

## **I Regained 41**

### Chapter 41: Take Sister Home

Gu Dai accepted the notebook from Chu Min, briefly scanned its contents, and her fingers danced on the keyboard.

Ten minutes passed –

Looking relaxed, Gu Dai leaned back in her chair and calmly stated, “It’s all done.”

Chu Min, holding his laptop, exclaimed in a rush of excitement, “These codes had me stumped, boss. I didn’t know what to do. But you cracked it so quickly. That’s amazing!”

There was a hint of disappointment as Chu Min continued, “If only I could be as good as you, I wouldn’t need to bug you.”

Gu Dai sighed gently, giving Chu Min a comforting look, “You’re pretty good already. I just checked the logs – in the last three years, you’ve stopped this person hundreds of times. Their skills were top-notch this time. It’s okay that you were stuck.”

Reassured by Gu Dai’s words, Chu Min forced a smile, but he still looked worried, “Boss, I feel they’re not going to stop. You’ve always said you don’t like being tracked. Why would they still want to pry into your life?”

As Chu Min spoke, Gu Dai’s mind drifted back to five years ago.

Back then, her parents were alive and she was a worry-free, pampered princess. She spent her days helping people and traveling the world, and her reputation as the “Legendary Doctor” grew.

Noticing Gu Dai's silence, Chu Min thought she was upset. He lowered his voice and asked, "Should we deal with them once and for all?"

Regaining her composure, she responded casually, "No need. If they're so desperate to find me, they might really need something. If they manage to, that's fate. Let's see if they're good enough."

Relieved, Chu Min dropped his plan.

As Chu Min was about to leave, the office door swung open.

Seeing the man who entered, Chu Min asked in surprise, "Su Ting, what are you doing here?"

Su Ting's brow furrowed at the sight of Chu Min, then relaxed. He replied flatly, "Work's over, I came to pick her up."

Su Ting moved past Chu Min to Gu Dai and gently asked with a small smile, "Sister, are you done?"

Gu Dai nodded, "Yes, let me pack up, and then we can go."

While Gu Dai packed, Su Ting helped carry her stuff.

Seeing this, Chu Min felt a jolt of alertness, worrying that his brother might lose his chance.

Quickly, he asked, "Boss, are you two living together now?"

Gu Dai nodded, "Yes, Su Ting just got back from overseas and doesn't have a place. He's staying with me for now."

Immediately, Chu Min blurted, "Boss, let me live with you too!"

Gu Dai looked puzzled at Chu Min, “Didn’t you just move to your new place? Why suddenly change your mind?”

Chu Min knew his request was sudden, but he had to try for his brother’s sake!

Thinking quickly, he found an excuse, “Boss, I’m worried I’ll run into more problems I can’t solve. I want to learn from you!”

As he spoke, Chu Min grew more confident.

But Gu Dai could tell he was not being honest.

She didn’t call him out though, and simply nodded, “Okay, if you want to, move in.”

After getting Gu Dai’s approval, Chu Min said quickly, “I’ll pack up right now!”

With that, he left the office, not wanting to give Gu Dai any chance to change her mind..

Chapter 42: Heartache

As the car hummed on the road, Su Ting noticed Gu Dai gently rubbing her temples. With a concerned undertone in his voice, he offered, “Sister, you seem to have a headache. I’ve picked up some massage techniques over the years, want to give them a try?”

Gu Dai, her thoughts clouded by the tedium of the office, readily accepted his proposal with a simple, “Alright.”

As Su Ting’s skilled hands worked their magic, Gu Dai’s tension started to melt away. Surprised by the effectiveness, she praised him, “You’ve certainly changed over these years, Su Ting. You’ve become a good cook and even learned massage.”

He chuckled softly, his eyes warm with promise, "There's a lot more to learn about me, sister. I'll reveal them to you slowly over time."

Intrigued and a little excited by his words, Gu Dai responded enthusiastically, "Okay!"

On their arrival at the villa, Gu Dai surveyed the newly renovated surroundings, noticing how it had been restored to its familiar old-world charm, free from any ostentatious modern touches. The sight stirred nostalgia, bringing unshed tears to her eyes.

Noticing her emotional state, Su Ting stayed quiet, giving her the space she needed. Seeing her, lost in her thoughts and seemingly fragile, a wave of compassion filled his heart.

His own childhood had been devoid of familial warmth until he met Gu Dai's parents. Their kindness had shown him a world filled with light and warmth, a stark contrast from the one he'd known. But fate had been cruel, snatching away those kind souls prematurely.

Wiping away her tears, Gu Dai's voice quivered, "Three years have gone by so quickly, Su Ting. My parents' death anniversary is approaching."

Unable to suppress his urge to comfort her any longer, Su Ting pulled her into a gentle embrace, "I remember Uncle Gu loved art. There's an art exhibition coming up, how about we choose some paintings for him?"

"Mm," she responded softly, and after a brief pause, added, "Mom always loved flowers. I want to bring her the most beautiful ones."

As her mood seemed to lighten, Su Ting found himself relieved. He reassured her, "The Gu Group is their legacy. They'd be proud to see you at the helm."

Nodding earnestly, she resolved, "I'll restore the company to its former glory. I won't let my parents' efforts be in vain."

Remembering the upcoming event, she asked, "When's the art exhibition?"

Checking his phone, Su Ting replied, "Tomorrow afternoon."

Suddenly flustered, Gu Dai worried, "I haven't prepared anything and it's already tomorrow!"

She realized that she'd been so engrossed in managing the company that she'd overlooked her attire for the event.

Su Ting reassured her with a confident smile, "Don't worry. Leave everything to me."

Seeing his assurance, Gu Dai relaxed, "Okay."

Then she realized that she was still in Su Ting's arms. The sudden awareness made her body stiffen.

Upon feeling her stiffen, Su Ting realized the intimate position they were in. Hastily breaking the embrace, he stammered, his ears flushing, "1... I... didn't mean to... 1 wasn't trying to... I'm sorry..."

"It's okay," Gu Dai diverted her gaze, keen to switch topics, "Let's head inside."

She then led the way into the villa, with Su Ting quickly trailing behind her.

On entering the villa, they encountered Gu Ming. A trace of confusion flickered in Gu Dai's eyes as she asked, "Uncle, why are you here?"

Noticing the disapproval in Gu Dai's voice, Gu Ming stiffened. Resentment flashed in his eyes but quickly faded. Remembering the upcoming transfer of the Gu family's assets, he forced a smile and responded, "I brought something for you. I initially planned to give it to Wu Zhen to pass on, but since you're here, I'll give it to you directly.."

Chapter 43: Peace Blessing

Gu Dai's attention fell on the box in Gu Ming's hands, causing her to question, "What is this?"

Gu Ming lifted the lid, presenting a jade pendant of a "peace blessing."

The "peace blessing" didn't stand out, in fact, it could be described as quite worn. A quick look could tell that it had been around for several years. It was the kind of thing most wouldn't bother to look at twice.

But Gu Dai reacted with surprise when she saw the "peace blessing."

Struggling to believe her own eyes, she rubbed them and took the "peace blessing" straight from Gu Ming's hand, wondering, "Why is younger uncle's peace blessing here?"

As a four-year-old, Gu Dai once found herself alone at home when a fire broke out, possibly due to dry weather. By the time the heat woke her up, the surrounding area was already on fire. Overwhelmed with fear, she cried loudly. That's when her younger uncle braved the flames to rescue her.

Shielded by her uncle, Gu Dai only had minor injuries. But the uncle succumbed to smoke inhalation and didn't survive, even after being rushed to the hospital.

The "peace blessing" was a gift she had given to her uncle. Why was it now with Gu Ming?

Gu Ming didn't directly answer Gu Dai's question, but instead said, "Gu Dai, we're all family. But you've frozen the cards of your elder uncle's family. If your younger uncle knew this, he would be hurt."

Gu Dai wasn't easy to fool. She saw through Gu Ming's intention.

Unable to hold back, she sneered, "I think if my younger uncle knew you were asking for money using his name, he would be even more hurt! As far as I know, the cards tied to the elder uncle's family are company property. Since I've taken over the company, the money is mine. Isn't it normal to freeze non-

company expenditures? Or are you implying that the elder uncle is so poor that he has to use someone else's card?"

Gu Ming's intentions were indeed as she said, but hearing it spelled out so plainly, he couldn't help feeling humiliated. He blamed Gu Zhi in his mind. If she hadn't complained about not being able to afford clothes and pushed him to ask Gu Dai for money, he wouldn't have ended up in such an embarrassing situation.

Gu Ming even harbored the thought of getting rid of Gu Zhi.

But Gu Dai enjoyed seeing Gu Ming in this state and suggested, "I can lend money to my elder uncle."

For a moment, Gu Ming was taken aback and looked at Gu Dai with disbelief.

Gu Dai didn't meet Gu Ming's gaze but continued, "I will ask Uncle Lin to transfer ten thousand to you."

"What can ten thousand do?" Gu Ming roared, his eyes wide.

Su Ting, who had been standing quietly behind Gu Dai, stepped forward and blocked Gu Ming's view. He looked at him coldly, replying, "Ten thousand is enough for an ordinary family to live on for a month."

Seeing Su Ting in front of her, Gu Dai felt a sense of safety. She added, "If elder uncle thinks it's too little, then I won't ask Uncle Lin to transfer the money."

Frustrated, Gu Ming clenched his fists.

He thought ten thousand was too little, but his funds had been frozen, and he only had a few thousand left. At this point, ten thousand was a significant sum for him.

Eventually, Gu Ming accepted the money, bowed, and left.

Before leaving, he turned and glared at Gu Dai, swearing in his heart that once he successfully moved the Gu family's assets overseas in a few days, he would make Gu Dai kneel before him and apologize!

Su Ting immediately noticed Gu Ming's hostile gaze. "Sister, I think Gu Ming is up to something."

"I know," Gu Dai quietly acknowledged, meeting Su Ting's confused gaze. She bit her lip and added, "It's part of my plan. Nothing will go wrong."

Hearing Gu Dai's words, Su Ting felt reassured.

At this moment, Gu Dai was completely focused on the "peace blessing." She closed her eyes, recalling the recent events. Suddenly, she had a realization. Recalling a possibility, her eyes flickered with sharpness.

The doctor had said her younger uncle had died because he didn't receive medical attention in time.. And the one who had brought her younger uncle to the hospital was Gu Ming!

Chapter 44: Three Years

Gu Dai had immediately ordered someone to investigate the matter from that year.

After she sent out the instruction, her gaze was fixated on the peace blessing.

Wu Zhen had been spent many years in the Gu family. When Gu Dai's younger uncle was still alive, he had already been working in the Gu family. Even after so many years, he still remembered the young and vigorous 18-year-old, as well as how much the young miss liked her younger uncle.

Therefore, Wu Zhen knew that Gu Dai must be very heartbroken at this point.



He sighed gently, and even though he was a man, he couldn't help but have teary eyes. Suppressing his inner sadness, he said softly, "Miss, the flower seedlings you bought for the lady have arrived, do you want to arrange them in the greenhouse yourself?"

Gu Dai came back to her senses, agreed, and gently put away the peace blessing, treating it as if it were a priceless treasure, which was indeed the case.

Gu Dai looked at Su Ting and asked, "Do you want to go to the greenhouse with me to plant flowers?"

Su Ting responded without hesitation, "Yes."

"Miss." Sun Kong stood up as soon as he saw Gu Dai come in.

Gu Dai nodded and said, "Uncle Sun, you can go to the living room to rest, I will plant the seedlings."

When Gu Dai's mother was still alive, it was Sun Kong who took care of the flowers in the greenhouse. However, after Liu Min moved into the villa, she dismissed him. Fortunately, Wu Zhen and Sun Kong were still in contact, so Gu Dai invited him back to take care of the flowers a few days ago.

Gu Dai turned her head towards Su Ting and asked softly, "Do you know how to take care of flowers?"

Su Ting nodded gently, answering, "Yes."

Gu Dai was surprised, looking at Su Ting in disbelief. She found that Su Ting really looked professional, his movements were very standard, even more so than hers!

Su Ting met Gu Dai's gaze, smiled and said, "I know how to do a lot of things."

Gu Dai didn't forget what Su Ting had told her, but now that it was presented before her, she was still surprised. After all, she clearly remembered that Su Ting did not know these things in the past.

Gu Dai sighed, "You've learned so much in these few years, it's amazing."

Su Ting's ears turned a little red at this point, he shook his head slightly and said softly, "I just learned casually."

Gu Dai nodded. She thought of her own past years, thought of her bowing and bending over like a dog in front of Song Ling, and her once delicate hands becoming rough, she felt irritable.

Gu Dai didn't understand why she, a proud person, had become like that after losing her memory.

Su Ting's attention was always on Gu Dai, so he was the first to notice the change in Gu Dai's mood.

Su Ting pursed his lips, thinking about his appearance just now, he felt that it was possible that Gu Dai had immediately seen through his lie, which was why she was angry. Realizing this, he lowered his head and said softly, "Sister, I'm sorry, I shouldn't have lied to you."

"Huh?" Faced with Su Ting's sudden words, Gu Dai was a bit puzzled and looked at him with confusion.

In front of Gu Dai's gaze, Su Ting avoided eye contact and said, "Sister, actually, I didn't learn casually. I studied hard. When you had an accident, I missed you too much, so I learned what you used to do, hoping it would ease my longing for you."

Gu Dai hadn't thought of it that way, so when she heard Su Ting's words, she was so shocked that she was momentarily dumbfounded and didn't understand what was going on.

Seeing that Su Ting wanted to speak, Gu Dai hurriedly covered his mouth with her hand, saying, "Wait a minute, let me sort out what just happened."

Feeling the hand on his lips, Su Ting didn't dare to speak or even breathe for a moment.

After Gu Dai sorted out Su Ting's words, a blush crept up on her cheeks.

She opened a mouth a few times before she finally squeezed out a sentence, "It's not because of you, but I just thought about my past three years.."

#### Chapter 45: Miss Gu Dai

Although Gu Dai refrained from revealing details about her past three years, Su Ting, after his recent interactions with Song Ling, managed to surmise some of her experiences. This insight intensified his compassion for Gu Dai.

Su Ting gently disengaged Gu Dai's hand from his mouth, his voice soothing as he comforted her, "Sister, let bygones be bygones. We don't need to linger over those three years, because we have the next three years, and even thirty years ahead..."

Gu Dai gave a nod, assuring him, "Indeed, those three years were inconsequential. No need to dwell on them. Planting flowers is more significant right now."

Seeing Gu Dai's understanding, Su Ting exhaled a breath of relief.

Gu Dai's mother was a passionate flower lover, who enjoyed cultivating a diverse array of them herself.

Her father never found this hobby whimsical; instead, he put every effort into fulfilling his wife's wish. He sourced these flowers globally, planting them in the greenhouse.

The process of gathering and transporting all these flowers and seeds consumed a significant amount of time, hence, the flowers Gu Dai and Su Ting had just planted were merely the initial batch. This batch was small, allowing them to finish the job swiftly.

Gazing at the result of their two-hour endeavor, Gu Dai expressed her satisfaction, "Over the next few days, more flowers will arrive gradually."

Su Ting agreed, "Yes, once we've planted all of them, it will indeed look stunning."

Gu Dai seemed to envision the future brilliance of the greenhouse filled with flowers.

Meanwhile, at Song Corporation,

Zhao Xuan nudged open the office door, finding Song Ling engrossed in his work. Taking a deep breath, he mustered the courage to announce, "President Song, your dinner is ready."

After delivering the message, Zhao Xuan intended to withdraw quickly, but Song Ling halted him, "What's the update on the legendary doctor?"

Realizing he couldn't evade the inquiry, Zhao Xuan reluctantly responded, "There's progress. We were close to locating the photograph..."

Song Ling interrupted Zhao Xuan's stuttering explanation, raising his head from the documents. His icy gaze fixated on Zhao Xuan, "Zhao Xuan, you know I have no patience for nonsense."

Wiping the cold sweat from his brow, Zhao Xuan confessed, "The legendary doctor discovered our investigation and put a stop to it."

Song Ling remained silent, his dark eyes boring into Zhao Xuan.

Under Song Ling's scrutiny, Zhao Xuan felt a knot tighten in his chest.

After what seemed like an eternity, Song Ling finally shifted his gaze, and Zhao Xuan breathed a sigh of relief.

Song Ling commanded, "Alright, noted. However, you must accelerate the process. Yueyue's hand can't wait indefinitely. Keep me informed immediately about any new development."

Zhao Xuan promptly acknowledged, "Yes, President Song."

Inwardly, Zhao Xuan felt torn. Eventually, he mustered up the courage to share his observation, “President Song, the man standing with your wife on the day of your divorce bore a resemblance to the legendary doctor’s disciple.”

Song Ling stared at Zhao Xuan, “What did you just say?”

Faced with Song Ling’s probing, Zhao Xuan lost his nerve to elaborate further. But Song Ling didn’t really need him to continue.

“The man accompanying Gu Dai cannot possibly be the disciple of the legendary doctor. And Zhao, Gu Dai and I are divorced. I hope you will rectify your language soon and stop referring to her as ‘my wife’. This time, I’ll let it pass, but I won’t be so forgiving next time!”

Zhao Xuan opened his mouth, a flood of words brewing in his mind, but all he managed to utter was, “Understood, President Song. Any other instructions?”

It was already 10 p.m., and Zhao Xuan was hoping for no more tasks. He yearned to complete the remaining work quickly and head home for rest.

Without sparing a glance at Zhao Xuan, Song Ling opened the lunch box on his table, dismissively stating, “No, you can leave.”

Zhao Xuan breathed a sigh of relief. Just as he was about to depart from the daunting office, Song Ling’s voice rang out again, “Why does tonight’s dinner taste different? How dare you serve me something so insipid?”

Zhao Xuan replied, “The previous meals were prepared by your wife... I mean, Miss Gu Dai....”

Chapter 46: Trust Me

Song Ling's expression hardened, he angrily smashed his chopsticks on the bento box as he shouted at Zhao Xuan in annoyance, "Leave!"

Not wasting any time, Zhao Xuan swiftly exited the office, musing to himself. Since the divorce from his wife, President Song's temper has progressively worsened!

At the same time, Zhao Xuan couldn't help but feel a pang of sympathy. Miss Gu had truly loved President Song. Despite his canine-like temper, she not only put up with it but also devoted herself to his care 24/7, never once showing a hint of impatience.

Seated in his chair, Song Ling was gasping for air. He found it baffling that Gu Dai's image continued to haunt his thoughts after their divorce.

This woman, Gu Dai, she indeed had strategies. When she was with me, she cooked for me, purchased and arranged clothes, and infiltrated every facet of my life. Was this her way of making it impossible for me to leave her?

As the thought coalesced in his mind, Song Ling scoffed, a derisive look surfacing in his eyes.

If Gu Dai thought like this, then she was sorely mistaken, because her presence had absolutely no impact on my life!

Zhao Xuan has increasingly proven to be incompetent, unable to manage the tasks assigned to him, and even rashly guessing that the man accompanying Gu Dai was the legendary doctor.

What a joke!

If he was indeed the apprentice of the legendary doctor, wouldn't that imply that Gu Dai, by his side, was the legendary doctor herself?

Song Ling felt as if he was losing his mind with this absurd idea. Given that Gu Dai, barely literate and from an underprivileged background, could not possibly possess such skills.

Furthermore, he had personally met the legendary doctor.

Five years ago, during a business trip to Europe, he found himself caught in a terrorist attack. Although the ringleader was promptly captured by local authorities, he was unfortunate enough to be struck by two bullets.

When they reached the local hospital, the doctor declared his condition as critical and life-threatening. The surgery agreement was repeatedly signed, and as they were on the verge of giving up, the legendary doctor made an appearance and kindly provided her assistance.

During the operation, Song Ling had a moment of lucidity and managed a vague glimpse at the legendary doctor.

Despite the doctor's surgical attire and mask, he was sure that she was a woman of significant bearing, possessing pure and steadfast eyes, characteristics that Gu Dai, a delicate woman, could not hold a candle to.

Song Ling stared at the half jade pendant in his hand, firmly holding on to his conviction.

However, as Song Ling was mulling over this, Gu Dai's graceful image kept intruding his thoughts.

With the art exhibition nearing, Gu Dai felt a wave of unease and questioned Su Ting, "I haven't prepared anything. Are you certain that everything is already set on your end?"

Unfazed, Su Ting assured her, "Do not fret, sister. Just place your trust in me."

"Very well."

No sooner had Gu Dai replied than there was a knock on the villa door.

"That must be the stylist and makeup artist," Su Ting said, as he moved to answer the door.

Over these past few days, Gu Dai had familiarized herself with Su Ting's situation during the last three years, and the people he interacted with, hence she instantly recognized the two newcomers not as ordinary stylists and makeup artists, but as part of Su Ting's personal team during his time modeling overseas.

Yet, Gu Dai was somewhat taken aback to see them here, aware that they had declared to serve only Su Ting.

Seeing Gu Dai's surprise, Su Ting clarified, "They have been wanting to meet you, sister. So, when they learned that you needed a stylist and makeup artist, they were adamant about coming."

Xia Shi and Jiang Jue concurred with a nod.

When they entered the villa, their eyes were glued to Gu Dai, unable to contain their excitement, "Sister, we came prepared to be dazzled, but after seeing you in person, we realized our imaginations fell short. You're a thousand, no, ten thousand times more stunning than we envisioned!"

"By the way, sister, are you considering a career in the entertainment industry? If you ever require a stylist or a makeup artist, do consider us. We will ensure you outshine every star!"

While Gu Dai did not consider Xia Shi and Jiang Jue's praises to be exaggerated – given their international fame and the rumor that anyone they groomed would undeniably be the most exquisite masterpiece of humanity – she shook her head apologetically, "I'm sorry, but I have no plans of the sort at the moment."

Despite their initial enthusiasm, Xia Shi and Jiang Jue weren't disheartened, "That's fine, it's fine. Even if you don't pursue a career in the entertainment industry, you can reach out to us anytime you require makeup or styling.."

Chapter 47: True Beauty

Su Ting had been observing the overenthusiastic duo for some time.



Eventually, he reached his limit, glared at them, and protested, "This is my sister, not yours."

Sharing a look, Xia Shi and Jiang Jue agreed to concede, "Alright, alright, we'll change how we refer to her."

Gu Dai, observing the bustling scene in front of her, let out a gentle chuckle.

Unexpectedly, her laughter drew the attention of everyone in the room. They all turned to look at her simultaneously. Gu Dai hesitated for a moment, then cleared her throat and said, "It's getting late. Let's get started."

True professionals, Xia Shi and Jiang Jue, shed their jovial demeanor as soon as they started working, focusing completely on designing the perfect makeup look and outfit for Gu Dai.

Nevertheless, they finished the whole makeup and styling process in a mere twenty minutes. The timing could have been shorter, but due to excessive number of dress options Su Ting prepared, and each one enhancing Gu Dai's appearance so beautifully, the selection process took quite a bit of time.

When Gu Dai emerged after changing, Xia Shi and Jiang Jue were taken aback.

Having worked in the industry for numerous years and seen countless beautiful women, it was at that moment they truly grasped what true beauty was.

Gu Dai also observed her reflection in the mirror, equally pleased.

Garbed in a black strapless dress, draped with a light-colored shawl, her long, exquisite hair elegantly done up, she resembled a noble lady from antiquity. Not flaunting, but subtly elegant, she emitted a mesmerizing aura of luxury.

Upon finishing his call and entering the room, Su Ting encountered this extraordinary sight and stood frozen in place.

After a few moments, he came back to reality. He approached Gu Dai slowly and gently praised, "You look breathtaking."

Hearing Su Ting's remark, Xia Shi and Jiang Jue too regained their composure. They quickly chimed in, "Indeed, you are astonishingly beautiful, like a celestial being descended from the heavens!"

Overwhelmed by the adulation, Gu Dai blushed slightly, "It's the fantastic makeup and outfit."

Their instant response was: "It's your innate elegance. We just accentuated it a bit. We truly didn't do much."

Gu Dai chuckled, "Then we've accomplished this ensemble together!"

Xia Shi and Jiang Jue agreed enthusiastically, "Yes, we accomplished this collectively!"

Unable to tolerate the duo anymore, Su Ting gave them an exasperated glance, "Now that the makeup and outfit are ready, you guys should pack up and get ready to leave. Zhang Zheng has already booked a flight for you three hours from now."

"What? The schedule is so tight!" Both of them cried out. They desired to admire Gu Dai more but had to depart.

After they took off, Su Ting checked the time and told Gu Dai, "Sister, it's late. We should head to the art exhibition."

Gu Dai acquiesced.

Once they were in the car, Gu Dai pondered for a moment before asking, "Xia Shi and Jiang Jue are heading overseas. Do you have responsibilities to manage over there?"

After all, Xia Shi and Jiang Jue were part of Su Ting's personal crew. It didn't make sense for them to go abroad while their employer was still in the country.

Su Ting bit his lower lip and honestly answered, "Yes, Zhang Zheng called me just now. There's a show I couldn't decline. I have to go. But I plan to leave tomorrow after accompanying you to the art exhibition."

Gu Dai instantly denied, "Don't concern yourself with the art exhibition, just go manage your responsibilities."

Even if his team had gone ahead, Gu Dai contemplated for a bit and figured that the work must be quite urgent. Perhaps due to Su Ting's status, no one would comment, but Gu Dai didn't want Su Ting to ignore his duties because of her.

Looking into Gu Dai's eyes, Su Ting had no choice but to agree. He still attempted to bargain, "Can I accompany you for a while until it's time to board the flight?"

After he finished speaking, Su Ting paused for a few seconds. Seeing that Gu Dai didn't reply, he quickly added, "I have outfits there. I don't need to go home to pack. There are still three hours until the flight. There's sufficient time."

Gu Dai wanted to refuse at first, but seeing Su Ting already conceding, she consented. But she didn't forget to add, "When it's time, I'll remind you.."

Chapter 48: Art Exhibition

Su Ting felt the shattering impact of Gu Dai's words, destroying the last vestiges of his hopeful thoughts.

Their destination, the art exhibition, was close by, and they arrived after only a brief journey.

Upon halting the vehicle, Su Ting exited first, then rounded the car to assist Gu Dai.

His celebrity status ensured that a gaggle of reporters, like coordinated hunters, instantly aimed their cameras his way.

“Is that Su Ting? He’s back in the country and I’ve managed to capture him on camera. So the rumors of his return home are true?”

“Who’s the woman accompanying him? She’s stunning. A newcomer to showbiz?”

“I don’t think she’s from the entertainment world. If she were, she’d be all over the tabloids already. Maybe she’s an heiress from some wealthy family.”

“I’ve never seen the usually aloof Su Ting with a woman, let alone giving her such a warm smile. Could something be brewing?”

“It certainly looks that way!”

Such scenes were familiar territory for Su Ting, but he feared that Gu Dai might find them overwhelming. He sought to reassure her, murmuring, “The press won’t have access beyond this point. They won’t be able to take any more photos once we’re inside.”

Gu Dai nodded, mirroring his calm demeanor, and quietly replied, “Understood.”

A troubling thought struck her then. “Will the press photos affect you? Should we try to suppress them?”

“No need for that!” Su Ting responded swiftly, perhaps too eagerly. Upon meeting Gu Dai’s questioning gaze, he composed himself, and said, “Such pictures won’t cause me any problems. There’s no need to erase them.”

With Su Ting’s reassurances, Gu Dai agreed to let the matter rest.

The art exhibition they were attending was one of the nation's most esteemed, housing numerous masterpieces.

Gu Dai had attended with the aim of purchasing the finest painting as a gift for her father.

The exhibit was attended by influential figures from all walks of life. However, when Su Ting and Gu Dai made their entrance, the attendees collectively gasped.

Su Ting was clad in a black suit, his eyes masked behind golden-framed glasses, exuding an aura of cultured allure.

An international model, Su Ting had long accustomed people to his captivating presence. Yet the real surprise was the woman at his side who, despite his overpowering aura, did not seem the least bit intimidated, her own charisma on par with his.

The pair commanded the attention of the room, though they seemed oblivious to the onlookers, their focus instead on the exhibited paintings.

Leaning over slightly towards Gu Dai, Su Ting suggested, "Sister, if you find a painting that catches your eye, don't hesitate to buy it. The bill's on me."

Gu Dai waved off his offer, her voice barely above a whisper, "This is a present for father. I can't let you foot the bill. Besides, you've worked hard for your earnings. Save it for yourself. Don't splurge needlessly."

Su Ting countered, "Sister, if it weren't for your promotional efforts, I wouldn't have earned a dime. Furthermore, Uncle Gu and Aunt Gu have always been kind to me. Buying them a present is the least I can do. It's not frivolous spending."

Feeling cornered by Su Ting's insistence, Gu Dai let out a resigned sigh and proposed a compromise, "Let's split the cost then. We'll present the painting to father as a gift from us both. Is that acceptable?"

To this, Su Ting raised no objections, and simply replied, "Okay."

As they were engrossed in examining the art, a voice rang out in surprise, “Mr. Su, you’ve indeed returned home! My wife told me earlier but I didn’t believe her. I’m glad I made a dash over here upon receiving her message, otherwise I would have missed you.”

Gu Dai and Su Ting turned towards the source of the voice.

The speaker was a plainly dressed man, hidden behind black sunglasses. Having learned about Su Ting’s acting ambitions, Gu Dai had familiarized herself with many film directors and instantly recognized the man as Zhao Hong, a celebrated national director.

Su Ting and Zhao Hong shook hands as the latter warmly greeted him, “Director Zhao, it’s been a while.”

Grasping Su Ting’s hand tightly, Zhao Hong responded excitedly, “Mr. Su, it’s been far too long. I heard you’re planning to reorient your career domestically.. I’m working on a big-budget film currently, would you be interested in discussing the plot?”

Chapter 49: Invitation

Su Ting glanced towards Gu Dai, then faced Zhao Hong, articulating politely, “I am honored by Director Zhao’s proposition, yet I regret to inform that I’m engrossed in selecting paintings and might not have the leisure to discuss the storyline.”

Zhao Hong was mildly disappointed by the response. “The final lineup for the drama will be finalized this afternoon. Missing this opportunity would mean a potential collaboration in our upcoming project a year later.”

As the country got wind of Su Ting’s plans to expand his career domestically, he had been in the sights of many directors. Zhao Hong was particularly remorseful about setting an early deadline for casting; had he delayed it a bit, he might have had a chance.

Gu Dai pondered upon hearing Su Ting's reply, understanding he was rejecting this opportunity due to her.

Acknowledging this, Gu Dai stepped forward and proposed, "Director Zhao, Su Ting has available time now. You both can proceed with your conversation."

Su Ting swiveled his head to gaze at her, murmuring, "Currently, I need to select a painting for Uncle Gu..."

Gu Dai extended her hand, gently redirecting Su Ting's face, "It's alright, I'll first make a preliminary selection myself. I'll earmark the ones I favor, and when you return, we can pick the finest."

Su Ting had no choice but to comply with her arrangement, conceding, "Alright."

Seeing Su Ting so compliant to a woman's suggestions, Zhao Hong was slightly taken aback. At this moment, he began to examine Gu Dai intently.

After taking in Gu Dai's appearance and the commanding aura she emanated, he was astounded and his curiosity was piqued, "Miss, you appear to be naturally destined for the silver screen. Would you entertain the thought of acting in films?"

Gu Dai felt slightly exasperated. After all, she had been barraged with questions throughout the day about her potential entry into the entertainment industry.

Although she was frustrated inwardly, Gu Dai declined Zhao Hong politely, "I apologize, but I harbor no intentions of venturing into the industry."

Zhao Hong experienced a tinge of regret. Reexamining Gu Dai's flawless features, he still desired to persuade her.

But before Zhao Hong could voice his thoughts, he was led away by Su Ting, "Director Zhao, I have a flight abroad scheduled for this afternoon. Let's hasten with the script discussion, else we might fall short of time."

On seeing Zhao Hong being escorted away, Gu Dai heaved a sigh of relief, thereafter concentrating on observing the paintings.

After perusing for some time, Gu Dai lowered her gaze, becoming somewhat introspective.

She yearned for her father.

Her father used to be deeply passionate about painting, even to the extent of obsession, visiting art exhibitions every few days.

Initially, Gu Dai was intrigued when her father brought her to observe the paintings. She gleaned a lot from it. However, after some time, she grew weary, reluctant, and started contriving various excuses to dodge the visits.

Eventually, even when her father attempted to coax her with assorted gifts, she still was unwilling to venture out.

At this juncture, Gu Dai felt a pang of remorse. How she wished she could attend an art exhibition with her father again, even if it was just once.

But now, that opportunity was non-existent.

Tears sparkled in Gu Dai's eyes, her heart felt heavy and inflamed, and she was swaddled in a blanket of melancholy.

When one's mood is down, unfortunate events seem to be inevitable.

Gu Dai didn't anticipate that, after composing her emotions and lifting her head, she would lock eyes with Wang Lan, Song Ling's mother.



“Gu Dai, why are you here?” Wang Lan shrieked incredulously after spotting Gu Dai, and blurted out, “How did a woman from the slums manage to infiltrate this art exhibition?”

When Wang Lan entered the exhibition hall, she spotted a woman standing under the spotlight, as if she was glowing all over. Assuming her to be a noblewoman, she guided Jiang Yue to introduce themselves.

However, she was astounded to find that it was Gu Dai, the bumpkin!

Gu Dai fixed a frosty gaze at Wang Lan, and retorted impassively, “Of course, I entered with an invitation.”

Gu Dai intended to depart after the brief interaction. She was averse to entangling herself with people akin to Wang Lan.

But as she pivoted to leave, a piercingly derisive laughter of a young girl rang in her ears: “You, holding an invitation? Just confess that you sneaked in, forsaking your dignity for the sake of preserving face, claiming you have an invitation, this is undoubtedly the most hilarious joke I’ve heard all year!”

Chapter 50:1 Discarded Him

Upon recognizing the distinctive voice, Gu Dai had known without turning her head that the speaker was Song Ling’s younger sibling, Song Yu. With an icy tone, she retorted, “Are you a tapeworm in my gut? Mow can you be so certain about my invitation?”

Throughout the preceding three years, one of the primary factors for her subdued personality had been the mother-daughter pair, Wang Lan and Song Yu.

In the presence of outsiders, especially Song Ling, they would playact as a harmonious mother and sister, constructing a facade. However, whenever Song Ling was away, they would drop the pretense, revealing their repugnant true selves, and treat her like a plaything.

Song Yu, in particular, would command her to undertake various tasks. Dirtying the villa and then making her clean the whole place, hand-washing the family's laundry, installing a tracking device on her, compelling her to walk for hours to purchase milk tea, and so forth; such orders were routine.

Gu Dai, who once endeavored her utmost to integrate into the Song family, catered to this mother-daughter duo in every conceivable way. Despite facing such abhorrent tasks, she refrained from resistance, opting instead to endure and comply.

During one of her menstrual cycles, she also developed a fever. Overwhelmed by such circumstances, she found herself in distress and thus reached out to Song Ling with her grievances.

Yet, after connecting the call, all she received was Song Ling's impatient rebuttal, "They would never stoop so low! I'm aware that you're trying to manipulate my empathy to win my affection, but let me clarify, Gu Dai, your approach is erroneous. It's a grave mistake. Your current conduct won't evoke my sympathy, but will instead incite disgust. How could you be so scheming?"

Each word served as a sharp dagger, puncturing her heart.

If Wang Lan and Song Yu were responsible for her physical torment, then Song Ling was the source of her mental agony.

Therefore, upon encountering them, Gu Dai was unable to conceal the loathing that was deeply engraved in her heart.

When Wang Lan and Song Yu's gaze crossed the hatred in Gu Dai's eyes, they instinctively shuddered, shrinking their necks, avoiding eye contact, and daring not to meet her gaze.

Upon witnessing the craven conduct of the pair beside her, Jiang Yue was on the brink of grinding her teeth in frustration. She managed to retain a smile and commented to Gu Dai, "Isn't it inappropriate for a younger person to glare at their elders like that?"

To Jiang Yue's statement, Gu Dai offered a mere indifferent response, "Oh?"

As Jiang Yue voiced out, Wang Lan jolted back to reality. Seeing Song Yu still trembling with fear, she reached out and pinched her harshly.

Simultaneously, Wang Lan reprimanded Song Yu in a frosty tone, “Did I nurture you to be so timid in daily life? Raise your head! She’s just a rustic girl, what are you scared of?”

Under Wang Lan’s painful pinch, Song Yu’s face contorted in agony. She instinctively desired to retaliate against Wang Lan, but she swallowed her words upon meeting her stern gaze.

Observing the internal discord between the two, Gu Dai couldn’t help but let out a faint chuckle.

The instant Wang Lan heard Gu Dai’s laughter, she swiftly raised her head to glare at her. It was only at that moment that she realized the woman standing in front of her was not the docile Gu Dai she remembered.

Nonetheless, Wang Lan was convinced that one aspect would persist – that Gu Dai would still be terrified to her core. Without any courtesy, she reprimanded, “Gu Dai, how dare you show such disrespect to me now. Song Ling will surely loathe you when he sees you behaving in this manner!”

“Loathe me?” At the mention of Wang Lan’s familiar words, Gu Dai couldn’t help but question, “Do you think I’m concerned about that?”

The triumphant expression on Wang Lan’s face froze. She hadn’t anticipated this unexpected twist.

Upon noticing Wang Lan’s reaction, Gu Dai realized something and softly remarked, “I suppose you’re unaware that when I divorced Song Ling, it was my choice. I’m not fond of him, and I discarded him.”

Completely oblivious to their public surroundings, Wang Lan exclaimed in disbelief, “Impossible! My son is so wonderful, how could you possibly not be fond of him!”

At this juncture, even Jiang Yue seemed perturbed. She stepped forward and reproached, “Sister Gu Dai, I comprehend that you’re distressed after your divorce, but you can’t fabricate stories. You shouldn’t delude yourself with false narratives just to feel better..”

