

Little Brat's 251

Chapter 251: Is This What the Ye Family Is Capable Of?

Ning Li had not expected Lu Huaiyu to come. When she heard his words, she momentarily froze.

Lu Huaiyu walked over and took Ning Li's backpack off of her.

This action could not be more natural.

Pei Song paused for a moment. "That will be too much trouble, so there's no need for it."

"You're all Lili's classmates and usually look out for her in school, so this little thing is no trouble."

Lu Huaiyu's voice was relaxed and deep. His words were polite, with an appropriate detachment.

Ning Li felt that with Pei Song's character, it was probably urgent since he had taken the initiative to ask.

She said, "Class President, I'll send the book to you later."

Since Ning Li said so, Pei Song had no reason to refuse.

He nodded lightly.

"No. 17, Huacheng Avenue. Thanks." Pei Song told them his home address.

After that, Pei Song and Ren Qian left in the other direction.

"Second Master Lu." Ye Ci looked at Lu Huaiyu nervously, subconsciously tucking her hair behind her ear as she greeted him.

Cheng Xiangxiang also had not expected Lu Huaiyu to suddenly appear. The arrogant demeanor that she had earlier when talking to Ning Li instantly vanished. She then followed Ye Ci's example by greeting Lu Huaiyu.

Although Cheng Xiyue and Lu Huaiyu were close friends, Lu Huaiyu barely interacted with Cheng Xiangxiang and Ye Ci.

Moreover, Lu Huaiyu carried himself with a noble and aloof aura that Cheng Xiangxiang did not dare behave reckless in front of him.

Lu Huaiyu swept a faint glance at Cheng Xiangxiang.

For some reason, Cheng Xiangxiang suddenly felt more nervous. 'Did he hear what I said earlier?'

However, Lu Huaiyu's gaze quickly moved to Ye Ci.

Ye Ci's heart was pounding as she worked up the courage to meet Lu Huaiyu's gaze.

When she looked into his deep bottomless eyes, Ye Ci realized that there was only a bone-chillingly cold indifference.

In an instant, Ye Ci's heart sank as a strong uneasiness surged. 'Why did he look at me like that? When did I offend him?'

"Lili." Lu Huaiyu withdrew his gaze and turned to look at Ning Li. "What do you want to eat?"

Ning Li was not picky. "I'm fine with anything, it's up to you."

Lu Huaiyu raised his eyebrows slightly.

“It’s the end of your exam, so you should choose what you want to eat. Also...”

The corner of his lips hooked up in an extremely faint arc.

“The court trial is over and the results are out, so that’s something worth celebrating too.”

As soon as those words came out, Ye Ci felt a tension in her head.

She looked up in shock and felt as if her heart was being clenched by an invisible hand.

‘The court trial is over... Is he talking about the lawsuit between Ning Li and those social media accounts?’

Ning Li had mentioned this before, but because Ye Ci had been busy with exams in the past few days, she had forgotten about it.

The moment she heard Lu Huaiyu’s words, she suddenly remembered it.

‘The important thing is...what kind of results?!’

Ning Li blinked her eyes.

Ye Ci had already settled this matter, but since she had been busy with exams, her lawyer had not told her about it.

“How was it?”

Lu Huaiyu said, “They’ll compensate, apologize, and pay for what they’ve done. Oh right, the public relations company that contacted them seemed to have some connections with the Ye family. What a coincidence!”

His tone was light, but those words landed heavily in Ye Ci's ears.

She subconsciously held her breath and clenched her fists under her sleeves.

Lu Huaiyu looked at Ye Ci without really smiling.

"That company's litigant is Ye Yiming."

Ye Yiming was Ye Ci's cousin.

At that moment, Ye Ci's mind went blank.

Ye Yiming was engaged in social media. That company had a lot of marketing accounts.

Back then, Ye Ci had sent him that video only because of his identity.

She never imagined that they would manage to investigate this.

Ye Ci's lips were pale. After a long time, she finally mumbled and seemed to be very shocked.

"My cousin's company? Is the investigation mistaken?"

It was impossible for it to be wrong.

Ye Ci knew how ridiculous that sounded. In a panic, she could only look at Ning Li and said, "Sister Ning Li, I...my cousin knows that you're living with us, so there's no way he would do such a thing!"

It was precisely this reason that Ye Yiming had done this.

Ning Li looked at Ye Ci calmly.

Cold sweat gradually broke out on Ye Ci's forehead. "Perhaps someone in his company took this order privately... If he knew about this, he definitely wouldn't have agreed to it!"

Cheng Xiangxiang listened to their conversation and gradually understood what was going on.

She looked at Ning Li incredulously.

"Ning Li, you don't think this has anything to do with Lil Ci, do you? Ever since you arrived, Lil Ci has been so good to you and yet that's what you think of her?!"

Ning Li suddenly laughed. "I didn't say anything."

They were so anxious to defend themselves. Was this not a sign of guilt?

Cheng Xiangxiang was momentarily speechless.

"But...you're right. The boss of such a big company can't possibly ask about every detail." Ning Li seemed to think that what Ye Ci had said was quite reasonable, and asked, "Oh, right...Second Brother, did they find out the source of the video?"

Ye Ci lowered her head slightly. Her brain was buzzing.

'They probably didn't... Definitely not! Ye Yiming told me that he had erased all the evidence so it would be impossible to trace it back to me...'

Those marketing accounts were unreliable, so it was not unusual that they had found Ye Yiming's company, but it would be difficult to dig deeper.

Lu Huaiyu looked at Ning Li.

The girl's beautiful eyes were radiant with a mischievous glint.

He let out a low laugh. "No."

Ye Ci was greatly relieved, but her heartbeat was still pounding erratically. Her temples had also started to hurt.

"Oh, that's a shame."

Ning Li sighed softly and looked at Ye Ci. "I wanted to tell you the result when it first came out. I didn't expect it to be such a tough investigation."

Ye Ci stuttered. "Oh...th-that's fine... At least those marketing accounts have been punished... Sister Ning Li, I-I'll apologize to you on behalf of my cousin. I'm really sorry..."

Lu Huaiyu suddenly interrupted her words. "Rather than apologizing, why don't you go back and advise your cousin to manage his company and staff properly?"

He then snorted faintly.

"It's so unprofessional to not do a background research before taking an order. Is this what the Ye family is capable of?"

This last sentence was extremely blunt and unforgiving.

It was his judgment of the entire Ye family.

Ye Ci felt extremely humiliated, as if she had just been slapped hard on the face, which felt hot and painful.

Lu Huaiyu went to Ning Li and gently tousled her hair.

“Alright, you don’t need to worry about these things. Just think about what you want to eat.”

Ning Li was in a good mood and looked up at him with gleaming eyes.

“Anything is fine as long as it’s with you.”

Chapter 252: Capital First High School

Lu Huaiyu chose a barbecue restaurant.

They both sat facing each other inside the small private room.

Lu Huaiyu cut a thick slab of black beef into small pieces and patiently put it on the grill.

The aroma of grilled meat gradually filled the air.

Ning Li held her cup and took a sip of buckwheat tea.

Lu Huaiyu glanced at her and saw her relaxed eyes.

He could not help but laugh. “Are you that happy?”

Ning Li’s eyes curved as she nodded.

“Mhmm. Thanks, Second Brother.”

Her eyes were extremely beautiful with thick and long eyelashes that curled up naturally.

The light reflected off her eyes like the moonlight spilling onto a lake, bright and radiant.

When her eyes arched into a smile, it felt like a light breeze blowing over a pool of spring water, brimming with light.

Lu Huaiyu focused on her face for a while before moving away.

Ning Li did not notice it.

She was indeed in a very good mood today.

On the one hand, her exams were over. On the other hand, she had managed to somewhat get back at Ye Ci.

Ye Ci would probably not sleep well due to this matter over the next few days.

A person who had done something unspeakable would fear that the truth would be revealed.

The most torturous thing to them would be the impending revelation.

Ning Li was not in a hurry.

She had plenty of patience for Ye Ci.

After all, Ye Ci had “taken care” of her for many years, so now that Ning Li had the opportunity, she naturally had to repay Ye Ci.

The reason Ning Li had thanked Lu Huaiyu was because he had cooperated with her today to give her the response that she had hoped for.

Lu Huaiyu took a piece of meat off the grill and put it onto her plate. He was also smiling with his eyes.

“As long as you’re happy.”

He had a vague idea as to why Ning Li wanted to stay with the Ye family and felt quite relieved.

“Is the schedule for the winter training camp out yet?” He asked casually.

Ning Li nodded her head.

“Yeah, our flight is at 10:00 am the day after tomorrow. As they mentioned previously, the training location is at Capital First High for a duration of two weeks.”

Lu Huaiyu raised an eyebrow.

“Capital First High? The plum blossoms in the garden are quite nice. You can check it out when you have the time.”

Only then did Ning Li remember that Capital First High School was also Lu Huaiyu’s alma mater.

However, he had only attended high school there for a year or so before he had gotten into Xijing University.

“Okay.” Ning Li responded.

The two weeks of training were completely closed off, so Ning Li would only be able to go around inside the school campus.

“By the way, the training is pretty strict on phone usage. It looks like we will only be allowed to use our phones for a while at night, so I guess I won’t be able to reply to your messages during that time.”

After Ning Li finished her sentence, she suddenly felt a little awkward.

Lu Huaiyu did not contact her much anyway.

When she had said that, it somehow seemed as if she was voluntarily sharing her detailed schedule with him.

The cyberbullying case had concluded, but Zhang Yang’s case was still ongoing and would probably take some time to deal with.

Apart from that, there was nothing else going on.

Thus, there should not be much contact between Lu Huaiyu and Ning Li.

That was why it felt a bit redundant to tell him this.

Lu Huaiyu did not seem to mind. When he heard this, he only nodded.

“Okay.”

Although Lu Huaiyu had never participated in these competitions, Zhou Fei had been a frequent participant in these competitions and would always get a prize.

Thus, Lu Huaiyu knew about the situation.

“You’ll come back in two weeks?” Lu Huaiyu asked.

Ning Li thought about it for a moment and shook her head.

“I haven’t decided yet since I rarely go to the Capital. Gu Siyang invited me to the LY training base, so I might go over and check it out.”

Lu Huaiyu said, “Mm. There are a few places in the Capital that you can visit if you have the chance.”

Ning Li smiled, “Okay.”

...

Ye Ci and Cheng Xiangxiang went to a hot pot restaurant.

The few people that Cheng Xiangxiang invited had already arrived. When they saw them coming, they immediately greeted them warmly.

The two of them took their seats.

The hot pot restaurant was bustling with people.

However, Ye Ci looked distracted.

“Ye Ci! Ye Ci? Why aren’t you eating?”

Someone saw that Ye Ci had not moved her chopsticks much and tried to urge her to eat more.

Ye Ci only returned to her senses after that person had called out to her twice.

She forced a smile. “I’m not very hungry, so I won’t eat much. You guys can help yourselves.”

Cheng Xiangxiang knew that Ye Ci was in a bad mood. She then came up to her ear and whispered a piece of advice.

“Lil Ci, don’t get upset because of those things. Your cousin’s company didn’t do a proper job, but it has nothing to do with you.”

Ye Ci lowered her eyes.

“But...it’s still related to my cousin’s company after all...”

“So what? Is Ning Li gonna take it out on you because of this?”

Cheng Xiangxiang pursed her lips. “Your cousin’s company does this kind of business anyway. It’s not a crime, right? Besides, anyone who watched the video would know that it’s Ning Li who has problems. Even without these marketing accounts, she still wouldn’t be able to escape.”

However, the school’s surveillance footage had been leaked and turned the tide.

Ye Ci still seemed a little worried and apologetic.

“No, I’m just worried that Sister Ning Li will misunderstand me...”

“It doesn’t matter what she thinks. Anyway, isn’t the case closed according to Second Master Lu? Since it’s over, you don’t need to think about it.”

Cheng Xiangxiang talked as she ate.

“Also, isn’t that winter camp starting soon? You should just focus on preparing for the national competition! Once you enroll at Xijing University, you’ll be different from us!”

Cheng Xiangxiang did not lower her volume when she said this, so several people around them heard it and chimed in one after another.

“Oooh...Xijing University! Lil Ci, you’re so smart!”

“How can you guys compare to someone who got fifth in the province? Come, let’s toast in advance! In a few months, Lil Ci will be a freshman at Xijing University!”

“I hope some of your intelligence will rub off on me!”

Several people gathered around.

Ye Ci readjusted her expression, raised her glass, and clinked it with them. The corners of his lips curled up with a smile.

“Thank you.”

Chapter 253: You Don’t Have to Thank Me for Her Matters

After dinner, Lu Huaiyu accompanied Ning Li back to the Ye family home to pick up a book and went to Huacheng Avenue.

It was a neighborhood of townhouses, and Pei Song usually lived here by himself.

“This classmate of yours seems to have family in the capital, right?” Lu Huaiyu looked out the car window and asked casually.

“I think so. His parents are not in the country and his grandparents are recuperating in the Capital.

Ning Li did not know much about Pei Song. She had only found this out when Pei Song had mentioned it at the office when the school had misunderstood and thought they were dating.

Lu Huaiyu nodded gently.

Ning Li's phone vibrated.

She clicked on it and saw a message from George.

He had probably found out that Ning Li's exams were over, and wanted to urge her regarding the designs again.

[Ning, I heard that you're on a school break, so you should have some time now, right? If you don't have time, then can we at least just discuss the design theme?]

Since George could not get the drafts, he had finally taken the initiative to compromise.

It was rare for the heir of G&S to be so humble.

Ning Li finally replied to his messages.

[I have a winter training camp for the National Physics Competition, so I'll be busy. Sorry.]

Ning Li had the drawings, but it was all still in her head.

In her past life, Ning Li had created a lot of sketches of high fashion dresses. Some of them had been stolen by Ye Ci, and others had been sealed forever in her laptop.

Ning Li wanted to set some time aside to present these slowly, so she was not in a hurry at this moment.

After a long time, George finally replied.

She could feel his desperation through the phone.

[Ning, you're so much harder to handle than any woman I've ever chased.]

George was responsible for handling the team, personnel, materials, and staging. All he wanted from Ning Li was her drawings, but she did not want to give them to him because she had exams, competitions, and a winter camp to go to. Only God knew what that was...

He thought that perhaps his life had been too good in the past few years, that even God could not stand it and had gotten Ning Li to torment him.

Countless designers around the world would kill to join G&S because this opportunity was an excellent resource for anyone, but Ning Li did not care.

She also showed her full insouciance in front of him, the heir of G&S.

In a moment, Ning Li typed a few words.

[Thanks for the compliment.]

George took a deep breath and looked at his assistant. "What's the National Physics Competition Winter Camp about?"

This assistant had been carefully selected from the G&S branch at the Capital for his great resume and capabilities.

Everyone had thought that George had come over specifically to attend that launch, but he had stayed behind after the event and even taken over some of the businesses in the country. They then realized that George was intentionally shifting his focus to China.

The executives in China were overjoyed and quickly assigned a senior assistant to him.

This assistant had also been doing a very good job.

When the assistant heard George's question, he felt a little confused.

Physics Competition Winter Camp?

How were these words even associated with this prince?

However, the assistant remained professional.

He quickly searched for the details on his laptop and tried to explain it to George in the most concise and easy-to-understand way.

George finally understood after the explanation.

"So...this is a shortcut for students to get into a domestic university?"

His assistant replied, "Yes. Generally speaking, students who can participate in this winter camp can sign up for guaranteed admission with top universities in China as long as they get a good ranking in the finals. Of course, although it's a shortcut, those who actually qualify are extremely few."

George fell into deep thought.

The assistant paused for a moment and asked, "Sir, do you need me to compile the past year papers for the National Physics Competition for you?"

George waved his hand and messaged Ning Li after some thought.

[I can get Curtin University to give you a degree. What do you think?]

Curton University was a top international university, and its overall ranking was not inferior to Xijing University.

When George had studied there, he had donated a library building.

It was not a problem to donate another one.

Ning Li was speechless and turned off her phone screen.

Soon, the car stopped in front of a house.

Ning Li was about to get out of the car when she received a call from Gu Siyang.

She already knew why he had called.

Lu Huaiyu sat next to her and glanced at the familiar number.

He raised an eyebrow. "You can answer the call while I deliver the book."

After that, he took the book out of Ning Li's backpack.

Ning Li was just about to go on her own, but Lu Huaiyu had already pushed the door open to get out.

The phone was still ringing frantically.

Ning Li answered it. "Hello?"

...

Lu Huaiyu walked to the front door.

The number plate “No. 17” was on the right side of the door.

He rang the doorbell and the door opened soon after.

It was Pei Song.

Seeing Lu Huaiyu standing outside the door, Pei Song was slightly stunned.

“Mr. Lu?”

His gaze subconsciously looked over Lu Huaiyu at the cab parked on the roadside.

The car window was half open and he could see a familiar slender figure inside.

“Lili’s on the phone, so I came to deliver the book for her.” Lu Huaiyu said as he handed the book that was in his hand over to him.

Pei Song withdrew his gaze and took the book. “Thanks.”

Lu Huaiyu’s thin lips had a very faint arc.

“I did it for Lili, so you don’t need to thank me.”

Chapter 254: Going to the Capital

Ning Li was on the phone with Gu Siyang.

“Ning Li, Ning Li! Your exams ended today, right? When are you coming to the Capital?”

His excitement and anticipation could be heard across the phone.

“Tell me when you’ve decided to come over so I can arrange for you to go to the training grounds.”

Ning Li rubbed her temples and held the phone a little further away.

“I’m going in a few days and will let you know if I have time to visit after the camp.”

She did not promise him anything, but Gu Siyang pretty much considered it a done deal if she could say this.

“Okay! It’s a deal! I’ll wait for you in the Capital!”

Ning Li was a little surprised. “You’re already there?”

‘Weren’t they still in Lincheng? They should’ve just picked up the car at this time. Why is Gu Siyang back in the Capital so soon?’

Gu Siyang did not want to talk about it.

On the night they had picked up the car, his uncle had booked a ticket back to the Capital for him. He had not even gotten to return to his house in Yunzhou and had straightaway been dropped off at the airport with his luggage.

Gu Siyang had no other choice but to get on the plane.

He coughed. “Ah, yes...I just got back.”

Ning Li did not think much of it since she did not know the background story.

After all, Gu Siyang had been staying in the Capital before Yunzhou, so it was normal to go back.

She glanced out the car window and saw that Lu Huaiyu had already made his way back.

“I’ll hang up first. We’ll talk later when I get to the capital.”

“Okay, sure!”

Gu Siyang felt that this was a sure deal and felt some comfort to his wounded heart, so he hung up the phone with satisfaction.

Lu Huaiyu pulled open the car door and sat inside.

“You’re done?”

“Mm, he said the same thing.”

Lu Huaiyu leaned back in his seat and smiled. “He’s quite persistent.”

Ning Li put her phone away. “Second Brother, you don’t need to send me home. I can go back by myself.”

Lu Huaiyu raised his hand and gently flicked her forehead.

“It’s on the way.”

The Ye family home was certainly not on the way to Yunding Fenghua. Not many would be as thick-skinned as Lu Huaiyu to say this with such confidence.

...

Pei Song stood at the door.

From where he was standing, he could vaguely see Lu Huaiyu flicking Ning Li's forehead as they spoke.

Ning Li wrinkled her nose.

Lu Huaiyu propped his head up with one hand and nodded with a smile.

Only then did Ning Li relax her eyebrows and sit back.

The car quickly drove away.

Pei Song stood in place for a while until he noticed the coldness seeping in, so he went back inside.

He had not worn a jacket when he opened the door, only a thin coffee-colored sweater, so his body was cold after standing outside for a long time.

Looking detached, Pei Song casually put the book on the coffee table without going through it.

...

Ning Li returned to the Ye family home, only to find that Ye Ci had come back before her.

In fact, Cheng Xiangxiang had planned for them to go to a KTV after dinner, but Ye Ci was not in the mood and had excused herself by saying that she was not feeling well.

After coming home, Ye Ci went into her room, locked the door, and called Ye Yiming.

Ye Yiming was also frustrated because of this case recently.

He thought that he had done enough to cover his tracks, but who could have known that Ning Li's lawyer would be from the Cheng family!

They had used certain methods to investigate everything clearly.

He felt sorry for Ye Ci and said, "Don't worry, this has nothing to do with you. You just have to be stubborn and not admit to anything. They can't do anything to you if they can't find evidence."

Ye Yiming comforted her a while before Ye Ci gradually felt more settled.

"Thanks, Cousin. It's my fault for causing you so much trouble."

Ye Ci bit her lip.

"I was afraid that Mom and Dad would be angry if they found out..."

Ye Yiming immediately said, "They won't. This is the kind of business that this company does and will be involved in this kind of lawsuit from time to time. They're used to it and won't ask questions. Also, your father's been busy with the Qinghe Bridge project lately, so he won't have time to care about such minor things.

Ye Ci could hear footsteps outside the door. It seemed like Ning Li was home.

She hurriedly said, "I'm sorry to have troubled you, Cousin. I won't bother you then."

After that, she hung up the phone.

The footsteps outside got closer and stopped right at her door.

Ye Ci held her breath.

Ye Ci felt like Ning Li had stomped on her heart when she stopped abruptly at her door. Her body was very tense.

Even if Ye Yiming had repeatedly confirmed that Ye Ci's involvement had not been exposed and Lu Huaiyu had also mentioned that they had not found out the source of the video, Ye Ci still felt worried.

Ning Li looked at the closed room door and silently smirked.

The light in Ye Ci's room was still on, so Ye Ci obviously knew that Ning Li was outside, yet Ye Ci did not dare to come out.

After a short pause, Ning Li continued to walk towards her room.

Hearing her departing footsteps, Ye Ci's heart still did not feel relieved.

Numerous chaotic thoughts flashed through her mind.

'What was Ning Li doing standing outside? Did she want to come in and question me? Or was it something else? Is she beginning to suspect me for Zhang Yang's case too?'

Knock knock.

The sudden knock on Ye Ci's door startled her.

"Who is it?" Her voice was a bit shrill because of the tension and panic.

"Lil Ci, it's Mom."

Hearing that it was Su Yuan, Ye Ci breathed a long sigh of relief.

She tried to make herself look calm before she went over to open the door.

“Mom, it’s so late. Why are you here?”

Su Yuan held a stack of freshly laundered clothes in her hand and said, “You’re going to the Capital soon, and it’s colder there than in Yunzhou. I’ve just picked these out for you so you should take more clothes.”

Ye Ci’s felt comforted and went forward to hug her mother’s arm.

“Thanks, Mom. You can just put these there. I’ll pack my suitcase later.”

Su Yuan put down the clothes and asked, “Were you doing your practices? Did I disturb you?”

Ye Ci shook her head and smiled.

“Of course not. I was just thinking about some things... Don’t worry about me. Sister Ning Li is coming along and the teacher in charge there is a friend of Mr. Zhou, so everything’s been arranged well.”

Only then did Su Yuan feel a little more at ease.

“That’s good, but you shouldn’t feel too stressed. You just finished your exam, so just relax and unwind. You can continue your practices tomorrow.”

“Okay, thanks, Mom.”

...

The next day, Ning Li went to Heyuan district and checked the binoculars and cameras in the north-facing bedroom. She also packed some things to take away.

...

Yunzhou Airport.

Zhou Hua drove Ning Li and Ye Ci there.

Su Yuan and Ye Cheng were also there to send them off.

"Lil Ci, remember to send Mom a message after you arrive at Capital First High."

Su Yuan tightened Ye Ci's scarf.

Ye Cheng stood by the side and helped with her suitcase.

"Sister! Mom and I will miss you!"

Ye Ci smiled and stroked his head. "Sister Ning Li and I will miss you too."

Ye Cheng pursed his lips, "I don't want her to miss me!"

Ning Li took her suitcase from the trunk and faintly glanced at the few of them before she walked towards the entrance.

Chapter 255: The Young Lu Huaiyu

Ning Li had brought a 24-inch oversized black suitcase, which made her look even more slender and tall.

Su Yuan frowned slightly.

The camp was only for two weeks. Su Yuan had not expected Ning Li to bring so many things.

When Ning Li had first come to the Ye family from Lincheng, she had only carried a backpack.

Now, she was only going to the Capital for two weeks, yet she had brought such a big suitcase.

Originally, Su Yuan had wanted to tell Ning Li to take care of Ye Ci since she was the older sister, but after several failed communications, Su Yuan had already given up on this.

Ye Ci said to Ning Li, "Sister Ning Li, please wait for me."

She pulled her own suitcase from Ye Cheng and said, "Mom, we'll go in now. You guys can go back."

Su Yuan hugged Ye Ci.

"This is your first time going away by yourself, so make sure you take good care of yourself, okay?"

"Sister, always remember to call us if you need anything!"

Ye Cheng had wanted to follow Ye Ci to the Capital for fun. However, his mother did not allow it, so he had to give up on the idea.

Ye Ci smiled and nodded. "It's only for two weeks. It'll go by quickly. I'll bring you a gift later, but you must listen to Mom during this time, okay?"

As soon as Ye Cheng heard that he would get a gift, he was happy and quickly agreed. "Deal!"

Su Yuan tapped his forehead.

“You only know how to get gifts from your sister. If you were even half as good as your sister, your father would buy everything for you.”

Ye Cheng stuck his tongue out. They looked so happy together.

Ye Ci turned back and saw that Ning Li had already gone into the departure hall without looking at them.

“Mom, Lil Cheng, I’ll go first then,” Ye Ci said as she pulled her suitcase away and quickly followed after Ning Li.

...

Pei Song had already arrived and was at the check-in counter.

He had only brought a small white suitcase. Compared to Ning Li, he was travelling very light.

Ning Li was checking in at the next counter.

Ye Ci was waiting in line, with only a few people between her and Ning Li.

Ning Li and Pei Song nodded in greeting. Ning Li looked at her boarding pass, which was a window seat.

After a while, Ye Ci walked over.

She was very reluctant to be with Ning Li, but that would only make her seem more guilty.

Besides, Pei Song was also there.

After thinking about it, Ye Ci sat down on the seat opposite Ning Li.

Ning Li was looking at her phone.

No one said anything.

Ye Ci took the lead in breaking the silence.

“Sister Ning Li, the last time you went to the capital, where did you go?”

‘Interesting... So much time has passed since then, yet Ye Ci only mentions this now?’

Ning Li did not even raise her head as she said in a light voice, “Just around.”

Ye Ci was rendered speechless.

She knew then that Ning Li did not want to say another word to her.

At that moment, Pei Song’s phone rang.

He answered it. “Hello, Mr. Sun.”

Sun Qingyi was the teacher in charge of receiving them at the airport. He was calling to ask about the trio’s schedule.

Since Pei Song was the Class President and the only male student in that group, Sun Qingyi contacted him directly.

After making sure that all three of them had arrived at the airport, Sun Qingyi gave them a few more instructions before hanging up the phone.

Soon, it was time to board the plane.

Pei Song got up.

“It’s almost time. Let’s go.”

...

The plane tickets had been booked by the school, so their seat numbers were connected.

Ning Li was in the window seat and Ye Ci was next to her. Pei Song and Ye Ci were separated by an aisle.

Ning Li buckled her seat belt and saw her phone light up.

It was a message from Lu Huaiyu.

[Safe journey.]

He knew the departure time of her flight, so he had purposely sent it at this time.

[Thanks, Second Brother.]

She replied to the message and turned off her phone before looking out the window.

This time, Ning Li would stay in the Capital for quite a long time, so it would be a while until she could see Lu Huaiyu again.

She put the phone in her pocket and closed her eyes.

...

Two hours later, the plane landed at the Capital Airport.

After getting off the plane, Ning Li went to the carousel to pick up her luggage.

Pei Song stood not far away and called Sun Qingyi, who was already waiting at the exit.

Soon, Ning Li pushed her luggage over.

“Let’s go.”

...

As soon as the trio came out, they saw a young man in the crowd holding up a sign.

Their names were written on it.

Pei Song took the lead. “Mr. Sun.”

Sun Qingyi had already noticed them and immediately smiled as he stepped forward.

“You’re Pei Song, right?”

As he looked, he secretly sighed.

It was really impressive for Yunzhou Second High to take up three out of five places to represent the province for the National Physics Competition.

Moreover, these three students were all so good-looking.

“Hello, Mr. Sun.”

Ning Li and Ye Ci greeted him.

Sun Qingyi was very friendly.

“The two others from your province are only coming over in the afternoon. I’ll send you guys to the school first and pick them up later in the afternoon. Let’s go to the car!”

...

The car left the airport and drove to Capital First High.

An hour later, the car stopped in front of the main gate of Capital First High.

Sun Qingyi said, “We’re here!”

Ning Li got out of the car.

Capital First High was one of the top high schools in the Capital that was centuries old.

Since it was the school holidays, there were not many people around. The place appeared to be quite desolate.

However, just standing in front of the main gate gave one the feeling of this school’s profound heritage.

Sun Qingyi led them inside.

"I'll show you to the dorms first. You guys can take a good rest today because the course doesn't officially start until tomorrow."

As he walked, Sun Qingyi introduced the campus.

"The two buildings over there are both teaching buildings, and that's the office building next to it. Right in front is the playground. Oh, there's also a plum garden behind the playground..."

Ning Li followed behind unhurriedly. Suddenly, her gaze was transfixed by something.

It was a wall of photos.

The top read: Distinguished Alumni of Capital First High School.

On the upper right side, there was an extremely familiar face.

The young man was wearing a white shirt with his head slightly inclined. The corners of his lips seemed to carry a nonchalant smile, but his eyes looked cold.

He looked so unattainable, like the moon or the snow on top of a mountain.

That was...the young Lu Huaiyu.

Chapter 256: The First Is Different

That appeared to be the sixteen-year-old Lu Huaiyu, looking very different from the noble and aloof Lu Huaiyu that Ning Li was familiar with. The teenager in the photo looked very youthful, and his eyes had a natural arrogance in them.

He was like the sun in the clouds, hard to reach but carrying a fatal attraction. One only needed to take a glance at him to become fully immersed in his eyes.

Sun Qingyi found that Ning Li was not following them. He looked back and saw that she was looking at the wall of photos. He then sighed helplessly.

Lu Huaiyu's photo had been placed here for so many years, yet he still managed to capture everyone's attention.

"That's Lu Huaiyu," Sun Qingyi said. "He was my high school classmate and also your teacher, Zhou Fei."

However, they had only been classmates for a year or so.

Both Lu Huaiyu and Zhou Fei had eventually moved on to university, leaving them, a group of poor devastated people, to complete three years of high school.

Hearing him say this, Ye Ci and Pei Song also looked over.

Capital First High was built a hundred years ago and had a rich history. Countless significant figures in various fields had been produced here.

Having a photo placed here was proof of excellence in itself.

Lu Huaiyu was the youngest on this wall.

His young and handsome face was a bit out of place and too conspicuous here.

Ning Li recovered her senses and nodded. "Mr. Sun, I'm sorry for delaying you."

“It’s okay!” Sun Qingyi was very good-tempered and did not mind this. “My main task today is to familiarize you all with the environment here. After all, you’re staying here for two weeks. Besides, I’ve been through that and I totally understand!”

He then lamented. “Back then, he attracted so many girls with that face. This photo has been here for so long, yet every year when there are new students, this place always becomes very crowded. It’s normal. Everyone’s used to it.”

Sun Qingyi was extremely young and only a few years older than Ning Li and the others, so he was casual when he talked about these topics.

Besides, this was a fact.

Being classmates with Lu Huaiyu had been both great and painful.

The great thing about it was that Lu Huaiyu was undeniably spectacular, so it had been an honor to be classmates with someone like that.

The pain was precisely for the same reason. That was because everyone seemed lackluster compared to him.

Even now, Sun Qingyi in person still could not beat his photo from years ago.

It was truly frustrating to be compared with Lu Huaiyu.

Ning Li took another look.

The young Lu Huaiyu really had the capacity to attract so many girls.

She then dragged her suitcase and caught up with the group.

...

Sun Qingyi took them to the dormitory.

“Building 7 is the girls’ dorm, and opposite it is Building 6 which is the boys’ dorm. There are 52 of you in this camp, 15 girls and 37 boys, so four of you will be sharing one room.”

Capital First High was the top high school in the Capital, so their standards in all aspects were great. The dorms were also based on university standards.

The participants in the winter camp this time were the most outstanding students from various provinces and cities, so they would definitely not neglect these star students.

There was also a resident teacher on duty in both buildings.

Sun Qingyi took the girls to Building 7 first.

The resident teacher was a middle-aged woman with a kind smile on her face as she handed them a form.

“Please fill out the form to register first.”

Ning Li took it and noticed that a few people had already moved in.

Fifteen girls were split into four rooms. Ning Li and Ye Ci were assigned to the same room, No. 202.

“The dorms are divided according to your school and region,” The resident teacher explained with a smile.

This would make it easier for the students to get acquainted as soon as possible and take care of each other.

“There aren’t many students who are from the same school here.”

Sun Qingyi smiled and pointed outside. “It’s not just two. Their school has three representatives! There’s a boy with them who is waiting outside.”

The resident teacher was surprised. “Wow, really? That’s very impressive!”

There were more than fifty students from the whole country yet this school had taken up three spots. It was indeed an amazing achievement.

Ning Li filled out the form and handed it to Ye Ci.

“Thanks, Sister Ning Li.” Ye Ci said softly and saw that she had been assigned the same room as Ning Li.

The smile at the corner of her lips stiffened slightly, but she quickly recovered and filled out the form.

Sun Qingyi helped them carry their suitcases upstairs and stood outside Room 202.

“This is your dorm. You can rest first in the afternoon. I’ll message you girls in the group regarding any arrangements.”

All the students had scanned the QR code before they came and joined a WeChat group. Sun Qingyi was the group leader.

“Thank you, Mr. Sun.”

Sun Qingyi quickly left and went to find Pei Song.

The room door was locked from the inside.

Ye Ci knocked on the door, but no one answered.

She knocked harder and increased her volume. "Is anyone there?"

This time, someone finally came to open the door.

It was a very thin girl with short hair and black-rimmed glasses.

Ye Ci smiled and greeted her. "Hello, I'm Ye Ci."

The girl nodded and took two steps back to let them in.

"Song Mengtang. Sorry, I was doing some practice questions just now and didn't hear you knocking."

She already walked back to her desk.

Each of them had their own elevated bed with a desk below in the four-person dorm.

Song Mengtang had chosen the bed on the right side of the window. There was a thick physics book spread open on the desk.

Ye Ci smiled and said, "It's alright."

However, Song Mengtang's attitude was rather cold. After greeting them, she continued burying her head in her book.

She was the typical hardworking genius that only had her mind on her studies.

Ye Ci could see through Song Mengtang's personality and did not say anything. She turned to look at Ning Li.

"Sister Ning Li, where do you want to sleep?"

Hearing this, Song Mengtang suddenly stopped writing and turned back to look at Ning Li.

Ning Li chose the bed next to the door on the left.

She was not picky about this since it was the same wherever she was.

Ye Ci pointed to the bed on the right side near the door.

"Then I'll sleep here?"

Ning Li did not say anything and put down her backpack.

Most of her belongings had been kept in her suitcase, and her backpack was only stuffed with small things like charging cables, her water bottle, and so on.

"You're Ning Li?" Song Mengtang suddenly spoke.

Unlike the coldness when she had faced Ye Ci earlier, Song Mengtang seemed to know of Ning Li and even took the initiative to talk to her.

"First in the preliminary competition in M Province?"

Although most of the students who attended the winter camp had not met each other yet, they were all very clear about each other's achievements.

Song Mengtang had obviously heard of Ning Li's name.

Ning Li nodded. "Hello."

Song Mengtang glanced at Ning Li's desk.

Ning Li had already taken everything out from her backpack, but there was not a single book or paper with her.

'Did she put them in her luggage?'

Ning Li did not unpack her suitcase. After simply putting aside some things, Ning Li just sat in her chair and played with her phone.

Song Mengtang looked at Ning Li for a while before she continued doing her practice questions.

Ye Ci bit her lip.

Chapter 257: Snapped a Picture

Song Mengtang had come in second for the preliminary rounds in C Province.

She clearly did not consider Ye Ci as a competitor. That was why she had not reacted when she heard Ye Ci's name.

Song Mengtang only cared about Ning Li, who had come first in her province.

Although they were all in the National Finals, there was still a gap between the contestants.

There was still judgment here among these geniuses. Since the competition was more intense now, the discrimination here was even stronger than anywhere else.

Ye Ci had come in fifth and barely qualified to join the finals, so she was the lowest-ranked here.

Ye Ci suppressed the frustration she felt and took out her phone to call Su Yuan.

“Hello? Mom? Sister Ning Li and I are at the dormitory now.”

Song Mengtang froze and glanced over at Ye Ci again.

‘It sounds like Ye Ci and Ning Li’s relationship seemed to be more than that of just ordinary classmates?’

However, Song Mengtang did not care much about it and quickly went back to her book.

Su Yuan seemed to be very concerned on the phone. She asked a lot of questions, and Ye Ci answered them all with a sweet and soft, but slightly petulant voice.

Ning Li put on her headphones.

After some thought, she clicked on her chat with Lu Huaiyu.

[Second Brother, I’ve arrived at Capital First High].

Lu Huaiyu seemed to be busy and did not reply to her message immediately.

Ning Li waited for a short while before putting her phone away.

....

After a long conversation, Ye Ci reluctantly hung up the phone.

This was indeed her first time going away alone. With that little episode with Song Mengtang, Ye Ci felt uncomfortable and became even more homesick.

“Ye Ci.” Song Mengtang called out to her.

Ye Ci turned her head. “Hmm? What’s wrong?”

Song Mengtang pulled the earphones out of her ears, looked at her, and said bluntly, “Can you please take your calls outside next time? Or perhaps shorten your conversation?”

Ye Ci’s face flushed red for a moment as she said in a small voice, “Right...I’m sorry. I’ll take note next time.”

Song Mengtang nodded.

She had always been a very straightforward person.

Everyone came here to train, so time was precious. If Ye Ci did not want to learn, the least she could do was not to distract others.

Song Mengtang had come here to get a prize.

Since they would be living together for the next two weeks, it was better to bring this up early on.

Ye Ci felt very embarrassed.

She gingerly unpacked her suitcase.

Originally, Ye Ci had wanted to look around the campus in the afternoon, but after seeing Song Mengtang studying so diligently, she felt very pressured.

After some thought, Ye Ci also took out a paper and started doing it.

The whole dorm was quiet.

...

Capital Airport.

As soon as Lu Huaiyu came out, Fang Qingyun was already waiting at the exit.

"Second Young Master."

Fang Qingyun came forward to greet him with an unconcealed smile on his face.

"You're finally back! Old Master is already waiting for you at home."

This was the first time in almost a year that Lu Huaiyu had returned to the Capital on his own initiative.

"How is Grandpa's health lately?"

"Haha, the Old Master is doing great, especially when he knows that you're coming back. He had someone clean the house again several days in advance!"

Lu Huaiyu's lips curved slightly.

"That's good."

Fang Qingyun asked, "By the way, the Old Master said that you are going to be spending Chinese New Year at home this time. Is it true?"

Lu Huaiyu looked down at his phone and saw that Ning Li had sent him a message an hour ago.

[Okay. Have a good time at the Capital.]

After sending this message, he looked at Fang Qingyun and nodded. "Mm."

He had already made a promise to his grandfather, so of course, it was true.

Fang Qingyun thought, 'No wonder... The Old Master has been extra energetic these few days when he gets up in the morning for his exercise.'

Second Young Master was staying in the Capital for Chinese New Year, so the Old Master must be happy.

The two of them got into the car and drove towards the Lu Mansion.

Fang Qingyun looked in the rearview mirror and saw that Lu Huaiyu was playing with his phone.

He had seemed to be sending someone a message earlier and had a rare warm smile on his face.

The last time the Second Young Master had been back in the Capital, he seemed to have had that expression as well.

Fang Qingyun suddenly made a bold guess but did not know what to say.

Lu Huaiyu lifted his eyes slightly. "Just say whatever you want to."

Fang Qingyun coughed and spoke carefully, "Umm... Second Young Master, do you have a girlfriend?"

The way Lu Huaiyu looked was just too suspicious and had given him such an impression.

Lu Huaiyu laughed. "Not yet."

Fang Qingyun was a little dubious.

He had worked for the Lu family for so many years and had watched Lu Huaiyu grow up, so he could more or less perceive that something was off about him.

'Hmm... He looks like a person who's dating... Wait... Did the Second Young Master just say 'not yet'? What does that mean?'

Fang Qingyun was shocked.

"Second Young Master, do you mean...she hasn't accepted you yet?"

If he was not dating someone, he could have just said "no".

However, with Lu Huaiyu's conditions, who would not accept him?

Lu Huaiyu raised his eyebrows slightly. After a long time, he let out a low chuckle.

"Not really."

That girl probably did not have a clue about his feelings for her.

...

Ning Li only stayed in the room for a while before she went out and casually walked around the campus.

It was the holiday season, so there were not many people around here.

Somehow, Ning Li found herself at the Wall of Fame again.

She stood there and looked at that photo.

After a moment, she took out her phone and snapped a picture.

She looked down for a while, before realizing that her phone felt a little hot.

Ning Li turned off her phone screen and put her phone away.

A voice suddenly came from behind, "Ning Li?"

Chapter 258: Ask Lu Huaiyu to Stop Duping Little Girls

Ning Li turned around and saw that Sun Qingyi was walking over with two boys.

They were probably participants in this winter camp as well.

"Mr. Sun."

Sun Qingyi introduced the three of them.

"These two boys are also from the same province as you, Ge Yu and Wei Mingming. This is Ning Li. You guys should've heard of her."

When the two boys saw Ning Li's face, they looked amazed. When they heard her name, they were even more surprised.

Ning Li had placed first in the preliminary round of the Provincial Physics Competition.

She had such excellent grades yet she was so beautiful.

It was not that they had a stereotype. It was because Ning Li's face was just too striking and impossible to ignore.

"Hello, guys." Ning Li greeted them.

Both boys were a bit nervous and panicked.

"Hello! Hi!"

They were both seventeen or eighteen years old, so it was normal for them to react like this when they saw a good-looking person of the opposite sex.

Sun Qingyi smiled and did not think much of it.

He casually glanced to the side.

"Are you here to look at Lu Huaiyu again?"

Ning Li replied, "N-No, I was just strolling around casually."

Sun Qingyi gave her a dubious look.

“Then, what did you just take a picture of?”

Ning Li was speechless. She had not expected him to see this and felt inexplicably embarrassed for a while.

Sun Qingyi laughed, looking like he was used to this.

“Don’t worry, there’s no need to be embarrassed. Since his photo has been here, so many people have taken a photo of it. In the past, someone even secretly smashed the glass and stole the photo.”

For this reason, Capital First High had purposely replaced the glass with a thickened tempered glass.

Compared to that incident, Ning Li snapping a picture was nothing at all.

Ning Li did not know what to say.

“Continue to enjoy looking at him then. I’ll take them to the dorms,” Sun Qingyi said.

Ning Li’s lips twitched as she wanted to defend herself, but it felt a bit redundant.

It always seemed fishier to defend one’s actions.

“Goodbye, Mr. Sun.”

Sun Qingyi sent the two boys to the dormitory. When he came back out, he could not resist calling Zhou Fei.

Zhou Fei took a while to pick up. His voice was lazy and groggy.

“What’s wrong?”

Sun Qingyi paused. "Don't tell me you just woke up?!"

"Yes, I slept at 5:00 am," Zhou Fei said and yawned.

Since he had been destroyed by Lu Huaiyu again, Zhou Fei was so devastated that he vowed to win against Lu Huaiyu at least once, no matter what.

Zhou Fei was finally on vacation, so he had been nestled at home playing games.

Sun Qingyi thought of how he had been going back and forth between the school and the airport all day, working tirelessly like a dog, while the shameless Zhou Fei actually had the nerve to say that he had been playing games all night!

Sun Qingyi suddenly felt how unfair the situation was and gritted his teeth. "You're too idle!"

Zhou Fei then remembered that he still had three students who had been sent over to Sun Qingyi and coughed lightly.

"No, actually I've been thinking about Pei Song and the girls. How are they?"

Sun Qingyi grunted. "They're fine!"

He was responsible for all the students this time. Even if Zhou Fei had not said anything in advance, he would still have made proper arrangements for them.

"The training will start tomorrow, so it's free and easy today. After all, they're all top students and can adapt well."

'Better than that even...'

Sun Qingyi remembered the scene earlier and silently sighed in his heart.

He did not know about the others, but Ning Li looked so relaxed that she even had time to think about Lu Huaiyu.

Zhou Fei felt at ease. "That's good."

"By the way, Lu Huaiyu is in Yunzhou too, right? When you see him later, get him to change his photo on the Wall of Fame."

"Huh? Why? What's wrong with that one?"

Sun Qingyi sighed and intoned.

"There's nothing wrong with it... It's just that he already graduated so many years ago. Can he stop keeping that picture to dupe little girls?"

It was such a headache to think about.

Zhou Fei pondered for a long time and asked in all seriousness, "Then, do you think that it would be better to replace it with his current photo?"

Sun Qingyi said, "Forget it!"

The young Lu Huaiyu had been sharp and striking, but now with his mature temperament and looks, he looked even more stunning.

In the large Capital, everyone knew of Lu Huaiyu.

Changing the photo would probably cause more trouble.

Sun Qingyi hung up the phone in annoyance.

...

Ning Li saw Lu Huaiyu's reply.

Since the two weeks of training were completely closed off, there would definitely be no time to go out.

After the training, she had made some arrangements, but did not necessarily have time to go sightseeing.

However, Ning Li still replied. [Sure.]

...

Capital First High had opened three stalls on the first floor of the cafeteria to provide three daily meals for the students participating in the winter camp.

Ning Li finished her dinner and went back to the dormitory. When she arrived at the door, she heard the sound of laughter coming from inside.

One of them was Ye Ci and the other...

Ning Li's eyes narrowed slightly.

Cao Jingxuan.

She was familiar with this person.

In her past life, Cao Jingxuan had been one of the main witnesses who had reported Ning Li for cheating in the competition.

By the sound of it, Cao Jingxuan and Ye Ci got along very well.

Ning Li recollected her expression and pushed the door open.

Ye Ci and Cao Jingxuan immediately became silent and looked at Ning Li.

Song Mengtang was not there, so the two of them could chat happily.

Ning Li's arrival had clearly interrupted their pleasant conversation.

The room was quiet for a moment.

"Sister Ning Li, you're back."

Ye Cheng was the first to react.

Cao Jingxuan merely gave Ning Li a once-over.

She was slightly stunned by Ning Li's clean and beautiful face.

In the afternoon, someone in the winter camp had chatted with Cao Jingxuan privately, saying that among the girls who came this time, there were two particularly beautiful ones. One named Ye Ci, and the other Ning Li.

After Cao Jingxuan had arrived, she saw Ye Ci and felt that she was not as pretty as they had said, so she had assumed that Ning Li was probably the same.

However, Cao Jingxuan could see that Ye Ci and Ning Li were not on the same level.

She stood up and greeted Ning Li.

“Hello, I’m Cao Jingxuan. We’ll be roommates for the next two weeks, so let’s look out for each other.”

Cao Jingxuan was also beautiful. She was 1.7m tall and very slender, so she looked like a model.

Anyone who saw Cao Jingxuan for the first time would feel that she was a generous and cheerful girl who got along well with everyone.

Ning Li gently nodded and looked at her dully. “Hello, I’m Ning Li.”

After saying that, Ning Li sat at her desk without any intention of continuing to chat.

Cao Jingxuan was stunned.

Her people skills were always great. Even if she had just met someone, Cao Jingxuan would quickly get acquainted with them.

However, didn’t Ning Li seem a little too cold?

Ye Ci glanced at Cao Jingxuan and caught her momentary daze. She laughed and said, “Jingxuan, Sister Ning Li is just slow to warm up to people, but she’s very nice. It’ll get better with time.”

She then said to Ning Li, “Sister Ning Li, Jingxuan is from Capital First High. She can show us around some time. What do you think?”

Chapter 259: I Like Her, So What’s Wrong With Admitting It

There were a total of four people from Capital First High that were attending the winter camp this time. Cao Jingxuan had placed first.

Cao Jingxuan was the best in the senior class at Capital First High.

Ning Li did not raise her head.

“The training is fully closed off, so there won’t be any time.”

Ye Ci was a little embarrassed.

Cao Jingxuan was quick to pick up the conversation.

“That’s okay. There are some very interesting places in the school itself. If you’re interested, I can show you guys around.”

She was polite and warm, a people pleaser.

Ye Ci smiled and responded. “Sure, thanks in advance, Jingxuan.”

“You’re welcome.”

Cao Jingxuan also did not seem to mind Ning Li’s aloofness and spoke with a hint of excitement.

“Actually, my house is quite close to the school, so I’ve always walked to school. This winter camp is the first time I’ve ever lived in the school.”

“Oh? Me too!”

Ye Ci and Cao Jingxuan continued to chat again.

Ning Li took out her headphones and put them on.

After a while, Song Mengtang came back. Only then did Ye Ci and Cao Jingxuan stop talking.

At 7:00 pm, Sun Qingyi sent out a notice in the winter camp WeChat group.

From tomorrow onwards, there would be morning and afternoon classes, and there would be a self-study period in the evening.

Three teachers would be taking turns to teach the classes.

One of the teachers was from Capital First High, and another was from Capital Fifth High. Both of them were always involved in the Physics Competition.

There would also be a physics professor from Xijing University.

However, the professor had fewer classes and the other two teachers would be responsible for most of the content.

Every morning when they arrived at the classroom, all students were required to hand in their phones. They would not get them back until the end of the evening self-study period.

It was a semi-militarized management.

These had all been mentioned before, so the students were already mentally prepared and quickly accepted it.

...

The Lu Mansion.

Lu Huaiyu accompanied Old Master Lu for dinner.

At the table, Old Master Lu glanced at Lu Huaiyu from time to time, with curiosity and inquiry in his eyes.

Old Master Lu had heard from Fang Qingyun that his grandson seemed to have fallen in love with a girl but had not pursued her yet.

This news really made Old Master Lu scratch his head.

His grandson had always been very outstanding since he was young. Many girls chased after him, but Lu Huaiyu had always kept a distance from them.

When Old Master Lu finally heard that his grandson had a crush, he was incredibly excited.

However, it would seem too abrupt to ask this out of the blue.

The old man felt torn and wanted to say something, but he stopped himself.

Lu Huaiyu knew what his grandfather wanted to ask, but he calmly ate his meal in silence.

Old Master Lu was very anxious.

His grandson was usually very sensitive and would take the initiative to speak when he saw him like this, but Lu Huaiyu was silent today.

When they were almost done with dinner, Old Master Lu could no longer hold it in.

“Huaiyu, what’s new in Yunzhou recently?”

Lu Huaiyu looked calm. “Nothing. It’s the same as usual.”

Old Master Lu was speechless.

‘This punk is doing this intentionally!’

Seeing that there was little hope of getting Lu Huaiyu to explain through his own initiative, Old Master Lu asked, “I heard that you have a girlfriend?”

Lu Huaiyu’s thin lips curled up slightly.

Fang Qingyun had always been precise in his words, so he would never have said this.

His grandfather was clearly trying to dupe him.

Lu Huaiyu put down his cutlery and looked straight at his grandfather.

“Where did you hear this from? Why don’t I know about it?”

Old Master Lu righteously said, “No rumors are unfounded. If you didn’t do anything, how did this news spread?”

He inched forward. “Tell me, which family is she from?”

“There’s no such thing, so it’s no use for you to inquire about it.” Lu Huaiyu calmly replied.

Old Master Lu knew that his grandson was tight-lipped, so he sighed.

“Both you and your brother really make me worried. Your elder brother has no hope, but at least you’re still young. You can still try hard and have a glimmer of hope! Huaiyu, you can’t be so unmotivated. If you really like the girl, put in more effort!”

How could he still not pursue the girl?!

Lu Huaiyu was speechless.

Although Lu Huaiyu felt that his grandfather’s words were somewhat reasonable, at this time, it was still inappropriate.

After a while, Lu Huaiyu said, “Don’t worry. I will take care of it myself.”

“Girls need to be coaxed. You’re such an arrogant and difficult person. No wonder the girl doesn’t... Wait... What did you say?”

The old man was rarely at a loss. After recovering himself, he finally understood what Lu Huaiyu meant.

He widened his eyes slightly and could not hide his shock. “You’re...admitting that you have a crush?”

This was unprecedented!

Lu Huaiyu leaned back in his seat and turned his head slightly. He smiled slightly and his voice was nonchalant and deep as he said, “I like her, so what’s wrong with admitting it?”

....

Old Master Lu walked an extra round today after dinner for digestion.

Fang Qingyun was next to him and said helplessly, "The doctor said that you should eat less. Why can't you remember that?"

Now, Old Master Lu still had to exercise at this late hour.

Master Lu waved his big hand with a smile on his face. "Hehe... You don't understand!"

'I have a granddaughter-in-law now, so I deserved to eat an extra bowl of rice!'

Fang Qingyun could not help but laugh. "You don't even know who the girl is. Why are you so happy?"

"He won't say, so what can we do?"

Old Master Lu had already asked several times, but Lu Huaiyu refused to say anything. He was so secretive, that all he could do was give up.

Even so, Old Master Lu still had confidence in his own grandson.

...

Lu Huaiyu stood in front of the window and looked at the yard with a cup of black coffee in his hand.

He could vaguely see the old man's figure. His grandfather's words echoed in his ears.

"If you like her, why don't you pursue her?"

Lu Huaiyu sipped his coffee.

'I like her too much... She's so precious, so I can't risk it.'

Chapter 260: Small Test

The next day, classes officially began for the winter camp.

All 52 students were in the same class, so it was held at the big auditorium No. 501 at Capital First High.

The whole school building was quiet and peaceful, with only this one classroom being quite lively.

Students came in one after another.

Some students already knew each other, so they sat in groups to chat. Some were sitting alone in their own seats, seemingly not interested in making friends. They just waited for class to start.

Those who could sit in this room were the creme de la creme of the country, so they were naturally all arrogant.

When Ning Li came in, the auditorium went quiet for a moment.

She quickly scanned the room and walked forward steadily. She then sat down in the last row against the wall.

Pei Song arrived first and was also in the last row, separated from Ning Li by a few empty seats and an aisle.

"That's Ning Li, right? I heard she got first place in M Province!"

"Yeah, that's her! We already met yesterday."

"I thought previously that Ye Ci and Cao Jingxuan were good-looking, but I didn't expect that there would be someone even prettier! She's probably really popular in her school..."

“The most popular girl in our school isn’t even as beautiful as her.”

“Same...”

“I heard that she was ranked first in the midterm exams in Yunzhou City. It’s amazing how she managed to achieve this result while participating in this competition!”

“You see the guy next to her? Pei Song. He’s only slightly behind Ning Li in the competition and that midterm exam. That’s pretty amazing.”

...

Ye Ci sat in the middle of the position and could hear these words clearly.

At Second High, Ye Ci had heard similar things and had not expected to hear this over here as well.

Many of the participants also paid attention to Pei Song, but in this class, there were more than twice as many boys as girls.

Thus, the focus of their discussion was, of course, Ning Li.

In this way, Ning Li really stood out.

Although some people greeted Ye Ci as well, the attention they paid to her was clearly far less than that of Ning Li because she could not compare to Ning Li in terms of looks or grades.

A teacher soon walked in with a folder.

He was a chubby man of about forty years in age. He wore glasses and looked very amiable.

His hair was also thinning.

The students went back to their seats and quieted down.

The teacher came to the podium and spoke as he smiled.

“Hello students, my name is Li Guangyuan. I’m the Head of the Physics Team in Capital First High and will be one of your teachers for this intensive training course. During our time here, I hope that we will get along well. I’ll start with a roll call so that we can get to know each other.”

He then pulled out a sheet from his file bag and started to call out names.

Before the students had arrived, many of them had already been familiar with each other because of the chat group. Today, they were just putting these names to their faces.

Li Guangyuan identified everyone and took out a stack of papers from the folder.

“Okay everyone, put away your things and get ready to take a test!”

The class was stunned when they heard these words.

Cao Jingxuan seemed to be quite familiar with him and could not help but ask, “Mr. Li, we’ve only just arrived, yet we have to take a test?”

Li Guangyuan nodded his head.

“Yes, but you all don’t need to be nervous. This is just a small test, mainly to gauge your level. It’ll facilitate the subsequent course arrangements.”

Li Guangyuan had said it would be easy, but everyone knew that this test was not that simple.

After all, this would be the first test they would be taking since their arrival here.

It would be fine if they did well, but if they did not, how humiliating would it be?

They were the top students in each school, so they were all very competitive.

No one wanted to be the one lagging behind when they were competing among other bright students.

"This is too sudden..."

"I wonder what will be tested? I haven't revised anything lately!"

"Do you guys think that it'll be harder than the preliminary round, or easier? This first test shouldn't be too tough, right?"

The students were whispering to each other as they packed their things.

Ning Li had not brought much with her. She left her pencil case on the table and placed her backpack near the podium in front.

She raised her eyebrows slightly when she heard their conversation.

Of course, this paper would be more difficult than the preliminary round.

It would be much tougher than that.

Since their training time was only two weeks long, the curriculum was very tight.

The teachers were only concerned about their efficiency of getting through the content and would not care about the students' feelings.

In fact, the moment they had arrived, the competition had already begun.

This was an intense competition where everyone was for themselves.

Ning Li raised her eyes slightly.

Ye Ci had just put her backpack in the front and returned to her seat.

Even if it was just a side profile, it was not hard to see how nervous she was.

Ning Li's lips hooked up slightly.

'What is she nervous about? This is just the beginning.'

...

All the students sat apart from each other while Li Guangyuan started handing out the papers.

"The exam duration is two hours, so everyone, please pay attention to the time."

Ning Li sat in the last row and took the paper from the boy in front of her. She then started to solve the first problem.

The entire classroom was quiet with only the rustling sound of pens scratching through paper.

Ye Ci also got the paper.

Her habit was to browse through the whole paper once.

After skimming through it, her face quickly became glum.

That was because there were no multiple-choice questions in this paper. There were also a lot of questions.

What was more, after a cursory scan, she found that the knowledge points that this test focused on were completely different from the preliminary round.

Ye Ci knew very well that she could not solve some of the questions.