

Hidden 801

Chapter 801: My Value Rises With The Child

The elder carefully held the little boy's hand. "That's right...this is a descendent of the Ning family...I can feel it..."

The elder shifted all his attention onto Little Treasure as he held Little Treasure's hand and stared at him. "He really...looks like Xiao Xi...look at his eyes...and his nose..."

The elder kept on saying that Little Treasure looked just like Ning Xi...

However, Ning Xi was thinking to herself, "Was Little Treasure not identical to Lu Tingxiao? How could he possibly look like her?"

"Xiao Xi, please take the child outside first. I have something to say to him in private." The elder looked at Lu Tingxiao with a serious expression.

"You sure you don't want to rest now, Grandfather? Don't overexert yourself!" Ning Xi gently scolded him.

"It's alright, I'm not tired yet. Or are you afraid that I'll swallow him whole?"

"Ning Xi, take Little Treasure outside first," Lu Tingxiao told Ning Xi.

Ning Xi looked at Lu Tingxiao helplessly, then she led Little Treasure out.

In the hospital room, the elder stared at the man in front of him. "What's up with you and Xiao Xi?"

"We were going to get married when we realized Xiao Xi was pregnant, but due to some misunderstanding, we got separated...until we reunited five years ago..."

...

Lu Tingxiao finally came out after making Ning Xi wait for half an hour.

"How was it?" Ning Xi went up to him.

"Grandfather asked you to go in with Little Treasure, he wants to see him again."

"Oh..." Ning Xi quickly brought Little Treasure in.

As she was about to talk to the elder, he looked past her and focused on Little Treasure before speaking in a gentle tone, "Little Treasure, how old are you?"

Little Treasure quickly wrote [Five] on his writing board.

"Are you going to school?"

[Going to kindergarten now]

"Do your father and your mother have a good relationship?"

[Yes]

...

Ning Xi was worried that Little Treasure might have problems communicating with Grandfather, but they interacted well on their own. In fact, she was the third wheel in the room.

The elder, who was weak earlier, seemed much more refreshed.

Who knew what Lu Tingxiao told the elder and what explanation could he have given? After the elder talked to Little Treasure, he spoke to Ning Xi, "Xiao Xi, you must treasure Lu Tingxiao. It's not easy to meet a man that really loves you!"

"I will, Grandfather."

"I know that you're focusing on your career, but don't neglect the people around you, alright?"

"Oh, okay..."

...

After they left the hospital, Ning Xi was confused. "Hey Lu Tingxiao, what did you say to my grandfather? Why was he suddenly on your side? He was all over you! Logically speaking, he'd be frustrated that you made me pregnant, shouldn't he?"

"Do you really want to know?" Lu Tingxiao looked at her.

Ning Xi nodded. "Yes."

"My value rises with the child."

Ning Xi was speechless.

This could not be anymore...accurate...

"I told Grandfather that we're not marrying right now, considering your career, but we can do it anytime as soon as you say 'yes'."

"Uh..." That was mean! That basically meant that he was putting all the blame on Ning Xi? But it did not seem wrong...

"That's all? What else did you say?" Ning Xi felt that he was not telling her everything.

Lu Tingxiao looked at her and said slowly, "I told Grandfather that we plan to have another three to five children."

Ning Xi almost choked. "Three to five? That's too many!"

This was unexpected! This guy...he was good at dealing with the elders!

Chapter 802: I'm Driving, Don't Mess Around

After they left the hospital, they sent Little Treasure to school.

On the way back, Ning Xi cocked her head sideways and looked at Lu Tingxiao. "Then...how did you explain our relationship to Grandfather?"

Lu Tingxiao had said that he would handle it, so she had not asked much about it, but she was curious now.

Lu Tingxiao looked straight ahead at the sun and answered while driving, "I said that we fell in love at first sight and that we were unable to control ourselves, then Little Treasure happened. After that, due to some misunderstanding, you left Little Treasure and I. We reunited five years later and realized that we still loved each other, so we got back together again..."

It was the first time Ning Xi heard Lu Tingxiao utter so many words that she felt surreal; it did not seem like him at all.

Ning Xi was surprised. "Wow, Lu Tingxiao! You're so good at making up stories. You should be a scriptwriter already...and a romance drama scriptwriter at that!"

Lu Tingxiao looked at her through the mirror. "I'm not making it up. It's what I envisioned. How nice would it have been if we had met each other earlier?"

Ning Xi's heart skipped a few beats.

Lu Tingxiao's words lingered in her mind...

How nice would it have been if we had met each other earlier?

She had also told herself the same thing countless times before...

How nice would it be if she had met this man earlier?

The next moment, at a red light, Ning Xi leaned forward and pressed her lips against Lu Tingxiao's...

The girl's sweet fragrance dominated all his senses, Lu Tingxiao was surprised at first, then he tilted his head and passionately returned her kiss...

The light turned green and Lu Tingxiao returned to his senses when he heard the honks of the cars from behind. "I'm driving, don't mess around."

Ning Xi pouted. "I'm not messing around, I only wanted to give you a small kiss. You're the one who messed around!"

Lu Tingxiao had nothing to say in his defense.

...

The next day was a Saturday. The elder was already walking around when Ning Xi brought Little Treasure to visit him. He even played with Little Treasure the whole morning.

Ning Xi was still worried about his health at first, but after she saw that he was getting better and better, she felt more relieved.

"Grandfather, it's going to be visiting hours soon, I'll take my leave for now. Little Treasure, say goodbye to Great-grandfather." She always avoided visiting hours to avoid meeting Ning Xueluo.

The elder patted the little bun's head gently. "Mmm, okay. Rest assured, Xiao Xi, I'll never tell anyone about this."

If people knew about Xiao Xi's relationship with Lu Tingxiao, who knew what kind of trouble would happen? He had to at least wait until both of them were married. If not, the news of Ning Xi being pregnant out of wedlock would surely affect her career.

He was now all satisfied with a grandson. Ultimately, he was glad to know that the Ning family still had a descendant. Even if he were to leave the world now, he would be able to rest in peace.

However for Xiao Xi and Little Treasure's sake, he had to live on and be there for them. After all, he was also going to wait for his second, third, fourth or even fifth great-grandchildren...

Chapter 803: Not Her Type

After Fashion Week, Spirit Studio had proven themselves worthy of the Golden Award. In addition to Qin Shengyue's influence, they were quite well known now and this helped to open up new opportunities for them. Various parties contacted them and expressed their intention to work with them on their new project.

However, there were simply too many of them from a diverse range of backgrounds and it was hard to judge; if they picked a wrong company to work with, then it might just spell the end of them.

Ning Xi's workload suddenly increased significantly. While she needed to research on a party to collaborate with, Gong Shangze and Han Momo were working on the samples.

As she was occupied with her work, the assistant from Qin Shengyue finally arrived.

Han Momo stood up and stretched as she heard the doorbell ring. "Is it the Marketing Director? I'll go get it!"

Moments later, Han Momo led a lady in. She was wearing a crisp champagne dress with her hair tied into a bun and not much emotion expressed on her face. She exuded an incredible aura.

"I'm Qiao Weilan. CEO Qin asked me to offer my assistance here," Qiao Weilan spoke straightforwardly in a formal tone.

"Hello, I'm Ning Xi, the person behind Spirit Studio. Please have a sit." Ning Xi brought her into the office.

"I was late because I had a few tasks to hand over and it took several days," Qiao Weilan explained.

"It's alright, I understand."

After some small talk, Ning Xi went straight to the point. "I'm not sure if CEO Qin mentioned this to you before. We're a fairly new and small studio, so surely we are incomparable to your workplace before. Although CEO Qin lent you to me, if you don't like it here, I'd be glad to help you talk to CEO Qin."

"No problem, I have no objections to CEO Qin's arrangement," Qiao Weilan replied expressionlessly.

Ning Xi assessed Qiao Weilan's attitude. While she was not very friendly, she did not look unsatisfied either; she was just obeying orders.

This was much better than what she expected. She had been assigned here on such short notice, so Ning Xi did not expect her to fit in so quickly.

Ning Xi continued with her introduction, "Our studio is really simple, there's not much explaining. Here are your two colleagues, our Design Director Gong Shengze and his assistant Han Momo."

They introduced themselves and Ning Xi noticed that Qiao Weilan's gaze was transfixed on Gong Shangze for a little while before she returned to her usual robot-like self.

Afterwards, Ning Xi gave her a tour around the studio and arranged a workspace for her. "Our aim is now mainly focused on high-class bespoke and retail shops. The target audience is the high-end market, so we must pick our client groups carefully..."

Qiao Weilan spoke up, "I'll filter through the suitable clients in three days, and I'll deal with them after you look through the list. I'll discuss further collaboration details with the other party."

"Alright."

Although she looked cold, her level of professionalism was top notch, and her willingness to be so involved solved Ning Xi's worries.

Ning Xi would just see if Qiao Weilan would keep working obediently or would fit with them well...

Most importantly, this beauty was not Ning Xi's type, so her chastity was defended!

Chapter 804: The Male Lead Belongs To The Female Lead, The Secondary Male Lead Belongs To Everyone!

"I'll leave it to you guys. I have a job to attend to, just call me if there's anything!"

"Alright, Sis Xi, go quickly! Remember to help me take some photos of Jiang Muye, it's best if you can get shots of you and him together!"

...

Ning Xi was attending a hot talk show. Because of the popularity of "The World", they invited the main cast to talk about their shooting experience. The main characters of the night were Ning Xueluo and Zhao Sizhou; most of the topics revolved around the both of them. Ning Xi, Guan Xiaoqi, and the other artistes were just there to serve as foils.

Jiang Muye was a special case. He would be invited even if he was just a side character. Moreover, he acted as the secondary protagonist this time.

As the host was chatting with Ning Xueluo's group, Ning Xi sat there quietly without interrupting. However, since she acted as Jiang Muye's better half in the movie, the host would sometimes mention her name.

"Ning Xi, your scenes with Jiang Muye earned the tears of the audience, and your popularity is soaring. Everyone thought you guys looked really good together, and you even made it into the top ten best on-screen couples of the year! And in the voting poll, the most popular male character went to your army doctor, Sun Huanqing! Aren't you glad?"

"Really?" Ning Xi looked surprised.

"That's right, look at this, it's the online voting poll and Sun Huanqing's leading! It's ranking even higher than Sizhou's main character!" As the host was speaking, there was a picture of the online voting poll flashed on the screen displaying Jiang Muye's vote as the highest.

At that moment, everyone was anticipating how Ning Xi was going to reply. It was a tricky situation. If she made a mistake, she might offend other people...

Apart from the popularity of Sun Huanqing's character, the main reason for Jiang Muye's high votes came naturally from his fans.

But if she were to say that she was happy or proud, she would be indirectly criticizing Zhao Sizhou and Ning Xueluo, and in turn, offend their fanbase.

Ning Xi smiled. "Just as the saying goes!"

"Which saying?" the host asked curiously.

Ning Xi looked at Zhao Sizhou and Jiang Muye. "The main male lead belongs to the female lead, while the co-starring male lead belongs to everyone!"

Not only the host laughed. Ning Xueluo, Zhao Sizhou, and Jiang Muye's fans all cheered. Ning Xi's smart reply did not offend anyone.

Backstage, the director looked at the cameras and noticed that a few of them were focusing on Ning Xi. Ning Xi had amazingly glowy skin, and her flawless face drew the cameras to her. Even if she was not saying anything, her eyes shone as she listened to others speak. The cameras were always fond of aesthetics...

"Later, keep three of the scenes that focus on Ning Xi's face. Put her scenes together with Jiang Muye's," the director ordered the assistants.

After the talk show was done, Ning Xueluo excused herself with a smile and she spoke to Ning Xi and the directors for a little before heading back to her car.

As she stepped into the car, her smile turned into dreadfulness and she quickly made a call back home...

Chapter 805: What Happened?

Chang Li and the assistant had apparently already gotten used to Ning Xueluo's stress and her worsening tantrums, so they tried not to speak and minimized their presence to avoid being scolded.

"Xiao Ling, how has Grandfather been doing this few days?" Ning Xueluo asked her maid at home.

"Miss, he's doing well! He even asked Elder Xi and other friends to go fishing this morning. When they returned in the evening, he looked great..."

"What about the things I asked you to investigate?"

"I've checked that only people from the family and a few shareholders visited him in the hospital, no one suspicious went."

"What about Ning Xi?"

"The nurse mentioned that she dropped by a few times, but she just visited him and chatted with him. There was nothing out of the ordinary."

"Alright, I got it!"

Ning Xueluo's expression worsened after she ended the call.

What had happened?

The elder had been in such a terrible condition, then he suddenly recovered and got much better. He even hosted a shareholder meeting yesterday.

Because she saw the elder was about to kick the bucket, she planned to get closer to the shareholders who were on Ning Yaohua's side, but as the elder's health improved, she gave up that thought.

Although it was Ning Yaohua who was handling the company now, the elder still held the real power and the shares in his hands!

Not only was the condition at home a mess, History had been facing issues since the incident at the Golden Awards. The period after Fashion Week made things worse. With Spirit Studio taking away numerous big clients of theirs, even though it was not that much of a loss, things could spell trouble if Spirit Studio continued to grow.

However, at this moment, she had to focus on her main career.

Her most important aim now was to gather various resources and networks through the entertainment industry; she could not lose what she had.

"What's up with Ning Xi recently? What job did she take up?" Ning Xueluo asked cautiously.

"She just acted as a co-star, but couldn't get anywhere quick. I heard she wanted to take up the lead female role in a drama, but was stopped by Liang Biqin. Don't worry, as long as Su Yimo exists in Glory World, she would never have it easy," Chang Li replied.

Ning Xueluo's expression softened a little. "Help me take on more jobs that are related to positive literary films. Make sure that the director has received awards before, and I don't care about the pay!"

Chang Li instantly understood her. Although literary films were not very popular, they were much easier bets to win awards. Before this, Ning Xueluo would never have considered literary films. However, since she was already popular enough, what she had yet to achieve was a respectable award.

It was not enough with just "The World" which was still relatively unknown. The industry was competitive, and there were a lot of new artistes aiming for the top. Winning the next Golden Film Award would be far from easy.

"Got it, I'll try my best," Chang Li replied, but she felt troubled.

Ning Xueluo had tried too hard back in the day, starring in too many commercial films and dramas which were poor in terms of standard and content. She did get more views, but her standards suffered. Directors who were aiming for awards would have looked for new actors instead of Ning Xueluo...

Chapter 806: Helping Jiang Muye

The talk show aired a few days later, and the reaction to it was excellent. Aside from the debate between Zhao Sizhou's and Jiang Muye's fans about how much screen time both of them had, it was expected.

In the end, Ning Xi's performance attracted attention.

[Did you guys realize Ning Xi was being really low profile? The other artistes kept on interrupting, but Ning Xi did not even say anything even when she's the co-star! She only answered when she was asked a question, and she answered all of them well. Her EQ is top notch! I think I'm becoming a fan of her!]

[That's not the main point! The main point is her beauty, her beauty, her beauty, alright!? I have to repeat important things three times! I'm already a fan of hers!]

[Agree! I'm a shipper of Ning Xi and Jiang Muye! If you looked closely, Jiang Muye almost always looks at Ning Xi's direction! I would never believe that there's nothing going on between them!]

...

The talk show caused another bump-up of fans on Ning Xi's Weibo. Together with the increase when she was promoting "The World", her number of fans had grown significantly.

Most of the comments asked her to post new pictures, or just to ask her about Jiang Muye. Ning Xi would never try to get famous off other celebrities, even if it was Jiang Muye. However, she felt like she was boring them by just posting selfies, so she put up some of her cosplay photos.

She only had the intent of just putting them up as a hobby, and also to soften the intense celebrity competition in Weibo, but it had gotten her a lot more fans.

At Glory World Entertainment office.

"These are some scripts that I just received. Read through them!" Ling Zhizhi passed some scripts to Ning Xi.

After "The World" aired, Ning Xi finally had something presentable in her portfolio. The secondary leading characters Meng Changge and Sun Huanqing were not any less popular than the main leads, and suddenly, various companies started sending scripts to Ling Zhizhi.

Probably because Ning Xi played the role of Meng Changge so well, the scripts sent to her were roles of either the unfortunate princess, the most beautiful lady in town, or the seductive mistress. Most of them were secondary or tertiary lead roles, but there were also some main roles from small productions.

Ning Xi kept the scripts. "Alright, I'll look through them!"

Ling Zhizhi pinched the space between her eyebrows as she asked hesitantly, "On a side note, Jiang Muye starred in another film recently. There's a supporting character with little screen time who was supposed to be played by Liang Biqin, but she rejected on short notice, and there isn't anyone suitable now. I was thinking maybe you could help."

"Jiang Muye's new film? The one by Director Chen Mian? Sure, no problem!" Ning Xi accepted gracefully.

Since it was Director Chen's film, she would be honored to be involved, more so as a supporting character! In addition, Jiang Muye had helped her numerous times, so this was nothing much!

When Liang Biqin took on the role, she had not been famous then, but everything was different now. She had taken on a few big projects and would never bat an eye at small characters like this.

Ling Zhizhi gave her another script. "There aren't many scenes, so you should be done soon. Here, I've listed out the scenes that you're involved in."

Chapter 807: That's My First Love

Because the drama team's end was urging her to hurry, Ning Xi had only discussed with Ling Zhizhi for a short while before taking Xiao Tao with her and rushing to the set.

She was going to play the late first love of Jiang Muye in the film. She only had to shoot a scene of the two of them before her character died, so it was quite easy. If all went smoothly, they should be done within a day.

"Why are you here?" When Jiang Muye saw her, he regarded her suspiciously.

"Sis Zhizhi had me come over to help with the emergency!" Ning Xi answered.

Jiang Muye turned his gaze to Lei Ming on the sidelines.

Lei Ming cleared his throat and mumbled, "It's all because you're unsatisfied with all the other girls you've seen. I had no choice but to borrow someone from Zhizhi..."

Ning Xi was speechless. "I really admire you. This character only has one scene from the start until the end, and it was the last scene before she dies of a chronic illness. The director didn't even say anything. Did you have to be so picky?"

"So what if it's just one scene? That's my first love!" Jiang Muye said matter-of-factly.

Ning Xi's mouth twitched. "Let me correct you, it's just your first love in the film."

She had no words for Jiang Muye. She had never met an actor as hard to please as him.

In such a film, many times, the main protagonists would have higher authority above the director and producers, and Chen Mian probably did not know what to do with him.

Chen Mian was not old, he was only 30-odd years old. He started to direct when he had just graduated university, and his debuting film "The Stars, The Moon and The Sun" had become famous in the entire Northern and Southern region of China. It was labeled in the American Business Weekly as "The Star of Asia", bringing fame to the protagonists in the film who were now elites in the entertainment industry.

Then, his other coming-of-age themed work titled "Love Is In The Future" topped the box office charts that year, setting the trend for a series of coming-of-age movies.

Chen Mian was a genius director who always liked to shoot the most unexpected things. No matter if it was choosing the script or the actors, he was visionary.

Sadly, even though his films in the past few years were not bad, none of it could surpass those two benchmark ones. Some outsiders said horrible things, even commenting that his talent had run out...

Ning Xi actually felt quite pitiful for him, yet she knew that such a result for a director like Chen Mian was an expected compromise upon entering the industry.

"Chen Mian, the person is here. Do you want to come and take a look?" Lei Ming ran to tell the director.

"What's the use of me taking a look? Is that punk satisfied?" Chen Mian and Jiang Muye had collaborated quite a few times, and their relationship was pretty tight in private, so the way he spoke was quite casual too.

"No more issues on Jiang Muye's end! Just waiting for your nod of approval!" Lei Ming anxiously said. Borrowing someone from Ling Zhizhi was really his last resort. It was hard for him to be stuck between Jiang Muye and the director every time.

"Oh?" Chen Mian, who had been occupied, started to walk over.

When she saw the director, Ning Xi quickly greeted, "Hello, Director Chen, I'm Ning Xi!"

Chen Mian evaluated Ning Xi, then he said, "Ning Xi...you're the second lead for Director Guo's 'The World', aren't you?"

It was unexpected that Chen Mian would know her, so naturally, Ning Xi was instantly delighted.

"Yes!"

"No wonder this guy had no opinions! I've seen that movie, it can be considered the peak of Jiang Muye's acting," said Chen Mian as he could not help but evaluate the girl before him for a few seconds more.

From the audience's perspective, they only saw the two people's suitability for the role and their collaborative chemistry, so with "The World", Jiang Muye's acting progress was seen as amazing.

However, Chen Mian had collaborated with Jiang Muye for a few times too and he could tell that to actually bring Jiang Muye's acting to such a remarkable extent, definitely required some tricks up her sleeves.

Chapter 808: I Would Thank You First

When both ends had agreed that there was no issue, Chen Mian started to run through the script with Ning Xi.

The shooting went very smoothly and they were done in three takes. The other two was only to shoot from different angles. At last, when Chen Mian reviewed the images in his camera and felt deeply moved, he thought that it was no wonder that old Guo had publicly praised this rookie many times in the director's circle!

After the shoot had ended, Ning Xi changed into a casual outfit for convenience. After all, more and more people knew her face now.

Ning Xi had been very busy for the past two days, so he could finally use this opportunity to catch up with her. Jiang Muye immediately stopped her with shining eyes. "Want to go to my place and shoot it up? I still lack three battles before I can level up! I must not lose!!!"

"What's in it for me to help you level up?" Ning Xi raised her brows.

"You want an incentive for such a little thing? Are you still my bro?"

...

"Jiang Muye, tomorrow..." Chen Mian was just about to say something to Jiang Muye when he saw the young man beside him and paused, "Is this your friend?"

Jiang Muye's mouth twitched. "Director, you know this person, okay?"

Ning Xi cleared her throat and waved. "Director, it's me!"

Chen Mian's jaw dropped as if he had just seen a ghost. "You...you're Ning Xi?"

The "young man" before him wore a black racer leather jacket with sleek hair and had unruliness written all over. It was obviously a man who did not lose to Jiang Muye's aura...But if one were to look closely, you would notice, there was indeed some resemblance to Ning Xi...

How could the same person look so different just by a change of clothes and different makeup?

The change in the charisma that was altered from the inside out could not be done just by putting on a wig! Even acting could not be this natural, this perfect!

"Uhh, well, in this acting industry, there's too little freedom, so I had to think of something...Director, you understand!" Ning Xi revealed an expression of tacit mutual understanding.

After finishing work and donning the male disguise, Ning Xi had naturally changed even her tone and demeanor. Those who did know would think that another charismatic and unruly man lived inside her!

Chen Mian could not describe what he currently felt. That long-awaited agitated feeling of emotions made it seem as if his blood was about to flow in reverse...

"Uhh...Director Chen...Director Chen, what's wrong with you?" Ning Xi felt goosebumps as he stared at her with a pair of burning eyes.

Jiang Muye unhappily waved in front of Chen Mian's eyes to block his line of sight. "Hello, Director Chen, don't tell me you like men?"

What kind of look was that?

Chen Mian pushed his hand away and said, "Go away, if I liked men, I would tank you first!"

Ning Xi burst out into a laugh. Who would expect that Chen Mian was like this in private?

Chen Mian did not understand what was going on either. Ever since he saw Ning Xi, he felt like he was in a situation where he could walk away any minute.

He took out a cigarette and took a drag from it, then he took out another and offered it to Ning Xi. "You smoke?"

Jiang Muye felt his forehead cramp up. "Chen Mian, what the hell are you doing?"

Ning Xi laughed and rejected, "Director, I've quit smoking, don't tempt me now."

Chen Mian put out his cigarette then ran to the front. He turned to remind Ning Xi, "Wait a minute, don't leave yet!"

A moment later, followed by Ning Xi and Jiang Muye's confused looks, Chen Mian dragged over his assistant.

Chapter 809: Make Her Fall In Love With You!

Chen Mian's assistant was a young girl in her twenties, and she was just arranging the props when she was suddenly been dragged over. She looked confused as she panted to ask, "Director, what's the urgency?"

Chen Mian looked at Ning Xi, then looked at his watch before pointing at the assistant. "I'm giving you ten seconds. Make her fall in love with you. If you can do it, I can guarantee that I'll make you become an instant hit!"

At that moment, Ning Xi, Jiang Muye, and the assistant were speechless.

What? Make a girl fall in love with a girl?

Was Chen Mian crazy?

While Jiang Muye was shocked and the assistant was completely confused, Ning Xi had already realized something. He was giving her an opportunity!

The moment Chen Mian started to time her, Ning Xi caught the assistant off-guard by pulling her hand. She sat on the wide chair behind her and smoothly pulled her to sit on her lap...

The assistant instinctively shrieked, yet stopped when Ning Xi tersely said, "Don't move!"

Then, Ning Xi carefully took off the assistant's heels and looked at her red and swollen ankles...

Ten seconds had yet to be up, and Ning Xi had only said the two words "don't move", yet the assistant girl was already staring at the young man's tensed face with empathy and love. Her heart was already beating fast while her breath came in short pauses. She was speechless...

Chen Mian looked at her, then directly said, "You pass the test. Now, follow me."

Ning Xi helped the assistant take off her heels, then let her put on her own sneakers before helping her steadily get to her feet. Then, she stood up and replied Chen Mian, "Okay!"

Jiang Muye, who was completely ignored, was speechless at this. "Pfft! Chen Mian, where are you bringing her?"

Chen Mian had already driven off with Ning Xi off like the wind...

Behind him, the assistant's gaze remained longingly at the direction Chen Mian's car had left in, "Senior Jiang, which rookie is that handsome guy? Has the Director taken a liking upon him, and chosen him to be the male lead in the new film? My God! Too charming! Earlier when he carried me and helped me change my shoes, my heart was about to jump out!"

Jiang Muye looked unhappy. "Are you blind? That was a girl!"

"No way!" The assistant was flabbergasted.

Jiang Muye rolled his eyes. "What do I get out of lying to you?"

The assistant covered her blushing face when she heard this. "Oh, so handsome! It's okay if she's a woman...crap, am I leaning the other way?!"

Jiang Muye had no words.

Chen Mian directly brought Ning Xi to his company.

"Sit."

Ning Xi casually skimmed the office. There were no pictures of the set, films, or that sort of thing. Chen Mian's office was unusually simple. The only things on the wall were just charts for the characters in a script and pictures of casting actors...

"I have a script on hand. It has already been accumulating for three years because I could not find a suitable female lead. I could have simply gotten some famous artistes and cook something up, and the box office sales would definitely not fare too badly in the end, but I could not give up this script," said Chen Mian, as he pulled open the lowest drawer with a key and took out a script booklet.

The pages were yellowed; one look and you would know that it had been read many times before. Ning Xi carefully took the script and looked at the summary first.

When she finished, she finally understood what Chen Mian's weird actions were for, "Female in a male disguise?"

Chapter 810: Happy Collaboration!

"Yes, have you seen Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night'?" Chen Mian asked.

Ning Xi's eyes shone and immediately, she nodded. "I have."

That was one of Shakespeare's classic comedies, and Ning Xi's favorite out of all his comedic works. It was about a pair of twin siblings who got separated during a shipwreck and had both thought the other was dead. The younger sister disguised as a man to replace her brother and became the servant to a Duke's family. She even fell in love with the Duke, but the Duke loved another Lady.

The sister helped the Duke run away to propose to the Lady, but sadly, the Lady had fallen in love with the sister, who was disguised as a male, and the Duke was rejected.

The most important character in the entire play was the brave, passionate, and pure sister. She had disguised as a male to be by the side of the person she loved, quietly loving him to help him get the person he liked, yet hinting to him from time to time that she loved him too.

The other female character in the play was the Duchess for whom the male lead had fallen in love with. She was beautiful and smart, kind at heart, and someone who valued friendship. She was loyal, brave and persistent. She rejected the elegant Duke's love, yet she had taken a liking for the servant twin sister. At last, she gathered her courage to confess her love for the person she had mistaken for as the girl's twin brother. Ultimately, both the female leads obtained their desires and gained their own happiness.

This was a very positive and beautiful piece of work.

"This script is an adaptation of Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night', except that the context has been changed to modern day to fit with the current day's aesthetics and flavor. However, I don't want to shoot it as a simple city drama, so my demands of the actors would be very high," Chen Mian explained.

Ning Xi nodded to indicate she understood. At the same time, her heart was suddenly been set ablaze. Chen Mian's script was definitely much better than the one she had seen before!

She had mostly liked the earlier script for the numerous exciting scenes, so she still had her own motives. However, for this one, the storyline to the message was a few levels higher than the one before. Besides, Chen Mian had worked on it for three years!

Chen Mian watched the twilight out his window in a daze. He was only in his thirties, yet the expression on his face seemed to have gone through many hardships, as if all of his passion had been depleted...

He mocked lightly, "When I first entered the industry, I had a gut full of passion for the art, for the dream...and now...do you know how everyone shoots movies? To decide on what to shoot is not for the director to say, not even the scriptwriter, but the investors! And the directors? They're not creators, at most a puppet, just a laborer! Artist? All that is bullshit!"

As she listened to Chen Mian's words, Ning Xi did not know what to say. The current situation could not be changed by one or two people in the industry.

Even a talented director like Chen Mian had to compromise but it was obvious that his heart was still unwilling!

"Ning Xi, there are some things that are best if I clarify beforehand. I plan to shoot this independently and not accept any investments, so my compensation for you will not be too much.

"In fact, I will be using an entire cast of newbies including you, so the risk would be pretty high. It could flop, and even your hard earned reputation from 'The World' could be damaged. So, whether or not you want to accept this, you should consider it carefully," Chen Mian said as nervousness fished across his eyes.

He had finally met Ning Xi, and he was ready to burn his bridges for once, but he had no right to ask anyone else to be crazy with him...