

## Little Brat's 641

### Chapter 641 Was That He Refused to Let Himself Off

The phone call was from Gu Tinglan.

Ning Li and Gu Tingyun both looked over.

Ever since the Hong Kong City horse race, Gu Tinglan had accompanied Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu for a period of time and had been busy abroad for a while. In total, Ning Li had not seen Gu Tinglan for about three months.

Lu Huaiyu asked, "Are you back in the Capital?!"

Gu Tinglan said something. Lu Huaiyu looked over and smiled.

"I'm afraid it's not convenient now. Ah Li and I are having dinner with Mr. Gu San."

Gu Tinglan was a little surprised.

"My third brother?"

"Yes, we're at Rongyue Mansion now," Lu Huaiyu reminded. "It's to thank Mr. Gu San for his previous help." Gu Tinglan quickly understood what he was talking about.

Although he had been abroad recently, he had been paying attention to the situation at home.

The outside world might not know much about the situation at that time, but he was a member of the Gu family. Gu Media had made a move, and it had been due to a personal phone call from Gu Tingyun. Of course, he would know about it.

Actually, Gu Tinglan was not surprised by this.

He had already known how much his parents favored Ning Li at the horse race.

Third Brother had always been considerate and filial. He was also very good at reading their thoughts. It would not be unusual for him to take the initiative to help.

However, for this matter, had Third Brother specially made this trip to the Capital?

"I see." Gu Tinglan smiled. "Since that's the case, let's make an appointment for another time."

He felt that it would be better for him not to join in the fun at this time.

Maybe his third brother had other plans.

Lu Huaiyu said goodbye and hung up the phone.

At this moment, Gu Tinglan instructed the driver to change their destination.

"Go to Jinshui No. 1 Courtyard."

Half an hour later, Gu Tinglan arrived.

Liang Su and Gu Siyang were not there. Gu Tingfeng was the only one at home. After Gu Tinglan entered the house, she saw Gu Tingfeng sitting in the living room, looking at his phone in a daze.

"Big Brother?"

Gu Tinglan called out, and Gu Tingfeng looked up.

“Tinglan, you’re here.”

Gu Tinglan walked over and glanced at his phone screen. He asked casually, “What are you looking at, Big Brother?” Gu Tingfeng coughed. “Nothing. By the way, didn’t you say that you had something else to take care of today?”

“Yes, Lu Huaiyu happened to be busy today, so we made an appointment for another time,” Gu Tinglan said as he sat down beside him. “Both he and Ning Li are having a meal with Third Brother.”

Gu Tingfeng snorted when he heard that.

So it was today!

Third Brother had not said a word! He had just come straight here!

If Gu Tinglan had not discovered it, he would not have even said anything!

Seeing his reaction, Gu Tinglan felt a little strange.

“Big Brother, what’s wrong?” Gu Tingfeng could not help but say, “It’s all because Third Brother is too slippery! Previously, Siyang had invited Ning Li over for a meal. When Third Brother found out about it, he used all kinds of tricks to get Ning Li to treat him to a meal.”

Had it not just been a small favor? He was so proud of it! He was even taking advantage of it!

Just for the sake of one meal, he had come all the way from Hong Kong City to the Capital!

Hmph!

Gu Tinglan was enlightened.

“Oh...”

So there was such a reason behind this meal...

No wonder.

“I was wondering why Third Brother had come to the Capital when he’s been so busy recently.” Gu Tingfeng scoffed and changed the topic. “By the way, how’s your investigation abroad been going recently?”

Gu Tinglan pondered for a moment.

“I’ve confirmed it again. He did return to the country once, and it’s highly likely that he went to Lincheng. The direction of the previous investigation was not wrong.”

Gu Tingfeng frowned.

“But... you also searched Lincheng for a long time, but you didn’t find any trace of him going there, did you...” “After all, that was almost twenty years ago. Moreover, the fire was so big that even the files of the Lincheng Public Security Bureau didn’t have many clues. But one thing is certain: the time that Fourth Sister had an accident in Lincheng was the day he returned to the country.”

Gu Tinglan’s expression was cold.

“Isn’t that too much of a coincidence?”

Gu Tingfeng closed his eyes.

Yes, it was too much of a coincidence. That was why they had their suspicions. That was why they had resumed their investigation again more than ten years after the accident had happened.

“Big Brother.”

Gu Tinglan looked at him. His lips moved slightly. After a long while, she finally said, “If the fire back then really wasn’t an accident... then all these years, Shen Zhijin...”

Hearing this name, Gu Tingfeng opened his eyes. His gaze was obscure and difficult to understand.

He was silent for a long time, and his voice was dry.

“In the end, he didn’t take good care of Yinyin and Tangtang.”

Gu Tinglan pursed his lips.

“But he also...”

“Tinglan.”

Gu Tingfeng suddenly interrupted him, “Do you think that it’s us who are not willing to let him go?”

“He’s the one who won’t let himself go.”

Gu Tingyun was very satisfied with this meal.

He took one last look at the group photo on his phone and stood up to leave.

Ning Li and Lu Huaiyu stood up and prepared to send him off.

Gu Tingyun smiled and said, "There's no need to send me off. I'll be going straight to my big brother's place."

Ning Li and Lu Huaiyu sent him into the elevator. After seeing that he had entered it, they returned to their room.

"I didn't expect Third Uncle Gu to be so easy to get along with."

Ning Li said.

She had been a little worried that she would not be able to get along with him. After all, this person's status was obvious.

However, after the meal today, Gu Tingyun had not put on any airs to show that he was the third master of the Gu family. He had been very approachable.

Lu Huaiyu glanced at her and could not help but laugh.

"Yeah, I didn't expect that either." To put it nicely, the third master of the Gu family was shrewd. To say it not so good terms, he was like a smiling tiger.

He had interacted with this person a few times in the past, and he was indeed an unpredictable person.

However, the third master of the Gu family today had been very different.

In short... It had indeed been beyond his expectations.

"The Gu family likes you very much," he said. Ning Li paused for a moment and sighed.

“It’s not me that they like, it’s the fourth Miss Gu that they like.”

It was only because she was somewhat similar to the fourth Miss Gu that they were so partial to her. It was not hard to imagine how much they doted on the fourth Miss Gu in the past.

Lu Huaiyu looked into her eyes, his thin lips slightly raised as he ruffled her hair. “Ah Li, other than the fourth young Miss Gu, there is also a reason that belongs to you alone that they are willing to treat you this way.” “Our Ah Li is so lovable. Who wouldn’t like her?”

Old Madam Gu loved her daughter dearly. Perhaps because of the similarity, she would feel tender affection for Ning Li.

However, the other masters of the Gu family were not easy to get along with.

If they could treat Ning Li this way just because they were similar, then countless girls would have used this reason to get along with the Gu family over the years.

How could it be Ning Li’s turn?

Now that even they were like this, it proved that the person they liked was indeed Ning Li.

Ning Li looked at him in a daze, and then the corners of her lips curled up slightly.

“Lu Huaiyu, thank you.”

Lu Huaiyu raised his eyebrows, then bowed his head to come nearer to her.

He said with a low smile, “Ah Li, actually, there are many ways that you can use to thank me. I have always been very patient. I don’t mind you trying them out one by one.”

Chapter 642 Camellia

Ning Li, "..."

Lu Huaiyu went closer to her and looked at her with a smile. "Hmm?"

"What you said makes sense," Ning Li took a step back and said in seriousness, "So we'll talk about it at another time when we have the chance."

...

In the afternoon, Ning Li went to the First Affiliated Hospital.

Mei Yanqing had recovered well after his surgery and would be discharged after a short period of rest.

Ning Li sat by the bed and patiently advised him.

"I heard that you've been losing your temper a lot lately."

Mei Yanqing's neck tensed. "When have I been doing that?"

Ning Li looked at him expressionlessly.

Mei Yanqing immediately quieted down. His lips moved as he muttered softly, "I... I'm just a little louder and more straightforward. I've been like this for so many years, so it doesn't count as scolding people... Besides, if they didn't always make me angry, would I have done that?"

Ning Li said, "Then you have to learn to adjust and control yourself."

Mei Yanqing stifled his frustration. He met her gaze and swallowed his words.

“... Oh, I’ll try my best then.”

Ning Li nodded, but she actually did not quite believe him.

Mei Yanqing had said this too many times, but it was always forgotten the moment he finished saying it.

This was his temper for life, and it was something he could not change.

She did not really expect him to change. She just wanted to remind him from time to time to control his emotions.

Seeing her like this, Mei Yanqing felt that he should quickly change the topic. He covered his chest with one hand.

“Oh no, my wound is hurting again... But don’t worry, Ah Li, I will endure it until it passes. I’ll be fine...”

Ning Li looked at him indifferently.

“Yes. After all, it was your stomach that was operated on. Your heart should be fine.”

Mei Yanqing, “...”

He silently withdrew his hand.

Yu Pingchuan, who was beside him, turned his head with a complicated expression. He could not bear to watch this!

Ning Li, on the other hand, nodded again. Her expression relaxed a little.

“It seems that you have indeed recovered well.”

He was even in the right frame of mind to try and fool people.

Mei Yanqing, "..."

He gave Yu Pingchuan a look as if to say, 'What are you standing there for?! Why aren't you coming over to help me!'

Yu Pingchuan silently chanted in his heart three times, 'This is my master. I can't just stand by and watch him die.' Only then did he finally speak up. "Oh right, Ah Li, how have things been at the Arts Association recently?"

Ning Li knew that the two of them were changing the topic, so she did not expose them.

She nodded. "It's been fine, not very busy." Yu Pingchuan heaved a sigh of relief. Mei Yanqing also chuckled. "That's good, that's good. I know that Ah Li never makes mistakes when she does things. Ah Li has worked hard—"

Ning Li looked at him. How could she not see that he was still trying to slack off?

"So it's better for you to get better as soon as possible, don't you think so?" Mei Yanqing pressed his fist against his lips.

"Cough! I'll try... try my best!"

Ning Li nodded.

"Then I'll take that as a promise. When you're better later, I'll make a trip back to the Arts Association."

Mei Yanqing, "... Oh."

The next day was Sunday. Wei Songze had invited Ning Li to look at some paintings at the Xijing Art School.

It was not to look at his.

Xijing Art School was holding a themed art exhibition called “The Return of Dreams.” The selected works were the works of students who had already graduated from the academy.

Naturally, as the top art academy in the country, the students from Xijing Art School were extraordinary.

In addition to paintings, the works on display in this art exhibition, which included sculptures, attracted a lot of people.

The exhibition would be running for three days. Since Wei Songze figured that Ning Li had no classes on Sunday, he had specially invited her over. When Ning Li arrived at the Xijing Art School, it was ten o’clock in the morning.

Outside the main entrance of the exhibition hall, many people had already gathered. The place looked very lively. However, everyone tacitly maintained their silence as they queued up to enter the hall.

“Sister Li, the sculptures are displayed on the first floor while the paintings are on the second floor.”

Wei Songze walked in front of Ning Li and whispered, “There’s a lot of space inside. I heard that one of Teacher Wang Yan’s paintings has also been included in this exhibition.”

Ning Li smiled. “Is that so? Then it seems that the time span for the selected works is quite large.”

Wei Songze chuckled. “I’ll definitely have to go and admire Teacher Wang Yan’s work from his university days later!”

They soon reached the head of the line, and the two of them entered.

As Wei Songze had said, the space for this exhibition was indeed large.

Everyone had lined up to enter. There had originally been quite a number of people, but after they entered the building, they quickly dispersed.

The whole hall still seemed quite empty.

Wei Songze asked in a low voice, "Sister Li, I plan to go to the second floor first. What about you?"

Ning Li felt that the sculptures on the first floor were quite interesting, so she planned to stay here for a while and only go up after she had seen enough.

Wei Songze went up the stairs alone.

Ning Li slowly walked around the first floor alone.

Occasionally, someone recognized her and looked over at her.

However, because they were in the exhibition hall, everyone followed the rules and remained quiet.

Most of them only stared at her or whispered to their friends. No one approached her to talk.

Ning Li was happy to have some peace and quiet. She looked at the sculptures on the first floor for an hour before she went up the stairs to the second floor.

The second floor was full of paintings, but it had been divided into many small sections.

Ning Li went to the traditional Chinese painting area first.

In comparison, there were more people on the first floor than on the second floor. On the second floor, there were more people in the section displaying the oil paintings rather than the traditional Chinese painting section.

In comparison, it was rather quiet here.

Ning Li was able to look at everything more casually as she walked along and looked at everything

She came to a small square exhibition hall and turned to enter.

There were a total of eight Chinese paintings hanging here with the theme of flowers.

Starting from the left-hand side, the first one she came to was a peony.

After that, there were plum blossoms, lotus flowers, and so on.

Suddenly, she stopped in front of the fourth painting

The red camellia flowers were in full bloom, with dark inky branches and the leaves showed a hint of rich emerald green. The hot and cold colors complemented each other and glowed with vigorous vitality. The red color of the petals went from light to deep, gradually becoming more intense and flamboyant.

When Ning Li looked at the painting, the first thing she felt was that it was lively and joyful.

There were very few paintings that gave her such a feeling

She did not know whether it was because the petals cascaded out in layers, or because the color was intense and bright.

In short, it was a very subtle feeling.

At just a glance, she seemed to be able to clearly sense the joyful mood of the painter when he had painted this painting.

Ning Li stared at it for a long time.

She did not pay attention to the sound of footsteps approaching. Until a clear voice came from behind her.

“Do you like this painting very much?” Ning Li was stunned and turned back to look.

The person who had come was actually Shen Zhijin.

“Teacher Shen?”

She was a little surprised. She had not expected to see Shen Zhijin here.

He did not seem to have the kind of personality of someone who would come to such a place...

Shen Zhijin’s gaze fell on the painting behind her. His handsome and clear eyes became a little warm.

She came back to her senses and nodded.

“I do like it.”

She noticed Shen Zhijin’s eyes and asked tentatively, “Do you... like this painting too?”

Shen Zhijin nodded slightly and paused for a moment before saying, “This is my wife’s painting.”

Ning Li's eyes widened slightly and she turned her head to look. As expected, she saw the sign next to the painting which introduced the artist.

"Mountain Tea"

—Gu Tingyin.

Chapter 643 Someone Who Had Traveled Thousands of Miles

Ning Li was so engrossed in the painting that she had not noticed who the artist was.

She had not expected it to be the fourth miss of the Gu family.

No wonder Shen Zhijin had come over...

Ning Li looked at the painting carefully and saw that it had been painted about twenty years ago. If she were to calculate, the fourth miss of the Gu family should have been in... in university?

"So, Teacher Shen's wife was also a student of the Xijing Art School?"

Ning Li was a little surprised.

Most of the Gu family's businesses were overseas. Most of the members of the family, including Gu Tinglan, had received their elite education abroad.

Who would have thought that they would see the fourth miss of the Gu family's painting here?

Shen Zhijin could see her surprise.

He was so smart, how could he not guess what Ning Li was thinking?

In fact, it was not only Ning Li.

This question would appear in almost everyone's mind after finding out that Gu Tingyin was actually from the Xijing Art School.

The only daughter of the Gu family, pampered by thousands.

Whether it was Hong Kong City or Bai City, all of these places had world-class fine arts universities.

That should have been her best choice.

Yet, she had not wanted it.

Without hesitation, she had applied to the Xijing Art School.

She had traveled thousands of miles for one person.

Shen Zhijin looked at the painting with an extremely calm and gentle expression.

The look in his eyes was unfathomable, as if he was immersed in some distant memory.

After a long time, he said, "Yes. This was her graduation work."

It was also the only painting that remained in the Xijing Art School.

Ning Li looked at him.

Before this, she had never known that the cold and proud Shen Zhijin would also be capable of showing such an expression.

She looked at the painting again.

‘Mountain Tea’.

That’s right, this was the flower that Shen Zhijin often bought.

Sometimes it was white, but most of the time it was red.

It was for the fourth miss gu, his wife...

She paused for a moment and said, “The painting and the flowers are very good.”

The corners of Shen Zhijin’s lips curved slightly.

“Thank you. Yinyin loves to hear people praise her.”

Ning Li was slightly stunned.

Shen Zhijin was a young genius. Up until now, he had been blessed with many honors and was already standing at the peak of the physics world.

However, whenever he mentioned himself, he had never shown such an expression.

Instead, he would thank her for the simple compliment.

This time it was because the person being praised was Gu Tingyin, his wife.

“Sister Li?”

Wei Songze’s voice came from the side.

Ning Li turned her head to look.

Only then did Wei Songze see that there was another person standing beside her. Moreover, it seemed that the two of them knew each other.

He lowered his voice.

“Sister Li, aren’t you going to the oil painting section to take a look?” He had waited there for quite a while, but since Ning Li had not appeared, he had decided to come over.

Ning Li said, “I’ll be going over now.”

As she spoke, she looked at Shen Zhijin.

“Teacher Shen, then I’ll take my leave first, alright?”

Shen Zhijin replied with a “Hmm”.

Ning Li walked to the side and looked at the remaining four paintings.

It was probably because the Fourth Miss Gu’s painting “Mountain tea” was so strong that when she looked at the others after having seen that first, she felt that they were not that eye-catching. Thus, she finished looking at them very quickly.

Finally, she turned to leave with Wei Songze, heading toward the oil painting area.

After walking for some distance, Wei Songze lowered his voice to speak, unable to hide the curiosity on his face.

“Sister Li, who was that just now?”

“The vice-principal of Xijing University, Shen Zhijin,” Ning Li explained. “Shen Zhijin... Oh! It’s that physics big shot that you’re following right now!”

Wei Songze had very little interest in physics, so he did not know much about Shen Zhijin.

The reason he remembered this name was because of Ning Li.

He looked over and muttered, “I really would not have guessed that such an important scientific research bigwig would actually be interested in an art exhibition...”

Ning Li did not want to say too much, so she changed the topic.

“Didn’t you say that you were looking for Teacher Wang Yan’s painting? Did you find it?”

Wei Songze immediately perked up.

“It’s just up ahead! Let me show you!”

The two of them continued to walk forward. Suddenly, her heart skipped a beat, and she turned around to take a look.

Shen Zhijin was still standing in front of the painting. Her shoulders and back were straight, and he did not move for a long time.

The two of them came to another exhibition hall.

Wei Songze pointed at one of the paintings and said, "Sister Li, this is it!"

It was an oil painting of a young girl in spring.

The whole tone was warm and relaxed, clean and bright.

Wei Songze rubbed his chin.

"I didn't expect Teacher Wang Yan's painting style when he was young to be so different from now! But this painting is very popular. There were many people praising it just now."

Ning Li looked at the painting and could not help but laugh.

"So, it's actually this one on display... It looks like Teacher Wang Yan did not look at the list of works that would be displayed in this exhibition."

Wei Songze was taken aback. "Huh? Why? Isn't this painting good?"

As he spoke, he took another look.

It was pretty good! The composition, color blocks, and light and shadow processing were all pretty good!

Of course, Wang Yan's current standard was definitely much higher than this.

However, a comparison like this could not be made.

After all, this was a painting from many years ago.

Ning Li said, "Not really, it's just..."

"It seems like Ning has a lot of unique insights into Teacher Wang's paintings."

A female voice came from the side.

Ning Li swallowed the rest of her words and turned her head to look.

Sheng Ruxue stood a few steps away with a smile on her face, yet there was no smile in her eyes.

She had not expected that she would bump into Ning Li again when she came to this art exhibition.

Previously, she had happened to hear Ning Li criticizing her work. This time, it was Wang Yan.

V

Sheng Ruxue was unhappy and looked at the painting

"Or, is your standard of appreciation too high? Are we all not worthy?"

It was fine if Ning Li did not like her paintings, but now she even dared to judge Wang Yan's paintings. Even if she was Ning, she was taking herself much too seriously.

Ning Li paused and said, "You misunderstood. I didn't mean it that way."

"Oh? So I misunderstood?" Sheng Ruxue obviously did not believe her words, "Wang Yan's painting won a silver award in the National Oil Painting Competition back then. If you don't even like it, then I think there aren't many paintings here that are worthy of your attention."

The corner of her mouth twitched.

“It’s better for you not to come to this art exhibition.”

Wei Songze frowned.

“Sheng Ruxue, please be more polite.”

Wasn’t this an obvious eviction?!

The point was that this exhibition hall was not owned by Sheng Ruxue. What right did she have to say such words?

Sheng Ruxue laughed.

“I’m just telling the truth. I didn’t mean to offend you. Don’t misunderstand. If you really don’t like it, why do you have to stay here? Wouldn’t you just be asking to be tortured?”

“You—”

Wei Songze was about to retort when Ning Li interrupted him.

“I didn’t mean to say that this painting isn’t good. I just said that it’s not suitable to be displayed here. There’s no other meaning. In any case, there’s really nothing else to see here.”

As Ning Li said this, she actually turned to leave.

When they brushed past each other, Sheng Ruxue looked at her.

“You know what? It’s better not to express too many opinions in an unprofessional field. Otherwise, you’ll always be laughed at.”

Chapter 644 It’s Not Good to Argue With Her

Ning Li raised her eyebrows slightly and lowered her chin slightly.

“Well, what you said makes sense.”

Sheng Ruxue was stunned, obviously not expecting Ning Li to have such a reaction.

Any normal person would have been ashamed and embarrassed, right?

Why did she—

Just as these thoughts were going through her mind, she saw Ning Li looking over with a very calm expression on her face.

“I would like to give you a piece of advice as well: When you don’t know the whole picture, it’s best not to judge. Otherwise, it’ll be very awkward.”

Sheng Ruxue felt very uncomfortable

nc

Was Ning Li talking about her?

However, she had clearly heard what Ning Li had said those two times.

By saying this now, was it possible that she was just being stubborn and trying to find a way to save her own face?

She wanted to say something to refute her, but when her eyes met Ning Li's, those words became stuck in her throat again.

"Wei Songze, let's go."

Ning Li did not seem to want to say anything more. She called out to Wei Songze and left.

Wei Songze did not look very happy. He glanced at Sheng Ruxue, then turned around, and quickly followed Ning Li out.

"Sister Li, what she just said to you, are you just going to let it go?" Wei Songze could not help but speak angrily after the two of them had walked out of the building.

Sheng Ruxue was usually very arrogant, but her words today had been even more outrageous.

"Does she think that she's the only one in the world who knows about oil painting?!"

Ning Li's expression was indifferent. "Why bother with her?"

"But her words were too harsh!" Wei Songze ran his fingers through his hair in annoyance.

His original intention for inviting Ning Li to the art exhibition today was to have some fun. Who would have known that such a thing would happen?

His good mood had completely disappeared, and Ning Li had even been ridiculed for no reason.

Ning Li smiled.

“Speaking of which, it could be said that she was trying to speak up for Teacher Wang Yan.”

“Speaking up for Teacher Wang Yan? You hadn’t even said anything, yet she was already babbling over there! She wasn’t doing it for Teacher Wang Yan, she was doing it for herself! It must be because she was upset when you said that her painting was inferior to mine!”

Wei Songze snorted disdainfully.

“If she didn’t like hearing it, she should have said something back then. Why would she take this opportunity to vent now? How interesting.”

That had happened a long time ago, yet Sheng Ruxue still remembered it clearly!

Ning Li was not really angry. There was no actual need for that.

Besides, there was no reason for her to argue with Sheng Ruxue.

She shook her head.

“Whether she’s good or not, it’s up to her master to teach her. It’s not up to me.”

Hearing this, Wei Songze suddenly laughed.

With his hands behind his head, he followed behind Ning Li with his long legs, looking casual.

“Sister Li, you’re too polite. How is it not up to you? It’s obvious that you’re lazy. If Teacher Wang Yan finds out about today’s incident later, tsk, that scene—”

Ning Li glanced at him.

Wei Songze immediately lifted his hand to make a zipper gesture over his mouth.

Only then did Ning Li withdraw her gaze.

Wei Songze knew that she was not really angry, so he chuckled and moved a little closer.

“Speaking of which, Sister Li, Teacher Wang Yan’s painting is quite good. Why did you say that it’s not suitable to be displayed there?”

Ning Li paused for a moment. “The painting is of Teacher Wang Yan’s first love.”

Wei Songze’s eyes suddenly widened.

He had met Wang Yan’s wife before. She was a teacher in the ceramic design department of the Xijing Art School.

The key point was that she was not the same person as the girl in the painting!

A rare look of sympathy appeared on Ning Li’s face. “This art exhibition will be held for a few days.”

Elsewhere, after Ning Li and Wei Songze had left, Sheng Ruxue was no longer in the mood to continue looking at the exhibition.

After thinking for a while, she went to Wang Yan’s office.

Seeing her, Wang Yan was a little surprised.

“Ruxue, why are you here? Didn’t you say that you would be going to the art exhibition this morning?”

"I did," Sheng Ruxue said.

Wang Yan smiled and asked, "What did you think?"

Sheng Ruxue pursed her lips.

"The others are fine, it's just that N... someone said that the painting of yours that was selected was not good, so I argued with her a little."

Wang Yan was a little surprised, but then he waved his hand carelessly.

"Since it's a piece of art, people will judge it anyway. There's no need to fight over it."

"But it's your work after all." Sheng Ruxue frowned, "It's not just me. Everyone thinks that your painting is very good. It's just that one person who's so picky. I think she's doing it on purpose. She's just trying to nit-pick."

Wang Yan picked up his glass of water. Seeing that she was so concerned, he asked casually with a smile, "So, which piece of work was chosen that would cause you to fight over it?"

"It's 'Spring Maiden', which you created during your time in university."

"Pfft—!"

Wang Yan spat out a mouthful of tea. Sheng Ruxue hurriedly handed him a piece of tissue paper, but Wang Yan could not care less about that. With a terrified expression on his face, he asked, "Did you say that 'Spring Maiden' is on display?!"

Sheng Ruxue did not know why he was reacting this way, so she nodded hesitantly.

Wang Yan spat out the tea leaves that were in his mouth. In his heart, he had already thoroughly greeted the teacher in charge of this art exhibition.

He had so many paintings, all of which were good! Yet he had to choose this one!

How could he have peace when he went home?!

Sheng Ruxue was puzzled. "Master, what's wrong?" He really could not bring himself to explain. "It's... it's nothing... That painting was done a long time ago, and the techniques used were still not very skilled..."

Of course, it was of little use to say these things now.

He put down his glass, shook his head and sighed.

"Never mind, just go back first."

He wanted to be alone.

However, Sheng Ruxue did not move.

She paused for a moment, with some hesitation on her face, before speaking up with determination.

"Master, I wonder how Elder Mei is doing now? I haven't visited him since he got sick..."

Now that she was Wang Yan's disciple, even if she was only Mei Yanqing's new grand-disciple, she had to show her gratitude. Wang Yan waved his hand.

"You don't have to worry about that. Even I haven't been there, let alone you. Only Master and the others can show up at his place. Just go home and paint in peace."

Sheng Ruxue was a little disappointed.

Being able to visit Mei Yanqing was an opportunity that many people could not get. She had originally thought that since she had become Wang Yan's disciple, this layer of relationship would definitely make it more convenient for her than the average person. She had not expected... "Alright Master, I'll go back first."

Chapter 645 Which one is Good?

Wei Songze accompanied Ning Li to the school gates before returning.

However, Ning Li did not immediately take a taxi to leave. Instead, she turned around and walked in another direction.

Almost all the top art resources in the country had been gathered within the whole area where the Xijing Art School was located.

The National Art Museum, as well as the largest art gallery in the country, were all gathered here.

In addition to the existence of the Xijing Art School many big shots also often stayed here.

As she passed by the National Art Museum, Ning Li suddenly heard a somewhat familiar voice coming from the front of the building.

"I didn't expect Miss Ye's artistic knowledge to be so high. I'm very impressed."

Ning Li's eyebrows moved slightly, and she looked up.

A middle-aged man was walking out of the entrance of the National Art Museum.

Tao Siwen.

Ning Li was very familiar with the young girl beside him— Ye Ci.

She was wearing a white dress, white shoes, and a caramel-colored trenchcoat. Her long hair was draped behind her head, and she wore light makeup.

She looked like a delicate and innocent student.

Hearing Tao Siwen's words, she smiled shyly.

"President Tao, you flatter me. I only know a little bit about it."

Tao Siwen laughed.

"Miss Ye is too modest. When Ah Sheng recommended you to be my guide, I was a little disapproving. I didn't expect Miss Ye to not only be beautiful on the outside, but also very beautiful on the inside! Nowadays, there aren't many girls like you."

As he spoke, he raised his hand and patted Ye Ci's shoulder gently.

Ye Ci brushed a stray strand of hair back behind her ear.

"President Tao really knows how to make people happy..."

Suddenly, she froze.

Ning Li was standing not far away, looking over with a faint smile.

Ye Ci's face instantly paled, and her heart was filled with both fear and anger.

How could it have been such a coincidence to bump into Ning Li here, and even for her to witness such a scene!

The previous incident had already been embarrassing enough, but today...

“Miss Ye?”

Tao Siwen saw that she seemed to be in a trance, so he called her twice.

Ye Ci hurriedly came back to her senses and forced a smile.

“President Tao.”

Before Tao Siwen could notice Ning Li’s presence, a black car stopped by the side of the road.

Ye Ci lowered her head slightly.

“President Tao, did you want me to get in the car?”

Tao Siwen opened the car door and said with a smile, “It’s so late. Why don’t we have a meal together?”

Of course, Ye Ci would not refuse. She took a deep breath and tried to make her expression look as natural as possible before getting in the car.

Forget it. There was no point in thinking so much.

Did Ning Li know that she no longer cared about it?

Right now, all she wanted was to do was curry favor with Tao Siwen!

“President Tao, you should get into the car

too.”

Tao Siwen also got into the back row.

Soon, the car drove away.

Ning Li looked at it, took out her phone, and took a photo. Looking at the license plate number on the photo, she raised her eyebrows.

It had to be said that Ye Ci was indeed quite capable.

The last time she had seen her, she had been drinking with someone until she had vomited. It had only been a short while since then, yet she had already hooked up with Tao Siwen and it was obvious that Tao Siwen was indeed somewhat interested in her now.

This was not something that could be achieved simply by relying on her looks.

Tao Siwen was a person with a dignified appearance. He liked to appear to be a refined and artsy person on a daily basis. Ye Ci had also studied painting, so it was no wonder that he was interested in her.

If she could really hook up with him, then for Ye Ci in her current position, it could really be considered a turnaround.

Unfortunately, Tao Siwen already had a family.

Ning Li took one last look at the photo, put away her phone, and continued to walk forward.

The car turned quickly and disappeared from her sight.

Ning Li stopped in front of a gate, went to the security booth, and showed her ID card. The security guard respectfully opened the door and invited her in.

She walked toward a building in front of her.

Behind her, there was a plaque hanging on the side of the door.

— The National Calligraphy and Painting Association.

Hong Kong City.

Gu residence.

Old Madam Gu was sitting in the courtyard, with a sunshade casting a shadow over her.

Old Master Gu sat beside her, while a servant stood nearby.

Old Madam Gu was holding two photos in her hands and looking at them carefully. “Brother Ci, look, which of these two looks better?”

Old Master Gu’s gaze swept over them. He paused for a moment on the left and snorted.

“The one on the right looks better.” “You mean the one with both Ah Li and Siyang?”

Old Madam Gu put the two photos together and looked left and then right.

“I think they both look good. Ah Li is very obedient.”

That was true.

Old Master Gu’s expression softened a lot.

“Ah Li is pretty. She looks good no matter how she is photographed.”

“That’s true.”

Old Madam Gu nodded in agreement.

“I heard from Yun that Ah Li is planning to come to Hong Kong City when she has the time.”

It had been more than three months since she had left.

She looked at the photos.

“Do you think Ah Li has lost a little weight compared to before?”

Old Master Gu said, “She has classes and is responsible for G&S’s high-fashion designs. She’s probably very busy. It’s no wonder she has lost weight.”

Old Madam Gu’s heart ached a little, but she was also a little proud. She sighed softly. “I told you this child was outstanding...” “Father, Mother.” Gu Tingchuan had rushed home the moment he had gotten off the pier.

Just then, he noticed that Old Master Gu and Old Madam Gu were looking at some photos.

He paused, feeling a little worried.

Could it be that his mother was looking at Yinyin's photos again?

He quickened his pace and walked over.

"Mother, didn't I tell you before that you must pay attention to your eyes—"

He did not finish his sentence.

That was because he had clearly seen the two photos in Old Madam Gu's hands.

The one on the right: Big Brother, Sister-in-Law, Gu Siyang, Ning Li. The one on the left: Third Brother, Lu Huaiyu, and Ning Li. Old Madam Gu looked at him with a gentle smile.

"Since Tingchuan happens to be here, please help me choose which one looks better?"

Gu Tingchuan was silent for a long time before he suddenly sneered.

Chapter 646 Assistant

It was one thing for Big Brother to have met her due to the presence of Gu Siyang, but when had Third Brother gotten together with her??

Oh, yes, previously he had mentioned that he was going to the Capital.

At that time, he had even specifically advised him to remind their big brother to be careful with Ning Li when he saw him.

What had Third Brother said at that time?

— Okay, I got it.

This was what Third Brother meant by “I got it”??

Gu Tingchuan’s face was dark and his jaw was taut. His eyes stared at the two photos as if they were about to burn two holes in them.

Seeing that he had not spoken for a long time, Old Madam Gu asked again, “What’s the matter?”

“Hmm?”

Gu Tingchuan took a deep breath and said with difficulty, “The one on the right...”

His eldest brother and sister-in-law sat side by side with Ning Li. They were all smiling, and Gu Siyang’s big white teeth were even more dazzling

He choked and turned to look to the left.

“The one on the left...”

AT

Lu Huaiyu was sitting behind Ning Li with his arm stretched out, practically holding Ning Li in their arms. Third Brother, who was sitting next to them, had a gentle smile on his face.

Gu Tingchuan secretly gritted his teeth.

He could not say that it looked good. In fact, he had already restrained himself by not cursing out loud!

“Tingchuan?” Old Madam Gu finally sensed something was wrong. She turned to look at him. “You think they both look good, so you can’t pick which one you prefer, right?” Gu Tingchuan, “...”

Old Master Gu glanced at him lightly.

Gu Tingchuan said firmly, “... Right.”

He could not choose... which one made him feel worse!

Old Madam Gu took the photo and looked at it for a while. She thought of something and asked, “By the way, Jingrou should be bringing Siqi and Sicheng back to China tomorrow, right?”

Gu Tingchuan’s head hurt even more at the thought of those two brats.

“Yes. Their school organized a school trip to Haicheng for four days. They will only return to Hong Kong City after the school trip is over.”

Gu Tingchuan had a pair of twin sons. They were eleven years old this year, Gu Siqi and Gu Sicheng. The two children had been attending school in Bai City. The reason they had not come back before the horse race event was because Yun Jingrou had been accompanying them while they sat for their examinations in Bai City at that time.

Old Madam Gu smiled and said, “Then you should take those few days off and go to Hai City to accompany them.” Gu Tingchuan said, “That’s what I plan to do as well. I came here today to inform the both of

you.”

Old Master Gu looked up.

“Then why are you still here if you’re not ready to pick them up?”

Gu Tingchuan, "..."

He took one last look at the two photos.

"Then father and mother, I'll be going first."

He had walked for some distance when he could not help but curse, "What are Big Brother and Third Brother doing?!"

The assistant next to him lowered his eyebrows and narrowed his eyes.

The second master of the Gu family had a bad temper. When he was angry, he could not be confronted directly. The best solution would be to quietly follow him.

Gu Tingchuan was still angry when he thought of the two photos he had just seen.

The assistant adjusted his glasses. "Then... Second Master, do you need to return the 1,000 copies of Universe that you ordered?" "Why should I return it?!" Gu Tingchuan flung his hands out furiously.

"Increase it to 2,000 copies! No! 3,000 copies!"

The assistant nodded respectfully.

"Yes, Second Master."

Monday.

After a morning class, Ning Li went to the laboratory.

Tang Yi was the only one in the laboratory.

Ning Li glanced around and found that Fu Niannian and Yan Qiu did not seem to have come at all.

She asked casually, "Senior Brother Tang Yi, are you alone?"

Usually, at this time on Monday, everyone in the lab was present.

Tang Yi raised his head and looked over.

"Hey, you still don't know? Eldest Senior Brother had acute appendicitis last night. Senior Brother Niannian and several others sent him to the hospital together."

Ning Li was stunned.

"Appendicitis?"

"Yes," Tang Yi sighed, "I'm glad that the illness isn't very serious, but I think he'll need to recuperate for a while."

As he spoke, he raised his chin.

"Yes, Senior Brother was supposed to come over today to conduct the experiment, but he can't do it now. Senior Brother Niannian told Eldest Senior Brother that he wanted me to help him collect his things first."

With Yan Qiu's current situation, the original progress of the experiment would definitely be delayed. However, there was no other way around it now, so all he could do was just recuperate first.

as

Ning Li thought for a moment, took out her phone, and sent her well wishes to Yan Qiu in their group's private chat group.

Yan Qiu did not reply, but Fu Niannian said that the hospital was already preparing for the surgery, so they did not have to worry.

Feeling slightly relieved, Ning Li then took out her computer.

By the afternoon, Yan Qiu's surgery ended successfully. His family rushed to the hospital, and everyone finally felt at ease.

However, Yan Qiu's illness in the hospital still had a significant impact.

Other than his own experiments and thesis progress being interrupted, there was another matter that was more troublesome.

He was Shen Zhijin's assistant. He usually helped Shen Zhijin handle many things. Now that he had suddenly fallen ill, he would have to find another person to take over.

This person was not easy to choose.

First, he had to have sufficient ability.

With Shen Zhijin's status as an assistant, the content that he needed to coordinate and handle was usually of a very high level and cumbersome.

Just this alone was enough to filter out most people.

Moreover, this person also had to be trusted by Shen Zhijin.

Therefore, the best choice was the other students that Shen Zhijin was currently leading

“Second Senior Brother, the Boss will probably choose you, right?”

That evening, the small group of people in the laboratory had gathered to discuss this matter.

Tang Yi’s first thought was of Fu Niannian.

However, Fu Niannian did not think so.

“That’s hard to say. I only just transferred to follow the Boss this year. My previous research direction was quite different from our boss. The Boss has a lot of content, so I’m afraid it’ll be a little difficult for me to do it.”

As he spoke, he helplessly spread his hands, “More importantly, my German isn’t good enough.” Shen Zhijin was the general manager of Fino Laboratory, and he had frequent and close contact with the headquarters in Bai City.

During their communication process, they usually used German.

Therefore, if one wanted to become Shen Zhijin’s assistant, their standard of German had to be extremely high.

On this point, Fu Niannian was quite far behind Yan Qiu.

“German? That’s true...”

Tang Yi nodded in agreement and suddenly looked at Ning Li.

“Wait, Junior Sister knows German!”

Previously, Ning Li had translated a German document for Yan Qiu, hadn't she?

Moreover, from Shen Zhijin's feedback, it seemed like he had been quite satisfied.

In other words, Ning Li's German proficiency was very good. Fu Niannian also looked over and clapped his hands.

"That's right! How could I have forgotten Junior Sister?"

Ning Li met their gazes and said hesitantly, "But I'm not considered to be Teacher Shen's student yet. Isn't that a little inappropriate?"

Fu Niannian said, "What's inappropriate about that? Eldest Senior Brother already told us that at the seminar earlier, the Boss said publicly that you're his student. Doesn't that count?"

Tang Yi nodded. "That's right! Besides, with Little Junior Sister's ability, it won't be a problem for her to take over Eldest Senior Brother's position! If you don't..."

The sound of footsteps came, and Tang Yi's voice came to an abrupt halt.

Shen Zhijin stood at the door with a sealed document bag in his hand. His gaze swept over the few of them before finally settling on Ning Li.

"Ning Li, come over."

Chapter 647 True or False

Ning Li stood up.

Fu Niannian and Tang Yi looked at each other and gave Ning Li a thumbs up.

“Little Junior Sister is indeed the best!”

After the news of Yan Qiu being hospitalized had spread, quite a number of people at the institute were actually itching to make a move.

After all, the opportunity to become Shen Zhijin’s assistant was rare.

Even if it was only temporary, it would be enough to prove your excellence. In the future, if you were to use this on your resume, it would definitely be an additional stroke of glory.

However, in Fu Niannian and Tang Yi’s opinion, Ning Li was still the best choice.

Little Junior Sister’s research ability was outstanding, her German was good, and her personality was low-key, steady, and meticulous.

Was there anyone more suitable than her?!

Ning Li followed Shen Zhijin into his office.

Shen Zhijin got straight to the point.

“Ning Li, you know about Yan Qiu’s situation. He will need to be hospitalized for about a week. I hope that during this period of time, you’ll be able to temporarily take over his work.”

Ning Li had not expected Shen Zhijin to actually choose her.

Shen Zhijin continued to speak. “I will personally handle some of the content. The rest of the content that you are more familiar with or that can be covered by your ability will be distributed to you. So, you don’t have to worry that it’s beyond your capabilities. In addition, during this period of time, I will give you a subsidy and remuneration according to the same standards as Yan Qiu. Please think about it.”

Ning Li blinked. Just as Fu Niannian and Tang Yi had said, this was an opportunity that many people could not get even if they begged for it.

Now, not only was Shen Zhijin giving her the opportunity, he was even giving her “preferential conditions”.

The corners of her lips curled up.

“Teacher Shen, does this mean that Senior Brother Yan Qiu and I will be getting equal pay for equal work?”

Graduate students and Ph.D. students were paid with subsidies. The government would give a certain portion, and the rest would be covered by the boss.

Therefore, their overall monthly “salary” was still decided by the boss.

Based on Ning Li’s understanding of Yan Qiu and the others, Shen Zhijin’s subsidies were the highest in the entire academy.

Coupled with the fact that they often did projects and published papers, they had indeed saved up a fairly substantial amount of money.

Upon hearing this, Shen Zhijin also smiled. The smile on his handsome and clear face was relaxed.

“Yes.”

He handed over the sealed document bag.

Ning Li accepted it with both hands.

“Teacher Shen, don’t worry. During this period of time, I will try my best to do well.”

Shen Zhijin nodded with a faint smile.

“Okay.”

Just like that, Ning Li temporarily took over Yan Qiu’s position and became Shen Zhijin’s assistant.

Many people were envious after learning about it, but they also knew that Ning Li indeed had the ability. They could only sigh that the person who was chosen by the big boss was indeed a very capable person.

Although Ning Li was only a freshman, her scientific research ability was not inferior to Yan Qiu and the others. In addition, her command of the German language was also very outstanding, so she quickly got the hang of the job.

She did an impeccable job of all the tasks that Shen Zhijin had given her, including the translation of the materials, communication with various parties, and the supervision and promotion of the progress of various projects.

With this, even the last doubtful voices disappeared.

That afternoon, Ning Li was in class when she received a message from Wei Songze. [ Wei Songze: Sister Li, is your ‘Seventeenth Night’ going to be auctioned again? ] Ning Li was stunned.

‘Seventeenth Night’ was an oil painting that she had sold last year. At that time, it had been sold to a mysterious buyer for 3.7 million yuan.

A year and a half had already passed.

If a painting that had already been sold appeared on the market again, the most likely reason was that the seller had chosen to auction it off again.

This was actually a very normal situation, but this was the first time for Ning Li.

All the paintings that she had successfully auctioned off before had never been resold.

That was why Wei Songze had contacted her as soon as this had happened.

Ning Li glanced at the podium, put away her phone, stood up quietly, and left through the back door.

University classes were relatively flexible, and the teachers of the Institute of Physics liked Ning Li a lot.

The lecturer glanced at her but did not say anything. Instead, he continued his lecture.

Ning Li walked out of the classroom and chose a quiet corner in the corridor. She called Wei Songze back. He answered very quickly. "Sister Li?"

In a direct manner, Ning Li asked, "Where did you learn this news?"

Wei Songze said, "It was at an art gallery. I passed by their entrance today and casually took their promotional pamphlet to have a look. I saw your painting in the catalog. So I was wondering, Sister Li, your painting had already been sold last year. Could it be that the previous buyer has taken it out again to be resold?"

Ning Li was silent for a moment.

"I'm not sure."

In fact, she did not think so.

From her first painting, "Kiss," until now, in the past few years, all the paintings she had sold had been bought anonymously.

Although she had no evidence, she had an inexplicable feeling in her heart that those paintings had been collected by the same person.

Subtly, she felt that the person would not easily resell her paintings. This feeling was inexplicable. Even she herself could not explain how she had come to have this thought.

But she did.

Therefore, when she heard Wei Songze say that “Seventeenth Night” would be auctioned again, her first reaction was disbelief. She paused and asked, “When will the auction for the paintings at the gallery be held this time?”

“It will officially start tomorrow. I saw that their art exhibition will be held for a week.”

One gallery was quite famous in the Capital. The scale and specifications of the art exhibitions that it held could be considered first-class.

Simply put, the gallery was responsible for collecting outstanding paintings from all over the country and putting them together for the exhibition, attracting people from all walks of life to come and see them.

If anyone liked them, they could ask to bid on them

The gallery would take a portion of the selling price of the painting as a commission and could be considered a middleman.

To many artists, this was already an extremely rare affirmation that their work had been selected by a gallery.

However, because Ning Li had already sold this painting before, she was not aware of the situation this time.

Ning Li said: "I understand."

Rongyue Mansion, master bedroom.

Lu Huaiyu had just woken up. His eyes were half-closed as he leaned against the headboard of the bed, his posture languid.

His slightly messy black hair fell casually over his brow. The lines between his eyebrows and the bridge of his nose were smooth and perfect.

He held his phone and listened to the person across from him.

After a moment, he opened his eyes.

"Seventeenth Night?"

His voice was still a little hoarse, undisciplined, and proud.

"It's a fake."

Cheng Xiyue was surprised.

"How can you be so sure?"

When he saw that a gallery was going to auction that painting, he had been quite happy and had specially called Lu Huaiyu. Who would have known that Lu Huaiyu would say that it was fake?

Lu Huaiyu said lazily, "It's actually in my hands right now. Where did the second "Seventeenth Night" come from?"

Cheng Xiyue was momentarily stunned and could not help but say, "Then, perhaps you are the one who is wrong and the one in your hands is fake?"

Lu Huaiyu chuckled.

"How could I possibly be mistaken?"

Chapter 648 Fake

When Cheng Xiyue heard how certain the tone of Lu Huaiyu's voice was, he was speechless.

"You're that sure?"

Even a professional could not avoid making the occasional mistake.

However, Lu Huaiyu was extremely certain. Lu Huaiyu raised his brows slightly. "Hmm."

He had seen every painting of hers countless times until they had almost become imprinted in his heart. How could he be mistaken?

Cheng Xiyue had originally wanted to say a few words to refute him, but when he thought about how this man had indeed put quite a lot of thought into those paintings these past few years. It seemed quite normal for him to say that.

"Alright then. Since it's fake, then you don't have to go over there this time."

Cheng Xiyue was about to hang up the phone after saying that, but Lu Huaiyu said, "I'm going."

Cheng Xiyue was stunned. "What? Didn't you just say that the painting is fake? Why do you still want to go?"

Lu Huaiyu's phoenix-like eyes narrowed slightly.

"It's because it's fake that we have to go."

Early in the morning, many people came to One Gallery.

Today was the first day of this art exhibition, and many people had come because of how well-known it was.

caus

Sheng Ruxue and Shang Wenwen walked inside together.

Shang Wenwen asked, "Ruxue, for this gallery art exhibition, you should be the youngest artist to have a work displayed here, right?"

Sheng Ruxue thought for a moment and said, "I'm not too sure either. There are more than 30 paintings on display this time, and I don't really know some of the artists."

"I guess it must be," Shang Wenwen said with certainty, "Who doesn't know that the threshold of an art gallery is extremely high? Many people might not be able to reach this standard even after painting for their entire lives! I've seen the catalog before. There are so many important people on it! You're only nineteen this year, yet your work was selected to be displayed in a gallery together with all these people. How amazing!"

Sheng Ruxue laughed.

"I don't really care about that. I just feel that this is indeed a rare opportunity."

As she spoke, she looked on either side of her and took a deep breath.

“There are indeed many seniors whom I admire. Regardless of whether my paintings can be successfully auctioned off, I’m already very happy to be able to display them together with their paintings.”

Shang Wenwen clicked her tongue.

“Why are you so unconfident in yourself? Being selected is already enough to prove your excellence! By the way, what did Teacher Wang Yan say?”

Sheng Ruxue blushed slightly.

“Teacher Wang Yan is quite happy.”

Shang Wenwen suddenly said, “Hey, isn’t that Teacher Wang Yan? Aren’t the people beside him also teachers from the Art School?”

Sheng Ruxue looked in the direction she was pointing and indeed saw a group of people coming from the other corridor.

Other than Wang Yan and a few other teachers, there were a few people whom she was not too familiar with.

Sheng Ruxue nodded.

“Right? The one in the middle wearing an embroidered suit seems to be the director of One Gallery.”

Shang Wenwen understood.

“I remember now. One Gallery has always cooperated with the National Art Association, right? And our academy as well.”

They were all in the same circle, so of course they knew each other.

Apart from teaching at the Xijing Art School, Wang Yan and the others mostly held positions at the National Art Association.

They seemed to have been invited here today.

“Ruxue, would you like to go and say hello?” Shang Wenwen asked.

Sheng Ruxue thought for a moment, but still shook her head.

“Forget it. Master and the others are busy with business right now. It’s not suitable for us to go over.”

“That’s true.”

The two of them walked forward and saw a middle-aged woman dressed in a mature and elegant manner standing in front of a painting. “Whose painting is that? Is someone interested in bidding for it so soon?”

Shang Wenwen was a little curious and took two steps forward quickly.

However, when she saw the name of the artist next to the painting, her expression froze.

“Who is it?”

Sheng Ruxue asked as she followed.

Then, she saw the name too.

“Seventeenth Night”

— Tree’s Shadow.

Both of them fell silent.

No wonder...

Among the artists today, Tree’s Shadow was definitely the best.

It was no wonder that someone wanted to buy it so quickly.

At the same time, they also heard the gallery staff mention the price— four million.

And that was only the starting bid.

Just then, another old man in his fifties walked over. He also wanted to buy the painting.

When there were many interested buyers for a painting, of course, it would be the highest bidder who would get it.

Sheng Ruxue looked to the side.

Her painting was hanging fairly nearby. Occasionally, people stopped to look at it, but so far, no one had asked for the price.

In fact, it was not only her.

The other paintings on display in the gallery were also inferior to the “Seventeenth Night” by Tree’s Shadow.

The middle-aged lady and the old man had already started to raise their respective bids. It was obvious that they were each determined to get this painting

The bids quickly rose and soon exceeded 4.5 million.

Many people noticed the situation here and looked over.

If it could be successfully sold, this would be the first painting sold in this exhibition.

Judging by this trend, it would definitely be sold at a high price. It would be a really good start for the exhibition.

The staff's face seemed to be almost overflowing with joy and excitement.

The higher the price, the higher the commission of their gallery. He would also be able to get a bonus, so of course he was happy.

Finally, the old man's bid reached 4.8 million.

This was already a very shocking amount.

The middle-aged woman looked a little hesitant, but in the end, she chose to give up.

"Forget it."

The old man smiled, looking at the painting with a very satisfied expression. on his face.

The staff member smiled earnestly. "Mr. Zhou, congratulations." The old man asked, "The contract will be signed upstairs, right?"

“Yes, this way please—”

“Hold on.”

Before the staff member could finish speaking, a clear and melodious female voice was heard.

Everyone turned to look. Shang Wenwen frowned and whispered, “Ning Li? Why is she here too?”

Sheng Ruxue shook her head.

Ning Li went straight to the painting and stopped in front of it.

She glanced at it and then looked at the old man.

“Don’t buy this painting.”

The old man looked confused. “Why?”

Ning Li said calmly, “Because this painting... is fake.”

Everyone was shocked!

The staff member’s expression immediately changed. He stepped forward and said sternly, “Miss, please watch your words!”

To openly say that a painting was fake at an art exhibition, was this not deliberately looking for trouble?!

Chapter 649 I Am Tree’s Shadow

The old man frowned and turned his head to stare at the painting a few more times. He said hesitantly, "You said that this is fake. Do you have any proof?"

He looked at it but could not see anything wrong with it.

Ning Li smiled.

"This painting is very realistic, but it's still not realistic enough."

As she spoke, she raised her hand and pointed at the painting "Aside from that, the color of this leaf is different from the one in the real painting. Although the artist of this fake painting has tried his best to match the colors as closely to the real painting as possible, if you look closely, it's still different."

Ning Li pointed out two more details in succession.

"The color transition here and here hasn't been handled properly either."

The crowd gradually quieted down. At first, they had thought that Ning Li was just making things up, but after listening for a while, they realized that Ning Li seemed to really understand the painting.

They could not help but consider Ning Li's words and look more closely at the painting. They then realized that what she had pointed out was just as she had said. Many people were still a little skeptical.

"What she said is reasonable. Could it be that this painting is really fake?"

"I think so. If she did not have a special understanding of this painting, she would definitely not be able to say these things!"

"That's not necessarily true, right? Could it be that what she said is true? Last year, "Seventeenth Night" had been auctioned off as soon as it came out. Up until now, not many people have even seen the original painting with their own eyes, right? This little girl looks like she's only 18 or 19 years old. How would she have had the chance to see it?"

Everyone started to discuss with each other in whispers.

Someone suddenly said, "She's not an ordinary little girl. She's Ning Li! The designer who worked with G&S previously! She's Ning!"

As soon as these words were said, many people were shocked.

"So it's her! I was wondering why she looked so familiar!"

"I've watched all of her big shows. There's really nothing to say. If that's the case, it's not surprising that she would have seen the original painting."

"I thought she was talented in the design of high-end gowns, but now I see that she knows a lot about oil paintings too..."

When the staff member heard these words, he was a little nervous.

He had not recognized Ning Li earlier and had only thought that she was a student who had come to see the exhibition. Who knew—

"So it's Miss Ning. I apologize for my rudeness just now. Please forgive me." He quickly apologized and presented a much better attitude.

However, he was not willing to give in easily regarding this painting.

"Miss Ning, I know that you have made great achievements in the field of fashion design. However, this painting has been appraised by several experts from our gallery. There is no doubt that it is the original painting. It is not very appropriate for you to say that this is a fake painting without any proof..."

A good deal had been going smoothly and was about to be completed. Who would have known that Ning Li would suddenly appear out of nowhere?

With just the words “fake painting”, it would most likely stop the sale of the painting.

Wouldn't the gallery bear the final loss?

Just then, a low and lazy voice sounded.

“I can prove that what she said was true.”

The originally noisy hall quieted down.

Ning Li's eyebrows twitched slightly, and she turned around to look.

Lu Huaiyu.

He was wearing a white sweater with a round collar and a long dark coat. With his wide shoulders and narrow waist, he looked tall and straight.

His good looks were without comparison and his simple outfit made him look cool, ascetic, and noble.

The staff member recognized him quickly. “Second Master Lu?!”

Lu Huaiyu walked over slowly and finally stood beside Ning Li.

The old man asked in confusion, “Proof?

How?”

Lu Huaiyu did not answer the question immediately. Instead, he tilted his head and looked at Ning Li.

He just looked at her, the look in his phoenix-like eyes was so deep that they seemed to sink into the sea, as if he wanted to look straight into her heart.

Ning Li suddenly felt something, and her heart started beating faster and faster.

The next moment, she saw his thin lips slightly raised, and the corners of his eyes and brows seemed to contain an indecipherable smile.

He said slowly, "I bought Seventeenth Night a year and a half ago. That painting is still currently part of my collection, so the one that is here today is naturally fake."

The man's deep voice with a smile fell beside her ear, and it sounded like a drum beating.

Ning Li's mind momentarily went blank.

Lu Huaiyu?

The mysterious buyer was him?!

If "Seventeenth Night" was in his hands, then the other paintings—

Lu Huaiyu raised his eyebrows slightly and said with a low smile, "Besides, I find that painting to be extremely precious. It wasn't easy for me to win the bid for it, and I've kept it hidden in my house. How could I bear to sell it to someone else?"

Silence.

Many people had heard that the mysterious buyer had bid a high price for "Seventeenth Night".

However, no one had expected the buyer to be Lu Huaiyu!

Now, the first buyer of “Seventeenth Night” had appeared, and he had personally confirmed that the original painting was still in his hands. So, the painting that was being displayed here today was obviously hiding something fishy!

The staff member had obviously not expected things to develop to this point, so he did not speak for a long time.

The old man suddenly exclaimed, “So that’s how it is! In that case, that means that this painting is indeed fake!”

He waved his hand.

“Then I don’t want it anymore!”

As he spoke, he looked at Ning Li and Lu Huaiyu. “Fortunately, you guys let me know in time. Otherwise, I would really have bought a fake painting!” The onlookers looked at each other in dismay.

“One Gallery is selling a fake painting? Isn’t this a scam?!”

“Exactly! A painting costs from hundreds of thousands to millions. How did they audit it?!”

“After this, the reputation of One Gallery will surely be ruined...”

Hearing these words, the staff member panicked and blurted out without thinking, “But Second Master Lu, what if... what if your painting is the one that is fake? This—”

“The one he bought is real.”

Ning Li suddenly interrupted him.

The staff member was extremely anxious and subconsciously retorted, “Miss Ning, the authenticity of this painting is not something that you can determine with just one sentence!”

Ning Li suddenly laughed. “It’s hard to say for other things, but I do have the qualifications for this particular painting.”

She raised her eyes slightly and looked at Lu Huaiyu, her red lips curling into a faint smile.

“I forgot to introduce myself.

“I’m Tree’s Shadow.”

I’m Tree’s Shadow.

The room fell silent.

Everyone looked at Ning Li in shock as they wondered whether they were hearing things!

Tree’s Shadow. She was Tree’s Shadow?!

“How could she be Tree’s Shadow?!” Shang Wenwen muttered in disbelief. “Isn’t Tree’s Shadow a man?!”

Sheng Ruxue’s lips moved, but her throat was

dry.

“That’s just outside speculation. Actually, no one knows the truth.”

Whether Tree's Shadow was male or female, their age and appearance were all secrets that were not known by anyone. Everyone had only been able to make all kinds of speculations. In the end, they had deduced that it was a man based on his carefree and mature style of painting.

Who would have known that they had guessed wrongly!

Tree's Shadow was actually a young girl who was only eighteen years old!

Shang Wenwen covered her mouth, her eyes still filled with shock.

Sheng Ruxue's lips turned pale.

In front of so many people, Ning Li would surely not tell a lie like this.

She was Tree's Shadow!

Not even three years had passed since her first painting, yet she had already become a popular and sought-after existence in the art world!

Some people admired her paintings, while others might not.

However, there was one thing: Her talent in painting was undeniable!

Even if there was anyone who did not like her style, they had to admit that Tree's Shadow was a rare genius.

And just a few days ago, what had she said to Ning Li?

"Do you know? If you're not a professional in the field, it's better not to express too many opinions so as not to attract too much ridicule."

Sheng Ruxue's limbs went cold, but her face was burning red Tree's Shadow was the best in oil painting!

Her face hurt as much as the feeling she felt when she had vented her anger as she had said those words!

No wonder... It was no wonder Ning Li had looked at her like that at that time.

Right, what else had Ning Li said?

'It just so happens that I'd like to give you a suggestion as well: It's best not to judge people at will when they don't know their circumstances fully. Otherwise, it's very easy to be embarrassed.'

At that moment, Sheng Ruxue wished there was a hole in the ground for her to crawl into!

Lu Huaiyu looked at Ning Li as the smile on the corner of his lips deepened slightly.

— I'm Tree's Shadow. It had not been easy for the young lady to admit that.

Ning Li then looked at the staff and tilted her head.

"There shouldn't be anyone more qualified than me to determine whether my painting is real or fake, right?"

Everyone fell silent again.

The staff member's lips moved soundlessly. Finally, he regained his rationality and wanted to say something, but not a word could leave his lips.

Their gallery had displayed a fake painting and even questioned the true artist of the painting!

What a joke!

“S-sorry!”

The staff member’s face had turned red.

Although this matter was very unbelievable, no one doubted that this was Ning Li’s painting.

This was One Gallery, and there were so many people present. Everything that happened here would quickly spread.

If he lied, he would very quickly be exposed. Since she had dared to proclaim that, then there could be no doubt-she was indeed Tree’s Shadow!

The staff repeatedly apologized.

“Earlier, I was blind and failed to recognize Mount Tai[1]. Please forgive me!”

Ning Li was actually not very concerned about his apology. Right now, she was more concerned about another matter.

“This painting is a fake. Because your gallery didn’t review it properly, it was put up for auction here. Such a big mistake can’t be solved with just an apology.”

Ning Li’s words were filled with doubt.

“I want to know who was in charge of the appraisal of this painting. In addition, you must also have the identity of this fake painting’s artist. Report the information to me.”

The staff member and everyone else was stunned.

Was Ning Li trying to pursue accountability?

The staff member was stunned and looked troubled.

“T-this might be a little troublesome. Every painting is appraised and examined by more than three experts. We can’t blame any one person alone. In addition, all artists’ personal information is confidential. I’m afraid we can’t provide this to you.”

Ning Li’s eyes narrowed slightly.

The staff member seemed to have noticed her unhappiness and quickly said, “But don’t worry, the fault definitely lies with us this time. Once again, we sincerely apologize to you! Don’t worry, we will try our best to compensate you for the loss caused by this incident!”

Logically speaking, this attitude of admitting their mistake was pretty good.

However, Ning Li seemed unmoved.

She said, “It doesn’t matter if there are multiple audits. All you need to do is send the list of names to me. In addition to that, the privacy of an artist is a rule that must be followed only without infringing on the interests of others. Now, however, this fake painting has been openly displayed and auctioned publicly. I have the right to request that you provide all relevant information unconditionally and conduct a thorough investigation on this matter.”

She said these words in a calm and unhurried manner.

However, under the calmness, there was an undercurrent that surged with an irresistible force.

That staff member still wanted to say something, but when he met Ning Li’s gaze, he inexplicably swallowed those words back down.

Just then, a middle-aged man walked over.

“What’s going on?”

When the staff member saw him, he immediately rushed over.

“President Wu.”

He explained everything in a low voice.

Wu Cheng frowned when he heard that.

Then, he looked at Ning Li. “Miss Ning, I’m really sorry about what happened today. I apologize on behalf of the gallery, but I’m afraid we can’t fulfill your request. You don’t have the right to demand unconditional cooperation, so—”

A few footsteps came from nearby. At the same time, a familiar voice sounded.

“Wu Cheng? What happened?”

Wu Cheng turned around and said in a much gentler tone, “Teacher Wang Yan, you’re here. Actually, it’s nothing much. It’s just a misunderstanding with Miss Ning.”

Wang Yan had already walked over from the back of the crowd. When he saw Ning Li, he was stunned.

Then, he looked at Wu Cheng and then at Ning

Li.

The painting “Seventeenth Night” was hanging next to them.

He hesitated for a moment and carefully asked, “Little Master Aunt, is there a problem with your painting?”

[1] This is a metaphor meaning that one is too narrow-sighted to recognize someone with high status or ability.

Chapter 650 She Was Mei Yanqing’s Last Disciple

Hearing her words, everyone present was dumbfounded.

Junior Master Aunt?!

Wang Yan’s master was Yu Pingchuan. He was a renowned oil painting master in the domestic painting circle. His status in the industry could be said to be very important and highly respected.

Yet now, he had actually called Ning Li—

Junior... Master... Aunt?!

Then wouldn’t Ning Li—

Lu Huaiyu’s brows twitched slightly as he turned his head to look at Ning Li.

After a long while, his thin lips curled into a meaningful arc.

The corners of his lips curled into a smile as he slowly spoke.

“So... that means that you’re Teacher Yu’s Junior Sister?”

Ning Li's eyelashes trembled slightly.

In the dead silent exhibition hall, someone gasped.

Wang Yan's status was already extremely important, not to mention his teacher, Yu Pingchuan.

Since Ning Li was Wang Yan's junior aunt, that meant that it confirmed that she was Yu Pingchuan's junior sister!

That also meant—

“She's Elder Mei's disciple?!”

An incredulous murmur came from the crowd.

Elder Mei... Mei Yanqing.

The Chairman of the National Art Association, the founder of the three major schools of Qing, and a true figure of the art world!

“How is this possible... how is this possible?! Elder Mei has had a total of three closed-door disciples. After Yu Pingchuan, he never accepted anyone else. How is it possible for Ning Li to be his disciple?!”

“That's right! Isn't she only a freshman this year? Isn't she only 18 years old? How can Elder Mei—”

“But Wang Yan clearly called her Junior Master Aunt just now! How can this be fake?!”

These words finally crushed the many doubts in everyone's hearts.

Yes, everyone present had clearly heard what Wang Yan had called out earlier!

Look at what kind of status he had! Why would he joke about such a matter?!

Moreover, everyone could see how polite and respectful he was to Ning Li!

Wu Cheng and the others did not speak for a long time. They were completely numb.

This news was so shocking that they did not even have the time to react!

Ning Li lowered her chin slightly, her expression remained indifferent.

“An art gallery obtained a high-quality copy of my painting from some unknown source and put it on public display for auction. I asked them to remove the painting and give me the list of names of the people who had examined the painting. I also asked them to give me the artist’s information. Unfortunately, they rejected it.”

She spoke very slowly and her tone was calm. However, with every word she said, the faces of Wu Cheng and the others turned paler. If Ning Li had just been Tree’s Shadow, it would not have mattered if they had offended

her.

However... she was Mei Yanqing’s disciple!

Who was Mei Yanqing?

He was in charge of the entire Arts Association!

Now that they had offended Ning Li, was it not clear that they were not respecting Elder Mei and were going against the Arts Association?!

Hearing this, Wang Yan frowned as he looked at Wu Cheng

“Wu Cheng, your gallery made such a huge mistake and it should have been dealt with seriously. Junior Master Aunt’s request just now was quite reasonable and sensible, yet you... refused it?”

Cold sweat broke out on Wu Cheng’s forehead.

“No, no! What we meant is that this matter is quite complicated. It might take up a lot of Miss Ning’s time and energy to resolve it...”

Ning Li laughed.

Wu Cheng paused a moment to gulp, before speaking with difficulty. “... But Miss Ning is right. This matter does need to be thoroughly investigated. Our Gallery will definitely cooperate. Don’t worry, Miss Ning. We will arrange the things you’ve asked for and send them to you as soon as possible.” Ning Li stared at him for a few seconds before nodding

“I’m sorry for the trouble.”

Wu Cheng’s mouth was bitter. “It’s... it’s my duty...”

How could he have ever imagined that something like this would happen on the first day after meticulously preparing for the art exhibition?

And it just so happened that the other party was the one person they could not afford to offend!

Only then did Wang Yan let out a slight sigh of relief. He looked at Ning Li.

“Junior Master Aunt, would you still like to continue to have a look at the art exhibition?”

Ning Li shook her head.

“No, thank you.”

Her reason for coming here today had been for that fake painting

Now that the matter had been resolved, there was no longer any need for her to stay here.

Wang Yan felt that this was for the best. He did not want to continue being angry here. “Then allow me to send you off—”

Before the sentence could be finished, Ning Li’s phone vibrated.

She took it out and took a look. It was a call from Yu Pingchuan.

She picked it up, but before she could speak, she heard Yu Pingchuan’s voice.

“Ah Li, where are you now?”

Ning Li heard that the tone of his voice was a little off.

“I’m in an art gallery. What’s wrong?”

Yu Pingchuan immediately heaved a sigh of relief and pleaded for help.

“So you have the time, right? Then please hurry and come to the hospital! Master is shouting that he wants to be discharged again! We can’t persuade him otherwise anymore!”

Ning Li pressed the space between her brows helplessly.

After Mei Yanqing's surgery, his body had recovered quite well. For the past few days, he had been shouting that he wanted to be discharged from the hospital. He said that the hospital was suffocating. Yu Pingchuan and the others had tried to persuade him several times to stay in the hospital for an observation period. He could then be discharged after he had completely healed, but he did not listen.

It sounded like he was quarreling about the same issue again today.

"Alright, I've got it. Tell him that I'll be there right away."

After Ning Li said that, she hung up the phone.

Wang Yan asked, "Junior Aunt, are you going to the hospital?"

"Yes, Master is asking to be discharged again." Ning Li put away her phone.

Wang Yan recalled Mei Yanqing's temper, and the corner of his mouth twitched.

"Then, then Junior Aunt, take care on your way there. I won't send you off then." Ning Li nodded.

Lu Huaiyu suddenly said, "I'll go with you." Ning Li was stunned and she looked up at him.

Lu Huaiyu raised his eyebrows. "Didn't we say that we would visit Elder Mei together when we got the chance?"

Ning Li coughed lightly, "... Okay."

As she spoke, she turned around and was about to walk out of the door.

The people around immediately made way for her.

Only two people did not move— Sheng Ruxue and Shang Wenwen.

The two of them were clearly still dazed from what had just happened.

Ning Li took a step forward.

“Excuse me.”

The two of them quickly came back to their senses.

Shang Wenwen subconsciously took two steps back, and Sheng Ruxue’s expression changed dramatically.

Her pale lips moved, as if she wanted to say something

However, her neck seemed to have been tightly gripped by something, and she could not say a word.

Wang Yan waved his hand.

“Ruxue, why are you just standing there? Address her properly!” Sheng Ruxue’s face instantly turned even paler.

Address her for what??

Ning Li was a year younger than her!

The corners of Ning Li’s lips curled up as she said casually,

“Uncle Yan is stubborn. Don’t mind him. Just call my name like before.”

Sheng Ruxue's throat felt dry.

Ning Li, however, seemed to be too lazy to argue about it. She turned her head to look at Lu Huaiyu.

"Second Brother."

Lu Huaiyu stepped forward with a smile and held her hand.

"Let's go. We shouldn't keep Elder Mei waiting."

With that, the two of them left hand in hand, leaving behind a group of people who were still in shock.

Walking out of the gallery, Ning Li saw the familiar black Panamera.

The two of them got into the car together.

Fang Qingyun was pleasantly surprised to see Ning Li. "Ah Li, did you come here to see this art exhibition as well?"

Lu Huaiyu looked at her with a wry smile.

Ning Li, "... Ahem, yes."

Fang Qingyun did not notice the subtle atmosphere between the two of them and happily asked, "Then shall we go back together today? The old man is—"

"Uncle Fang, we're going to the First Affiliated Hospital of Xijing University."

Lu Huaiyu leaned back and lazily said, “It’s been so long. It’s time to visit Elder Mei.”