning Yaohua have for him to pick up such a valuable golden egg?

It was a good thing that his biological daughter was so terrible. He was looking forward to Ning Xi's return to mess up Ning Yaohua's life! He was excited just by thinking about what had happened five years ago!

Chapter 554: Everything Would Be Hers Eventually

Ning Yaohua stopped talking to Ning Yaobang and focused on the old man first. "Father, it's not that I don't want to announce it but it's too hasty to do so. We've been telling everyone that she's adopted, then suddenly the adopted daughter becomes the real daughter. You'd need a good excuse for that! It'll

be a big joke if we do it unprepared! Furthermore, it will look really bad if we mess up on your birthday today!"

"Hasty, hasty...it's been five years! You have never even bothered about this matter, have you?!"

"Of course, I have, I've looked for her when she first returned and even wanted to arrange a job for her. She could have slowly adapted to our Ning family, only then we'd announce her real identity. It was she who wanted to enter the entertainment industry. Not only did she bring up some nasty rumours upon herself, she even affected Xueluo..."

Actually, announcing Ning Xi's identity had never occurred to him.

The terrible scandal of Ning Xi giving birth to a dead child after having sex with two escorts was a time bomb that would explode any moment.

If it was ever exposed one day...

He could never let anyone know that Ning Xi was her biological daughter!

Ning Zhiyuan did not believe his son and asked, "A job? What kind of job did you arrange for Xiao Xi?"

"Our branch company in Singapore..."

"You bastard, you're sending her far away right after she had just returned! What are you letting Xiao Xi do at that stupid place with just 20 over employees?"

"I'm just trying to let her gain more experience. I can't put her straight into our main office, can I?"

"Xiao Xi is my granddaughter, why not?! Xiao Xi, you'll join the main office tomorrow in the finance department!"

Ning Xueluo's expression changed when she heard what Ning Zhiyuan said.

She had actually wanted to join the Ning company's main office at first but her position would attract a lot of suspicion in the company. Thus, she decided to use reverse psychology. Even if Ning Yaohua and Zhuang Lingyu had suggested it, she would decline them, showing that she was not going after any benefits the Ning family would be associated with at all. As a result, Ning Yaohua and Zhuang Lingyu showered her with more love and even the elder had nothing to say about it.

Ning Zhiyuan really hated the two illegitimate daughters of Ning Yaobang. They were not a threat to her at all. Even though Ning Tianxin could possibly give birth to a son, she was still charmed by a man from her past so there was no worrying about her. Ning Xueluo was patient because after she had gained enough resources from the Su family, everything from the Ning family would be hers eventually.

But now, after so many years of hard work, they were falling apart all because of Ning Xi!

How could she tolerate this?!

After the elder finished, not only Ning Yaohua, Zhuang Lingyu, and Ning Xueluo, even Ning Yaobang could not stand it anymore.

"Father, are you kidding me? She graduated from some unknown university and has no working experience at all, how could you let her join the finance department?! Even if you were to pick, you should pick Tianxin! Or even Xiao Ru and Xiao Ai!"

"Brother, you're overestimating your children. While it's true that Tianxin graduated from the University of Imperial, she's an art major, so what can she do in the finance department? As for your two illegitimate daughters, what else do they know aside from dressing themselves up? Are you trying to mess up the company by letting them join the finance department? Father has said it before, Xueluo will join the finance department after she's married!"

Chapter 555: It's Only Been Two Hours

Of course, Ning Yaohua hoped that his daughter would join the main company but he had hoped for Ning Xueluo to do so, and not Ning Xi.

To him, if Ning Xi were to join the main company, it would be a total disaster. Messing things up in the family was terrible but screwing up in the company would be utterly embarrassing. He had promised the Su family the other day that Xueluo would definitely inherit the family business!

As the three of them argued, Zhuang Lingyu went up to Ning Xi and pulled her aside. "What are you still waiting here for? Leave now! We were all good here until you came along. It's your grandfather's birthday today, do you really have to mess things up?"

Although Ning Xi looked calm, Ning Tianxin could not hold it in anymore. Despite being a meek person, she spoke up, "Big Aunt, you're not being reasonable here. Xiao Xi was just here to wish Grandfather, so in order to not alert all of you I brought Grandfather to the backyard to see her. She didn't say anything nor do anything wrong at all! How is this her fault?"

"Yes, she didn't do anything wrong but her presence itself is more than enough! And our family matters are none of your business!"

...

At the same time, in CEO Lu's room.

Two hours had gone by but Ning Xi was not back yet.

Little Treasure was lying there looking out of the window as usual while Lu Tingxiao started to check his phone frequently.

Lu Jingli could not stand them anymore. "Eh, can the both of you calm down? It's only been two hours!?"

Five minutes later, she was not back yet.

Lu Tingxiao picked up his phone and called Ning Xi but no one answered.

At the Ning family's residence.

Ning Xi's phone suddenly rang and she saw it was Lu Tingxiao calling. She realized that more than two hours had passed.

He was probably going to ask when she was returning.

The Ning family was in an uproar now and Ning Xi was not available to pick up the call. She went up to her fuming grandfather and spoke to him gently, "We'll talk about things some other day, I'm just here to see you today. I have something to do later and I have to go now. Happy birthday, Grandfather!"

"What? You're leaving now?" her grandfather asked worriedly, "Don't worry about these bastards! Grandfather is here, no one can chase you away!"

Ning Xi stroked her grandfather's back, "Grandfather, I'm just a little busy lately. Otherwise, I wouldn't be here this late!"

"Xiao Xi, it's my fault, I made you go through such hard times..." Ning Zhiyuan thought Ning Xi was just comforting him and that she was leaving because of Ning Yaohua and Zhuang Lingyu's attitude, so he felt sorry for her.

Ning Xueluo knew that things were bad, seeing the expression on her grandfather's face.

Although the current power lay in Ning Yaohua's hands, the company's shares were still dictated by the elder, and if he favoured Ning Xi, then things would be troublesome.

She was afraid that the elder would feel sorry for Ning Xi. After all, she was still the real granddaughter, so no matter how useless or dirty Ning Xi was, a few words were all it would take to destroy everything Ning Xueluo had built up so far.

Was it because of that damned lineage?

Just because she did not have the Ning family's blood running in her, would she need to invest hundreds and thousands-fold more effort to get what Ning Xi could acquire easily?

Chapter 556: Worried About The Wife Being Alone

If Ning Xi became the legitimate heir, then...

Ning Xueluo could not accept the thought of how she would live a life of poverty back in the poor village! Even if the Ning family kept her, she could not bear the thought of being under Ning Xi!

She was the Ning family's daughter and she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. There was no way she would allow this witch to take away all of that from her!

That's right, she was the one and only daughter of the Ning family! Even bloodline could not change that!

Ning Xueluo took a deep breath to calm herself down, then she went up to Ning Xi and held her arms, saying in a trembling voice, "Sister, please don't leave, alright? Please don't be angry with Father and Mother! They have been preparing to announce your identity a long time ago, but you didn't want to come back and join the company..."

"You can put all the blame on me, it's all my fault, do whatever you want to me. If you really don't want to see me here, I'll leave now! But please, sister, don't go!"

"Even if you don't want to see us, think about Grandfather! Grandfather really missed you! At least take a bite of Grandfather's birthday cake! What could possibly make you miss Grandfather's birthday?"

Ning Xueluo's words were phrased cleverly, indirectly blaming matters on Ning Xi, at the same time expressing her awkward position in the Ning family, and most importantly, showing how filial she was towards Grandfather...

Zhuang Lingyu felt sorry for her. "Xueluo, what are you talking about? Where are you going? You shouldn't be the one leaving!"

The elder looked much kinder now, seeing Ning Xueluo ask Ning Xi to stay as well. Of course, he would not chase Ning Xueluo away, so he went along with her. "Xiao Xi, it's such a rare occasion that you're back. Stay for a while more, alright?"

Ning Xi looked at the elder's eyes silently, and in the end, she nodded. "Okay."

It was already clear that she would disappoint him by never fulfilling his wish of giving birth to a great-grandchild for him.

It would be impossible for her to go back to the Ning family or to join the company, so she was not cruel enough to decline his simple request upfront.

"That's great! Come inside! It's cold outside!" The elder delightedly went back into the house with the help of Ning Tianxin and Ning Xi.

Ning Xueluo was left behind. She gave them a cold stare when she saw Ning Tianxin and Ning Xi helped Ning Zhiyuan back inside.

Seeing that the elder was settled, Zhuang Lingyu let out a sigh of relief. She walked up to Ning Xueluo kindly and held her hands apologetically. "Xueluo, it must be hard for you!"

No matter what happened at home, she was always mature and cared about everyone's feelings.

Ning Yaohua felt heartbroken for her as well. He sighed, "Xueluo, don't take it personally, your grandfather just missed Xiao Xi too much and was excited. He did not mean what he said, I'm still in charge of the company right now, don't worry!"

"Thank you, Father, Mother...I understand!"

...

After Grandfather had calmed down, Ning Xi sent Lu Tingxiao a message: [I need to stay here with my grandfather for a little while more. Will be late. Take Little Treasure back home first, I'll pick him up from Platinum Palace later.]

Lu Tingxiao's face fell when he read her message in his office.

Lu Tingxiao understood that no matter how strong Ning Xi looked, she still had her soft spot, which was the Ning family.

He knew a thing or two about what had happened to her in the Ning family...

Although Ning Xi sounded casual in the text message, how could he be not worried about leaving her alone at that place?

Chapter 557: Drastic Changes

As Ning Xi followed the elder into the banquet hall, everyone started whispering to each other.

"Who's the girl beside Elder Ning? She came here dressed like that?"

"I heard the elder call her Xiao Xi just now, could it be...the adopted daughter, Ning Xi?"

"So that's her! It's been five years and she's still like that, there's been no improvement at all!"

"Hehe, she's still wearing pirated goods after five years. Has her taste in clothes not improved?"

...

Ning Xi had been going around to do some furniture shopping for the studio decoration with Gong Shangze and Little Treasure, so she had casually worn just a leather jacket with jeans, and tied a neat ponytail.

However, because all of the ladies there that night were wearing long dresses and high heels, she stood out like a sore thumb.

The elder was over the moon about his granddaughter's return and could not care less about what Ning Xi wore, so he kept on talking to Ning Xi until Zhuang Lingyu had to remind him about the guests waiting for him. Eventually, she let Ning Tianxin accompany Ning Xi to get something to eat.

After the elder had left to see to the guests, any trace of a smile left Zhuang Lingyu's face as she looked at Ning Xi with despire. "Take a look in the mirror. Don't you know what day it is?"

Ning Xueluo rushed to say, "Mother, don't blame Sister, she must have rushed here and had no time to change!"

She acted as if she was afraid of Ning Xi getting angry at her. She walked up to her, "Sister, if you don't mind, do you want to change into one of my outfits upstairs?"

"What are you waiting for? Go and follow Ning Xueluo to change! You've been so busy but you never do anything properly. Who knows what kind of trouble you're involved in?!" To Zhuang Lingyu, Ning Xi was the bane of her existence and she could not even stand looking at her.

When she was younger, Ning Xi would have been embarrassed if she was scolded like that the last time, but now she just glanced at Zhuang Lingyu. "Oh, it wouldn't really matter to you whether I got changed or not. Aren't you being a bit too controlling, Madam Ning?"

She then took hold of Ning Tianxin's hand and headed for dessert.

"You...you..." Zhuang Lingyu sputtered in frustration, "Xueluo, look at her, does she still treat me as a mother? She's got no manners at all!"

Ning Xueluo was gloating happily as she comforted Zhuang Lingyu and pretended to speak up for Ning Xi, but the more she said, the deeper Zhuang Lingyu's hatred for her own daughter ran...

Oblivious to her mother's anger, Ning Xi sat down at a table with Ning Tianxin. She helped herself to some wine and felt no awkwardness about crashing an unfamiliar place. It was as if the place was her backyard garden and what had happened here was merely a hilarious performance which she was taking as entertainment.

Ning Tianxin looked at her cousin sister with her nonchalant attitude in surprise. "Xiao Xi, you've changed a lot over the years!"

Ning Xi raised her eyebrows. "Have I?"

When she was discovered wearing a ripped-off dress five years ago, she recalled feeling like she might as well have been naked in public and her world collapsed under the mockery and the looks of disgust from everyone...

But now...

By comparison, it seemed that there had been drastic changes over the years...

Chapter 558: How Could She Cut Herself Off From Worldly Desires When There Are Temptations

Actually, before she arrived, she had felt nervous and reluctant when she thought about meeting the Ning family.

The trauma from her past was too hurtful to be forgotten easily and it still haunted her in the form of nightmares.

But being present there, facing the odd stares from those people and the mockery from her own parents, along with Ning Xueluo's usual hypocritical act, she was not as anxious as she anticipated to be. There was not even the tiniest sense of rage or anger...

Time could really change a person.

Before she realized it, all the things she cared so much about before did not matter as much now.

"Mmm, you're not just prettier, you've actually gained much more confidence. I can see it, especially in your eyes. How do I put it? There's an unknown strength from them, like the rebirth of a phoenix, rising from the ashes..." Ning Tianxin told her excitedly although she felt a little heartache.

People don't change without reason and she did not know what triggered Ning Xi's change today. She felt that it was odd when Ning Xi had gone overseas five years ago but she felt like she was not in the position to ask about it.

Ning Xi smiled and cupped her chin in her hands. "Cousin Sister, you've even got a flair for complimenting people!"

"I'm serious!" Ning Tianxin replied.

Ning Xi sipped some wine and sighed, "Love breeds sorrow, love breeds fear. Those who have abandoned love are free from sorrow and fear. Maybe it's because I don't care anymore that none of this matters now. You're stronger when are free of desires..."

Ning Tianxin looked a little pale hearing Ning Xi's words. "Xiao Xi, what are you thinking?! Why does it sound like you're cutting yourself off from any worldly ties?"

Ning Xi coughed. She was just joking around but Ning Tianxin was clearly scared, so she quickly comforted her, "Sis Xin, I'm just kidding, don't worry!"

She was obsessed with such temptations around her, how could she cut herself off from any worldly ties? It would be great if she could really achieve that!

...

Ning Xi chatted with Ning Tianxin happily while the gossip about her earlier soon stopped since Ning Xi did not pay them any mind.

Their main purpose here was to get on the elder's and Ning Yaohua's good side; they were not here to look at some unimportant adopted daughter.

The night came. More and more guests arrived and the banquet hall was filled with people.

Ning Yaohua was trying her hardest to make the elder happy. He got people to bring out the presents he had prepared beforehand.

He had prepared an exquisitely-made Red Coral Eight Treasure screen which looked very extravagant. Everyone praised it and mentioned how filial Ning Yaohua was.

The elder just looked at it and just let it slide. He did not look very happy, apparently because he was still angry.

Ning Xueluo gave his father a comforting gaze and shot Ning Xi daggers. He went up to the elder with a wooden box filled with intricate carvings in her hands. "Grandfather, happy birthday! This is a present I picked out by myself, I hope you'll like it!"

Zhuang Lingyu started, "Father, open it! Xueluo's company started to earn some money recently and she used her own money to buy it for you! I've mentioned paying for her but she insisted on preparing the present herself for it to be sincere!"

The elder took a glance at his granddaughter and opened the box and slowly. Upon seeing what was inside, his facial expression changed drastically.

Inside the box was a bracelet made of jade beads.

Chapter 559: Questionable Present

Ning Yaohua's gift was clearly a case of insincere splurging. On the other hand, Ning Xueluo's present exuded effort in preparation.

She knew that he loved jade and was also a staunch Buddhist, so she chose to give him a jade beaded bracelet.

As Ning Zhiyuan assessed the bracelet, Ning Xueluo stood in front of him quietly.

Despite the unease in her eyes, the elder loved her very much.

Ning Xueluo had been staying with him ever since she was a child and even after it was found out that she was not his actual grandchild, he still treated her just like one of his own. He just did not like his eldest son's and daughter-in-law's attitude.

Ning Zhiyuan sighed and gently said, "Thank you for your gift, I really like it!"

Ning Xueluo looked relieved to hear her grandfather's praise. Her eyes had reddened slightly and she excitedly said, "I'm glad that you like it, Grandfather!"

The old man felt sorry for her upon hearing the girl's sincerity in her voice. He did not want to involve her in his argument with his son and daughter-in-law. He then advised her, "Your career is important but remember to take care of your health, especially since you're a girl. Don't overexert yourself!"

Ning Xueluo nodded heavily, feeling touched. "Got it, Grandfather!"

Zhuang Lingyu and Ning Yaohua looked at each other after they saw that the elder's face was full of warmth. They looked at Ning Xueluo, their treasure and pride.

The relatives and the guests at the side started their stream of flattery...

"Oh, the color of the jade looks really good. I'm guessing it costs at least two or three million dollars!"

"That's no big deal. Xueluo's brand "History" made a net profit of tens of millions just this season.

What's more is that she's a famous superstar!"

"Elder Ning, you're really blessed! Your children and grandchildren are so capable and filial!"

...

In the corner, Ning Xi who was chatting with Ning Tianxin frowned when she saw Ning Xueluo's present for their grandfather.

What a coincidence!

Ning Xueluo's present was just like Ning Xi's, a bracelet made of jade beads?

Her eyes met Ning Xueluo's gaze.

Ning Xueluo set her eyes on the present on their table. Those cunning eyes...they looked as if she already knew what Ning Xi had planned to give and that she had purposely prepared the same thing!

Obviously, Ning Xueluo's present was at least ten times more expensive than Ning Xi's gift.

She intentionally wanted to embarrass her in front of everyone...

Ning Xueluo put on a grin, then told the elder, "Grandfather, I heard that Sister has also got you a present!"

She innocently looked as if she was just trying to make Grandfather happy.

As Ning Xi's real identity had still not been announced, Ning Yaohua and Zhuang Lingyu would be spared the blame regardless of whatever humiliating incident occurred since she was an adopted daughter to

the public's knowledge . At the same time, she could make Grandfather upset with Ning Xi, hence killing two birds with one stone.

As expected, the elder did not notice Ning Xueluo's real intentions. He looked at Ning Xi with joy. "Is that true, Xiao Xi?"

Ning Tianxin looked at Ning Xueluo, then turned to Ning Xi, her sharp senses warning her that something was not right. "Xiao Xi, wait..."

She could not tell what Ning Xueluo was plotting but it was definitely clear that whatever it was would not help improve the relationship between Ning Xi and Grandfather, making it even more impossible for Ning Xi to shine under a positive light at an event like this.

Chapter 560: Priceless Treasure

"Let me have a closer look at your gift. I suspect that Ning Xueluo might have done something to it!" Ning Tianxin alerted.

There must be something odd happening.

Ning Xi smiled and whispered to Ning Tianxin, "Cousin Sister, you sure are smart. The present does have some flaws but it's been by my side the whole time, so I'm sure that nothing has happened to it."

"Then?" Ning Tianxin asked suspiciously.

"For some reason, Ning Xueluo knew what I was going to give Grandfather, so she prepared the same present as mine and of course, hers is much more expensive!"

Ning Tianxin immediately knew what was going on and she continued in panic, "What then? Even if Grandfather doesn't mind, the people around us would surely say something nasty...Xiao Xi, why don't I exchange something for you?"

"It's okay, I'm fine as long as Grandfather doesn't mind." Ning Xi walked towards her grandfather with her present and gracefully wished him, "Grandfather, happy birthday."

Ning Tianxin was worried about her but then she suddenly calmed down.

She had been blinded. At first, Ning Xi had not wanted to return to the Ning family. Besides that, she was clearly not after the Ning family's property. No matter what everyone else said to her, she did not care about their opinions, only being concerned about Grandfather's opinion.

Being reunited with his granddaughter was a happy enough occasion for him, so he did not mind even if she had not prepared any gift. He smile and told her, "I'm already very glad that you're back, you don't to prepare anything for me! You've been working so hard on your own outside!"

"Anyway, it's Sister's sincerity, quickly open it, Grandfather!" Ning Xueluo told him, hiding her eagerness.

"Okay, okay..." The elder slowly opened up the box and was surprised when he saw what was inside but he recovered quickly. He looked at Ning Xi kindly, "Girls are really sweet, they both thought of the same thing and got me what I like!"

Ning Xueluo shot them a cold gaze as she sneered at them inwardly. So, you would still like it because your real granddaughter gave it to you...

Others also saw what Ning Xi presented him with and they were surprised. What a coincidence! They both gave him the same thing!

Ning Xueluo's friends started gossiping...

Ying Fanglin glanced at the jade bead bracelet and ridiculed, "That's totally different! Xueluo's one is definitely top-notch quality, this is just some worthless trash! How is that the same?!"

Jing Xuanxuan went along, "Ning Xi, didn't you just move over to Glory World Entertainment? You should be earning a lot, shouldn't you? And you just bought such a poor quality item like this? It's your grandfather's 70th birthday. Are you really okay with giving him this? Do you know that jade has an aura of its own which can make or break a person's fortune?"

That last sentence was a devastating arrow meant to embarrass her.

Suddenly, Ning Xi was targeted by everyone.

"Please don't put it that way, she might not be doing very well herself!" someone said jokingly.

"What? For giving something she can't afford, why did she choose something as expensive as this?"

"You have to understand that people from small villages like to act generously and act ignorantly. How would they know about the taboo about jade stones?"

...

Ning Zhiyuan was really unhappy as he heard all the comments. Just as he was going to speak up, an bespectacled old man from the crowd said in a serious tone, "My young friends, please allow me to say something. The taboo about jade stones doesn't lie in its worth. And a jade's quality is based on many factors. Even if it was just a normal jade, with suitable care or if it were crafted by a renowned maker and blessed by high priest monks, it could become a priceless treasure!"

The elder hesitated and looked at the jade Ning Xi had given to her grandfather before continuing, "And this is what I would call a priceless treasure!"