

Little Brat's 1021

Chapter 1021: First Come, First Served

Shen Li was dumbfounded.

Gu Siyang was shocked.

[Is Third Uncle in Tianye City?! You're with Ah Li and Fourth Uncle?!]

This time, Gu Tingyun did not answer immediately.

However, Shen Li heard footsteps in the kitchen. She turned around and saw Gu Tingyun standing at the kitchen door with a warm smile.

"Ah Li, is there anything I can help you with?"

Shen Li was silent for a moment

"... No. But, Third Uncle, didn't we already agree to make corn rib soup?"

Then what was the reason for asking?

Gu Tingyun saw the phone that she had put aside. Clearly, she had already seen the message that he had sent to the family group chat.

His smile did not change.

“Yes, I just wanted to ask if there was a more convenient way to make it. Zhijin mentioned that you’ve been spending a lot of time in the laboratory recently and that you’re very busy. I was afraid that you’d be tired.”

Shen Li was speechless.

Shen Zhijin’s cold voice came from behind.

“If you really don’t want to tire Ah Li, it’s still not too late to go out and eat now.”

Gu Tingyun was very calm. He raised his hand and pointed at the pot of ribs and said gently, “Then Ah Li’s work would be in vain.”

Shen Zhijin was unwilling to say a word in reply.

Gu Tingyun did not mind. After making sure that there was indeed nothing that Shen Li needed his help with, he turned around and returned to the living room.

Unhurriedly, he picked his phone. His family was indeed in an uproar.

However, it was mainly Gu Siyang, Gu Siqi, and Gu Sicheng who were frantically speaking.

[Ah! Cousin made ribs! I want to eat them!]

[Speaking of which, we did not even go to Fourth Uncle’s house when we went to the Capital previously! I really want to eat them with Cousin and Fourth Uncle!]

[Both of you, shut up... I have not been to the Capital in such a long time. What did I say?]

[Third Uncle, you have to post a picture later!]

[Where is Third Uncle? Could it be that he has already eaten?]

Gu Tingyun then typed out a sentence.

[Not yet, I just asked Ah Li if she wanted help, but she refused. Also, I didn't take a good picture, I'll ask Ah Li take it later.]

Shen Li, who had just fished out the ribs, saw this message and felt speechless.

She lowered her head to look at the ribs in the pot and for a moment, she doubted her life.

To be honest, flying from Hong Kong to the Capital should cost a lot of money, right?

Although these ribs were top-notch ingredients, compared to that, wasn't it just a fraction of the cost?

Gu Siyang was burning with anxiety.

[I'm at LY. Is it too late to go over now?]

Gu Tingyun looked at the time.

"Don't arrive after dinner."

Gu Siyang was speechless.

Wouldn't he be eating on time? He would surely not miss it so perfectly!

Gu Siqi and Gu Sicheng were far away in Hong Kong City, so they could only stew in their feelings of envy.

However, from the beginning to the end, other than the three of them, everyone else in the family group had tacitly remained silent, as if they had not seen the news at all.

Feeling satisfied, Gu Tingyun put away his phone.

An hour later, the dishes were served.

Apart from the corn stewed ribs, Shen Li had also made a few other dishes such as fish-flavored shredded pork, stir-fried lettuce, and so on.

She remembered that Gu Tingyun had previously mentioned that he did not have a very strong stomach, so the overall taste of the dishes she had prepared was relatively bland.

However, due to her skill, everything was delicious, looked great, and the smell and taste of it was perfect.

Gu Tingyun swept his gaze across the table and handed his phone to Shen Li. He smiled and said, "Ah Li, Siqi and the others want to see your cooking."

The word "see" had very cleverly been slipped in.

"Okay."

Shen Li took the phone, took a few pictures, and handed it back to him.

Half a minute later, Shen Li's phone vibrated a few times.

She looked at Gu Tingyun who was holding the phone and guessed something.

She unlocked it and clicked on it.

As expected, there were a few more photos in the family group. They were the ones she had just taken.

While she was thinking about this, Gu Tingyun sent another message.

[Ah Li took such good photos.]

Shen Li was nonplussed.

Gu Siqi and Gu Sicheng cheered for her although they were extremely envious.

Looking at the screen full of Cha Lemon emojis, Shen Li went silent for a moment. Finally, she chose to mute the chat group notifications and held her breath.

Gu Tingyun also put away his phone and picked up some food to serve to Shen Li.

“Ah Li, are you tired today? You should eat more.”

Shen Zhijin raised his eyes slightly.

Had he just asked if she was tired?

Sensing the subtle atmosphere at the dining table, Shen Li was silent for a moment. Finally, he probed.

“Third Uncle, how long will you be staying in the Capital this time?”

Even after such a long time, she still did not know which strange direction the family would develop in...

Gu Tingyun ate a piece of pork ribs and took a mouthful of soup. Feeling refreshed, he said, "I'm going to take care of some things tomorrow and meet a few friends. I'll be leaving the day after tomorrow."

Shen Li nodded.

At that moment, her phone lit up. It was a call from Gu Tingchuan.

Why was he calling at this time?

Shen Li had a strange feeling, but she still picked it up.

"Second Uncle?"

The hand that Gu Tingyun was using to hold the chopsticks paused slightly, but it only lasted for a moment before he quickly returned to normal.

"Ah Li, I'll be in the Capital tomorrow morning. Are you free?"

"Tomorrow morning?" Shen Li was slightly stunned. "What's the matter?"

When Gu Tingyun heard this, the corners of his lips curled up slightly.

It seemed that Gu Tingchuan was saying something on the other side.

Shen Li repeated her question with a troubled expression on her face.

"The auction at the central building in the Capital? I'm afraid that I can't. I already have an appointment."

Gu Tingchuan's voice deepened. "You have an appointment?"

The smile on Gu Tingyun's lips faded greatly as he looked at Shen Li.

Shen Li explained, "Yes, Aunt Fang will be there tomorrow. I've already agreed to go with her."

Auntie Fang, of course, was Lu Zheng's wife and Lu Huaiyu's mother— Fang Yunyi.

This time, even Shen Zhijin looked over.

Shen Li was going to the auction with Fang Yunyi, but she had not had the time to tell him yet.

Gu Tingchuan frowned.

The dock had been quite busy recently, so he had not been able to free up any time. In the end, his third brother had beat him to it.

They had already eaten that meal, so it was too late now anyway, so he had focused his attention on the auction at Bo Xing Auction House tomorrow morning.

Who would have known that it would not work out? Shen Li had already been booked.

And the person was Fang Yunyi.

It was obviously not suitable for Shen Li to break her promise at the last minute.

Gu Tingchuan had no choice but to give up.

Forget it. Even if they were not going together, he still had to attend the auction.

After hanging up, Shen Li realized that Shen Zhijin and Gu Tingyun were both looking at her.

She was stunned.

“Dad, Third Uncle, what’s the matter?”

Shen Zhijin asked, “I didn’t hear you mention this before, did I?”

“Aunt Fang called me this afternoon. I was going to tell you when I came back, but I forgot about it,” Shen Li said.

Shen Zhijin nodded and did not ask any more questions.

Gu Tingyun paused and smiled.

“It seems that Ah Li and Mrs. Lu have a good relationship.”

At first, he had thought that he was closer to her than others, but he had forgotten that someone was ‘closer’ to her than he was.

After a while, Gu Tingyun asked again, “Ah Li, do you know what kind of item Mrs. Lu is interested in at the auction?”

Shen Li thought for a moment.

“I didn’t ask about that, but Aunt Fang loves jewelry so I think she would probably be going for this kind of item, right?”

Gu Tingyun nodded.

That was good.

Chapter 1022: What a Coincidence

Early the next morning, Fang Yunyi came directly to Skyleaf City to pick her up.

Once the white car was parked downstairs, Fang Yunyi called Shen Li and asked her to come downstairs.

Three minutes later, a tall and slender figure walked out of the building.

Fang Yunyi looked in that direction and immediately fixed her gaze.

Shen Li was wearing a sleeveless red A-line dress today. Her long wavy hair was tied up in a fluffy and lazy bun. Her facial features were clear and beautiful. Her swan neck was slender and beautiful. Her waist was slender, her legs were straight, and her bones and flesh were nicely proportioned, and her exposed skin was as fair and delicate as fine cheese. Under the sunlight, it was clear and white as if it could shine.

Her white and tender ears were decorated with two square-shaped ruby earrings. The color was rich and the texture was pure, which made her skin appear even whiter.

Fang Yunyi instantly felt her heart begin to pound.

God!

The scene that she had imagined countless times before had now appeared in front of her eyes just like that!

Look at that little dress!

Look at those little ear studs!

Look at the young girl!

She raised her hand and gently pressed down on her heart to calm herself down from the excitement.

So dignified!

So generous!

So elegant!

By the time she had made her third chant in her heart, Shen Li had already arrived in front of the car.

“Aunt Fang?”

Shen Li called out to her.

Fang Yunyi instantly came back to her senses and immediately waved at Shen Li.

“Ah Li, please get in the car. We’re leaving now.”

Shen Li sat in the backseat with her.

Only then did she notice that Fang Yunyi was wearing a ruby necklace today.

She already had an extremely cool and elegant appearance to begin with, so it matched well with this rich and passionate ruby.

She had fiery red lips, noble and reserved, extremely bright and beautiful.

Shen Li silently sighed in her heart once again. This was expected of the great beauty who had been famous in the Capital in the past.

With such a mother, it was no wonder that Lu Huaiyu was so stunning.

The car started and drove towards the Capital Central Building.

Shen Li recalled what Gu Tingyun had said the night before and asked casually, "Aunt Fang, are there any auction items that you're interested in when you go over today?"

"There are two."

Fang Yunyi nodded. Then, she thought of something and looked at Shen Li,

"Oh right, Ah Li, if you see anything that you like at the auction later, feel free to tell Auntie."

Shen Li was shocked.

Fang Yunyi continued, "I've seen the catalog of their auction this time. There are a few things that I think you'll be interested in."

Shen Li was bewildered.

Originally, she had thought that she was just going to accompany Fang Yunyi today, but she had not expected her to still have the intention of buying things for her.

“Aunt Fang, you’ve already given me many things previously, I—”

Fang Yunyi tilted her head slightly.

“That’s right, you’ve already said that it was previously. How can it be the same as today?”

Shen Li was completely flabbergasted.

Very good, she was really never able to best Fang Yunyi in this aspect.

After Fang Yunyi finished speaking, she took her phone out again.

She had very beautiful hands. Her fingers were slender and white, and even her fingernails were a sparkling pink.

Thus, even though she had only made a simple action, she still looked completely elegant.

“I’ll tell your Uncle Lu that we’ll be eating out for lunch and won’t be going home.”

Fang Yunyi spoke while typing at a leisurely pace.

Shen Li replied with a “Okay”.

Fang Yunyi sent a message to Lu Zheng.

[Lu Zheng! Do you know how cute and beautiful Ah Li is today?!]

[She's actually wearing a red dress, and it's very similar to the one I showed you earlier! Isn't this just proof of a telepathic connection between a mother and daughter?! You can't see it but her dress matches the pair of earrings that I gave her. It's really amazing! I have such good taste!]

[Lu Zheng, your son is so lucky to have found Ah Li to be his girlfriend.]

After frantically sending out a few messages, Fang Yunyi finally calmed her excitement down slightly and was temporarily restrained.

She looked up again and took a look at the rearview mirror.

Shen Li was looking out of the window. She had an exquisite and perfect profile. Her long eyelashes were thick and curly, and her peach blossom eyes were black and pure.

Quiet and beautiful.

Fang Yunyi's heart softened.

How could a little girl be so beautiful and so sweet?

She had thought that those cartoon drawings of Ah Li were very cute and beautiful, but when she saw the real person with her own eyes, she felt that those drawings were far less than one percent of the young girl's actual beauty and temperament.

Fang Yunyi clenched her handbag, which only contained her cell phone and black credit card.

This was her first time taking her daughter out shopping. How nice it was!

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Capital Central Building.

The auction at Bo Xing Auction House was being held at the top floor of the building today.

Bo Xing was one of the top three auction houses in the world. They had very high standards, so many well-known people would come to the auction every time.

This time was no exception.

In the luxurious and spacious auction hall, many guests had already taken their seats.

Suddenly, the crowd became restless, and several pairs of eyes turned to look in the same direction.

A tall and handsome figure had appeared at the entrance of the auction hall.

He was wearing a black shirt, with his jacket draped over his arm. He was very tall, with broad shoulders and a narrow waist.

His black hair fell over his forehead, and he had a deep look in his eyes. The lines from his eyebrows to his nose bridge were perfect, and his jaw line was sharp and smooth.

His facial features were stunning, and his temperament was cold and ascetic.

It was Lu Huaiyu.

“The second young master of the Lu family has actually come today?”

“It seems that he rarely comes to the Bo Xing auction, right? This time...”

“He probably came for a particular auction item, right?”

The crowd whispered among themselves.

Lu Huaiyu was led to his seat by a staff member.

Just then, an eager voice came from behind him.

“Second Master Gu, you’re here.”

Lu Huaiyu stopped in his tracks and turned around to see Gu Tingchuan walking over.

Gu Tingchuan’s arrival had obviously attracted the attention of many people.

“Is that Gu Tingchuan, the second master of the Gu family?”

“It’s him!”

“Could he... have come all the way from Hong Kong City just to attend this auction?”

The Gu family was the number one family in Hong Kong City. The second master of the Gu family really had no reason to come to this auction.

Lu Huaiyu stood still.

It was then that Gu Tingchuan spotted him as well.

Their eyes met. Lu Huaiyu and his thin lips curled slightly.

“Second Master Gu, what a coincidence.”

Gu Tingchuan's eyes narrowed slightly. However, before he could speak, a smiling voice sounded from behind him.

"Second Brother."

Gu Tingchuan was annoyed when he heard this voice. He frowned and saw that it was indeed Gu Tingyun.

Then, Gu Tingyun turned to look at Lu Huaiyu and smiled.

"Second Master Lu, what a coincidence."

Chapter 1023: Internal Strife in the Gu Family

The third master of the Gu family had actually come as well.

Everyone looked over in surprise.

The appearance of the second master of the Gu family was already very surprising. With the addition of the third master of the Gu family, this scene was truly extraordinary.

"What treasures does this auction have that has attracted the two masters of the Gu family to come?"

"I'm looking at the second master of the Gu family and the third master of the Gu family. Why didn't they know the other was coming? Moreover, this atmosphere... no matter which way I look at it, it can't be said to be harmonious..."

"There have been rumors in Hong Kong City that the masters of the Gu family are fighting in private, especially these two. They had a public quarrel at the horse race, but now it's at the auction in the Capital..."

“Tsk, that’s the Gu family after all...”

“These masters of the Gu family have never appeared together in any auction before, right? Are they going to completely fall out with each other now? I guess there’s going to be a good show today!”

The crowd discussed this matter animatedly, and many speculations arose.

Although the people who had come today were all famous people from all walks of life, those who could be compared to the Lu family in the Capital and the Gu family in Hong Kong City were as rare as phoenix feathers and qilin horns.

Therefore, Gu Tingchuan and Gu Tingyun appearing together today undoubtedly became the focus of everyone’s attention.

Lu Huaiyu remained expressionless, and the corners of his lips curled up into a smile:

“Third Master Gu.”

Gu Tingyun looked at the two of them and smiled.

“Why aren’t you going in? The auction is about to start, right?”

Seeing his face now, Gu Tingchuan thought of the few photos that he had posted in his family group last night. The more he had looked at them, the more annoyed he had become.

Don’t think that he did not know what Gu Tingyun was up to by postponing his meeting for the next two days and coming to the Capital ahead of schedule!

Other than that meal, today’s auction was the most important thing, right?

However, it’s useless for him to come early. Ah Li was still not with him, right?

Thinking of this, Gu Tingchuan finally felt a little better. He snorted coldly, turned around, and was about to walk in.

However, at this moment, there was another commotion from behind.

Everyone looked in that direction.

A group of people came over. The person walking at the front was none other than...

“Gu Tingfeng?!”

Someone gasped.

“Why is this person here too?!”

The person who had just arrived was Gu Tingfeng.

Compared to Gu Tingchuan and Gu Tingyun, this Master Gu had gradually shifted his assets to the Capital in recent years. His wife, Liang Su, and his son, Gu Siyang, had also settled down in the Capital. Thus, the many aristocratic families in the capital were much more familiar with him.

Even so, his attendance at the Bo Xing auction today was still very shocking.

That was because the second master and the third master of the Gu family had already arrived before him.

“God... What’s going on? Apart from the fifth master of the Gu family, all three of the Gu family members have actually come here?”

“This situation... could it be that the Gu family is going to change?”

“But I haven’t heard about how Old Master Gu is doing...”

“The waters run deep in the rich and powerful families, especially those like the Gu family. Who knows how many secrets are hidden under the surface? How can outsiders know about it so easily?”

“That’s true. With these few people appearing together, even if you think about it with your toes, it must mean that something big is happening! As for the fifth master of the Gu family, compared to these few brothers, he’s much younger. How can he be their match?”

“The Gu family’s business has long been divided up among these few people and firmly occupied by them. Is it possible for the fifth master to still have a share? I heard that he only has a few wineries now. Oh, I think he even opened a private psychology clinic in the Capital where he can earn from the consultation fees and so on. Even if he came today, he probably wouldn’t be able to compete with them! Why would he come here to humiliate himself?”

“Tsk, if that’s the case, the fifth master of the Gu family is really pitiful...”

At a private psychology clinic in the Capital, Gu Tinglan was looking at the medical records in his hand when he suddenly sneezed.

“Achoo!”

He rubbed his nose and muttered, “Who’s talking about me behind my back...”

When he saw Gu Tingchuan, Gu Tingyun, and Lu Huaiyu before him, the smile on Gu Tingfeng’s face immediately froze.

What’s going on?

Why were all of them here?!

“Big Brother.” Gu Tingyun reacted the fastest and greeted him with a smile.

Gu Tingchuan frowned, feeling even more unhappy.

What did he mean by this? He had been staying in the Capital all day. One moment, he asked to go to Ah Li’s house for dinner, and the next moment, he was going to deliver gifts to Ah Li. And just like that, was he actually here today to snatch something?

This was too much.

“Big Brother.”

He also called out. However, the second master of the Gu family had always been a straightforward person, so he was displeased. Even his own big brother did not give him much face, so naturally, the expression on his face did not look pleasant.

The people around them looked at each other in dismay.

Had the relationship between these few masters actually deteriorated to such an extent that they did not even bother to put on a show?

Thinking about what would happen later, Gu Tingfeng felt annoyed.

“Alright, let’s not stand here. Let’s go in first.”

Thus, one after another, the masters of the Gu family took their seats under everyone’s gazes.

The most important point was that their seats were in the same row and were next to each other.

Many people exchanged glances with each other. They would not be tearing each other apart here later, would they?

Lu Huaiyu invited them to take their seats first, but he was the last one.

Coincidentally, his seat was only one aisle away from Gu Tinglan's.

Just as he sat down, he suddenly caught a glimpse of two familiar figures at the entrance.

His expression froze, and he slowly focused his gaze.

Fang Yunyi was leading Shen Li in this direction, and there were a few ladies and socialites beside her.

It had been a long time since Fang Yunyi had been in the Capital. Now that she had returned a month ago, many people wanted to connect with her.

So even though she was only here to participate in an auction, she still met many people who came over to greet her.

The only thing Fang Yunyi wanted to do today was to take her daughter shopping. She was too lazy to deal with these other people.

The little bit of time she had was not even enough for her to talk to Ah Li, how could she give any of it to these outsiders?

Plus, she was a cold and elegant beauty. Just by standing there, her aura seemed to spread out 2.8 meters, making her even more difficult to approach.

With just one glance, Lu Huaiyu could tell that Fang Yunyi's patience had almost run out.

Just then, a middle-aged woman smiled and said, "Eh, Mrs. Lu, are both you and Shen Li wearing rubies today? It looks good together."

Fang Yunyi immediately stood still.

"Oh?"

She tilted her head slightly.

"Ah Li is wearing the same pigeon blood-red colored gems as mine. What do you think? Aren't they beautiful?"

Lu Huaiyu closed his eyes and held his forehead.

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Chapter 1024: The Lu family and the Gu family Were at Loggerheads!

Everyone could tell how close she was to this "Ah Li".

That was true. After all, look at what Fang Yunyi's temperament was like. If she didn't like this future daughter-in-law, why would she personally bring her here to participate in the auction?

Those who could achieve this status were all shrewd people. The woman who had spoken realized that she had hit the nail on the head and immediately smiled and nodded.

"That's right. Shen Li has always been exquisite and attractive. With this pair of ruby earrings, she's really very beautiful."

Previously, someone had used similar words to praise Fang Yunyi, but she had not gotten any reaction.

However, now that Shen Li had been praised as well, she was clearly much happier.

She turned her head to look at Shen Li again. No matter which way she looked at it, she still liked it.

“That’s right. I helped her choose this pair of earrings.”

The woman continued to praise.

“I see. Of course, there’s no need to mention how impeccable Madam Lu’s taste is. If anyone who did not know any better saw the two of you stand together like this, I’m afraid they would think that the two of you are sisters.”

She had originally intended on praising Fang Yunyi’s youthful looks at the same time. After all, there was no woman who did not like to hear that.

Moreover, Fang Yunyi was really beautiful. She really looked young.

Both of her sons were already in their twenties, but she looked like she was still only in her thirties.

It was not an exaggeration to say that she and Shen Li looked like sisters when they stood together.

However, after Fang Yunyi heard this, she carefully looked at the young girl beside her.

“Ah Li and I? Don’t we look more like mother and daughter?”

She and Ah Li were wearing matching ruby jewelry today. They were also wearing clothes of the same color. How could these people not notice such an obvious matching parent-child outfit?

Someone next to her smiled and said, "Exactly. Shen Li is smart and beautiful. Who wouldn't want to have such a daughter?"

Fang Yunyi tucked the strands of her hair behind her ear and smiled elegantly.

"That's right."

After spending some time together, Shen Li already had a rough understanding of Fang Yunyi's temperament and thoughts, so she was not surprised at all to hear her say this.

Fang Yunyi was close to printing out "This is my daughter, isn't she beautiful?" flyers to be handed out to everyone.

Just then, Shen Li inadvertently turned around and saw a familiar face.

Shi Yang.

He was here too?

Almost at the same time, Shi Yang raised his eyes and looked over. When he saw Shen Li, a look of surprise flashed across his face, but it quickly turned into a smile.

He walked forward. "Shen Li?"

Shen Li nodded slightly. "Teacher Shi Yang."

Fang Yunyi also noticed Shi Yang at the same time. She did not know him personally, but she still had a good impression of the name "Shi Yang".

After all, he was a master of traditional Chinese painting.

Shi Yang's gaze turned slightly and looked at Fang Yunyi. He nodded politely.

"Madam Lu."

When Fang Yunyi faced the outside world, her every move was elegant and dignified. She was polite and courteous.

"Teacher Shi Yang."

Shi Yang smiled and reminded her, "The auction seems to be starting soon."

Thus, everyone walked in one after another and took their seats.

Shi Yang was seated at the back. After greeting Shen Li and the others, he left.

Meanwhile, Shen Li followed Fang Yunyi to the front row.

Several gazes landed on her.

Raising her eyes slowly, she soon realized that her three uncles, as well as Lu Huaiyu, were here?!

Fang Yunyi took her to her seat, right in front of Lu Huaiyu.

Shen Li was baffled.

Was today's auction such... a grand affair?

She was not the only one. The other people present also had the same question.

When they saw Fang Yunyi bring Shen Li in, many people were puzzled.

“Isn’t that Fang Yunyi? She actually brought Shen Li with her?”

“Strange, what’s going on today? It can be said that the Gu family is in an internal conflict, but the Lu family—”

“I guess Madam Lu and Second Master Lu are here for different items, right? Everyone knows that Madam Lu likes gemstones.”

“That’s true... All in all, there are really many heavyweights in today’s auction. I wonder what will happen when the auction starts.”

...

Shen Li sat there with Fang Yunyi on her right and Lu Huaiyu behind her. Her three uncles were on her left and she was separated from them by an aisle.

Even without turning her head, she could clearly feel the gazes of those people on her.

Shen Li was speechless.

The atmosphere was really strange.

Fortunately, the auction very quickly started. As the auctioneer went up onto the stage and auctioned off the items one by one, the atmosphere in the entire venue quickly became lively. Everyone’s attention was also on the auction itself.

The first item to be auctioned off was in the calligraphy and painting category.

The first five items were auctioned off very smoothly. Very quickly, it came time for the sixth item to be auctioned off.

“The painting below is the sixth item to be auctioned off today. It is also the last calligraphy and painting item to be auctioned off in this auction.”

The auctioneer raised his hand and a painting appeared on the screen behind him.

His gaze paused on Shen Li for a moment before he smiled and said, “This is Tree’s Shadow’s new work, ‘The Fog’. Starting price: one million.”

Shen Li was stunned when she saw the painting appear.

She had not known that her painting would be placed in today’s auction.

She had entrusted this matter entirely to the art association, and had not asked about it ever since. Now that she thought about it, she seemed to remember the staff mentioning that there would be an auction in the Capital in July and that they had been planning to send her painting over.

However, the Capital was so big, and there was more than one auction in July. She had not expected it to be so coincidental.

No wonder...

She suddenly thought of the men sitting behind her, and her heart suddenly felt that something was not right.

This feeling was quickly confirmed.

Gu Tingchuan raised his paddle. “Two million.”

Everyone was stunned. The second master of the Gu family had doubled the bid?

Then, before everyone could react, Gu Tingfeng raised his paddle. "Four million."

Gu Tingyun followed closely behind and smiled warmly. "Eight million."

Everyone was flabbergasted.

What was going on with the Gu Family?

Why were they raising the bid in such a manner? Did they not have any buffer at all?

After just a round of bidding, they had broken the previous auction record for Tree's Shadow's paintings!

In the silence, Lu Huaiyu raised his paddle, his voice cold and lazy.

"16 million."

The venue fell into silence.

Whoa, before the Gu family's infighting had even started, the Lu family had already started a fight with the Gu family?

Chapter 1025 - Chaos

Tree's Shadow had been a rising star in the domestic art scene in recent years.

Although they had only debuted for a short period of time, they quickly occupied a place in the art scene due to their amazing talent in painting.

All the paintings that had been produced had been auctioned off at high prices starting from the first one.

Before this, the highest price for her single work had been 7.6 million.

Gu Tingyun's bid of 8 million had already easily broken this record. Now, Lu Huaiyu had raised the bid price to an astonishing 16 million.

There were countless painters in the domestic art scene, but there were not many who could bid for a high price of 10 million.

Everyone in the venue turned to look at Shen Li.

Everyone knew that she was Tree's Shadow and this painting was also the first painting that she was publicly auctioning off after revealing her identity.

No wonder...

It was no wonder that the Gu family members, as well as Lu Huaiyu, had come.

They were obviously here to try and snatch up the painting!

"I've heard that Old Master Gu is very fond of his only granddaughter. I think the Gu family members are here today to please her?"

"I think so... I was wondering what kind of treasure it was that could attract these people to appear and bid for. Is their interest in the painting not completely genuine and are they just trying to win over their niece?"

"Then I'm afraid there's going to be some competition..."

Everyone secretly exchanged glances.

Shi Yang sat at the back.

When the first few items were being auctioned, he had not shown any reaction. It was obvious that he had no intention of bidding on them.

It was only when Shen Li's painting appeared on the screen that he finally sat up a little straighter.

When Shen Li heard Gu Tingfeng start bidding, she had gotten an uneasy feeling. Sure enough, before she could react, these people had raised their paddles one after another and quickly raised the bidding price to ten million.

This—

Just as she was thinking about how to resolve this matter, another voice suddenly came from the back of the venue.

“Twenty million.”

Shen Li's heart moved and she turned around to look.

The one who had raised his paddle this time was actually Shi Yang.

As if sensing her gaze, Shi Yang looked over at her and nodded with a smile.

Shi Yang's sudden bidding this time had attracted the attention of everyone in the venue.

Everyone looked at him with different expressions on their faces.

What was Shi Yang doing? Was he actually bidding for Tree's Shadow's painting?

Anyone with a discerning eye could see that today's painting was actually a confrontation between the Gu and Lu families. There was no need for others to participate.

Moreover, he was a master of traditional Chinese painting. Why was he bidding for the oil painting?

Someone whispered, "I heard that Shi Yang appreciates Tree's Shadow greatly. It seems to be the case today... Does he actually want to bid together under such circumstances?"

Whether the painting itself was worth 20 million, just participating in the auction itself was quite...

Who were the others?

It was true that Shi Yang was the vice-chairman of the National Art Association and a master of Traditional Chinese painting. Whether it was his own assets or his social status, he could definitely be considered to be in the upper class.

But he really could not be compared to the Gu family and the Lu family...

"I doubt that he'll be able to purchase this painting in the end. The Gu family members are not to be trifled with, let alone Second Master Lu..."

Someone whispered.

Gu Tingfeng continued to raise the bid, "25 million."

Gu Tingchuan frowned, "30 million."

Gu Tingyun quickly followed, "35 million."

Shen Li withdrew her gaze and looked at these people before finally settling on Lu Huaiyu.

Her lips moved slightly but just as she was about to speak, she saw Lu Huaiyu raise his paddle.

“40 million.”

Shen Li was speechless.

Someone looked at Shi Yang.

The price had already reached this high. Who knew if he would continue to bid?

Shi Yang smiled.

“What a pity.”

This meant that he had given up on bidding.

That was true. After all, it was 40 million.

The starting bid for this painting had only been 1 million. After only two rounds of bidding, it had already risen to 40 times its original price!

Not many of the well-known guests who were present today could compete with them like this, let alone any ordinary people.

Shi Yang’s abandonment was already within everyone’s expectations, so not many people paid attention to it.

Their focus was still on the auction of that painting.

Shen Li felt a headache coming on.

She had sent this painting to the art association and asked them to help bid for it, so she had not thought too much about it.

Who would have known that things would turn out like this?

She frowned slightly and looked at Lu Huaiyu disapprovingly.

Lu Huaiyu was sitting behind her. Of course, he could see the expression on the young lady's face.

He raised his eyebrows slightly.

Shen Li shook her head, indicating that he should not continue bidding. But then, she heard Fang Yunyi, who was beside her, say in an extremely carefree manner, "Son, you can do it."

Shen Li was filled with disbelief.

She slowly turned her head and said, "... Aunt Fang?"

Fang Yunyi also looked at her with a concerned expression. "Oh? What's wrong, Ah Li?"

Shen Li was shocked.

Why was she asking her what was wrong?

What else could it be?

Didn't any of these people think that there was something wrong with this matter?!

Gu Tingchuan was annoyed and immediately raised his paddle. "50 million."

Everyone else in the venue went silent.

For a painting to be sold for 50 million, only the Gu and Lu families would do such a thing.

"They are not bidding. They are clearly just showing off their wealth!" Finally, someone could not stand it anymore and mumbled, "How can the auctioneer just stand by and watch such a malicious bidding?"

"Malicious bidding? People are throwing away real gold and platinum. At most, they will say that they are rich and willful, right?" Some people were quite clear-headed, although there was a hint of ridicule in their tone. "Moreover, can this 50 million... be considered as showing off their wealth to these few people?"

The person who had spoken earlier immediately shut up.

This was the truth.

Putting everything else aside, just Shen Li's family acknowledgment banquet alone should have cost more than this amount on that night.

As for Lu Huaiyu... 50 million was not even a fraction of the amount of the Night of the Milky Way watch that he had bought for Shen Li back then.

Shen Li closed her eyes and took out her phone.

If this went on, who knew how this auction would develop?

She added her three uncles to a group chat.

[Uncles, please give up on the auction.]

Then she quickly withdrew the bid and opened Lu Huaiyu's chat window.

[Second Brother, stop following the auction.]

Worried that they would not read the message, she deliberately turned around and waved her phone at them.

Gu Tingyun was close to her so he looked down at his phone first.

Then, he thought for a moment before looking up and smiling.

"Fifty-four million."

He had lowered the amount of the increase, so that should be enough of an effort, right?

Shen Li was even more speechless.

It was as if she had not said anything.

She gritted her teeth and sent another message to the chat group with her uncles.

[For the first person to stop bidding, I'll cook for a month.]

The smile on Gu Tingyun's face froze.

At that moment, Gu Tingfeng and Gu Tingchuan also saw the message.

Gu Tingfeng made a prompt decision.

“I give up.”

Gu Tingchuan was about to say something, but was rendered speechless.

Gu Tingyun turned his head and looked at Gu Tingfeng with a cold smile.

“Big Brother, is it fun to climb up by stepping on your younger brother?”

Gu Tingfeng leaned back, feeling very satisfied.

“It’s alright.”

Lu Huaiyu looked over, having probably guessed that something was up.

He raised his paddle again.

“60 million.”

Chapter 1026: Many Thanks to Ah Li

Gu Tingchuan and Gu Tingyun looked over at the same time.

Was Lu Huaiyu still increasing the bid?

Given the current situation, it would not be good to give up. It would be better to continue.

Anyway, Ah Li's meal offer for that month had already been snatched up by their big brother. If they went all out, at least they would be able to keep a painting of hers.

The auctioneer's line of sight fell on this side. He smiled and said, "60 million going once."

Gu Tingchuan lowered his voice.

"Sixty-five million."

Shen Li was taken aback.

Gu Tingyun was not in a hurry to raise his paddle. After thinking for a moment, he looked at Shen Li and raised his eyebrows slightly.

Their eyes met, and Shen Li instantly understood the hidden meaning in his eyes. If she added more conditions, he would give up on this auction.

Shen Li felt her head hurt even more.

She took out her phone and added another sentence.

[For the second person to give up on the auction, I'll cook for a month and ten days.]

Gu Tingyun looked away the moment she picked up her phone to type. He looked at her phone.

Thus, he finally saw her message for the first time.

He immediately said, "I give up."

It was at this moment that Gu Tingfeng saw that sentence as well. The comfortable smile on his face instantly faded.

As for Gu Tingchuan, his face completely darkened.

He stared at Gu Tingyun, and his voice was deep and stern.

“Third Brother, are you trying to p*ss me off?”

Gu Tingyun was unbothered about his question and smiled.

“Second Brother, didn’t I learn this from Big Brother? Besides, we’re all brothers.”

Gu Tingchuan almost flipped the table. ‘Who’s your brother?! One or two, all of you are so good at playing tricks!’

Shen Li sent a message to Lu Huaiyu.

[Second Brother, give up on the bid and I’ll give you one month’s worth of coffee.]

Lu Huaiyu looked down and raised his eyebrows slightly.

This condition... was quite sincere?

However—

He raised his paddle again.

“75 million.”

Shen Li was shocked.

Had this man gone mad?

When Gu Tingchuan heard that Lu Huaiyu was still bidding, he became angry and immediately wanted to follow.

Shen Li immediately sent him a private message.

When Gu Tingchuan saw the message from Shen Li on his phone screen, his eyes narrowed slightly.

The auctioneer looked over. "75 million going once."

Gu Tingchuan put away his phone. The cold expression on his face had already disappeared. He said very clearly, "I give up."

...

Within a short period of time, the three members of the Gu family had chosen to give up, one after another. Everyone present was stunned.

What was going on?

Had they not been fighting to the death just now? By the looks of it, they did not seem to treat money as money at all. They had made up their minds to grab that painting, no matter what.

But now... all of them had suddenly given up?

With the financial resources of these people, it was obviously not because they did not have any money, and it was even less likely that they felt that it was not worth it.

After all, the auction price of this painting had long surpassed its value.

At this point, it was not just this painting that they were fighting for.

However, in such a short period of time, what had happened to make these people give up so easily?

Moreover, although they had given up, their relationship with each other was clearly not very good.

Just from the conversation just now, the smell of gunpowder was too strong!

On the surface, they were openly sarcastic, but in private, who knew what the situation was like?

Obviously, Gu Tingfeng and Gu Tingyun also sensed that something was wrong and looked at Gu Tingchuan at the same time.

Shen Li had not continued to send messages to the group chat, yet Gu Tingchuan had still given up. Was this not evidence that it had been through a private chat?

Moreover, with his temperament, it would not have been this easy to make him give up at this final step.

However, Gu Tingchuan's expression had already returned to normal, so nothing could be seen.

The auctioneer felt a little regretful.

Earlier, just by looking at the second master of the Gu family's stance, he had thought that he would definitely continue to raise the price.

However, to be able to bid for 75 million was already a price that he had not dared to think about previously.

“75 million going twice, 75 million going thrice.”

Bang.

“Sold. Congratulations, Mr. Lu.”

...

Hearing this, Shen Li’s worried heart finally settled down.

Fang Yunyi turned around and looked at Lu Huaiyu with a satisfied expression on her face.

“It’s still alright this time.”

Shen Li was speechless.

Right now, she was deeply regretting having taken out that painting to be auctioned.

Lu Huaiyu’s thin lips twitched slightly as he looked at Shen Li.

The little girl seemed to be in a daze, not moving at all.

From his angle, one could only see the back of her slender and fair neck, as well as her delicate and snow-like earlobes.

A few strands of loose hair had fallen loose, making her skin look even more delicate, almost white to the point of dazzling the eyes.

His eyes darkened a little, and then he laughed softly.

“I still have to thank Ah Li.”

His voice was very, very soft, so only the people closest to him could hear it.

The next moment, the young girl turned back to glare at him.

Her fair cheeks were suffused with a faint crimson color, and her pair of peach-shaped eyes were jet-black and moist, and sparks seemed to be burning faintly within.

He still had the nerve to say that?!

She had tried several times to persuade him to withdraw and even offered him something in return as a condition, but he still had not hesitated and had continued to raise the price!

1

Lu Huaiyu had been tempted, but this was not the right time or occasion.

He had no choice but to suppress the impulse in his heart and move closer to her. He chuckled and tried to coax her.

“Let’s talk about it when we get home, okay?”

Shen Li did not know what to say.

What else was there to talk about? He had already overrode her wishes!

She finally realized that she really could not communicate with this man on this matter.

Hence, she gave up and turned around.

On the other side, Gu Tingfeng and Gu Tingyun were not in a good mood either.

Both of them were looking at Gu Tingchuan.

Gu Tingyun smiled and said, "You were only one step away. Don't you think it's a pity for Second Brother to give up just like that?"

Gu Tingchuan was unmoved.

"How can everything go smoothly in life? Besides, wasn't it First Brother who led the way? After all, you said it yourself that we are all brothers."

As a big brother, it was normal for them to follow his example, was it not?

In his heart, Gu Tingyun sneered.

Did he even believe it as he said it out loud?

He did not know what kind of conditions Ah Li had given him. Most likely, it was higher than his.

Thus, he looked at Gu Tingfeng.

"What do you think, Big Brother?"

Gu Tingfeng sneered.

What do I think?

He felt that he was the one who suffered the most!

His third brother was ten days ahead of him. As for his second brother, there was no need to even mention it!

There was no way he could overcome him!

He had finally seen through it. His brothers were each more unreliable than the last!

“What else can I think? Since when has the Gu family become a place where people were distributed according to their status? I don’t know anything about it.”

Gu Tingyun paused. “Big Brother, don’t be so angry.”

Gu Tingchuan glanced at him. “That’s right.”

Wasn’t he the one who had started the commotion? Now he had the nerve to say that. How interesting.

The atmosphere was tense, and even the temperature around them seemed to have dropped significantly.

Many people looked over and noticed the tense atmosphere. They could not help but sigh.

The Gu family was probably going to change. Look at how these people were openly causing a ruckus!

Shen Li, of course, felt it as well. She felt another headache coming on.

Just then, Fang Yunyi patted her lightly.

“Ah Li, what do you think about this?”

Shen Li looked up and saw a jade bracelet on the screen. The starting bid was two million.

Did Fang Yunyi have her eyes on this one?

She nodded. “It’s pretty good.”

Fang Yunyi’s eyes lit up. She raised her paddle.

“Five million.”

Chapter 1027: Who Does Ah Li Side With

The venue fell silent for a moment.

She knew that the Lu family was rich, but wasn’t it a little too much to raise the price by so much?

Shen Li looked at her hesitantly.

Fang Yunyi seemed to understand what she meant. She raised her red lips slightly and explained concisely, “This way, the efficiency is higher.”

Shen Li was at a loss for words.

This was truly the first time she had heard someone state “efficiency” as a reason to raise a bid at an auction...

However, Fang Yunyi must truly like this jade bracelet a lot, right?

She nodded to show her understanding.

Someone raised their paddle at the back on the right. “Six million.”

Almost without hesitation, Fang Yunyi raised the bid again. “Eight million.”

Everyone could tell that she was determined to get the jade bracelet, so she raised the paddle without any hesitation.

Realizing this, the person who had raised the bid again hesitated and chose to give up.

Forget it, there was no need.

The jade bracelet was good, but it was not worth it if she continued to bid. Moreover, this was the first item that Fang Yunyi had participated in today’s auction, so she had to give her face.

“Eight million going once, eight million going twice, eight million going thrice.”

Bang.

The auctioneer looked over with a smile.

“Sold. Congratulations, Madam Lu.”

Fang Yunyi was notorious for being a big spender. The entire auction of the item had taken less than five minutes, and the final price was very high. Naturally, the auctioneer was happy.

Having successfully bought the bracelet, Fang Yunyi was in a good mood.

Shen Li saw that she was smiling, so she said, "Aunt Fang, congratulations."

Fang Yunyi tilted her head and looked at her with shining eyes.

"Ah Li, I heard that you wore a qipao on the night of your family acknowledgment banquet?"

Shen Li's heart thumped. Seeing the unconcealable curiosity in Fang Yunyi's eyes, a guess emerged in her heart.

Could it be—

"Do you think this jade bracelet would be especially suitable to be worn with a Qipao?"

Shen Li was flabbergasted.

As expected...

This jade bracelet had not been bought to be worn by Fang Yunyi herself, but had specially been bought for her!

Shen Li gently advised in a low voice, "Aunt Fang, actually my grandmother already gave me a bracelet, you—"

"I know, but that was given to you by Old Madam Gu. This is a gift from me. Besides, you should have more jewelry."

To Fang Yunyi, her logic was very clear.

“Or do you not like this bracelet?”

Shen Li immediately shook her head. “I don’t dislike it. It’s just that—”

“It’s okay if you don’t like it. There are others that will be coming after that.” Fang Yunyi comforted her. “Just take a look later. Maybe there’s something else that you like?”

Shen Li insisted, “... No, I think this is already quite good...”

Fang Yunyi looked at her carefully. “Really?”

Shen Li nodded. “Really.”

Only then did Fang Yunyi feel relieved. “That’s good.”

Previously, she had been a little worried that her taste and Ah Li’s tastes would not be the same. After all, they were separated by generations. But now, it seemed that she did not need to worry about this problem at all!

Shen Li also let out a light sigh. If she had known that today’s auction would be like this, she would not have come, no matter what.

However, immediately after, she heard Fang Yunyi continue, “Oh yes, Ah Li, I have a friend who runs a qipao shop in the capital. When you are free later, would you like to come shopping with Aunty?”

It was no real reason to buy a princess dress, but surely she could add a qipao or something like that, right?

Fang Yunyi had been thinking about this for a long time, but she had never found a suitable opportunity to bring it up.

Now that she had finally found such a perfect opportunity, of course, she could not miss it.

“...”

Shen Li's eyes met her eyes that were full of anticipation. She paused for a moment, and finally nodded in agreement.

“Okay.”

How could she say no in this situation?

Fang Yunyi's beautiful eyes immediately lit up.

Ah Li's figure was extremely suited to wearing a qipao.

Paired with this jade bracelet, and with her jet-black hair tied up...

How beautiful she would look!

Lu Huaiyu was sitting behind the two of them. Although their voices were very soft, he was so close to them that he could hear them.

When he heard the word “qipao”, he raised his eyes slightly.

Fang Yunyi was looking at Shen Li. “So it's settled then?”

The young girl nodded obediently. “Yes.”

Lu Huaiyu recalled her appearance that night.

So far, she had only worn that qipao once. It had been half a year since.

But as he thought about it, it was still as vivid as if it had happened yesterday.

It was delicate, pure, and beautiful. Every inch of the girl's curves had undulated perfectly.

She was so pure and clean with a hint of charm that even she herself had not noticed it.

She did not know that all she needed to do was just to stand there without needing to say or do anything. That had been enough to sway people's hearts.

He just wanted to hide her away like that.

Lu Huaiyu leaned back lazily. Only his pitch-black eyes were fixated on her.

After a long while, he chuckled softly.

...

The auction continued. This time, the item was a tourmaline ring.

Fang Yunyi lifted her chin slightly.

"Ah Li, what do you think about this?"

With her previous experience, Shen Li's answer was much more cautious this time.

She stared at it for a few seconds before shaking her head.

“It doesn’t seem very good.”

Fang Yunyi stared at it for a few moments before nodding in agreement.

“Yes, this transparency is rather average. Forget it, I don’t want this.”

Just as Shen Li was about to heave a sigh of relief, she heard her continue.

“We’ll talk about it when we see a good one.”

The remaining half of Shen Li’s breath was forcefully swallowed back.

...

In this auction, there was a total of eleven jewelry items.

Without exception, every time one appeared, Fang Yunyi would seek Shen Li’s opinion on it.

With Shen Li’s hard work, she finally managed to dispel most of her desire to buy something. In the end, she only bought four of the pieces.

In addition to the first jade bracelet, Fang Yunyi had also bought a pearl bracelet, an amethyst pendant, and a jade marrow ring.

In fact, the first jade bracelet was the cheapest one among them.

At noon, the auction finally ended.

Shen Li leaned back on the chair, and there was only one word on her body: tired.

She had finally endured it...

“Ah Li.”

Gu Tingfeng’s voice suddenly came from behind,

“Let’s go home to have a meal.”

Shen Li’s heart jumped.

The next moment, she heard Gu Tingyun ask with a smile, “Oh? Have Big Brother and Ah Li already made an appointment?”

Chapter 1028: So Many People Like Her

Shen Li immediately stood up and turned around to greet them one by one.

“First Uncle, Second Uncle, Third Uncle.”

Gu Tingfeng had suffered a great loss today and he was unwilling to talk to his second and third brothers.

Hearing Gu Tingyun’s question, he said indifferently, “It’s a common thing for Ah Li to come over for dinner. There’s no need to go through the trouble of making an appointment.”

After all, they were all in the Capital. Liang Su liked to cook for Shen Li, so he really had an advantage.

However, as soon as she finished speaking, Fang Yunyi asked, "Huh? Ah Li, didn't we agree to have lunch together?"

It was for this reason that she had even contacted Lu Zheng.

There was a moment of silence.

Shen Li braced herself and said, "First Uncle, I'm really sorry. I've already promised Aunt Fang earlier..."

Gu Tingfeng's expression instantly became extremely interesting.

Gu Tingchuan glanced at him.

"Big Brother, what Third Brother said isn't unreasonable. It's better to make an appointment with Ah Li before having a meal with her."

Gu Tingfeng threw him a cold glance.

Was it not satisfying to not say something out loud?

Gu Tingfeng, on the other hand, felt much better. He smiled faintly and nodded.

"That's right. Since Ah Li already has an appointment with Madam Lu, it's better for us to meet another day. Second Brother, don't you agree?"

Gu Tingchuan secretly sneered in his heart.

What, was he mocking him for coming to the Capital this time and not being able to have dinner with Ah Li?

What was so important about that?

He thought of the message on his phone and nodded calmly.

“Yes.”

Gu Tingyun and Gu Tingfeng looked at him again. The atmosphere was subtle.

What kind of promise had Ah Li been forced to make so that he would forget about this matter?

...

The auction ended. Logically speaking, everyone should have gradually left.

However, due to the presence of Gu Tingfeng and the others today, they were too conspicuous. Therefore, many people deliberately slowed down their footsteps as they looked over.

With Shen Li as the center, the three masters of the Gu family, Lu Huaiyu, and Fang Yunyi were all gathered around her.

It was as if they were all supporting the moon.

“It goes without saying that Shen Li is really favored by the Gu family! For so many years, these masters have never appeared together in public for anyone else, right?”

“This time, they are all here for her painting. She actually sold that painting for 75 million... Second Master Lu is really too good to his little girlfriend.”

"I think I heard Fang Yunyi asking Shen Li's opinion just now. I think the few pieces she bought are also for her?"

"... This Gu family's only young miss is really favored..."

Many people discussed in low voices and sighed inwardly.

"Teacher Shi Yang? Teacher Shi Yang?"

Being pulled back to his senses by his assistant's voice, Shi Yang withdrew his gaze and asked lightly, "What's wrong?"

The assistant looked in the direction he was looking and could only vaguely see the tall and slender figure of the young girl.

He hesitated for a moment before asking in a low voice, "Teacher Shi Yang, are you still regretting that you didn't manage to bid for that painting?"

Shi Yang rarely attended such an occasion as an auction. And today, throughout the entire process, he had only raised his paddle once when Shen Li's painting was being auctioned off.

It was obvious that he had come for that painting.

Unfortunately, the competition had been too intense.

When Shi Yang heard that, he smiled faintly.

"It's a little unfortunate, but it's in the past, so it's in the past."

"You're right." When his assistant heard him say that, he also nodded. "That Miss Shen is really favored... How could we compete?"

Shi Yang paused for a moment and adjusted his gold-rimmed glasses, revealing a gentle smile.

“Yes, so many people like her. How do we compete?”

His voice was very soft, more like an involuntary murmur or a casual sigh. The assistant heard it but did not seem to care.

Shi Yang seemed to be looking at Shen Li, but he did not seem to be focusing on her.

It was not clear as to who his statement had been aimed at.

Just then, Shen Li seemed to have sensed something and suddenly turned around to look at him.

The two of them were separated by some distance, but her pair of black and quiet peach blossom eyes were still clearly visible.

Whenever she was not smiling, her brows and eyes always showed a bit of cold arrogance, as well as indifference.

This appearance did not look like her mother, but more like...

The smile in Shi Yang's eyes faded a little, but it was only an extremely subtle change. Even the assistant beside him did not notice it.

He nodded slightly at Shen Li, then turned around and left.

“Let's go.”

The assistant hurriedly followed.

The two figures quickly disappeared at the corner of the corridor.

“Ah Li, who are you looking at?”

Lu Huaiyu noticed Shen Li’s line of sight and looked over as well. However, he only saw two figures leaving very quickly.

His phoenix-like eyes narrowed slightly.

Was that... Shi Yang?

Shen Li withdrew her gaze. “It’s nothing.”

Lu Huaiyu paused for a moment and his eyebrows raised slightly.

“Before today, I didn’t know that Shi Yang was so fond of your painting.”

After the first round of bidding began, anyone with discerning eyes should have been able to tell that the Gu and Lu families were competing. Most of them had withdrawn from the competition of their own accord. Only Shi Yang had raised his paddle once.

Although he had only bid once and had given up very quickly, it was not difficult to see that he did have the intention to try and fight for it.

Shen Li lowered her chin slightly. “Me too.”

Shi Yang had mentioned this matter more than once, but she had never taken it to heart before.

So when she heard that Shi Yang had raised his paddle to participate in the auction today, she was very surprised.

However...

Perhaps it was because she did not have any feelings for Shi Yang, or perhaps she did not care about the likes and dislikes of her paintings from outsiders, but this incident did not cause any waves in her heart.

She looked at Gu Tingfeng and the other two.

"Then... Uncle, may I take my leave first?"

Chapter 1029: Was It Very Important

Of course, Gu Tingfeng and the others were reluctant to part with her, but all they could do was nod.

"Go ahead."

Shen Li looked at the three of them hesitantly and said, "Then..."

Today, because of this painting, the three of them had caused a ruckus. Even now, she could keenly sense the subtle tension between them.

Would they continue to fight even after they returned home?

As if she had seen through her thoughts, Gu Tingyun smiled and said, "Ah Li, go ahead and accompany Madam Lu. Big Brother and Second Brother will be going home separately."

Separately.

Shen Li's heart relaxed slightly. "Alright. Goodbye, Uncles."

...

Only when Shen Li had completely disappeared with the Lu family did Gu Tingyun turn his head to look at Gu Tingchuan. He smiled and said, "Second Brother, why don't we chat while we walk?"

Gu Tingchuan looked at his watch. "I don't think there's anything to talk about. Besides, time is tight, so I'll take my leave first."

As he spoke, he lifted his leg and was about to leave.

"Second Brother."

Gu Tingfeng called out to stop him as his gaze landed on his phone.

"Are you so busy that you don't even have the time to say a few words?"

Hearing these few sentences, the ears of the many people who had secretly been paying attention to the situation around them immediately perked up.

Were they about to fight?

Were they really about to fight?

Look, was the second master of the Gu family really that impatient with his own brothers?

Listen, the tone of Master Gu's voice was really weird.

As for the third master of the Gu family, he was obviously not easy to deal with. Could he not see that he was the one who had started this matter?

Gu Tingchuan noticed the gazes around him and frowned.

“Then let’s go somewhere else.”

He was not interested in allowing others to watch their show.

This suggestion was agreed upon by Gu Tingfeng and Gu Tingchuan.

“Alright.”

No matter where they went, they had to force him to explain clearly what kind of conditions Ah Li had used to convince him!

Then, the three of them left with great tacit understanding.

Everyone felt a wave of regret. What a great show! They would be missing it just like that!

...

Gu Tingfeng and the others finally returned to Jinshui No. 1 Courtyard.

As soon as they entered the living room, Gu Tingfeng got straight to the point.

“Tell me, what did Ah Li tell you?”

Gu Tingchuan held his phone without any intention of answering at all.

"If Big Brother and Third Brother are really curious, why don't you ask Ah Li directly?"

Gu Tingfeng sneered. "Do you think I don't dare to?"

Gu Tingyun came over to smooth things over, "Second Brother, actually, Big Brother and I don't have any other intentions. We're just curious."

No one would believe such words.

Gu Tingchuan simply changed the topic.

"Then, are you not curious about why Lu Huaiyu bid all the way to the end today?"

Once these words were said, the surroundings instantly fell silent.

Gu Tingfeng slowly frowned, and Gu Tingyun seemed to be deep in thought.

After a moment, Gu Tingfeng said hesitantly, "Could it be that Ah Li wanted him to have that painting?"

As soon as he thought of this possibility, his tone became colder.

Gu Tingyun recalled the situation at that time and shook his head.

"I don't think so. Ah Li had also tried to persuade him, but—"

But clearly, Lu Huaiyu had not listened.

He had been aiming for that painting since the beginning. Throughout the entire auction process, there had not been a single moment of hesitation or wavering on his part.

“Perhaps the conditions that Ah Li offered him had not been attractive enough?” Gu Tingfeng asked.

No one said anything.

They had not seen it, so what could they say about it?

Gu Tingchuan said, “No matter what, that painting still ended up in his hands.”

Gu Tingfeng glanced at him coldly. “Don’t be a good-for-nothing when you’ve gotten a bargain. Don’t you feel embarrassed at all?”

He was the one who had the least chance to say this!

Gu Tingyun thought for a while and finally found an excuse.

“Forget it. The money will be in Ah Li’s hands anyway.”

More importantly, it was Lu Huaiyu’s money.

Thinking of this, Gu Tingfeng and Gu Tingchuan’s expressions became much better.

“Well, Ah Li is quite considerate of her family.”

...

Shen Li’s eyelids twitched again.

Helplessly, she sighed in her heart and looked at her phone for the nth time.

It was obviously not going to be that easy to get over today's matter.

She did not need to ask to guess the reaction of Gu Tingfeng and her other uncles when they went home.

"Second Brother."

Shen Li turned her head and looked at the man beside her, feeling a little helpless,

"Don't you already have a few of my paintings in your hands? Why did you still bid on this one today?"

Also, it had been at such an outrageous price!

"Even without mentioning anything else, just the commission that the auction house will take would be quite a large sum..."

Fang Yunyi, who was sitting across from him as she was ordering, suddenly raised her head and looked over.

"Eh, Ah Li, didn't you know?"

Shen Li was stunned. "Know what?"

Fang Yunyi raised her hand and pointed at Lu Huaiyu.

"He's the biggest shareholder of Bo Xing Auction House."

Shen Li was shocked.

Stiffly, she slowly turned her head to look at Lu Huaiyu.

He lowered his eyes slightly, his expression remaining calm and composed. He slowly helped her refill her cup of tea before looking up.

“Hmm? Didn’t I tell you this before?”

Shen Li was perplexed.

Surely the number of people who knew about this matter was ridiculously low, right?

Bo Xing Auction House was a top-tier auction house. Although she rarely paid attention to it, she had heard of the boss of Bo Xing.

That person was not Lu Huaiyu.

And now, with such a piece of sudden news, how could she not be shocked?

Shen Li’s lips moved, and she asked faintly, “Did Second Brother forget to mention it, or...” Had he deliberately not mentioned it?

He had come to this auction and bid for her painting.

If he had wanted to, he could have told her all these things.

However, he had not.

Lu Huaiyu’s lips curled up slightly, revealing a hint of a smile.

“Was it that important to mention it or not?”

Chapter 1030: Then I'll Help You Return It

Shen Li picked the cup up and lowered her eyes slightly.

“Not really.”

She took a sip of tea before looking at Lu Huaiyu. Her beautiful peach blossom eyes curved slightly as she smiled.

“Second Brother lied to me before, but isn't he telling me about it now?”

Lu Huaiyu looked at her and saw that her eyes were dark and clear.

It seemed as if she really did not care about this matter at all.

Perhaps it was because this matter itself was too insignificant, or perhaps it was because she did not think that his concealment was something worth getting angry about.

He laughed.

“Is Ah Li being that magnanimous towards me?”

Shen Li nodded.

“After all, Second Brother spent this sum of money for me.”

This was almost equivalent to Lu Huaiyu directly giving that huge sum of auction money to her.

In the end, it was all for her, so what was there to be angry about?

“But—”

As she spoke, she suddenly stopped.

Lu Huaiyu looked at her with his pitch-black eyes.

If she minded...

“Second Brother, don’t buy my paintings at the auction like this anymore.” Shen Li looked at him sincerely. “If that really doesn’t work, I’ll just give the paintings to you directly, okay?”

That amount of money was actually enough to buy many of her paintings.

Lu Huaiyu’s heart felt slightly moved, and then the corners of his lips curled up slightly.

“Won’t that affect your income? That’s not very suitable, right? I can still afford a painting. Besides, if you gave me all your paintings to me, then what about the Gu family members?”

Shen Li was silent for a moment.

“... Did Second Brother consider this when he was bidding just now?”

Lu Huaiyu tilted his head slightly and said frankly, “No.”

No matter what, he had been resolved to have that painting.

Even if the Gu family had come to snatch it away, he would never let them.

Shen Li was quiet.

Then why ask?

She was actually really considering this matter.

Previously, she had sold the painting to earn money and support her family to pay off her debts. But now, she did not need to do that anymore. Moreover, no one could guarantee that the same situation would not happen again.

This time, she had finally managed to coax them. What about next time?

Her heart was tired.

“By the way, I haven’t asked. What did you say to them at the auction just now that made them give up on the auction?”

Lu Huaiyu had guessed that she must have offered some kind of condition to make the exchange with them. The message he had received later had proved his idea.

However, she had offered to make him coffee for a month, but he did not know what she had offered to those people...

Shen Li felt a lump in her chest when she mentioned this matter.

“Cooking,” she said in a muffled voice.

Lu Huaiyu's eyebrows raised slightly. "For how long?"

Shen Li was quiet for a moment before she looked away. "... A month."

"What?!"

Before Lu Huaiyu and Fang Yunyi could say anything, Fang Yunyi, who was sitting opposite them, became anxious first.

"Ah Li, in order to make them give up on the auction, you agreed to cook for them for a month?!"

Shen Li corrected her, "Actually, I was the one who proposed this condition..."

"Lu Huaiyu!" Fang Yunyi put down the menu that she was holding in her hands and furrowed her beautiful brows. "What's wrong with you? It was just a painting, and you wanted Ah Li to help you this much?!"

One month!

It was one month!

Lu Huaiyu did not say anything.

Shen Li stayed quiet.

After a short silence, Fang Yunyi finally realized that she had lost her composure, and her eyelids twitched.

She immediately coughed lightly and tried to salvage her image.

“No, what I mean is... Ah Li is usually so busy, and it would be too long and tiring to do this for one whole month...”

Shen Li silently swallowed the rest of her words.

If she were to say that a month was only for her first uncle’s family, followed by a month and ten days for her third uncle’s, and second uncle’s...

If she did, she probably would not be able to eat this meal well.

“Aunt Fang,” Shen Li said after some deliberation, “Actually, it’s not too bad. There’s going to be a horse race in Hong Kong City in August, and I’ll be there at the end of July and all throughout August. When the time comes, my family will be there, so I’ll just do it while I’m there.”

Although it was said to be a month’s worth of cooking, of course, it would be impossible for her to cook every dish and soup.

Otherwise, she would not be able to do anything else for such a long time.

Hearing her words, Fang Yunyi finally felt a little better.

“Oh right, Ah Li, I’ve been studying cooking recently. My culinary skills have improved a lot. I’ll cook for you later!”

This was the truth. She had really spent a lot of effort on this recently. Old Master Lu and Lu Zheng had both said that she had improved a lot.

Lu Huaiyu paused.

Shen Li smiled and replied, “Okay.”

Hearing her affirmative answer, Fang Yunyi was relieved.

“Speaking of the horse race, I remember that the two of you went together last year?”

Although Fang Yunyi had been out of town with Lu Zheng for a long time, she still knew quite a lot about these things.

Moreover, Lu Huaiyu had taken Shen Li to a banquet in Hong Kong City at that time. It had been very high-profile, and many people had known about it.

Shen Li nodded. “Yes.”

Fang Yunyi smiled. “Then let Huaiyu go with you this year. He went there by himself a few years ago.”

Shen Li was stunned. She looked at Lu Huaiyu and said, “Second Brother... went there a few years ago?”

She knew that Lu Huaiyu had gone to the Hong Kong Jockey Club before. At that time, he had bought his watch for 130 million yuan at the auction held after the Jockey Club that year.

However, she had not known that he had been there in the past few years.

Lu Huaiyu nodded with a light smile.

“I was just looking around.”

Fang Yunyi thought of something.

“If you go this year, you should ask Huaiyu to take you to play at horse betting. The probability of him winning is quite high.”

Now, the entire Dutian Racecourse belonged to Shen Li. However, horse betting itself was quite interesting. Fang Yunyi thought that it would be good for Lu Huaiyu to accompany her.

Shen Li was really surprised this time.

“Second Brother also plays at horse betting?”

Last year, Lu Huaiyu had arrived in Hong Kong City at the end of the race meeting. It did not seem as if he had participated in the horse betting.

She had always thought that he was not interested in this matter.

But now, hearing what Fang Yunyi said, apparently he had gone there a few years ago to play?

Lu Huaiyu’s thin lips raised slightly, and he said with a casual smile, “I only played a few times.”

Shen Li thought about it and agreed.

The Hong Kong City Jockey Club was always very lively. Horse betting was almost a national entertainment, and everyone more or less participated in it to experience the fun.

Lu Huaiyu had very good equestrian skills. Since he would be going to watch a horse race, it would be normal for him to play along.

Lu Huaiyu tilted his head slightly, and he said with a faint smile, “I remember that you used 100,000 yuan to play back and forth many times last year. I believe that you managed to earn a small sum of money in the end?”

Shen Li suddenly recalled what Old Master Gu had ridiculed back then. “Is Lu Huaiyu that poor?”

She immediately felt guilty.

“Ahem, I didn’t have much experience back then? I was afraid of losing the bet.”

The last few words she said were sincere.

“But I was quite lucky. I did earn some money later.”

Lu Huaiyu lowered his chin slightly. He smiled and said, “Then you can gamble however you want this year. If you win, it’s yours. If you lose, it’s on me.”

Shen Li shook her head. “I don’t think so. What if I lose and I owe money?”

Seeing the serious look on her face, Lu Huaiyu could not help but laugh. He leaned back and said, “Then I’ll help you as well.”