

Little Brat's 51

Chapter 51: Not Anyone Can Be In My Debt

Ning Li slightly raised her head. Her charming eyes were crystal clear. She subtly pocketed her phone and said calmly, "I made the call."

Lu Huaiyu looked at her with a soft grin. "Oh?"

For some reason, she felt the atmosphere got tenser.

She blinked. "They stopped us in the alley, and I was worried that they would take my phone, so I dialed your number in my pocket. I don't know whether you'd pick up or not, but after I got into the fight, I totally forgot about it."

Her explanation sounded reasonable, so Lu Huaiyu responded with silence.

Ning Li added, "When Ye Ci tried to call the police, Meng Jiang snatched her phone and smashed it against the wall. Am I right, Wei Songze?"

"Huh?"

Wei Songze was caught off guard because he did not expect Ning Li to cue him. He met her gaze and nervously nodded repeatedly. "Ah, right! That's right! I just got there and saw those b*stards smash Ye Ci's phone. Thank God that Sister Li was quick enough!"

Lu Huaiyu stood up straight. The strange pressure from the man instantly felt lesser.

Ning Li cleared her throat softly. She noticed that the duration of the call was around 20 minutes.

After some quick calculation, Lu Huaiyu had probably heard and learned about most of the confrontation through the call.

The call only ended when the police officers arrived at the scene. It was surprising that Lu Huaiyu had kept the phone call going for so long.

A car then arrived at the entrance of the police station.

A woman came down in a hurry. It was Su Yuan. Behind her was Zhou Hua, who was also anxious.

Zhou Hua had gone to pick Ye Ci and Ning Li up at Second High, but he was late because of the traffic. He then received a message from Ye Ci, saying that they had gone to buy some books, so he could just wait for them at the Third Avenue instead of the school entrance.

However, he did not see the girls after waiting for a while, then he realized that something was wrong.

Just when he was about to search for the girls, he received a call from Su Yuan, informing him that she had gotten a call from the police station.

He then went to pick up Su Yuan, and they headed to the police station together.

Su Yuan looked worried and nervous. Then, she suddenly saw Ning Li in front of the station.

“Ning Li? Why are you here? Where’s Lil Ci?” She had received a call from the station telling her that both her daughters were there.

Then, she noticed the young man beside Ning Li. It was Lu Huaiyu.

“Second Master Lu?” Her heart skipped a beat and she had a hunch about what was going on.

Ning Li said softly, “She’s still inside.”

“Then, why didn’t you bring her out together?” Su Yuan asked instinctively.

Ning Li frowned.

However, Su Yuan was vexed by her reaction. "You are the elder sister. How can you leave her alone in the station?!"

Before Ning Li could say a word, Lu Huaiyu said in a lazy tone, "Mrs. Ye, are you blaming me now?"

Su Yuan stuttered. "N-no, I don't mean it..."

Lu Huaiyu smiled, but his gaze was cold. "I understand you're worried about your daughter, but excuse me as I've never liked helping people that I am not familiar with."

Ever since Su Yuan became Mrs. Ye, she had never been shamed in public before. However, she dared not argue with Lu Huaiyu because both she and the Ye family could not compete with the Lu family.

She forced a stiff smile and simply mumbled something to him before she ran into the station.

A while later, she came out with Ye Ci.

Ye Ci was just a bystander in the whole incident. Furthermore, the Ye family was also a well-known family in Yunzhou, so the officers in the station did not give her a hard time.

Ye Ci clung to her mother's arm tightly when she came out. Her eyes were slightly red and she looked aggrieved.

Su Yuan consoled her as she walked her daughter out of the station. "You must be terrified today. It's fine, it's fine. Let's go home now."

Wei Songze scoffed rather loudly. "She's not the one who was threatened or harassed, so why is she terrified?"

Ye Ci looked down and bit her lip tightly.

Su Yuan was unhappy with the comment. “You are really—”

Then, she froze for a second. She frowned and sized Wei Songze up for a moment.

“Wei...Songze?”

She had not noticed him before, but now with a second glance, she realized that the boy was the one who had beaten Ye Ci in the Huatsing Cup and gotten first place.

She then looked at Ning Li. “Ning Li, do you know this boy?”

The coincidence was uncanny.

Ye Ci tugged at her mother’s sleeve. “Mom, he’s Sister Ning Li’s friend and he helped us just now.”

Su Yuan had only felt anger when she saw that Ye Ci had been left alone in the station. “He didn’t beat up Meng Jiang, did he? So, how did he help?”

Ye Ci was silenced.

Su Yuan knew Ning Li had beaten someone up, but after she saw Meng Jiang’s injuries, she realized that things were much worse than she thought.

Ning Li had almost pushed her classmate off the rails the last time, but fortunately, nothing bad had happened then.

This time...

If the school learned about this...

“Ning Li, why did you get yourself into—”

Wei Songze interrupted Su Yuan with a frivolous tone, “Auntie, if you really want to make it sound like that, I was not much help because Sister Li took care of the b*stards and protected your precious daughter, but you didn’t even thank her for that.”

The moment his words subsided, the atmosphere turned stiff and awkward.

Precious daughter. If Ye Ci was Su Yuan’s precious daughter, what about Ning Li?

Was Ning Li not a part of the family? She was the one with the blood relation!

Su Yuan only cared about the terrified Ye Ci but did not even ask Ning Li whether she was hurt. In turn, she was deeply embarrassed.

Ning Li, however, did not get the mockery in Wei Songze’s words. She looked at Lu Huaiyu. “Second Brother, how are you going back?” The debut release happened at N0v3lBiiin.

Since it was late, she was worried that it might affect his rest time.

Lu Huaiyu raised his chin slightly. “I’ll send you home first.”

Ning Li looked around and saw a car parked further away. The license plate was A Capital.

Ye Ci could not help but ask, “Sister Ning Li, are you not coming with us?”

Wei Songze rolled his eyes. "Second Brother Lu said that he will send Sister Li home. Didn't you hear him?"

Ye Ci flushed in embarrassment.

Ning Li nodded at Lu Huaiyu. "Thank you, Second Brother."

She did not plan to trouble him further, but since the man had come all the way to the station to bail her out, she might as well trouble him one last time for the night. Moreover, she really did not want to be in the same space with Ye Ci.

Ning Li, Lu Huaiyu, and Wei Songze walked towards the car with the special license plate.

Su Yuan stood there for a while with a long face.

Despite being her daughter, Ning Li would rather walk away with an outsider than go home with Su Yuan.

It was a huge slap to Su Yuan's face. She knew she was biased towards Ye Ci, but it could not be helped. Whenever she looked at Ning Li, the girl would remind her of her past, a past that she did not like or remember.

She could do nothing about it for now, thus she turned around and said to Ye Ci, "Let's go home."

...

Wei Songze's place was nearby, so he went home by himself.

Meanwhile, Ning Li got into Lu Huaiyu's car. The driver was a man in his 40s.

Lu Huaiyu introduced his driver. "Uncle Liang came to Yunzhou to deal with some matters. Since he will be here for two days or so, I brought him along."

"Hello, Uncle Liang. Sorry for your trouble," Ning Li greeted the driver.

Liang Heng, the driver, smiled. "It's nothing. It's just along the way."

Then, he looked into the rearview mirror and saw Su Yuan leaving with Ye Ci. He asked, "The other girl was also brought in together, wasn't she? Why didn't you help her, Second Master?"

Lu Huaiyu leaned against the seat and lifted his thin lips.

"Not everyone can be in my debt."

Chapter 52: Study Company

Lu Huaiyu appeared relaxed and lazy, but his unique aristocracy remained when he said those words.

Ning Li's heart raced for a moment.

Liang Heng was familiar with Lu Huaiyu's temper, so he was not surprised to learn the answer. He then looked at Ning Li through the rearview mirror and smiled brightly.

"I guess so."

Some people wanted to be in Lu Huaiyu's debt though he did not deem them worthy; some people did not want to be in his debt and yet they were.

A few days ago, Liang Heng heard that Lu Huaiyu started a fight at the Chengs' because of a girl. He did not expect to meet the girl so soon.

"Ning Li, you are in the third year at Second High, aren't you?"

"Yes, I am."

"How are your studies? Can you manage? Is it tiresome?"

"It's fine, I guess."

"Great. You should take your third year casually. If you run into problems in your studies, just ask around for help."

Ning Li giggled. "Thank you, Uncle Liang."

The man was not merely a temporary driver for Lu Huaiyu. Not only did he sound kind and generous, but his presence was also comforting. He must be someone important.

Lu Huaiyu shot a glance at Liang Heng.

"Uncle Liang, for your first meeting, you sure are asking Lili a lot. If I didn't know better, I might have thought that you are trying to do a background check on her."

Liang Heng laughed out loud. "Ning Li and I are having a comfortable conversation. You are the one acting like a strict parent."

It sounded wrong to Ning Li for some reason.

Before Lu Huaiyu could say a word though, Liang Heng asked, "Ning Li, have you thought about your choice of university?"

Lu Huaiyu's lips parted for a moment. His words were stuck in his throat for a moment before he swallowed them back. He had forgotten to ask Ning Li about that.

"Xijing University, I suppose," she replied.

Liang Heng was first surprised before he smiled. "Xijing University? That's great! It's the best tertiary education institution in the country!"

More importantly, Xijing University was located in the capital.

Lu Huaiyu turned to Ning Li. "Why would you want to get into Xijing University?"

There were two top universities in the country. One was located in the capital while the other was located in Haicheng.

If Ning Li chose Xijing University, it would mean that she chose to stay in the capital.

She smiled. "I think that's a good place to go to."

In her past life, she had wanted to get into Xijing University too.

However, after being reported for cheating in the Physics competition, she landed in a difficult situation. The fact that she could get into Xijing University without a problem given her results remained, but she missed her English paper at the end.

Dai Li had chosen to spring on her that day, and Meng Jiang had also been there. Even though she escaped, she had missed the exam for good.

She tried to retake the exam, but her files were taken away by a normal school in Yunzhou.

Su Yuan had told her back then that she could stay by her side, which was even better. It really did seem like a better choice for a while.

Ning Li had already suspected a lot of things during that time, but when Su Yuan held her hand and told her to stay, Ning Li had chosen to compromise.

The first wrong step would eventually result in a cascading failure. Now that the cards were reshuffled, she would not make the same mistake twice.

“Speaking of which, Second Master used to study in Xijing University. If you get into Xijing, he will be your senior!” Liang Heng said with a smile.

Lu Huaiyu had entered Xijing University when he was 16. He had finished and aced all his subjects within a year and graduated in advance.

If Liang Heng wanted to put it that way, he might be right.

Lu Huaiyu raised his brow and said in a lazy tone, “Then, you’d better work hard, junior.”

...

At the Ye residence, Su Yuan and Ye Ci were already home when Ning Li came back.

The entire family decided to keep quiet about the incident. It was not something glorious after all, thus no one wanted the news to get out.

On top of that, Ning Li going off with an outsider and leaving Ye Ci in the station alone made Su Yuan furious. She decided to give Ning Li the cold shoulder, thus she did not speak a word to her after she came back.

However, to Ning Li, that was great because she could finally enjoy peace and quiet.

After she cleaned up, changed into her pajamas, and got into bed, it was already midnight. She held her phone and checked her call history.

The call with Lu Huaiyu lasted for 27 minutes 31 seconds. She tried to recall the time when she had left school with Ning Li.

“Great.”

Lu Huaiyu must have heard everything, from what Meng Jiang said to the thuds she caused when she had thrown Meng Jiang on the ground.

Annoyed, Ning Li grabbed her hair. Her temples suddenly felt swollen.

How could she have been so careless with her phone back then?

She did not care how Ye Ci or Su Yuan looked at her or what they thought of her when she beat Meng Jiang up, but Lu Huaiyu was different.

Some thoughts later, she decided to send Lu Huaiyu a message.

[Second Brother, thank you for what you did today. Goodnight.]

“I hope I didn’t disturb him...”

Lu Huaiyu replied almost instantly.

[It’s nothing. Try to be careful with your school jersey next time. Your phone might get faulty if you mishandle it like that.]

Surprised, Ning Li soon thought of something.

“Second brother didn’t hang up the phone?! I must have accidentally hung up the phone when I took my jersey back!”

Ning Li felt extremely embarrassed, especially when she recalled her calm expression when she had admitted to Lu Huaiyu that she made the call.

Lu Huaiyu sent her a reply.

[Goodnight.]

At last, Ning Li covered her face in disappointment.

...

The next morning, Ning Li went to school as usual, but when she entered the class, she noticed something strange in the atmosphere.

The class usually studied quietly during the morning, but it was extremely lively at the moment.

The students were huddled in groups of three to five, talking about something excitedly.

Ning Li heard Meng Jiang’s name and she paused walking for a moment. When she walked past He Xiaochen, she asked, “What are you guys talking about?”

He Xiaochen looked at her, surprised that the most beautiful girl in the class would be interested in gossip. She said excitedly, “Ning Li! Did you know that Meng Jiang of Seven High got expelled?”

Ning Li was slightly startled. “Expelled?”

“Yeah. Seven High sent out the notice early in the morning. Meng Jiang and two of his lackeys were expelled together.”

Schools nowadays would usually approach a problematic student in a subtler way. The teacher responsible would normally try to talk to the student about a potential transfer or dropping out.

It was rare to see schools expelling students so brazenly.

Moreover, Meng Jiang was not the first school gangster and he had always gotten away scot-free.

This time, however...

“The announcement only stated that Meng Jiang severely disrupted the rules, so they were forced to expel him. But actually...” He Xiaochen signalled Ning Li to get closer. She whispered, “Actually, Meng Jiang was caught breaking the law, and I heard that he’s still in the lockup!”

“Breaking the law?”

“Yeah! He committed armed robbery and hurt someone badly before, and this time, someone snitched on him and told the police everything he had done. They’ve got solid evidence on him, so what else can Seven High do?”

The high school students had not stepped into society, so breaking the law was something that seemed like a foreign concept. When they heard about Meng Jiang, they were stirred. No wonder even He Xiaochen was talking about it.

He Xiaochen grunted. “Hmph! I knew that Meng Jiang is a bad egg! He got what he deserved!”

While the news spread like wildfire, nothing about Ning Li was mentioned. No one even knew that she had also been in the station because of the fight with Meng Jiang.

Ning Li nodded. “I guess you are right.”

...

Cheng Xiyue had just gone upstairs when he heard Lu Huaiyu talking on the phone. He was still some distance away but was able to hear Old Master Lu's firm voice through the phone.

"Dr. Gu said your body is fine now, so why aren't you back in the capital? You told me you were handling some proper matters. Was that a lie?"

Lu Huaiyu smiled. "How could I lie to you? It's true."

Just when Cheng Xiyue wanted to go back down and wait for him, he heard Lu Huaiyu saying something shameless, "I'm a study companion. Isn't that something proper?"

Chapter 53: Show Me Your Answers

Old Master Lu was confused. "Study...companion?"

Before he could ask further, Lu Huaiyu switched the topic, not wanting to talk about him being someone's companion for studying.

"Cheng Xiyue is back. I'll talk to you later. I'll go visit you and Grandmother when I have the time."

"You little—"

Lu Huaiyu hung up the phone and looked at Cheng Xiyue.

"It's fine that you hung up on your grandfather, but why did you use me as an excuse?" Cheng Xiyue might have to suffer Old Master Lu's wrath when he meets the man in the future.

Lu Huaiyu consoled him, "It's fine. It's not the first time anyway."

Cheng Xiyue was speechless. He wanted to curse out loud but did not know whether he should speak his mind. He sized Lu Huaiyu up carefully and thought of what he had called himself over the phone. He could not help but giggle.

“A study companion? How did you come up with that? Does Little Ning Li even know that you are accompanying her in her studies?”

Lu Huaiyu raised his brows. He stared at Cheng Xiyue with a slightly dangerous gaze.

In return, Cheng Xiyue lifted his chin arrogantly. “Sigh. I’m just sending Meng Jiang’s records to the station on your behalf. Don’t you turn your back on me now.”

Lu Huaiyu nodded. “Thank you.”

With his connection and methods, dealing with a small gangster like Meng Jiang was a piece of cake. However, he wanted to solve the matter as soon as possible, so he asked for Cheng Xiyue’s help to gather evidence for the police.

For the time being, Meng Jiang was held in police custody.

“The guy is quite young, but he’s committed a lot of crimes.” Cheng Xiyue sounded heavy as he recalled the records he had gone through earlier.

Although Meng Jiang came from a normal background, he was fierce when it came to fighting.

Cheng Xiyue learned that the guy had stopped Ning Li and harassed her. Fortunately, things had gotten under control. Otherwise...

“Oh, I found out that Meng Jiang had something to do with Dai Li.”

Lu Huaiyu frowned. He checked on Dai Li before and did not find any connections with Ning Li. Therefore, he did not expect Dai Li to be connected to Meng Jiang. "Is Dai Li a part of this?"

Cheng Xiyue shook his head. "Meng Jiang didn't snitch on him, so there's no evidence. It's going to be difficult if you want to press charges."

Lu Huaiyu went silent for a moment as his long fingers tapped on the table softly. "Yesterday, Ye Ci said she wanted to buy a book. That's why she brought Ning Li into that alley."

...

At Second High, Meng Jiang's expulsion stirred up quite the commotion in both Second High and Seven High.

He was notorious to start with, plus he was arrested because he had broken the law, so it was natural for him to become the hottest topic.

However, the incident whereby he had tried to stop Ning Li and harass her did not seem like it happened because no one was talking about it.

Ning Li returned to her seat after a quick chat with He Xiaochen. She sat down and took her books out, not seeming intrigued by the gossip at all.

Ye Ci looked at Ning Li a few times. The scene of Ning Li throwing Meng Jiang to the ground kept replaying in her mind. She heard that Ning Li used to get into fights back at Lincheng, but it was her first time seeing Ning Li beat someone up in person.

When Ning Li had grabbed Meng Jiang's hair and slammed his head to the ground, she had appeared extremely cold and ruthless.

The thought alone gave Ye Ci chills.

The class teacher, Geng Haifan, came in. He knocked on the board and said, "There's a monthly test coming up this Thursday and Friday. Are you guys ready?"

The class groaned in misery.

"On top of that, similar to the previous test, our class will rearrange the seating for the upcoming tests."

The higher one scored, the higher chance one would have to select his or her favorite seat. It was an old tradition in Second High's third year because it was considered a form of exciting entertainment to the students.

Lin Zhouyang sobbed and turned around. "Brother Pei, Brother Qian, you guys must keep a place for me behind you!"

It was hopeless for him to get a seat beside the two geniuses, but it might be less demanding to request a seat close to them.

Ren Qian kicked Lin Zhouyang's chair. "Go away! This is all up to you. Why does it have anything to do with us?"

Lin Zhouyang looked aggrieved. "I'm not good enough to call the shots!"

Due to his scores in English, he ranked last in the class. He was only able to stay in the first class because his other subjects were above average.

Ren Qian felt disgusted. "Go away! Shoo! Shoo!"

Everyone knew that Lin Zhouyang was trying to get a seat close to Ye Ci but was too embarrassed to say it, so he used the two geniuses as cover.

After all, the few of them always ranked close to each other in exams or tests.

Cheng Xiangxiang tapped Ye Ci's hand. "Lil Ci, why are you looking at Ning Li?"

Ye Ci recovered from her blank stare. "It's nothing. I'm just thinking about the monthly test. Sister Ning Li should be the last to enter the exam venue, right?"

The seating venue of the monthly test was arranged based on the previous monthly test ranking.

Ning Li was a transfer student, so she had never taken the previous monthly test. She had nothing in her records yet, so she would be placed in the last venue.

Cheng Xiangxiang pouted. "Who cares about her? No matter which venue she gets, she either knows how to answer the paper or not at all."

"Hey, can you help me with these few questions?"

Her result was considered below average in terms of the first class standards. She must be feeling immense pressure from all the competition.

Ye Ci thought about it and said, "Your foundation in Physics is rather weak, and you have a few days left. If you just study at the last minute, I don't think you can make it. Why don't you go to our class monitor and ask him to help you?"

Cheng Xiangxiang believed it was a good idea.

After class, she took her book to Pei Song. "Monitor, what do you think will be in the upcoming Physics paper? Can you give me some tips and tell me which part is important?"

Pei Song was doing exercises in his book. He looked up at Cheng Xiangxiang and glanced at the book in her hand. He simply said, "Everything is important."

Ren Qian swiftly looked down, trying his best to hold his laughter back.

Embarrassed, Cheng Xiangxiang said, “B-but, there should be some important parts and some less important parts, right? I am going to skip the difficult parts and focus on the easier ones—”

Pei Song slightly paused and said, “Difficult parts? Which one do you mean?”

Ren Qian cleared his throat and decided to join the conversation while holding his laughter back. “Cheng Xiangxiang, Brother Pei has finished studying high school physics by himself. How would he know which part is difficult?”

To a genius, everything seemed equally easy.

Embarrassed, Cheng Xiangxiang clenched her teeth and left.

Ye Ci went up to her and consoled her.

The bell rang and it was time for the next class—Mathematics.

As usual, Ning Li left through the back door.

Cheng Xiangxiang was furious. “Why should I be scared? There’re still Lin Zhouyang and Ning Li taking the last place!”

...

Thursday arrived in the blink of an eye.

The entire third-year building was rearranged into a big exam venue; with each venue housing 30 students.

Ning Li got her exam identification and went to the last venue on the west side of the building. There were already some students at the venue, and when she entered, they went quiet.

Ning Li turned a blind eye and walked to the last spot in the last row.

A while later, the seat to her left was pulled out.

A tall young man sat down at the small table that could barely contain his long legs.

Screech!

The young man leaned back in his chair.

“Hey, you,” the young man called out to Ning Li.

Ning Li turned around.

The young man had fairly tanned skin, but he looked sharp and rigid with a buzz cut. He smiled at Ning Li. “Can you lend me a pen?”

Ning Li scanned over his table and realized that he came in empty-handed, so she gave him a black ballpen.

“Thanks.” The young man took the pen and moved closer to Ning Li. “You are the new transfer student in first class, aren’t you? Can you show me your answers later?”

Chapter 54: Okay, I Guess

Ning Li did not say a word.

The invigilator then came over with the exam paper.

The young man raised his brows in delight. “I take that as a yes!”

...

The first exam paper was Literature.

The classroom was quiet except for the noises of pens scratching against paper.

Ning Li wrote her name and her candidate number. She swiftly calmed herself down before answering. There were a lot of things in the world that she could not control.

She could not choose where she was born or force Su Yuan to like her for whatever she did.

Fortunately, there was still something that she could control: the exam. With every question she answered and every word she wrote, her effort would be reflected in her score.

It was fair, thus it comforted her.

She soon went into her little trance and started answering the paper.

...

Duan Xu leaned his body as he looked at the exam paper. He spun his pen and would write a few words from time to time.

The long comprehension essay gave him a headache at first glance, but Literature was one of the few subjects that he understood. Therefore, he had to bite the bullet and answer the questions no matter what.

The last question quoted an ancient text, and he stared at it with furrowed brows for quite some time.

‘What does this even mean...?’

Screech!

The noise of a chair being pulled pierced his ears.

Ning Li, who was beside him, got up and walked to the rostrum with her paper.

Duan Xu widened his eyes in shock. He instinctively looked at the clock above the writing board. It had only been an hour since the exam started, but she was already done answering?

The others in the same classroom looked at her in shock.

Even the invigilator was shocked. “Are you sure you want to submit your paper now?”

Ning Li nodded.

The invigilator took her paper and went through it. Aside from her beautiful and neat writing, every question was answered. He looked at Ning Li and said, “Okay. Pack your things. You can leave now.”

Ning Li then walked out of the classroom.

Duan Xu gasped in shock as he watched her walk out.

‘So, is this how smart the geniuses are in the first class? No, I must stick closely to her for the next few papers!’

...

The Mathematics paper was next, and it was held in the afternoon.

Ning Li finished the paper faster than before. When she handed the paper in and walked out, it had only been 50 minutes since the exam began.

The third paper was General Science. She took the most time to answer this paper: 1 hour and 20 minutes.

The others in the classroom were shocked at first but soon got used to her amazing speed.

As for the last paper, English, Ning Li was the first to hand in the paper within an hour. Everyone else had gotten numb to her inhumane intelligence.

For the English paper, Duan Xu used the shortest time to answer all the questions. Most of the questions were multiple-choice questions, so all he needed to do was fill in the answer, even if he did not know it.

He went out shortly after Ning Li handed in the paper.

“Hey, genius! Wait, thank you!” Duan Xu strode to Ning Li to catch up to her right after he came out.

He was 190 cm tall, so his strides were longer than the average folk. Thus, he was able to move quickly.

Ning Li barely responded to his gratitude.

“You don’t need to.”

She had been answering her own papers throughout all the exams and had not uttered a single word with Duan Xu.

However, Duan Xu’s eagle eyes plus his rich experience, allowed him to ‘see’ the right answer, and copying was not that difficult.

Duan Xu did not mind the cold shoulder. He smiled brightly. "Why? This test is important to my life and my net worth. My dear genius, you do know that saving one man's life is more meritorious than building a seven-story pagoda, right? My dear genius, why don't I buy you lunch? Or—"

Ning Li glanced at him. "I just need you to shut up."

Duan Xu cleared his throat and zipped his mouth with his fingers.

Immediately, she walked the other way.

"Duan Xu!"

A boy came down from the stairs and tossed Duan Xu a basketball.

"Wanna have a game?"

Duan Xu was delighted. "Sure!"

"Hey! I have never seen you so happy before after a test! I thought your father said if you can't score at least 300 points, you won't get any more daily allowance." The guy sized Duan Xu up curiously. "Aren't you afraid of starving to death?"

Duan Xu had gotten the last place throughout the entire third year and got a serious scolding when he went home. He would not have been this nervous during the tests otherwise.

Duan Xu smiled. "What do you know? It's in the bag this time!"

He lifted his chin. "Look at that. A genius from the first class!"

The guy looked at where Duan Xu was pointing. He then asked in an unsure tone, "Is that...Ning Li? I thought she's bad at studying."

Duan Xu was shocked. “What?”

The guy sized Duan Xu up with a complicated look.

“Don’t you know about her? She was famous for being bad at studies back at Lincheng, and she always got into fi—I mean, she always skipped classes and even exams sometimes. She might not even pass the test, let alone be a genius.”

Duan Xu’s eyes twitched helplessly. “I thought she was in the first class?”

“What do you put in that head of yours? She’s the stepdaughter of the Ye family. How do you think she got in?”

“B-but I saw her finish writing her answers very quickly! You have no idea how fast she was! She was the first to leave the venue for every single paper—”

“You used to be first as well. How can you forget that?”

Duan Xu was speechless as complicated emotions ran through him. He had been beside Ning Li throughout all the papers, and he knew that she did not hand in a blank paper.

Most importantly, she looked like she really knew what she was writing.

Could she have simply written down all those answers?

The guy tapped Duan Xu’s shoulders out of pity. “May God help you, young man.”

...

The monthly test was soon over.

Usually, the third-year teachers would have to come back on weekends to mark all the papers so that the results could be announced on Monday.

On Monday, in the twelfth third-year class, Duan Xu sat in his seat with a bitter look. If he had known that Ning Li was unreliable, he would have tried to answer the paper by himself.

He could have relied on his luck to circle the correct answers rather than copying someone who was bad at her studies.

"The results for Mathematics are here!" A guy holding a stack of papers came into the class and the students gathered around him.

Duan Xu was uninterested. He could already see himself begging for bones on the street. Annoyed, he walked to the back door to grab his basketball, intending to leave.

"Hey! Duan Xu, your paper—holy sh*t!"

The guy actually wanted to mock Duan Xu with his paper, but when he saw the scores, his eyes widened in shock.

"Duan Xu, how did you do it?"

Not wanting to see the single-digit score beside his name, Duan Xu said in an annoyed tone, "With my own strength, of course. Is there a problem?"

The students got close to the guy with the papers and they looked strange when they saw Duan Xu's score.

"All the multiple questions are...correct! What kind of sorcery is this?!"

Thud!

Duan Xu's basketball fell to the floor.

...

In the first class of the third year, Lin Zhouyang came in, looking all mysterious.

"Sigh. I heard from the teachers that someone in our class failed the monthly test."

It was rare for someone to have failed the test in the first class.

"Failed? Who could it be?" someone asked curiously.

Cheng Xiangxiang looked at Ning Li and scoffed. "Who else could it be?"

Having transferred to Second High recently, there was a high chance that Ning Li was the one who had failed the test.

She must have been able to answer the Physics question the other day because she had solved it before. Nevertheless, the monthly test would bring out the true standard of a student.

He Xiaochen nervously looked at Ning Li. "Ning Li, how did you fare in the test?"

She was worried that Ning Li might have failed.

Ning Li paused for a moment and said, "Okay, I guess."

Chapter 55: Sh*t

“Hmph! How pretentious!” Cheng Xiangxiang jeered.

Lin Zhouyang scratched his head awkwardly. “Someone failing the test is not the most significant news. The biggest news is that someone scored full marks on the test!”

The moment the words escaped Lin Zhouyang’s mouth, the entire class groaned bitterly.

“Holy sh*t?! Someone got full marks on the test? It was crazy hard! What kind of mad person could’ve gotten a perfect score?”

“I was thinking about praying to God if I get 120 marks, and now someone got full marks?”

“Hey, Linny, who got the perfect score?”

“The teachers didn’t mention a name, but it’s definitely someone from our class. I think it’s either Qianzi or Brother Pei.”

Pei Song came over when the others were talking about him.

Someone asked, “Hey, monitor, are you the one who got full marks in Mathematics?”

Pei Song shook his head and barely reacted to the claims. “Not me.”

“Then, it must be Qianzi.”

Lin Zhouyang winked at Ren Qian who had just come in with a stack of papers.

“Hey, Qianzi, way to go! You’ve surpassed Brother Pei!”

Ren Qian put the stack of papers on the rostrum before looking at Lin Zhouyang and saying with a sincere tone, "I really can't handle your winking. I think you'd better find the one who actually got full marks."

Lin Zhouyang almost fell off his chair. "It's not you?"

If it was not Pei Song or Ren Qian, who else could it be?

The two of them had always gotten the highest scores in Mathematics in all of the third year.

"Come here and take your paper." Ren Qian waved the paper in his hand.

Lin Zhouyang went over nervously. When he saw the score on his paper, he instantly felt an intense heartache. "139? Tsk! I missed it this time!"

Ren Qian tossed the paper into his face. "There are only five people who scored 140 in Mathematics in all of the third year. Who are you whining to?"

As he pulled the paper off his face, Lin Zhouyang smiled delightedly. "Hehe, I know. I'm just playing along to show my positive side that strives for improvement!"

Ren Qian nodded. "Yup. It means you might not even get 70 marks in your English paper, so you have to work hard."

Lin Zhouyang felt like a bolt of lightning had struck him.

A few more guys got closer to him.

"He did it on purpose! Get him!"

Lin Zhouyang was drowned instantly by the guys, so only his hand was left flailing outside. "Qianzi! Save me! Brother Pei, help!"

Alas, the two of them turned a deaf ear to him.

Ren Qian continued giving out the papers.

Some were happy with their scores while some were not.

Cheng Xiangxiang went to Ye Ci and looked at her paper with jealousy. "135? Lil Ci, you did well this time!"

Ye Ci shook her head. "I can't even get to the top 10 in this subject with this score."

"Uh...You've been busy with the Huatsing Cup before this, so for you to get this is actually not bad! I don't think I can even score this high."

Chen Xiangxiang then looked at the rostrum. "Why hasn't he given out my paper?"

After Ren Qian finished giving back the test papers, he returned to his seat with his own and Pei Song's papers.

Ren Qian compared his paper to Pei Song's and sighed.

Pei Song had scored 148 while he got 147.

"Brother Pei, if you keep doing this well, I will feel embarrassed to tell others that I'm participating in the competitive Mathematics competition."

Other than Pei Song, there was also someone who had scored full marks.

Cheng Xiangxiang looked around and noticed everyone had gotten their papers except for her. She lost her patience and asked him, “Ren Qian, why didn’t I get my paper?”

Ren Qian looked at her. “Your paper is with Ms. Tan.”

Cheng Xiangxiang felt that it was odd. “What? Why didn’t you take it back for me?”

He shrugged. “Ms. Tan wanted to keep it, so I didn’t take it.”

A bad feeling rose in her heart. Tan Kailan would never keep a student’s paper without a reason. Everyone else had gotten their papers except for her.

More importantly, the one who had failed had yet to appear.

Could it be...

Cheng Xiangxiang bit her lip. She knew she had done poorly in the test, but she should not be in the last place.

“Ning Li, how much did you get?” She suddenly turned around to Ning Li.

Ning Li did not even look at her when he said, “I didn’t get my paper, so I don’t know.”

“You didn’t—” Cheng Xiangxiang then realized Ning Li also did not have her paper.

Why not?

It was then that Tan Kailan came in with her heels clicking against the floor. She looked a little more serious than usual.

Everyone went back to their own seats and the classroom became quiet.

“Has everyone gotten your papers? You know how much you’ve scored in the test.” Tan Kailan looked around. “Did everyone forget what I taught you? What is with the ridiculous scores?”

Slam!

She slammed the papers in her hand on the table.

“Does anyone have any idea how much lower the average score is compared to the last time?!”

Even though the test was a lot harder than before and there were only 5 students in the first class who scored more than 140, Tan Kailan had always been strict with the results.

Moreover, the first class was the culmination of the best students in the school, so the poor results really made her mad.

“Someone even failed in this class! Cheng Xiangxiang! Tell me, how did you fail your paper?!”

For a moment there, everyone gaped at Cheng Xiangxiang. She was the only one who had failed the paper.

Cheng Xiangxiang felt chills go down her back. Her cheeks blushed as if she was slapped. As endless embarrassment gushed to her head, she wished that there was a hole that she could bury her head in.

“Not only have you been slacking, but you even dragged the average score down! This is all your shortcoming!” Tan Kailan pointed at the paper fiercely. “I’ve taught you all the questions before. If you were a little bit more useful, you wouldn’t have failed!”

Cheng Xiangxiang lowered her head. Her eyes were teary and she bit her lip hard.

The atmosphere in the classroom felt tense.

The graduating classes under Tan Kailan's lead had always performed great in exams. Despite being the teacher responsible for excellent results, she was also known for her short temper. If a student made her unhappy, she would scold the student with the ugliest words, and she never held back.

The bell rang, breaking the silence in the classroom.

"Ms. Tan, I still haven't got my paper."

Everyone turned around to Ning Li.

She must have lost her mind. Why would she speak in such a sensitive moment? It was like pouring fuel into a burning fire!

Surprisingly, Tan Kailan did not lash out at her for interrupting. She frowned and adjusted her tone before saying, "Mr. Zhang Yuan took your paper."

Zhang Yuan was a Mathematics teacher responsible for the tenth, eleventh and twelfth classes.

Why would Ning Li's paper be with him?

A moment of silence later, someone gasped in shock.

"The one who got full marks...is Ning Li?!"

Cheng Xiangxiang turned around in disbelief.

Ye Ci's hand trembled strongly, and she accidentally ruined her paper with her pen.

Ning Li was not surprised as she slightly curled her lips. “As long as it’s not lost, I’m okay with it. Ms. Tan, please continue the lesson. I’ll excuse myself.”

Then, she turned a blind eye to Tan Kailan’s bitter expression and everyone’s astonishment and walked out from the back door with her bag.

...

In the twelfth class of the third years, Zhang Yuan raised the paper in front of the class.

“Can you see this? A perfect score! Who said that the paper was difficult? Ning Li just transferred here less than a month ago and got full marks! You guys had better study harder! Try to understand how she answered the questions!”

One of the male students poked Duan Xu with his elbow. He whispered, “Hey, I heard there are only two students who got full marks in the multiple-choice question. One of them is this genius Ning Li, and the other one is you, am I right? Are you stupid? Even if you were to copy, why did you copy everything?!”

Duan Xu hugged his head bitterly. “Stop it! How would I have known that she would get full marks?!”

He could barely concentrate throughout the lesson.

After the class, several guys walked past the corridor.

“Are you serious? There’s also a perfect score in general science?!”

Duan Xu’s head started to buzz.

Chapter 56: How Did You Get This Score?

Fwoosh!

Duan Xu bolted up and opened the window. He shouted at the boys who walked past his classroom, "Hey, mate! The person who got a perfect score in general science, do you have a name?"

The boy turned around. One of them knew Duan Xu and he ridiculed, "Yo, Duan Xu, is the sun rising from the west? Why do you even care about things like this?"

Duan Xu belonged to the school's basketball team and was considered Mr. Popular on the courts of Second High. However, everyone knew his results were bad, so bad that it was shocking.

Why would a guy like him care about who got a perfect score in general science?

Duan Xu was anxious. "Cut the crap. Just tell me who it is!"

The boys looked at each other curiously before one of them said with hesitation, "I...I actually had a glance at the computer in the teacher's office. I didn't catch the name, but I'm sure the person is from the first class. Oh, and I think there are two words in the name."

Two words?

A spark of hope was ignited in Duan Xu's heart. "Pei Song? Is it him? It's him, isn't it?"

The boy giggled. "Nope, it's not Pei Song. When I came out from the office, I heard another teacher saying that Pei Song missed a question about Chemistry, or else he would've gotten full marks. So, the one who got the perfect score must be someone else."

Duan Xu's heart sank and went cold.

...

"Is this even humanly possible?"

Lin Zhouyang came back to the classroom looking like a ghost.

He had gone out to buy a cup of milk tea, but he heard something that destroyed his confidence and hope.

He put the milk tea on Ye Ci's table as his mind remained blank.

Although Ye Ci thanked him, Lin Zhouyang did not hear a word. She looked at him curiously while she thought that something was not right with him.

"What's wrong?"

Lin Zhouyang gulped and said in a bitter tone, "Ye Ci, do you know that someone in our class got a perfect score in general science as well?"

Not only Ye Ci, but the entire class also fell into silence when he said that.

A perfect score in general science?

What did that even mean?

Ye Ci instinctively looked at Pei Song's seat which was empty. Pei Song must have gone to the teacher's office.

"Did our class monitor do that well in the monthly test?" Ye Ci said.

Lin Zhouyang rubbed his face in disappointment. "It's not Brother Pei."

Ye Ci's heart skipped a beat. Who else could have gotten a perfect score in general science other than Pei Song?

It was then Zhou Fei walked past the class with a stack of papers. He stood at the entrance and waved at Ning Li.

"Ning Li."

Ning Li got up and went over. "Mr. Zhou?"

Zhou Fei then gave her a book.

Ning Li had a glance at the cover and realized that it was a book that he had on his table. The book was about astrophysics and related theories. It was an original version written in English, thus it was quite rare to find it in a school.

When Zhou Fei was not playing with his phone, he would read it.

"Mr. Zhou, this—"

"I noticed you were interested in this book, and since you did well in the monthly test, I'll lend it to you." Zhou Fei lifted his chin with a grin.

Despite Ning Li being a little surprised, since Zhou Fei had come all the way to her class just to lend her the book, it would be inappropriate for her to reject his goodwill. She accepted the book with both hands and smiled softly, "Thank you, Mr. Zhou."

"You're welcome." Zhou Fei grinned as he raised his brows childishly.

"If you get a perfect score the next time, I'll reward you with even more prizes!"

The class plunged into dead silence. It was obvious by now. The only person who had gotten a perfect score was Ning Li.

Cheng Xiangxiang widened her eyes in disbelief as she instinctively grabbed Ye Ci's wrist. "She got...a perfect score...in general science?"

Ye Ci felt suffocated, as though something was lodged in her throat. An imaginary buzz sounded in her ears and silenced her completely.

Zhou Fei looked at his watch. "Okay, I still have to teach the second class. Off you go now."

He then left in a nonchalant manner.

Ning Li returned to her seat with the book.

Everyone in the class turned their heads along with her movements.

Moments later, Lin Zhouyang gasped in shock. "Holy moly!"

Ning Li had gotten at least 450 marks with both perfectly scored papers. Even if she simply answered the other two papers, she would still score above 700 marks.

Lin Zhouyang could not help but get closer to Ren Qian. "Qianzi, do you think Brother Pei can still get first place this time?"

Ren Qian leaned on his chair. "I can't say for sure."

He already had a hunch that Ning Li would do well in the monthly test, but the actual score still shocked him.

It was then that Pei Song came in with the results in his hand.

The class was in awe.

“Monitor, are those the results for English and Literature?”

Pei Song nodded. “These are just the results for our class. If you want to see the results for the entire third year, you will have to go down to the notice board.”

Lin Zhouyang ran over. “Let me see, let me see!”

Pei Song put the paper on the rostrum and took a step back. He then subtly glanced at the corner of the classroom.

Ning Li was reading the book Zhou Fei had given her, not seeming interested in knowing the results. She sat in her seat quietly as the sunlight shone through the window and shed a layer of glow on her, making her look like a living painting.

“Brother Pei, you got a perfect score for English!”

Lin Zhouyang was looking at the result paper, but he did not look at his own scores. Instead, he checked Pei Song’s scores. He was excited. If Pei Song got a perfect score in English, he would still stand a chance to get first place.

Pei Song simply said, “In the entire third year, three people got perfect scores.”

“What?” Ling Zhouyang was stunned. He looked at the next row and saw another 150 marks. He then quickly glanced through all of Pei Song’s results. The debut release happened at NOV3IBiin.

Literature: 139; Mathematics: 148; General science: 294; English: 150.

Total: 731.

The score was extremely high, but on top of his name, there was another row.

Literature: 137; Mathematics: 150; General science: 300; English: 150.

Total: 737.

Lin Zhouyang slowly moved his finger along the row and finally saw the name at the end.

Ning Li.

He gasped.

Pei Song had beaten Ning Li in Literature, but his total score was 6 marks lower than Ning Li's. The two of them would not just be the first and the second in class but in the entire third year.

The third would be Ren Qian with a total score of 711.

Ren Qian was 20 marks behind Pei Song who was only in second place. He was no match for Ning Li at all, who sat in first place.

The fourth place would be He Xiaochen with 709 marks. She was the third to have achieved a perfect score in English.

Only these four people had scored more than 700 marks throughout the entire third year.

Lin Zhouyang's eyes widened like golf balls. He was stunned for quite a while before recovering with a complicated look.

"Brother Pei, you got beaten?! This has got to be the first time in many years, right?"

Ren Qian tapped Lin Zhouyang at the back of his head. "What are you talking about?"

"I'm just speaking the truth!" Lin Zhouyang covered his head and looked aggrieved.

If it was not for Ning Li with her otherworldly scores, Pei Song would have still been first.

Ye Ci went over to look at her own results.

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That was the 17th place in the entire third year. 17th place was not a good place for her, not to mention there was Ning Li who outsprinted everyone and got first place.

Lin Zhouyang could not help but ask, "Ning Li, how did you get this score?"

...

In the teachers' office.

"You got a perfect score for all these sections: the multiple-choice questions for Mathematics and English, and filling in the blanks for general science."

Zhang Yuan pointed at the paper in his hand and raised his chin at Duan Xu who was standing in front of him.

"Tell me, how did you get this score?"

Chapter 57: Call Your Parents

As Duan Xu looked appalled, his eyes twitched. He carefully asked, “Mr. Zhang, you always tell me not to be afraid and do my best. I did my best and studied for the test recently. Look at how I’ve improved—”

Zhang Yuan laughed. “You studied? You studied how to copy people’s answers, am I right?”

Duan Xu’s face twitched helplessly. He still wanted to resist by arguing, “No, please—”

“During the monthly tests, you and Ning Li were in the same venue, and you sat beside her.” Zhang Yuan waved the paper in front of Duan Xu. “There are only two people in the entire third year who got all the answers right: you and Ning Li. Tell me, who copied whose answers?”

The answer to that question was obvious.

Ning Li had answered both the multiple-choice questions and essay questions perfectly whereas Duan Xu’s essays were all messy and poorly written. It seemed like he simply pieced the formulas together and still got it wrong.

Duan Xu looked down in guilt, admitting his mistake, “Mr. Zhang, I’m sorry. I won’t do it next time.”

Zhang Yuan grunted. “Ning Li will shift to the first exam venue in the next paper. You won’t get another chance!”

Duan Xu was speechless.

“The discipline instructor has been informed of this. You really are a problematic student. Call your parents to come over right now.”

Duan Xu shook his head nervously when he heard that. “Mr. Zhang, please, no!”

If his father found out about him cheating during the test, he would be dead!

“You started this by copying answers, and you are telling me you don’t want to be held responsible?”
Zhang Yuan raised his voice.

The twelfth class that he taught had the poorest average score in the entire third year with Duan Xu being the worst of them all.

He could forgive the boy if he had done badly in the test since the boy would still achieve something if he worked hard. However, he had cheated in the test, thus it was an issue of breaking the rules and principles.

All the third-year teachers knew that Duan Xu of the twelfth class had copied Ning Li’s answers and that he had not even tried to change some of them to make it less obvious.

Zhang Yuan had to fight his urge to crack open Duan Xu’s head and see what was inside!

Meanwhile, Duan Xu could already picture his father’s slap across his face. His eyes were twitching in fear.

“Mr. Zhang, you wouldn’t want to see me bleed to death in the office, right? I’ll write an apology essay, or the disciple instructor can give me a demerit for this, anything! Anything is better than calling my father here!”

Zhang Yuan rolled his eyes at Duan Xu. “Don’t worry. Your father is not the only one. Ning Li will have to call her parents as well.”

Duan Xu looked appalled.

...

“Call my parents?”

In the teacher's office, the Literature department, Ning Li reacted with a strange expression. "Mr. Geng, may I know what this is about?"

Geng Haifan hesitated for a second before he asked, "Do you happen to know Duan Xu?"

Ning Li immediately thought of the boy's long legs that could barely fit under the desk. She somehow had a hunch about what was going on. "Is it about the test?"

Geng Haifan hesitated again. "Other than Literature, Duan Xu's score was rather strange in the other three papers. His answers in all the multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blanks are the same as yours..."

Ning Li's eyes twitched. "All...the...same?"

Geng Haifan nodded.

"Second High has always taken priority in the integrity and honesty of our tests and exams. The school is looking into this incident, and they want you to call your parents over for a better investigation."

Ning Li was speechless.

Geng Haifan noticed her distressed reaction. He quickly consoled her, "Don't worry. You passed the test with flying colors, and it's obvious who cheated on the test. It's not your fault, but he copied your answers 100%, so the school has no choice but to..."

"...to check whether I helped him to cheat in the tests?" Ning Li finished Geng Haifan's sentence on his behalf.

Geng Haifan awkwardly cleared his throat. He disagreed with this method. In his opinion, Ning Li came from a harsh background, and after she got transferred to Second High, she did her best in her studies and stayed away from trouble. She certainly showed signs of improvement.

It was almost certain that Duan Xu had copied her answers and that she had nothing to do with this, but if the school wanted to make an example out of this incident, not even Geng Haifan could do anything about it.

Some thoughts later, Ning Li said, "They might be busy, but I'll cooperate with the investigation. I remember that all the venues have surveillance cameras, so why don't we bring the footage out and have a look?"

Geng Haifan was aware of Ning Li's unusual family background, so he did not force her to call her parents after her suggestion. He consoled her and told her that it would be fine before sending her back.

When Ning Li walked out of the office, she ran into Cheng Xiangxiang who was still holding the Mathematics paper with a bitter look on her face. She must have just come out from the Mathematics teacher's office.

She sensed Ning Li's gaze at her paper which made her angry.

"What are you looking at?"

"Nothing. There's actually nothing to see," Ning Li simply replied.

Cheng Xiangxiang was furious. "Don't get ahead of yourself just because you scored so well this time!"

Ning Li scoffed. "If I can't feel happy about getting a good score, should I celebrate when I fail?"

"YOU!" Cheng Xiangxiang clenched her teeth but then, she scoffed and grinned at Ning Li. "Well, if it's your own results, of course, you can celebrate!"

Ning Li squinted her eyes.

Cheng Xiangxiang must have gotten the news, but the information did not seem complete.

Nevertheless, Ning Li shrugged and did not want to argue. “Whatever.”

She then left.

Cheng Xiangxiang viewed Ning Li’s frivolous answer as an act of guilt. She clutched her Mathematics paper tightly.

...

The news about a genius from the first class of the third year scoring perfectly in the test got out fast.

When the results were posted on the notice board, the students thronged there on pilgrimage batch after batch. Countless students were deeply shaken by the total score on the first row.

“737? Is that even humanly possible?”

“She only lost 13 marks in Literature? I’m done! I’m a piece of a sh*t!”

“Brother Pei has occupied the first place for so many years, but this transfer student beat him in her first test. This is huge! I feel bad for Brother Pei!”

“Wake up! Brother Pei scored more than 730 marks, so why should we feel bad for him? If you have the time for mercy, you might as well use it to study more!”

“No wonder she’s so audacious! She even argued with the headteacher! I heard that many Mathematics teachers used Ning Li’s paper as an example to lecture their classes, but not the headteacher. I guess that’s what happens when you get a perfect score!”

The discussion among the students was heated.

Suddenly, a sharp and irritating voice blurted out, “Do you guys really think she got such high scores on her own?”

The voice silenced most of the students, and everyone, including Ye Ci, turned to the owner of the voice.

She frowned and asked, “Xiangxiang, what do you mean?”

Cheng Xiangxiang crossed her arms and looked at the notice board with contempt and mockery. “I heard that someone cheated on the test, and the school is serious about the punishment. Ning Li was called to the office because of it. What do you guys think will happen?”

Confused, everyone looked at each other.

“Our class teacher even told Ning Li to call her parents. Lil Ci, why don’t you call home and ask your mom?” she continued.

The students then looked at Ye Ci.

Ye Ci did not say a word. Instead, she pulled Cheng Xiangxiang away. The two of them walked into a quiet corner, and Ye Ci took her phone out for a call.

The call got through after a few seconds, and Su Yuan’s voice sounded from the other end.

“Lil Ci?”

“Mom, did Sister Ning Li call you?” Ye Ci asked.

Surprised, Su Yuan asked, “No. What’s wrong?”

Ye Ci tightened her lips. “The school is investigating a cheating incident, and Sister Ning Li seems to be involved.”

Chapter 58: The First Place Will Get A Prize

At the dean's office, Ning Li followed Geng Haifan, and when they reached the entrance, she heard someone bellowing inside.

"You little rascal! Do you think you are all grown up now? How can you cheat in your exam?! Come here!"

Ning Li was shocked by the voice.

Geng Haifan quickly went in.

A buff middle-aged man was pointing at the boy hiding behind the desk, and it was apparent how furious he was.

Duan Xu said in grievance, "Dad, I'm sorry! Please just give me a chance!"

"I'll give your—" Considering it was the teacher's office and there were still teachers around, Duan Dajiang forcefully swallowed the words back. "You said you were sorry? But this is how you apologize?"

Duan Xu stayed quiet, not daring to walk over.

His father's slap was so terrifying that no normal man could take it!

Zhang Yuan had spoken to Duan Dajiang before, so he knew how rough the man could be.

"Mr. Duan, please calm down! What happened has already happened. Scolding and punishing your child doesn't have much meaning now, does it? The most important thing now is to find out the truth. As long as the boy can correct his mistake, everything can be discussed."

Then, Zhang Yuan saw Geng Haifan and Ning Li coming into the office. He quickly waved at his colleague.

“Is Ning Li here?”

Duan Dajiang turned around and saw a beautiful and reserved girl walking in.

A slight surprise later, he turned around to Duan Xu. “You? You copied her answers during the test?”

Everyone else was silenced. It was not necessary for him to be this straightforward.

“My family is busy, but I’ll be responsible for what I did,” Ning Li said.

Sun Quan nodded. “It’s okay.”

They believed Ning Li more than Duan Xu. Telling her to call her parents was just a formality. The key to this incident was Duan Xu.

“Since everyone is here, let’s have a look at the surveillance footage.”

Suan Quan then clicked and typed on the computer to bring up the footage of both exam days.

Duan Xu cautiously walked over. ‘There are so many people here. I think Dad won’t beat me in public...right?’

With that in mind, Duan Dajiang pouted his lips as a signal and asked softly, “Do you know her?”

He did not sound angry at all. Instead, he sounded curious as if he was a paparazzi asking for a scoop.

Duan Xu was curious. “Uh, not really?”

"If you don't know her, why would she let you copy her answers?" Duan Dajiang sounded like he had seen through the entire incident.

Duan Xu had a feeling that something was not right.

"Wait, Dad—"

Duan Dajiang tapped his son's shoulder, and his eyes showed rare praise. "You good-for-nothing rascal, you can copy answers, yet your results are still so poor, but I have to give it to you for your taste. Remember, you are in your third year, so you can't be distracted!"

Duan Xu reacted to his father's words with a poker face. "Dad, what are you going on about?"

His father raised his head and said, "Look at it yourself."

Since there was nothing wrong with the Literature paper, the group started with the footage of the Mathematics paper.

The footage clearly showed that Ning Li had sat down quietly after the invigilator distributed the paper. She did not even move her head.

As for Duan Xu, he peeked at her countless times. His movements were subtle and somewhat natural, thus it was difficult to determine whether he was cheating or not.

Every time Ning Li wrote an answer, he would follow and write the same answer on his paper.

It was obvious that Ning Li had nothing to do with this; it was Duan Xu peeking at Ning Li's answers.

Sun Quan sighed and said, "The school actually watched the footage before, and we are certain that Ning Li did not offer to cheat. As for Duan Xu, this is solid evidence that he cheated during the test. Since this is his first time and the third year in high school is a special period, after some serious discussion, we have decided to give him a warning and a demerit for this time. He will also have to make up for his

mistakes in front of the whole school. If he promises to not do this again and show improvement in the future, we can erase this demerit. However, if he commits this again—”

“I swear I won’t do it again! I swear!” Duan Xu nervously said.

“What do you think, Mr. Duan?” Sun Quan asked.

Duan Dajiang regained his senses. He glanced at Ning Li and sighed subtly. “I’m sorry that my son has given everyone so much trouble. This is his mistake, so I have no problem with any punishments from the school—”

Knock, knock.

The door opened as Su Yuan came in in a hurry.

“I’m sorry for being late.”

She quickly scanned around and saw the computer playing the surveillance footage of the exam venue. She then looked at the teacher and Duan Xu’s father. It was obvious what had happened.

Ning Li flinched slightly at her mother’s arrival. She did not call Su Yuan, but it seemed like someone had done her the favor.

Sun Quan shook his head. “It’s fine now. We have gotten to the bottom of this incident. The school has also reached an agreement. Mrs. Ye, you don’t have to worry—”

Su Yuan walked over and said after a deep breath, “Ning Li has caused a lot of problems for the school ever since she transferred here. If it was her mistake this time, I’ll accept whatever punishment the school has for her.”

She did not plan to use the Ye family's connection to protect Ning Li because she deemed her a shameful daughter. Moreover, Ning Li had always been rebellious and she could use this opportunity to teach the girl a lesson or maybe even tone down her stubbornness.

To her surprise, the office fell into silence after hearing what she said.

Sun Quan asked, "Mrs. Ye, what do you mean?"

Su Yuan was slightly stunned. "She cheated on her tests, didn't she? I know Second High always values integrity and honesty, so...

Her voice grew soft when she sensed the unusual gaze from everyone. "What's wrong? What's the matter?"

Duan Dajiang walked up to her and said sincerely, "Are you Ning Li's mother? I am sorry. My little rascal copied Ning Li's answer during the test and gave you trouble. I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

Su Yuan was stunned. "You said your son copied Ning Li's answer? But her score—"

Geng Haifan realized something when he heard Su Yuan mention Ning Li's score. He said softly, "We have just gone through the surveillance footage, and it's been confirmed that Ning Li did not cheat. She achieved the score by herself and did not help anyone else at all. I wonder where you heard this news from.

"Ning Li scored 737 marks and got first place in all of the third year. Who do you think she could possibly copy the answers from?"

Su Yuan was silenced. It was at that moment that she realized the embarrassing mistake she had committed.

The atmosphere was so stiff that it was suffocating.

Geng Haifan had taught Ye Ci for two years now and had spoken to Su Yuan a few times before.

The woman was not like this in front of Ye Ci, so why would she treat her own daughter so differently? How could she simply assume Ning Li's mistake and accuse her without even verifying it?

"If there's nothing else, I'll go back to class now," Ning Li suddenly said.

Geng Haifan looked at her. The girl looked calm as if she was not part of this at all. He sighed and said, "Okay, you can go back now."

Ning Li walked out. When she walked past Su Yuan, she paused and looked at her mother. "You told me to study hard, but when I got first place, you don't seem pleased at all."

As Su Yuan was silenced in embarrassment, Ning Li grinned softly and walked out.

It was already evening. The setting sun was glorious while the evening breeze was comfortable.

Ning Li sighed. It was then that her phone in her pocket buzzed. She took it out and saw Lu Huaiyu's message.

[How's your result of the monthly test?]

Ning Li took a picture of her result and sent it to him, but she did not get a reply after that.

She was strangely disappointed but had no idea why. Finally, she put her phone away and returned to class.

At 6:00 p.m., she wanted to have dinner at the cafeteria, but then she got a call from Lu Huaiyu. Some hesitation later, she answered it.

"Hello, Second Brother?"

“Come down.”

“Are you at school?”

Ning Li strode down the corridor and saw a familiar figure.

Lu Huaiyu looked up to her with a humorous gaze.

“Don’t you know that first place gets a prize?”

Chapter 59: Which One Do You Like Most

The lazy and pleasant voice echoed and made her ears ring.

Ning Li’s heart raced for a moment. She smiled. “Is that so?”

Lu Huaiyu looked at his watch. “I’ve applied leave for you tonight.”

She asked in surprise, “Are we going out?”

Lu Huaiyu nodded softly and said with a smile, “Don’t worry. It won’t take long.”

She turned around for a quick glance. “But I have competitive Physics class tonight...”

“It’s just one period of class. It won’t affect your progress. Zhou Fei can give you extra tuition after this,” he said frivolously.

Ning Li went quiet for a moment.

“Okay, hold on for a moment.” The debut release happened at N0v3lBiiin.

Then, she hung up the phone and returned to the classroom to get her bag.

He Xiaochen was reading in her seat while waiting for rush hour at the cafeteria to pass. When she saw Ning Li coming back in, she could not help but ask, “Ning Li, why are you packing?”

“I have to leave early today,” Ning Li replied.

He Xiaochen was shocked. “Aren’t you coming to competitive Physics tonight?”

Ning Li nodded.

Pei Song looked at her when he heard that she was not attending class. Ning Li had always been alone, and this would be the first time she was leaving early.

Nonetheless, Ning Li did not notice Pei Song’s glance as she grabbed her bag and left.

...

Downstairs, the campus was full of students walking around.

Even though Lu Huaiyu chose to wait in a rather quiet corner, his appearance stood out naturally. His presence garnered a lot of attention from the students.

Fortunately, this was not the first time, so he had experience in dealing with this situation.

Ning Li went up to him. She stood in front of him though she had to look at him with her head up.
“Where are we going?”

Lu Huaiyu held her bag for her but was not in a hurry to leave. He took something out from his pocket and gave it to her.

“This is for you.”

Ning Li looked down and saw a candy resting on his palm. She blinked softly and took the candy. Her slender and soft fingers were cold when they grazed his warm palm.

Then, she twisted the candy wrapper and put the candy into her mouth. The refreshing sweetness filled her mouth instantly, and her charming crystal-clear eyes squinted right away.

“Lemon candy?”

He looked at her. “Don’t you like it?”

“No, but I like peach better,” Ning Li’s cheek bulged as she said in a muffled tone.

Lu Huaiyu nodded. “Peach, I see.”

Ning Li looked at the man with a suspicious gaze. She had a feeling that something was not right. “Second Brother, is this the prize that you have for me?”

He softly flicked her forehead with her finger. “Do I look like a stingy man to you? This is the first prize.”

“There’s more?”

After a quick calculation, she realized that it had been only an hour since she told him about her results. He should not have had enough time to prepare any presents, so she was baffled.

Lu Huaiyu brought her to the school exit.

“You will know when you reach there.”

At the entrance, Ning Li saw Cheng Xiyue’s car at first glance and was slightly surprised. “Brother Xiyue is here as well?”

Cheng Xiyue popped his head out of the window and said with a bright smile, “Little Ning Li, I heard you got first place in your test! You really remind me of my younger self!”

Lu Huaiyu opened the door. “If I remember correctly, the highest score you’ve ever gotten is only 699. That’s worlds apart from 737.”

Cheng Xiyue glared at the man coldly.

Ning Li got into the rear seat. “Brother Xiyue, why are you so free today?”

Cheng Xiyue smiled. “It’s getting noisy at home, so I came out for some fresh air.”

In reality, Ning Li knew what must have happened. After the results came out, the Cheng family had picked Cheng Xiangxiang up right away.

The Cheng family’s second house paled in comparison with the first house. With Cheng Xiangxiang’s poor results, the second house of the family would be in turmoil for the night.

Soon, Cheng Xiyue started the car.

...

Twenty minutes later, they arrived at a cozy restaurant that seemed luxurious with a quiet and relaxing environment.

The owner of the restaurant was a familiar friend of Cheng Xiyue's. After a quick chat, the three of them entered the VIP room.

Ning Li sat beside Lu Huaiyu while Cheng Xiyue sat opposite him.

The menu was then passed to her.

"Little Ning Li, order what you like. It's on Second Master today!"

Cheng Xiyue held a grudge against Lu Huaiyu because of the Japanese restaurant incident the other day. He ought to take revenge on the man and earn back his worth by eating!

Ning Li ordered a few dishes and then gave the menu to Cheng Xiyue who ordered a bunch of dishes without hesitation.

There was crusty onion soup, Saint-Jacques scallops, black truffle tofu soup...

Ning Li frowned slightly. Lu Huaiyu disliked most of the dishes Cheng Xiyue had ordered. She turned to Lu Huaiyu but realized that the man did not care.

The man sensed her gaze and asked, "What's wrong?"

Ning Li paused for a while before saying, "The rock sugar hasma soup sounds nice. Why don't we swap it with the crusty onion soup?"

Cheng Xiyue looked at her. "Huh? Little Ning Li, you don't like it?"

Ning Li nodded to say that she did not.

"Okay, you are the boss." Cheng Xiyue shook his head in slight disappointment.

"I don't like onions," she declared.

Cheng Xiyue grumbled, "Second Master doesn't like them either. You guys are really similar..."

He originally wanted Lu Huaiyu to suffer, but it seemed like his little mischievous plan was foiled.

"Really? What a coincidence." Ning Li took her cup of tea for a sip.

Lu Huaiyu raised a brow. A second later, he chuckled and echoed, "Yeah, what a coincidence."

She tightened her lips while her ears itched and the refreshing taste of the lemon candy lingered on her tongue.

...

It was already dark after dinner.

Ning Li thought of going back, but after a while, she realized that Cheng Xiyue was not driving towards the Ye residence.

"Brother Xiyue, where are we going?"

Cheng Xiyue looked into the mirror. "We are going to Yunding Fenghua. Didn't Second Master tell you?"

Ning Li turned to Lu Huaiyu who glanced at his watch. There was still time. He then looked at her with a subtle grin.

"You will know when you reach there. What's wrong? Afraid that I'll sell you away?"

Ning Li shook her head while she studied him with her bright eyes. “No, I have nothing valuable on me either.”

Given Lu Huaiyu’s net worth, there was no need for him to do that anyway.

Lu Huaiyu looked outside the window as his long fingers tapped on the armrest softly. There was a hint of restlessness in his subtle movements.

His deep eyes squinted, and a moment later, his lips curled into a grin. He no longer dared to offer his guarantee for certain matters.

...

At Yunding Fenghua.

It was Ning Li’s first time in Lu Huaiyu’s house.

The huge mansion was simple yet elegant. Footsteps echoed as she walked, making the place seem bleak.

Lu Huaiyu took her upstairs.

“Follow me.”

Ning Li did as she was told.

On the third floor, where the spacious balcony was, a telescope was installed, and Lu Huaiyu was adjusting it.

Ning Li was surprised. “Second Brother, this is—”

Lu Huaiyu looked at her. "The book that Zhou Fei gave you was originally mine."

He then waved her over with his hand. "There's a meteor shower tonight at 9:00 p.m., and it's almost time. Do you want to have a look?"

Ning Li walked over.

The endless night sky stretched as far as her sight could reach.

Then, a bright meteor soared across the sky.

Lu Huaiyu looked into the night and asked boldly, "Among candy, onions, and meteors, which one do you like the most?"

Chapter 60: If You Wish For It, I'll Make It Come True

'Which one do I like?'

Ning Li stood straight and looked at the man beside her.

The lights illuminated half of his delicate face, putting him in between light and darkness. His expression was hidden behind the mysterious aura.

The air felt heavy, and even the night breeze felt slow.

Her heart felt a strong grip as though a hand was holding her.

Right before she could say a word, Cheng Xiyue's humorous voice came from behind. "That's it? You told Little Ning Li to skip class just because of this?"

The strange and subtle atmosphere was shattered to pieces, much to Ning Li's relief.

Lu Huaiyu turned around to Cheng Xiyue, his gaze as dead as still water.

Cheng Xiyue froze. His heart skipped a beat as he felt chills running down his spine. He stiffly raised a tray of freshly cut fruits. "Can I...have a piece of fruit?"

He was frozen on the outside, but deep down, he was complaining endlessly.

'You little b*stard, must you treat me like this? The two of you came all the way up here right after you arrived whilst I, a guest, had to do everything, and I didn't even start to complain yet!'

Lu Huaiyu looked away and said, "I applied for leave on her behalf."

Cheng Xiyue slowly moved closer to Ning Li. "Mm-hmm. Here, Little Ning Li, have some."

Ning Li smiled. "Thank you, Brother Xiyue. I'll have some when I'm done watching."

Cheng Xiyue did not push her because he was confident that Lu Huaiyu would do nothing to him as long as he stayed behind Ning Li. He eventually sat down beside her in a casual manner.

"Little Ning Li, I didn't know you were interested in this."

He had known Ning Li for quite some time now and discerned the girl as a mature and tenacious person. He did not expect her to be interested in romantic girly stuff.

"Mm-hmm, it's quite interesting," Ning Li answered.

Lu Huaiyu's telescope was an expensive and rare one. She had seen it once before in her past life in the national astronomy museum.

“Little Ning Li, what did you wish for?” Cheng Xiyue asked as he put a piece of fruit into his mouth.

Ning Li shook her head. “I didn’t wish for anything.”

Surprised, he said, “No? You didn’t wish for anything? Then—”

He expected girls to believe one’s wish might come true when they wished upon a shooting star.

Ning Li curved her lips. “I don’t believe in this, and I don’t have anything to wish for anyway.”

She liked meteors because she simply liked watching them. She ought to rely on her own hands to get back what she was owed instead of putting her hopes and wishes into groundless illusory tricks.

Lu Huaiyu looked at her with a deep gaze.

All of a sudden, Ning Li’s phone buzzed. She pulled it out for a glance and was surprised by what she saw.

Lu Huaiyu was beside her. He was a lot taller than the girl, hence he was able to look at her screen clearly.

The buzz was a friend request notification from Pei Song.

...

Ning Li felt odd.

“Is he your classmate from the other day?” Lu Huaiyu then asked softly.

She nodded.

He slightly furrowed his brows. "You've transferred to Second High for almost a month now. Why would he add you now?"

"I didn't really add anyone in class, so..." Ning Li said.

She had a poor experience in Second High during her past life, and since she barely had any interaction with anyone, she thought she could save herself the hassle.

"Pei Song is the class monitor, thus it's no surprise that he got my phone number."

"I suppose so." Lu Huaiyu looked at his watch. "It's late. I wonder what's the emergency?"

Ning Li nodded in agreement.

"Second Brother, you go ahead. I'll text him and ask what's wrong." She then turned around and started typing.

Crunch!

Cheng Xiyue took a big bite from a piece of watermelon.

'Is it me or does the atmosphere feel wrong all of a sudden? It suddenly feels dangerous.' He looked at Lu Huaiyu.

Lu Huaiyu walked to the telescope and started adjusting it. He dwarfed the telescope just by standing beside it. The expression on his face was as calm as still water as if he cared about nothing at all.

Pei Song sent Ning Li a message after the friend request.

[Hey, Pei Song here.]

[This is what Mr. Zhou taught in competitive Physics class today. The last question is today's homework.]

He attached two images to his message.

The first one was the contents written on the board while the second one was half a piece of paper with only one question written on it. The pictures must be the contents of tonight's class.

Right before Ning Li could type her reply, Lu Huaiyu called out to her, "Lili, these should be the last few shooting stars. Wanna have a look?"

Ning Li walked over, intending to put her phone aside and reply to Pei Song later.

It was at that very moment that Lu Huaiyu had a glance at the second picture which Ning Li had zoomed into.

"Ferrofluid?"

Ning Li answered with a soft grunt.

Lu Huaiyu chuckled. "Two hours in a night, and that's all Zhou Fei taught in class?"

She was speechless.

Zhou Fei had been a genius when he was younger which gave his resume a golden sparkle. Unfortunately, he encountered Lu Huaiyu who overtook him in every single aspect.

The two men were working in different industries now, so nothing substantial really happened. However, if Lu Huaiyu wanted to, he could stomp into Zhou Fei's field and crush the guy.

"Since I'm free now, may I have a look at the question?" Lu Huaiyu sounded courteous, but there was a sense of arrogance in his voice.

Ning Li awkwardly cleared her throat and gave him her phone.

He went over to the book rack for some paper and a pen. Then, he sat down on the couch and started writing.

Ning Li's phone was placed on the tea table. From start to end, Lu Huaiyu only took a single glance at the question.

Cheng Xiyue had a glance at the question, and it immediately gave him a headache. "D*mn, how many years has it been since you saw something like this? How can you even remember all these?"

The moment he graduated, Cheng Xiyue returned all the knowledge he learned from school to his teacher.

Lu Huaiyu did not answer as he continued with his flawless writing. After that, he put down his pen and waited patiently for Ning Li to finish watching the meteors.

Five minutes later, she came over. She saw that Lu Huaiyu had solved the question. Strangely, she felt surprised, but at the same time, she expected it to happen.

She took the paper and quickly went through it. She had learned all this in her past life, and now looking at it again, it seemed a lot easier.

However, she had to give it to Lu Huaiyu because his answer was clearer and more flexible than the answer she had in mind.

“Second Brother, can I send this to my classmates?” she said.

Lu Huaiyu picked up his cup of tea and said coolly, “Sure. Classmates should help each other in their studies. After all, your competition is not only from Yunzhou.”

Ning Li found his words true. She took a picture of the answer and sent it over.

...

After Pei Song sent his message and the images, he waited for a reply and saw Ning Li typing through the chatbox.

However, he did not get an instant reply, so he put his phone down and continued reading.

Soon, he got a notification from his phone.

His heart throbbed for a moment as he picked his phone up for a glance.

It was a picture from Ning Li, and it was the answer to the question that he had sent her earlier.

The writing was neat and rigid. Obviously, it was not her writing.

He thought for a while and decided to ask.

[It’s correct, but the writing...you didn’t do it yourself, did you?]

Ning Li replied quickly this time.

[Yes. My second brother did it.]

Second brother?

Pei Song immediately thought of the towering figure. He looked at the time. It was 9:27 p.m. It was late, yet Ning Li was not home yet.

He put his phone down and did not press on the topic.

...

Ning Li failed to notice the meaning behind Pei Song's question.

She simply kept her phone away and said that it was time for her to go home.

Lu Huaiyu got up, intending to send her back.

The trio reached the exit and Cheng Xiyue went ahead to bring the car over while the two of them stood side by side, waiting.

"Thank you, Second Brother," Ning Li said.

Lu Huaiyu looked down at her. "Did you really not make a wish upon the shooting stars?"

Ning Li shook her head. She could not understand why he would ask her a question like this. "No."

Pocketing his hands, he said with a smile, "Then, does it mean that you've wasted your trip here?"

She was slightly surprised. "Huh?"

Lu Huaiyu slightly bent over and stared into her lovely eyes.

“The prize for getting first place is actually a wish. You get a wish from me.”

Ning Li suddenly felt the pressure in her heart again. She paused slightly and said, “But there are no more shooting stars—”

Lu Huaiyu chuckled. “If you wish it, I’ll make it come true. I’ll give you another chance. Do you want to make a wish?”