

## Little Brat's 41

### Chapter 41: Are You Out Of Your Mind, Lu Huaiyu?

Dai Li knocked the table over, resulting in the wine and the liquor falling and splashing all over the floor.

He covered his chest in pain and looked as pale as paper. Looking at Lu Huaiyu, his eyes were full of fear while his voice sounded heavy as if he was being choked. He dared not even groan in pain.

The dinner hall was doused in dead silence, the air almost frozen by the intense tension.

Lu Huaiyu looked down on Dai Li with his sharp and cold gaze. He said in a flat tone, "She said she didn't want to. Are you deaf?"

He had brought her here himself, and everyone in the hall saw it clearly. He thought he was making himself known, but it seemed like he was not being clear enough.

Cheng Xiyue nervously glanced at Lu Huaiyu, his eyes twitching helplessly. 'How long has it been since he got so angry? How stupid of Dai Li! Out of everyone, why must he offend Ning Li?'

If Lu Huaiyu decided to be ruthless, even those in the capital would fear him, let alone now. Dai Li must have mistaken Lu Huaiyu for someone with a good temper.

Then, a middle-aged man anxiously came over, sweating nervously as he said, "Second Master Lu, my son doesn't mean to offend you. This is a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding!"

The man was Dai Li's father, Dai Shengquan.

The Dai family was considered one of the richest families in Yunzhou though not in the same league as the Lu family from the capital.

Dai Shengquan thought he could seek out favors, but his son had offended Lu Huaiyu in the blink of an eye. Being a smart man, he quickly apologized to Ning Li.

“Ms. Ning, I’m so sorry about this. My boy might be a little unruly, but he doesn’t mean ill!”

Ye Ming frowned and looked at Su Yuan.

The Dai family was considered a business associate to the Ye family. If the situation was exacerbated, it would do no good to either side.

Su Yuan took a deep breath and said, “Ning Li, this should be a misunderstanding. Dai Li has suffered for his mistake, so let’s talk this over...”

Xu Yini went over to Lu Huaiyu and tried to talk him out of this. “Huaiyu, calm down. Don’t start a fight here. After all, we are here to celebrate Uncle Cheng’s birthday.”

If things continued to intensify, it would turn really ugly for everyone. Moreover, it was all because of Ning Li.

“I can afford to pay his hospital bills,” Lu Huaiyu said calmly.

Xu Yini responded poorly to Lu Huaiyu’s answer. She turned around to Old Master Cheng. “Uncle Cheng, I’m sorry that this is happening at your birthday dinner. Huaiyu will apologize to you officially another time, but he hit my men, and I demand an explanation.”

The situation gave Old Master Cheng a headache. He had practically watched Lu Huaiyu grow up and knew the boy’s temper better than anyone.

Dai Li must be out of his mind. Why would he offend Lu Huaiyu of all people?

“Uhm...”

"I don't want this to affect your dinner, so I'll bring him back now." Lu Huaiyu stepped forward as Dai Li instinctively retreated. Fear was growing in his heart. He had a feeling that if Lu Huaiyu brought him out, he might not come back in one piece!

Cheng Xiyue's heart skipped a beat. He did not care about Dai Li's wellbeing, but if Lu Huaiyu's condition worsened because of this, the consequences would be severe! He turned to Gu Tinglan to ask for help. "I thought you were a professional. Do something to control the situation!"

Gu Tinglan already knew Lu Huaiyu was acting strange. He was ready to go up to the man, but someone else was quicker.

"Second Brother," Ning Li called out.

The pleasant voice entered Lu Huaiyu's ears, and at the same time, he felt something pulling at his sleeve.

Lu Huaiyu looked at her, his eyes meeting her clear and charming ones, and that grievance and frustration disappeared into nothing.

Ning Li blinked. "Your shirt is dirty. Why don't you go home and change?"

When Lu Huaiyu had struck Dai Li, the wine on the table had splashed and wet the edge of his coat.

A second later, Lu Huaiyu nodded. "Okay."

...

While Dai Li was sent to the hospital, the Dai family was too embarrassed to stay. Every one of them left the party.

The servants came in and cleaned the place up, and the party continued as if nothing had happened. However, there were subtle changes in the atmosphere.

Cheng Xiyue stared in a particular direction and still had not recovered from the situation.

“Holy sh\*t...Ning Li was able to hold him down?”

Those few words alone were worth it for him to ask for help!

Gu Tinglan was pondering about the earlier situation from the side. He seemed to have underestimated Ning Li's influence on Lu Huaiyu.

Lu Huaiyu had obviously been on the verge of exploding, yet he was able to force himself to calm down and revert to his logical self.

Cheng Xiyue got closer and whispered a question, “Dr. Gu, I’m not sure, but is that a sign of him recovering from his condition?”

Had it been before Lu Huaiyu met Ning Li, Dai Li would not even have gotten the chance to reach the hospital.

Gu Tinglan smiled after a slight hesitation. “Maybe. Or maybe his condition is worsening.”

...

In the washroom, Lu Huaiyu took off his coat and tossed it into the trash can.

Ning Li noticed it and prayed for the hundreds and thousands of dollars that were casually tossed into the trash can just like that.

Lu Huaiyu leaned on the wall and watched Ning Li wash her hands through the mirror. He suddenly asked, “Have you forgotten what I taught you?”

Ning Li paused. She knew what he was talking about. She flung the water off her hands and said, "If I didn't stop you, you might have already tainted your hands."

Lu Huaiyu raised a brow. "You don't like my hands being dirty?"

She turned around and stared at him. Then, she nodded with a serious look. She truly felt that beating Dai Li would only dirty Lu Huaiyu's hands.

He jokingly leaned forward and put his hands out. "So, I must wash my hands as well? How troublesome."

When he got closer, the smell of the wine on him alone could intoxicate anyone.

Ning Li held his hands and put them under the tap. Since he had done it for her, washing his hands was nothing compared to that.

Lu Huaiyu squinted his eyes at her.

Her soft hands felt like jelly as if she did not have bones in them. A lock of hair blocked her face slightly, but he was able to notice the serious look on her petite face.

Ning Li even used soap to wash his hands, afraid that the ill odor would stay.

"It's done." She nodded happily and passed him a hand towel.

Lu Huaiyu looked at her and smiled. "Why do you trust me that much?"

Ning Li looked up at him. Her eyes were sparkling like stars in the night sky, seeming like embers igniting his heart.

"Mm-hmm."

The little ember ignited his heart and burned fiercely.

...

At 1:00 a.m in Yunding Fenghua, Lu Huaiyu woke up from his dream. His messy black hair covered his eyes and concealed his true emotions.

A long silence later, he got up with his eyes closed and went to the bathroom.

At 3:00 a.m., Cheng Xiyue was woken up by an abrupt call. When he saw the familiar number on his screen, he answered the phone with a bitter look. "Lu Huaiyu, are you out of your mind? It's 3 in the morning. Why are you calling me?!"

Lu Huaiyu was unperturbed. "Come down to the shooting range."

Cheng Xiyue widened his eyes as he thought he heard it wrongly. "You motherf\*cker! It's 3 in the morning and you are playing with guns?!"

Lu Huaiyu went silent for a moment before he said with an impatient tone, "I'll be more lenient with you about the agreement that we spoke about before. Come down here in 15 minutes."

Chapter 42: Group Leader

Cheng Xiyue showed some rare guts and hung up the phone.

"Just you wait!"

15 minutes?

He would be there even if he had to take a rocket!

...

At a private shooting range on the west side of the city, it was 3:00 a.m. and the place was empty. It was spacious but quiet.

Cheng Xiyue arrived at the shooting range in a hurry and spotted that tall figure at a first glance.

Bang!

His eyes twitched helplessly after looking around.

Lu Huaiyu must have arrived some time ago because there were two empty magazines beside him. There was only a single hole in the center of the shooting target.

The Lu family had been in stratocracy for three generations. Old Master Lu had even sent Lu Huaiyu to a military camp to practice his shooting, hence it was natural for him to have outstanding shooting skills.

However, ever since he came to Yunzhou to treat his condition, he had never been near a shooting range.

Cheng Xiyue walked up to him and sized up the man. "What's with the temper?"

Lu Huaiyu did not answer.

Cheng Xiyue clicked his tongue. "Are you still bothered by what happened earlier?"

He thought Ning Li had calmed Lu Huaiyu down, so why would the man be this angry at this hour?

“Little Ning Li broke Dai Li’s thumb easily. I didn’t expect a quiet girl to be so strong and swift.”

Cheng Xiyue got himself a gun. He believed that he should regard Li differently from now on.

“Besides, your kick must have at least broken two of his ribs. He would have to spend some time in the hospital. I really have to give it to you guys.”

He took aim at the target and pulled the trigger.

Bang!

It missed the bullseye.

Lu Huaiyu threw a quick glance at Cheng Xiyue’s target.

Cheng Xiyue awkwardly cleared his throat. “What are you looking at? I was woken up by some b\*stard in the middle of the night! The least I can do is clear my mind!”

Lu Huaiyu moved his gun a little and took aim at Cheng Xiyue’s target.

Bang!

Bullseye!

Cheng Xiyue was speechless. It seemed like this b\*stard had woken him up in the middle of the night just to insult him. Just as he wanted to argue or even lash out at Lu Huaiyu, when he thought of the promise, he swallowed his complaints back forcefully.

Life had been difficult, especially in recent years.



Lu Huaiyu fired all the remaining bullets in his gun. He finally felt a little better as the raging fire in him diminished.

“Has Dai Li met Ning Li before this?” Lu Huaiyu asked suddenly but sounded flat.

Cheng Xiyue found his question strange. “I don’t think so. I thought Little Ning Li is new in Yunzhou.”

The two of them should not have crossed paths.

Lu Huaiyu squinted his eyes. If Ning Li did not know Dai Li before this, why would the girl be so fierce towards the man?

The charming and clear eyes of hers appeared in his mind again, and he could see the complete trust in that determined gaze.

Lu Huaiyu grinned softly. She trusted him, but he did not trust himself.

“I want to know more about Dai Li.”

...

Ning Li had a rough weekend.

Ever since she returned from the Cheng family, Ye Ming and Su Yuan had been trying to find out about her relationship with Lu Huaiyu, but she simply brushed them off.

The next morning, when Ning Li opened her eyes, she reached out to her phone. She remembered Lu Huaiyu’s strange reaction from last night and was thinking whether or not she should send him a message.

Knock, knock.

Ning Li got up. She opened the door and saw a well-dressed Su Yuan.

Su Yuan said succinctly, "Get dressed. We are going to the hospital. The Dai family has always been our friend, and after what happened last night, it's not appropriate for things to continue like this. You and I are going to apologize to the Dai family."

Ning Li looked at him with a plain expression. "I didn't do anything wrong. Why must I apologize?"

Su Yuan raised her brow. "You didn't do anything wrong? Dai Li was just being friendly. Why did you react like that?"

It was originally a trivial matter, but now, the entire Yunzhou knew about it.

As a result, the Dai family was deeply embarrassed. They dared not offend Lu Huaiyu, so they shifted the blame to the Ye family.

Ning Li scoffed, curling her lips into a soft grin. "I can apologize to that guy, but I'll have to call Second Master Lu together. We both hit him, and since the Dai family isn't happy with us, we should go there by ourselves."

Su Yuan was shocked.

Dai Li was still alive because Lu Huaiyu had held back yesterday. If Lu Huaiyu were to apologize to the Dai family on behalf of the Ye family, it would be asking for trouble.

"What are you talking about? You are not the same as Lu Huaiyu."

Ning Li looked at Su Yuan and asked, "What if it was Ye Ci?"

"What?"

“What if it was Ye Ci who was harassed last night? Would you ask her to apologize to Dai Li?”

Su Yuan reacted poorly to Ning Li’s question. “What are you trying to say?”

If it was Ye Ci, none of this would have happened!

“I’m telling you, no more next time.”

Before Su Yuan could recover from her bitter expression, Ning Li added, “I can’t say for sure either. If there’s a next time, he might lose more than just a finger.” She sounded soft and flat as if she was a cold and merciless machine with an indescribable ruthlessness.

Su Yuan’s heart skipped a beat. She started to feel nervous for unknown reasons. “You—”

However, Ning Li shut the door once she was finished.

Just when Su Yuan wanted to knock on the door and call Ning Li to come out again, Ye Ci came up to Su Yuan and saw the tightly shut door.

“Mom, Sister Ning Li might not be in a good mood now. Why don’t I go with you?”

Su Yuan felt aggrieved. “This is her fault. What are you planning to do there?”

Ye Ci curled her hands around Su Yuan’s arm and tried to dissuade her. “We are family anyway, and I know Dai Li as well. He should understand if I talk to him.”

Su Yuan tapped her hand. “You are really an understanding child. I really have no idea how Ning Li became like this.”

Ye Ci chuckled. "We still have time ahead of us. Don't worry."

...

Ning Li did not send the message to Lu Huaiyu.

Since Gu Tinglan was in Yunzhou, it should not be a problem. Moreover, she seemed to have an unusual relationship with Lu Huaiyu, and it was not appropriate.

However, in order to keep her promise to Lu Huaiyu, she had to finish the test papers.

...

On Monday, even though Ning Li and Lu Huaiyu caused a scene at the Chengs', the news did not spread far.

Everything in school seemed to be normal.

The first class of the day was English.

The teacher, Kong Rou, used to study abroad. She was open-minded and had many ways of teaching. She would choose an English play to show the class every Monday and ask the students to get into a group of four to act out the play themselves. The students would have to perform the play the following week.

The play was not long—only 5 to 8 minutes—and the purpose was to train the students' speech apart from training them to work together as a team.

The short play was considered one of the entertaining activities throughout the boring and tense third-year curriculum, thus most of the students liked it.

After the class, Kong Rou got the name list and wanted to pick the next group. However, a name caught her attention.

“Ning Li.” She looked at the corner of the classroom. “Can you be the group leader for next week?”

The classroom went quiet as everyone turned to Ning Li.

Ning Li’s English textbook was on the table, but it was only on the first page.

Cheng Xiangxiang scoffed, “Ms. Kong, I don’t think it’s suitable. I heard people in Lincheng only start English lessons during middle school. If Ning Li can’t recite the lines, she’ll end up as a joke.”

Chapter 43: Did Her Best

Ning Li looked at Kong Rou. “Ms. Kong, my English is not that good. Why don’t you pick someone else?”

She found it useless and a waste of time.

Kong Rou, however, thought it was not a problem. After all, the more Ning Li claimed to be poor in English, the more she should practice.

Ning Li was still a new student in the school, and Kong Rou noticed the girl always spent time alone. This might be a great chance for her to mingle with the other classmates.

“It’s okay. No one comes into this world knowing everything. You just have to muster enough courage to try, am I right? Why don’t I get someone who is better at English to join you in the same group?”

Kong Rou then scanned the classroom.

A lot of the students looked away and tried to blend in with the background. There was nothing wrong, but Ning Li's English was poor. If the students were to join the same group as her, they would have to do the heavy lifting.

Time was precious to the third-year students, and no one wanted to waste their time with this.

Kong Rou then locked her gaze on someone.

"Pei Song?"

Pei Song had won the first prize in the National High School English Speaking competition back when he was just a first-year student, and he was the monitor of the class. He was the perfect candidate to guide Ning Li.

"You and Ren Qian can help Ning Li with next week's play."

The class went silent, but on second thought, it seemed like Pei Song was the best choice. Since Pei Song was chosen, Ren Qian, who was sitting next to him, would naturally be chosen as well. The inception of

Pei Song nodded plainly.

Ren Qian smiled and said, "Ms. Kong, don't worry! We will make sure that the play goes well!"

"And one more..."

Kong Rou continued to scan through the class. She spotted Ye Ci but eventually locked her attention on a petite and quiet girl with short hair sitting in the front row.

"He Xiaochen, is it okay for you to be in the same group with them?"

He Xiaochen was a regular in the top 10 in terms of academic results, especially English. She had never dropped out of the top 3 spots before.

Kong Rou had somehow assembled the strongest English team for Ning Li.

He Xiaochen pushed her glasses up and answered, "Yes, teacher."

Kong Rou was happy with her arrangement. She heard that Ning Li was great in other subjects such as Chemistry, Physics, Biolog, and so on. However, the English standards in Lincheng were falling behind, and she was afraid that Ning Li could not catch up.

Henceforth, she ought to help Ning Li by giving her ample chances to practice!

"Okay, that's it. Class dismissed."

...

Ning Li got the scripts from Kong Rou and distributed them to her classmates.

Lin Zhouyang scratched his head bitterly. "Why didn't I get such a strong team to help me last time?" He had performed last week and almost embarrassed his entire lineage.

Cheng Xiangxiang looked askance at Ning Li and said, "If you are only starting to learn English during middle school, maybe Ms. Kong will look out for you as well."

"Ning Li is good at Maths and Physics. She's smart, so she can pick this up quickly," Ren Qian said with a smile.

Cheng Xiangxiang tucked her hair behind her ear and scoffed. "I'm not sure about that. Lin Zhouyang's Maths was good, but in his last English test, he scored only half of his Maths score."

Lin Zhouyang was caught in the crossfire without even knowing why. While he was fine with Cheng Xiangxiang talking about Ning Li, why must she bring his embarrassing score into this?

Ren Qian shrugged. "Are you saying that you don't have faith in our Brother Pei? We still have He Xiaochen!"

The group still had Pei Song and He Xiaochen, both of whom were the smartest in the class. With them in the same group, they should be able to tutor Ning Li and get her up to speed.

He Xiaochen walked over when she heard her name being called.

"Ning Li, why don't we go through the script later during lunch?"

Ning Li was surprised. "Later?"

He Xiaochen was surprised by her reaction. "Are you not nervous at all?"

The play might be short, but the chosen script followed the original theatrical play in English. Furthermore, the words used were rather complex, and it would take a lot of time to understand and make use of them.

She blinked innocently at Ning Li, suddenly realizing something.

Ning Li might be having some difficulty. It was understandable though. He Xiaochen had never approached someone in Ning Li's situation, so such an awkward situation was expected.

He Xiaochen clenched her fists and consoled Ning Li, "Don't worry. We can take it step by step. I'm sure we can make it."

Ning Li replied uncertainly, "Okay..."



...

At lunchtime, Ning Li and her group went to the reading corner. There was almost no one walking around in this hour, so it was less distracting.

The group sat down in a circle with the scripts in their hands.

Ren Qian did the narration while Ning Li was given the role with the least lines.

He Xiaochen sat beside Ning Li and then shared her own script with the latter. "Ning Li, your role might have the least lines, but there are some words that are not within the syllabus. I've labeled the pronunciation for you. Why don't you use my script instead?"

Ning Li wanted to reject her, but when she saw the sparkles in He Xiaochen's eyes and the serious expression on her face, she swapped her script with He Xiaochen. She smiled. "Thank you so much."

He Xiaochen was caught off guard by Ning Li's gentle smile.

She realized that Ning Li was not as cold as the rumors said. More importantly, she was beautiful!

Witnessing Ning Li's beauty at such a close range proved to be impactful to He Xiaochen who stole a quick glance at her.

Meanwhile, Ning Li saw Pei Song looking at his script with his head down. His eyes were half-closed due to the angle which made him look extra handsome.

He Xiaochen put her hand on her chest and said, "You're welcome!"

'Holy mother of cow! So, this is how it feels to be with the good-looking kids in school! I'm in heaven!'

Ning Li saw the reaction on He Xiaochen's face and thought that He Xiaochen somehow looked...aroused?

He Xiaochen nervously calmed herself down and cleared her throat. She recovered to her serious self.

"Let's begin."

...

It was noon, and the sun was bright.

The campus was quiet except for the reading corner where a couple of students were reading scripts.

Ren Qian's English might not be as good as Pei Song or He Xiaochen's, but he was not too shabby either. He read through the narration smoothly, and it was then Pei Song's turn.

The young man's voice was calm and clear, making early autumn feel less stuffy as his voice was somehow refreshing.

Then, it was Ning Li's turn. She flipped to the next page and wanted to read out her first line.

When she saw the notes on the script, she was slightly stunned. The script was written in both English and Chinese, and on the left side, where the English text was, the words had been labeled neatly.

On top of the words was the intonation and below them was the pinyin.

The writing on the script was neat and beautiful. It was obviously He Xiaochen's.

Ning Li failed to keep up, thus drawing the others' attention.

He Xiaochen was a little surprised. “Ning Li?”

Could she still not pronounce it?

He Xiaochen had taken her time to label the words in both intonation and pinyin. No matter how poor Ning Li’s English was or how confusing the intonations were, she could have read it with the assistance of the pinyin.

Ning Li looked at He Xiaochen with a complicated gaze. “You’ve done a lot for me.”

He Xiaochen thought that Ning Li was nervous based on her complicated gaze. She patiently said, “It’s fine, Ning Li. Just read it. If we run into any problem, it’s best for us to find out earlier than later so that we can fix it!”

She added, “Learning is like swimming against the current. As long as you are willing to put in the effort, you can do it.”

She wanted Ning Li to know it was fine to make mistakes.

However, right before Ning Li could speak a word, Pei Song spoke. He read Ning Li’s lines for her. His pleasant voice read through the lines in English smoothly.

He Xiaochen softly nudged Ning Li’s arm. “Come on, Ning Li, read after him.”

Then, a thought popped into her mind.

“Why don’t we let the hand—I mean, Pei Song—read through the lines and you record it? Then, you can practice at home.”

Chapter 44: I’ll Do The Narration

Ning Li shook her head. “You guys don’t need to go through the hassle.”

Intrigued, He Xiaochen insisted, “It’s nothing! There are no more than 10 lines in your role. What do you think, Pei Song?”

It was a piece of cake for Pei Song, so he simply nodded.

Right before He Xiaochen could say a word, Ning Li read her lines. Her voice was clear and soothing, sounding pleasant to the ears.

The reading corner fell into silence for a moment, so only her pleasant voice was heard.

The others looked at Ning Li in surprise.

It was Ren Qian’s gasp that broke the silence.

“Damn...it’s so...good!” He then looked at Pei Song.

Pei Song used to live in the UK for two years when he was younger, so he could speak fluent British English. While the others wanted to learn, it was difficult to master the accent.

However, Ning Li’s pronunciation was perfect—the tone and the accent were almost the same as Pei Song’s.

It seemed like their new classmate had outstanding learning abilities! Smart people shone no matter where they were!

He Xiaochen was slightly stunned before her eyes glittered like diamonds.

“Ning Li! You were great!”

As expected, as long as Ning Li was willing to put in the hard work, she could do it!

“This is what speaking is about. As long as you are willing to open your mouth, there’s nothing hard about it!” He Xiaochen thought that she would have to put in extra effort to help Ning Li, but Ning Li surprised her. She was even more excited than before.

“Okay, we’ll let Pei Song read all the lines first, and you can read after him!”

He Xiaochen urged Ren Qian to continue with the narration.

Soon, it was Ning Li’s turn to read the second line.

Pei Song looked at her for a few seconds before reading her lines.

Ning Li read after Pei Song. She repeated it smoothly and swiftly while her accent was extremely similar as well, as if she was mimicking Pei Song’s lips.

There was actually a subtle difference in their accent though.

Pei Song knew that Ning Li was not just copying him. Even though both of them were speaking in a British accent, there was still a slight difference due to the difference in possibly the location where he had picked up the accent.

He paid attention to Ning Li’s accent and noticed that her accent was from...

“I give up. I’ve been together with Brother Pei for so long and still can’t get a thing from him. Ning Li just heard it once and she’s mastered it?!” Ren Qian sighed.

They spent around half an hour going through the script twice, and in the second round, Ning Li no longer needed any support to perfectly deliver the lines.

Ning Li glanced at her watch. "Let's call it a day now. We'll practice again on Wednesday afternoon."

The next part would be memorizing their lines and a simple rehearsal. Since there was still time until next Monday, they could take things slow.

"Huh? That's it?" He Xiaochen was disappointed when she heard that Ning Li wanted to stop.

Time had flown by before she knew it. Ning Li's words also implied that He Xiaochen would have to wait until Wednesday to closely admire her beauty.

"What's wrong? Is there a problem?" Ning Li asked.

He Xiaochen held her sadness back and shook her head. Then, she thought of something and said, "Oh, right, Ning Li. Are you preparing for the Physics competition? I've some questions about Physics. Can you help me some time?"

Ning Li nodded. "Sure."

He Xiaochen bolted up, determined to go to war with Physics today!

...

The first-class third-year students noticed that He Xiaochen had gotten close to Ning Li recently.

Not only would she study the script with Ning Li during lunchtime, break, or even during class, but she would also go to Ning Li frequently and stay with her for quite some time.

On Friday afternoon, while Ning Li and her group were rehearsing in the study corner for one last time, Ye Ci and her friends passed by.

“Isn’t that Ning Li and her group?”

Sun Huihui had a glance at the group and spotted the handsome and tall figure. Jealousy overflowed from her eyes. “The class monitor is really a responsible person, but I wonder how much had Ning Li studied.”

Ning Li’s English was so poor that it was beyond saving, and yet the English teacher had grouped her with the best student of the class to help her.

The others thought Ning Li was simply dragging her group down, especially Pei Song.

Looking at Ning Li, Ye Ci said softly, “Sister Ning Li comes from a complicated background. We shouldn’t blame her for that.”

Cheng Xiangxiang ridiculed, “Why? Are you jealous that she can be with Pei Song?”

Sun Huihui was embarrassed because Cheng Xiangxiang was right. Nonetheless, her temper got the better of her and she said, “N-no! I’m just thinking that it’s not good to drag others down. Aside from the class monitor, even He Xiaochen has spent a lot of time with Ning Li in the past week. I wonder how she managed to keep her patience up.”

“I know right. I saw Ning Li’s script had pinyin and intonation labels on every word,” Cheng Xiangxiang said with a scoff.

“Since her group mates are so caring, I’m sure she can perform well on Monday.”

...

Class was extra quiet during Friday night’s self-learning class.

Lin Zhouyang went to He Xiaochen with an English test paper. "Xiaochen, my good pal, can you teach me how to solve this comprehension passage?"

He Xiaochen was doing calculations of a Physics formula. When she heard Lin Zhouyang's request, she simply said, "Hold on. Let me finish this calculation."

Lin Zhouyang rested his foot on one of the table legs and said frivolously, "Come on, Xiaochen, have you been out of your mind recently? I thought you hated Physics."

He Xiaochen pushed her glasses up. "You don't understand."

"Of course, I do! You pretend to go to Ning Li every day, but," Lin Zhouyang acted mysteriously and whispered, "everyone knows that you went to her with a Physics book but are actually teaching her English!"

He Xiaochen looked up at Lin Zhouyang with a complicated expression.

"Are you guys...out of your mind?"

Lin Zhouyang giggled. "What's the matter? It's just a class play! Just let her embarrass herself! I did...Ahem...So, since everyone thinks that you did it, it's not necessary."

He Xiaochen thought about it for a while. She arranged her words and said, "I didn't really teach her English. I went to her because I want her to teach me Physics."

"I mean there are a lot of others who are good in Physics, not just her." Lin Zhouyang did not believe her.

He Xiaochen sighed. "Okay, since you've caught me red-handed, I'll come clean. I went to her because she's gorgeous."



Lin Zhouyang was silenced.

“I like Ning Li because she’s beautiful!”

Shocked, Lin Zhouyang faltered backward.

“He Xiaochen, are you insane? Why are you doing this to her? If you want beauty, you can go to Ye Ci—”

He Xiaochen continued to look at him with a complicated gaze. “People like us have our own standards, okay? Ye Ci? I’m not blind.”

...

A week flew by quickly.

Lu Huaiyu had been busy for the entire week, thus he barely had any contact with Ning Li. All he did was ask her about her studies.

Ning Li answered honestly, but that was it. She did not ask what he was doing either.

...

On Monday, during English class, Sun Huihui came into class with several cups of milk tea.

Behind her was Lin Zhouyang, who seemed to be in a hurry. He ran in and accidentally bumped into her arm.

Splash!

The milk teas fell onto the rostrum where the scripts that Ning Li had placed earlier were. They were planning to use the rostrum and the scripts for the play later.

Unfortunately, the scripts were soaked in milk tea, and the words were blurred out.

Ren Qian frowned and kicked Lin Zhouyang. “B\*stard Lin, are you blind?”

Lin Zhouyang said in a grievance, “I didn’t mean it...”

It was then that Kong Rou came into the class and saw the mess. She was slightly annoyed. “It’s okay. Ning Li, you can go make a few more copies at the office.”

Ning Li looked at the dripping rostrum and said, “Thank you, Ms. Kong, but that won’t be necessary. It’s only going to delay the class.”

“Not necessary? Does it mean...”

Chen Xiangxiang said, “Ms. Kong, printing a few papers won’t delay the class, but labeling the words with pinyin is tedious!”

Kong Rou frowned. “Even if you and your group had memorized the lines, there’s still the narration portion.”

Ning Li said calmly, “I’ll do the narration.”

Chapter 45: The Pinyin Are Labeled Nicely

The class went silent.

Kong Rou widened her eyes in shock. “The narration? Are you sure about that?”

It was worth noting that the narration had more lines than all three of the other roles combined, and because of the number of lines, the narrator was allowed to read directly from the script.

However, the script was ruined by the milk tea, so how could Ning Li take on the narration role?

Ren Qian was shocked. “Ning Li, you memorized the narration as well?”

Ning Li nodded. She said, “The lines of my roles aren’t that much, so while I was memorizing my lines, I memorized the narration as well.”

Ren Qian’s eyes twitched helplessly.

Did she memorize the narration while learning her own lines?

The number of words that she had to memorize would equal a long essay, yet she just simply memorized all of them?

The script was directly extracted from the original play, thus there were a lot of difficult new words. Even Ren Qian had to spend quite some effort going through it.

How did Ning Li memorize all of them within a week?

The class fell into dead silence.

Kong Rou, however, was rather surprised. “Are you sure?”

It seemed like picking Ning Li as the group leader was the right choice! She was responsible and dutiful!

Ning Li nodded. Besides having a photographic memory, He Xiaochen had accompanied her while reading the script many times throughout the week, so she would not forget it even if she wanted to.

“Okay, get ready then. We will start in a bit.”

Cheng Xiangxiang then plonked an English textbook on her table with a thud. She scoffed, “Lying without even considering your own capabilities? Don’t embarrass yourself if you can’t even spit out a single word later!”

She had clearly seen the pinyin and intonations labeled on Ning Li’s script.

How could Ning Li possibly remember the narration lines if she could not even pronounce the words properly?

Sun Huihui glanced at Pei Song a few times. She quickly tidied up her table and went to him with a blush. “Pei Song... I’m sorry.”

Pei Song reacted with his usual plain expression as if he was not bothered. “It’s fine.”

When Sun Huihui noticed that he was rather calm, she sighed a breath of relief.

Before she could say a word, Pei Song looked at her. The boy’s eyes were clear and sharp when he said, “I think you’d better have your milk tea sealed next time.”

Sun Huihui’s face then turned pale.

...

Ning Li and her group got into position for the play.

Ren Qian stood beside Kong Rou and was looking at the computer.

The computer was showing a soft copy of the script. Kong Rou told Ren Qian to stay close so that he could remind Ning Li if she had difficulties remembering the narration or her lines.

He Xiaochen was a little nervous at first, but she quickly calmed down when she saw Pei Song beside her. 'It's going to be fine. It's going to be fine. There's still someone capable in the group to support us!'

If Ning Li could not remember her lines, Pei Song could simply jump in and help her out.

While He Xiaochen was still thinking about how to save the play, a pleasant and sweet voice sounded.

Her voice was clear and loud. The narration was long and difficult to understand, yet it sounded smooth when she read it out.

Everyone was stunned.

Lin Zhouyang could not control himself and turned around to Cheng Xiangxiang. He whispered in shock, "Ning Li's pinyin is great! I also used pinyin myself, and it sounds nothing like this! I wonder why!"

Cheng Xiangxiang clenched her teeth in silence.

The look on Ye Ci's face also slowly faded.

Everyone could tell based on Ning Li's voice that she could really read.

Everyone knew that Lincheng's English education standard was behind Yunzhou's, so where did Ning Li learn her smooth and accurate accent?

Ning Li did not even stutter when she finished reading the long narration.

Then, Pei Song recited his lines. When he finished his part, Ning Li continued.

After reading the narration, Ning Li slightly lowered her voice and her tone sounded a little heavier and softer than before.

Everyone realized that this was originally her role.

Despite playing two parts, she was able to keep both roles clear and distinct from each other. She purposely used two different tones to read the lines so that everyone knew that she was playing two roles.

Everyone was astonished. Ning Li had really memorized the entire script!

Ren Qian looked at the computer. He listened and compared her lines to the script word for word. The more he listened, the more astonished he was. He even looked at Ning Li in awe a few times during the play.

Seven minutes went by in the blink of an eye.

Ning Li finally finished reading her last line, but the spacious classroom remained silent.

Ren Qian got up and pinched his face in awe.

Ning Li did not miss out on a single word!

Kong Rou's eyes were shining as she stared at Ning Li. Deeply impressed, she was the first to clap her hands.

She had been worried about Ning Li before this, but it seemed like her worries were useless. Why would there be rumors saying that her English was poor?

“Ning Li, have you ever joined an English-speaking competition?”

Her standard was way better than an average student's. Even if an average student went through tedious training, he or she might not even reach such accuracy.

Ning Li shook her head. “No, I have not.”

“Then, how did you practice speaking?” Kong Rou was curious.

Ning Li's memory was obviously better than everyone's, but not all students with a good memory could perform the play to this level of competence. Ning Li's performance caught her off guard.

Ning Li furrowed her brows and curled her lips into a faint grin. “It's nothing special. I'm just reading based on the pinyin. The pinyin are labeled nicely.”

The quiet class then burst into laughter.

“Hahaha!”

“She's awesome! Now I know I've been using pinyin incorrectly! Ning Li, can you teach us how to read like you?”

“Me too! I want to memorize the entire script as well!”

A lot of the students looked at Cheng Xiangxiang with a ridiculing gaze. Before the class, she had mocked Ning Li for her poor English and the fact that she had to rely on pinyin.

After the play, she realized she was the fool instead of Ning Li. She felt like she just got a huge slap on her face.

Ning Li might have relied on pinyin to recite her lines, but what about the narration?

Cheng Xiangxiang's mockery became a joke, a joke that was as funny as she was harsh. She blushed as if she was really slapped in the face. The embarrassment felt hot on her face.

She tried to defend herself and argue but could not come up with a valid argument since everyone saw Ning Li's performance.

Kong Rou also chuckled along. "See that? The performance of Ning Li's group will be the new standard of the play. Try to learn a thing or two from her. I don't expect you guys to be as good as her, but all of you should pay more attention to your own parts. Understand?"

The class groaned miserably at first but sighed a breath of relief after hearing what Kong Rou said.

Ning Li just did something beyond human capability; no one in class could possibly challenge her.

...

The English class carried on.

Ren Qian went back to his seat and sighed. "Brother Pei, I think my role was useless."

Pei Song did not say a word.

"If our new classmate was this good, why am I even in the group?"

It had been a while since Ren Qian felt so worthless. He turned around for a glance at Ning Li.

Ning Li sat down in her chair and slightly lowered her head. The sun shone through the window and granted a layer of gold around her, making her look extra calm and aloof.



It seemed like the play was nothing much to her.

“However...her accent, she really sounds like you, Brother Pei! If I didn’t know better, I would have assumed that you taught her word for word—”

#### Chapter 46: Who Are You Calling

Bang!

Pei Song tossed a book at Ren Qian.

“If you have the time, why don’t you use it to learn new vocabulary? You won’t have to stand aside and listen to people reading your narration next time.”

Ren Qian smiled bitterly. “Fine, I’ll learn, I’ll learn. What’s so hard about that? The thing is, I’m certain that many other of our classmates share the same thought as me.”

Pei Song was taking notes on his book and his hand froze when he heard Ren Qian.

...

“Lil Ci, what’s going on with Ning Li? I thought students in Lincheng had terrible English!”

Cheng Xiangxiang’s anger exploded right after the class ended. She had been holding back her temper for the entire class.

If she had known that Ning Li was proficient in English, she would not have mocked her in front of the class. Now, every word that she had uttered to Ning Li felt like a slap to her own face.

Ye Ci frowned. "I have no idea either. Sister Ning Li did not say a thing about that before—"

"She must be doing it on purpose!" Cheng Xiangxiang was furious with embarrassment. She turned around to the corner of the classroom where Ning Li was sitting.

The seat was empty though.

Mathematics class was next, but Ning Li had left. Although she was not in the class, the other students were talking about what happened earlier and the topic was gathering attention quickly.

Cheng Xiangxiang even heard her name being mentioned a few times. She knew her classmates were laughing at her although she was not part of those discussions.

Ye Ci was quiet for a moment before she said softly, "Speaking of Sister Ning Li, her accent is really similar to our class monitor, Pei Song's."

Cheng Xiangxiang was hit with an epiphany after hearing what Ye Ci said. "You're right! It's really similar!"

She glanced at Pei Song a few times and acted all suspicious.

"Our class monitor practiced the play with Ning Li for the whole week, but based on what I know, Pei Song isn't that kind of patient character. I think Ning Li must have secretly learned it from him."

Cheng Xiangxiang pouted. "Pei Song used to live in the UK, hence the accent. But what about Ning Li? What's her background? Did she learn the accent just because she can act cool in front of all of us?"

Ye Ci did not reply. She quietly tidied up the notes on her table and walked out of the classroom.

Suddenly, Cheng Xiangxiang saw the Physics textbook in Ye Ci's hands. She asked, "Lil Ci, are you going to the competitive Physics class?"

Ye Ci nodded.

“The teacher in charge asked me a few times before, but I said no. However, I found competitive Physics interesting lately, so since I have the time recently, I want to give it a try.”

Ye Ci had obtained a perfect score in her Physics paper during her second year, so the competitive Physics class sent her an invitation. However, because she was preparing for Huatsing Cup’s competition at the time, she had rejected it.

“I wonder if Mr. Zhou will let me join the class now,” she said with a slightly worried tone.

Cheng Xiangxiang said, “Of course, you can! But there’s one thing you need to know: if you really join the class, you will have to face Ning Li again.”

Ye Ci smiled. “Mr. Zhou likes her very much, so her Physics must be good. If we can study together, it would be great.”

...

At the Physics department in the teacher’s office, Zhou Fei was leaning on his chair and playing with his phone as usual while Ning Li was sitting opposite him, answering the mock paper.

Zhou Fei would glance at her at times, appearing all mysterious.

Ning Li finished calculating the question about the magnetic field and then looked at Zhou Fei.

“Mr. Zhou, is there something wrong?”

Ever since she sat down in front of him, the man had been peeking at her. He had never done that before, but he was acting strange today.

Zhou Fei waved his hand frivolously. "Nothing, nothing in particular. Continue."

Ning Li stared at him. Just when she was about to continue answering the paper, Zhou Fei finally gave in to his curiosity. He turned off his phone and leaned forward. After arranging his words in his mind, he asked, "I...um...it's not important, but I have something to ask you."

Ning Li nodded. "What is it?"

Zhou Fei cleared his throat. "You and, uh...Second...I mean Lu Huaiyu, are you guys close? I heard that the two of you went to the Cheng family's last week."

"Mr. Zhou, do you have a 2G network in your mind?" It had been a week since then, but he was only asking her now.

Zhou Fei smiled awkwardly and his face started to twitch. It was not his fault! He never really paid attention to this kind of thing, so he was not aware.

If he had not overheard people talking about it the other day, he might still have been in the dark. However, Ning Li's answer practically confirmed it for him.

"Can you tell me how you guys met?" Zhou Fei was intrigued.

Ning Li might be the first and only one who got special treatment from Lu Huaiyu. As a matter of fact, how she met Lu Huaiyu was not the point. She knew what Zhou Fei wanted to know.

Ning Li thought about it and said, "We—"

Knock, knock.

"Mr. Zhou." Ye Ci's voice came from the door.

Zhou Fei turned around and was rather surprised when he saw Ye Ci. “Ye Ci? Why are you here?”

Ye Ci came in. She saw Ning Li answering the mock paper in front of Zhou Fei and tightened her lips. Ning Li was probably the only one who got this special treatment from Zhou Fei.

“Mr. Zhou, I have something to talk to you about.” Ye Ci cleared her thoughts and asked with an anxious tone, “I...want to join the competitive Physics class. I wonder if I can still make it now.”

Surprised, Zhou Fei said, “Now? It’s a little too late.”

Students in the competitive Physics class had started their preparation for the competition a long time ago.

Since Ye Ci had no relevant experience in the past, Zhou Fei believed her sudden participation was not worth it.

Ning Li looked at the paper in front of her and frowned slightly.

It was exactly the same! In her past life, after the Huatsing Cup, Ye Ci had asked to join the competitive Physics class.

The only difference was that in her past life, Ye Ci had already gotten a guaranteed slot to Xijing University. Ye Ci joined the competitive Physics class just to compete with her and find a chance to ruin her completely.

Now, it was more likely that Ye Ci knew it was difficult for her to get into Xijing University with the entrance exam alone.

Ye Ci did not expect such a swift rejection from Zhou Fei, thus she was slightly caught off guard.

Zhou Fei said, “Moreover, with your current Physics score...”

“Mr. Zhou,” Ning Li said all of a sudden, “Ye Ci’s Physics has always been good. If she focuses on competitive Physics, there’s a high chance that she can win.”

Surprised, Zhou Fei looked at Ning Li. He had only been teaching Ye Ci’s class this year. Even though it was not that long, he already knew the student’s standards in Physics.

Ye Ci’s scores in combined science were average, but if she were to perform in a competition, she would be at a disadvantage. Could it be that Ye Ci had yet to show her full potential, like Ning Li?

Ye Ci never would have thought Ning Li would help her. Her eyes twitched for a second.

“If that’s the case...” Zhou Fei sat up straight. “Ye Ci. Let me ask you one more time. Are you sure you want to join the competitive Physics class?”

Ye Ci noticed the change of attitude in the man’s words. Was it because of what Ning Li said?

She felt uncomfortable but nodded nevertheless. “Mr. Zhou, I’ve thought this through.”

“The competition is time-consuming and will wear your mind down. If you’ve thought it through, I’m okay with it. If you run into any problems, you can ask Ning Li for help,” Zhou Fei concluded.

Ye Ci felt suffocated for a moment. “I...understand. Thank you, Mr. Zhou.”

Zhou Fei then returned to his phone while Ning Li returned to answering the paper.

Ye Ci lost her mood. She originally planned to find out more but could no longer stay after being given the cold shoulder. She quickly left the office.

After she left, Zhou Fei looked at Ning Li.

“Where were we just now?”

Then, he realized something. “Hold on! The 1,000 high-school Physics questions that you were doing, were they from Lu Huaiyu?”

Surprised, Ning Li asked, “Mr. Zhou, how did you know?”

As Zhou Fei clenched his teeth, he made a call with his phone. He wanted to ask Lu Huaiyu what he had done to make the man unhappy and why Lu Huaiyu would waste his student’s time

However, all he got was a flat line.

Lu Huaiyu had rejected his call.

Zhou Fei clenched his teeth tighter. “Ning Li, call Lu Huaiyu now.”

Ning Li was stunned for a second before she did as told.

After a short wait, the call got through.

“Lili?” The heavy and lazy drawl of a man came from the other side of the call.

Zhou Fei snatched the phone over and said with a scoff. “Second Master Lu, who are you calling Lili?!”

Chapter 47: I Want Everything You Give

Lu Huaiyu looked at his phone for a second before he raised a brow. “She’s in your office?”

Zhou Fei scoffed. “What else? You did it this time, Second Master Lu! You reject my call, but you answered Ning Li’s call almost instantly?!”

Even if Lu Huaiyu was biased towards Ning Li, this was too much!

Lu Huaiyu answered in his lazy voice, "My phone is sensitive towards unrelated people."

Zhou Fei was speechless. He had to repeatedly tell himself that he was talking to Lu Huaiyu on Ning Li's phone so that he would not smash the phone to pieces. He had to fight his anger to calm himself down.

He could never reason with Lu Huaiyu.

He switched his hand and continued, "Let's talk business. Did you get Ning Li's lousy papers for her?"

Lu Huaiyu went silent.

Zhou Fei took advantage of the silence and blasted Lu Huaiyu, "What is wrong with you? With Ning Li's score, she has no use for that garbage! You are just wasting her time and energy!

"Do you know Ning Li is joining the national Physics competition? I am hoping for her to get us a prize! Why must you drag her down!?"

He grabbed a chair and sat on it frivolously, seeming delighted. It was a rare chance for him to criticize Lu Huaiyu, so he would never let this go.

"Second Master Lu, even if you want to buy additional study materials for her, you must at least know her results. I don't think you are that close to Ning Li, so why are you simply stuffing her with things that she doesn't need?"

Zhou Fei sounded like he was Lu Huaiyu's master at the last part.

Ning Li suddenly felt vulnerable. Lu Huaiyu had taken the effort to buy her study materials, and yet Zhou Fei was mocking him and wrongly assuming that he had wasted her time.



To be honest, her results in her past life had always been average, so the books that Lu Huaiyu had gotten were actually suitable.

She actually planned to tell Lu Huaiyu about it, but she believed it would make her look pretentious. Since she did not get the chance to do so, the matter slipped her mind.

Who would have thought...

“Mr. Zhou, actually—”

Lu Huaiyu heard the voice of the girl through the phone. He smiled and said with his usual low tone, “I thought you were the one who picked those books.”

The delight on Zhou Fei’s face froze in an instant.

Ning Li heard what Lu Huaiyu said as well, and she instinctively looked at Zhou Fei.

Lu Huaiyu had asked for Zhou Fei’s opinion about what books to buy for Ning Li. Now she finally knew why Lu Huaiyu was so familiar with the high school Physics curriculum.

However, she believed that she should at least try to save the books from being called ‘garbage’ by Zhou Fei. “Mr. Zhou, I think the books are great.”

Zhou Fei was silenced.

‘Shut up! Let me think!’

Zhou Fei raised his voice at Lu Huaiyu, “Lu Huaiyu! Let’s get something clear! If you had said you were choosing books for Ning Li, I would never have let you take those books!”

Lu Huaiyu raised a brow. "Why should I tell you about her?"

Zhou Fei was silenced once more. He did not know how to continue the conversation with Lu Huaiyu.

Meanwhile, Lu Huaiyu loosened his collar. "Put her on the phone, I have something to ask her."

Ning Li cleared her throat and got the phone back from Zhou Fei. "Second brother."

The man's clear and lazy voice entered her ears. "You joined the competitive Physics class?"

Zhou Fei had made it clear enough for Lu Huaiyu. He did not have to ask Ning Li to know what she was doing.

Ning Li must be talented in Physics since Zhou Fei thought so highly of her. As for her previous results, it seemed like that was all part of her little trick.

Ning Li nodded. "Mm-hmm."

Lu Huaiyu went silent, actually acknowledging that he had been fooled by the girl's trick.

The conversation went silent, and Ning Li nervously curled her fingers.

For some reason, she believed that Lu Huaiyu was angry with her even though he was not in front of her or scolding her.

Zhou Fei noticed the silence which rejuvenated his shattered heart. He scoffed.

'It's rare to see that guy pay so much attention. This might be the only time, but he did this. Tsk, he was arrogant before, but this is a debt to society that he has to pay sooner or later!'

Ning Li blinked awkwardly and said, "Second brother, I did the exercise in the books."

"Hmm?" Lu Huaiyu grunted with his nasal voice. It was strong and pleasant with a hint of frivolity. "If you don't need the books, why did you do the exercise?"

Lu Huaiyu had actually gone through the materials before. If Ning Li was good enough to be in the competitive Physics class, those study materials were nothing to her.

Zhou Fei was right when he claimed that those books would only waste her time and energy.

"But you gave them to me." Her clear and pleasant voice went straight into Lu Huaiyu's ears, causing a symphony. The frustration that lingered in his heart disappeared.

Lu Huaiyu went silent for a long while before he smiled.

"You want it because it's from me?"

Ning Li grunted softly. She knew that Lu Huaiyu's time and thoughts were precious, so even though she had little use of those study materials, she felt great doing them.

There was one thing that she missed out on: it was the first time someone had given her books.

In her past life during her school days, her classmates had gone to all kinds of tuition classes and had all kinds of study materials.

She was poor back then, and her grandmother had no knowledge about studying. Plus, she believed the extra study materials would do her no good, so she barely cared about them.

At first, her grandmother would give her money to buy books for her studies. However, her grandmother noticed Ning Li was able to pass just nicely without even looking at the books, so she no longer insisted on her granddaughter getting extra study materials.

It was until she received the books from Lu Huaiyu that she realized the books felt different.

Lu Huaiyu heard chuckles through the phone.

“You don’t need to use the books anymore. If you have the time, it’s better for you to get some rest.”

Ning Li believed that Lu Huaiyu had a misunderstanding about her third year in high school.

“I do get enough sleep.”

“Great then.” Lu Huaiyu then thought of something. “Your classmates, those who were with you when I picked you up last time, they’re from the competitive Physics class as well?”

Some thoughts later, Ning Li answered, “No. Ren Qian is from the competitive Mathematics class.”

In other words, the other classmate would be in the same class as her.

“Is Zhou Fei teaching all your classes?”

“No, not really. I have to study extra on my own as well.”

While Zhou Fei was able to teach her, it required talent and gifts to win a competition.

Lu Huaiyu squinted his eyes. “He must be playing on his phone again.”

Ning Li was speechless. Lu Huaiyu was right if he wanted to put it that way.

“Okay, I got it.”

Lu Huaiyu looked at his watch. He gave Ning Li a few more pieces of advice and a reminder before he hung up.

Just when Zhou Fei wanted to find out more, the bell rang.

When Ning Li walked out of the office, she suddenly thought of something. “Does it mean that Lu Huaiyu came to school the other night just to deliver the books to me?”

...

At 7:30 p.m. in the competitive Physics class, the class was so quiet that the flipping of pages and writing on paper could be heard.

Zhou Fei was behind the rostrum, playing with his phone.

Suddenly, he received a message from Lu Huaiyu.

[Come. Let’s play one round.]

Zhou Fei’s eyes were sparkling.

[Hold on! I won’t lose this time!]

Five minutes later, Zhou Fei stared at the death of his character on-screen and his eyes twitched ceaselessly.

Lu Huaiyu sent him another message.

[Another game?]

Zhou Fei turned off his phone.

On the other hand, Ning Li was staring at her paper that she had not been answering for a while.

Pei Song looked at her. He then passed her his own paper.

“Let’s compare answers.”

Ning Li was stunned, and before she could take the paper, Zhou Fei bolted up from his seat. “Time for class! Lecture time!”

One of the male students said jokingly, “Mr. Zhou, aren’t you playing games today?”

Zhou Fei took a deep breath. “Games are not as fun as lecturing! Take out your papers! It’s time to study!”

## Chapter 48: I Really Like You

Ning Li shook her head at Pei Song who took his paper back. Surprisingly, he reacted calmly to the rejection.

The little interaction caught Ye Ci’s attention. Sitting two rows behind them, she looked at the boy beside her and asked softly, “Can we check the answers by ourselves after we finish answering them?”

The boy beside her wore a pair of thick glasses and was flipping through the pages while spinning his pen. He was slightly shocked when Ye Ci spoke to him. His fairly tanned face blushed as he nervously nodded at first but quickly shook his head.

“This paper was prepared by Mr. Zhou himself. It is used to test our level. Usually, he doesn’t allow us to check the answers among ourselves, but Brother Pei and Ning Li are different.”

The boy looked at the pair in front of him. "Mr. Zhou gave them special permission to opt out of the regular rests."

Ye Ci was surprised. "Why?"

"What do you mean 'why'? That's the difference between a genius and a peasant!" The boy looked jealous as he looked at Pei Song.

"You might not know it, but the two of them scored perfectly in the first three regular tests. After that, Mr. Zhou allowed them to skip the tests altogether."

He then waved the paper in his hand. "This kind of test is nothing to them."

Ye Ci looked down at her paper. She had mixed feelings after hearing what the boy said because she had three more questions to answer.

Her general science results might not be the best, but she always scored well throughout the entire third year. Her name was a regular among the top 10 students.

Despite her achievements, the paper felt difficult to her. Some questions required a lot of calculations while some required different combinations of formulas. There were even two questions that she barely understood.

Competitive Physics had a larger scale and depth in terms of curriculum. It was different from the normal general science paper. Struggling with a difficult time while answering the paper, she even felt a rare sense of defeat.

'Ning Li understood all this?'

"Ye Ci, tell us what you think about question No. 8," Zhou Fei called her name.

Ye Ci looked at her paper. It was the question that she had left blank. Embarrassment rose in her heart as the other students turned around to her.

Forced to bite the bullet, she said softly, "Mr. Zhou, I...haven't reached that question..."

Zhou Fei was rather surprised.

While she claimed that she had not reached that question, there was a high chance that she could not answer it. However, question No. 8 was a simple calculation question, so how could she not know how to answer it?

The boy beside Ye Ci noticed the nervousness on her face. He said, "Mr. Zhou, it's Ye Ci's first day here. Maybe she hasn't gotten used to the questions here."

After all, competitive classes progressed a lot faster than normal classes.

Zhou Fei grinned with his brows up. Although Ning Li had joined the class halfway as well, she did not have a problem adapting. The difference in standards was obvious.

"Okay then, Pei Song, you're up."

Pei Song got up and walked to the writing board. His figure looked slender in front of the writing board whereas his handwriting was beautiful and neat.

Ye Ci stared at the writing board carefully. She was able to get a general idea of the formula, but she could barely keep up.

Zhou Fei watched Pei Song write down the answer. He then said, "Your answer is okay, but a little tedious. Ning Li, would you mind showing us how you solve it?"

He was not worried about Ning Li using the same formula as Pei Song at all.



Ning Li nodded and walked to the writing board. She started to write from the left side. Her handwriting was neat and clear, and the calculations were smooth.

Compared to Pei Song's answer, her version was much more simplified.

The other students started to compare their answers to Ning Li's.

"Damn! She used that formula? Why didn't I think of it?"

"It has fewer steps but a lot more things to calculate. This might take more time than usual..."

"Shut up! Didn't you see? Ning Li's draft paper is clean! She must have calculated this in her heart!"

"You make it sound like you can solve it! Compared to the geniuses, we are all idiots! There's no glory in competing among ourselves!"

The students started to argue.

Ye Ci did not say a word as she just held her pen tightly in silence.

Ning Li did not stop there. She walked to the right as she continued writing.

Zhou Fei enjoyed watching her solutions on the board. "Ning Li, is this the third way to solve the question?"

The third way had even fewer steps, so she finished writing it faster. After the last stroke, Ning Li turned around and vaguely glanced over Ye Ci. "Yeah. I think this one is much more understandable."

Ye Ci's temples were twitching. She had a feeling that Ning Li was referring to her.

Pei Song carefully read through the two answers Ning Li provided. He nodded softly. Her answers were much more simplified compared to his own.

Zhou Fei turned around to the class. "Pei Song and Ning Li have written it clearly on the board. I think there's no need for me to explain, is there?"

The class went silent.

It was then that the boy beside Ye Ci raised his hand nervously. He said softly, "Mr. Zhou, I...don't understand."

"Huh?" Zhou Fei looked at the boy in surprise. He suddenly realized something and tapped his forehead. "Oh, right, I almost forgot you guys haven't learned L'Hospital's rule!"

The class went speechless.

Zhou Fei had studied in a junior class when he was younger, so he had never been tortured by the so-called high-school life before, thus he had no idea how the high-schoolers were suffering.

He had never experienced misery until he became a teacher and went through the third-year Physics textbook.

"Okay, we'll look at the first two answers then." Zhou Fei reacted rather casually. He explained Ning Li's formula and the reason behind her calculations.

He also told Ning Li to be careful, "Ning Li, try to write it simpler next time."

"I understand," she said.

...

At 9:00 p.m, the night self-learning class was over.

Ning Li packed her bag and left the classroom.

Ye Ci clenched her teeth in grievance for a moment before she decided to chase after Ning Li. "Sister Ning Li, I still can't figure out some questions. Can you teach me after we get home?"

Ning Li paused. She looked at Ye Ci and said, "If it's too hard for you, you can still drop out from the class."

The look on Ye Ci's face froze. Everyone knew that she had registered for the Physics competition. If she dropped out after one day in class, everyone would laugh at her.

She forced a smile on her face. "I think I can manage, but it's so sudden and I'm still having a hard time adapting to the pace. If you don't have the time...then I guess I won't disturb you, Sister Ning Li."

Ning Li did not actually deny Ye Ci's request. "I'll try my best."

Ye Ci felt aggrieved. Ning Li was making it sound like Ye Ci was begging for her mercy.

She then looked at her phone and her eyes sparkled for a moment. "Uncle Zhou said the third avenue is having a terrible traffic jam and that he will be late. Why don't we go wait for him on the other street? Let's go there together."

Ning Li softly grinned. "Sure."

...

At Yunding Fenghua, Lu Huaiyu got up and walked to the French windows in his room.

Against the dark sky outside, countless sparkling neon lights were shining.

A blurry image flashed in his mind, followed by the clear and strong voice of the girl ringing in his ears. Maybe because it was a dream, her voice felt extra sweet and alluring, as if it was trying to hook him in.

He rubbed the center of his brows.

“This girl...does she know that there are things that she cannot simply say?”

His phone suddenly buzzed. He had a glance at the caller ID and then answered it.

No one said a word from the other side. Only the whirring of wind could be heard. He frowned.

Then, an unfamiliar and dissolute voice sounded from afar.

“Ning Li, I really like you. Can you be my girlfriend?”

#### Chapter 49: Your Family Is Here For You

At Second Avenue, Ning Li and Ye Ci walked out of the campus together.

Ye Ci had said she wanted to buy a book, so the two of them took a detour into a rather secluded path.

All of a sudden, the two of them got held up.

Several young rascals were standing ahead of the girls. The leader of the group had red hair, and he was looking at Ning Li with a perverted gaze.

After receiving the news about a beautiful transfer student in Second High, he had been lingering in front of the school, especially after the night self-learning class.

Unfortunately, his wait was fruitless a few times because the driver of the Ye family picked Ning Li up every time, thus he did not have a chance to get close to her.

His wait finally returned fruitful this night, so he ought to seize the rare chance.

As the rumor went, Ning Li was so beautiful that even Ye Ci paled in comparison beside her.

Ning Li took a glance at the man with the red hair. The man was actually a familiar face. It was Meng Jiang of Seven High.

Meng Jiang was a well-known gangster in the area. He usually spent his time with young adults in society. He changed his girlfriends as fast as he changed clothes and was considered one of the most notorious gangsters of Seven High.

Nevertheless, Ning Li was calm as she said, "Not interested."

Meng Jiang giggled. "You don't know me well enough. I am actually a man of many skills, and you have to try them yourself to find out."

His followers laughed mischievously.

"That's right, Brother Meng is very skillful. You have to go deeper to understand him better!"

"Hey, babe, why don't you come with us? Brother Meng really likes you!"

"Yeah!"

Ye Ci was beside Ning Li as she asked cautiously, "What do you guys want?"

Meng Jiang glanced at her and scoffed, "It's none of your business. Shut up, will ya?"

Ye Ci heaved strongly. She took her phone out and said, "My driver is around here. If you dare to—"

Before she could dial the number, Meng Jiang strode up to her and snatched her phone away before smashing her phone against the wall.

Bang!

The phone was smashed into pieces.

"What are you doing, Ye Ci? I'm trying to ask Ning Li out. Why are you making calls?" Meng Jiang looked fierce and cold.

Shocked, Ye Ci's face started to turn pale.

Meng Jiang looked at Ning Li. "Ning Li, I'm being sincere. Come with me, and I shall spare her for her little mistake. What do you say?"

Ning Li looked at the man with an impatient gaze. "I said...I. Am. Not. Interested. Do you understand human language?"

She made it sound extra elementary, embarrassing Meng Jiang who lifted his chin slightly and grinned.

"People say that interest can be raised over time. Why don't you come with me and we can shorten the distance between us?"

Before Ning Li could argue, a scoff sounded from around the corner.

"I'll raise your \*ss!"

Meng Jiang and his boys looked in the direction of the voice and saw a familiar figure. The casual look on their faces turned serious.

“Wei Songze? Who are you calling \*ss?!”

Wei Songze grinned. “Who else do you think I’m calling \*ss?”

Meng Jiang glanced at him and then Ning Li. He grinned and sneered, “My, my. Is someone trying to be a hero here? Look who it is! Do you think you can be a hero here? In front of us?”

Ever since Wei Songze got first place in the Huatsing Cup, he had concentrated on his studies, which was rare for him.

Meng Jiang was confident that Wei Songze would not want to start a fight. After all, if anything unpleasant happened, Wei Songze would be rejected by Xijing University.

Wei Songze tossed his bag on the ground and shrugged his shoulders. “I think you can use some beating. It’s been a long time since I destroyed someone!”

He then walked over to Ning Li. “Sister Li, move aside. You don’t have to get your hands dirty.”

Ye Ci was shocked when she saw the little interaction between Ning Li and Wei Songze. ‘They know each other? Judging from his tone, they seem rather close.’

Ning Li shook her head. “Don’t you start a fight here.”

Wei Songze’s guaranteed admission to Xijing University was precious. There was no need for him to take the risk for her.

However, he frowned.

Ning Li calculated the time in her heart. It had been some time since Ye Ci and she left the school, and yet Zhou Hua did not even give them a call or a message.

Coincidentally, the timing was just right for Ning Li.

“What did you say just now? You want me to know you better and deeper? Am I right?” Ning Li asked Meng Jiang.

Meng Jiang’s eyes sparkled. “So, are you coming with me?”

Ning Li curled her lips into a grin. “Yeah”

She bit the collar of her school jersey and unzipped it singlehandedly. Then, she took it off and gave it to Wei Songze.

“Open your eyes and count,” she commanded.

Wei Songze had a look at her hand and already felt the pain. “Sister Li, you’d better go slow.”

Meng Jiang suddenly realized that something was wrong.

Ning Li took a step forward and grabbed Meng Jiang by the wrist. Immense pain radiated from his wrist as if something had clamped him down. Meng Jiang was terrified.

How could Ning Li be so strong?!

He tried to free himself, but Ning Li switched her feet and performed an over-the-back throw.

Meng Jiang’s vision started to spin, and before he knew it, he was flung to the ground.



Thud!

“Aaargh!”

Meng Jiang was furious, but before he could get up, Ning Li twisted his arm behind his back and stepped on his back. He groaned loudly.

“Brother Meng!”

The boys were shocked because they did not expect Ning Li to be so strong!

Meng Jiang clenched his teeth and bellowed, “What are you guys waiting for? Get her!”

Ning Li bent over slightly. She grabbed Meng Jiang’s hair and pulled his head up. Her force was so strong that Meng Jiang felt like his scalp was being ripped off.

Then, she pushed his head to the ground.

Bang!

Meng Jiang was silenced by the slam. His head started to buzz while his forehead was swollen. Some tiny but sharp stones even cut his face twice.

The boys were terrified.

Ning Li said softly, “If they take a single step, you will kowtow once. Do you understand me now?”

Blood filled Meng Jiang’s mouth. He tried to speak but he could not. All he could do was nod.

It was then that a police siren wailed behind them.

Wei Songze turned around for a glance. “D\*mn you, Meng Jiang! You called the cops?!”

Meng Jiang could not utter a word, but his boys tried to defend him.

“No, it wasn’t us!”

“If it’s not you guys, then who—”

Wei Songze suddenly realized the forgotten girl. He looked at Ye Ci.

Ye Ci opened her mouth nervously and said, “I was just worried that they would hurt Sister Ning Li!”

Ning Li freed Meng Jiang and got up.

“Then, let’s drop by the station.”

...

At the police station, the two groups of students stood in two neat lines.

A police officer in his 30s sized Meng Jiang up carefully. “Are you saying that the girl caused the swelling and the injury on your face?”

Meng Jiang was embarrassed as well, but it was not time for him to flaunt his ego. He clenched his teeth and said, “Yes! She hurt me on purpose! I have to go to the hospital later! I think I’m having a concussion! They can prove it! They are all witnesses!”

Wei Songze argued angrily, “Then, what about you harassing Sister Li? We still haven’t got to that!”

“Shut up!” The officer slammed the table. “You are all students, but all you kids know is to fight! What about school? Are you trying to get yourself in trouble?!”

The students went quiet.

He then looked at Ning Li. “You, especially you! Why did you beat the boy up? What is this all about? Call your parents and tell them to come over!”

Ning Li frowned.

Then, footsteps came into the station.

The door opened, and another man in a police uniform came in.

The officer bolted up right away. “Chief, why are you here?”

The man looked around and asked, “Who’s Ning Li?”

“That’s me,” Ning Li answered.

The chief officer sized her up and then sighed a breath of relief.

Thank goodness she was fine!

He waved attentively at Ning Li and said, “Come here. Your family is here for you.”

Chapter 50: You Didn’t Make The Call?

Family?

Ning Li was surprised.

Ye Ci's eyes sparkled in excitement. "Is it Mother? Is she here?"

The chief looked at Ye Ci and waved his hand. "It's not for you. Just sit down and wait."

Ye Ci was baffled. The only family member Ning Li had was her only mother, but it seemed like the 'family member' was not Su Yuan.

Ning Li walked to the exit.

The chief looked at the officer who was in charge of the questioning before he glanced at Ning Li with a nervous look. "How are you feeling? Did the officer give you a hard time?"

The officer noticed something was not right, so he quickly said, "No, sir, I only asked her a few questions!"

The officer started to look at Ning Li differently. The girl must be someone important for the station chief to have come down here himself.

Ning Li had a hunch who it might be. She followed the chief to the exit, but before she walked out, she pointed at Wei Songze and asked, "Can my friend come along?"

Wei Songze had a complicated family background, thus he would never call his family to bail him out.

The chief nodded. "Sure, bring him along."

Meng Jiang and his boys got riled up when Ning Li left. They wanted to be bailed too.

The officer frowned and bellowed, “Hey, you guys! What do you think you are doing? Sit down and shut up!”

With a scoff, he thought to himself, ‘These boys have no idea who they’ve crossed.’

No matter how fierce Meng Jiang and his boys were, they dared not cause trouble in the station, so they did as told.

Meng Jiang menacingly licked his lips and looked at Ye Ci. “Hey, what’s the matter? Your family bailed Ning Li out and left you in here?”

...

The moment Ning Li emerged from the lobby, she saw a familiar figure.

The man stood there casually, one of his hands in his pocket while his black hair looked a little messy.

He turned around when he heard the commotion behind him.

Ning Li locked eyes with the man. She stared right into his deep and affectionate eyes.

Wei Songze whispered behind Ning Li, “Sister Li, is he someone from your family? Why haven’t you spoken about him before?”

Family?

The word sounded odd to Ning Li’s ears, and for some reason, she felt an itch in her ears. She answered softly, “No, he isn’t.”

Lu Huaiyu raised his brows.

Confused, Wei Songze asked, “No? Then why is he here at this hour just to bail you out?”

Ning Li was speechless.

The chief went up to Lu Huaiyu attentively. “Second Master Lu, sorry for waiting.”

When the chief got the call from Lu Huaiyu, he was so scared that he started to question his life. Who could the girl be if someone this important was asking for her himself?

After the chief found out that one of his officers had brought the girl back, he almost had a heart attack. He was afraid that his officers would handle this poorly and offend the man before his eyes.

Lu Huaiyu smiled. “Sorry for your trouble, Chief Shao. Please forgive her. She’s still young and gets into trouble easily.”

“Second Master Lu, you are too kind. It’s no trouble at all! The boys started this first. Ning Li simply protected herself, so it was purely self-defense. Besides, this is my job.” The chief looked at Ning Li when he spoke to Lu Huaiyu. He had never heard of the Lu family having a daughter.

Ning Li walked closer. “Second brother, why are you here?”

Lu Huaiyu sized her up carefully. He did not answer the question. Instead, he asked her, “Are you hurt?”

She shook her head. “I’m fine.”

Lu Huaiyu slightly sighed a breath of relief. He then looked at Chief Shao. “They are all third-year high-schoolers, so it’s better to handle this quietly. What do you think, Chief Shao?”

Chief Shao was surprised.

Based on what he knew about Second Master Lu, this should not be happening. Someone close to him was bullied, yet he did not want to hold the person responsible? Instead, he wanted to silence the matter?

“Yes, I think so myself. Special situations require special measures. In short, only Meng Jiang got hurt, and judging from his attitude, he wasn’t hurt badly.” Chief Shao could tell that the boy was fine based on his earlier reaction and temper.

The school should be informed of the incident, but since Lu Huaiyu said that he wanted to settle things quietly, the school would not have to know about this.

Lu Huaiyu nodded. “Great. However, there’s one more thing—Meng Jiang and his boys committed attempted harassment of a minor which is something serious and despicable. I think they should be punished accordingly.

Chief Shao was confused.

The man had just said he wanted to settle this quietly, but in the blink of an eye, he wanted to hold Meng Jiang and his boys responsible.

It seemed like Lu Huaiyu only wanted to settle Ning Li’s actions quietly.

A slight hesitation later, Chief Shao said, “Second Master Lu, you are right but...Ning Li isn’t physically hurt, and there’s no surveillance in that alley. There’s not enough evidence, so I think it would be difficult to—”

Lu Huaiyu took his phone out. “Recording. I have the recording, which I believe can be used as evidence, right? Based on what I know, Meng Jiang and his boys are already grown-ups, so they can be held responsible.”

Chief Shao’s heart skipped a beat.

Lu Huaiyu had come prepared.

Meng Jiang was a regular in the station, but he was a cunning person and barely left evidence after he committed any kind of illegal acts. He was able to always get off the hook with a warning.

Unfortunately, he ran into Lu Huaiyu this time, so...

Chief Shao nodded. "Don't worry, Second Master Lu. We will handle this with the utmost attention."

...

It was already 10:00 p.m. after they came out of the station.

Lu Huaiyu stood beside the road like a monolith.

Wei Songze had yet to respond to the situation. He turned around and stared at the police station's entrance for quite a while. It was not his first time in the station, but it was his first time walking out of the station so easily and being treated like a respected guest.

Second Master Lu was something else!

He could not hold back his curiosity, so he asked, "Sister Li, why didn't you tell me you know someone so influential? He's awesome!"

Ning Li looked at Lu Huaiyu for a second. For some reason, she felt embarrassed and awkward. She never would have thought that Lu Huaiyu would bail her out like this.

"Second brother, thank you for going to all the trouble today."

When Lu Huaiyu looked at her, Ning Li felt a sense of guilt and instinctively looked away.



“Since when did you know how to fight?” Lu Huaiyu asked softly. He had heard what happened through the phone, and he was certain that it was not Ning Li’s first time being in a fight.

Ning Li tightened her lips. Fighting was not new to her, but when Lu Huaiyu questioned her, she felt like she had done something wrong.

Wei Songze could not help but join the conversation. “Come on, it’s fighting. We all learn how to fight by just getting down and dirty along the way, don’t we? Second Brother Lu, you don’t have to worry, Sister Li is very strong. Meng Jiang and her boys don’t even stand a chance—”

Ning Li glared at him fiercely. ‘Can you just keep your mouth shut?!’

Wei Songze nervously covered his mouth. ‘Oh, I can’t say that?’

Lu Huaiyu softly grunted. “Is that so?”

Ning Li felt a burning gaze sizing her up. She opened her mouth and wanted to explain, but Lu Huaiyu spoke first.

“Great then.”

She widened her eyes.

Lu Huaiyu looked at her and flicked her forehead softly. He smiled and said, “It’s better to beat people up than get beaten up, am I right? Though you can beat the bully faster the next time, then you won’t have to listen to those filthy insults.”

Ning Li’s heart skipped a beat, but she quickly realized something. “Second brother, how did you know—”

Lu Huaiyu looked at her. “You called me. Of course, I know what happened.”

A call?

Ning Li reached into her pocket and took her phone out. She realized a call had been made to Lu Huaiyu during the fight.

She must have accidentally dialed his number.

Lu Huaiyu slightly squinted his eyes. The atmosphere around him suddenly got colder. He grinned and leaned forward slightly. He asked with a lazy but somewhat dangerous voice, "Didn't you make the call?"